

ميكام

مركز ميربان
للدراسات المتقدمة
في المنطقة المغاربية



MECAM

Merian Centre
For Advanced Studies
In The Maghreb

"IMAGINING FUTURES – DEALING WITH DISPARITY"

17–19 MARCH 2023

MERIAN CENTRE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES IN
THE MAGHREB (MECAM)
27, RUE FLORIAN, BORJ ZOUARA | 1029 TUNIS
MECAM-OFFICE@UNI-MARBURG.DE



MECAM's Closing Conference

"Imagining Futures - Dealing with Disparity"

17-19 March 2023 / Tunis, Tunisia

Abstract

Established in April 2020, the Merian Centre for Advanced Studies in the Maghreb (MECAM) has become an integral part of the Tunisian and Maghreb academic landscape. Based in Tunis, the MECAM is a Tunisian-German research centre that intends to be a platform for interdisciplinary, transregional, and intergenerational research based on humanities and social sciences. MECAM explores the connection between multidimensional disparity and the possibilities of building and negotiating future-oriented ideas and models in the societies of today's Maghreb, as launched by the "Arab Spring". Therefore, it focuses on complex social, political, cultural and economic processes and issues of common interest and concern that divide and connect the Maghreb, the Middle East and Europe historically and in the modern time– e.g. beliefs, distribution of resources, cultural transformations, migration, rule of law, socio-economic conflicts, and (transitional) justice. These exemplified pressing issues converge in the central theme of MECAM: "*Imagining Futures - Dealing with Disparity*". Under this label, MECAM is planning its Closing Conference at the end of March 2023 in Tunis. The Arab Spring has shown that we are dealing with fermenting societies. For example, behind the institutional façades of some countries in the Maghreb, there are constant social shifts toward new constellations of actors and their sometimes-competing agendas. Within MECAM, we assume that different manifestations of disparity determine these shifts to a considerable extent. And each new formation is associated with certain visions or perceptions of the future or/and specific models of society.

Imagining Futures

This concluding scientific gathering of MECAM's preliminary funding phase aims to reflect on the complex processes by which models and visions for the future of society are (re)negotiated (imagining the future) in the region. Crucially, this process of (re)negotiation has to be seen in the context of the deep inequalities (disparities) that can characterise the Maghreb. In the sense of François Hartog (*Régimes d'historicité*; 2003), an anticipated future always suggests a projection into history – thus the future can be understood as a construct built and imagined on the basis of everyday and past realities. At the scholarly level, the concept of "Imagining Futures" has found its way into a number of debates in various disciplines, including geography (Gregory, 1993, Harvey, 2000), economics (Lanier, 2014, Beckert, 2016), ethics (Bowles, 2018), and cultural studies (Appadurai, 2013), from which MECAM has generated its academic point of departure.



Dealing with Disparity

"Disparity"- refers to various forms of inequality, including its spatial and temporal dimensions. Disparity is an expression of unequal power imbalances within societies, but also of different norms and ways of life. The term refers to inequalities as "avoidable, morally unjustified, hierarchical differences" (Therborn, 2002) in income, social status, gender and race relations, cultural dominance, and access to social resources, (such as education, work, and health). Inequalities exist in all societies but the Tunisian or Maghreb perspective may offer new or different perspectives and experiences, and perhaps models for thinking about issues of inequality and the future. Against this background, the main objective the Closing Conference is to trace the complex processes by which the societal models of the future are developed and (re)negotiated (imagining the future), while maintaining an awareness of the profoundly unequal conditions from which these models are derived (disparity). For this purpose, it considers different societal actors as well as respective contexts of time and space, which define the disparate starting conditions for models of the future. Thus, the Conference will explore the impact of multidimensional disparity on models, visions and imaginaries of the future within the framework of MECAM's five thematic clusters, which represent pressing issues of common interest and concern: "Aesthetics & Cultural Practice", "Inequality & Mobility"; "Memory & Justice"; "Resources & Sustainability" and "Identities & Beliefs". All analysis will proceed from a comparative historical perspective and will deal with the following two overarching research questions:

- *How does the multidimensional inequality of Maghreb societies affect different social spheres and spheres of life (Bourdieu, 2012; Gana, 2012; Salehi-Isfahani et al., 2014)?*
- *What are the implications of existing inequality for the scope of these future models that coexist and compete both inside and outside the Maghreb?*

The three-day closing conference will be an opportunity to bring together researchers from different career stages, academic disciplines and world regions to discuss these issues and to build and strengthen scientific networks. At the same time, this conference is also an opportunity to thank and bring together all those who have always provided MECAM with start-up support since its first hour of birth.

We are pleased to welcome at this conference not only researchers from the Maghreb, the Middle East and Europe, but also researchers from our partner centres ICAS:MP from Delhi (India) and MIASA from Accra (Ghana). Together with both centres as well as the Merian Centre Family as a whole, we generally aim to broaden MECAM's research to include inter-regional perspectives. Consequently, a roundtable discussion on current academic freedoms will take place during this conference.



MECAM's Closing Conference

"Imagining Futures - Dealing with Disparity"

17-19 March 2023 / Tunis, Tunisia

Programme

Day 1 – Friday, 17 March 2023: Reception at Oudhna

Location: Conference room at the reception centre of the archaeological site in [Oudhna, Mornag](#)

12:45-14:00	Transfer from Hotel Carlton to Oudhna Meeting Point for all conference guests: Hotel Carlton, 31 Ave Habib Bourguiba, Tunis
14:00-15:00	Guided Visit of the archaeological site of Oudhna
15:00-15:50	Opening session welcome remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 15:00-15:20: Opening words by <i>MECAM directors Khaled Kchir</i> (University of Tunis, Tunisia) / <i>Rachid Ouaiassa</i> (Philipps-Universität Marburg, Germany) - 15:20-15:30: Welcoming Words by <i>President Habib Sidhom</i> (Université de Tunis, Tunisia) - 15:30-15:40: Welcoming Words by a representative of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Tunisia (<i>to be confirmed</i>) - 15:40-15:50: Welcoming Words by a representative of German Embassy in Tunisia (<i>to be confirmed</i>)
15:50-16:30	<i>Coffee Break</i>
16:30-16:45	Wrap up on the preliminary phase <i>Julius Dihstelhoff</i> (MECAM, Tunisia): MECAM's Achievements in its preliminary phase <i>Isabelle Werenfels</i> (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), Germany / MECAM): Germany's discovery of the Maghreb
16:45-17:45	Keynote <i>Khaled Kchir</i> (University of Tunis, Tunisia) / <i>Rachid Ouaiassa</i> (Philipps-Universität Marburg): What role can MECAM play in the <i>longue durée</i> of social sciences and humanities in the Maghreb?
17:45	Transfer from Oudhna to Hotel Carlton



Day 2 – Saturday, 18 March 2023: MECAM Premises

Location : Campus of the Institut Supérieur des Etudes Appliquées en Humanités de Tunis (ISEAHT) – Université de Tunis, 27, rue Florian - Borj Zouara (Bab Saadoun)

