

Professor Michael Chamberlain
History 600 – Seminar 3
Shiism in Iraq / Islam in Politics- 19th & 20th Centuries

What accounts for the increasing salience of Islam in the politics and social relations of the Middle East? This seminar will examine several scholarly debates on the question of Islam and politics. Rather than focus in depth on specific cases – though you will learn more about some than about others - we will discuss the most influential recent scholarship on major problems in the field. The seminar will begin with an examination of attempts to explain Islamist politics in a global context. We will move on to discuss the historical development of Islamist reform movements in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the Islamic revolution in Iran, the relationship of Islamist political movements to nationalism, and recent attempts to understand the resurgence of Islamist politics and identities. The final part of the course will be devoted to a discussion of debates on the relationship of Islamist politics to gender, and on how Islamist politics can play out in small communities. Prerequisites: at least one course in Middle Eastern history. Requirements: that you devote yourself to this seminar and think of nothing else.