

## Cities in the Arab Imagination: Fiction, Reality, and Futurescapes

MECAM Transregional Workshop | Berlin, 15-16 May 2024

*Convened by Teresa Pepe (University of Oslo/ MECAM Fellow 2021), organized by Diana Abbani (MECAM/Forum Transregionale Studien), in collaboration with Europe in the Middle East – The Middle East in Europe (EUME), and the Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages at the University of Oslo.*

*Venue: Forum Transregionale Studien, Wallotstr. 14, 14193 Berlin*

*If you would like to attend in person or receive the Zoom link for the first day, please register in advance via [eume@trafo-berlin.de](mailto:eume@trafo-berlin.de).*

### Program

#### Wednesday, 15 May 2024 | MECAM Workshop/ Berliner EUME Seminar (hybrid sessions)

14:30 **Welcome and Introduction**

15.00-16.30 **Teresa Pepe** (University of Oslo / MECAM Fellow 2021): *Cities of the Future in the Arab Literary Imagination*

Chair: **Rasha Chatta** (Freie Universität Berlin / MECAM Fellow 2021 / EUME Fellow 2017-21)

16:30-17:00 *Coffee Break*

17.00-18.30 **Ammar Azzouz** (University of Oxford): *Erased City: Imagining a Future without Ruins?*

Chair: **Anne-Marie McManus** (SYRASP / Forum Transregionale Studien)

*Part of the BEYONDREST Conversation Series "Restitution and its Vantage Points: Beyond the Preservation Paradigm"*

19:00 Dinner Reception

#### Thursday, 16 May 2024 (in-person sessions)

9.30-11.00 **Panel 1 | Fictional Realities**

Chair: Mina Khanlarzadeh (EUME Fellow 2023/24)

**Loayy Wattad** (EUME Fellow 2023/24): *Jerusalem's Dragons: Sociological and Fantastical Realities in Palestinian and Israeli Young Adult Literature*

**Hanan Natour** (Freie Universität Berlin): *Tunis and Beyond: Power, Access, and Representation in the Tunisian Arabic Novel*

- 11:00-11:30 *Coffee Break*
- 11.30-13.00 **Panel 2 | Speculative Futures**  
Chair: **Yvonne Albers** (Freie Universität Berlin / EUME Fellow 2022-24)  
**Sanabel Abdelrahman** (EUME Fellow 2023/24): *The Future Arab City: A Palimpsest of (Post) Colonial Imaginaries*  
**Rasha Chatta** (Freie Universität Berlin / MECAM Fellow 2021 / EUME Fellow 2017-21): *Beirut and the Ruins of the Future in Speculative Comics*
- 13:00-14:00 *Lunch Break*
- 14.00-15.30 **Panel 3 | Urban Structures**  
Chair: **Mariam Abou Ghazi** (Freie Universität Berlin),  
**Katarzyna Puzon** (Humboldt University): *'After the Future': A Walk in Time in Beirut*  
**Yahia Shawkat** (10 Tooba, Cairo/Berlin): *Two Dimensional Futures: The Stubborn Failures of Egyptian High Modernist Planning*
- 15:30-16:00 *Coffee Break*
- 16:00-17:00 **Panel 4 | That Was Tomorrow: A Conversation about Arab Imaginaries in Berlin**  
Conversation with Syrian writer **Rasha Abbas** (Independent, Berlin) and Palestinian artist **Muhammad Jabali** (Independent, Berlin) moderated by **Diana Abbani** (MECAM/Forum Transregionale Studien), on the future of Berlin, once envisioned as an Arab cultural hub, exploring the evolving dynamics and narratives shaping the city.
- 17:00 **Closing Remarks**