08:30-08:45	Transfer from Hotel Carlton to MECAM Meeting Point: Hotel Carlton, 31 Ave Habib Bourguiba, Tunis
08:45	Welcome by the organizers Meeting Point: Gathering at the entrance area of the ISEAHT campus
09:00-11:00	<p>Panel 1: “Aesthetics & Cultural Practice”: Disparity and future models in Arab Literature and the Arts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair/Discussant: <i>Malte Hagener, Olaf Müller and Friederike Pannewick</i> (all Philipps-Universität Marburg, Germany) - <i>Rasha Chatta</i> (Freie Universität Berlin, Germany) and <i>Katarzyna Falecka</i> (Newcastle University): Figurations of History in Algerian Comics and Contemporary Art - <i>Farouk El Maarouf</i> (Justus Liebig University Gießen, Germany): Waiting, Art Practitioners, Hope, and Never-Ending Queues - <i>Teresa Pepe</i> (University of Oslo, Norway): “That Future is Now and it Stinks”. The Climate Crisis in Contemporary Arabic Speculative Fiction. - <i>Angela Jouini (Rabing)</i> (Freie Universität Berlin, Germany): Images Towards the Future. Mobility and Uncertainty in Migrant Filmmaking
11:00-11:30	<i>Coffee Break</i>
11:30-13:30	<p>Panel 2: "Inequality & Mobility": Intertwining dimensions of inequality and mobility in contemporary Tunisia and the Maghreb</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair/Discussant: <i>Mohamed Ali Ben Zina</i> (University of Tunis, Tunisia) - <i>Sofien Jaballah</i> (University of Sfax, Tunisia): Rural Exodus and Street Economy in Tunisia: Mobility(s) vs. (in)equalities: The case of the informal market of the street of Spain in Tunis - <i>Marouene Taleb</i> (Institut de recherche sur le Maghreb contemporain (IRMC), Tunisia): The governance of the Tunisian-Algerian Border: a pact of invisibility for marginalized communities - <i>Mourad Ben Jelloul</i> (University of Tunis, Tunisia): Quel rôle de la planification territoriale stratégique dans la réduction des inégalités spatiales en Tunisie - <i>Imed Melliti</i> (University of Tunis El Manar, Tunisia): Vulnérables. Portraits sociologiques.
13:30-14:30	<i>Lunch Break at MECAM premises</i>
14:30-16:30	<p>Panel 3: "Memory & Justice”: Practices and gender relations of memory and justice in post-conflict societies of the Maghreb and Mashreq regions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair/Discussant: <i>Susanne Buckley-Zistel</i> (Philipps-Universität Marburg) - <i>Faouzia Zeraouia</i> (University of Jijel, Algeria): Empowering reconciliation and sustainable peace in post-conflict societies in the MENA region: Silence and memorialization processes



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Selima Kebaili</i> (University of Lausanne, Switzerland): Genre, violence et récit national: le cas d'un mémorial dédié aux femmes victimes de la dictature en Tunisie post-révolution. - <i>Hayet Rouibah</i> (University of Jijel, Algeria): Mémoire et guerre d'indépendance en Algérie : approche du genre - <i>Khaled Kchir</i> (University of Tunis, Tunisia): Témoignage à propos de l'élaboration de la loi sur la justice transitionnelle en Tunisie 2012-2013
16:30-17:00	<p>Reception and Photo Exhibition at MECAM's premises <i>"Working hands in arid lands"</i> Introductory Words by MECAM's alumni fellow Lisa M. Sarida Lippert (University of Hamburg, Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker - Centre for Science and Peace Research, Germany) - IFG IV: "Resources & Sustainability" Meeting Point: Gathering at the entrance area of the ISEAHT campus</p>
17:00	Transfer from MECAM to Hotel Carlton

Day 3 – Sunday, 19 March 2023: MECAM Premises //

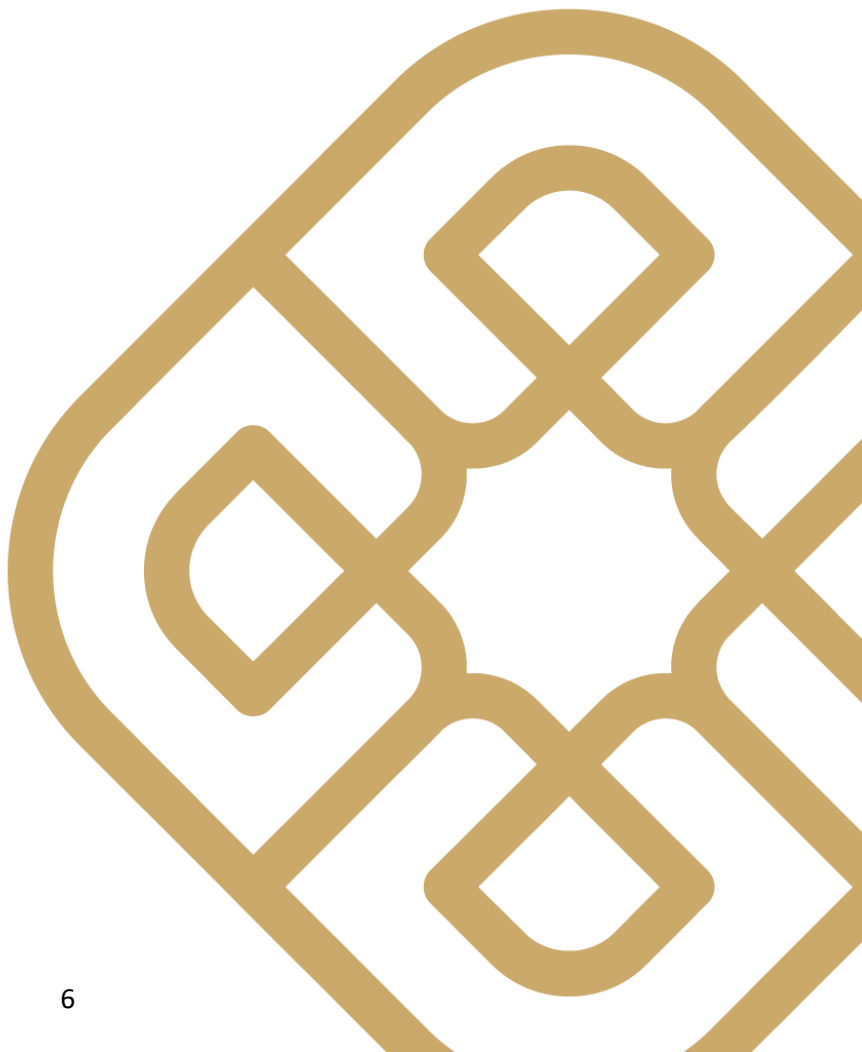
Closing Event at Club Tahar Haddad

Location : Campus of the Institut Supérieur des Etudes Appliquées en Humanités de Tunis (ISEAHT) – Université de Tunis, 27, rue Florian - Borj Zouara (Bab Saadoun) ; Club Tahar Haddad, 20 Rue du Tribunal, Bab Souika, Tunis

08:30-09:00	Transfer from Hotel Carlton to MECAM
09:00-11:00	<p>Panel 4: "Resources & Sustainability": Imagining Futures in the Maghreb between Environmental Needs and Social Justice"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair/Discussant: <i>Katharina Lange</i> (Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO), Germany) - <i>Habib Ayeb</i> (Université Paris 8 à Saint-Denis, France): Facing climate change (CC), how to manage natural resources in a sustainable way? - <i>Jamie Furniss</i> (Institut de recherche sur le Maghreb contemporain (IRMC), Tunisia): The blue-clad fennec: authoritarian environmentalism in Tunisia, and its afterlives - <i>Alexander Martin</i> (South Mediterranean University, Tunisia): How can an energy transition provide economic and environmental justice for Tunisian citizens? - <i>Nidhal Attia</i> (Heinrich Böll Stiftung Tunesien, Tunisia): Foundations of a socio-ecological transformation in Tunisia
11:00-11:30	<i>Coffee Break</i>
11:30-13:30	<p>Panel 5: "Identity & Beliefs": Whose Futures? Imagining Social and Political Change in the Maghreb</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair/Discussant: <i>André Bank</i> (GIGA German Institute for Global and Area Studies) - <i>Alyssa Miller</i> (GIGA German Institute for Global and Area Studies): "Manish Msamah: Imagining Futures through Refusal" - <i>Fadma Ait-Mous</i> (Hassan II University, Morocco): <i>Seeing Change: When Moroccan women are picturing their future</i>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Mounir Saidani</i> (University of Tunis, El-Manar, High Institute of Human Sciences, Tunisia): “Postrevolutionary Tunisian Youth (De-/Re-)Constructing Identities and Beliefs”
13:30-14:30	<i>Lunch Break at MECAM premises</i>
14:30-15:30	Coffee and poster presentation of partner projects in MECAM premises
15:30-17:30	<p>Round table Discussion: How to protect and foster academic freedom <i>in the field of International Scientific Cooperation?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moderation: <i>Julius Dihstelhoff</i> (MECAM) - <i>Najiba Chkir</i> (University of Sfax, Tunisia) - <i>Khaled Kchir</i> (MECAM, University of Tunis, Tunisia) - <i>Shail Mayaram</i> (Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), India) - <i>Sebastian Schwecke</i> (Max Weber Forum for South Asian Studies, Delhi, India) - <i>Susann Baller</i> (Maria Sibylla Merian Institute for Advanced Studies in Africa (MIASA), Ghana) - <i>Chika Mba</i> (Research Fellow, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana) (to be confirmed)
17:30	Transfer from MECAM to Hotel Carlton
19:30	Meeting point Bab Bhar (Porte de France – Rue de la Kasbah, Tunis): Walk through Medina to Club Taher Haddad
20:00-22:00	<p>Closing event at Club Taher Haddad</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closing remarks by the organisers and reception - Concert: Ghassen Gherissi, Album Palandabu, Gnawa fusion





MECAM's Closing Conference

"Imagining Futures - Dealing with Disparity"

17-19 March 2023 / Tunis, Tunisia

Abstracts & Biographies

Day 2 – Saturday, 18 March 2023: 09:00-11:00

Panel 1: "Aesthetics & Cultural Practice": Disparity and future models in Arab Literature and the Arts

Chairs: Malte Hagener, Olaf Müller & Friederike Pannewick

1) **Teresa Pepe (University of Oslo; Norway): "That Future is Now and it Stinks"¹. The Climate Crisis in Contemporary Arabic Speculative Fiction.**

Abstract:

This paper analyses the representation of climate change and environmental issues in contemporary Arabic fiction. It focuses, in particular, on post-2011 dystopian literature, that is novels and short stories that project a pessimistic view of the future, a type of fiction that has become particularly prominent in Arabic in the last two decades.

The study is based on a range of fictional works written in the last decade where the climate crisis sets the plot in motion, namely: *Using Life* (Istikhdam al-Haya) by the Egyptian author Ahmed Naji (2014), *The Solar Grid* by Ganzeer (al-Qubba as-Shamsiyyah, 2020); the short story "The Worker" (original title: *al-Mutakallim*), by the Iraqi writer Diya Jubaili (2016) and the short story "The gardens of Babylon" (Hada'iq Babil, 2016) by Hassan Blasim, both included in the collection *Iraq +100* edited by Hassan Blasim.

The study identifies a range of ecological issues that seem to occur in most of the works taken in consideration, namely: the representation of air and water pollution, waste disposal, traffic congestion, built environment and how they affect the daily lives of the Egyptians; the imminent coming of the apocalypse as a result of resource exploitation and climatic changes; the building of smart futuristic cities and the use of technology and renewable energies as means of recovering from the ashes of the catastrophe. Besides, it argues that environmental challenge is becoming a growing concern for Arab authors, as part of a long-standing tradition of political commitment (*iltizām*).

Short bio:

Teresa Pepe is Associate Professor in Arabic Studies at the University of Oslo. Her research interests span across Arabic literature, media, popular culture, sociolinguistics, environmental humanities and the relation between aesthetics and politics. She is the author of the book [Blogging From Egypt: Digital Literature \(2005-2016\)](#) (Edinburgh University Press, 2019) and the co-editor of the volume [Arabic Literature in a Posthuman World](#) (with S. Guth, Harassowitz Verlag 2019). She has published several articles in [Oriente Moderno](#), [The Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication](#), [Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies](#) and [LEA- Lingue e Letterature d'Oriente e](#)

¹ The quotation is derived from Naji's *Using Life* (2017: 26)



[d'Occidente](#). She occasionally writes for [Jadaliyya](#), the Egyptian online newspaper [Mada Masr](#), and the magazine [Strange Horizon](#).

2) Farouk El Maarouf (Justus Liebig University Giessen, Germany): Waiting, Art Practitioners, Hope, and Never-Ending Queues

Abstract:

Waiting is a phenomenological condition that depicts the ensnarement with which certain vulnerable communities in Morocco are burdened down the line of socio-political equity. That is a line, of course, that stays as is. It explains why the sluggishness of the line of justice, freedom, and dignity is a source of frustration in the Moroccan context and elsewhere in the MENA region. Being in the line is being in the queue of social rights, and being in the queue, according to Tarik Sabry (2005) is being in a situation of entrapment and confusion. As such, waiting for art practitioners, as a case in point, is heterogeneous in its practice. Though it stems from the similar need to better one's life and shift away from the lingering social decay, precariousness, and marginality, one does not experience waiting in conformity. In this talk, I will attempt to come to terms with waiting as a passive/active state of being for a community of art practitioners in Morocco who belong to the social footnote. However, any cursory examination of future projections on such marginalized communities cannot happen in isolation from the ongoing state of limbo where they feel implicated. Hence, this discussion is an attempt to formulate the necessary language to bridge the gap between the lingering state of constant present-ness and the projections of a better future; socially, economically, and politically among other things.

Short bio:

El Maarouf Farouk is a doctoral candidate at Justus Liebig University Giessen and Ibn Tofail University. His dissertation explores vernacular art communities, alternative economies, and precarity in Morocco. El Maarouf graduated from the Center of Moroccan Cultural Studies at Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University, Fez, in 2020 and was awarded a fellowship at MECAM-Fellowships for the IFG "Aesthetics & Cultural Practice". He also received a study grant from ERASMUS+ at Babes-Bolyai University, Romania (2020) where he studied British and Irish Cultural Studies. El Maarouf's academic research engages several thematic fields within Cultural Studies including risk society, local art markets and treasure hunting in Morocco, street art, Maghribian literature, diaspora studies, and youth and activism. Besides, Farouk is a portrait artist and a creative writer.

3) Angela Jouini (Rabing) (Freie Universität Berlin): Images Towards the Future. Mobility and Uncertainty in Migrant Filmmaking

Abstract:

Following the project „Digital Documentations of Migration Movements“ that I conducted during the MECAM fellowship in 2021, the talk will focus on one film that was central to the project: *Les Sauteurs* (2016) is a film by Malian refugee Abou Bakar Sidibé that documents the time he spent in a forest in northern Morocco, trying to cross the border fences to Melilla and thus entering the EU.

