



# NEWSLETTER

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## BUILDING ON PAST SUCCESS WITH ARABIC STUDY IN TUNISIA

The summer intensive Arabic program, known as the Critical Language Scholarship, has been CEMAT's biggest annual project. Funded by the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, the Tunis program has expanded from a 6-week program for 16 students in 2006 to an 8-week program for 32 students in 2010. Currently under the direction of Dr. Sonia S'hiri, the 2010 program hosted thirty students studied Arabic intensively and had a chance to explore

Tunisia's diverse regions as well. The students were hosted by Tunisian families and had the chance to interact with Tunisians in everyday situations such as the barbershop, the hammam, the café and the markets via the "language socialization" part of the program. The students also received an orientation and security briefing at the U.S. Embassy which covered a broad range of topics. For much of the program, students alternated between weekly study sessions and weekend excursions to southern Tunisia, the Sahel or "coast" of Tunisia, and the northwest of the country. The home stays, language socialization, and the excursions complemented the students' formal lessons in Arabic by providing colloquial and regional expressions they might not have learned otherwise. The program wrapped up in spectacular fashion with a wonderful reception at Ambassador Gordon Gray's residence in Sidi Bou Said. The overall impact of the program can be summed up in the words of one of its students: "I have learned so much about myself and what I am capable of achieving. I now know I can do anything I set my mind to."

## EXPLORING NEW PARTNERSHIPS AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Our efforts to reach out to new partners in the Tunisian academic and research community have met with success during these past two years. In addition to our partnership with the National Archives, at which Director Tom DeGeorges recently moderated a lecture in Arabic, CEMAT is also examining ways to deepen its collaboration with several English-language degree programs at Tunisian universities. In our meetings with these institutions, CEMAT is able to inform their representatives about new scholarship opportunities and lecture series. In turn, the institutions discuss with CEMAT the best ways to assist their teachers and students.



*National Archives photo of Tom, Lotfi  
Aissa, Ahmed Jdey*

## **INTRODUCTION: CEMAT'S EVENTFUL YEAR**

The challenges faced by CEMAT over the past year, including the destruction of the building next to our villa, had the potential to seriously impede our ability to serve the Tunisian and American scholarly community. We are happy to report that CEMAT has not only met these challenges, but has thrived. The contributions made by directors Karim Hamdy and Laurence Michalak have left us a strong base from which to expand. With the key assistance and advice provided by Assistant Director, Riadh Saadaoui and the hard work of Sameh Bouraoui and Faouzi Mahbouli, we are proud to report that we have never had to close our doors to our Tunisian and American partners, not even for one day. Despite some disruption to our daily routine, we have continued to sponsor lectures, maintain our relationships with key partners, and offer a wide range of resources and services to an expanding clientele. The pages that follow offer articles about our strategic partnerships, our activities, and snapshots of the various people and organizations that affiliate themselves with our work.

### **LETTER FROM CEMAT DIRECTOR, DR. THOMAS DEGEORGES**



It has been a great pleasure to be back in Tunisia after the time I spent here several years ago. The first time I came to Tunis was in the summer of 2002, when I was pursuing Arabic studies at the Bourguiba Institute. I later returned often over the next few years as I completed my doctoral research on Tunisian veterans of the First and Second World Wars. For the past three years, I have been teaching Arabic history to Emirati students at the American University of Sharjah. My trajectory from graduate student to director of CEMAT has been deeply gratifying on many levels. I look forward to reconnecting with researchers and institutions that I have known in the past, as well as meeting new friends and colleagues this year.

Under the leadership of my predecessors, Laurence Michalak and Karim Hamdy, a lot has happened at CEMAT since our last newsletter published in 2008. We have observed two important milestones, one with celebration and the other with regret. CEMAT celebrated the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our founding agreement with the Ministry of Higher Education in 2010. Former director Michalak spoke at the Temimi Foundation about this joyous occasion and described the changing nature of CEMAT's work in Tunisia and the possible future projects of the organization.

On a sad note, it is with deep regret that CEMAT marks the passing of Jeanne Jeffers Mrad on May 27, 2009. Jeanne presided over CEMAT for more than half of its lifetime—from January 1986 to her retirement in June 2001. Jeanne practically invented CEMAT, setting up the offices and the library in our current headquarters, the villa on the Impasse Menabrea. She furnished our offices with surplus furniture from the U.S. Embassy. Jeanne also kept CEMAT going when it lost most of its funding and had almost no money for staff or electricity. Most of all, Jeanne went out of her way to help Americans and others who came to Tunisia for research. In the years after her retirement, she was given awards by MESA and AIMS, and a scholarship program is named in her honor.

CEMAT closed for Jeanne's burial in La Marsa on May 28, which was attended by Larry Michalak and Riadh Saadaoui. CEMAT also placed a condolence notice in one of the local newspapers, "La Presse". A memorial gathering was held at the 2009 MESA Annual Meeting to commemorate Jeanne, who is survived by her husband Khaled, daughter Mouna, and son Ramzi. The American Tunisian Association (ATA) has set up a fund to which donations can be made in Jeanne's honor. For information on the fund and instructions on how to contribute to it, please contact CEMAT and we will direct you to the appropriate person.

