





Dr. Julius DihstelhoffAcademic Coordinator



Prof. Khaled Kchir



Prof. Rachid Ouaissa

Director

Director

Ladies and Gentlemen.

We are pleased to announce that the Merian Centre for Advanced Studies in the Maghreb (MECAM), established in 2020, has been able, through its Fellows Programme, to strengthen international, intergenerational and interdisciplinary research exchanges on the Maghreb and the wider MENA region. MECAM has served as a platform for academic debates on the causes, forms and transformations of cultural, economic, political and social disparities in Tunisia, the Maghreb and across regional borders. This was done in the challenging context of the Covid pandemic.

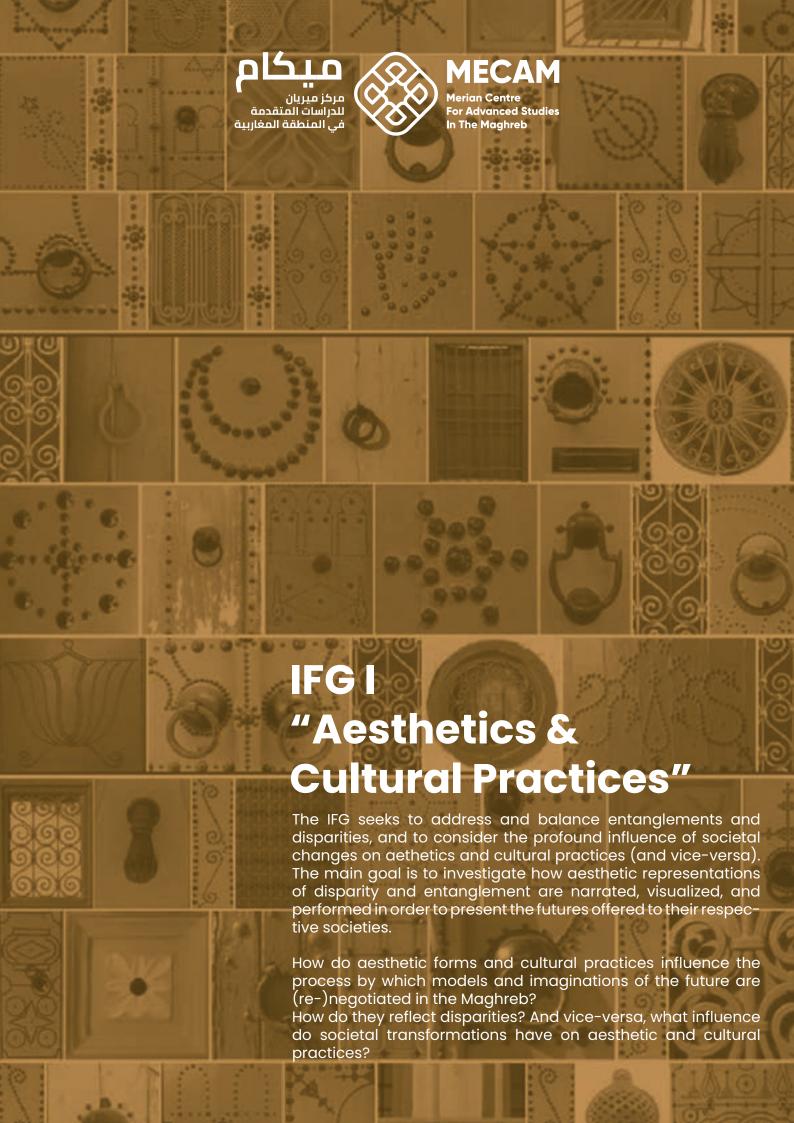
Over the last two years, the MECAM Fellows Programme has been achieved through the constitution of Interdisciplinary Fellowship Groups (IFGs), i.e. interdisciplinary and international research groups composed of five to six researchers at different stages of their academic career. The MECAM Fellows worked on their individual projects for four months virtually and/or at the MECAM site in Tunis. They presented the results of their research in specific events (MECAM Spectrum & MECAM Seasonal Talks) and in joint publications.

Each of the five MECAM IFGs was accompanied by both an IFG coordinator and by so-called Principal Investigators (PIs). The coordinators were responsible for the organisational, logistical and programmatic preparation, on-site coordination and follow-up of each phase of the fellowship. The PIs were composed of experts from the coordinating institution of each IFG in Germany as well as from the Maghreb partners of the MECAM consortium. The PIs ensured the planning of the IFG's programmatic and cooperation activities, as well as the implementation and reporting on the fellowship phase.

We would like to thank all the contributors and participants of the MECAM Fellows Programme - you have helped to make MECAM an important platform for academic debate in Tunis, the Maghreb and Germany.

Julius Dihstelhoff & Rachid Ouaissa & Khaled Kchir





Coordinator

Dr. Felix Lang

(Postdoc, Philipps-Universität Marburg/Germany)

Felix Lang specialises in the Cultural Sociology of the Middle East and North Africa, with a focus on Lebanon and Syria. In 2014 he completed a PhD in Arabic Literature and Culture at the University of Marburg. His main research interests lie with theoretical and methodological approaches to spaces of cultural production and knowledge production (in particular Bourdieu's concept of the field and Actor-Network Theory), practice theory, modern Arabic Literature, trauma and memory studies, as well as music and food studies. Between 2014 and 2020 he was the coordinator of the research group Figures of Thought|Turning Points at the department of Arabic Studies at the University of Marburg.

His publications include the monograph The Lebanese Post-Civil War Novel: Memory, Trauma, and Capital (Palgrave 2016), the edited volume Culture and Crisis in the Arab World: Production and Practice in Conflict (with Richard Jacquemond, Tauris 2019), "Bourdieu, Latour and Rasha Abbas. The Uses of Actor-Network Theory for Studying the Field(s) of Cultural Production in the Middle East and North Africa" (in Cultural Sociology, 13(4) 2019).

Currently, he is working on a project on socio-cultural knowledge in food systems in the Middle East which aims to integrate the analysis of 'high' cultural representations of food in the arts and literature in a wider conceptual framework for the analysis of food production and consumption.



Cluster Pis



Prof. Olaf Müller

(Professor, French and Italian Literature and Culture, Marburg/Germany)



Prof. Malte Hagener

(Professor, Media and Film Studies, Marburg/Germany)



Prof. Fiederike Pannewick

(Professor, Arabic Literature and Culture, Marburg/Germany)



Prof. Samia Kassab-Charfi

(Professor, French and Francophone Literatures, Tunis/Germany)



Dr. Rasha Chatta

(Postdoc, Europa im Nahen Osten – Der Nahe Osten in Europa (EUME), Freie Universität Berlin/ Germany)

Rasha Chatta is a comparative literary and cultural studies scholar and has held teaching positions at SOAS, Bard College Berlin, and NYU London. She received her PhD in Cultural, Literary, and Postcolonial Studies from SOAS, University of London. She has published essays on migrant literary theory, Arab diasporic literatures and cultures, and Arab comics in venues such as The Sage Handbook of Media and Migration, Diasporic Constructions of Home and Belonging, the Literary Encyclopedia amongst others. Her research interests include visual aesthetics and memory, approaches to world literature, Arab migrant and diasporic literatures, 'alternative' archives, and war literature with a focus on Lebanon and Syria. She is currently completing her first monograph on Arab comics and migration. Rasha was a EUME Fellow between 2017 and 2021, and has held affiliations with the Freie Universität Berlin and the American University of Beirut. She serves as Chair of the MLA's Global Arab and Arab American Forum.

Project Aesthetics & Cultural Practice

Visual (Hi)stories of Diaspora: MENA Graphic Narratives Present and Future

This project proposes a pioneering study of contemporary Arab Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) migration to Europe as represented in a corpus of 150 hitherto unexamined graphic narratives. Arab graphic narratives have powerfully developed into an aesthetically and culturally significant literary and artistic practice since 2010 in the wake of the Arab Spring, both in the MENA and in diaspora. Envisaged as the first extensive study to address migration in graphic narratives, 'Visual (Hi)stories of Diaspora' builds an interdisciplinary and theoretically informed model through which to examine works that depict personal stories situated at the intersection of history and (auto)biography: the subjective representations and experiences of migration are linked to historical events and subsequent diasporic dispersions, while pointing to diverse negotiations and imaginations of alternative futures sketched through a variety of styles, both in the storytelling and narrative styles. The project is designed around two synchronous axes which underlie its comparative, cross-regional dimension: the first is focused on providing a contextual and an analytical frame to the emergence of a vibrant multi-generational Arab graphic narrative scene at 'home' and in diaspora, while the second traces their reception both in Europe and in the Arab MENA.



Sahar El Echi

(PhD candidate, Ecole supérieure de l'audiovisuel et du cinema (ESAC), Tunis)

Sahar El Echi (1992) lives and works in Tunisia. A visual artist, filmmaker and researcher, Sahar El Echi was born in Tunis where she pursued studies in graphic design. She obtained her bachelor degree in graphic design in 2014, and her masters diploma in visual design in 2017 at the Higher Institute of Fine Arts of Tunis (ISABT). Currently, she is working on her PhD project in film studies at ecole superieure de l'audiovisuel et du cinema (ESAC) about the narratives of exile in Mediterranean cinema (2000-2020). Sahar El Echi's research is situated at the intersection of films studies, and social sciences. She directed two short Films, Mutation (2016) and Entre-Deux (2018), which were selected in many international and national festivals, as well as video essays. She makes use of different mediums including cinema, photography and video art. She also exhibits her work in many art galleries. Sahar El Echi was selected in different international programs: The Documentary Film Methods for film teachers at the Danish Film School in Copenhagen (2019), The Beirut - Locarno Industry Academy International, Beirut Talents as part of the Berlinale Talents amongst others.

Project Aesthetics & Cultural Practice

Migrant Narratives and Aesthetic Practices in Mediterranean Cinema

In the last twenty years, the phenomenon of migration has raised questions that are troubling society and that cinema in turn questions. As a means of study, the latter provides the history of the exiles with a reading tool and, consequently, shows how society deals with otherness by relying on the figure of the stranger. By exiles, we mean: immigrants, deportees, expatriates, illegal immigrants and the undocumented. From a sociological point of view, exile is envisioned from the place it occupies in the various mechanisms; administrative and legal. Exile is in fact considered a subject, in a passive mode, and not as an active agent. However, the identity nature of a group is not determined solely by the relationship defined by the social classification institutions. It is also defined in intersubjective relations and more broadly by its respective place in the spectrum of ideology and representations. This research questions the stories of exile in relation to their film representations. We propose to grasp the mode of appearance of these stories in the cinema through an essentially narrative approach. The history of cinema interests us in the sense that it apprehends an epoch, a movement, and a mode of production as variable realities, in perpetual change. It has a hermeneutic vocation because it operates at all levels and interacts with other disciplines such as sociology and anthropology.



Dr. Katarzyna Falęcka

(Lecturer, Newcastle University/ UK)

Katarzyna Falęcka is a Lecturer in Art History at Newcastle University in the United Kingdom. Her research and teaching interests span modern and contemporary art from North Africa and the Middle East, archives, photography, gender and memory. She is currently working on her first book titled Archival Excavations: Photography, the Algerian War of Independence and the Afterlives of Images. Following the completion of her PhD at University College London in 2020, she was a Postdoctoral Humanities Fellow at the Centre d'Études Maghrébines à Tunis (CEMAT). She currently co-leads (together with Jessica Gerschultz and Nadia Jelassi) a program in modern art history at CEMAT and serves as interviewer for the "Modern Art in the Maghrib" podcast series as part of Maghrib in Past and Present. In 2021, she curated an exhibition titled "Beyond Metaphor: Women and War" at apexart, New York.

Project Aesthetics & Cultural Practice

Contested Legacies: State-Building and Visual Imaginaries in North Africa and the Middle East

The past decade has seen an increase in artistic and public history projects in North Africa and the Middle East that explore regional histories of state-building of the 1950s and 1960s. New political, social and cultural systems were developed in the aftermath of decolonisation. The aim of the proposed research is to examine contemporary art from Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon that explores the political potential, utopian thinking, as well as perceived shortcomings of the early years of independence. The project will trace how artists marshal aesthetic registers of fiction, the absurd and the grotesque to critically explore the paths taken and offer speculative visions of what might have been. The research will question how contemporary art can intervene in regional memory politics surrounding postcolonial state-building. Further, it will situate the work of research-based contemporary artists in relation to recent public and oral history initiatives that explore post-independence histories. In short, this research will explore the terms on which contemporary art can tell history from the 'bottom up' and its potential to reimagine the often contested legacies of postcolonial state-building.



Farouk El Maarouf

(PhD candidate, Kénitra/Morocco)

Freshly graduated from the Center of Moroccan Cultural Studies at Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University, Fez, Farouk El Maarouf is currently a PhD candidate at Ibn Tofail University working on vernacular art communities in Morocco. El Maarouf received a study grant from ERASMUS+ at Babes-Bolyai University, Romania (2020) where he attended British and Irish Cultural Studies classes. His latest (2020) co-publications include "City as Canvas: Street Art(ists), Walls and the City between State Patronage and Artistic Transformation", Matatu: Journal for African Culture and Society, Brill, and a theoretical piece on COVID-19 titled "Covid-19: A Critical Ontology of the Present", Educational Philosophy and Theory 53:1, Routledge. El Maarouf's academic research engages several thematic fields within Cultural Studies, including alternative economies, risk society, local art markets and treasure hunting in Morocco, gender politics, street art, Maghribian literature, diaspora studies, and youth and activism.

Project Aesthetics & Cultural Practice

The Aesthetics of the Margin: Vernacular Art Communities, Curious Dealers, Unorthodox Art Consumers and Alternative Visualities

This research project departs from the contemporary cultural, social and political history of Morocco to generate an adequate discussion on the meanings and implications of seeing (visualizing) in the domain of art and culture. In addressing questions of visuality and perception, we need to ask preliminary questions as to who is entitled to seeing. Whose eye? Who/what deserves to be the subject/object of the look? Who sees better? What does it mean to see in a context fraught with turmoils and tensions? Keeping an eye on the importance of, and the ways of seeing, nonetheless, this research builds on the narratives of beauty/treasure hunters who do not see haven in orthodox ways of living gain. Indeed, this research rightly situates the discussion on the present and future of art circulation and the various underprivileged practitioners that contribute to the movement of art (across classes, cultural folds, and social loops). As it is important to come closer to the communities that operate therein, this research studies how different movements and flows affect the perception of the locals (and the perception of locals by onlookers) of categories such as beauty, aesthetics, happiness, and ethics, that, in return, borrow from and resonate with the popular (everyday) preoccupations, fears and future inspirations of the vulnerable communities involved.



Assoc. Prof. Teresa Pepe

(Associate Professor, Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages, Oslo/ Norvège)

Teresa Pepe is Associate Professor in Arabic Studies at the University of Oslo. Her research interests span across Arabic literature, media, popular culture, sociolinguistics, and the relation between aesthetics and politics. Her current research focuses on Arabic dystopian novels and their connection to social, political, and environmental changes in the region. She is the author of the book Blogging From Egypt: Digital Literature, 2005-2016 (Edinburgh: EUP, 2019) that explores blogs as forms of digital literature emerging in Egypt during the rise of the political protest of the Arab Spring. She is the co-editor of the volume Arabic Literature in the Posthuman Age (with S. Guth, Harassowitz Verlag 2019), that examines the use of dystopia, necropolitics, monsters and satire in Arabic literature today. She is also the co-founder of the research network "Arab Media Transitions" that analyses the impact of media on Arabic culture and society from a historical perspective. She has published several articles in the Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication, Oriente Moderno, Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies, and LEA- Lingue e Letterature d'Oriente e d'Occidente.

Project Aesthetics & Cultural Practice

Environmental Imaginaries in Egyptian and Tunisian Dystopian Fiction

In the last decades, dystopian fiction, that is fiction that offers pessimistic visions of the future, has become particularly popular in Arabic culture. These works, that range from novels, to movies to tv series, often portray Arabic cities destroyed by environmental catastrophes, or future Arabic societies ruled by oppressive governments. This project analyzes the development of this genre in Arabic culture during the modern and contemporary era. It focuses on a number of fictional works (novels, movies, TV-series) written by Egyptian and Tunisian authors during the XX and XXI centuries. Borrowing insights from global literary theory, it investigates the specificity of the genre in Arabic and how it participates to the global circulation of near-future fictions and catastrophic thinking. Besides, combining dystopian theories with eco-criticism, it explores the "environmental imaginaries" offered by these works, exploring the ideas that authors and readers develop about the landscape, including perceptions about that environment and assumptions on how it came to be in its current state (Davis 2011, 9). The project, thus, sheds light on how Arab authors imagine the future in their works, and it investigates whether the environmental challenge is becoming a growing concern for Arab authors, as part of a long-standing tradition of political commitment (iltizām).



Angela Rabing

(PhD candidate, Department of Film Studies and Media Aesthetics, Bremen/ Germany)

Angela Rabing (M.A.) is a film and media scholar and doctoral candidate at the Institute for Art History - Film Studies - Art Education (IKFK) and ZeMKI at University of Bremen, Germany since 2017. She studied Media and Communication and completed her master's degree at Ruhr-University Bochum in Media Studies. Her current doctoral project investigates digital aesthetics of filmic realism, focussing on feature and documentary films shot on digital devices such as smartphones. Her research interests include filmic realism, digital film, documentary film, smartphone film, film and migration and queer cinema. She currently edited an issue of the online research journal nachdemfilm.de on "Aesthetic and Theory of Digital Film" (No18/2020) and is co-editor of two volumes following the Bremen International Film Conference, including a volume on "Cinema Crossing Borders" (Pauleit/Rabing (ed): Grenzüberschreitendes Kino, Bertz+Fischer, 2019).

Project Aesthetics & Cultural Practice

Digital Documentations of Migration Movements

The research project aims at analysing digital documentary films on current migration movements with regards to their aesthetic strategies towards creating filmic realism. Migration as well as digital media are two of the dominant factors of recent social, political, and cultural changes in the world. This is especially true for the MENA- and Maghreb-region, where LES SAUTEURS (2016) and MIDNIGHT TRAVELER (2019) are set. Both films are shot on digital devices such as mobile phones and can be understood as audio-visual counter-images to narratives of a 'refugee crisis' or a 'crisis of representation'. The analysis draws closer attention to two aesthetic concepts that are closely linked to digital media as well as migration: uncertainty and mobility. While digital media are often discussed in terms of manipulation and 'fake news', the project asks what aesthetics, practices and strategies of filmic realism are deployed and how digital media supports or undermines an aesthetic of filmic realism. Moreover, the analysis will focus on the entanglements between migration and digitisation as it is interconnected in the documentary films discussed, as well as its aesthetic and cultural implications.



IFG II "Inequality & Mobility"

The IFG "Inequality & Mobility" aims to examine the complex relationships between rising inequalities and diverse types of mobility in present-day Tunisia and the wider Maghreb.

The Second Interdisciplinary Fellow Group (IFG) examines the complex relationships between rising inequalities and diverse types of mobility in present-day Tunisia and the wider Maghreb, elaborating an agenda for MECAM's research pillar "inequality and mobility". Seven early career researchers from different disciplines – namely political science, psychology, anthropology, geography and urbanism – comprise the fellow group and have worked together at MECAM in Tunis between September and December 2021.

Coordinator

Dr. Katharina Grüneisl

(Postdoc, Universität Leipzig/Germany)

Katharina Grüneisl is a postdoctoral researcher in the Department of Geography at Leipzig University. Her research interests lie at the intersection of urban, economic and cultural geography, and her work employs ethnographic methods and focuses on contemporary North Africa. Initially trained in political science with a regional focus on the Mediterranean, Katharina specialised in urban studies during her postgraduate studies at SciencesPo Paris and the London School of Economics. She subsequently worked in urban development projects in Tunisia, Egypt and Kenya with the GIZ (German Development Agency) and UN-Habitat. Katharina then pursued her doctoral studies in Human Geography at Durham University, conducting research on the urban second-hand clothes economy in Tunis. She now coordinates the scientific programme of the IFG "inequality and mobility" for MECAM in Tunisia.

Katharina simultaneously continues to develop her research on the second-hand ('fripe') economy in and beyond Tunisia, exploring the complex cross-Mediterranean linkages these material circulations bring to the fore, especially in the context of the on-going COVID-19 pandemic.

First publications (selected) from her research have appeared in, Grüneisl, Katharina. 2020. 'Second-Hand Shoe Circulations in Tunis: Processes of Valuation and the Production of Urban Space'. Articulo – Revue de Sciences Humaines, no. 21 (January).

Grüneisl, Katharina. 2021. 'Rethinking Global Urbanism from a "Fripe" Marketplace in Tunis'. In Global Urbanism: Knowledge, Power and the City, edited by Michele Lancione and Colin McFarlane. Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge. Grüneisl, Katharina. 2020.



Cluster Pls



Prof. Jörg Gertel

(Professor, Economic Geography, University of Leipzig/ Germany)



Prof. Mourad Ben Jalloul

(Professor, Geography, Université de Tunis/ Tunisia)



Prof. Ali Bennasr

(Professor, Geography, Université de Sfax/ Tunisia)



Dr. Wael Garnaoui

(Postdoc, Centre d'anthropologie sociale et culturelle de la FLSH-Université de Sousse / Tunisia)

Wael Garnaoui is a doctor in Psychoanalysis and Psychopathology from the University of Paris, a clinical psychologist, and holds a professional master's degree in clinical psychology from the University of Tunis, a research master's degree in psychoanalysis and interdisciplinarity from the University of Paris Diderot-7, and a master's degree in political science from the University of Paris Dauphine. Since January 2020, he has been a lecturer in sociology at the University of Le Havre Normandy. He conducts research on migration policies, the processes of borderization and their impacts on the political subjectivities of migrants from the global south, particularly in the context of irregular immigration of Tunisians. He founded on November 18, 2021 a network of researchers on "Border Studies" at the Center of Anthropology of the University of Sousse in which he taught anthropology between 2016 and 2017. His thesis defended in February 2021 is entitled: Harga and desire for the West in the time of jihad. Borders and migrant subjectivities of Tunisian youth. Currently he continues his research as part of his post-doc at the IFG "inequalities and mobilities" at MECAM.

Project Inequality & Mobility

Consequences of immobility on the subjectivities of Tunisian youth

My research revolves around the processes of frontierization and their impacts on the political subjectivities of migrants from the global south, particularly in the context of irregular immigration of Tunisians. During my postdoctoral stay at MECAM, I continued my observations on the new generation of devices, tools of repression and borderization of the bodies and desires of the populations in the countries of origin; consequences of the European Union's policy of externalization of borders.

My research project is politically fundamental: it is that of the right to circulate, and, correlatively, of the absurdity of borders. An inequality of movement that has become commonplace in the era of visas and border deportations, and which in itself is aberrant. This difference in rights, paradoxically, makes subjects illegal: to want to circulate. It sets up a real international apartheid of circulation, and founds a systemic racism proper to the relations between Global North / Global South. Colonization, forced displacement of populations, economic migrations in turn provoked then contained and prohibited by Europe, and the capitalist, then neoliberal system, founded on this disparity in circulation, exposes differently to vulnerability the subjects of the Global North and those of the Global South.

The idea of my stay is to develop a perspective based on knowledge from the Global South through the words of people who have experienced the violence of migration policies, such as deported migrants and families of the disappeared. In particular, I studied the impact of migrants' "forced/voluntary return" or disappearance on their families and on their economic and social environments in their countries of origin.

During this stay I also developed a theoretical perspective by bringing together a dozen Tunisian and international researchers from different disciplinary fields to found a research group on "Border Studies" at the Center of Anthropology at the Faculty of Letters and Humanities of Sousse. This group aims to develop an alternative approach to border studies based on the production of knowledge of the "Global South".



Myriam Amri

(PhD Candidate, Harvard University/ USA)

Myriam Amri is a PhD candidate in the joint- degree in Anthropology and Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard University. Her PhD project investigates money, national currency, and the nation-state in Tunisia and at the border between Tunisia and Algeria. In particular, she's interested in notions of materiality, circulation, and value. She received a dual bachelor's degree from SciencesPo Paris and Columbia University, an MSc from the London School of Economics, and is the co-founder of "Asameena", an Arab literary collective. She is also a visual artist working with analog photography and documentary filmmaking.

Project Inequality & Mobility

Money & Its Contentious Forms Along a North African Border

Myriam's research project at the MECAM is part and parcel of her PhD dissertation project which brings together national currency and nation-state together to examine how Tunisia's national currency becomes a contested form on which imaginaries and anxieties about what constitutes a nation-state, especially in times of "revolution", and "transition" are mapped out. This research is an interdisciplinary project based on two key sites, the Central Bank of Tunisia and the Northwest border between Tunisia and Algeria in order to locate the mutual constitution of formal and informal rules that produce the Tunisian dinar as an object of state power at the same time as it is turned into the medium to evade the state. At the MECAM, Myriam focused on collecting data on the circulation of currencies at Tunisia's border and the myriad of social discourses that imagine the flight of money out of the nation-state.



Dr. Johannes Frische

(Postdoc, Universität Leipzig / Germany)

Johannes Frische is a postdoctoral researcher from Leipzig University with a background in Middle Eastern Studies, History and Religious Studies. During his graduate studies, he specialized in human geography of the MENA region. After having earned his master's degree in 2011, Johannes joined the PhD program 'Critical junctures of Globalization' and became a research fellow at Leipzig University. In this position he conducted investigative field research in Tunisia (in the years 2012-13). Focusing on North Africa (especially Tunisia and Morocco), his research interests include development studies, urban sociology, youth studies and migration. Moreover, he has gained broad ranging experiences in international research collaboration. Between 2015 and 2017, Johannes worked as a regional program coordinator with the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Rabat/Morocco from where he coordinated a network of politically or civically engaged young professionals in the MENA region. His doctoral thesis revolves around urban youth, informality and precarity in post-revolutionary Tunisia. In his fellowship with MECAM IFG II "Inequality and Mobility" he builds on previous research on youth and the urban question in Tunisia while exploring the impact of COVID-19 crisis on mobility.

Project Inequality & Mobility

Variegated effects of COVID-19 crisis in Tunisia - the inequality-mobility nexus under scrutiny

Johannes' research project takes into account the socioeconomic repercussions of the pandemic amid Tunisia's multi-layered crisis while exploring the outreach of both long term and emergency response plans in face of economic hardship resulting from lockdown measures and recession. This aspect involves the role of state institutions and public action in addressing disparity with an eye toward the future. In the early stage of his fieldwork, he conducts interviews with several Tunis-based Civil Society Organizations that work with a territorial based approach to tackle root causes of marginalization and social disintegration, especially among jobless youth in disadvantaged urban areas of Greater Tunis and its hinterland. Moreover, he retraces the integration of informal housing areas where vulnerability and precarity are particularly pronounced.

The output of his fellowship is threefold:

- 1) Publication projects in different formats
- 2) Getting involved in the planning of scientific workshops
- 3) Co-organizing events with Civil Society Organizations (International Alert and Jamaity)



André Weißenfels

(PhD Candidate, FU Berlin/ Germany)

André Weißenfels is Scientific Associate and doctoral researcher at FU-Berlin. Trained in Near-and Middle Eastern Studies and Sociology, André's PhD project analyzes the everyday of Tunisian employees in a French factory in Tunis and how it connects to global capitalist dynamics and the post-colonial development project of the Tunisian state. In his teaching, André focuses on topics of political economy, power-knowledge dynamics and anarchist thought and practices. In the context of the MECAM fellowship he collects testimonies of autonomous self-administration in the aftermath of the revolution in 2010. During this time, different groups all over Tunisia decided to claim (back) state lands. In many cases, people took control over those lands and started to work them individually or collectively. Almost all of those projects have disappeared after the State started to take back/ expropriate those lands since 2014. The aim of André's research project is to collect those experiences and to theorize them from an anarchist perspective.

Project Inequality & Mobility

Collective management and self-governance as a challenge to the post-revolutionary nation state?

In the inner parts of Tunisia, many communities have long been at odds with different central authorities. They have been dispossessed and marginalized by French colonizers and later by the postcolonial Tunisian nation state. In the context of disappointed hopes after the 2010 revolution, those long-nurtured resentments towards central authorities have paved the way for new forms of autonomous self-government and self-management in the historically neglected areas outside the coastal region. These autonomous projects are characterized by a strong sentiment to manage different (agricultural) resources collectively and integrate the profit won from them into local societal structures. A first analysis of a small sample of such projects (Jemna, Aoulad Jaballah, Menzel Bouziane) shows that they seem to be based on a dual structure: On the one hand, they started to collectively manage certain economic resources. On the other hand, those projects give birth to participatory political representation to negotiate consensually the broader direction of the project, the distribution of resources and the conflict with central authorities.

I will use my MECAM fellowship to:

- 1. Engage with examples of autonomous self-government
- 2. Flesh out their social dynamics and their historical context
- 3. Reflect on their meaning for an ongoing postcolonial struggle, postrevolutionary learning processes and the application of anarchist practice.



Dr. Ann-Christin Zuntz

(Lecturer, University of Edinburgh/ UK)

Ann-Christin Zuntz is a lecturer in Anthropology of Development at the University of Edinburgh. She is an economic anthropologist, with a focus on the intersections of labour, (forced) migrations, and gender, in the Mediterranean. Since 2015, Ann has conducted in-person fieldwork with displaced Syrians in Jordan, Turkey, Tunisia, and Bulgaria, and, remotely, in Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria. Fluent in Levantine Arabic, she specialises in research with displaced populations in hard-to-reach rural areas, and with refugee women. She does collaborative research with Syrian academics within the One Health FIELD Network. As the principal investigator of the 2020/21 AHRC-funded Refugee Labour under Lockdown project, Ann partnered with Syrian scholars affiliated with the Council for At-Risk Academics, and the Turkish non-profit cooperative Development Workshop to study the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Syrian farmworkers in the Middle East. Remote ethnographic data from this project have informed a graphic novel, available in English, Turkish and Arabic [Refugee Labour Under Lockdown]. Starting in November 2021, Ann's new AHRC-funded project FIELD SONGS will investigate the potential of Syrian refugees' traditional harvesting songs and intangible cultural heritage for informing sustainable development policies in the Middle East. The research is a collaboration with two Syrian-led organisations with expertise in agricultural science and the arts and humanities, and involves music workshops and fieldwork in agricultural work sites with Syrian labourers musicians in southern (https://www.onehealthfieldnetwork.org/field-songs). In 2021, Ann won the best article prize of the Syrian Studies Association for her article "Refugees' Transnational Livelihoods and Remittances: Syrian Mobilities in the Middle East Before and After 2011", published in volume 34(2) of the Journal of Refugee Studies.

Project Inequality & Mobility

A "forced" destination – lived realities of mixed migration in post-2011 Tunisia

My research investigates how class differences and financial, social and cultural capital inform Syrian migrants and refugees' journeys to Tunisia. Between October and December 2021, I conducted interviews with over twenty Syrian households, policymakers and aid providers in Tunis, Sousse, Sfax, Zarzis, Gafsa and Kairouan. The research redirects the focus from Syrians' South-North journeys across the Mediterranean to their complex South-South movements. My findings demonstrate how pre-war migration and trade ties between Syria and Tunisia and Tunisia's migration landscape have shaped Syrians' conditions of arrival. They also highlight Syrians' unequal access to international mobility, and the heterogeneous nature of Tunisia's refugee population.

Changing border regimes in Arab host countries have reordered Syrian movements across the Middle East and North Africa: I found that the poorest Syrian refugees travelled the longest, most expensive and most arduous routes to enter Tunisia illegally, while better-off Syrians with pre-existing family or business connections to Tunisia entered the country earlier, via direct flights and on tourist visas. For most poor Syrians, Algeria, not Tunisia, was the intended destination. After Algeria introduced new visa requirements for Syrians in 2015, refugee newcomers flew from Lebanon to Mauretania and then joined the established West African migration route through the desert to Algeria.

Inside Tunisia, Syrians' settlement patterns reflect the socioeconomic differences between different refugee and migrant populations: affluent Syrian businessmen and –women reside in Tunis, while poor Syrian families are scattered all over the country, including in interior locations like Gafsa with limited employment opportunities.

I will present results during a webinar on 9th February 2022 co-organised by MECAM, the Mixed Migration Centre in Tunis, and the Maghreb Action on Displacement and Rights (MADAR) Network – after the event, the recording will be available on the MADAR website.



Dr. Souhir Bouzid

(Maître Assistante, ISTEUB (Institut Supérieur des Technologies de l'Environnement de l'Urbanisme et de Bâtiment) / Tunisia)

Souhir Bouzid is an assistant professor at the Higher Institute of Environmental Technologies of Urbanism and Building, Urban planning Urban Departement at the University of Carthage.

She graduated in 2008 as an urban planner from the Higher Institute of Environmental Technologies of Urbanism and Building. She also holds a master's degree in urban studies in mediterranean regions from Institute of Urban Planning and Regional Development Aix-en-Provence and university of SevilleShe received her PhD in urban planning from the National School of Architecture and Urban Planning of Tunis. Her main research fields involve mobility in urban and peri-urban areas.

Project Inequality & Mobility

Daily mobility in the Tunisian periphery: A case study of the commune of Borj El Amri

The dispersal of populations and facilities to the outskirts of cities brings with it new infrastructure and a new supply of transportation services. Inhabitants will have more miles to travel and more time to spend in their departure from the periphery to the city center. Settlement on the outskirts of cities is therefore closely related to the development of transport systems and the mobility of people.

Mobility is a major asset for opening up peripheral districts and is also a major issue for social cohesion. Thus, people's conditions (age, socio-professional category, state of health, economic situation,) are closely linked to mobility conditions. The better their conditions, the faster and farther they move. Mobility is, and will increasingly become, one of the conditions for social integration.

Thus, the residential choices of households in the Tunisian peri-urban areas differ from one household to another, which creates real social diversity in these areas. So, we will consider digging and highlighting the interaction between the place of residence in the peri-urban commune of Borj El Amri and the different practices of space (mobility) as well as the lifestyle of this privileged clientele who lives the non-spontaneity of its movements.

It is necessary to study mobility in its socio-spatial framework. There are many angles from which to study mobility, but we will only look at its social and spatial dimensions and its influences on all members of the household.

We then ask to what extent the move to the suburbs is the source of social inequality for a population with diverse origins.



Nasser Moslem

(PhD candidate, Université de Tunis/Tunisia)

Nasser Moslem is a third-year Ph.D. student, researching "water governance and socio-spatial mobility in the region of Siliana" (Northwest of Tunisia). He is a MECAM Fellow of the IFG "Inequality and mobility", working alongside other social science researchers on the complex relationships between rising inequalities and diverse types of mobility. He has recently finished a research mission with the Contemporary Maghreb Research Institute (IRMC) and participated as a research assistant in two research projects, namely "ProGreS migration" and TARICA "Political and socio-institutional changes in North Africa". He finished his Research Masters' degree in Geography in 2018 at the Faculty of Humanities of the Université de Tunis (FSHST) and gained a BA in Sociology from the same Faculty beforehand. Next to his doctoral studies, Nasser is currently the regional coordinator of the organisation I Watch in Siliana and is the founder and president of the El Khir agricultural development group. In 2020 he was the supervisor of the "Socio-political opinion poll" project with Elka consulting.

He recently received a three-year PhD scholarship at the University of Leipzig, Germany.

Project Inequality & Mobility

Dynamiques territoriales et inégalité d'accès à l'eau dans la région de Siliana and Combined Development

Certainly the ground of Siliana has not developed that temporally continuous territorial identity Despite our historical roots of the large part of researching support space, the construction process of this region appears intermittent: from "Zamaregia" to the Roman, plus Byzantine and finally Hafsid Arab adopting the name of Ziriya. It is geographically an area of fundamental separation between the steppe regions of central Tunisia and the fertile lands of the north. What is the meaning of accumulation of denominations in the sandstone of these temporal discontinuities? If we concede, no doubt, that this is due to the difficulty of the emergence of a coherent territorial entity - what is the role of the historical actors of the territory? how have the structural elements of the territory (population / land and its economies / activities) represented decisive factors in the identity transformations of the space? "Water - Land - Activities" triptych have always represented the elements of territorial formation in its identity and its symbolic dimensions, but the weakness of its systemic interaction made the entire-region live into the orbit of other regions and resources, the sustainability and the multiplicity of water organizations, in addition to the deepening of agricultural activities, have supported the intervention of the State in its various institutions with the aim of preserving water facilities and thus activating development paths in line with the national strategy for mobilizing water surpluses and food security. Rural and regional have established a network of relationships and strategies between territorial actors with unequal balances and cross-cutting issues that have affected the water reserve and deeply exhausted its capacities. This process has seriously raised the question of water governance, social inequalities and the state of poverty within the region of Siliana, as well as the changes



IFG III "Memory & Justice"

This IFG explores how discourses on, as well as practices of, memory and justice are narrated and performed with a view to the future of post-conflict societies in the Maghreb region and the Middle East.

Following initial meetings with the fellows and PIs, memory and media, the use of narratives, victimhood, and justice during transitions have been identified as some of the common threads connecting the research of the fellows. These common themes, under the overall umbrella of "Imagining Futures / Dealing with Disparities", guide the work of the IFG.

Coordinator

Rebeka Gluhbegovic

(PhD Candidate, Philipps-Universität Marburg /Germany)

Rebeka Gluhbegovic is a doctoral candidate at the Centre for Conflict Studies, Philipps-Universität Marburg. Her research explores how selected communities in Tunisia are dealing with persisting socio-economic grievances in the post-2011 period. Previously, she took part in the CODESRIA funded research project Justice on the Margins at the Centre for the Study of Governance Innovation in Pretoria and contributed to an edited volume: 'Transitional Justice Policies in Africa'. Other areas that she has conducted research on include civil society and social movements, types of conflict, and the use of new technologies for the promotion of human rights in Africa.

Rebeka has worked for several years in Tunisia with local NGOs on youth engagement and social economy. She completed her Bachelor in Law (2006 – 2008) and a Masters in International Relations (2015) at the University of Pretoria.



Cluster Pis



Prof. Susanne Buckley-Zistel

(Professor, Peace and Conflict Studies, Philipps-Universität Marburg/Germany)



Prof. Thorsten Bonacker

(Professor, Peace and Conflict Studies, Philipps-Universität Marburg/Germany)



Prof. Anika Oettler

(Professor, Sociology, Philipps-Universität Marburg/Germany)



Prof. Khaled Kchir

(Professor, History, Université de Tunis /Tunisia)



Alina Giesen

(PhD Candidate, Philipps-Universität Marburg / Germany)

"Contested Narratives of the Past: Morocco's Years of Lead and Challenging the Silences" (PhD candidate, Philipps-Universität Marburg / Germany)

Alina Giesen is a PhD researcher at the Center for Conflict Studies at the Philipps-Universität Marburg, Germany. Her research examines the narration of memory in Morocco, focusing on official as well as unofficial transitional justice initiatives to come to terms with the so-called Years of Lead. She is interested in memory and memory politics, and how history is harnessed and retold from the demands and perspective of the present. Her research interests further include narrative theory and narrative analysis. Alina holds a master's degree in Conflict, Security and Development from King's College London and a BA in History and Politics from the University of Oxford.

Project Memory & Justice

Contested Narratives of the Past: (Re)telling and Remembering tMorocco's Years of Lead

Narratives of historical events and the appropriate form of their commemoration are often highly contested, particularly in societies where there is ongoing debate about how to achieve some form of justice after widespread past violence or repression.

This research project examines narratives of past violence and the interaction between them using the case study of the "Years of Lead" in Morocco and the subsequent transitional justice process. Specifically, it examines whether and how the work and records of truth commissions impact the narratives of victimization told by different memory actors in Moroccan society. The project thus focuses on how memory actors tell the past, including how elements are intertwined or left out, thus creating the narratives presented. To this end, I use a narrative analysis that I have adapted that combines integrated readings and thematic analyses. Narrative interviews with individuals are analyzed alongside written sources.

By making victimization narratives and their interaction the focus of the study, this work will help elucidate whether, and in what ways, narrative work can be constructively harnessed in transformations to promote inclusive peace and justice in the future.



Prof. Ratiba Hadj-Moussa

(Professor, Department of Sociology, York University / Canada)

Ratiba Hadj-Moussa is Full Professor in the Department of Sociology at York University (Toronto) in the fields of cultural and political sociology. Her works bring together four major areas: Islam and secularism in Western societies, Cinema/art/media, radical/popular expressions and public memory in the Maghreb, all of which are informed by multidimensional axes including gender, politics, and minoritarian discourses and practices. She has extensive research experience and has been a researcher in a variety of research projects in national and international settings. Her research projects have been funded by the research Council of Humanities and Social Sciences of Canada and she has also contributed to the editorial boards of book collections, and several national international journals. She received national and university awards including Le Prix l'AQEC/Olivieri for her book on Algerian cinema, and the 2020-21 Dean's Award for Distinction in Research (York University). Dr Hadj-Moussa was Guest Professor at Paris III Sorbonne nouvelle, Paris (France); University of Gandia/Valencia (Spain), and Konstanz University (Germany). She was a Senior Fellowship and Grantee at IFK-Internationales Forschungszentrum Kulturwissenschaften | Kunstuniversität Linz in Vienna (Austria). She is the co-founder and the Coordinator of the GT4-Monde arabe en movement-Association internationale des sociologues de langue française.

Project Memory & Justice

Public Memory: Reckoning with the Margins

This project studies transitional justice and reconciliation processes in Tunisia and Algeria, with a particular focus on process of reconciliation and remembrance in the elaboration of public memory. Working from the two national experiences, I ask how transitional justice and reconciliation as a political instrument illustrates their respective political cultures, their public memories and spaces, and the ways that memories as practices make the lived present intelligible. Despite differences in how reconciliation was conceived in each country, with Algeria emphasizing forgetting and Tunisia remembering, both experiences involve issues that go beyond legal questions and involve imperatives stemming from other orders, political or memorial. Public memory results from conflicts of interpretation, in which "sites of memory" mark only limited historical agreement. Turning to public memory makes it possible to analyze the mechanisms that allow a given memory to arise and be put to work, and ultimately to show the dynamics of alternative memory in the search for justice and its contribution to the redefinition of national public and political spheres.



Dorothée Hagenstein

(PhD Candidate Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg/Germany)

Dorothée Hagenstein is a teacher and external PHD student, she studied bilingual teacher training (French, Politics and Philosophy) at the University of Education in Freiburg, Germany, combined with European Cultural Studies. She also studied at the Kigali Institute of Education, taught several years in Rwanda and finished her studies with the work: "Education reform in Rwanda: English or "Kinyarfranglais" as new language of instruction? An empirical analyse of the multilingualism in the Rwandan school system". Dorothée did her traineeship (Referendariat) in Potsdam at an UNESCO Project School. The master thesis was about children's rights and their practical implementation at school. Since August 2020 Dorothée has been living with her family in Tunisia. Here she worked for the Goethe-Institute and is glad to have now the chance to continue her studies. She is interested in postcolonial, feminist theories and her research interests are human rights education, children's rights and educational inequality.

Project Memory & Justice

Human rights and human rights education in postrevolutionary Tunisia: actors - multiplicators and discourses

I am in the early stages of my PhD project and preparing my research proposal. The working title of my research project is "Forms of human rights education in post-revolutionary Tunisia: actors – multiplicators and discourses". Human rights played an important role during the revolution of the Arab Spring 2011 and the entire transition process but also in times of postcolonial and post-revolutionary Tunisia. Starting from postcolonial-feminist approaches, my theoretical part would question the "Eurocentric" view on human rights as "Western" and discussing the predicament "universality" versus "cultural relativism". A short overview about the history of human rights, the occidental tradition as well as the relation between Islam and human rights could lead towards a cross-cultural "overlapping consensus" on human rights (Bielefeld). By comparing the German and Tunisian discourse on human rights education, I intend to analyse central national actors.

One focus will be on Lina Ben Mhenni's activist group and their ongoing fight for human rights in post-revolutionary Tunisia. Another one on the Arab Institute for Human Rights, the Observatoire des droits de l'enfant and the Tunisian League of Human Rights. The main methods for my qualitative approach are semi-standardized interviews and document analyses with a content-analytical evaluation.

My research is guided by the following research questions: What forms of human rights education are existing in post-revolutionary Tunisia? What understanding of human rights and human rights education do the Tunisian actors and students have? What are chances and challenges of human rights education in the transition process?

Tunisia is an interesting example of concrete civil human rights activities, which, on a didactical level, could also be used as an interdisciplinary, transcultural approach of human rights education in schools and universities.



Dr. Marianna Liosi

(LABA – The Free Fine Arts Academy, Rimini (Italy); Guest Lecturer MA Spatian Strategies, Weißensee Kunsthochschule, Berlin (Germany))

Marianna Liosi is an art curator and researcher. In 2020, she completed her PhD in Humanities, at the University of Ferrara, Italy. Through her thesis, titled Social Networks as Digital Archives: Videos of the Tunisian Revolution post-January 14, 2011, she aimed to offer an overview of the role played by social networks, especially YouTube and Facebook, as digital archives within the culture of connectivity, in Tunisia post-Ben Ali. Her research interests focus on the question of engaged spectatorship, social networks as digital archives, affect and emotions, and digital memory as a tool of resistance. With artist and professor Nasan Tur, she held the seminar "We want the break, we want to fail' (L. Russell). Politics of self-reconfiguration in challenging times" at MA Spatial Strategies, Weißensee Kunsthochschule, Berlin (2021). She served as Lecturer of Media and Theory of Perception at LABA - The Free Fine Arts Academy in Rimini (Italy) (2019-2021). As a curator, Marianna initiated in 2016 the experimental curatorial-pedagogical laboratory Between-Broadcast Workshop (BB-W), an ongoing laboratory for discussion and creation at universities, and a YouTube channel. BB-W explores the bond between militancy through videos, empathy and digital memories as well as the activism of the spectator-user through cinematic montage. She has published essays in edited volumes, such as Image Testimonies - Witnessing in Times of Social Media, (ed. by Kerstin Schankweiler, Verena Straub, Tobias Wendl (2019), as well as articles in the journal Video Journal of Education and Pedagogy, SpringerOpen, and in the opendemocracy.net and Ibraaz.

Project Memory & Justice

Emotional Phenomena, Memory and Feeling of Justice during the Transitional Justice in Tunisia

The research aims to explore the feeling of justice in connection with mediated and digitally mediated memory and emotional phenomena during the transitional justice in post-January 14, 2011 Tunisia. In particular, I observe the transitional justice as a phase embedded within the revolutionary process still ongoing in the country.

The focus of my study is the community legacy that emotions and feelings build during transitional justice in Tunisia. During the process of reconciliation between citizens and the state, emotions and feelings carry and, in turn, give voice to the actualization of the citizens' expriences. I argue that sharing publically personal remembrances and related emotions enable to transmit them beyond the individual sphere, and transform them into a collective heritage.

My research objects are the mediated visual materials, especially artworks, created in Tunisia during the revolutionary process. In particular, through the video-performance of Souad Mani and the installations of Héla Ammar, I will look into how aesthetics as well as digital and analog media used by these two women artists contribute to developing the feeling of justice in the Tunisian community. Furthermore, I will observe in what capacity this feeling influences or is, in turn, affected by memory. I anticipate that the social engagement through art can heal subjects and groups. I expect that the use of specific media, such as the digital, facilitate a sense of social and political rehabilitation.

Ultimately, my study will explore critically the notion of collectivity when it comes to reflect upon the polysemy of narratives that compose memory, and it looks at the bond between art and the public sharing of emotional phenomena within the healing process that the transitional justice process aimed to reach in Tunisia.



Dr. Rania, Said

(Postdoc, University of Massachusetts Boston/ USA)

Rania Said is a postdoctoral research fellow at the University of Massachusetts Boston. She earned her PhD in comparative literature from the State University of New York at Binghamton and her agrégation in English from the Ecole Normale Supérieure de Tunis. Her book project studies women's testimonies of the Arab Uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, and Syria, with a particular focus on the city in rebellion. Her research interests are memory studies, autobiographical studies, and urban literary studies in North Africa and West Asia. Her MECAM research centers on transgenerational resistance in the testimonies of Tunisian political families.

Project Memory & Justice

Fathers, Daughters, and Transgenerational Resistance: The Testimonial Writing of Tunisian Political Families After 2011

This research project studies the production of transgenerational resistance and collective memory in the testimonial narratives of dissident Tunisian families. More particularly, it looks at Je Prendrai les armes s'il le faut...Tunisie: mon combat pour la liberté (2013) a testimony by the Tunisian lawyer and cofounder of Dostourna, Dalila Ben Mbarek Msaddek, and Nazzārāt 'Ummī (2018), a prison narrative by her father Ezzedine Hazgui. Between the prison narrative of the father who was persecuted under Bourguiba for being part of the Communist collective "Perspectives" and the testimony of the daughter who became a leading liberal activist during the uprising against Ben Ali is an untold story of transgenerational dialogue. This research project will delineate the main features of this dialogue by comparing the political practices of the father to those of the daughter. I ask whether Fadi Bardawil's assessment of Mashriqi leftist intellectuals post 1967 also applies to Tunisia; i.e has the "transnational liberal discourse of human rights" taken over the discourse of radical national liberation?" To answer this question, I will analyze the scathing self-criticism and self-satire that characterize Hazgui's prison narrative together with the overt critique of the "old left" levied by his daughter. I argue that the dialogue between these two texts is important for us to uncover for two main reasons. First, this dialogue produces a counter-memory to the official state narratives of contemporary Tunisia, and second it sheds light on the transgenerational traumas of Tunisian political families.



Prof. Sonia, Zlitni Fitouri

(Professor, Francophone and comparative literature, Université de Tunis / Tunisia)

Sonia ZLITNI-FITOURI is a Professor of French and Comparative Literature at the Department of French at the Faculty of Human and Social Sciences (University of Tunis). She is the Director of the Intersignes research laboratory (LR14E501) and chairs the PhD commission in French language, literature and civilisation. She is a specialist in French and Francophone literature, particularly Maghrebi literature and the work of Rachid Boudjedra. She also works in the fields of comparative literature, on the French New Novel and on Spanish literature. She is the author of numerous publications, including many articles in indexed journals and several books including La Réception du texte maghrébin, (Dir.), Tunis, Cérès Editions. 2004; Le Sacré et le profane dans les littératures de langue française, (Dir.), Co-edition Sud Editions/ Presses Universitaires de Bordeaux, Pessac. 2005; Les Métamorphoses du récit dans les oeuvres de Rachid Boudjedra et de Claude Simon, Tunis, Publications de la Faculté des Sciences Humaines et Sociales de Tunis/Imprimerie officielle. 2006; Edouard Glissant: for a poetics of the relation. Limits. Epreuves. Dépassement, (Dir.), Co-publication of the Beit-Al-Hikma Academy // Presses Universitaires de Bordeaux, Pessac. 2008; L'espace dans l'oeuvre de Rachid Boudjedra : épuisement, débordement, Préface de Rachid Boudjedra, Sud Editions, Tunis, 2010; Pour un art de la relation : Processus narratif et restructuration du sujet dans trois romans maghrébins de langue française, Centre de publications universitaires CPU, Tunis, 2014; Littératures francophones et comparées: Postcolonial Postures, (Dir.); Latrach Editions, Tunis, 2018; Le corps à l'épreuve du genre dans la littérature, le cinéma et le blogue maghrébins de langue française, (Co-direction with Claudia Gronmann); Latrach Editions, Tunis, 2018; Assia Djebar: de l'écrit au cri; (Dir.), Latrach Editions, Tunis, 2018; Nouveaux regards sur le monologue intérieur, (Dir), PSN, Paris, 2021; Réinventer la nature : pour une écopoétique des littératures de langue française, (Dir.), PSN, Paris, 2021.

Project Memory & Justice

Memory and transitional justice in French-language Tunisian literature

Examining collective and individual memory in French-language Tunisian literature is an attempt to re-reveal a justice that has long been dreamt of, fantasised about and claimed. The literature, which is both political and subjective in nature, is essentially a denunciation of the "production of forgetting" rooted in long years of injustice and violence. This research project will focus on the transition from the need to break the silence and to say the unspeakable in mimetic writing to the need to testify driven by the duty of memory. Writing and testifying thus become a way to forgo forgetting, of reactivating "pathological memory" which – it seems to me – is essential to ensure a democratic transition based on the rights to justice and truth by questioning the past, by confronting past crimes and re-shaping the memory of the past. Furthermore, this research project will not only be based on this thematic and historical relationship between literature, memory and justice, but will also attempt to reflect on the aesthetic and scriptural dimension that is the foundation of all creative work. It would be interesting to show how the subversion of history permeates the writing that takes it on. This discourse is based on new strategies used in fiction-writing that disrupt the fiction aesthetics of Tunisian writers. Indeed, violence and memory govern and disrupt the form and structure of the novel. This is essentially achieved through deconstructive and fragmentary writing. The main axes of our reflection will be:

- 1 Literature and transitional justice;
- 2 The role of sources and archives in the rereading of the past and, Poetics of historical narration and languages of memory.



IFG IV "Resources & Sustainability"

The focus of the IFG "Resources and Sustainability" is to examine the origins and potential effects of a range of economic and social strategies that are currently being explored to create an alternative model of sustainable economic development in the region. This IFG investigates how such strategies might lead to positive economic development and help address environmental challenges.

The fourth Interdisciplinary Fellow Group (IFG IV) "Resources and Sustainability" focuses on the origins and potential effects of a range of economic and social strategies that are being explored to create an alternative model of sustainable economic development in North Africa. The IFG examines how these strategies can lead to positive socio-economic development and help address environmental challenges.

Coordinator

Dr. habil. Steffen wippel

(Postdoc, Philipps-Universität Marburg / Germany)

Steffen Wippel is currently coordinator of the interdisciplinary fellowship group "Resources and Sustainability" at the Merian Center for Advanced Studies in the Maghreb (MECAM), Tunis, for the Center for Near and Middle East Studies (CNMS), Philipps-Universität Marburg. He previously worked at Freie Universität Berlin, the Universities of Potsdam, Erlangen, Leipzig and Marburg, the University of Southern Denmark in Odense and Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO) in Berlin. He holds a PhD in economics from the FU Berlin and a habilitation degree (Dr. habil.) from the University of Erlangen. His interdisciplinary research focuses on regionalization processes (including transregional entanglements) and urban development (especially of port and secondary cities) in the MENA region. His most important research fields have been Morocco and Oman. Currently, Wippel is finalizing an edited volume entitled "Branding the Middle East" and preparing a new research project on socially sustainable urban development in Arab cities under conditions neoliberalisation and authoritarian regimes.



Cluster Pls



Prof. Héla Belkhiria

(Lecturer, Electrical Engineering, National Engineering School of Tunis (ENSIT), University of Tunis / Tunisia)



Prof. Eckart Conze

(Professor, Modern and Contemporary History, History and Cultural Studies, Philipps-Universität Marburg / Germany)



Prof. Tamirace Fakhoury

(Associate Professor, Political Science and Global Refugee and Migration Studies, Department of Politics and Society, Aalborg University in Copenhagen / Denmark)



Prof. Lamia Rouached

(Associate Professor, Quantitative Methods and Economics, Institut supérieur de gestion de Tunis, University of Tunis / Tunisia)



Prof. Rachid Ouaissa

(Professor, Middle East Politics, Center for Near and Middle East Studies (CNMS) and Director of MECAM, Philipps-Universität Marburg / Germany)



Prof. Benedikt Stuchtey

(Professor, Modern History, History and Cultural Studies, Philipps-Universität Marburg / Germany)



Lisa M. Sarida Lippert

(PhD Candidate, Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker Center for Science and Peace Research ZNF, University of Hamburg / Germany)

Lisa M. Sarida Lippert is a PhD candidate at the Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker – Centre for Science and Peace Research (ZNF) at the University of Hamburg. She studied political science at Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz University in Hannover and Université Cheikh Anta Diop in Dakar, and holds a master's degree in peace and conflict studies from Otto von Guericke University in Magdeburg.

Since 2018, she has been working in the Conflicting Use of Land and Water research group at ZNF, together with colleagues from biology and sociology. Her PhD project investigates the daily practices of small-scale farmers in drylands with a case study in the region south of Bouhedma National Park, Tunisia.

Lippert's areas of academic interest are interdisciplinary research on community peace and conflict management and their links to natural resource distribution and use, particularly with respect to desertification and water scarcity.

Project Resources & Sustainability

Project: Doing Peace in Drylands

Global warming, desertification and water scarcity are severely challenging the living conditions of rural populations. However, natural resource depletion and competing forms of use do not necessarily lead to violent conflicts, as recent research shows. They also present an opportunity for environmental cooperation, community empowerment and conflict prevention, while the literature on climate change and conflict suffers from a case selection bias, which leads to neglect of the peaceful outcome option. In order to understand the dynamics present in a climate change and conflict context, researchers are encouraged to increasingly focus on peaceful and nonviolent contexts.

The proposed project takes up this idea. It investigates the daily practices of small-scale farmers in the region south of Bouhedma National Park by asking the following research questions:

- How do they navigate daily natural resource challenges?
- How do they adapt to land degradation and ecological deprivation?
- What role do women play in this context and how is gender presented?

The project contributes to a better understanding of how rural communities in drylands negotiate natural resources on a daily basis and the consequences this has for (local) peace and conflict prevention.



Assist. Prof. Alexander Peter Martin

(Assistant Professor, Politics, South Mediterranean University, Tunis / Tunisia)

Alexander Peter Martin has held the position of Assistant Professor of Politics at the Southern Mediterranean University, Tunisia since 2020. He previously worked for the University of Lincoln, the American University of Beirut, the University of Tunis, the University of Exeter, and Durham University. He holds a PhD in politics from the University of Durham (2016). His research focuses on civil society, democratization, public policy and energy transitions in North Africa.

