Islam and politics in MENA: ideology, activism and change

Instructor: Lurdes Vidal (IEMED-IBEI)
Date: June 19 - 21
Time: 5.00 pm - 7.00 pm
Room: 24.133 Fred Halliday - Mercè Rodoreda Building 24 (Floor 1)

This course examines the interaction between Islam and politics from different perspectives and disciplines, engaging with the key debates about the nature, evolution and future of political Islam. Students will be introduced to various approaches to the study of Islam and politics and to the diversity and complexity of a multi-faceted phenomenon that has been central to the socio-political life of the MENA region. The role of Islam in regard to the state, political ideology, popular activism and political violence will be analysed in the framework of contemporary challenges. Therefore, major strands of Islamist movements, their historical background, similarities and differences and likely future directions will be addressed. Democracy, gender equality, religious freedom, rule of law, governance and freedom of expression will be cross-cutting axis of analysis that will help students connect the various phenomena that intersect in a region amid change. This course will strengthen students’ knowledge and analytical tools to understand the diverse ways in which Islam has operated in the political scenario of the region.

Session 1. Islamic polity: the link between religion and politics in Islam

Required reading:

Session 2. Islamist movements: origins, evolution, currents, narratives and relation with other political actors. Islamism, revolution and counter-revolution?

Required reading:


Session 3. The geopolitics of jihadism or jihadism geopolitics?

Required reading:


Other suggested readings for the course:


