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DIGITAL ARCHIVING

CONFERENCE IN THE ARAB WORLD

ABU DHABI
October 29-30
Programme





DIGITAL ARCHIVING IN THE ARAB WORLD



ABU DHABI

October 29-30

WELCOME

I'm delighted to welcome you all to the 2024 Digital Archiving in the Arab World conference. Our last gathering was in 2019, and although we planned to meet every two years, the challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic made it difficult. However, our commitment to bringing together the best talents in archiving from across the Arab world has remained strong.

I'm especially proud that this event has been made possible by a team largely from the Arab world. Finding and bringing together these talented individuals wasn't easy, but they have truly proven to be among the best in the world. I'm very grateful to each one of you for being here today.

This conference wouldn't have been possible without the generous support of the UAE, Sorbonne University of Abu Dhabi, and especially, our key sponsor, the Abu Dhabi National Library, whose support has been essential in making this event happen.

This conference is just the beginning. We hope to build a lasting community that works together to preserve our history, which will be a gift for future generations. Let's continue this journey, not just during the conference, but in the years to come.

I hope you enjoy this conference as much as we enjoyed working on it.

Dr. Hala BAYOUMI
Digital Humanities Director
CEDEJ/CNRS

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PROGRAMME

INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC SYMPOSIUM
DIGITAL ARCHIVING IN THE ARAB WORLD
ABU DHABI, OCTOBER 29-30, 2024

TUESDAY OCTOBER 29

NATIONAL LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES OF UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

- 8:30am** Gathering in the lobby of the Intercontinental Hotel and departure to the National Library and Archives of United Arab Emirates
- 9:30am** Registration
- 10:00am** Inaugural session at the amphitheatre Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed

PART 1: OFFICIAL SPEECHES BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ORGANIZING COUNTRIES

- 10:15am** **Opening of the conference**
Speeches by:
His Excellency Abdallah Majed Al Ali, National Library & Archives
General Director
Prof. Frédéric Lagrange, CEDEJ Director
Prof. Ahmed Zayed, Bibliotheca Alexandrina Director
Prof. Nathalie Martial-Braz, Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi Vice-chancellor
Dr. Hala Bayoumi, Scientific Head of the conference

PART 2: INAUGURAL THEMATIC SESSION

Presentation: 15 min, questions: 5 min

- 11:15-12:00pm** **Challenges and Innovations**
President: Dr. Hala Bayoumi, CNRS/CEDEJ
- Mr. Hamad Al Mutairi, Mr. Hatem Mohamed Younis, Mrs. Shaikhah Alabdouli

PLENARY CONFERENCE

Presentation: 50 min, questions: 15 min

- 12:00-1:00pm** **AI and Digital Archiving**
President: Prof. Basma Makhoulf-Shabou, HEG-University of Applied Sciences and Arts Western Switzerland
- Prof. Muhammad Abdul-Mageed: Generative AI for Arabic Digital Archiving
- 1:00-2:00pm** Lunch

THEMATIC SESSION

SESSION I

Presentation: 15 min, questions: 5 min

2:00-3:20pm **Heritage Preservation – Case Studies**

President: Dr. Ramadan Elkhoully, The Africa Institute – Global Studies University

- Dr. Al-Ghalia Al-Mughairi: The Role of the Sultanate of Oman’s Cultural Institutions in Preserving Historical Documents and Archives through Electronic Archiving (the National Records and Archives Authority as a model)
- Mr. Mohammad Hammam Fekry: The Journey of British Documents from English to Arabic
- Dr. Azza Ezzat, Dr. Ahmed Mansour: The Importance of Personal Archives in Writing History: A Case Study on the Archive of Ahmed Pasha Kamal
- Dr. Emad Hussein: Archives of foreign institutions in the Arab countries “American University in Cairo Archive” Case Study