Project Resources & Sustainability

Project: From Oil Town to Solar Town: A Just Transition for Tataouine

This research applies the "Just Transition" model to the Tunisian case study to explore how Tunisia's energy transition can help address environmental challenges while leading to sustainable economic development in marginalized fossil fuel producing regions. This research explores the potential for a just transition in Tataouine, southern Tunisia, through a holistic strategy to maximize the socio-economic and employment benefits and minimize the drawbacks of a transition from fossil fuels to green energy. This research aims to determine how Tataouine will be affected in the short, medium, and long term by a strategy to diversify Tunisia's energy mix and examines plans to mitigate negative impacts on the labor market.



Dr. Mansour Nadia

(Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Economics and Management, University of Sousse / Tunisia; Visiting Scholar, University of Salamanca / Spain)

Nadia Mansour is an assistant professor at the University of Sousse, Tunisia, and a visiting scholar at the University of Salamanca, Spain. Her research interests include finance, banking, macroeconomics and innovation. She is an academic member and ambassador of the Institute of Communication of Greece, a member of the indexed conference committee, a member of the editorial board of Taylor & Francis, IGI Global and Springer, and a reviewer for IGI Global, Emerald and Wiley. She has presented several scientific conferences in international (France, Morocco, USA, Turkey) and national conferences. She has also been a keynote speaker and session chair in several conferences in Turkey, India and the United Arab Emirates. She has published several articles in peer-reviewed journals and chapters (IGI Global, Palgrave Macmillan) and edited books (Taylor & Francis, Springer).

Project Resources & Sustainability

Project: Towards Sustainable Banking in the Maghreb Countries

The Maghreb countries, like other countries around the world, suffer from a lack of available capital and experience that has hindered the adoption of sustainable and efficient energy technologies and practices by businesses. However, some companies have completed hundreds of green finance transactions, resulting in positive financial and environmental outcomes for themselves, residents and communities. Within this framework, and based on the available literature, we can see the following solutions:

- Strengthen the capacity of partner banks to develop loan products and evaluate applications for energy efficiency project financing.
- Helping small and medium-sized enterprises identify cost-effective energy improvements.
- For Tunisia, for example, implement strategic marketing to promote the Green Economy Financing Facility (GEFF) to banks, businesses, and professional associations.
- Work with suppliers of energy-efficient equipment and maintain a mechanism to promote the adoption of energy-efficient technologies.
- Provide skills transfer to financial institutions, local engineers and businesses to support the energy efficiency market in the Maghreb countries.

Therefore, this study will focus on a comparative analysis between European and Maghrebian banks in terms of the application of sustainable development rules (environmental, social and governance criteria – ESG). To carry out this study, it is necessary to consult banks that work on "green" credits, that is to say banks that encourage green investment. Among them, for example, the National Bank of Agriculture of Tunisia supports investments in "healthy" agriculture.



Dr. Mohamed Ismail Sabry

(Lecturer, Fresenius University of Applied Sciences and Bremen University of Applied Sciences / Germany)

Mohamed Ismail Sabry is a visiting postdoctoral researcher at the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) at Erasmus University Rotterdam and a lecturer at the Fresenius University of Applied Sciences (Hochschule Fresenius) and the Bremen University of Applied Sciences (Hochschule Bremen). He received his PhD in Economics from Philipps University Marburg in 2013, with his BA and MA from the American University in Cairo (AUC). His professional experience includes working in the development field on a United Nations Development Program (UNDP) project in Cairo and another project in Berlin funded by the German Foreign Ministry.

Sabry's academic interests include institutional economics, economic development, political economy, and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, and his research focuses on state-society and state-business relations. He has published several books in English and Arabic and several academic articles in various peer-reviewed journals.

Project Resources & Sustainability

considered in terms of a matrix of long-term growth levels, equality, and environmental sustainability.

Project: State-Society Relations and Growth Paths in North Africa

This research examines the growth trajectories that develop from existing state-society relationships in North Africa. It plans to conduct a comparative analysis of these relationships and the resulting paths in three key North African countries: Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria. State-society relations will be analyzed on the basis of state-firm-union relations (SFERs), i.e., the power relations between the main actors in the industrial sector of the countries studied: the state, large businessmen (tycoons), owners and managers of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) (businessmen), and unions. Several modes of REES are identified, including cronyism, state capture, balanced lobbying and state domination. REES shape policies, regulations, legislation, and their degree of enforcement, leading to a unique industrial policy profile for each country. The resulting industrial policy then leads to different growth trajectories. In the proposed research, growth trajectories are

The three North African countries have developed different REES during the post-colonial period and these relationships are still evolving. The proposed research will rely primarily on a comparative case study approach, using qualitative data supported by statistical data analysis. Data will be collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources will be generated from interviews conducted primarily with key members of business associations, NGOs, academic and business experts, and (possibly) government officials involved in industrial policy. Secondary sources will be obtained from various publications of ministries, business associations, trade unions and international organizations. They will also include quantitative data on relevant industrial statistics obtained from international organizations.



Prof. Andreas Thiel

(Professor, International Agricultural Policy and Environmental Governance, University of Kassel / Germany)

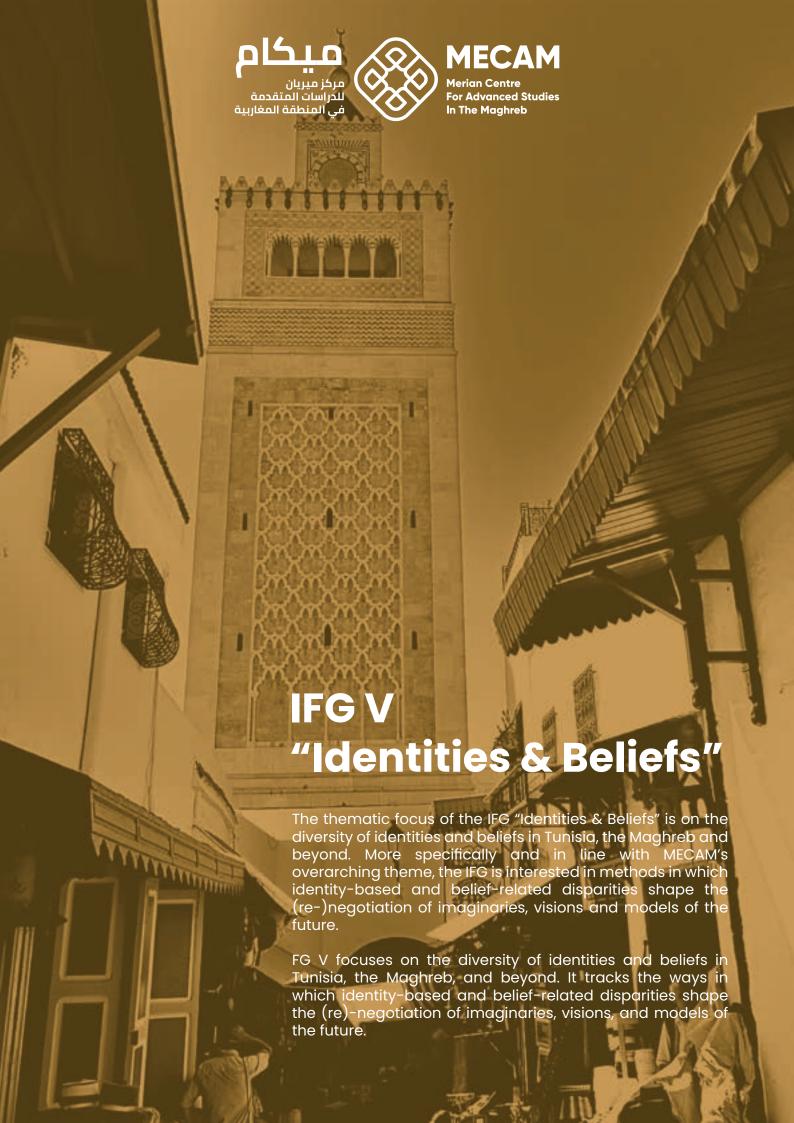
Andreas Thiel holds the Chair of International Agricultural Policy and Environmental Governance and heads the corresponding section at the Faculty of Ecological Agricultural Sciences at the University of Kassel in Germany. Until 2016, he was a post-doc in resource economics and visiting professor in environmental governance at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. He is an affiliate member of the Vincent and Elinor Ostrom Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis.

Thiel's research interests concern polycentric governance in social-ecological systems, its performance and change. He develops this conceptual perspective in the context of research on water, biodiversity, climate change adaptation and agro-environmental governance at different spatial and jurisdictional scales in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. In this regard, he leads several international research projects. For his research, he uses qualitative and comparative research methods, while his team also works with quantitative approaches, social network analysis and qualitative comparative analysis.

Project Resources & Sustainability

Project: Change, transition and performance of Tunisian agroenvironmental governance: a polycentric perspective

The provision and production of public goods in relation to resources can be conceptualized through the analytical lens of polycentric governance. The main proponents of normative polycentric governance had specific ideas about how the social sphere should be structured, modelled on an idealized North American federalist perspective. It is supposed to foster resilience and adaptive capacity, self-correction in the interests of citizens and consumers, and the efficient and sustainable provision of public goods. Its underlying cultural and systemic biases have rarely been researched. The proposed research on polycentric governance of agri-environmental relations in Tunisia aims to contribute to filling this gap. Tunisia stands out as an exceptional example in this regard, as it is a country in transition from an autocratic regime to a democratically constituted multi-ethnic and multi-religious state in North Africa. The explicit decentralization of state responsibilities has been an important reform in polycentric governance. It faces considerable sustainability challenges. At the same time, there are initiatives to transform agriculture. In this context, the research asks the following questions: How do constitutional rules affect agri-environmental governance in Tunisia since its transition to democracy? How is agri-environmental governance in Tunisia evolving and how is it affected by Tunisia's transition from an autocratic to a democratic state? What is the role of decentralization for Tunisian agri-environmental governance and its transformation?



