



AN/WS 336: WOMEN AND CULTURE IN SPAIN AND THE MEDITERRANEAN
IES Abroad Barcelona

DESCRIPTION: This course will introduce students to the social and historical construction of women's roles in the Mediterranean region, from a cross-cultural and interdisciplinary perspective. Though the course places special emphasis on Spain, by bringing in examples of other Mediterranean countries it will examine if, in terms of the roles traditionally assigned to women, Spain shares more with Mediterranean countries than with northern European societies. Thus, though we will pay attention to existing diversities across the Mediterranean we will also highlight similar understandings of women and culture and how these understandings shape and are shaped by issues such as religion, politics, use of space, family arrangements or migration flows. As this course is a women's studies course, it will focus on the conceptions of women in Mediterranean societies. Other gender roles, including LGBTQ issues are not a central focus of this course, and will only be touched on tangentially, if at all.

The course is divided into an introductory section, and four topics:

The introductory section provides a discussion of two key concepts: that of gender and its relevance to women's studies; and the identification of Spain in the Mediterranean, both geographically and culturally. The course then introduces the debate about Western attitudes to women in Islamic societies, in the context of unifying cultural codes across the Mediterranean, with the identification of overarching visions of women's roles within what is known as the "Mediterranean honor code". In this way, the course identifies both the unity of cultural codes around the Mediterranean, and at the same time, the concept of the "other" in Western stereotypes about Islam.

From these foundations, the course goes on to introduce students to different fields in which women's roles are created and recreated in traditional Mediterranean societies, comparing Spain to other societies – principally Islamic societies on the opposite shores of the Mediterranean: The discussion is divided into 4 topics:

Topic 1 introduces students to women's roles in religion, on both shores of the Mediterranean.

Topic 2 broadly tackles the economy, introducing students to early women's movements, as well as women's roles in relation to the family, education and migration.

Topic 3 examines women's roles in public and private spaces.

Topic 4 examines women's roles in politics, and ties up the course by looking at early, and recent, feminist movements, and how these have tried to challenge the traditional roles and representations discussed earlier in the course. The course specifically discusses contemporary feminist movements in Islamic societies, which ties back into the debate highlighted at the start of the course.

The course sessions will combine theoretical lectures, class discussions and debates based on the critical reading of assigned articles. The articles are a selection of key academic works chosen with the aim of providing a general understanding of how traditional women's and men's roles intersect with other aspects of social and political life in the Mediterranean. There will be also occasional screenings of films and field visits.

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 45 hours

LANGUAGE OF PRESENTATION: English

INSTRUCTOR:

PREREQUISITES: One course in Anthropology, Sociology, or Women's or Gender Studies is recommended



ADDITIONAL COST: None

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

- **Lectures:** Lectures provide the students with an opportunity to gain an overview of the course content and to clarify issues.
- **Class discussions:** The course is largely discussion-based. Students are expected to come to class prepared (i.e. not only having done the readings but also having considered them in depth) and participate actively in the discussions. The aim of class discussions is to facilitate the students' ability to apply the theoretical material to lived experience. All required readings can be found on Moodle. The readings listed for a particular session must be completed BEFORE coming to class that day.
- **Class presentations:** Students will be responsible for presenting a session's readings and leading the discussion in class.
- **Course-related trips:** Professor-guided visits to significant sites related to the content and outcomes of the course.

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Midterm - 25 %
- Ethnographic Journal - 15 %
- Research Poster - 35 %
 - Draft Research poster and 1,000 words report: 10%
 - Final Research poster - 15%
 - Student presentation - 10%
- In-class article group presentation - 15 %
- Class Participation – 10 %

Midterm

Students will have to respond to conceptual questions about topics discussed in class and write a critical review of a short text.

Ethnographic Journal

Write a **journal for 6 days** (3 at the beginning of the semester and 3 at the end) taking note of cultural differences regarding gender roles that they observe during their stay in Barcelona. Observations could be addressed to investigate how women and men use public space or public transportation, gender dynamics in clubs, gyms or bars, women's representation in media, gender and politics. **Though nothing that is revealed in the journal will be made public in the classroom discussion, you will receive comments on it.** The journal will be assessed using a rubric that will be previously shared with students.

Final Project (Research Poster)

Students will create a visually engaging poster that explores one aspect related to gender and culture in Spain, incorporating insights from their study abroad experience. The poster should focus on one of the themes covered in the course. Topics may include gender identity, representation in media, cultural norms, intersectionality, or historical movements. Students should use a mix of research, personal observations, and reflections to prepare their poster.

In-class article presentation

Students will have the responsibility of initiating discussion of the assigned readings (individually or in pairs). Presentations should consist of a 10–15-minute introductions about the central arguments and conclusions of each piece and raise leading questions. In developing these informal presentations, students are encouraged to work together; it is also helpful to bring in examples that can help the understanding of the readings.

Class participation

Making a substantive oral contribution during class lecture or large-class discussion. Showing the reading has been done. Staying on task in dyads, small groups and activities. When given a task or question to discuss, work to make meaningful and course content-driven contributions, ask questions and brainstorm additional ideas.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Articulate key concepts and theories in women's studies
- Explain how gender intersects with politics, cultures and societies in the Mediterranean
- Analyze women's issues in Spain and the Mediterranean area through the critical reading of a selection of sociological, anthropological and historical works
- Make use of critical tools and concepts drawn from gender and feminist studies to interpret existing diversities and similarities in women's roles across the Mediterranean
- Describe cultural differences in non-judgmental ways

ATTENDANCE POLICY: As a member of our class community, you are expected to be present and on time every day. Attending class has an impact on your learning and academic success. For this reason, attendance is required for all IES Barcelona classes, including course-related excursions. If a student misses more than three classes in any course without justification, 3 percentage points will be deducted from the final grade for every additional absence. Seven unjustified absences in any course will result in a failing grade. Absences will only be justified, and assessed work, including exams, tests and presentations rescheduled, in cases of documented medical or family emergencies.

CONTENT:

Session	Content	Assignments, readings, homework, exams
Building the container		
Session 1	Introduction to the course: Goals of course, studying women's issues in the Mediterranean	
Session 2	Gender: Preliminary notions.	• Pilcher, J., & Whelehan, I. (2016). <i>50 Key concepts in gender studies</i>. Sage. 56-68; 176-181 • Aresti, N. (2023). <i>Beyond Models: The Many Paths to Feminism in Modern Spain</i>. <i>European History Quarterly</i>, 53(2), 277-296.
Session 3	Gender as lived in Spain	• Platero, R., & Drager, E. H. (2015). <i>Two trans* teachers in Madrid: Interrogating trans* formative pedagogies</i>. <i>Transgender Studies Quarterly</i>, 2(3), 447-463
Session 4	Gender studies from a cross-cultural perspective:	• Abu-Lughod, L. (2002). Do muslim women really need saving? Anthropological reflections on cultural relativism and its others. <i>American Anthropologist</i>, 104(3), 783-790. • Mikdashi, M. (2012). How not to study gender in the Middle East. In "Women living under Muslim Laws"

		http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/4775/how-not-to-study-gender-in-the-middle-east Mohanty, C. (2003). Under Western Eyes” Revisited: Feminist Solidarity through Anticapitalist Struggles Author(s): <i>Signs</i>, 28(2), 499–535.
Topic 2: Cultural aspects and history		
Session 5	Spain in the Mediterranean	- Herzfeld, M. (2005). Practical Mediterraneanism: Excuses for Everything, from Epistemology to Eating. In W. H. Harris (Ed.), <i>Rethinking the Mediterranean</i> (pp. 45–63). Oxford: Oxford University Press. - Stewart, C. (2015). <i>Honor and Shame. International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences</i> (Second Edi, Vol. 11). Elsevier. 181-184
Session 6	Gender Roles and History in Spain	Nash, M. (1999). Un/contested identities: Motherhood, sex reform and the modernization of gender identity in early twentieth-century Spain. <i>Constructing Spanish womanhood: Female identity in modern Spain</i>, 25-49
Session 7	Women in Spain: the role of religion in defining gender roles	Collier, J. F. (1986). From Mary to Modern Woman: The Material Basis of Marianismo and Its Transformation in a Spanish Village; <i>American Ethnologist</i>, 13(1), 100–107.
Session 8	Self –Guided Tour Barcelona Feminist Resources	
Session 9	Changing gender roles and the family	- Platero, R. (2007). Love and the state: Gay marriage in Spain. <i>Feminist Legal Studies</i>, 15(3), 329-340. - Recommended: Dierckx, M., & Platero, R. L. (2018). The meaning of trans* in a family context. <i>Critical Social Policy</i>, 38(1), 79-98.
Topic 3: Women, Economy and Migratory patterns		
Session 10		

