

## **Middle East after the Arab Spring: From the Arab uprisings to ISIS**

Six years after massive mobilisation against authoritarianism the Arab World is in a still deeper crisis. The course offers a series of reading and debates about the background of the last Arab decade, following a series of questions: How and why did the Arab mobilisation fail? What social and political transformations did the Arab Spring bring? What explains the return of authoritarianism and the spread of violence? Are these outcomes result of the Arab Spring or do they have deeper causes? What is the regional, social and political context of the present crisis?

The course will follow a multidimensional and thematic questioning. Its aim will not be to give definitive answers, but to allow participants to increase their orientation in the various dimensions of Middle Eastern crises: governance challenges, geopolitical changes, political Islam and its transformations, sectarianism, political aims of terrorism, gender roles, secularism, political economy of oil, the role of the military in the Middle East etc.

The purpose of the course is to identify questions and work together towards possible answers.

There will be two readings (an article and a book chapter) for every session available for download in Moodle.

During the course, there will be short assignments every month: participants are expected to read one full book and write a short summary/review; present an article or a topic during class; write a short essay elaborating a given question; and write a final essay of one's choosing.

### **Course requirements:**

- Active participation (at least 75%, or 9 out of 12 sessions)

There will not be a control but almost every week I will be expecting participants either to hand in a review, essay or at least essay outlines. Consequently, absence will get noticed and can be excused in advance for a reason)

- Write a short book review (2 pages) due 2. 11.

- First mid-term essay (5 pages) essay due 30. 11.

- Final essay (8-10 pages) due 4. 1.

### **Credit structure**

15 % Participation and attendance

10 % Book review (2-3 pages) due 2. 11.

25 % Midterm short paper (5 pages) due 30. 11.

50 % Final paper (8-12 pages) due 30. 1.

### **Course outline**

1. Introduction
2. Context: Regional state system from 1918 to 2011

#### **From Arab Spring...**

3. Arab Spring: revolutions and counterrevolutions
4. Democratisation processes: Egypt vs. Tunisia
5. Reform processes in the monarchies

### **...to the Arab Winter**

6. Authoritarianism and militaries
7. The sources of ISIS and extremist jihadism
8. New regional geopolitics (oil, demography, regional politics)

### **Lasting changes**

9. Transformations of islamism
10. Islamic authority and politics
11. Human rights, women rights and civic activism
  
12. Conclusion and presentation of essays

### **Readings**

Council on Foreign Relations. 2011. *The New Arab Revolt: What Happened, What It Means, and What Comes Next*. New York: Council on Foreign Relations/Foreign Affairs. (Free e-book)

Fred Halliday. *The Middle East in International Relations: Power, Politics and Ideology*, Cambridge University Press 2005

Marc Lynch (ed.) *The Arab Uprisings Explained. New Contentious Politics in the Middle East*. Columbia University Press. 2014

Marc Lynch, *The New Arab Wars. Uprisings and Anarchy in the Middle East*. 2016

Roger Owen, "The End of Empires: The Emergence of the Modern Middle Eastern States." in *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East*

Edward Said. *Orientalism* New York: Vintage, 1987