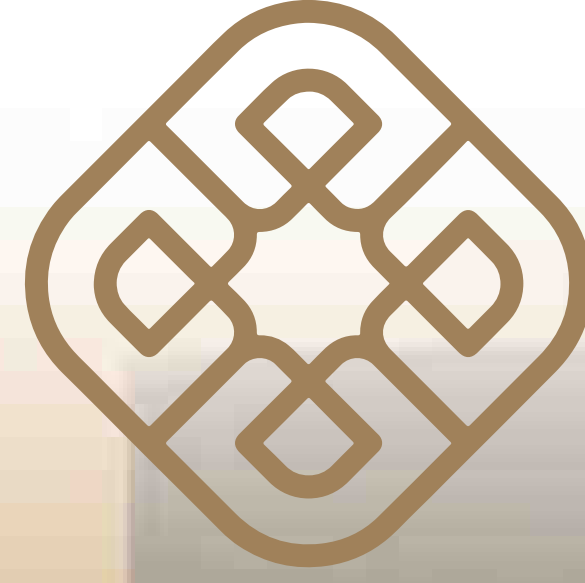


ميكام

مركز ميريان  
للدراسات المتقدمة  
في المنطقة المغاربية



MECAM

Merian Centre  
For Advanced Studies  
In The Maghreb



**Dear Colleagues, Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

MECAM looks back on exciting months ( December 2022 to March 2023) that have been filled with events, meetings and exchange opportunities. With this newsletter, we would like to give you insights into our work from this period.

## Second lecture of the Hichem Djaït Chair: Histories and Cultures of Islam entitled “Qīmat al-wakt: Piety, Productivity and the Use of Time in Modern Islamic Discourse”

16/12/2022

On the occasion of the launch of the "Hichem Djaït Chair: Histories and Cultures of Islam" at the University of Tunis – inaugurated in March 2022 in honor of the great Tunisian Islamologist and historian – the University of Tunis, in partnership with the Institute of Research on the Contemporary Maghreb (IRMC), the National Library of Tunisia and the MECAM, decided to begin a cycle of lectures dedicated to him. In this framework Gudrun Krämer (Professor Emeritus at the Freie Universität Berlin, former director of the Institute of Islamic Studies) has been invited on Friday, December 16, 2022 at 15:00 at the National Library of Tunis for the second lesson of the Chair Hichem Djaït: Histories and Cultures of Islam entitled "Qīmat al-wakt: Piety, Productivity, and the Use of Time in Modern Islamic Discourse." MECAM is supporting this series of events with funds from its partner institution, Philipps Universität Marburg

## Emergence of diasporic Libyans’ transnational activism and its dynamics in a post-Gaddafi context

5/01/2023

This Winter Talk with Houda Mzioudet was discussed by Asma Khalifa and moderated by Guy Eyre (IFG V) with the objective of exploring the Libyan diaspora and its active mobilization to have a social and political impact on the conflict, as well as the formation of the Libyan community in exile after the fall of the Qaddafi regime and its role in creating a network of intellectuals, politicians and civil society activists active in the reconstruction of the country. In this conference Houda Mzioudet presented the main organizations of the Libyan diaspora, their character and the type of work they do. She contextualized the diasporic mobilization of Libyans in exile during the Libyan uprising of 2011, as well as their role in its construction, highlighting the evolution of the diaspora since 2011. Through a comparative perspective, this meeting sought and capitalized on changes in the scope and nature of Libyan diaspora mobilization in peace and reconciliation efforts.

khaled Kchir

Ahmed khouaja

## Mobility and borders: What issues for artists from the South?

10/01/2023

This meeting was organized with the aim of creating a platform for exchange between researchers, artists as well as actors of the political world and civil society. Questioning the issues of mobility of Tunisian artists and artists from other Arabic-speaking countries. This meeting was proposed and organized by the MECAM in collaboration with the El Hamra Theater and the Marc Bloch Center. In this conference several ideas were discussed precisely the subject of the mobility of artists at the heart of artistic practices, training and creation processes. However, persistent inequalities in access to these circulations impact the Tunisian cultural environment, were revealed to the audience. These inequalities, reinforced in the post-COVID 19 context, are materialized in particular by the difficulties of access to visas, by the increase in travel costs to the detriment of artists from the South. But these issues of disparity are also perceptible in artistic and aesthetic expectations. Also in this conference, they discussed issues related to funding and programming opportunities on international stages that are often limited to external perceptions centered on the identities and socio-political contexts of the region. Also in this conference, they discussed around the topic "how do artists and arts and cultural institutions develop their practice in cooperation and resistance to these issues?" This question was discussed by the three speakers: Cyrinne Douss, Cyrine Gannoun, and Ophélie Mercier. Vanessa Barisch moderated this discussion.

## Lecture series Studium Generale of the Philipps-Universität Marburg: Dr. Isabelle Werenfels “The Maghreb in Africa: Ambivalence and Competition”

18/01/2023

As part of the Studium Generale lecture series at the Philipps-Universität Marburg in the winter semester 2022/23 on the topic "From the Atlantic to the Hindu Kush.... A History of Interdependence", Dr. Isabelle Werenfels, Chair of the Scientific Advisory Board of the Merian Center for Advanced Maghreb Studies (MECAM) and researcher at the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), presented the results of her research on the topic "The Maghreb in Africa: Ambivalence and Competition".

## Third lesson of the Hichem Djaït Chair: Histories and Cultures of Islam entitled “The Question of Orientalism and Islamic World Studies: The Contribution of Hichem Djaït”

20/01/2023

In the context of the third lesson of the Hichem Djaït Chair: Histories and Cultures of Islam Roberto Tottoli (Professor of Islamology: Rector of the University L'Orientale of Naples) has been invited on Friday, January 20, 2023 to give a lecture entitled "The question of orientalism and the studies on the Islamic world: The contribution of Hichem Djaït".

## Delegation visit of Université de Tunis in Marburg

6 -9/2/2023

A delegation of the University of Tunis visited Philipps-Universität Marburg. In this visit the delegation of the University of Tunis discussed with the Vice President Prof. Dr. Evelyn Korn, their academic partners as well as the International Office on how the two universities could extend their cooperation beyond the Erasmus exchange and the liaison office of Philipps-Universität Marburg at the University of Tunis.

## Extractivism lecture series “Climate change and raw materials: risk or opportunity?” with Rachid Ouaisa

9/02/2023

As part of the Extractivism conference cycle "Climate change and raw materials: risk or opportunity?" Prof. Rachid Ouaisa, one of the two directors of MECAM, gave a presentation on the theme "500 years of interdependence between the Maghreb and Europe". As in most non-European countries, the most important events in the history of the 19th and 20th centuries were the relations of the Maghreb countries with the capitalist and industrial powers. The colonial triumphs caused serious inequalities and contradictions that led to liberation movements. The history of the colonial construction of the region is also the history of the emergence of colonial power techniques and colonial dynamics to create postcolonial geographical realities and interdependencies. Indeed, even in the postcolonial phase, the Maghreb and Europe are closely linked. With a clear domination of Europe, the EU dictates migration, security, trade and energy policies and has a monopoly on knowledge in the Mediterranean and Maghreb. The question then arises as to whether we are in the presence of a kind of long colonial or even imperialist period.



## Traveling Academy Solidarities In/Between the Middle East and North Africa, Beirut/Liban

19-25/02/2023

This Traveling Academy which was organized by the MECAM in cooperation with the Orient-Institut Beirut (OIB) examines and considers the solidarity in a comparative and historical perspective, following the dialectic of affinity and difference at the heart of the political community. Solidarity is one of the oldest preoccupations of the social sciences, which have sought to understand the weakening of traditional ties under capitalist modernity. The return of this topic to the research agenda today is symptomatic of the multiple crises facing humanity on a global scale. Contemporary writing on solidarity captures the utopian hopes of an "alter-politics" (Hage 2015) capable of making a radical break with a political present experienced as stultifying and self-destructive. She also documents the messy attempts to translate these hopes into transformative action. Understood as "a way of standing together while defending one's own interests," solidarity requires taking difference into account while building shared liberatory futures (Li 2021: 241).

- Drawing on charismatic solidarity projects of the past (Bardawil 2020), our Traveling Academy asks what emancipatory futures animate the political imagination in the MENA region today?
- How do contemporary projects relate to past visions and transmit values to the next generation?

## Fourth lesson of the Hichem Djaït Chair: Histories and Cultures of Islam entitled "Muslim Law and the Historical Evolution of Shari'a in Islam (VIII-XVI centuries)"

24/02/2023

Christian Müller (Director of Research HdR (CNRS) at the Institute for Research and History of Texts, Director of the Arabic Section) was invited on Friday January 20, 2023 to the fourth lesson of the Hichem Djaït Chair entitled "Muslim Law and the Historical Evolution of the Shari'a in Islam (VIII-XVI centuries).

## MECAM Conference "Imagining Futures – Dealing with Disparity"

17-19/03/2023

After three years of stimulating academic exchange, fruitful research, and hard work, the Merian Center for Advanced Studies in the Maghreb, MECAM, held its closing conference from March 17-19, 2023 in Tunis. The title of the conference, "Imagining Futures – Dealing with Disparity", is also the leitmotif of MECAM. This conference marked the beginning of the main phase of MECAM rather than the end of the preliminary phase. In this conference MECAM organized under the general theme "Imagining the Future: Dealing with Disparity", five panels related to the interdisciplinary research themes" Aesthetics and Cultural Practices, Inequalities and Mobility, Memory and Justice, Resources and Sustainability, and Identities and Beliefs. A photo exhibition was also curated in the premises of MECAM and a round table on the topic how to protect and promote academic freedom in the field of international scientific cooperation took place.

## Photography exhibition: 'Working hands in arid lands' by Lisa M. Sarida Lippert

18-19/03/2023

MECAM, held its closing conference from March 17 to 19, 2023 in Tunis. As part of this conference, MECAM organized a photo exhibition in its premises: This photo exhibition carried the title "Working hands in arid lands" organised by Lisa M. Sarida Lippert (University of Hamburg, Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker – Center for Science and Peace Research, Germany) – and member of MECAM's IFG IV research group: "Resources and Sustainability This photo exhibition addressed the theme "What does the daily life of small farmers look like in the context of global warming?" Using the power of images, the 2022 photo series, which emerged from field research as part of MECAM's Interdisciplinary Fellows Group (IFG) IV "Resources and Sustainability," attempts to answer this question. It focuses on the hands of those who work the land, highlighting their connection to and dependence on natural resources. By merging epic and etic perspectives, it provokes a critical reflection on the dominant representations of rural people as passive victims. Furthermore, it highlights the power and responsibility of resource and sustainability researchers, and beyond, in creating these representations