



## CEMAT NEWSLETTER

CEMAT is the American Research Center in Tunis, the Centre d'Etudes Maghrébines à Tunis  
CEMAT is the Overseas Research Center of the American Institute of Maghribi Studies, AIMS  
CEMAT is a member of the Council of American Overseas Research Centers, CAORC

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CEMAT was authorized by the Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research of the Republic of Tunisia, March 1985.

CEMAT is open Monday – Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.  
July & Ramadan hours: 7:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.  
CEMAT is closed the month of August.

### Message from the Director

Summer has finally come to Tunis. After a long, cool spring, bright clear skies and azure blue waters are Tunisia's destiny until fall makes its entrance months from now. The heat will rise, and rise again. Then in September, the new school year will be upon us and a host of new activities will be underway. Some of the recent initiatives undertaken by CEMAT should by then have an effect that push scholarship forward at 19 bis Rue d'Angleterre. Perhaps foremost among these is the simple creation of the idea that "Tunisian Studies" exist (p. 6) and that CEMAT – and its Tunisian counterpart, the Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research – are working together to promote them. While the concept may have a variety of effects in the future, right now it coincides with the develop of CEMAT Grants at AIMS. While the pot of grant money available for scholars to study in Tunisia through AIMS has not gotten any bigger, we have acted to encourage research in Tunisia by separating CEMAT out as its own grant announcement and application for those who intend to work in Tunisia only. This is now the "CEMAT Grant." Still through AIMS, still same procedure, but a different and distinctive name to indicate that CEMAT seeks qualified researchers and indeed to draw attention to the possibilities for research in Tunisia. As scholars seek grant possibilities on the web, the CEMAT Grants will come up as a separate URL at the AIMS website. I hope we haven't complicated things; this should focus attention on the rich resources available to researchers in Tunisia.

The fall promises to be a busy season. CEMAT is assisting the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ben Ali Chair for Dialogue of Religions and Civilizations in planning for a colloquium, "Dialogue in the House of Abraham" which will bring a select number of scholars and others from the three faiths together to Tunis for an examination of the concept of tolerance December 9-11 of this year. If present indications are correct, there will be more AIMS scholars in Tunis next year than this year and in fact a big jump in the number of Fulbrighters. With others coming through on their own means and the growing realization that CEMAT is open to all nationalities, the life of scholarship in Tunisia grows and prospers.

### CEMAT Researchers Summer 2004

Michael Suleiman, Department of Political Science, Kansas State University. Senior Fulbright Researcher. Professor Suleiman is researching "Attitudes Toward the Other in Tunisian Textbooks" between January and July, 2004. Mike and Penny Suleiman have been re-discovering life in Tunisia after a break of many years. Mike held a previous Fulbright for Tunisia in 1987-88.

Ben Gardner, School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) Johns Hopkins University, Washington DC. Mr. Gardner is working toward his M.A. in international relations and finance and is undertaking research on the private equity market in Tunis during June and July and is at CEMAT through the auspices of the SAIS African Studies program.

Mohammed Sawaie, Department of Asian & Middle Eastern Languages & Culture, University of Virginia at Charlottesville, returned to Tunisia for a period of research in May and June to pursue his work on Ahmed Faris al-Shidyaq, a Lebanese-born polymath who was editor of the first Arabic newspaper in Istanbul. The periodicals section of the National Library holds 3 volumes of the newspaper Al-Jawa'ib, and Professor Suwaie is working on 19<sup>th</sup>-century Arabic lexicography and word coinages as they appeared in the Arab world in that period.

Kevin Pittle, Department of Anthropology, Florida State University, is researching contemporary Tunisian herbalists' folk medical knowledge. Mr. Pittle, who is a Ph.D. candidate, will be working on traditional pharmacopoeia from mid-June until the end of August.

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### **AIMS & CEMAT Fellows 2004 -- Maghribi Grantees**

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#### **● Moroccan Scholars to Tunisia:**

Souad Eddouada, Doctoral candidate, University Mohammed V, Rabat. "Mobilizing Women Against Violence." Violence against women seen from the perspective of women's associations in Tunisia.