	Changing women’s roles and economy	Comas-d’Argemir, D., & Soronellas, M. (2019). Men as carers in long-term caring: Doing gender and doing Kinship. <i>Journal of Family Issues</i>, 40(3), 315-339.
Session 11	Women and transnational migrations across the Mediterranean	- Ruba Salih (2001) Moroccan migrant women: Transnationalism, nation-states and gender, <i>Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies</i>, 27:4, 655-671 RECOMMENDED - Parella, S., Petroff, A., & Solé, C. (2013). The Upward Occupational Mobility of Immigrant Women in Spain. <i>Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies</i>, 39(9), 1365–1382.
Session 12	Women and Politics in Spain Contemporary Feminisms I (Course related trip 😊 to Ca la Dona and Plaça Vuit de Març	Ca la Dona is a meeting place for women and women's groups, open to participation and the proposals of women. During the fieldtrip we will visit the building that has been recently renovated through a process of participation and discuss the role of this space in facilitating the connection among different feminist groups in Barcelona.
Topic 4: Women in the City		
Session 13	Women and urban space: negotiating separate spheres (Spain)	- Hutchison, R. (2010). Gendered Space. In <i>Encyclopedia of Urban Studies</i> (pp. 299–302). - Ortiz, A., Garcia-Ramon, M. D., & Prats, M. (2004). Women’s use of public space and sense of place in the Raval (Barcelona). <i>GeoJournal</i>, 61(3), 219–227.
Session 14	Women and space: negotiating separate spheres	- Newcomb, R. (2006). Gendering the City, Gendering the Nation: Contesting Urban Space in Fez, Morocco. <i>City and Society</i>, 18(2), 288–311. - Class discussion based on excerpts of films: 678 is a 2010 Egyptian film by director Mohamed Diab focusing on the sexual harassment of women in Egypt
Session 15		
Session 16	Midterm in class	
Topic 5: Women and Politics; from Early Movements to Contemporary Feminism		
Session 17	Guest Speaker Feminist Self Defense Strategies	
Session 18	Women and Politics in Spain: The pioneers	Kaplan: T. (1982) Consciousness and Collective Action: The Case of Barcelona 1910-1918. <i>Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society</i> 7(3)

Session 19	Women and Politics in Spain (II) The Civil War	Ackelsberg, M. A. (1985). "Separate and equal"? Mujeres libres and anarchist strategy for women's emancipation. <i>Feminist Studies</i>, 11(1), 63-83.
Session 20	Film Viewing EXTENDED OUTLINE DEADLINE	
Session 21	Women and Politics in Spain (III): the Franco dictatorship and the fight for democracy	Radcliff, P. B. (2001). Imagining female citizenship in the "New Spain": gendering the democratic transition, 1975-1978. <i>Gender & History</i>, 13(3), 498-523
Session 22	Peer Review in Class	Final paper peer review session
Session 23	Spanish Feminisms and coalitions	- García Grenzner, J. (2014). Indignant Feminisms in Spain: Placing the Body before Patriarchal and Capitalist Austerity. <i>Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society</i>, 40(1), 59-69. - Platero, R. L., & Ortega-Arjonilla, E. (2016). Building coalitions : The interconnections between feminism and trans * activism in Spain, 20 (1) 46-64
Session 24	Final Presentations	Presentations should consist of a 10–15-minute introduction to the central arguments and conclusions of each piece and raise leading questions. In developing these informal presentations, students are encouraged to work together; it is also helpful to bring in examples that can help the understanding of the readings
Deadline for final project submission in Moodle		