CEMAT hopes to accomplish three major goals this year. We want to reinforce relationships with our institutional partners (the Ministry of Higher Education, universities, research centers) to the extent that our advice is solicited for collaborative efforts that benefit Tunisian and American scholars. CEMAT also wants to increase our outreach to individual Tunisian and American scholars and students via lecture series which promote their research, as well as providing them with assistance to write grant applications and network with other scholars from the United States and the Maghreb. Our third major goal is to facilitate Tunisian scholarly exchanges with the United States and the other countries of North Africa, through a variety of grant opportunities, international conferences, and lecture series.

Following the end of the holy month of Ramadan, Assistant Director Riadh Saadaoui and I have embarked upon a busy schedule of meeting with our Tunisian institutional partners. We have met with representatives from the Ministry of Higher Education, as well as scholars and administrators from several universities, the National Archives, and the National Institute of Patrimony. We anticipate further visits to Tunisian institutions throughout the country in the months to come. CEMAT is also planning a full lecture schedule in the months ahead, as you will see later in the newsletter.

In all, I look forward to a very eventful year as director of CEMAT and one which will enable us to report further successes in the near future.

**Thomas P. DeGeorges**

**STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AT THE CORE OF CEMAT'S ACTIVITIES: CEMAT would not function without the support and advice of key partners. Below is a list of the most important relationships CEMAT values and strives to maintain.**



*CAORC Annual meeting held in Istanbul, August 2010 (Attended by Kerry Adams-AIMS executive Director, Terry Ryan, AIMS administrative associate, Gerald Loftus – TALIM Director, Robert Parks – CEMA Director, Riadh Saadaoui and Tom Degeorges)*

#### **OUR AMERICAN PARTNERS**

**CAORC/AIMS:** CEMAT's activities continue to benefit from the financial support of our parent organizations. CEMAT is the American Institute for Maghrib Studies Overseas Research Center in Tunis, and it is one of three centers that AIMS operates throughout North Africa. AIMS is a member of the Council for American Overseas Research Centers and we are the only member of CAORC to operate throughout an entire region. Funding from both organizations helps CEMAT fund Tunisian research trips to other Maghrebi countries, organize the Critical Language Scholarship Intensive Summer Arabic programs that have taken place over the past five years, and the scanning of unique archival collections in the LALORC project.

**United States Embassy in Tunis:** Gordon Gray became American Ambassador to Tunisia in Fall 2009, after the term of Robert Godec. Ambassador Gray was briefed in Washington by former AIMS president Jim Miller and in Tunisia he has met with CEMAT Directors Larry Michalak and Tom

DeGeorges. CEMAT is grateful to the American Embassy for generous funding to our American Studies Grant Program and our American lecture series. We also thank Public Affairs Officer John Berry for his participation in the American Studies Grant Program selection committee and for his continuing interest in our public programs.

**Friends of CEMAT:** In addition to the researchers who rely on CEMAT, we are very grateful to the American community that supports our efforts here in Tunisia. We respect the contribution that many Americans from diverse backgrounds have made in fostering better relations with the Tunisian people. CEMAT is often a point of contact for such Americans when they visit Tunis and we look forward to welcoming more of them in the future. In particular, CEMAT salutes the diverse efforts of former Peace Corps volunteers to fostering American-Tunisian ties. Although the Peace Corps program in Tunisia was discontinued in the 1990s, alumni continue to contribute to American-Tunisian understanding. One of the most well-known is the incredible director of AMIDEAST, Lee Jennings, a Peace Corps alumnus who supervises the English education of thousands of Tunisian students. Scott Johnson, who currently works at the African Bank of Development, has lived in Tunisia for several decades since his time in the Peace Corps and is a font of information about the land and its peoples. Scott taught English in Jerba and was especially influential in the lives of many poorer Tunisians who lived in the deep south at that time. Peace Corps alumni, Stanley Hallet, professor of Architecture at the Catholic University of America, and his wife, Judy, also returned to Tunisia in September of 2010 to pursue projects related to Tunisian architecture found in the southern regions and the island of Jerba. Richard Fraenkel, another Peace Corps alumnus, delivered a lecture at CEMAT on farming in Tunisia in 2010. CEMAT is most indebted to the Peace Corps in Tunisia for having instilled a lifelong love of the country in our former director, Laurence Michalak, who served from 2006-2009 and then again in 2010. We look forward to Larry's return in the Spring of 2011 in preparation for his research project on Tunisian weekly markets.

## **OUR TUNISIAN PARTNERS**

**Ministry of Higher Education:** CEMAT is very fortunate to have the support and advice of several key Tunisian partners. Most important of all is our relationship with the Ministry of Higher Education. We owe our existence in Tunisia since March 1985 to the goodwill and continuing encouragement of this ministry. My initial contacts with Ministry representatives have been positive and reassuring. The head of International Cooperation at the Ministry of Higher Education, Jellal Ezzine, received us warmly at his office in September 2010 and I was deeply impressed by the wide-ranging discussion we had together. I have the distinct impression that the Ministry is committed to expanding educational opportunities for Tunisian academics and graduate students and looks forward to working with CEMAT to increase the scholarship opportunities and support for Tunisians to study abroad in a variety of disciplines.

