

The Middle East and Islamic Studies Program Presents Its
Annual Keynote Lecture

THE POLITICAL THEOLOGY OF ISIS

by Ahmad Dallal



Just a few years after their beginning, it now appears that the bold hope engendered by the Arab uprisings is being replaced by fear of the seeming endless slide towards utter devastation and senseless cruelty. More than any other actor on the contemporary Arab political landscape, ISIS embodies this fear. In a very real sense, ISIS usurped the uprisings' revolutionary project and aborted many of its promises and achievements; and in this sense, it acts as a counter-revolutionary force. But ISIS also appears to be one of the most potent forces poised to undermine the former order that triggered the uprisings. ISIS entirely rejects the current order and its beneficiaries, and as such it claims to carry the revolutionary project to its conclusion. By examining the political theology of ISIS, this lecture aims to understand the challenge posed by this phenomenon to the struggle for justice in the contemporary Arab and Muslim Worlds.

Thursday | 12 May | 5 PM
Merten Hall 1202 | GMU
Reception to follow the lecture
RSVP: MEIS@gmu.edu

Ahmad Dallal is Professor of History in the Department of History and Archeology at the American University of Beirut (AUB). He previously served as Provost of AUB and held positions at Smith College, Yale University, Stanford University, and Georgetown University. His research focuses on the intellectual, historical, and institutional contexts of the disciplines of learning in classical Islamic societies, the history of Islamic science, and pre-modern and modern Islamic thought and movements.

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