



## ***Teach Mob – Visiting Professors Academic year 2017/2018***

2 <sup>nd</sup> Term
<b>COURSE TITLE</b> Politics and Religion in the Middle East and North Africa
<b>Scientific area</b> Political Sociology
<b>Department of Cultures, Politics and Society</b>
<b>Language used to teach</b> English or French
<b>Teaching Commitment: 54 hours</b>
<b>Course summary</b> The course analyses the historical and current relationship between politics and religion in the MENA Region. While de-colonisation and independence seemed to set the MENA on the path of secular modernization, more cent decades have seen the revival of the religion in the public sphere and in the political arena. Islam, the dominant religion in the region, has become central in the understanding of political and social phenomena in the MENA: Islamist groups of all sorts have become the protagonists of Middle East politics, highlighting the relevance of political Islam and its impact on societies, politics and the regional balance of power. The politicization of Islam, both before and after the Arab uprisings, has emerged as a crucial component to understand regional dynamics of democratization and authoritarian resilience. At the same time religion, and particularly Islam, has been often adopted as an interpretative key in order to oversimplify the understanding of political dynamics in the region and of their societies, too often explained through the narrative of wars of religions or the sectarianism. The course will explore the relationship between religion and politics through an analysis of regimes in the Arab world especially after the Arab Spring: democratization studies versus authoritarian resilience. In this context, there will be an in-depth analysis of the main beneficiary of the changes taking place: political Islam and the movements associated with it. Finally, the course will deal with the international politics of the region.
<b>Learning objectives</b> The course aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Introduce students to a general understanding of Islamism, its birth, its definitions, its basic theories and its transformations.</li><li>- Make students aware of the complexity and plurality of Islamism.</li><li>- Provide students with the analytical tools required to analyse critically the theoretical and methodological approaches employed to study Islamism.</li></ul>
<b>Other activities besides the course: i.e. seminars and conferences addressed to PhD students and research fellows, dissemination conferences</b> Considering the great interest on the issues that will be developed during the course, public lectures and seminars will be organized both in the frame of the PhD programme in 'Social and Political Change' promoted by the Department of Culture, Politics and Society of the University of Torino

(in partnership with the University of Florence), and in the context of other relevant training and dissemination activities organized by the Department in partnership with external Institutions (T.wai- Turin World Affair Institute, CSA-Centro Studi Africani).

For example the cycle 'Spring seminars' (<http://www.medit.eu/?q=content/primavera-mediterranea-secondo-ciclo-di-incontri> ) and the TOMideast Summer School (<http://www.to-asia.it/to-mideast/> ).

### **Visiting Professor Profile**

The ideal candidate is an Anglophone or Francophone scholar, conducting original and internationally acknowledged research on religious phenomena in the MENA region from a sociological, political science or historical perspective. The ideal candidate would have a solid network of scientific cooperation in the MENA region, documented teaching experience, and the necessary social skills for being fully involved in the scientific activities of the Department. A background in political sociology is preferable, but applications from scholars with a broader Middle Eastern Studies background are also welcome.

### **Contact person at the Department**

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