The importance of (filmic) images cannot be underestimated when discussing current migration movements. Thomas Nail (2019) coins the term 'migrant image' in this context. I argue that *Les Sauteurs* creates different types of 'migrant images': the film offers counter-images to those that dominate media coverage on migration; it creates images of a European future marked by uncertainty; and it exposes a European gaze at migration.



The talk will focus on the fact that the camera was handed over to Sidibé by two European filmmakers. I will discuss the power-relations underlying this gesture that shift as Sidibé becomes a filmmaker and (co-)director during the process of filming. Moreover, two central concepts of migration – mobility and uncertainty – are discussed with regards to migrant filmmaking and the aesthetics of *Les Sauteurs*. I argue that the movement of migration as well as the mobility of the digital camera translates into images of (aesthetic) uncertainty.

Short bio:

Angela Jouini (Rabing), M.A. is film and media scholar at Freie Universität Berlin and doctoral candidate at University of Bremen. In 2021 she was Fellow at MECAM in Tunis as part of IFG I *Aesthetics & Cultural Practice*. Her research focuses on digital aesthetics of cinematic realism. Further research interests include documentary film, smartphone film, queer cinema, and film and migration. Moreover, she is editorial board member at online journal *nach dem film* and was project coordinator of the *International Bremen Film Conference (2017–2022)*.

She edited No18 of *nach dem film* on *Aesthetics and Theory of Digital Film (2020)* and recently published *Affektive Potentiale durch räumlich-körperliche Erfahrungen in der VR-Installation Carne y Arena* (in: Schubert/Süß/Hujer (eds.): *Das Andere Kino. Texte zur Zukunft des Kinos*, 2021) co-authored with Franzi Wagner, and *An den Grenzen des Dokumentarischen* (in: *Zeitschrift für Medienwissenschaft*, Nr. 25, 2021), published as Angela Rabing.

4) Rasha Chatta (Freie Universität Berlin) & Katarzyna Fałęcka (Newcastle University): Figurations of History in Algerian Comics and Contemporary Art

Abstract:

This paper examines the ways in which the memory of episodes from Algerian colonial and postcolonial history is transmitted through the visual. Can graphic novels and contemporary art facilitate ways of working through marginalised memories? Situated at the intersection of the singular and the collective, of History and personal stories (or autofiction), the selected corpus of graphic narratives and contemporary art offers entry points to further delineate a visual compendium of (dis/re)membrance, loss, and a reimagining of the past. While political discourse and the educational system secure a more or less coherent national memory, side-lined histories continue to emerge in the digital sphere, cultural practices, and publications. At times these unofficial and scattered expressions of remembrance are slowly incorporated into public debates, but more often they remain on the fringes of collective memory. This discussion is framed through Marianne Hirsch's concept of "postmemory", which describes the relationship that younger generations bear to the personal, collective, and cultural traumas and memories of their ancestors. Finally, the paper will also trace the points of connection between graphic narratives and contemporary art works, thinking about sequence, the relationship between images and text, and juxtaposition.

Short bios:

Rasha Chatta is an Associate Researcher of the Einstein Foundation at the Freie Universität Berlin where she is completing a monograph titled *Sketching Migration in Arab Comics: War Narratives, Conflicted Memory, and Gender*. She was previously awarded postdoctoral fellowships at EUME, Forum Transregionale Studien and at the Merian Centre for Advanced Studies in the Maghreb (University of Tunis & Philipps-Universität Marburg). Rasha holds a PhD in Cultural, Literary, and Postcolonial Studies from SOAS, University of London. She has published on contemporary Arab migrant narratives, war literature, visual archives, and Arab comics.



Katarzyna Fałęcka is a Lecturer in Art History at the School of Arts and Cultures, Newcastle University. Her research and teaching interests span modern and contemporary art from North Africa, with a particular emphasis on artists who work with archives and how their work can be read within broader memory politics. She is currently working on a book titled "Archival Excavations: Photography, the Algerian War of Independence and the Afterlives of Images". She co-leads the CAORC/Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship in Modern Art History at CEMAT. In 2021, she curated Beyond Metaphor: Women and War, an exhibition of contemporary art that explores women's experiences of the Algerian War of Independence, at apexart, New York.

Day 2 – Saturday, 18 March 2023: 11:30-13:30

Panel 2: "Inequality & Mobility": Intertwining dimensions of inequality and mobility in contemporary Tunisia and the Maghreb

Chair: Mohamed Ali Ben Zina (University of Tunis, Tunisia)

1) Soufiane Jaballah (University of Sfax, Tunisia): Rural Exodus and Street Economy in Tunisia: Mobility(s) vs. (in)equalities: The case of the informal market of the street of Spain in Tunis

Abstract:

How the absence of the state or its unjust presence in the southwestern region of Tunisia, its policy of anti-tribal modernization but also its policy of regional discrimination in favor of the Sahel regions, has created a social disaffiliation, a void and a need filled and satisfied by a return to primary ties and the resurrection of old forms of social cohesion, in this case the tribal form?

Result: Informal merchants (From center west), in Tunis, who manage thanks to a mechanical solidarity, a tribal Asabiya and arts of resistance to convert a street into a market, and the proximity of the borders, the links of kinship and a complicated relationship with the police, into an economic system.

Short bio:

Dr. Soufiane Jaballah is Assistant Professor of Sociology and Anthropology at the Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences at the University of Sfax. He holds a doctorate in Social and Religious Sciences. Soufiane's research interests include emergent social and religious movements and the street economy in Tunisia. He has directed several studies on collective action and the informal economy, particularly with the Tunisian Forum of Economic and Social Rights. Most recently, Soufiane completed a multi-disciplinary study on the street economy, entitled "Spanish Street or the curriculum of the street economy in Tunisia" (2022); which can be viewed at: <https://ftdes.net/rue-despagne/https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cy5kAYRMn0A&t=14s>. He is currently leading two major research projects on the informal economy, focusing on ragpickers and informal parking lots in Tunis (respectively).

2) Marouene Taleb (Institut de recherche sur le Maghreb contemporain (IRMC), Tunisia): The governance of the Tunisian-Algerian Border: a pact of invisibility for marginalized communities

Abstract:

The border areas management between Tunisia and Algeria is part of a range of binational, regional, and local standards whose roots go back to the Algerian liberation war of 1954. The confrontation of these norms results from the logic of power that determines access to spaces and how people are currently using them. Throughout an analysis of the socio-spatial trajectories of smuggling and cross-border trade, this intervention tries to reflect on social hierarchies and political negotiations in terms



of rights of access and mobility in these particular spaces. Indeed, authoritarianism and terrorism legacies in Algeria and Tunisia had shaped a no man's land into a negotiated territory between the political/security powers and cross-border communities. Communities are characterized by a trans-territoriality that dates back well before the establishment of borders yet never recognized by the powers from each side as they prefer the seal of informality. This is indeed fitting up to a point security agenda, but which constitutes an obstacle to all decentralized and participatory economic governance. Keywords: Tunisian-Algerian border, local governance, youth, smuggling, cross-border trade, security
Short Bio:

Dr. Marouen Taleb is a Senior Policy Officer at the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherland in Tunisia. He is also the co-founder and technical advisor of the North African Policy Initiative (NAPI), an independent, non-profit, and non-partisan NGO. Furthermore, he led as a PI at IRMC Tunis, a three-years (2019-2022) research program on youth, local governance, and migration, funded by the French Development Agency (AFD). He also works as an expert consultant on PVE, border management and strategic urban planning programs in African and Arab countries.

