



## AFRICA IN MOVIMENTO / AFRICA ON THE MOVE

MACERATA 17 -20/09/2014

**TITLE: TUNISIA, HISTORY AND HISTORIES**

**AUTHOR: DAVID BOND, OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY ([bond.210@buckeyemail.osu.edu](mailto:bond.210@buckeyemail.osu.edu))**

### **ABSTRACT:**

This paper will seek to study how commentators in post-revolutionary Tunisia depict Tunisian history. We shall be attentive in particular to the ways in which representatives of progressive and secular parties perceive Tunisian history as following an evolutionary axis on which the thought of figures such as Habib Bourguiba, Tahar Haddad and Mohamed Charfi constitute decisive way-stations (*mahattat*) or turning-points. Such a view of history recalls the rectilinear axis of the Avenue Habib Bourguiba in central Tunis.

The repeated evocation of this axis regrouping Bourguiba, Haddad, and Charfi nevertheless raises a paradox which will be the principal focus of my paper: contemporary Tunisia commentators and parties which present themselves as forward-looking and innovative nevertheless tend to draw on models from the past. I shall situate this tendency as part of a broader process of “prospective nostalgia” which evokes the past in order to critically frame the present.

In so doing I shall draw on research carried out in Tunisia before and after the Revolution of January 2011, notably on the myths of a Mediterranean and “cosmopolitan” Tunisia. I shall attempt to examine how such myths have been reactualised after the Revolution in the case of controversies such as the “Manouba affair” involving Professor Habib Kazdaghli and the depredations suffered by the archaeological zone of Carthage.

This paper will therefore seek to identify continuities in the domain of representations and imaginary and situate them in the changing socio-political landscape of contemporary Tunisia.

### **AUTHOR'S ACADEMIC PROFILE:**

*David Bond* I am a doctoral candidate at Ohio State University. Between 2000 and 2010 I was editorial coordinator of the Tunis-based *Revue de l'Institut des belles-lettres arabes*.