3:20-4:10pm Coffee Break

SESSION II

4:10-5:30pm **Digital Archiving – Other fields**

President: David Wrisley, New York University Abu Dhabi

- Dr. Ahmed Ebeid: Folksonomy and its Role in Archiving Heritage Photographs: Global Experiences
- Mr. Ebrahim Fawzy, Mrs. Eman Khereba: Hockey: From Pharaonic Hucksha to Modern Sports Heritage in Sharqia Governorate
- Mr. Mohamed Hussein Ahmed: Specialized Digital Archives: A proposal to create a digital archive for commercial records in the Arabian Gulf during the period between the 19th and 20th centuries

8:30pm Official Dinner at Byblos-Sur-Mer restaurant – Intercontinental Marina Hotel

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 30

SORBONNE UNIVERSITY ABU DHABI

8:20am Gathering in the lobby of the Intercontinental Hotel and departure to Sorbonne University

9:00am **Opening of 2nd day conference at the Amphitheatre Richelieu**

Official speech by Prof. Nathalie Martial-Braz, Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi Vice-chancellor

9:10-9:45am **AI and Digital Humanities**

President: Dr. Forget Chaterera-Zambuko, Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi

- Keynote speaker, Prof. David Wrisley: From Sparse Data to Shared Wisdom: Leveraging Collective Intelligence in Emerging Spaces of Digital Humanities

THEMATIC SESSIONS

SESSION I

Presentation: 15 min, questions: 5 min

9:45-11:10am **Ancient Arabic and Islamic Documents and Manuscripts – Preservation and Access**

President: Prof. Maurice Pomerantz, New York University Abu Dhabi

- Prof. Walid Ghali: Digital Philology Textual Criticism of Arabic Manuscripts in the Digital Age
- Dr. Nagmeldeen Morshed Hamza: Beyond the Visible: An integrated study of Islamic and Arabic manuscripts at the National Museum of Ras Al Khaimah
- Dr. Ahmed Mansour: The Role of Writing and Scripts Center (BA) in Investigating the Egyptology Archives: Obstacles and Challenges
- Dr. Andrew Simon: Alternative Archives: Writing Egypt Recent Past

11:10-11:30am Coffee Break

SESSION II

11:30-12:45pm **Heritage Archiving: Case Studies**

President: Mr. Hatem Mohamed Younis, Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi

- Mr. Ibrahim Mohamed Ali: Developing Sustainable and Enhanced Access to Archival Collections from the Arab World: A Case Study on Customized Cataloging and Access Strategies
- Dr. Francesca Biancani, Dr. Costanza Lisi: For a Connected History of Vernacular Cosmopolitanism through Endangered Archives: The VERNACOSM Project
- Dr. Ali Fathy Alsherif: Digital Knowledge and Archive Services in the Post-Digital Repositories Era: A Case Study of the Digital Repositories for National Heritage Preservation Centers of the United Arab Emirates

12:45-1:45pm Lunch

SESSION III

1:45-3:10pm **Scientific Data Analysis in the Arab World**

President: Mr. Brad Bauer, New York University Abu Dhabi

- Dr. Ismael Awad: The Maryut Lake region: Historical GIS case study from Egypt
- Dr. Aymen A. Solyman: The Power of Location: Location-based Information in Archives and Documentation
- Mr. Mohamed Shalaby, Mr. Rune Bjerkestrand: The often forgotten aspect of archiving and digital preservation, – Piql's storage solutions
- Dr. Dalia Galal Elabady: New Considerations Toward a wide Data Transition in Official Statistics

SESSION IV

3:10-4:20pm **Digital Humanities – Towards Sustainable and New Methodologies**

President: Prof. Walid Ghali, The Aga Khan University, London

- Dr. Forget Chaterera-Zambuko: Towards sustainable digital records management in the UAE
- Dr. Radwa Zaki: From the Library of Alexandria to ChatGPT: Exploring Modern Egypt's Historical Archives Using AI in the Bibliotheca Alexandrina
- Mr. Marcin Werla: Long-term Digital Preservation of Cultural Heritage Content at the Qatar National Library
- Eng. Eslam Mesbah: Preserving History: The Imperative of Digital Archiving in the Arab World