3) Mourad Ben Jelloul (University of Tunis, Tunisia) : Quel rôle de la planification territoriale stratégique dans la réduction des inégalités spatiales en Tunisie

Abstract:

La question des disparités spatiales en Tunisie a alimenté les débats politiques après la révolution du 17 décembre 2010 qui a éclaté dans les territoires les plus démunis de la Tunisie de l'intérieur. En effet, les politiques d'aménagement du territoire en Tunisie, depuis l'adoption du premier Schéma National d'Aménagement du Territoire (SNAT) en 1985 jusqu'à nos jours, n'ont pas permis d'atténuer les disparités spatiales héritées de la colonisation et approfondies par l'ouverture à la mondialisation, accentuant ainsi le déséquilibre régional caractérisé par une très forte concentration de la population et des activités sur une portion réduite du littoral (Ben Jelloul, 2017). L'impératif de compétitivité et d'efficacité des territoires ainsi que la métropolisation ont contribué à creuser l'écart entre les régions littorales et celles de l'intérieur. Les crises politique et socio-économique que le pays a connu durant la dernière décennie n'ont pas permis de renouveler les outils de la planification territorial ni d'engager une nouvelle politique de développement territorial ce qui a entraîné plus de disparité et d'écarts de développement entre les régions.

La planification territoriale stratégique peut constituer un outil efficace pour la réduction des inégalité territoriale. En effet, ce modèle de planification repose sur la démocratie participative et favorise la participation et le dialogue entre les acteurs. Il s'agit d'une approche de type bottom-up qui se fonde sur un style de gouvernance différents des approches conventionnelles de planification (Healey, 1997). Ce modèle qui vise la promotion de la cohésion territoriale (Faludi, 2009 ; 2010) repose sur une approche de développement spatial intégré (Allmendinger & Haughton, 2009; Faludi, 2006; 2009; 2009) et vise une articulation entre les enjeux socio-économiques et ceux de l'organisation de l'espace (Zepf & Andres, 2011). Notre intervention vise à démontrer comment la PTS dans un cadre de décentralisation et de partage de compétence entre Etat et collectivités peut constituer un moyen efficace pour un développement territorial équitable.

Short bio:

Mourad BEN JELLOUL, Professeur de géographie à l'Université de Tunis (Faculté des Sciences Humaines et Sociales) Spécialiste en Aménagement du Territoire et Gouvernance territoriale ; Titulaire d'un Doctorat en géographie et aménagement du territoire de la Faculté de Droit, d'Economie et des Sciences Sociales de l'Université François Rabelais, (Tours-France) et d'une Habilitation universitaire



en géographie de la Faculté des Sciences Humaines et sociales de l'Université de Tunis ; Chef du laboratoire de recherche « Gouvernance et développement territorial » et rédacteur en Chef de la Revue tunisienne de Géographie (RTG).

4) Imed Melliti (University of Tunis El Manar, Tunisia): **Vulnérables. Portraits sociologiques.**

Abstract:

Il s'agit de rendre compte des résultats d'une enquête qui a donné lieu à un ouvrage collectif intitulé « Vulnérables. Portraits sociologiques » ; un ouvrage signé par une quinzaine de contributeurs qui ont essayé, chacun à sa manière, de broser le portrait d'un personnage vulnérable sur la base d'une série d'entretiens réalisés avec lui. Témoins de leurs vies, les personnages qui ont contribué par leurs récits à l'élaboration des portraits ont raconté leurs vécus émaillés d'épreuves et de souffrances et révélé, de ce fait, une capacité variable à résister au poids de leurs conditions objectives et aux injonctions de leur environnement. La présentation du livre s'attardera à la fois sur les enseignements majeurs qui se dégagent des portraits et sur les enjeux méthodologiques de l'approche retenue.

Short bio :

Professeur d'enseignement supérieur en sociologie à l'Institut supérieur des sciences humaines de Tunis (ISSHT), Université de Tunis El Manar. Enseignant au département de sociologie de cet Institut depuis septembre 1999 et directeur dudit département entre avril 2002 et avril 2005. Responsable du master d'anthropologie entre 2017 et 2019. Actuellement, enseignant au département d'anthropologie. Président de l'Association internationale des sociologues de langue française (AISLF) depuis juillet 2021, après avoir occupé plusieurs responsabilités au sein du bureau de cette association à partir de 2004. Chercheur associé à l'Institut de recherche sur le Maghreb contemporain (IRMC) depuis 2009. Membre du Comité national d'éthique médical, le CNEM, depuis février 2021. Membre de la Commission de doctorat et d'habilitation universitaire en sociologie de la Faculté des sciences humaines et sociales de Tunis (Université de Tunis)

Day 2 – Saturday, 18 March 2023: 14:30-16:30

Panel 3: "Memory & Justice": Practices and gender relations of memory and justice in post-conflict societies of the Maghreb and Mashreq regions.

Chair: Susanne Buckley-Zistel (Philipps-Universität Marburg, Germany)

1) Faouzia Zeraouia (University of Jijel, Algeria): Empowering reconciliation and sustainable peace in post-conflict societies in the MENA region: Silence and memorialization processes

Abstract:

Silencing policies is a key analytical factor that allow scholars to understand the process of memorialization and reconciliation in transitional landscapes in the MENA region. Generally, scholars of transitional justice discuss silence policies in authoritarian contexts that establish a top-down schema of reconciliation without addressing victims' concerns, including symbolic reparation, apologize, psychological rehabilitation. Mapping silencing practices, those studies concentrate much more on silence in its passive form: hiding the past and suppressing alternative narratives of victimized groups. While, few efforts have been made to understand the patterns, strategies, and differentiation of silencing policies across post-conflict societies: how silence sites have been crafted throughout memorials, monuments, official narrative, and alternative narratives. Those studies assume implicitly that silence has the same language, cognitive, and ends in those societies. A view that does not allow to develop an efficient agenda for sustainable peace in the region. This paper tends to fill this scientific



void by focusing on silencing policies and past legacies in Algeria. The author examines forms of silence that have been developed by the post-war regime, its ends, and impact on political change.

Short bio:

Dr. Faouzia Zeraoulia, an associate professor at department of political science, Mohamed Seddik ben Yahia, Algeria, and a member of Arab-German Young Academy of Science and Humanities (AGYA). Her main area of expertise and interest is the Middle East region, reconciliation, civil wars, political violence, extremism and radicalism, transitional justice, reconciliation, memory studies, resource conflict. At the moment, Dr. Zeraoulia works on a project discusses women in conflict zones and post-conflict settings, also, she lead a project, with the collaboration of AGYA members, examines teaching peace, tolerance and non-violent communication in Algeria, Lebanon, Egypt, and Yemen.

2) Selima Kebaïli (University of Lausanne, Center for Gender Studies, Switzerland) : Genre, violence et récit national: le cas d'un mémorial dédié aux femmes victimes de la dictature en Tunisie post-révolution.

