

Call for Papers

Students, universities and knowledge production in the Maghrib

Annual conference of the American Institute for Maghrib Studies (AIMS)
Organised by the Centre d'Études Maghrébines en Algérie
30 June – 1 July 2018
(CEMA), Oran, Algeria

I. Context and significance

The sector of higher education is amongst the priorities of Maghribi countries and since independence it has undergone remarkable development, both scientifically and structurally. This development can be seen through the diversification of teaching programmes, national and international exchanges and a growing variety of socio-economic partners. This conference proposes to provide a state-of-the-art on the shifting relationship between students, universities and knowledge production in the Maghrib, from the mid-twentieth century to the present.

Research to date has tended to fall into three broad categories, each with its own chronological focus and preferred disciplinary approaches:

First, there has been a focus on students as political actors in nationalist politics in the colonial period, and then in opposition forces during the first decades of independence.¹ Second, scholars have studied universities as an illustration of state modernization policies and a theatre of political struggles.² Third, the links between universities and knowledge production have been examined, by looking back at past production and by formulating proposals for the reform of this institution.³

This conference seeks to bring together these questions from public debate and academic traditions and establish a research agenda for the coming years in the Maghrib. Participants will be encouraged to consider the Maghrib as a whole when thinking and writing about students, universities and knowledge production, examining what new questions might emerge from considering other case studies, seeking out connections across the region and going beyond explicit or implicit narratives of national exceptionalism.⁴

The aim of this conference is to share experiences, datasets and research methodologies in a multidisciplinary framework, favoring comparisons across chronological timeframes and

¹ C. M. Henry, *UGEMA : Union Générale des Étudiants Musulmans d'Algériens (1955-1962), Témoignages*, (Éditions Casbah, 2010) ; S. Segalla, *The Moroccan Soul: French education, colonial ethnology and Muslim resistance, 1912-1956* (University of Nebraska, 2009).

² J. P. Entelis, 'Ideological change and an emerging counterculture in Tunisian politics', *Journal of Modern African Studies* 12:4 (1974); P. Vermeren, *Ecole, élite et pouvoir au Maroc et en Tunisie au 20e siècle* (Alizés, 2002).

³ F. Siino, *Science et pouvoir dans la Tunisie contemporaine* (Karthala, 2004); C. Boutieri, *Learning in Morocco : Language politics and the abandoned educational dream* (Bloomington, 2016); M. Cherkaoui, *La production scientifique en sciences humaines et sociales au Maroc 1960-2006* (RD Maroc, 2009) ; D. Guerid, *L'Exception algérienne: la modernisation à l'épreuve de la société* (Casbah, 2007).

⁴ Collaborations between historians at CRASC (Oran), Mohamed V (Rabat) and Diraset, Etudes Maghrébines (Tunis) have demonstrated the advantage of cross-national comparisons, e.g. S. Bargaoui & H. Remaoun, *Savoirs historiques au Maghreb: construction et usages* (CRASC, 2006).

geographical spaces. In doing so, we hope to stimulate creative thinking about the complex relationship between students, universities and knowledge production that will in turn reinforce rigorous academic research. Holding a conference on this theme will signal the significance of the questions which it raises, and provide an impetus to academics to play a more visible role in public interventions.

Conference participants are invited to engage with the following sub-themes:

- 1. Nation-building and relations between the university and the nation-state:** cultural policy, curriculum and language. Students as political elites and state-builders. Students and protest movements.
- 2. University circulations** (of students, professors, ideas): how do circulations take place and what are their impacts?
- 3. Transformation and its challenges:** the political economy of research and education, the impact of the diversification of higher education. The impact and significance of the emergence of alternative actors of knowledge production.
- 4. Globalization:** challenges of knowledge production and Maghribi universities within the context of an increasingly globalized research community. Implementation of the LMD (Bachelors/Master/Doctorate) system.
- 5. The university as forum:** the university as a social space and place of knowledge.

II. Scientific Committee (provisional)

- Dr. Idriss Jebari
- Dr. Karim Ouaras
- Dr. Robert Parks
- Dr. Malika Rahal
- Dr. Natalya Vince

III. Organising Committee (provisional)

- Pr. Abdelbaki Benziane
- Dr. Idriss Jebari
- Dr. Karim Ouaras
- Dr. Robert Parks
- Dr. Malika Rahal
- Dr. Natalya Vince
- Mme Hayet Yebbous-Bensaïd

Timetable:

Proposals of 300 words should be sent to aimswahran2018@gmail.com before **15 March 2018**, accompanied by a CV (including the name, institutional affiliation and a list of academic publications of the researcher). An acknowledgement of receipt will be sent to researchers as soon as all the required documents have been received.

The selected participants will be informed by **30 March 2018**.

A final version of the paper (which should last 20 minutes) should be sent by **30 May 2018**.

For further information, please contact aimswahran2018@gmail.com