4:20-4:40pm Coffee Break

SESSION V

4:40-5:50pm **Digital Libraries in the Arab World**

President: Dr. Yann Rodier, Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi

- Mrs. Shatha El-Own, Eng. Ahmed Omar: Digitization at Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research
- Dr. Tarek Ouerfelli, Dr. Aïda Chebbi, Dr. Hanae Lrhoul: Web archiving and digital repositories in the Arab Universities
- Eng. Eman Abuemera, Eng. Peter Soccar: Memory of Modern Egypt: A Case Study about Egyptian Cultural and Historical Preservation through Digital Archiving

SESSION VI

5:50-6:00pm **Synthesis, Conclusion and Perspectives**

Prof. Frédéric Lagrange, Dr. Hala Bayoumi, Dr. Ahmed Samir, Dr. Yann Rodier

Reporters' conference:

Dr. Andrew Simon, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH, USA

Mrs. Carolina Sonja, Mr. Graig Andrew, Mrs. Reem Mubarak Saeed,

Mrs. Rosanna Elizabeth Tharakan-May, Trends Research & Advisory

PARTNERS

NATIONAL LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES



Embracing Proactive Transformation in Digital Archiving at the National Library and Archives of the UAE (NLA)

As the UAE continues its journey toward achieving the ambitious goals outlined in the National Agenda, the pivotal role of institutions in driving proactive and rapid transformation cannot be overstated. At the heart of this transformation lies the effective management and preservation of information assets, which are essential to building and sustaining a knowledge society. The National Library and Archives (NLA) is at the forefront of this mission, ensuring the preservation of the UAE's collective memory while leveraging these assets to drive innovation and support the nation's vision.

As custodians of the UAE's rich history and cultural heritage, the NLA is uniquely positioned to contribute to the nation's strategic objectives through digital archiving. By embracing cutting-edge technologies, particularly in artificial intelligence (AI) and digital preservation, the NLA is revolutionizing archival management and access, ensuring that knowledge is preserved, accessible, and utilized to foster innovation across sectors.

The NLA's participation in the Digital Archives Arab World conference provides a platform to showcase its achievements and leadership in these areas. This conference not only highlights the NLA's technological advancements but also its role as a catalyst for regional collaboration and knowledge-sharing. The recent partnership with Sorbonne University - Abu Dhabi to launch academic programs in records management and archival science further underscores the NLA's commitment to advancing the field, setting a regional standard, and contributing to the global discourse on best practices in digital archiving.

Through active engagement with peers and the exchange of knowledge at the conference, the NLA seeks to remain at the cutting edge of archival science, contributing to the development of standards that are globally relevant yet tailored to the unique needs of the Arab world. The NLA's dedication to innovation, knowledge-sharing, and the development of best practices not only aligns with the UAE's national agenda but also supports the broader vision of fostering a knowledge society where information is preserved, shared, and used as a foundation for future progress.

Hamad Abdulla Al Mutairi
Director of the Archives Department
National Library and Archives, UAE

CENTRE D'ÉTUDES ET DE DOCUMENTATION ÉCONOMIQUES, JURIDIQUES ET SOCIALES



Digital Humanities are the heart of CEDEJ's identity, at the crossroads of applied mathematics, humanities and social sciences. Thanks to the center's digitization policy of its documentary and map collections, enabling researchers to access and cross information, as well as its historical partnerships with the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and Egyptian CAPMAS, the Digital Humanities research axis, conceived and managed by Dr. Hala Bayoumi and sponsored by CNRS, has now become one of CEDEJ's main assets and a pivotal activity. In 2019, CEDEJ impuled the idea of a conference dedicated the importance of digital humanities in the region. It co-organized with Bibliotheca Alexandrina, the UAE National Archive and the CEFREPA research center the first *Digital Archiving in the Arab World* conference, which was graciously hosted by Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi. I had the pleasure and honor to attend this pioneering event as a CEFREPA researcher five years ago. It is now with great pride that I seize this opportunity to welcome, in the name of CEDEJ, the researchers and archive experts from all over the Arab region who will participate in this second edition of the event. Our center deeply thanks all the institutions that have taken part in this academic and practical endeavor that enables all researchers in the archival field to share their experience and help define standards for the future.