**Tunisian universities and research institutes:** We are deepening links with various research institutions and universities in Tunis and throughout the country. We currently collaborate with the Institut Supérieur des Sciences Humaines de Tunis, el-Manar university on several issues. This institute, located near the large campus of 9 avril university, promotes diverse degree programs in English. The director of the program, Dr. Imed Bouslama, has worked closely with us to co-sponsor workshops and transfer part of CEMAT's library to the Institut. Many students from this institute also visit CEMAT regularly to use our library resources and the JSTOR database. The Institut has also permitted the use of their space this December to host a lecture by renowned scholar William Quandt on American foreign policy in the age of Obama. The Institut Nationale du Patrimoine, the Fondation Temimi, and the Institut pour le Recherche sur le Maghreb Contemporaine (IRMC) have also assisted us in the past.

**MERC:** The Middle East Research Competition (MERC) is a Ford Foundation Project that helps young social scientists of the Arab World and Turkey. MERC was originally headquartered in Cairo in the 1980s, then briefly in Beirut. In 2006, Tunisia won a competition to host MERC, under the leadership of Dr. Abdelwahab Ben Hafaiedh. Dr. Ben Hafaiedh has reinvigorated the program with several ambitious projects, including a website, grant programs, conferences, an academic journal, and in-service training activities. AIMS and MERC co-sponsor training programs for young social scientists from the Arab World and Turkey, to enhance their skills in research design and grant-writing. More information about these workshops can be found below in our “Activities” section.

**National Archives:** Former CEMAT Director Karim Hamdy signed an agreement of cooperation with the National Archives in February 2010 that committed both parties to exploring new ways of collaborating on joint projects. The Archives is part of the Tunisian government that falls under the control of the Prime Minister’s office. In September, Tom DeGeorges and Riadh Saadaoui met with the head of the National Archives, Madame Saloua Labben, and her assistant, Mabrouk Jbehi, to explore joint projects for the coming academic year. Our meeting has already borne fruit. CEMAT and AIMS have agreed to finance two Maghrebi scholars (one from Morocco and one from Algeria) to participate in a conference on Maghrebi youth and the nationalist movements in North Africa that will be hosted by the Archives. In addition, Director Tom DeGeorges was asked to introduce and moderate a lecture in Arabic by Professor Lotfi Aissa on “Non-Archival Collections and the Writing of Modern Maghrebi History”. This lecture is one in a series that the Archives sponsors in honor of the contributions of the Tunisian historian, Mohamed Hédi Chérif. The National Archives has also graciously agreed to co-sponsor a lecture delivered by Professor William Quandt in December on American foreign policy in the age of Obama.

**CEMAT ACTIVITIES:** As a result of our partnerships outlined above, CEMAT has been able to sponsor a wide range of activities over the past two years. What follows is a brief summary of the highlights of our activities, as well as a list of scholars, researchers and others who have used our center’s resources.



*Jocelyn Cesari, Director of Islam in the West program at Harvard University, at CEMAT talking about Muslims in Europe and the United States*

## LECTURE SERIES

CEMAT has continued to host various scholars, researchers, and university professors at the center. As a result of our strong connections with the scholarly community in Tunis and beyond, we continue to host informative and scholarly lectures. Working with partners from the United States and Tunisia, we have expanded the range and depth of our offerings. CEMAT is grateful to the United States Embassy in Tunis for its generous grant to fund a series of lectures delivered by eminent scholars of North Africa, such as Jocelyn Cesari of Harvard University

and William Quandt of the University of Virginia. Our parent organization, AIMS, has provided support to allow us to bring Maghrebi scholars to Tunisia to participate in an academic conference at the National Archives in December. CEMAT is also deeply appreciative of the work that Robert Parks and Karim Ouaras of CEMA have provided in the selection of several Algerian scholars who will deliver lectures in Tunis. We include in the following list past events and future ones that have been confirmed. Lectures are normally held at CEMAT unless noted below.