Abstract:

En septembre 2018, un mémorial en hommage aux femmes victimes de la dictature pré-révolutionnaire tunisienne a été mis en place dans le centre-ville de Tunis à l'initiative d'une ONG internationale. Le mémorial a exposé des œuvres, créées conjointement par des victimes et des artistes, sous un thème particulier : le couffin traditionnel tunisien. Le choix d'un tel emblème pour représenter la violence politique contre les femmes soulève des questions sur la manière dont les projets de genre sont mis en place dans les contextes de transitions politiques. Dans le contexte de la justice transitionnelle tunisienne, une attention sans précédent a été consacrée par les experts à l'implication des femmes victimes dans le processus, largement mené par l'ICTJ. Cette communication examine la manière dont les normes libérales de genre circulent à travers les mesures internationales d'intégration du genre et comment elles participent à l'élaboration d'un récit national dans le contexte de la transition.

Short bio:

Sélima Kebaïli is a sociologist whose research focuses on gender, transitional justice, social suffering, islam, and victimhood, mainly in the MENA region and Europe. She received her Ph.D. in Sociology from the EHESS in Paris in 2021 and has degrees in gender studies and political science. Sélima is currently co-editing a book on Women in revolts. Mobilizations and political imaginations in the Middle East and North Africa (1960-2020) and has published articles on gender and authoritarianism, islamic NGOs and transitional justice. In 2021, she joined the Institute of Social Sciences of the University of Lausanne as a Senior Researcher for a project supervised by Prof. Eléonore Lépinard entitled Shaping the Legal Consciousness of Intersectional Subjects. Accommodating, Negotiating and Contesting Regulations on Islamic Veiling in France, Switzerland, and the U.K. Sélima is also visiting professor at the Graduate Institute of Geneva.

3) Hayet Rouibah (University of Jijel, Algeria) : Mémoire et guerre d'indépendance en Algérie : approche du genre

Abstract:

Après leur participation active dans la guerre de libération nationale, les femmes algériennes ont acquis de nombreux droits dont elles étaient privées durant la période coloniale. Mais paradoxalement, la question féminine en Algérie ne s'est pas posée d'une manière indépendante après l'indépendance, elle a toujours été intégrée dans le discours développementaliste de l'Etat



algérien. L'évocation des femmes dans la mémoire officielle de l'Algérie à travers un stéréotype ancré depuis la guerre de libération a affecté par la suite la réhabilitation du rôle des femmes dans la société sur tous les niveaux (politique, économique et social, etc.). Cette exclusion de la femme du discours mémoriel a entraîné un retard dans l'institutionnalisation du mouvement des femmes en Algérie.

Short bio :

Hayette Rouibah est docteur en sciences politiques et relations internationales (Université d'Alger, Algérie). Elle occupe maintenant le poste de maître de conférences au département de sciences politiques à la faculté de droit et de sciences politiques, université de Jijel, Algérie. Elle donne des cours de Master en coopération internationale.

Actuellement, ses recherches portent sur l'institution militaire, la diaspora, le Hirak algérien, le rôle de la femme dans le changement politique. Sa recherche post doctorale se concentre sur la diaspora et le changement politique en Algérie.

4) Khaled Kchir (University of Tunis, Tunisia) : Témoignage à propos de l'élaboration de la loi sur la justice transitionnelle en Tunisie 2012-2013

Abstract:

Je souhaiterais témoigner de mon expérience dans le champ de la justice transitionnelle tunisienne. Entré comme membre indépendant faisant partie du Centre de Tunis de la Justice transitionnelle, j'ai été choisi parmi les dix représentants de la « société civile » devant faire partie de la Commission nationale technique chargée du dialogue national sur la justice transitionnelle. Je m'exprime donc ici en tant qu'acteur engagé dans la mise en place de la « justice transitionnelle tunisienne » post-2011.

Short bio :

Khaled Kchir is one of the two directors of MECAM and is Professor of Medieval History at the Faculty of Human and Social Sciences of the University of Tunis. He has directed the Laboratory of the Medieval Arab-Islamic World since 2013. He works on the transmission of knowledge in the Middle Ages. He is developing his research on the work of Ibn Khaldun. He teaches history, codicology and diplomacy. He has indexed 600 entries in the Fawât al-Wafayât of Ibn Shâkir al-Kutubî for the Onomasticon Arabicum (IRHT/CNRS). His latest work concerns the Berbers and then the Persians as seen by Ibn Khaldun. For two terms, he was successively member of the Council of the University of Tunis (2014-2017), then vice-president of the university (2017-2020).

Day 2 – Saturday, 18 March 2023: 16:30-17:00

Reception and Photo Exhibition at MECAM's premises: "Working hands in arid lands"

By MECAM's alumni fellow Lisa M. Sarida Lippert (University of Hamburg, Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker - Centre for Science and Peace Research, Germany) - IFG IV: "Resources & Sustainability"

Day 3 – Sunday, 19 March 2023: 09:00-11:00

Panel 4: "Resources & Sustainability: Imagining Futures in the Maghreb between Environmental Needs and Social Justice"

Chair: Katharina Lange (Head of Research Unit "Environment and Justice", Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO))

- 1) **Habib Ayeb (Professor emeritus, Université Paris 8, Saint-Denis / Founding member, Observatoire de la Souveraineté Alimentaire et de l'Environnement (OSAE), Tunis) : "Facing Climate Change, How to Manage Natural Resources in a Sustainable Way?"**

Abstract:



The first consequences of climate change (CC) are undoubtedly the dramatic reduction in natural resources and biodiversity. In addition, the poorest and socially marginalised segments of the population, and precisely small farmers, are the most vulnerable and exposed to these impacts. The question is, how and by what means these impacts can be limited? Generally, local communities and their practices and knowledge that enable them to react adequately to climatic contingencies, such as floods and droughts, are never, or almost never, included in global strategies to tackle CC processes and their consequences. We can give the case of Tunisian farmers who have developed since ancient times the engineering of “jessours”, plural of jesser, which consist of small dams, traditionally made of ground, across the wadis. Their function is mainly to “break” the flood, forcing the water to infiltrate into the plot of land upstream of the dam. When the flood is too high, the dyke gives way to allow the overflow of water to pass. As soon as the weather returns to normal, the farmers rebuild the jesser. Such local and traditional techniques, which are well adapted to climatic variations, do not appear in the long list of “adaptation” measures proposed by experts from the major international institutions and even less so by national decision-makers. Instead, the emphasis is on so-called modern techniques of water storage, transport and management. My presentation aims to demonstrate that the best way to resist to CC impacts is to radically change paradigms by abandoning the intensive and export-oriented agriculture for a peasant food agriculture based on local knowledge and respectful of life, biodiversity and social, environmental and intergenerational justice.

Short Bio:

Habib Ayeb is a geographer, researcher and professor emeritus at the University of Paris 8 in Saint Denis, France. A specialist in social geography, his research areas cover issues related to food sovereignty, environment, peasant issues, climate change, marginality and poverty, social change, and the role of the environment in the development of food security. His research areas are mainly focused on Tunisia and the whole of North Africa. Habib Ayeb is also a committed documentary filmmaker, including “Couscous: Seeds of Dignity” (2017). In 2017, together with other comrades, he created the Observatoire de la Souveraineté Alimentaire et de l’Environnement (OSAE), a non-governmental organisation based in Tunis. Ayeb is a member of several institutions and networks, including LAVUE - Lab AUS - University Paris 8; and Thimar Rural Network (founding member).

