MODERN MIDDLE EAST STUDIES (MMES)

MMES 126a / ARCH 271a / HSAR 266a / SAST 266a, Introduction to Islamic Architecture
   Kishwar Rizvi
Introduction to the architecture of the Islamic world from the seventh century to the present, encompassing regions of Asia, North Africa, and Europe. A variety of sources and media, from architecture to urbanism and from travelogues to paintings, are used in an attempt to understand the diversity and richness of Islamic architecture. Besides traditional media, the class will make use of virtual tours of architectural monuments as well as artifacts at the Yale University Art Gallery, accessed virtually. HU

MMES 148b / HIST 345b / JDST 265b / RLST 202b, Jews in Muslim Lands from the Seventh to the Sixteenth Centuries
   Ivan Marcus
Jewish culture and society in Muslim lands from the time of the Prophet Muhammad to that of Suleiman the Magnificent. Topics include Islam and Judaism; Jerusalem as a holy site; rabbinic leadership and literature in Baghdad; Jewish courtiers, poets, and philosophers in Muslim Spain; and the Jews in the Ottoman Empire. HU

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

* MMES 150a / HEBR 150a / JDST 213a, Advanced Modern Hebrew: Daily Life in Israel
   Orit Yeret
An examination of major controversies in Israeli society. Readings include newspaper editorials and academic articles as well as documentary and historical material. Advanced grammatical structures are introduced and practiced. Conducted in Hebrew. Prerequisite: HEBR 140 or equivalent. L5 RP

* MMES 157b / JDST 306b / NELC 157b, Israeli Narratives
   Shiri Goren
This course looks at contemporary representations of social, political, and domestic space in Israel through cultural production such as literature, visual work, and art. It focuses on close reading of major Israeli works in translation with attention to how their themes and forms relate to the Israeli condition. Reading and viewing include: Amos Oz’s major novel A Tale of Love and Darkness, Anne Frank: The Graphic Diary, Maya Arad’s novella “The Hebrew Teacher,” TV show Arab Labor and writing by Yehudah Amichai, Etgar Keret, and Sayed Kashua, among others. We discuss topics and theories of personal and collective identity formation, war and peace, ethnicity and race, migration, nationalism, and gender. No knowledge of Hebrew required. WR, HU TR
* MMES 162a / HEBR 169a / JDST 403a / LING 165a, Languages in Dialogue: Hebrew and Arabic  Dina Roginsky

Hebrew and Arabic are closely related as sister Semitic languages. They have a great degree of grammatical, morphological, and lexical similarity. Historically, Arabic and Hebrew have been in cultural contact in various places and in different aspects. This advanced Hebrew language class explores linguistic similarities between the two languages as well as cultural comparisons of the communities, built on mutual respect. Students benefit from a section in which they gain a basic exposure to Arabic, based on its linguistic similarity to Hebrew. Conducted in Hebrew. Prerequisite: HEBR 140, or placement test, or permission of the instructor.  L5, HU TR RP

* MMES 166a / HEBR 167a / JDST 402a, Creative Writing in Hebrew  Orit Yeret

An advanced language course with focus on creative writing and self-expression. Students develop knowledge of modern Hebrew, while elevating writing skills based on special interests, and in various genres, including short prose, poetry, dramatic writing, and journalism. Students engage with diverse authentic materials, with emphasis on Israeli literature, culture, and society. Prerequisite: HEBR 140 or placement exam.  L5 RP

* MMES 170a / ARBC 168a, Modern Arab Writers  Muhammad Aziz

Study of novels and poetry written by modern Arab writers. Such writers include Taha Hussein, Zaid Dammaj, Huda Barakat, Nizar Qabbani, al-Maqalih, and Mostaghanimi. Prerequisite: ARBC 151 or permission of instructor.  L5

