Why Morocco?

• Or, what one outstanding vacation can do for a person
Outline

I. Situating Morocco

II. Situating Morocco’s Ecole des Sciences de l’Information (ESI)
   I. My personal perceptions (that may be **WRONG**) of:
      • ESI facilities
      • ESI instructors
      • ESI students

III. Situating Librarians in Morocco
Situating the Kingdom of Morocco

- Constitutional monarchy
  - chief of state: King MOHAMMED VI (since 30 July 1999)
- Independence: March 2, 1956 (from France)
- Capital city: Rabat

Situating Morocco’s people

- **Religions**
  - Muslim 99% (official),
  - Christian 1%,
  - Jewish about 6,000

- **Population**
  - 32,649,130 (July 2013 est.) (like Canada)
  - Internet users: 13.213 million (2009)
  - Cell phones: 36.554 million (2011)

Situating Morocco’s people, cont.

• **Languages**
  - Arabic (official),
  - Berber languages (Tamazight (official), Tachelhit, Tarifit),
  - French (often the language of business, government, and diplomacy)

• **Literacy (definition: age 15 and over can read and write)**
  - total population: 67.1%
  - male: 76.1%
  - female: 57.6% (2011 est.)

• **Industries**
  - phosphate rock mining and processing, food processing, leather goods, textiles, construction, energy, tourism
Intersection of the old and the new?

• Some observations:
  – Poverty was very real
  – Women didn’t go out alone at night
  – No buildings had indoor heat, so we wore our coats indoors all winter
  – My house was very high end, but I only had hot water in the tub and my stovetop was three camping burners

CD peddler with mobile sound system in the market at Akkari (market in Rabat)
Situation Morocco’s Ecole des Sciences de l’Information (ESI)

Morocco’s Ecole des Sciences de l’Information (ESI)

- Began in 1974
  - Received funding from UNESCO
  - Co-sponsored by Pratt University in the US
- Is an « école » under the Haut Commissariat au Plan
  - Not attached to any of the local universities
  - The sister institution to
    - Centre National de Documentation (CND)
    - Institut National de Statistique et d’Economie Appliquée (INSEA)
- Only library and information science program in Morocco
  - Grant-funded project through Chapel Hill attempting to provide American-style LIS
Situating ESI
Madinat Al Irfane

Madinat Al Irfane

Feel free to post any event or news related to Madinat Al Irfane. Nothing will be considered as SPAM if it is related to Irfane.

21 octobre 2008, à 16:05 • Signaler un abus

Activité récente

Madinat Al Irfane a modifié les infos suivantes : Transports en commun et Adresse.
مدرسة علوم الإعلام
Making the grade at ESI

• Competitive entrance exam to the school
• Students go through the program in a cohort
  – 100 or so in the first year of undergrad, 80-90 by the end
• By year 3, “undergrad” students choose a track
  – Documentalist
  – Archivist
  – Librarian
• Also Masters level work (with thesis and defense)
• Making their own mark
  – Call all graduates « informatistes »
that walking in the medina. 3 days ago
managed to get up "early" all week long 3 days ago

follow me on Twitter

Blog Archive
▼ 2009 (29)
▼ April (3)
Choosing the ESI
director, a reprise
The SCI (formerly SCILS) Rabat
section, class of 2...
Gen X, social media,
and libraries
▼ March (6)
▼ February (9)
▼ January (11)
▼ 2008 (40)

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2008

Blogs in class

Today we talked about blogs in Technologies de l'information. I took a photo of the class at the beginning of the hour, and posted these photos, as well as a first draft of this post, at the end of class. Everyone seemed to agree that it's an easy process, and about eight students came up after class and asked for me to transfer the...
Practical aspects of instruction

- Borrowing from the French
  - Grading system out of 20
  - System of modules
    - Students pass or fail the whole year
    - *Conseil définitif* at the end to decide
  - Is a *school* in the French sense
    - Classes meet all day long (from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm or even later)
    - Professors dictate lectures, students record them as notes
    - Exams are held in February and June
Students and after-hours « ateliers »
Organise

La 9ème Édition du Forum
ESI - Entreprises 2009

Sous le thème

"Enterprise Information Management" : nouvel enjeu de performance pour l'entreprise

6 et 7 Mai 2009
Languages in play

• Instruction at ESI
  – Mostly French (technical aspects of topics)
  – Some explanations in Derija.

• Foreign language instruction for undergrads:
  – French
  – English
  – Spanish.

Where is Arabic?
My teaching

• Mix of
  – co-teaching lecture-hall classes with an experienced professor (who essentially taught the whole thing, à la française)
  – Me teaching sections for undergrad students in LIS
  – Me teaching Cataloging to Masters students
Instructors
The good and the different

• We may not have had textbooks, but we had a great internet connection.
• We also had access to a manned copy machine and students had access to an inexpensive copy shop.
The collaborative nature of time?

