



# PASSAGES THROUGH FRANCOPHONE CITIES

**APA Program:** Multi-Country: France, Morocco, Senegal

**Language of instruction:** French

**US semester credits:** 4.0

**Contact hours:** 36 hours (12 hours per host city)

**Term:** Fall Semester | Spring Semester

**Instructors:** Paris - Part 1: Dr. Stefania Cubeddu-Proux, Lecturer, Paris Nanterre University  
Part 2: Florence Paravy, Professor, Paris Nanterre University  
Rabat - Hassan Moustir, Professor, Mohammed V University  
Dakar - Dr. Mamadou Ba, Professor, Cheikh Anta Diop University

## Course Description

Study of the city through Francophone literature: This peripatetic course takes place in three stages in which urban space plays an essential role. It is both the engine and the object of a thematic route which allows us to discover the literary city juxtaposed with the urban, physical space. Thus, we will probe the city by way of its literature and texts and examine the complementary reflection of a direct experience of the space found in the books.

This course will unfold over the space of three cities: Paris, Rabat, and Dakar. From the outset, French-language literature is questioned and dissected to better define their space in a constant ebb and flow between the book and the city.

**Paris:** The groundwork for a study of the city in literature through a theoretical reflection and a corpus of Francophone texts from French-speaking America (Quebec, Haiti) and from African literature will be explored and observed.

**Rabat:** A continued study of the city in Francophone literature, with a regard on Maghreb and Morocco in particular, will confront students with a similar but contrasting angle.

**Dakar:** This sequence continues and closes the reflection on the city in French literature with a deepening focus on the literature from sub-Saharan Africa – including Senegal.

## Learning Objective

At the end of this course, students will have studied and analyzed the urban space and traversed texts allowing them to have a more precise vision of Francophone literature. They will have acquired the defining tools to analyze a literary text by way of a city. This approach will inevitably have a comparative character: writings about a city in North America, Morocco or Senegal brings out an imaginary context, a lexicon, practice, etc. each distinct. Moreover, the French language, however common to these spaces and their literature, requires a line of questioning and to be tested in a unique manner specific to the cultural method necessary for the location.

In this comparative approach, which will not be without scrutiny, the other forms that the city can take (literature, art, etc.), in various genres, the student is certainly at the heart of learning, but also the subject: they will be led to question the space traversed by the measuring tool of their own knowledge and personal experience.

## **Schedule**

### **Paris: Dialogue Between Two Great Norths: North America & Francophone Maghreb**

#### Week 1 - Discovery of North America

- General introduction to French-speaking literature
- Two great Norths in dialogue: North America and the Maghreb
- Arriving in Canada
- Describe or not describe?
- The Quebec City of Jacques Poulin
- A round trip from Quebec to Paris

#### Week 2 - From North America to the Maghreb

- Montreal to Port-au-Prince, two cities from one author: Dany Laferrière
- Arriving in the Maghreb. Histories of the Siege: Assia Djebar's city of Alger- "*Fantasia: An Algerian Cavalcade*"

#### Week 3

- Introduction to French-speaking African literature. First approach to the representation of urban space in these literatures
- Postcolonial images of the city and the village (*The Suns of Independence*)

#### Week 4

- The Griot and the shallows (*The Scales of the Sky*)
- Topographical interference and poetic elements (*The Seven Solitudes of Lorsa Lopez*)

### **Rabat: The Flap in the Novel**

#### Week 5 - Introduction to Moroccan Literature: The Problem with the City in Khatibi's Works

- Birth and evolution of the French Moroccan novel: A glimpse
- Khatibi: Approach of the novel and the city; Casablanca in *Tattooed Memory* (1971); Stockholm in *A Summer in Stockholm* (1990); Fez in *The Pilgrimage of an Artist in Love* (2003)

#### Week 6 - *Passport to Rabat*

- Rabat: city - labyrinth

#### Week 7 - *Passport to Rabat*

- Allegories of the city: body - trauma - power

#### Week 8 - *Passport to Rabat*

- Obsessive and passionate figures of the place: spinning - lust - fantasy

## Dakar: From the Perspective of the Urban African Universe

### Week 9 - The Fascination of the City

- Ousmane Socé E, *Karim*  
Abdoulaye Sadj, *Maimouna*

### Week 10

- City and destiny: Malick Fall, *The Wound*
- The duality of the colonial city: Mongo Beti, *Cruel City*

### Week 11 - New Mega-Cities and Sociopolitical Changes

- Ahmadou Kourouma, *The Suns of Independence*
- Tierno Monenembo, *The Scales from the Sky*

### Week 12 - The City as a Framework for the African Thriller, Crime Novel

- Ken Bugul, *Rue Félix Faure*
- Laurence Gavron, *Boy Dakar*

### Course Readings

Students will read excerpts from the selected novels and are expected to read one of works in full, to be determined on arrival.