#### **● Algerian Scholar to Tunisia:**

Boucheta Benaini, Enseignant-chercheur, Faculté des Sciences, de Géographie et d'Aménagement du Territoire-IGMO, Université d'Es-Senia, Oran. "Gestion, usages et conflits d'eau dans un bassin-versant frontalier: Le cas du bassin de l'Oued Mouillah (Oranie occidentale, Algérie). Problems of water use and urbanization in the Maghnia plain in western Algeria, where the watershed of the Oued Mouillah begins in Morocco and continues across the border into Algeria.

#### **● Algerian Scholar to Morocco:**

Hind Amel Mostari, Assistant Professor, Sociolinguistics, Department of English, Faculty of Humanities, University of Sidi Bel Abbès. "A Sociolinguistic Perspective on Language Contact Phenomena: Evidence from Arabic/French Code-switching." Comparative code-switching from Arabic to French in Morocco and Algeria.

#### **● Tunisian Scholars to Morocco:**

Sofiane Bouhdiba, Doctoral candidate, Demography, Faculty of Human & Social Sciences, University of Tunis. "Urban Mortality in Morocco." A comparison between the principal factors of urban mortality in Morocco and Tunisia.

Jouhaina Bouteraa, contractual Assistant Professor, Institut Supérieur des Etudes Appliquées en Humanités de Gafsa, University of Sfax for the South. "A Comparative Study of Berber Architecture and Decorative Concepts."

Naim Ghali, Assistant d'Enseignement Supérieur, Faculty of Letters, University of Manouba. "Patrimoine Culturel et Tourisme au Maghreb: Le cas de la Tunisie et du Maroc." Development of comparative information on tourism in Morocco, especially cultural tourism and tourism promotion.

Mabrouk Mansouri, Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies, University of Human Sciences, Sousse. "Imazighen Islam and 'Mimetic Religions' in the Maghrib: Local Prophets & Mahdists in the Middle Ages." The Barghwata and Ghumara heresies.

#### **● Maghribi Scholars outside the Maghrib to the Maghrib:**

Mustapha Hamil, Assistant Professor of French & Comparative Literature, Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, State University of West Georgia. "Language, Identity, and the Internet; A Case Study: Tunisia." Relationship of the internet to Arabic language, identity and worldview in Tunisia.

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### **AIMS & CEMAT Fellows 2004-2005 -- American Grantees**

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#### **Short-term Grantees:**

Debbie Barnard, Adjunct Instructor, Johnson C. Smith University and Director, Inlingua Language & Intercultural Services, Charlotte, North Carolina. "Judeo-Tunisian Literature: The Case of Gilbert Naccache." Naccache's perspective on the Tunisia of the 1960s and 1970s through his novels.

Marie-Therese Ellis, Ph.D. student, Department of French, University of California at Berkeley. "Print Cultures and State Centralization in the Maghrib." Relationship between the novel and nationalism in Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia.

John Herrmann, Curator of Classical Art, Boston Museum of Fine Art. "Sculpture of Thasian Marble in Tunisia." Analysis of Roman sculpture in Tunisia made of white marble from the northern Greek island of Thasos.

Laura Rice, Associate Professor, Department of English, Oregon State University. "Imagined Lives." Rural Maghribi women and literacy.

### **Long-term Grantee:**

Driss Cherkaoui, Assistant Professor, Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, College of William & Mary. "Voices of North Africa." Oral stories and storytellers.

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## **AIMS CONFERENCES**

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**2004.** AIMS will host its 2004 Conference in Tangier at TALM June 22-25. The theme for the conference, "*Rethinking Jewish Culture & Society in the Maghrib*" ("*Nouvelles perspectives sur la culture et la société juive au Maghreb*") takes as its point of departure the fact that Maghribi Jewish studies have become a subdiscipline of Jewish studies generally and embrace a large number of scholars from associated disciplines in the human and social sciences. The conference seeks papers from the following areas: historiography and ethnography; urban and rural communities; Muslim-Jewish relations; linguistic literary, and artistic expressions. The conference organizers are Daniel Schroeter (History, University of California at Irvine; [djschroe@uci.edu](mailto:djschroe@uci.edu)) and Emily Gottreich (Vice-Chair, Center for Middle Eastern Studies, University of California at Berkeley; [emilyrg@uclink.berkeley.edu](mailto:emilyrg@uclink.berkeley.edu)).

