



SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

APA Program: The Contemporary Maghreb - Rabat, Morocco

Language of instruction: English

US semester credits: 4.0

Contact hours: 36

Term availability: Summer (6 weeks)

Instructor: Professor Hamid Bouyahi

Course Description

Social movements offer a unique angle from which to approach the political, social, and cultural construction of Morocco from the point of view of the people. While social change usually takes place slowly and gradually, social movements, as organized mass phenomena, accelerate transitions and can be read as direct expressions of how the people of a specific community view their reality and seek to improve it. In this course, we examine social movements in Morocco and in the MENA region, with particular attention to their relationship to traditional party politics and to their dynamics in authoritarian and semi-authoritarian contexts. We consider the role of social media in shaping social movements and ask what part economic realities and ideology (Islamic or otherwise) play in explaining the dynamics of change. Finally, we look at their composition and try to understand who is most likely to partake in them and why (youth/age factor, gender, etc).

To give students from different disciplines access to similar tools of analysis, this course introduces:

1. **The main theories of social Movements**
 - a. Relative deprivation
 - b. Resource Mobilization
 - c. Political opportunity structures
 - d. Frame alignment processes
2. **Social media studies**
 - a. Utopian views
 - b. Dystopian views
3. **An overview of the Moroccan history**
 - a. Main political parties
 - b. Human rights
 - c. Main social issues
 - d. Islamist social movements
4. **The general context in other countries in the MENA region**

As the students become familiar with the socio-political context of the region and the main theories of social movements, specific cases will be selected for further analysis and discussion.

1. The Arab Spring

a. Egypt's 25 January Movement

- i. Opportunities and threats
- ii. Use of social media

2. Recent social movements in Morocco

a. Rif Movement

- i. Causes
- ii. Development
- iii. Collapse