*Professor Mohamed Kerrou discussing the politics of the hijab in the Muslim world.*

- “New Directions in U.S. Public Policy” by John Berry (U.S. Embassy/Tunis PAO), November 18, 2009.
- “Constitutionality and its discontents: USA Patriot Act under Obama” by Robert Harvey (SUNY-Stony Brook), December 7, 2009.
- “Anthropology and Cultural Studies: Connections and Contrasts” by Nicolas Hopkins (American University in Cairo), December 15, 2009.
- “Synchronizing Language Software and Language Pedagogy” by Deborah Healey (University of Oregon) January 10, 2010.
- “Comparing Muslims in Europe and the USA” by Jocelyne Cesari (Harvard University), January 18, 2010.
- “Des causes réelles de la radicalization des musulmans en Occident” by Jocelyne Cesari (Harvard University), January 19, 2010. Lecture held at the Diocesan Library.
- “New Sources of Finance for Farming, Tunisia and Globally” by Richard Fraenkel (former Program Officer with the USAID), February 8, 2010
- “The Arab World and Political Systems” by Hamadi Redissi (SIT Lecture), February 12
- “Women and Gender in Tunisian Culture” by Raja Boussedra (SIT Lecture), February 19
- “Islam and Modernity” by Hamadi Redissi (SIT Lecture), March 12, 2010
- “State and Islam in Tunisia” by Asma Noura (SIT Lecture), March 19, 2010
- “Youth and Education in Tunisia” by Imed Ben Ammar (SIT Lecture), April 2, 2010
- “Voiles islamiques, individus et sphères publiques” by Mohamed Kerrou (Faculté de droit et des sciences politiques de Tunis) October 22, 2010.
- “Les débuts du cinématographe en Tunisie (1896-1943) by Morgan Corriou (Doctorante au laboratoire SEDET, Université Paris Diderot), October 25, 2010.
- “Cinéma de la Méditerranée” by Mohamed Ben Salah (Réalisateur et enseignant-chercheur à l’Université, Algérie), October 29, 2010
- “Frustration de la jeunesse marocaine et genèse du mouvement national dans l’entre-deux-guerres” by Jamaa Baida (Université Mohammad V-Rabat) December 1, 2010. Lecture to be held at the National Archives of Tunisia
- “La naissance du mouvement national dans une ville de l’ouest algérien: Saida” by Amar Mohand Ameer (Collaborateur au CRASC-Oran) December 1, 2010. Lecture to be held at the National Archives of Tunisia

- “ Les publications des nationalistes marocains aux Etats-Unis entre 1947 et 1956: Propagande et histoire” by Jamaa Baida (Université Mohammad V-Rabat) December 2, 2010.
- “La politique étrangère des Etats-Unis dans l’époque Obama” by William Quandt (Professor of Political Science, University of Virginia) December 8, 2010. Lecture to be held at the National Archives of Tunisia.
- “American Foreign Policy in the Age of Obama” by William Quandt (Professor of Political Science, University of Virginia) December 9, 2010. Lecture to be held at the Institut Supérieur des Sciences Humaines de Tunis, el-Manar.
- “La politique familiale à Tunis et dans les autres provinces arabes” by Amy Kallander (Assistant Professor, Maxwell School of International Studies at Syracuse University), December 14, 2010
- Round table discussion on the state of Ottoman studies in Tunisia (chaired by Amy Kallander and Asma Moalla), December 15, 2010

## CEMAT SCHOLARS MEETINGS



*CEMAT Scholars meeting, October 2010*  
*From left to right: Tom Degeorges, Mark Willis, Cody Case, Jessica Gerschultz, Nadia Mamelouk, Habib Ben Messaoud, Khoulood Chebbeh, Michael Clark, Nizar Ben Ali, Kyle Liston*

In addition to our lecture series, CEMAT periodically holds get-togethers of scholars in Tunis so that they can meet each other and share resources and ideas. One such meeting was held on March 23, 2010. The meeting was attended by eleven CEMAT scholars: Cody Case, Laryssa Chomiak, Laura Clauson, Christen Farr, Eamonn Gearon, Jessica Gerschultz, Scott Johnson, Kyle Liston, Nadia Mamelouk, and Jason Vivrette. The scholars introduced themselves and described their research projects, followed by discussion. Nadia Mamelouk gave a report on the January IBLA fire and

opportunities for volunteering to help dry restore books. The conversations continued informally over a dinner at Chez Nous Restaurant.

Building on this successful tradition, CEMAT held the another Scholars Meeting on Wednesday, October 20. This meeting was unique in that both Tunisian and American students and researchers participated. The topics were diverse. Nadia Mamelouk and Jessica Gerschultz talked about the reinterpretation of feminism in a Tunisian context in their respective research. Habib Ben Massaoud's thesis will inquire into the novelty of political reform in the era of Tony Blair and Bill Clinton. Mark Willis and Kyle Liston are pursuing topics in the Protectorate era that examine Tunisia from American and Italian perspectives. Nizar Ben Ali and Khouloud Chebbeh are working on survey research designed to measure the performance of key indicators in Tunisia's education and business sectors. Finally, Cody Case is exploring the applications of music therapy in the treatment of autistic children in Tunisia. The researchers had the opportunity to continue their discussion in an informal setting over dinner at the restaurant, L'Orient. CEMAT looks forward to finding new activities to support the research agendas of both Tunisian and American students who are preparing Master's or Doctoral theses.