**2005.** AIMS will host its 2005 conference in Tunis through the auspices of CEMAT. Tentative dates are May 26 (Thursday) through May 29 (Sunday). The topic will be "*The Expansion of the North African City*" ("*L'Agrandissement des villes maghrébines*"). Themes will include geographic and demographic expansion, human and physical impacts, and cultural and environmental changes inherent in the growth of cities in the Maghrib. The conference organizer is James Miller, Director of CEMAT, [ceamat@planet.tn](mailto:ceamat@planet.tn)

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## **Other Conferences in Tunis**

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"*Out of Place: Text, Memory, and Exile,*" in honor of Edward Said, will take place at the Institut Supérieur des Sciences Humaines (Ibn Charif), December 1-3, 2004. Contact Samira Mechri ([samiramechri@yahoo.com](mailto:samiramechri@yahoo.com)) or Rached Khalifa ([rachedkhalifa@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:rachedkhalifa@yahoo.co.uk)) or by regular mail to: Samira Mechri, Institut Supérieur Des Sciences Humaines, 26, Avenue Darghouth Pasha 1007 Tunis -- Tunisia. CEMAT is among the conference sponsors.

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## **Conferences at CEMAT, Spring 2004**

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- 1) Fulbrighter Michael Suleiman gave a presentation on "The Arab American Community" on May 19<sup>th</sup>. Professor Suleiman, who is on a Senior Research grant, outlined the major stages in the development of Arab American society and fielded a large number of questions for a large and enthusiastic audience.
- 2) Naomi Stone, a Fulbrighter and graduate from Dartmouth, read poems emanating from her immersion into the Jewish community on Djerba, "Of Ritual and Faith," on May 21 – mostly in English, a couple translated into French and read by her friend and tutor, Bisma Sudani. Naomi's presentation allowed us to inaugurate the newly paved patio and at the same time, sadly, served as a going-away event for several other members of the Cemat community of 2003-2004.
- 3) Mr. Tom DeGeorges, Ph.D. candidate in the Department of History at Harvard University and an AIMS scholar and FLAS recipient, spoke on one aspect of his research in Tunis during AY 1003/4 on Monday, May 24<sup>th</sup>. Tom's talk, in French, was entitled "La Politique française envers les Anciens Combattants Tunisiens après les Deux Guerres Mondiales," and was received by a diverse crowd of researchers and interested citizens.

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## **Internship Program in Tunisia**

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A new internship program known as the "Salaam Initiative" connecting Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt, and the U.A.E., developed by enterprising Tunisian university students through the auspices of the US State Department and the Tunisian chapter of AIESEC (the Association Internationale des Etudiants des Sciences économiques et commerciales; <http://www.aiesec.org/about/>; "the world's largest student organization") has resulted in CEMAT having an intern this May through July. Dixie O'Donnell, a budding scholar of Turkish and a hard-working new graduate of the University of Washington, is helping us organize our library's journal holdings and will update our website for the first time since its inception in 2000. In all 6 Tunisian students are working as Salaam interns in the US and 13 American student interns are in Tunis. For more information, go to: <http://salaam.aieseconline.net/>

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## **Research Resources in Tunisia (a continuing series)**

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### **The Periodicals Section of The National Library in Tunis**