2) Alexander Martin (South Mediterranean University): “How Can an Energy Transition Provide Economic and Environmental Justice for Tunisian Citizens?”

Abstract:

As Tunisia continues to consume more and produce less fossil fuel energy, the need to incorporate a greater percentage of renewable energy sources in the energy mix is growing. Thus, an energy transition has become necessary from energy security, energy sovereignty, and national economics perspectives. Tunisia’s excellent wind and solar potential mean the state could significantly reduce its energy imports and even become an energy exporter. Despite optimistic plans and legal amendments to implement an energy transition, government instability, union pressure, and infrastructure weaknesses have slowed progress. Furthermore, little attention is being paid to how this energy transition can provide economic and energy justice for the citizens of Tunisia. Applying the “Just Transition” paradigm, this paper analyses Tunisia’s energy transition, asking if the switch from a fossil fuel energy-based economy can positively impact the lives of Tunisia’s citizens. It addresses a just transition from the perspective of employees in the energy sector to understand how their concerns are not marginalised. Regarding, the construction of the necessary infrastructure to facilitate an energy transition, it engages with the balance between European-focused extraction and export



projects and the sourcing of sustainable finance and technology transfer to fund infrastructure development. Finally, it explores possible solutions that could provide social, environmental, and economic justice for Tunisia.

Short bio:

Alexander Martin was a IFG IV Fellow at MECAM in spring 2022. He has held the position of Assistant Professor in politics at South Mediterranean University, Tunisia, since 2020. He is the co-founder and chief executive officer of Resolve Consulting, a research and policy consultancy. 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 Durham University (2016). His research focuses on civil society, democratisation, public policy, and energy transitions in North Africa.

3) Nidhal Attia (Senior Programme Coordinator, Sustainable Development and Environmental Policies, Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung (HBS)): Foundations of a socio-ecological transformation in Tunisia

Abstract:

Facing the complex and multifaceted environmental challenges in Tunisia requires a rethinking of the dominant environmental policies, stemming from an outdated environmental philosophy, inherited from a limiting way of thinking that reduces ecology to a rather secondary order.

First, the limits, gaps and inconsistencies of environmental policies will be discussed, as well as the weak integration of the ecological and climatic dimension at the level of public policies, which makes the environment a showcase and a means to green the political discourse and consequently, delay the ecological transition that is able to reverse the trend. Subsequently, I will focus on the urgent political, legal and institutional measures needed to achieve transformational thinking based on the principles of a deep ecology that puts the environment at the heart of political priorities and reflects the inextricable links between the environmental crisis and the current socio-economic crises.

The transformational approach that this presentation will advocate aims to ensure more coherence at the policy level and aims to break away from the fragmented (or siloed) work that is the main cause of the sectoral approach, which further isolates the environment, not allowing it to rise to the level of the challenges, nor to anchor it in the agenda of policy makers. This reasoning will be based on the ideas of transformations substantiated by concrete examples. The analysis of the shortcomings of the dominant environmental policies and the proposal of solutions will be presented according to their articulation at the level of environmental policies, but also the changes that need to be made within civil society and its activism in Tunisia.

Short bio:

Nidhal works for the Heinrich Böll Foundation's office in Tunis since January 2018. He currently co-heads the environmental policy program. A program that tackles environmental issues like water resources, climate and energy crises, waste management and environmental law. In addition, the program also addresses transformational solutions. Nidhal focuses on issues that link ecology with politics and development. Hence, his particular interest in debates that has a particular interest into political ecology. Being committed to anchoring green ideas of inclusiveness, sustainability and solidarity among civil society actors and policy makers, Nidhal advocates for "deep ecology". In addition, Nidhal is an expert in climate change and climate negotiations. He holds a degree in natural sciences and a master degree in marine biology, both from the Faculty of Sciences in Tunis.

4) Jamie Furniss (Institut de recherche sur le Maghreb contemporain (IRMC), Tunis) : The Blue-clad Fennec: Authoritarian Environmentalism in Tunisia, and its Afterlives



Abstract:

There is hardly a city in the whole of Tunisia without a faded sign reading “Boulevard de l’environnement” (Shari’ al-bi’a) on one of its most prominent thoroughfares. One may find a statue of desert fox (Fennec) in a blue jumpsuit, minus a few limbs, standing at the end of the avenue: this is “Labib”, the national mascot of the environment. These are the traces of the authoritarian environmentalism of Ben Ali’s Tunisia, the forms and afterlives of which this paper seeks to sketch. I begin by arguing that environment emerged as a category of political action in 1990s Tunisia largely as a way of papering over the totalitarian state and attracting foreign funding by appealing to strategic hot-button issues in the eyes of the “West” (like women’s rights), as well as a form of aesthetic and moral aspiration. The Labib campaign was officially abandoned in 2013 for having too close an association with the Ben Ali regime; it had also become a symbol of corruption due to the family ties between the most prominent Minister of the Environment and the president, as well as misuse of funds. This paper attempts to evoke some of the consequences this genealogy has on the ways “environment” is used and understood in Tunisia today, concluding with the resurrection of Labib in 2021. The overall aims of the paper are to contribute to a political and social history of the term “environment” and to insist on the political overtones of the issues of waste, cleanliness, and environment have in contemporary Tunisia.

Short bio:

Jamie Furniss is currently a researcher at the Institut de recherche sur le Maghreb contemporain (IRMC) in Tunis. He has a DPhil from the University of Oxford in International Development and has conducted fieldwork in Egypt and Tunisia, primarily on topics pertaining to environment, waste, and urban development.

Day 3 – Sunday, 19 March 2023: 11:30-13:30

Panel 5: “Mobility & Inequality: Whose Futures? Imagining Social and Political Change in the Maghreb”

Chair & Moderator: Dr. André Bank (GIGA German Institute for Global and Area Studies, Hamburg)

Panel Abstract:

Inspired by the overarching MECAM theme “Imagining Futures – Dealing with Disparity”, this panel builds on discussions that took place in MECAM’s IFG V on “Identities & Beliefs.” Taking stock of the contentious decade following the 2010-12 Arab uprisings, the panel poses the question: who is authorized to imagine the future in the Maghreb today? We approach this question from at least three dimensions: The first, the actor dimension, relates to the immense diversity of societal groups who, from the position of specific identities and beliefs, articulate very different claims about their own hoped-for future, as well as that of their respective community. The second dimension, of inclusion/exclusion, relates to the political struggle over which claims on the future will be taken into consideration (if only partly) by powerful state and economic elites. Finally, the third dimension takes seriously the “image” aspect of the imagination, asking how the various visions for the future are mediated through political slogans, storytelling, and other modes of expression.

To address this question, the panel brings together contributions from anthropology, sociology, and political science to examine imaginaries of the future, as authored by different individuals, social groups and political movements from across the Maghreb and over the course of the last decade. The presentation topics range from political activism and youth cultures in Tunisia writ large, to the practices and imaginations of the Manish Msamah anti-corruption campaign, to rural women facing climate change in the Moroccan countryside.