### **RESEACHERS AT CEMAT DURING 2009-2010**

- Zach Bloomfield** (Chapman Univ.) Fulbright, Youth, education and unemployment
- Sonja Buchberger** (Univ. of Leeds, UK) Tourism in Tunisia and Morocco
- Cody Case** (U. Wash) Fulbright, Contemporary Tunisian music
- Mounira Maya Charrad** (UT/Austin) Women leaders in the professions in Tunisia
- Laryssa Chomiak** (U. Maryland) Civic politics and public space
- Laura Clauson** (McGill), Plastic waste recycling
- Thomas Earnest** (Georgia Tech) Fulbright, Economic development in Tunisia
- Christen Farr** (USC) Arabic study and Fulbright, Women and microcredit
- Allen Fromherz** (Georgia State U) Modern perceptions of Ibn Khaldun
- Eamonn Gearon** (U.of Southampton and SOAS) Arabic study and writing projects
- Jessica Gerschultz** (Emory U) Gender, identity and modern art in Tunisia
- Margaret Gleason** (UC/San Diego) History of science in Islamic settings.
- Chauncy Harris** (Oxford) Italians and Maltese in Tunisian and Algerian history
- Matthew Hendren** Fulbright, Urban agriculture
- Claudia Jannone** (S, Florida) Fulbright, poetry project
- Stephanie Kirkland**,(York Univ./Canada) Tourism and the cultural environment
- Kyle Liston** (Indiana U) Fulbright, Italo-Tunisian interactions in the Protectorate
- Nadia Mamelouk** (U of Virginia) Women and gender in Tunisia
- Ruth Marcus** (AUC) Fulbright, Art and nationalism in Tunisia
- Larry Michalak** (UC/Berkeley) Weekly markets in Tunisia
- Cristina Mouratides-Mediouni** (Deakin U, Austral.) Men and Reading in Tunisia
- Claire Oueslati-Porter** (S. Florida) Women workers in Maghrebi offshore factories



- Elizabeth Perego** (Tulane) Women and the Algerian War of Independence
- Abderrahman Robana** (Alfred U/NY) Fragmentation of Maghreb financial markets
- Zakia Robana** (Alfred U/NY) 6-8/09, Oral traditions in Djerba.
- Laura Thompson** (Georgetown), Fulbright, Women in the public sphere
- Sarah Vincent** (London School of Economics) Marriage and divorce in Tunisia
- Sabra Webber** (Ohio State) Women's autobiography in Cap Bon
- Mark Willis** (State Dept., retired) US-Tunisian relations in the period 1941-1945
- Dorsey Wisotzki** (independent scholar) Arabic study

## **INTERNS AT CEMAT**

CEMAT employed the following interns in recent months:

- **Dylan Boye** (Oregon State University), Beit El Bennani and IBLA, Jan-Feb 2010
- **Jenna Smith** (Oregon State University), Beit El Bennani and IBLA, Jan-Feb 2010
- **Dambian Bangali** (Ivory Coast), CEMAT newspaper files, Jan-Mar 2010
- **Yusuf Dridi**, CEMAT, Beit El Bennani and IBLA, Jan-Feb-Mar 2010
- **Miriem Ouled Dhaou**, CEMAT, Beit El Bennani and IBLA, Jan-Feb-Mar 2010\
- **Nihel Jaafar**, Beit El Bennani and IBLA, Jan-Feb-Mar 2010
- **Dhaou Bsisia**, Beit El Bennani and IBLA, Feb-Mar 2010
- **Radhia Bakroo**, Beit El Benani (Feb), IBLA (Feb-Apr) and CEMAT (Apr-May)
- **Dhouha Bokri**, Beit El Benani, May – September 2010

## **LIBRARY UPDATE AND TICFIA/LALORC PROJECT**

### **NEW BOOKS AND THESES FOR THE CEMAT LIBRARY**

In Spring 2010 Kerry Adams of AIMS allotted \$2,000 for new book purchases for CEMAT. CEMAT buys books throughout the year, but especially after the Annual MESA Meeting. The CEMAT Director visits the MESA Book Exhibit, notes new books about the Maghreb, and we order them—often as used books from Amazon. The books arrive through the diplomatic pouch within a couple of weeks. We solicit book purchase suggestions from CEMAT scholars and Tunisian users of our Library. CEMAT has an excellent collection of PhD theses about the Maghreb, available in both print and electronic format. The theses are a shared resource, an excellent investment, and one of the main reasons why scholars visit CEMAT.

CEMAT also has a growing collection of Tunisian and Algerian films. We get the Algerian films through swap with CEMA in Oran, and we are currently working on acquiring Moroccan films. Undergraduates in study abroad programs in Tunis often use the CEMAT film collection as the basis for term papers. The films are listed on the CEMAT website, which we are currently updating.

### **A LIBRARY GRANT TO CEMAT**

The TICFIA (Technological Innovation and Cooperation for Foreign Information Access) program is funded by the U.S. Department of Education. As a beneficiary of TICFIA funding, our parent organization, CAORC has initiated the Digital Library for International Research program

(DLIR) to work with local overseas research centers to catalogue and scan materials from local libraries and archives and make them available via the internet, in order to benefit wider scholarly audiences. As part of our first TICFIA grant which ran from 2007-2010, CEMAT project provided technical assistance for cataloguing and scanning at libraries in Tunis. The bulk of our work for this first grant was with the Beit el-Bennani collection located in Bab Menara near the Medina of Tunis. We have just completed our project with Mr. Mohamed Bennani to catalog his collection of 1,000 books. In addition to the rare books in the Bennani collection, CEMAT interns have assisted Mr. Bennani with the cataloguing and scanning of 8,000 rare photographs taken by one of former President Habib Bourguiba's favored photographers, Mohamed Bouchoucha.