Just behind the National Archives building on the main artery, Boulevard du 9 Avril, one cannot fail to notice a tall building where a large construction project is currently in progress. This will be the permanent Tunisian National Library, to open in 2005. The older tower, now being incorporated into the new building, is the Periodicals Section of the National Library of Tunis. The Periodical Section is the repository of all periodicals dealing mainly with study of Tunisia, historically, politically, culturally and anthropologically, etc., and,

to some extent, with the other Maghrib countries. Some of the items in this collection date back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, containing, for example, *Al-Ra'id al-Tunisi*, the first national newspaper published in Tunis (1860), and three volumes of *Al-Jawa'ib*, an Arab newspaper published in Arabic in Istanbul in 1861. Latin-based languages, especially French, Italian and English, are well represented in the collection. There is a modest collection of periodicals from other Arab countries as well. -- Mohammed Sawaie

## **New Books at CEMAT**

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The following books have been received at CEMAT since February 1, 2004:

- Allali, Jean-Pierre. Juifs de Tunisie. Paris: Editions Soline, 2003
- Association des Economistes Tunisiens. Les Mésures de libéralisation et leurs impacts sur les équilibres macro-économiques. Tunis: Orbis Impression, 1994
- Bekri, Tahar. Littératures de Tunisie et du Maghreb. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1994
- Ben Abdallah, Chedli. Tunis au passé simple. Tunis: Editions S.T.D., 1977
- Benabdullah, Abdelaziz. La Tijania: Une Voie Spirituelle et Sociale. Marrakech: Al Quobba Zarqua, 1999
- Bensimone, Frank. Juifs du Maroc. Paris: Editions Soline, 2003
- Biegel, Reiner. Problèmes Migratoires en Région Méditerranéenne. Tunis: Fondation Konrad Adenauer, 1998
- Carrington, Richard. East From Tunis: A Record of Travels on the Northern Coast of Africa. London: Chatto and Windus, 1957
- CERES. L'Université et les transformations sociales. Tunis: Imprimerie El Asria, 1992
- CERES. Médina de Tunisie: Hammamet. Tunis: CERES, 1996
- CERES. Problèmes socio-économiques de la forêt du Nord-Ouest de la Tunisie. Tunis: Imprimerie El Asria, 1993
- Clark, James I. The Mediterranean Rim. New York: McDougal, Littell & Company, 1970
- Société Française de Musicologie à l'Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes. Les Sources en Musicologie. Paris: CNRS, 1981
- Doumerc, Bernard. Venise et l'Emirat Hafside de Tunis. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999
- Ferhat, Halima. Le Soufisme et les Zaouyas au Maghreb. Casablanca: Les Editions Toubkal, 2003
- Friedman, Thomas L. Longitudes and Attitudes: The World in the Age of Terrorism. New York: Anchor Books, 2003
- Gaudio, Attilio. Rif: Terre marocaine d'épopée et de légende. René Julliard, Paris, 1962
- Hejjaji, Salem Ali. The New Libya. Tripoli: Government Printing Press, 1967
- Hubert, Annie. Le Pain et l'olivier: Aspects de l'alimentation en Tunisie. Paris: Editions du CNRS, 1984
- Isnard, Hildebert. Algeria. Paris: Arthaud, 1954
- Kerrou, Mohamed. Public et Privé en Islam. Paris: IRMC, 2002
- Laabidi, Lilia. Génération des Années 30: la Mémoire vivante des sujets de l'histoire. Tunis: CERES, 1985
- Lamari, Moktar. Forces Féminines et Dynamiques Rurales en Tunisie. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999
- Letolle, René. Histoires d'une Mer au Sahara. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1997
- Mahjoubi, Ali. L'Etablissement du Protectorat Français en Tunisie. Tunis: Université de Tunis, 1977
- Martin, Jean-François. Histoire de la Tunisie Contemporaine. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003
- Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur. Le Savoir: une ambition pour l'avenir. Tunis: Imprimerie Art Pub, 2003
- Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur. Knowledge: an Ambition for the Future. Tunis: Imprimerie Art Pub, 2003
- Moghadam, Valentine M. Women, Work, and Economic Reform in the Middle East and North Africa. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1998
- Morris, Peter and Daniel Jacobs. Tunisia: The Rough Guide. London: Rough Guides, 1995
- Najet, Mahmoud. Contes du Grand Sud Tunisien. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1998
- Nasroui, Mustapha. La Représentation de la Pauvreté dans la Société Tunisienne. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1996
- Nelson, Nina. Tunisia. London: B.T. Batsford Ltd, 1974
- Nyrop, Richard F. Area Handbook for Algeria. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972
- Perkins, Kenneth J. Tunisia: Crossroads of the Islamic and European Worlds. New York: Westview Press, 1986
- Puig, Nicolas. Bédouins Sedentarisés et Société Citadine à Tozeur. Paris: Karthala et IRMC, 2003
- Rainero, Romain H. Les Italiens dans la Tunisie Contemporaine. Tunis: Publisud, 2002
- République Tunisienne. L'Ecole Tunisienne: les acquis du changement. Ministère de l'Education, 1999
- République Tunisienne. Le Programme électoral du Président Zine el Abidine Ben Ali. Tunis, 1999
- Roald, Anne Sofie. Women in Islam: The Western Experience. London: Routledge, 2001
- Saadoui, Ahmed. Tunis: Ville Ottoman. Tunis: Centre de Publication Universitaire, 2001
- Sandron, Frédéric. La Transition de la Fécondité en Tunisie. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2002
- Sebag, Paul. Les Noms des Juifs de Tunisie. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2002
- Sebag, Paul. Communistes de Tunisie 1939-1943. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2001
- Université la Manouba. Actes du Colloque International sur les Années vingt au Maghreb. Tunis: ISHMN, 2001
- Werndorfer, Gilbert. Juifs d'Algérie. Paris: Editions Soline, 2003
- Wilmots, André. De Bourguiba à Ben Ali: L'Etonnant Parcours Economique de la Tunisie 1960-2000. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003

