

# MODERN MIDDLE EAST STUDIES (MMES)

**MMES 149a / ER&M 219a / HIST 219a / JDST 200a / RLST 148a, Jews and the World: From the Bible through Early Modern Times** Ivan Marcus

A broad introduction to the history of the Jews from biblical beginnings until the European Reformation and the Ottoman Empire. Focus on the formative period of classical rabbinic Judaism and on the symbiotic relationships among Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Jewish society and culture in its biblical, rabbinic, and medieval settings. Counts toward either European or non-Western distributional credit within the History major, upon application to the director of undergraduate studies. HU RP o Course cr

**MMES 156b / HEBR 161b / JDST 407b, Israeli Popular Music** Dina Roginsky

Changes in the development of popular music in Israel explored as representations of changing Israeli society and culture. The interaction of music and cultural identity; modern popular music and social conventions; songs of commemoration and heroism; popular representation of the Holocaust; Mizrahi and Arab music; feminism, sexuality, and gender; class and musical consumption; criticism, protest, and globalization. Conducted in Hebrew. Prerequisite: HEBR 140 or equivalent. L5, SO

\* **MMES 159a / HEBR 159a / JDST 409a, Conversational Hebrew: Israeli Media** Shiri Goren

An advanced Hebrew course for students interested in practicing and enhancing conversational skills. Focus on listening comprehension and on various forms of discussion, including practical situations, online interactions, and content analysis. Prerequisite: HEBR 140 or permission of instructor. L5 RP

\* **MMES 167b / HEBR 164b / JDST 417b, Biblical to Modern Hebrew for Reading Knowledge** Dina Roginsky

Instruction in the linguistic needs of students who have reading knowledge of Biblical Hebrew but cannot read or converse in Modern Hebrew. Concentration on reading comprehension of Modern Hebrew for research purposes, particularly scholarly texts tailored to students' areas of interest. Two years of Biblical or Modern Hebrew studies, or permission of the instructor. RP

\* **MMES 168a / HEBR 158a / JDST 305a, Contemporary Israeli Society in Film** Shiri Goren

Examination of major themes in Israeli society through film, with emphasis on language study. Topics include migration, gender and sexuality, Jewish/Israeli identity, and private and collective memory. Readings in Hebrew and English provide a sociohistorical background and bases for class discussion. Prerequisites: HEBR 140 or permission of instructor. L5, HU RP

**MMES 171a / NELC 132a, The Islamic Near East from Muhammad to the Mongol Invasion** Kevin van Bladel

The shaping of society and polity from the rise of Islam to the Mongol conquest of Baghdad in 1258. The origins of Islamic society; conquests and social and political assimilation under the Umayyads and Abbasids; the changing nature of political

legitimacy and sovereignty under the caliphate; provincial decentralization and new sources of social and religious power. HU o Course cr

\* **MMES 172a / ARBC 178a, Yemeni Literature & Culture** Muhammad Aziz

This seminar introduces students to a variety of Yemeni novels, short stories, poetry, history, movies, songs, and culture. We delve deeply into the major Arabic literary styles, in their forms of poetry, prose, movies, and series. A general sense of the transitional period between past and present in the modern era. Students are expected to read the material at home and prepare for class discussions. Students grasp some sense of Yemeni history as well as literature in general. Prerequisite: ARBC 151. L5

\* **MMES 177b / ARBC 171b / ARBC 527b, Hunger in Eden: Mohamed Choukri's Narratives** Jonas Elbousty

A survey of the work of Mohamed Choukri, one of the most prominent Moroccan, if not Arab, writers to have shaped the modern Arabic literary canon. His influence has been instrumental in forming a generation of writers and enthusiastic readers, who fervently cherish his narratives. Students dive deeply into Choukri's narratives, analyzing them with an eye toward their cultural and political importance. The class looks to Choukri's amazing life story to reveal the roots of his passion for writing and explores the culture of the time and places about which he writes. Through his narratives, students better understand the political environment within which they were composed and the importance of Choukri's work to today's reader regarding current debates over Arab identity. This class surveys the entirety of his work, contextualizing within the sphere of Arabic novelistic tradition. Prerequisite: ARBC 151 or completion of the placement test. L5, HU

**MMES 215a / ENGL 191a / HUMS 206a / LITR 318a / NELC 201a, The Arabian Nights, Then and Now** Robyn Creswell

The medieval cycle of tales known as *The Arabian Nights* or *The Thousand and One Nights* is among the most beloved and influential story collections of world literature. It is an "ocean" of tales that has much to teach us about how stories work, whether they must come to an end, and our apparently bottomless desire to hear them. We will spend the semester in the company of genies and princes, thieves and slaves, mass murderers, detectives, and orientalists. We will also explore the ways in which the stories of the *Nights* have been adapted by later writers, such as Djebbar, Stevenson, Conan Doyle, and Mahfouz, as well as by filmmakers such Pasolini and – of course – Walt Disney. The course is intended to introduce students to the major tales of the *Nights* and to the classical Arabic literary tradition more broadly. It also seeks to develop their skills of close reading and analysis, particularly through a consideration of literary and filmic adaptations. HU

