



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI TORINO

ID

VP9\_DIP\_CPS

## Visiting Professor Program Academic year 2022/2023

**TEACHING COMMITMENT:** 54 hours

### COURSE TITLE

**Religion and Politics in the Middle East and North Africa**

### TEACHING PERIOD

1st term

### SCIENTIFIC AREA

Sociology

### LANGUAGE USED TO TEACH

English

### COURSE SUMMARY

The course aims to analyze the changing relationship between politics and religion in the MENA Region (Middle East and North Africa). During the last 20 years, this region has been invested by a revival of the religion in the public sphere, in the political arena, and more broadly in society. Islam has been particularly concerned by this tendency, and its politicization has emerged as a crucial component to understand regional evolution. Different versions of political Islam, more or less militant, and more or less radical, have played a relevant impact on cultures and societies, on politics and on regional balance of power. The role accorded to religion, particularly Islam, in the definition of interpretative paradigms – such as the clash of civilization, the war of religions, or sectarianism – has led to oversimplify the understanding of social, cultural, and political dynamics in the region. The course will focus on religion as a space of action and of sense, for addressing three aspects of the relationships between politics and religion. First, the focus on the political use of religion will lead to develop a broader reflection on this phenomenon and its impacts on societies and politics. Second, the plurality of political Islam, its faceted expressions, and its historical transformations, will be particularly tackled. Third, new expressions of religion in the field of healing cults, and of ceremony will be closely taken into consideration.

## **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

From a broader perspective the course will provide students with theoretical, methodological and analytical skills required to better understand and analyze the crucial relationships among politics and religion, and their impact over societies. At another level the course, through the focus on political Islam in the MENA region, will provide students the needed knowledge to better understand socio-political phenomena of the region. Moreover, the course will reinforce the interdisciplinary background required both by the Erasmus Partner Countries students from Lebanon and Morocco, and by the students of two Master Degree programs: International Relations (MENA Politics profile) and Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology.

## **TUTORSHIP ACTIVITIES**

N/A

## **LAB ACTIVITIES**

N/A

## **OTHER ACTIVITIES BESIDES THE COURSE**

Public lectures and seminars will be organized in the frame of the PhD programs in 'Social and Political Change' and in 'Anthropology', both promoted by the Department of Culture, Politics and Society of the University of Torino (respectively in partnership with the University of Florence and with the Department of Psychology). Extracurricular activities will be organized for valorizing the impact of the Visiting professor's research agenda over the scientific life of the Department CPS, such as a welcome seminar supported by the CRETAM (Centre for Research in Ethnopsychiatry and Anthropology of Migration), as well as a public seminar in the frame of the PASSI project. The VP will be also involved in relevant training and dissemination activities in the frame of a fall-cycle of seminars about Mediterranean affairs, supported by the Department CPS, the TOMideast Summer School, in partnership with external Institutions (i.e. CSA-Centro Studi Africani, Frantz Fanon Center).

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## **VISITING PROFESSOR PROFILE**

The ideal candidate is an Anglophone scholar, conducting an original and internationally acknowledged research activity on religious phenomena in the MENA region from sociological, anthropological, or political science perspective. The ideal candidate has a solid network of scientific cooperation in the MENA region, a documented teaching experience, a solid fieldwork activity, and the necessary social skills for being fully involved into the scientific activities of the Department. An interdisciplinary background and scientific production is preferential.

## **CONTACT PERSON AT THE DEPARTMENT**

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