Coordinator

Dr. Alyssa Miller

(Postdoc, Institute for Middle East Studies, German Institute for Global and Area Studies (GIGA) / Germany)

Alyssa Miller is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Institute for Middle East Studies at the German Institute for Global and Area Studies (GIGA). She holds a PhD in Cultural Anthropology from Duke University and was an Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow at the Wolf Humanities Center at the University of Pennsylvania from 2019-20. Her research investigates socio-political transformations in Tunisia and the wider SWANA region following the 2011 Arab Uprisings, particularly from the viewpoint of marginalized communities. She has written on precarity and its representation in Tunisian cultural production, anti-corruption movements in the context of transitional justice, uneven development and (in)security in borderland regions, and the transformation of kinship through experiences of ambiguous loss. She is currently working on a book project that examines kin-based strategies to defend citizenship rights for alleged ex-fighters and other Tunisian returnees from the Islamic State, and to secure the repatriation of fighters' wives and stateless children. Her publications include "I Do Not Forgive!' Refusal and Hope in Tunisia's Democratic Transition" (Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, 2021) and "Kin-Work in a Time of Jihad: Sustaining Bonds of Filiation and Care for Tunisian Foreign Combatants" (Cultural Anthropology, 2018).



Cluster Pis



Dr. André Bank

(Senior Research Fellow, Institute for Middle East Studies, German Institute for Global and Area Studies (GIGA) / Germany)



Prof. Fadma Aït Mous

(Professor, Sociology, Aïn Chock Faculty of Letters and the Humanities, Hassan II University of Casablanca / Morocco)



Assoc. Prof. Elizabeth Bishop

(Associate Professor, History, Texas State University/ USA)

Elizabeth Bishop joined Texas State's History Department in 2008 with a PhD from the University of Chicago. At Texas State, she teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in the areas of her scholarly expertise—the history of the Middle East, postcolonial Arab history, and the history of the Global Cold War, as well as serving as faculty advisor to the Model Arab League student leadership activity. Prior work on UGEMA by Dr.Bishop was partially supported by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA)'s Fulbright Program, and by Texas State's Department of History. She has been elected to serve on the board of the American Institute of Maghrib Studies (AIMS).

Project Identities & Beliefs

UGEMA, L'Union Générale des étudiants musulmans algériens, in Tunisia

At a press conference, Prime Minister of Algeria Abdelaziz Djerad called for more research on the 19 May 1956 strike organized by the General Union of Muslim Students of Algeria (Union Générale des Etudiants Musulmans Algériens, UGEMA). The fact that nearly all Indigenous students at Algiers' university joined the strike, as did most of those in France, is celebrated each year as the "National Day of Students," and many UGEMA leaders were recruited into the nation's diplomatic service. Under the slogan, "with diplomas, we will not make better corpses," UGEMA called an indefinite strike 19 May 1956. In retrospect, the students' strike marked a turning point in Algeria's nascent national liberation struggle. Following the success of their strike, students began to join the National Liberation Army (Armée de Libération Nationale, ALN) in substantial numbers (Wallon 2015). Recalling his experience as an organizer, Salah Mekacher remarked "the students organized the Revolution better to such an extent the historic Wilaya III, where I was assigned, became a well-run clock" ("19 Mai 1956," Algérie Presse Service, 18 May 2020); Laid Lacheguar recalled "the students' strike ... had a significant impact on the Algerian Revolution at a time when France tried to convey the idea the intellectual elite weren't involved" ("19 mai 1956 grève des étudiants," YouTube).



Dr. Guy Eyre

(Postdoc, Department of Political Economy, King's College London/ UK)

Guy Eyre completed his PhD in Politics and International Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. Guy also holds a BA in Philosophy from Bristol University, an MA in Near and Middle Eastern Studies from SOAS, and an MA in Legal and Political Theory from University College London. Situated at the nexus of comparative politics, political theory, and methods associated with anthropology, his doctoral research studied the politics of prominent transnational Islamic social movements in Morocco and Algeria who claim they "don't do politics". Guy is currently working on two new projects. The first develops a comparative study of Salafi transnationalism across North Africa. The second project examines the emergence of sectarian tensions, and specifically 'anti-Shiite' rhetoric and sentiment amongst Salafi networks, in Morocco and Algeria.

Project Identities & Beliefs

Mapping Wahhabi / Salafi Transnationalism and the Limits of State Power in North Africa

Part of a global Sunni religious movement formed of scholars, preachers, and lay individuals propagated worldwide since the 1980s by Saudi-sanctioned Islamic institutions, Salafi groups are perhaps the most tangible example of how Islam and transnational Islamic actors simultaneously function across discrete geographic and social scales. Scholarship typically depicts Salafi actors as disseminating a broadly rigid, universal framework largely detached from the specificities of the national and local contexts (Roy, 2004). More recent work on Islamic transnationalism and international relations, however, has begun to underscore the capacity of Salafis to pursue their own agendas independently from states that purportedly sponsor them. Via extensive ethnographic work, and also qualitative content analysis of interviews, online sermons, social media statements, and printed and audio-visual Salafi literature, this project demonstrates the role of national and local histories and politics in variously shaping the religiosity and politics of prominent Salafi networks across North Africa. In doing so, it highlights the capacity of these local Salafi grassroots actors to pursue their own agendas and act independently from Saudi transnational religious influence and authority.



Shreya Parikh

(PhD Candidate, Department of Sociology, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA / CERI-Sciences Po Paris, France)

Shreya Parikh is a Dual PhD. candidate in sociology at CERI-Sciences Po Paris and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her dissertation research focuses on the constructions and contestations of race and racialization in Tunisia through a focus on the experiences of racialization of Black Tunisians and Sub Saharan migrants. More broadly, she is interested in the study of race, religion, migration, and citizenship in West Asia and North Africa region and its diaspora. Her work has been funded by the Global Religion Research Initiative at the University of Notre Dame, Kenan Institute for Ethics at Duke University, and internal grants from her institutions of affiliation. Her research has been published in MERIP's Middle East Report and IRMC's Carnet; her op-eds have appeared in Nawaat (Tunisia), The Wire (India), The Print (India), and Dawn (Pakistan). Parikh grew up in Ahmedabad in India, and undertook her previous studies at Sciences Po Paris and the American University of Beirut.

Project Identities & Beliefs

Constructing and contesting Blackness in Tunisia

The goal of my dissertation project is to investigate race (a social construct) and racialization in Tunisia. I approach this investigation through the study of Black as a racial category because Blackness, i.e., set of constructed imaginations about what it means to be Black, is (re)produced, negotiated, and challenged in relation to other racial, ethnic, and national categories like White, Arab, Amazigh (indigenous populations), and Tunisian. Scholars of history have detailed the genealogies of Black enslaved populations brought to Tunisia from West Africa until the abolition of slavery in 1846 in Tunisia. Yet we know little about the processes and mechanisms through which this history plays into the construction of Black as racial category. In addition, in the last decade, Tunisia has become an important site of transit migration from Sub-Saharan Africa to Europe. What does the increasing presence of Sub-Saharan migrants in Tunisia add to historical layers of constructions of Black as a racial category? Through what processes and mechanisms do both darker-skinned Tunisians and Sub Saharan migrants undergo racialization, i.e., categorization as Black? To answer these questions, I rely primarily on interviews with Black Tunisians and Sub-Saharan migrants and observations in sites that host a significant number of these two groups.



Dr. Arbia Selmi

(Postdoc, Dynamics and Experiences of Globalization, Centre Marc Bloch, Berlin/ Germany)

Arbia Selmi is a sociologist of labour and gender. Her doctoral thesis in sociology at the École des hautes études en sciences sociales (EHESS) in Paris focuses on the mobilization of women trade unionists for access to positions of power within the Tunisian General Labour Union (UGTT). Since March 2022, Arbia Selmi is a member of the IFG framework: Identities and Beliefs as part of a postdoctoral fellowship with the Merian centre for advanced studies MECAM in Tunis. Arbia Selmi is a member of the axis "Gender, class, race" of the Maurice Halbwachs Centre in Paris, and since October 2019, an associate member of the Marc Bloch Centre in Berlin, on the axis "Dynamics and experiences of globalization". Her research lies at the intersection of three fields of analysis: political sociology (collective mobilization); sociology of gender; sociology of organizations. Arbia is an expert in gender studies and has specialised in gender and trade union issues. She is a feminist activist involved in associations fighting for gender equality and against violence against women in Tunisia.

Project Identities & Beliefs

Tunisian women's mobilizations for equality: Identity, beliefs and unfinished revolution?

Following the 2011 Arab revolts, Tunisia experienced a decade of profound political, economic and social change, with the main challenges being the establishment of democracy, social justice, and the expansion of gender equality. However, despite significant advances in women's rights in Tunisia, women still cannot inherit on equal terms with men. A feminist movement for equality in inheritance was therefore created in 2018, sponsored by more than 60 secular feminist associations and united against the Islamic movement, which sought to pressure the government into adopting a law on equal inheritance. However, the Tunisian Parliament ultimately rejected the draft law establishing inheritance equality between the sexes. This was due to the patriarchal societal culture, religion and "national identity" which is defined in Article 1 of the Tunisian Constitution of 1958 and later reaffirmed by the Constitution of 2014: declaring Islam as the religion of Tunisia. This rejection provoked the anger of women who mobilized to adopt this law. My research project addresses the following question: How do national identity and beliefs influence the rights of Tunisian women?

Based on qualitative research and analysis of the archives of feminist associations, this paper seeks to understand the influence of national identity, beliefs, societal culture and law in the creation of inequalities for women. Going beyond the issue of inheritance law, I ask what conditions would allow for the establishment of substantive equality in all areas in post-revolutionary Tunisia.