- None of the classrooms in ESI had clocks
- Students used their phones to tell time
- Proctoring exams was quite different in Morocco than in France:
  - Phones were used as time-telling devices
  - White-out was freely shared
  - Proctors didn’t patrol the rooms
  - Unlike the French university classes in languages and literature that I experienced, there were no oral exams to balance out the written exams.
Facilities
Salle des Conférences
New Director

El Hassan Lemallem - Directeur de l'ES I

Mur  Infos  Photos

El Hassan Lemallem...  Fans seulement

Activité récente

El Hassan Lemallem - Directeur de l'ES I a modifié les infos suivantes : Informations personnelles, Adresse et Adresse électronique.

El Hassan Lemallem - Directeur de l'ES I a modifié les infos suivantes : Date de naissance et Informations personnelles.

Devenir fan

El Hassan Lemallem, né le 12/07/1960 - Directeur de l'Ecole des Sciences de l'Information
The Library at ESI

- English-language and French-language materials
  - Mostly books (not journals)
  - Purchased through French jobbers
    - The dirham is a soft currency and it’s quite difficult to purchase internationally with it.
  - Very limited open hours
    - Only open while school was in session
Final thoughts about ESI

• Straight comparisons are often useless
  – ESI classrooms have more equipment than some Rutgers classrooms
  – Many of the strengths and weaknesses described at ESI are also evident in American schools

• ESI educates a group that often becomes part of the Moroccan elite
  – The school is head and shoulders above others in Africa
Libraries in Morocco

- 4 OCLC member libraries
  - ESI school library (Rabat)
  - Centre national de documentation (Rabat)
  - Library of the Fondation du Roi Abdul-Aziz Al Saoud pour les Etudes Islamique et les Sciences Humaines (Casablanca)
  - Al Akhawayn University In Ifrane (Ifrane)
Centre national de documentation (CND)

• The “sister” institution to ESI
• Charged with creating and then saving the nation’s government information and publications (grey literature)
• Both printing and digitization operations in place
• An additional library also in place
The CND
Library of the Fondation du Roi Abdul-Aziz Al Saoud pour les Etudes Islamique et les Sciences Humaines (Al Saoud)

- Located in Casablanca
- Serving a variety of scholars
- In many ways, a de facto national library
Al Akhawayn University In Ifrane (AUI)
Other notable library traditions

• Libraries supporting foreign teaching institutions
  – Institut français de Rabat

• The national library
  – Bibliothèque Nationale du Royaume du Maroc

• Religious libraries
  – A new twist: the médiathèque of the Fondation de la Mosquée Hassan II de Casablanca
Institut Français de Rabat
BNRM

• The Bibliothèque Nationale du Royaume du Maroc (BNRM) is the Moroccan national library
  – Ensures legal deposit for published books in Morocco
  – Restores and preserves manuscripts and religious documents
  – Is a library in its own right
Photos by Ray Schwartz
My view of the BNRM (from my balcony)
School’s bus brought students to the BNRM
The largest mosque in North Africa: Mosquée Hassan II
† LES RENDEZ-VOUS INCONTournABLES DES JEUNES

**Heure du conte**
Tous les mercredis et vendredis à 19h00
Espace « Heure du conte » / RDC
-[lire la suite]

**Atelier « Ewek dos sons »**
Tous les mercredis à 19h00
Espace Animation / Premier niveau
-[lire la suite]

**Club de lecture**
1 fois par mois à 19h00
Espace Animation / Premier niveau
-[lire la suite]

**Rencontres**
-[lire la suite]

** projections videos**
Tous les vendredis à 11h00
Espace Heure du conte / RDC
-[lire la suite]

ITALITÉ

La Médiathèque de la Fondation de la Mosquée Hassan II annonce à son jeune public le lancement du programme jeunesse pour le mois de juin 2013.
-[lire la suite]

Vous aimez la lecture ? Vous avez envie de partager vos coups de cœur avec d'autres lecteurs ? ... La Médiathèque de la Fondation de la Mosquée Hassan II a le plaisir de vous annoncer le lancement du « Club de lecture ».
-[lire la suite]

Venez découvrir les sélections du mois choisies par nos bibliothécaires jeunesse et adulte.
-[lire la suite]

Restez informés des activités jeunesse programmées pour cette semaine.
-[lire la suite]

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Some observations

- Libraries are book-based, and tend to imply old-fashionedness

- ESI students are “informatists” – they avoid the librarian stereotype, but then remain misunderstood as a profession

  – There was no active professional group in Morocco when I was there to promote the place of libraries in society
Libraries as we know them in the US:

- Are issue of a primarily Western tradition
- Were first introduced in Morocco by the French
  - Supported education
  - Were destined for use by the elite
- Embody a metaphor that is not part of the local tradition in Morocco
Information in context

A « Maroc qui bouge » recognizes the importance of information
- Information’s place in study and research (education)
- Information management and monitoring (business)
- Information literacy (general)

Libraries (*bibliothèques*) and information/documentation centers (*centres de documentation*) have a clear mandate
- And information professionals have an important place in the future of Morocco
Thank you. Merci. Shukrane.

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