COURSE-RELATED TRIPS

- Course-related trip to Francesca Bonnemaison Center (La Bonne). La Bonne is a meeting place for cultural exchange and creative feminist projects. La Bonne has its origin in the Institute of Popular Culture Francesca Bonnemaison founded in the early twentieth century by Francesca Bonnemaison a pedagogue from a bourgeois family, who in 1909 founded the first public women's library in Europe. After a long history of struggles and several changes in the building, during the 1990s the feminist movement in Barcelona (represented by more than 80 entities) signed a manifesto that claimed the recovery of the space as a center for women's culture.
- Course-related trip to Ca la Dona. Ca la Dona is a meeting place for a diverse array of women's groups, open to participation and to the proposals of women who wish it. It was founded in the mid 1980's as a space to facilitate the coordination of the

existing feminist groups that were constituted after the dictatorship. It is a physical space, but above all a symbolic one, a place of political experiences, reflection and production of thought. Ca la Dona has also become a point of reference for many women, since it collects and transmits diverse information related to women resources, for example: how to address issues of harassment, provide information about family planning, AIDS, unions, etc. We will visit the building that host Ca La Dona, which was donated in 2006 by the City Council and has been recently renovated through a process of participation.

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Aresti, N. (2023). Beyond Models: The Many Paths to Feminism in Modern Spain. *European History Quarterly*, 53(2), 277-296.
- Ackelsberg, M. A. (1985). "Separate and Equal"? Mujeres Libres and Anarchist Strategy for Women's Emancipation. *Feminist Studies*, 11(1), 63-83.
- Abu-Lughod, L. (2002). Do Muslim women really need saving? Anthropological reflections on cultural relativism and its others. *American Anthropologist*, 104(3), 783-790.
- Bello, V. (2015). The experience of Muslim immigrant women in Spain: between socio-cultural change, discrimination and civil society participation. Report 03/05. UNU-GCM- Institute on Globalization, Culture and Mobility.
- Bustelo, M. (2016). Three Decades of State Feminism and Gender Equality Policies in Multi-governed Spain. *Sex Roles*, 74(3-4), 107-120.
- Comas-d'Argemir, D., & Soronellas, M. (2019). Men as carers in long-term caring: Doing gender and doing Kinship. *Journal of Family Issues*, 40(3), 315-339
- Collier, J. F. (1986). From Mary to Modern Woman: The Material Basis of Marianismo and Its Transformation in a Spanish Village; *American Ethnologist*, 13(1), 100-107
- García-Fernández, M. (2022). From National Catholicism to Romantic Love: The Politics of Love and Divorce in Franco's Spain. *Contemporary European History*, 31(1), 2-14
- García Grenzner, J. (2014). Indignant Feminisms in Spain: Placing the Body before Patriarchal and Capitalist Austerity. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 40(1), 59-69. <http://doi.org/10.1086/676978>
- Herzfeld, M. (2005). Practical Mediterraneanism: Excuses for Everything, from Epistemology to Eating. In W. H. Harris (Ed.), *Rethinking the Mediterranean* (pp. 45-63). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hutchison, R. (2010). Gendered Space. In *Encyclopedia of Urban Studies* (pp. 299-302).
- Kaplan, T. (1982). Female Consciousness and Collective Action: the case of Barcelona 1910-1918. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 7(3), 545-566.
- Karakaşoğlu, Y. (2017). *Comparing women's movements in different cities in Turkey*. Project Report, University of Bremen.
- Mikdashi, M. (2012). How not to study gender in the Middle East. In "Women living under Muslim Laws" <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/4775/how-not-to-study-gender-in-the-middle-east>
- Newcomb, R. (2006). Gendering the City, Gendering the Nation: Contesting Urban Space in Fex, Morocco. *City and Society*, 18(2), 288-311.
- Ortiz, A., Garcia-Ramon, M. D., & Prats, M. (2004). Women's use of public space and sense of place in the Raval (Barcelona). *GeoJournal*, 61(3), 219-227.
- Parella, S., Petroff, A., & Solé, C. (2013). The Upward Occupational Mobility of Immigrant Women in Spain. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 39(9), 1365-1382.
- Peile, C. G. (2017). Feminist birds of passage: Feminist and migrant becomings of Latin American women in Spain. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 25(2), 198-213.
- Pilcher, J., & Whelehan, I. (2016). *50 Key concepts in gender studies*. Sage.
- Platero, R., and Drager, E. H. (2015). *Two trans* teachers in Madrid: Interrogating trans* formative pedagogies*. *Transgender Studies Quarterly*, 2(3), 447-463
- Platero, R. (2007). Love and the state: Gay marriage in Spain. *Feminist Legal Studies*, 15(3), 329-340.
- Lucas Platero, R., & Ortega-Arjonilla, E. (2016). Building coalitions: The interconnections between feminism and trans* activism in Spain. *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, 20(1), 46-64.
- Radcliff, P. B. (2001). Imagining female citizenship in the "New Spain": gendering the democratic transition, 1975-1978. *Gender & History*, 13(3), 498-523.

