

Jews and Muslims in North Africa (19th-20th c.): a shared history?

Overview

This class will address the question of Jewish-Muslim relationships from a historical perspective, drawing on recent works on Modern North Africa (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia).

Starting from the pre-colonial period, it will analyze the status of Non-Muslim communities in Islamic countries and the growing influence of European imperialism on colonized populations. Then it will discuss the dynamics of coexistence under French colonial rule, in a context characterized by competitive colonial policies, distinguishing between both autochthonous populations, and the rise of Zionism. Finally, it will explore decolonization and independence as processes of religious and ethnic homogenization in North Africa, leading to a massive Jewish emigration, and the inherited intercommunal tensions in postcolonial France.

This course offers a new perspective on issues linked to colonialism, nationalism, antisemitism, Zionism and, more generally speaking, multiculturalism. Doing so, it also sheds light on the question of race in contemporary France.

Requirements

Active and well-prepared participation is expected. We will discuss at every session the assigned article or chapter: take time at home to carefully read it and take notes on it. You should be able to identify the author's main thesis, his different arguments and the empirical material used to prove it.

Once in the semester you will present the assigned reading orally, in group (ca. 15 minutes): introduce the author, sum the text up, identify its contribution to the field and discuss its main ideas.

Provisional Course Outline

9 two-hour sessions

- N° 1: North African history, from pre-colonial period to decolonization
- N° 2: Being a non-Muslim in an Islamic society
- N° 3: Between tradition and modernity, Jewish communities in North Africa
- N° 4: North African societies facing European Imperialism
- N° 5: Colonial policies over mixed societies
- N° 6: Nationalism, Arabism, Islamism: The Jews rejected from the national narrative?
- N° 7: Decolonization, migrations and the "memories of absence" in North Africa
- N° 8-9: Racial tensions in postcolonial France

Total amount of hours: 54 hours = 18 hours in-class + 36 hours out-of-class study.

Bibliography (abridged version)

- Boum, Aomar. *Memories of Absence: How Muslims Remember Jews in Morocco*. Stanford University Press, 2014.
- Gottreich, Emily B., et Daniel J. Schroeter, éd. *Jewish Culture and Society in North Africa*. Indiana University Press, 2011.
- Katz, Ethan B. *The Burdens of Brotherhood: Jews and Muslims from North Africa to France*. Harvard University Press, 2018.
- Mandel, Maud. *Muslims and Jews in France: History of a Conflict*. Princeton University Press, 2016.
- Schreier, Joshua. *Arabs of the Jewish Faith: The Civilizing Mission in Colonial Algeria*. Rutgers University Press, 2010.
- Stein, Sarah A.. *Saharan Jews and the Fate of French Algeria*. University of Chicago Press, 2014.

Evaluation

50% of FINAL GRADE

Written exam:

This 2 hours exam will take place at the end of the semester and will consist of an essay on a subject dealing with the topics raised in class and in the readings.

50% of FINAL GRADE

Class participation

Its includes:

- Assiduity, preparation of the sessions (compulsory readings), oral participation and involvement in the class debates.
- A 25-minutes recap in pairs of the reading assignments. The recap must engage and challenge the other students.