CEMAT has successfully applied for a second TICFIA grant that will last from 2010-2013. Recently, Director Tom DeGeorges and Assistant Director Riadh Saadaoui explored the possibility of using TICFIA funding to scan an archival collection documenting the history of an important Tunisian town, Enfida, during the French protectorate era (1881-1956). The Dar Chérif museum is run by Habib Chérif, whose brother, Faisal, is a researcher affiliated with the Institut Supérieur pour l'histoire du mouvement nationale at Manouba University. Enfida used to be a Beylical town that was famous for Khaireddine Pacha who had an estate there. The beys themselves built a house right next to Dar Chérif museum, but only completed the first floor. The house was bombed by the Germans in 1943, when the entire area was the scene of fierce fighting.

Dar Chérif is run by Habib Chérif, an artist who has devoted considerable time to collecting historical documents concerning the Enfida region. The most interesting part of Habib Chérif's collection (for the DLIR project) consists of 50,000 archival documents which refer to many aspects of the Protectorate period in Enfida. Among these documents are records of Tunisian veterans, Italian and French laborers, and financial, economic and property information concerning the town during the Protectorate period.

We had intended to use TICFIA funding to scan valuable documents found in the Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes (IBLA), but we were unable to do so due to the tragic reasons we give below.

### **CEMAT ASSISTS IBLA LIBRARY AFTER TRAGIC FIRE**

On January 5, 2010 there was an explosion and fire at the library of the Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes (IBLA), which is run by the White Fathers, an order of Catholic priests. IBLA is located in a historic old building at the Southwest periphery of the Medina of Tunis.

IBLA's building was adorned with tiles and plasterwork and had a relaxing courtyard, complete with gardens and terraces. The heat of the fire loosened the tiles and warped the walls and floors, so the building will need much work. The Tunisian government has pledged to do the restoration, which will take a year and a half or more. During this time the book and journal collection will be temporarily moved to another location for restoration and scanning.

About 10-12,000 volumes out of IBLA's collection of 30,000 were destroyed or damaged by fire, smoke, and water. One White Father, Giambattista Maffi, lost his life during the blaze. Despite this terrible cost, the walls of the old building are two feet thick and made with non-flammable material, which prevented the fire from spreading and protected most of the collection.

CEMAT scholars have been helping at IBLA, supplemented by two paid Tunisian interns from CEMAT, to clean and dry books. We look forward to working with IBLA in the near future to see whether there might be the possibility to use TICFIA funding to salvage the unique documents that still exist in the undamaged part of the collection.

## TUNISIAN SCHOLARLY EXCHANGES TO THE UNITED STATES AND WITHIN THE MAGHREB

We are fortunate to receive funding from the United States Embassy in Tunisia which enables us to select Tunisian scholars and teachers that wish to travel to the United States to further their professional development. Our parent organization, AIMS, assists CEMAT in funding Tunisian research in other countries of the Maghreb.

### THE AMERICAN STUDIES GRANT PROGRAM EXPANDS

CEMAT has an annual grant program to send Tunisian scholars to the US for a month of research on American topics. The program began with a single grant for \$3,000 under Jim Miller in 2006. Under Larry Michalak, we gave another grant in 2007, then three in 2008, five in 2009, and six grants in 2010. The current award amount has been increased to \$5,000. This expansion is due to generous funding from the U.S. Embassy, for which CEMAT is grateful.

Each Spring, returning Tunisian grantees in the American Studies Program participate in a public panel. Most recently, on May 6, the grantees from 2009 reported on their experiences in the US. The audience filled CEMAT's conference room and included U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Officer John Berry, who is a member of the Awards Committee.

The speakers and their research topics were:

- 1- **Sihem Arfaoui Abidi** (Univ. of Tozeur), the 19<sup>th</sup> Century American novel and Arab-American literature, hosted by the Univ. of California at Berkeley;
- 2- **Ouassim Jday** (Univ. of Sousse), the figure of the priest in American Gothic novels, hosted by UCLA;
- 3- **Radhia Krid** (Univ. of Gabes), how students interpret the poetry of T.S. Eliot, hosted by the Univ. of Indiana/Bloomington;
- 4- **Houda Slim** (Univ. of Tunis 9 Avril), gender inequality in education, hosted by Syracuse Univ.
- 5- **Houda Zaibi** (Institut Supérieure des Langues de Tunis), women's autobiography, hosted by the Univ. of California at Berkeley.



All five scholars reported diverse and generally positive experiences and much progress on their dissertation research. All of them teach American Studies at the University level in Tunisia, so they also gathered materials that will be of help in their teaching, which is part of the purpose of the program.

