

GEOG 447/ASIAN 447/WMST 447: GENDER IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Dr. Banu Gökariksel

Office: Carolina 307

Location: CH204, TR 11:00-12:15



What role did women play in the uprisings across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)? How did protestors use and transform public and private spaces? Why was women's participation in these political events surprising to western observers? These are some of the questions that we will examine in this course.

Gender relations and spaces are central to historical and contemporary cultural and political formations in the modern MENA. Our knowledge and imaginations of this region are also mediated through gendered representations. In this course we will examine relationships of gender and geography in the modern Middle East. We will question how the representations of the Middle East are gendered and analyze such icons as the “veiled women” and “terrorist men.” After critically analyzing the kinds of political projects such iconic images serve, we will investigate the ways in which colonialism, as well as anti-colonial nationalist and Islamist movements, has created (or attempted to create) new kinds of feminine and masculine identities and spaces. We will end the semester with a study of the recent wave of popular uprisings across the region. The topics we will discuss include colonialism, national identity, Islamic revival, militarization, violence, the “Arab Spring” and Turkey's Gezi Park protests. Through the lens of gender, we will develop a new understanding of Middle Eastern geography and politics.

There is no prerequisite for this class. Students' active participation will be key to productive class discussions. Student assignments include facilitating class discussions. There will be two essay/short answer exams.