## **CEMAT Book Review**

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Paula Holmes-Eber. Daughters of Tunis: Women, Family, and Networks in a Muslim City. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2003. ISBN 0-8133-3944-8. 127 pp + Appendices + Glossaries + Bibliography + Index = 166 pp.

Sometimes one reads an ethnology and has the feeling it was written on the moon. Sometimes one reads an ethnology and it really hits home. This one is the latter. Women's networks in Tunis is the subject, and as one reads the pages of Daughters of Tunis, the reality of everyday women's lives unfolds for Holmes-Eber's four main informants, Hannan, Nura, Miriam, and Sherifa, and the different socio-economic levels that they, the literal daughters of Tunis, represent. While Tunisia may have modernized and urbanized, the author discovered (during research stints in 1986-7 and 1993) that family retains an essential centrality in Tunis, and that three types of network – women's survival strategies – emerge: the "kin exclusive," the "neighbor," and the "friendship." None of these excludes kin; rather they add neighbors or friends – other women known through the maze of life – to the basic kin-centered network that Tunisian women live and form their lives around. In the pattern of neighbor networks, Holmes-Eber discovered for example, that in one street a women's network had coalesced among the women – unrelated to each other – who came from the Sahel region and now found themselves in Tunis. Each maintained her own kinship network, but the neighborhood women from the Sahel (and not from elsewhere in Tunisia) bonded together to exchange visits, celebrate holidays, and share life's tribulations, hardships, and joys together. In another example, the "friendship" network, women higher along the socio-economic ladder incorporated far more individuals in their circle who were drawn from university and business connections. More money supports more friends, Holmes-Eber found. Still, the family network, and especially women's consanguineal kin, formed the basis of their network. Women's blood kin are favored (slightly) over their married kin. And ultimately, the networks function over that most basic of North African social principles, reciprocity. Small errors tarnish this valuable contribution. Odd phrases ("Bourguiban" government), irritating shifts from *Le* to *La* & back to *Le* Marsa; and the curious inclusion of "self-employment" being "widespread" as among the weakpoints in the Tunisian economy (p. 7) could have found easy remedy. However, the book is an easily understood and insightful exploration of the infrastructure of everyday life. It is a welcome addition to the literature on Tunisian society.