*American studies grant panel, May 2010  
Laurence Michalak (CEMAT Director) and  
Houda Slim (American Studies Grantee)*

## NEW AMERICAN STUDIES GRANTS IN 2010

The 2010 American Studies grants were decided by the Selection Committee in April and announced in early May. The grantees and their topics and hosts are:

- 1- **Rym Ben Khelifa** (University of Tunis School of Law), international business law, hosted by George Washington Univ. in Washington, D.C.;
- 2- **Oumeima Mouelhi** (Institut Supérieur de Langues de Tunis), adaptations of Shakespeare plays in Hollywood cinema, hosted by UCLA;
- 3- **Abderazak Tebbeb** (Univ. of Sousse), “Dark Humor,” hosted by UC/Berkeley;
- 4- **Adel Bahroun** (Univ. of Sousse) the plays of Eugene O’Neill, hosted by UC/Berkeley;
- 5- **Asma Ben Hamza** (Institut Supérieur de Langues de Tunis), the plays of Harold Pinter, hosted by UC/Berkeley; and
- 6- **Samir Mestiri** (Univ. of Sfax), the novels of Don De Lillo, hosted by Towson Univ. in Maryland.

As of the writing of this Newsletter in October, four of these scholars have already gone to the U.S., done their research, and returned to Tunisia; the other two are scheduled to leave for the U.S. in mid-November. The topics and destinations are diverse, but four of the six went to the University of California—three to Berkeley and one to UCLA.

## AIMS MAGHREBI GRANT RECIPIENTS:

**The American Institute for Maghreb Studies provides annual funding to sponsor Maghrebi scholars’ research in Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Mauretania and Libya. Normally grants are for the duration of one month to six weeks. Below is a list of Tunisian grantees who have worked in Morocco, Algeria or Libya in 2009-2010. We have also included an Algerian grantee who completed his research in Tunisia.**

- “Herbal Remedies in Medieval Moroccan Society” Raja Abdelli (Tunisia)
- “Arts of the book in Tunisia and Morocco from the Xth to the XVIIth century: A Comparative Study of Memory and Materials” Wissem Abdelmoula (Tunisia)
- “Les Sociétés d’investissement à Capital Variable au Maghreb: Essai d’Etude Comparative” Hanène Ammar (Tunisia)
- “Les inscriptions Arabe et Turque dans la Medina de Tripoli (Libye) à l’Epoque Ottomane (1551-1911): Etude Epigraphique et Historique” Ali Cheib Ben Sassi (Tunisia)
- “Water and the Oasis Communities in Morocco from the 19th to Early 20th Century: A Historical and Anthropological Approach” Aida Khaled (Tunisia)
- “The Legal Framework of Clandestine Migrations in the Maghreb Countries: The Case of Morocco” Nadia Lagha (Tunisia)
- “Assessment and Perspectives of European Policies Toward the Maghreb: The Case of Tunisia” Rachid Tlemcani (Algeria)

## GETTY FELLOWSHIPS

The Getty Foundation awards grants through CAORC and the American Overseas Research Centers for foreign scholars to do research relating to Mediterranean Studies. CEMAT organizes the competition each year for Tunisian scholars. We choose one or more applications which we refer to CAORC for the final selection process.

**The 2010 Getty Fellowship** was awarded to Dr. Fathi Jarray of the Higher Institute of Heritage and Crafts of the University of Tunis, to visit Turkey and study the origins and evolution of Islamic sundials.

**The 2009 Getty Fellowship** was awarded to Faïka Béjaoui of the Association Pour La Sauvegarde de la Médina to study the preservation of monuments in Cairo and identify best practices that can be used in Tunisia.

## WORKSHOPS, SEMINARS, AND CONFERENCES

### AIMS AND MERC; OUR SECOND JOINT WORKSHOP

The second MERC-AIMS workshop for North African scholars on research design and proposal writing took place from May 21 to 23, 2010. There were 21 participants--4 each from Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, 3 from Egypt, 2 from Lebanon, and one each from Jordan, Palestine, Turkey and Syria. About half the scholars were from MERC and half from AIMS. The program featured training sessions by five resource persons, including three scholars from AIMS--Azzedine Layachi, Angel Foster, and Larry Michalak. Training topics included proposal writing, budgeting, identifying funding sources, literature reviewing, qualitative interviewing and research ethics. There were also four group workshops to discuss the grant proposals of the participants and to help improve them.



*MERC AIMS Workshop, May 2010*

*Left: Azzedine Layachi, AIMS Board member, presenting ways to improve grant applications  
Right: Abdelwhab Ben Hafaieth, MERC Coordinator, and Laurence Michalak, CEMAT Acting Director.*

### A POPULAR SEMINAR ON AUGUSTINE AND PERPETUA

CEMAT assisted Prof. Thomas Heffernan, who conducted a six-week National Endowment for the Humanities seminar for 15 American scholars, from 30 June to 7 August, 2010. The seminar topic was "Augustine and Perpetua: Autobiography in its Roman African Context." Participating scholars

read and discussed “The Confessions of St. Augustine” and the apocryphal autobiography of St. Perpetua, who was martyred in Carthage. They also visited Tunisian sites relating to the Roman period. CEMAT helped with logistics. The seminar was one of the most popular NEH programs of 2010 and attracted a record number of applicants.

