

Press Release

September 2024

MECAM Advances Research and Dialogue with New Cohort and Leadership

The Merian Centre for Advanced Studies in the Maghreb (MECAM) is delighted to welcome a new cohort of Fellows in Tunis, building on the successful first year of its main project phase. This marks an important step for MECAM as it solidifies its role as a key academic hub for research and international academic exchange in Tunisia and the broader Maghreb. With the appointment of Dr. Amel Guizani as the new Tunisian co-Director, succeeding Dr. Khaled Kchir, MECAM is set to advance its mission of to build up an institution of free academic exchange in the Maghreb. Guizani's expertise in the humanities and social sciences will guide MECAM's future endeavors across Tunisia and international networks.

Established in 2020 as a joint initiative of Tunisian and German Universities and research institutions, MECAM has rapidly become a hub for interdisciplinary research on questions of Aesthetics & Cultural Practice, Inequality & Mobility, Memory & Justice, Resources & Sustainability, and Identities & Beliefs – the five interdisciplinary research fields that constitute MECAM's agenda under its guiding theme, *"Imagining Futures: Dealing with Disparity."*

Reflecting on the first year of the main phase, the project successfully implemented all its research programs and work formats, setting a strong foundation for sustained intellectual engagement. Despite global and regional challenges since its foundation, it hosted numerous events and workshops that facilitated dynamic exchanges among scholars from Tunisia, the Maghreb, Europe, and beyond.

From September 2024 until the end of April 2025, MECAM will host a cohort of researchers from Algeria, Germany, Tunisia, the Netherlands, Palestine, the United States, and Ireland who are engaged in highly interesting topics and research fields. Together with researchers from Tunisia and in close collaboration with the research laboratories of the University of Tunis, MECAM will contribute to strengthen Maghrebi as well as Tunisian-German research cooperation, as well as promoting the internationalization of Social Sciences and Humanities in Tunisia, the Maghreb and beyond in order to connect better with knowledge production in Germany and Europe.

Looking ahead, MECAM will continue to offer a rich program of academic activities, including Traveling Academies, exploratory workshops, and public events such as the "Rencontres Ibn Khaldun" series. Additionally, doctoral schools are planned to connect Maghrebi PhD students and support them in planning their early careers. This November 2024, MECAM will realize an international Conference on the

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Mediterranean Sea from an interdisciplinary perspective. These initiatives will further enhance knowledge exchange within the region and globally.

MECAM is supported by a consortium of six Tunisian and German academic partners: Philipps-Universität Marburg, Université de Tunis, Université de Sfax, Universität Leipzig, the German Institute for Global and Area Studies (GIGA) in Hamburg, the Forum Transregionale Studien in Berlin, and two network sites in Casablanca and Beirut. Backed by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research of Germany, MECAM is part of the broader network of Maria Sibylla Merian Centres for Advanced Studies, which promote the internationalization of the humanities and social sciences worldwide.

More information: www.mecam.tn

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