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## Websites to Discover

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### **Bourguiba Institute of Modern Languages**

<http://www.iblv.rnu.tn/>

The Bourguiba Institute, or Institut Bourguiba de Langues Vivantes (IBLV) is now in its 40<sup>th</sup> year. Famous as a place to study intensive Arabic in the summer, (<http://www.iblv.rnu.tn/htm/pubete.html>), the Bourguiba Institute is also a place to study intensive English & French during July not only in Tunis but at their satellite campuses sprinkled throughout the country.

**Both the University of Texas and University of Pennsylvania** maintain "mother sites" of information about the Middle East and North Africa, mirroring the presence at both universities of a federally funded Middle East Center or African Studies Center (Title IX centers, as they are known, or more properly National Resource Centers). These websites re-group websites on specific countries and themes of the region; very little, if any, of the information they contain is original to their site.

[http://inic.utexas.edu/menic/Countries\\_and\\_Regions/Tunisia/](http://inic.utexas.edu/menic/Countries_and_Regions/Tunisia/)

"The Middle East Network Information Center" (MENIC) of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Texas is a webquarters for information about the Middle East & North Africa in its most commonly understood format (Afghanistan to Mauritania) plus the Sudan, the Comoros, and Djibouti. In addition to country pages, the MENIC site also has sites organized by the themes of education, business & economics, and arts & humanities. Texas has put some of its cartographic collection on line; perhaps the most distinctive element in the Tunisia page is the inclusion of the entire text of Mounira Charrad's book, States and Women's Rights (University of California Press, 2001) in electronic format as a button.

[http://www.sas.upenn.edu/African\\_Studies/Country\\_Specific/Tunisia.html](http://www.sas.upenn.edu/African_Studies/Country_Specific/Tunisia.html)

This is the "Country Pages" website of the African Studies Center at Penn; it is entirely organized by country. Many of the links here are stale or no longer active. However, the site features the Norwegian Council for Africa "Index on Africa" (<http://www.afrika.no/>) site, which covers Africa and subdivides into subjects, countries, and news sources, and may itself prove more useful.

### **Revue CELAAN Review**

[www.skidmore.edu/celaan](http://www.skidmore.edu/celaan) is the website of the journal, CELAAN, the Revue du Centre d'Etudes des Littératures et des Arts d'Afrique du Nord. Edited by Hédi Abdel-Jaouad, a professor of French at Skidmore College, the journal, which is now in its third year, publishes on Maghribi authors and arts, French authors from the Maghrib, and on the growing role of the Maghrib in world literature. Revue CELAAN Review is available for purchase at CEMAT.

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## Tunisian Filmmaker Honored at Harvard University

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Internationally acclaimed Tunisian filmmaker Moufida Tlatli was honored at Harvard in March as the 2004 laureate of the *Geneva McMillan-Reba Stuart Fellow in Distinguished Filmmaking*. The award, made annually by Harvard's Film Study Center, includes past recipients Med Hondo and Aderrahmane Sissako from Mauritania, Souleymane Cissé of Mali, and Gaston Kaboré from Burkina Faso. The first female recipient of this prestigious award, Tlatli has been a trailblazer throughout her entire career in filmmaking & is known for her acuity of vision, sensitivity, passion, and determination.

Born in Sidi Bou Said in 1947, Tlatli earned a scholarship to study at the *Institut des Hautes Etudes Cinématographiques* (IDHEC) in Paris in the 1960s and returned to Tunis in 1972 to embark on a career in film editing. Her name appears on the credits of more than twenty of the most highly acclaimed films from Arab and North African cinema of the 1970s and 1980s, among which are Omar Gatlato (1976). Traversées (1982) and Halfalouine (Asfour a'Stah) (1990), to name but a few. With her 1994 directorial debut in Silences of the Palace (Samt al Qusour), Tlatli astonished audiences world-wide and went on to win the *Camera d'Or* at Cannes and the *Tanit d'Or* in Carthage. Her long-awaited second feature film, The Season of Men, (2001) won the Grand Prix at the Bi-Annual Festival of Film at the

Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris and *Special Mention* for the *Camera d'Or* in Cannes. Tlatli recently completed *Nadia and Sarra*, commissioned by the Franco-German television network Arte, which will premier in late 2004. Her future film projects include a script that centers on the strained relationships and duplicitous affairs of a family beset by the tragedy of a murder.