1) Alyssa Miller (GIGA German Institute for Global and Area Studies): “Manish Msamah: Staking a Claim on the Future through Refusal”

Abstract:

The “politics of refusal” has become an important topic in political anthropology today, eclipsing what Abu Lughod has described as an earlier “romance” with resistance (1990). The trouble with resistance, so the story goes, is that it maintains an active engagement with the state, thereby maintaining desire for its recognition. In contrast, refusal describes an attitude of disinvestment, a turning away from the state and its projects (like citizenship) to maintain fidelity to an alternate history, authority, space-time, or world (Simpson 2007, 2014).

Against this backdrop, my talk proposes a retrospective look at the Manish Msamah campaign, one of the most successful political actions in Tunisia’s post-2011 transitional decade—and yet, still technically a failure. This horizontal campaign of independent youth emerged from the depoliticized moment of “rotten compromise” between the Nida Tunis and Ennahda parties in 2015 (Marzouki 2015), to refuse “Economic Reconciliation” with corrupt businessmen from the Ben Ali era. Engaging the theoretical framework of refusal, the presentation will assess what the Manish Msamah campaign means when it proclaims, “I do not forgive,”—tracking how its slogan and on-the-ground strategies articulate with theories of refusal and/or resistance. The talk will also critically assess the campaign’s capacity for imagining an alternate future for Tunisia-in-transition, and its concrete ability to bring such a vision to life.

Short bio:

Dr. Alyssa Miller is a Humboldt Postdoctoral Research Fellow based at the GIGA Institute for Middle East Studies in Hamburg, Germany. She received her PhD in Cultural Anthropology from Duke University (2018) and was an Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Pennsylvania from 2019-20. In 2022, she co-led MECAM’s Interdisciplinary Fellow Group “Identities & Beliefs” in Tunisia. Her current research examines kin-based strategies to defend citizenship rights for Tunisian migrants to the Islamic State and repatriate their widows and stateless children. Her work has appeared in *Cultural Anthropology*, *Anthropology Now*, and *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East*.

2) Fadma Ait Mous (Hassan II University, Casablanca/Morocco): Seeing Change: When Moroccan women are picturing their future

Abstract:

This presentation builds on a project using creative participatory visual methods to make the voices of Amazigh women in rural Morocco heard. It is undertaken in collaboration between Hassan II university of Casablanca and colleagues from Lincoln University in England and was conducted in Aoufous (Errachidia). A dozen of women’s cooperatives were recruited and trained in visual storytelling techniques. During the whole process, a participatory approach was adopted. Women were invited to present and discuss the themes and issues they wanted to picture. They all agreed to picture the problem of climate change as the main issue they are currently facing. Over two days, they took pictures in their environment in a total respect of ethics. At the end, Women presented their work to the group and, through discussion, refinement and coproduction, select material that speaks of the selected theme. They got a certificate of participation as an official reward but more important they speak and tell how the training is helping them to envision their daily lives differently, and most important they explain how this experience is significant for them to plan their future (to reopen a cooperative, to think of new modalities to market their product, and to prioritize their ideas, etc.).



Short bio:

Fadma AIT MOUS is a tenured Professor of Sociology (Professeur Habilité) at the Ain Chock Faculty of Letters and Humanities (Hassan II University of Casablanca), Head of the Sociology Department at the same faculty, and researcher at the Laboratoire de Recherche sur les Différenciations Socio-Anthropologiques et les Identités Sociales (LADSI). She is the General Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the Arab Council for Social Sciences (Beyrouth, since 2019), Member of the Executive Committee of the Merian Center for Advanced Study in the Maghreb (MECAM, Tunis) and Member of the Scientific Commission n°4 (CSS4) of the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD). Her research is mainly focused on issues related to nationalism and social movements; women, gender and socio-political transformations; history and memory; youth cultures, urban dynamics; social media; and migration.

**3) Mounir Saidani (University of Tunis, El-Manar, High Institute of Human Sciences):
“Postrevolutionary Tunisian Youth (De-/Re-)Constructing Identities and Beliefs”**

Abstract:

This presentation starts out from the observation that youth population and youth cultures are at the center of processes of de- and reconstructing of national and/or regional identities and beliefs, both in Tunisia and in the wider Maghreb. And yet, despite their role as protagonists of the 2010/11 uprisings as well as the fact they will inherit whatever futures are currently being concretized politically, youth populations continue to be sidelined in official national politics.

At the same time, it is important to stress that “youth” does not constitute a homogenous social category, still less a class with common interests and politics. This is why it is necessary to look at how diverse youth cultures are driving (non-)movements in the Maghreb, transforming societies and reconfiguring possible futures surreptitiously, and from below.

Short bio:

Mounir SAIDANI is Professor of Sociology and a full-time researcher at the Centre for Economic and Social Studies and Researches (CERES, 1962). He is the Editor in Chief of the *Tunisian Social Sciences Review* (edited by CERES since 1964). He is interested in Socio-anthropology of Culture, Knowledge and Art, Socio-cultural Change in contemporary Tunisia and the Arab World. He published several books and articles in Arabic, French and English in Tunisia and abroad. He also translated books and articles in the field of his interest from French and English into Arabic. One of his latest publications is a 1418 pages Report on the Religious State in Tunisia 2011-2015, a collective work whom he is the general supervisor and the editor in chief (2018). From 2014 to 2022, he led a multidisciplinary research unit working on “Knowledges, Cultures and Social Change”. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the International Sociological Association (ISA 2018-2023). He gave lectures and presentations in A Coruña, Ajman, Ankara, Beirut, Brussels, Doha, Gottingen, Liège, Manama, Oran, Paris, Rabat, Santiago di Compostela, Taipei, Toronto, Tunis. He coordinated the XVII ISA PhD Students Lab (September, 2022).

Day 3 – Sunday, 19 March 2023: 15:30-17:30

Round Table: Academic freedom - How to protect and foster academic freedom in the field of International Scientific Cooperation?

Description:

The aim of this roundtable is to discuss how the political context and the rise of authoritarianism in three different countries (Tunisia/India/Ghana) affects research and the freedom of expression and what can



be done by academic institutions in the framework of international scientific cooperation to defend academic freedom.

- How does authoritarianism affect academic freedom?
- What is the role of International Scientific Cooperation in the face of rising authoritarianism?
- How political can universities and academic institutions be?

Moderation: *Julius Dihstelhoff* (MECAM)

- *Najiba Chkir* (University of Sfax, Tunisia)
- *Khaled Kchir* (University of Tunis, Tunisia)
- *Shail Mayaram* (Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), India)
- *Sebastian Schwecke* (Max Weber Forum for South Asian Studies, Delhi, India)
- *Susann Baller* (Maria Sibylla Merian Institute for Advanced Studies in Africa (MIASA), Ghana)
- *Chika Mba* (Research Fellow, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana) (to be confirmed)





Working hands in arid lands

Saturday, 18 March 2023: 16:30-17:00 at MECAM Premises



How does the everyday life of small farmers look like against the background of global warming?

Using the power of visuals, the 2022 photo series which emerged from field research as part of MECAM IFG IV seeks to give answers to that question. It focuses on the hands of those working the land, emphasizing their connection to and dependence on natural resources.

By merging emic and etic perspectives, it stirs critical reflection upon dominant representations of rural populations as passive victims. Further, it sheds light on the power and responsibility researchers have in the areas of resources and sustainability and beyond in creating those representations.

Photos: Lisa M. Sarida Lippert (ZNF – University of Hamburg / Mecam IFG IV “Resources & Sustainability”)

Text: Lisa M. Sarida Lippert and Ali Cheheb (Association „SADA BOUHEDMA“)