### **AIMS CONFERENCES (2010-2011)**

Each year AIMS sponsors a major conference around an academic theme, alternating the site of the conference between Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria. The 2010 AIMS conference took place June 26-28 on the topic, “Viewing the Scene: Global and Local in North Africa.” CEMAT sponsored the following Tunisian delegation: Mohamed Kerrou, Kmar Bendana, Houaida Ben Khater, Houda Laroussi, and Olfa Meziou. Amal Obeidi, a Libyan scholar, also attended the conference. In 2011 it will be the turn of Tunis to host the AIMS conference. The organizer is Dr. Angel Foster and the conference will focus on “Public Health issues in the Maghrib.” The site is the Hotel Belvedere in Tunis. Dr. Foster is currently recruiting presenters from the Maghreb countries and the U.S. The dates of the upcoming Public Health conference have been finalized and it will be held from June 17 to June 20, 2011.

### **CEMAT AND ARABIC STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS IN 2009-2010**

As part of our mission to promote scholarship about the Maghrib at multiple academic levels, CEMAT provides services to undergraduate study abroad groups in Tunisia. Historically, we have provided services to three major programs: The Critical Language Scholarship, the SIT Study Abroad (based in Middlebury) and Oregon State University. CEMAT also receives other American student groups who come on short visits to Tunisia, and we do receptions and orientations for them free of charge. Recent groups have included the American University in Paris and George Fox University.

### **CEMAT SETS NEW STANDARDS FOR ARABIC TRAINING**

By far, our most visible and successful collaboration has been the Critical Language Scholarship, directed by Dr. Sonia S’hiri. For the past five years, the summer intensive Arabic program has been CEMAT’s biggest annual project. From a 6-week program for 16 students in 2006 our Tunis program has expanded to an 8-week program for 32 students. In the early years the students stayed in a hotel in Tunis, but for the past two years they have stayed with Tunisian families. We have also moved the program from downtown Tunis to suburban Sidi Bou Said, where SIT, an American study abroad program, has generously given us summer use of a perfect site with multiple air-conditioned classrooms.



*Hatem Bouriel explaining pottery making in Gallala – Djerba, South of Tunisia, to CLS students, June 2010*



*Katie Bentivoglio and Noura Zaouali within the courtyard of the Grand Mosque of Kairouan*

Two years ago, in Summer 2008, we hired Dr. Sonia S’hiri of the University of California at Berkeley to direct the Arabic Program and the resulting test scores of the students were spectacular. Just under a third of the students tested at the Novice High level; over two thirds tested in the Intermediate, and a few even in scored at the Advanced level—unprecedented results for beginners in an 8-week program. The result was that Dr. S’hiri was made overall Director of six Arabic programs in five countries.

In summer 2010 Dr. S’hiri directed the Tunis program, as well as the other Arabic programs in Tangier, Cairo, Alexandria, Amman, and Muscat. She also did several teacher training workshops for these sites. An innovation in 2010 was dropping Beginning Arabic. Now all six programs require at least a year of previous Arabic study. Summer 2010 once again showed impressive results, this time across all six programs.

The 2010 program began on June 3 and ended on August 1. During this time, the thirty students studied Arabic intensively and had a chance to explore Tunisia’s diverse regions as well. The students were hosted by Tunisian families and had the chance to interact with Tunisians in everyday situations such as the barbershop, the hammam, the café and the markets via the “language socialization” part of the program. The students also

received an orientation and security briefing at the U.S. Embassy which covered a broad range of topics. For much of the program, students alternated between weekly study sessions and weekend excursions to southern Tunisia, the Sahel or “coast” of Tunisia, and the northwest of the country. The home stays, language socialization, and the excursions complemented the students’ formal lessons in Arabic by providing colloquial and regional expressions they might not have learned otherwise.

The program wrapped up in spectacular fashion with a wonderful reception at Ambassador Gordon Gray’s residence in Sidi Bou Said. The overall impact of the program can be summed up in the words of one of its students: “I have learned so much about myself and what I am capable of achieving. I now know I can do anything I set my mind to.”



*Ambassador Gordon Gray welcomes CLS students, teachers and host families to his residence.*



*CEMAT villa "Maria Carlotta" seen in full for the first time due to construction next door.*



Centre d'Etudes Maghrébines à Tunis

مركز الدراسات المغاربية بتونس

CEMAT is the American Research Center in Tunis [www.cematmaghrib.org](http://www.cematmaghrib.org)

CEMAT is the overseas Research Center of AIMS, the American Institute of Maghrib Studies [www.aimsnorthafrica.org](http://www.aimsnorthafrica.org)

CEMAT is a member of CAORC, the Council of American Overseas Research Centers, [www.caorc.org](http://www.caorc.org)

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