* MMES 179a / PERS 180a, Reading Persian Texts  Farkhondeh Shayesteh

Students are presented with opportunities to enhance their knowledge of Persian, with primary focus on reading skills. The course involves reading, analyzing, and in-class discussion of assigned materials in the target language. Authentic reading excerpts from history, art, philosophy, and literature, as well as art history materials from medieval to modern times are used. This course is taught in Persian. Prerequisite: L4 and instructor permission.  L5

* MMES 216b / HEBR 156b / JDST 405b, Dynamics of Israeli Culture  Shiri Goren

Controversies in Israeli society as revealed in novels, films, poetry, newspaper articles, Web sites, art, advertisements, and television shows. Themes include migration and the construction of the Sabra character; ethnicity and race; the emergence of the Mizrahi voice; women in Israeli society; private and collective memory; the minority discourse of the Druze and Russian Jews; and Israeli masculinity and queer culture. Conducted in Hebrew. Papers may be written in English or Hebrew. Prerequisite: HEBR 140 or permission of instructor.  L5, HU RP

* MMES 237a / LITR 433a, Politics and Literature in Modern Iran and Afghanistan  Bezhan Pazhohan

This course traces the emergence of modern Persian literature in Iran and Afghanistan, introducing the contemporary poets and writers of fiction who created this new literary tradition in spite of political, social, state, and religious constraints. Our readings include Iranian novelists working under censorship, Afghan memoirists describing their experience in a warzone, and even contemporary writers living in exile in the US or Europe. Major writers include Mohammad Ali Jamalzadeh, Sadegh Hedayat, Simin Behbahani, Forough Farrokhzad, Homeira Qaderi (who will visit the class), and Khaled Hosseini.  HU
MMES 290a / PLSC 435a / RLST 290a, Islam Today: Modern Islamic Thought  Frank Griffel
Introduction to Islamic thought after 1800, including some historical background. The development of Islamic modernism in the 19th century and of Islamic fundamentalism in the 20th. Islam as a reactive force to Western colonialism; the ideals of Shari’ā, Islam as a political ideology, and the emergence of Jihad movements. Different kinds of Salafism, Islamic liberalism, and feminism as well as the revival of Islam’s intellectual heritage. HU 0 Course cr

* MMES 317a / FILM 317a / LITR 370a, Comparative New Wave Studies  Fatima Naqvi
From the late 1950s, demands for “new cinemas” were being raised in different parts of the world. What was soon to come forth changed the practice and understanding of film until our time. While open to diverse intellectual approaches, this course investigates the emergence of various “new wave cinemas” by placing them not only in their national contexts but also within a global frame. Our comparative critical approach focuses on the cinematic, with a constant sideway gaze towards the visual and literary, modernism of Brazil (Cinema Novo), France (Nouvelle Vague with an eye for Nouveau Roman), Iran (Moj-e Now, often juxtaposed and analyzed with the “New Poetry” ), and Yugoslavia (The Black Wave). Authoritative historiographies of these new wave cinemas have repeatedly underappreciated documentary films, often placing them into the evolutionary narrative of a “national cinema” or that of an auteur. This course, in reverse, foregrounds the transnational and the nonfiction. The documentaries produced in the formative years, the moment of emergence, of these new waves are established as a kind of “pre-history” that impacted how these cinematic modernisms developed in time. As the class moves forward, two major sub-themes will emerge: the body and the city. We consider these questions: Do films brought under the designation new wave have a different relationship to the materiality of the profilmic world? In what ways the bodies and urban environments they film affect them? Can one speak positively of a global new wave style? And, if the answer to that question is yes, what were the conditions of its border crossings? WR, HU

* MMES 321a / ANTH 321a / SOCY 318a / WGSS 321a, Middle East Gender Studies  Marcia Inhorn
The lives of women and men in the contemporary Middle East explored through a series of anthropological studies and documentary films. Competing discourses surrounding gender and politics, and the relation of such discourse to actual practices of everyday life. Feminism, Islamism, activism, and human rights; fertility, family, marriage, and sexuality. SO

* 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