- Stewart, C. (2015). *Honor and Shame*. *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences* (Second Edi, Vol. 11). Elsevier.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

- Carrasco, C., & Recio, A. (2001). Time, Work and Gender in Spain Labour Force Participation, Domestic Work and Education: A New Generation of Women. *Time & Society*, 10(2–3), 277–301.
- Bustelo, M. (2016). Three Decades of State Feminism and Gender Equality Policies in Multi-governed Spain. *Sex Roles*, 74(3–4), 107–120
- Charrad, M. (2011). Gender in the Middle East: Islam, State, Agency. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 37, 417–437.
- Ennaji, M. (2016). Women, Gender, and Politics in Morocco. *Social Sciences*, 5(4), 75.
- Fernea, E. W. (2010). *In search of Islamic feminism. One Woman's Global Journey* New York: Anchor.
- Göle, N. (2004). Visible women: Actresses in the public realm. *New Perspectives Quarterly*, 21(2), 12–13.
- Kandiyoti, D. (1991). Women, Islam and the state. *Middle East Report*, 173, 9–14.
- Kapchan, D. A. (1996). *Gender on the market: Moroccan women and the revoicing of tradition*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Moghadam, V. M. (2003). *Modernizing Women: Gender and Social Change in the Middle East*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Mohanty, C. (2003). Under Western Eyes" Revisited: Feminist Solidarity through Anticapitalist Struggles Author(s): *Signs*, 28(2), 499–535.
- Moreno Mínguez, A. (2017). Family and Gender Roles in Spain from a Comparative Perspective. *European Societies*, 12(1), 85–111.
- Nash, M. (1999). Un/contested identities: Motherhood, sex reform and the modernization of gender identity in early twentieth-century Spain. *Constructing Spanish womanhood: Female identity in modern Spain*, 25–49.
- Nash, M. (2004). The Rise of the Women's Movement in Nineteenth-Century Spain". *Women's Emancipation Movements in the Nineteenth Century. A European Perspective*. Eds. Sylvia Paletschek y Bianka Pietrow-Ennker. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 243–63.
- Nash, M. (2008). Challenging subordination: the women's movements. *Contributions to Science*, 4(1), 75–83.
- Sanchez, L., & Hall, C. S. (1999). Traditional values and democratic impulses: The gender division of labor in contemporary Spain. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 30(4), 659–685.
- Rebesandrata, T. (2014). Adding sex-and-gender dimensions to your research, *Science*, March, 23, 2014.
- Scott, J. W. (2007). Gender as a useful category of historical analysis. In *Culture, society and sexuality* (pp. 77–97). Routledge.
- Segura, I (1998). The feminist movement in Catalonia or one hundred years of feminism, *Catalonia*, (8), 26–27.
- Valiente, C. (2017). Male allies of women's movements: Women's organizing within the Catholic Church in Franco's Spain. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 62, 43–51.
- Verge, T. (2010). Gendering Representation in Spain: Opportunities and Limits of Gender Quotas. *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy*, 31(2), 166–190.
- Worthen, M. G., Lingardi, V., & Caristo, C. (2017). The roles of politics, feminism, and religion in attitudes toward LGBT individuals: A cross-cultural study of college students in the USA, Italy, and Spain. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 14(3), 241–258.

FILMOGRAPHY:

- *678* (2010) by Mohamed Diab
- *Solas* (1999) by Benito Zambrano
- *Te doy mis ojos* (2003) by Itziar Bollain