Moufida Tlatli's one-week residence as the McMillan-Stuart Fellow at Harvard featured several public events including special event screenings of *Silences of the Palace* and *Season of Men* at the Harvard Film Archive. Both screenings were shown to sold-out audiences. Admirers of her work traveled from as far away as Washington, D.C. and New York to meet Mme. Tlatli and celebrate her achievements. Among former CEMAT affiliates who turned out for the events were Robert Lang (Fulbright, University of Tunis, 2001-2003) and Karen Stern (PhD Candidate, Brown University, CEMAT Fall 2003.)

--Kathy Paras, Harvard Law School Alumni Center

## **Tunisian Studies: To Promote the Study of Tunisia**

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CEMAT is the American Research Center in Tunisia. Its history dates from the signing of an accord between its founding agency, the American Institute of Maghribi Studies (AIMS) and the Ministry of Education, succeeded by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research and Technology (MHERST). CEMAT's primary purpose is to "promote scholarly and intellectual exchange on topics concerning the Maghrib between American and Tunisian scholars." Together, CEMAT and MHERST strongly believe in the words enshrined in the language used in the treaty establishing relations between our two countries in August, 1797: "*There is perpetual and constant peace between the United States and [the magnificent Pacha Bey of] Tunis, as well as a permanent friendship, that shall ever be increased.*"

Toward that end, CEMAT and MHERST encourage the development and broadening of Tunisian Studies, which we identify as intellectual endeavor focused on the unique resources found in Tunisia of interest to scholars from the United States, Tunisia, and beyond. We promote research, scholarly communication, and publication on Tunisian society, history, and science. Scholars will find the following topics are especially attractive in Tunisia:

**Islam.** Tunisia's population is 98% Muslim. The country has a diverse social history of religious encounters & diversity. Christianity, Judaism, & Islam have all played a role in this land. Today, Tunisia's open and tolerant atmosphere makes it an ideal location for the study of Islam in the modern world.

**History.** The depth of civilization over time in Tunisia is great. Distinctive civilizations – Carthaginian, Roman, Byzantine, Islamic, & modern European – have rendered Tunisia a locus for historical & archaeological studies. The nationalist movement & the history of independent Tunisia are also subjects of high interest. Well organized archives characterize the study of history in Tunisia.

**Language.** Tunisia's history & position in the Arab World render it an unparalleled location for the study of Arabic language & linguistics. Language study in Tunisia is enriched by its multi-cultural heritage & the web of outstanding professors & facilities.

**The Family.** Family planning, initiated in the 1960s, has transformed the nature of the Tunisian family & social structure. Stable families & relatively low levels of unemployment match the Tunisian demographic transition, features of Tunisian society that can be communicated as models world-wide.

**Women's Lives.** Dramatic changes in the condition of women in Tunisia mirror similar deep-seated transformations in Tunisian life. Women play prominent roles in government, education, administration, & science. Women's organizations permeate the fabric of Tunisian life.

**Education.** Foreshadowing the list of changes apparent in Tunisia is the development of universal education & the establishment of a system of higher education aiming at pushing the country into the ranks of fully developed societies.

**Civic Society.** Tunisia's public life is permeated by civil organizations designed to mediate between the individual and larger spheres of public life, resulting in an open-minded society. Some professional and social organizations have long histories; others mark the shift of Tunisia to globalism.

**Agriculture.** The organization of Tunisian rural land and life has been transformed in less than two generations. Agricultural production has been modernized and is underpinned by the development of water resources and a skilled labor force.

**The Environment.** Tunisia's environmental diversity is subject to increasingly sophisticated management techniques. The national park program is marked by achievements in land restoration & reintroduction of endangered species. Emerging public associations favoring protection of the environment define the Tunisian landscape.

**Infrastructure and Economic Development.** Forty years of strategic planning to employ, house, transport, and enrich Tunisian society have created much higher standards of living in this Mediterranean society