\* **MMES 300a / HIST 398Ja / RSEE 329a / RUSS 329a, Introduction to Modern Central Asia** Claire Roosien

An overview of the history of modern Central Asia – modern-day Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China. This course shows Central Asia to be a pivotal participant in some of the major global issues of the 20th and 21st centuries, from environmental degradation and Cold War, to women's emancipation and postcolonial nation-building, to religion and the rise of mass society. It also includes an overview of the region's longer history, of the conquests by the Russian and Chinese empires, the rise of Islamic modernist reform movements, the

Bolshevik victory, World War II, the *perestroika*, and the projects of post-Soviet nation-building. Readings in history are supplemented by such primary sources as novels and poetry, films and songs, government decrees, travelogues, courtly chronicles, and the periodical press. All readings and discussions in English. HU

\* **MMES 342a / HIST 232Ja / HUMS 443a / JDST 270a / RLST 201a, Medieval Jews, Christians, and Muslims In Conversation** Ivan Marcus

How members of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim communities thought of and interacted with members of the other two cultures during the Middle Ages. Cultural grids and expectations each imposed on the other; the rhetoric of otherness—humans or devils, purity or impurity, and animal imagery; and models of religious community and power in dealing with the other when confronted with cultural differences. Counts toward either European or Middle Eastern distributional credit within the History major, upon application to the director of undergraduate studies. WR, HU RP

\* **MMES 389a / AFST 389a / ER&M 417a, Comparative settler geographies** Leslie Gross-Wyrtzen

This advanced undergraduate seminar delves into theories and comparative studies of recent and contemporary settler colonial geographies to ask the following questions: 1) What are the key characteristics of settler colonial geographies and (how) are they distinct from colonial geographies? 2) What are the intellectual and political stakes of applying settler colonialism as an analytical lens? 3) How does comparative analysis deepen or disrupt concepts such as sovereignty, race, and I/indigeneity, especially in a majority world context? 4) How do Indigenous or and/or occupied peoples contest settler cartographies through placemaking and other strategies? In this seminar, we read key theoretical texts in colonial, postcolonial, settler, Native, and Indigenous studies with an emphasis on global and Southern intervention. Alongside theoretical texts, we focus on four case studies that, to a greater or lesser degree, push the boundaries of settler colonial definitions and concepts: South Africa, Morocco/Western Sahara, Israel/Palestine, and southwestern China and Tibet. Where possible, we invite scholars with expertise in the cases to speak to the class. SO

\* **MMES 430a / ANTH 441a / WGSS 430a, Gender and Citizenship in the Middle East** Eda Pepi

This seminar explores the complex interplay between gender, sexuality, and citizenship in the Middle East and North Africa. We examine how they are both shaped by and shape experiences of nationality, migration, and statelessness. Highlighting how gender and sexual minorities, and the gendered regulation of life, more broadly, both animate and contest colonial legacies tied to a racialized notion of “modernity.” Through ethnography, history, and literature, students confront a political economy of intimacies that continuously reshape what it means to be or not to be a citizen. Our approach extends beyond borders and laws to include the everyday acts of citizenship that rework race, religion, and ethnicity across transnational fronts. We discuss how people navigate their lives in the everyday, from the ordinary poetry of identity and belonging to the spectacular drama of war and conflict. Our goal is to challenge orientalist legacies that dismiss theoretical insights from scholarship on and from this region by labeling it as focused on exceptional cases instead of addressing “universal” issues. Instead, we take seriously that the specific historical and social contexts of the Middle East and North Africa reveal how connections based on gender and sexuality within and across

families and social classes are deeply entwined with racial narratives of state authority and political sovereignty on a global scale. so

\* **MMES 447b / ANTH 447b, Culture and Politics in the Contemporary Middle East**

Marcia Inhorn

In the decade since the 2011 Arab uprisings, the challenges facing the Middle East have been profound. They include various forms of war and displacement, political and economic instability, social upheaval and societal rupture. Indeed, by 2015, millions of Middle Eastern men, women, and children had been driven from their homes by conflict. This advanced undergraduate/graduate seminar is designed to explore some of the most important contemporary cultural and political shifts that are shaping life across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). The course aims for broad regional coverage, with particular focus on a variety of important Middle Eastern nation-states (e.g., Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Iran). Students should emerge from the course with a keener sense of Middle Eastern regional histories and contemporary social issues, as described by a new generation of leading scholars in the field of Middle East Studies and particularly Middle East Anthropology. This course is thus designed for students in Anthropology, Modern Middle East Studies, and Global Affairs, but also from the disciplines of Sociology, History, Political Science, Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, and the like. The course is also intended for students in the CMES Graduate Certificate Program. so

\* **MMES 456a / HSAR 456a, Art and Politics in the Modern Middle East** Kishwar

Rizvi

Political ideologies have either unified the modern Middle East, such as Pan-Arabism of the 1960s and Islamism of the 1980s, or caused deep ruptures, such as Zionism and sectarianism. Examination of the art and architectural productions that have gone hand-in-hand with these political developments from the nineteenth century until present day. Poetic, visual, and urban interventions document the profound changes that have defined the countries of this region, while connecting them to political movements throughout the world. WR, HU