Prof. Frédéric Lagrange
CEDEJ Director

SORBONNE UNIVERSITY ABU DHABI



Since its creation, Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi has been committed to excellence, intrinsic to its heritage, in order to support Emirati stakeholders in recognizing a top-tier university education in some of the most innovative sectors. Similarly, the energy of an intensive world-class research comes to SUAD and contributes to its radiance in the region.

In this perspective, the second edition of the international conference on digital archiving in the Arab world, four years after the first, which paved the way for a collective reflection on data preservation and digital archiving, is a wonderful opportunity to nurture reflection in this field.

Prof. Nathalie Martial-Braz
SUAD Vice-chancellor

BIBLIOTHECA ALEXANDRINA



This conference is more than just a meeting of minds; it is a celebration of the rich cultural and historical heritage of the Arab world. In a world that is rapidly embracing digital transformation, the significance of digital archiving cannot be overstated.

Our region is home to a wealth of history, culture, and intellectual contributions that deserve to be kept for future generations. This conference seeks to not only showcase the richness of Arab content, but also to highlight the crucial role that digital technology plays in preserving our identity. Through this conference, we will engage in thought-provoking discussions, explore the challenges of archiving in the digital era, and collaborate on innovative solutions that will help us navigate the complexities of this ever-evolving landscape.

It is our hope that through these conversations, we will pave the way for more effective and inclusive archiving practices that ensure our region's legacy is preserved and accessible to all.

By creating a dedicated platform for this discourse, we hope to learn from one another, to innovate, and to continue our work in protecting the essence of who we are.

Prof. Ahmed Zayed Hegab
Bibliotheca Alexandrina Director

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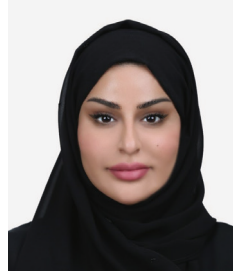
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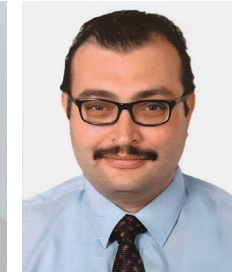
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Mr. Hatem Younis

ABSTRACTS

AI AND DIGITAL ARCHIVING

PROF. MUHAMMAD ABDUL-MAGEED

[bio. on p. 30](#)

Generative AI for Arabic Digital Archiving

Keywords: Generative AI, Large Language Models, Digital Archiving, Cultural Heritage, Arabic
Despite progress in digital archiving across the Arab world, the complexity of preserving and organizing vast collections of Arabic textual and multimedia content remains a significant challenge. This talk explores the transformative potential of generative artificial intelligence (AI) in Arabic digital archiving. We provide a focused overview of key generative AI methods and their relevance to archiving efforts. Additionally, we introduce a suite of generative models specifically designed for text, speech, and image generation, aimed at enhancing the representation of Arabic. We then demonstrate how these advanced models address critical areas in archival work and cultural heritage preservation. Finally, we discuss current challenges in the field, examine the broader implications of our work, and offer policy recommendations.

HERITAGE PRESERVATION - CASE STUDIES

DR. AL-GHALIA BINT SALEM BIN KHALIFA AL-MUGHAIRI

[bio. on p. 32](#)

The Role of the Sultanate of Oman's Cultural Institutions in Preserving Historical Documents and Archives through Electronic Archiving (the National Records and Archives Authority as a model)

Keywords: Documents, manuscripts, the National Records and Archives Authority, electronic archiving, digital archives

It is no secret that manuscripts and historical documents have played a major role in recording and documenting historical images and events since ancient times until the modern era. These ancient documents are scientific evidence and material sources that conveyed history to us from various aspects, and to preserve them, it was necessary to employ modern technologies, such as digital electronic archiving. This reflects the aspect of technological employment in preserving history and protecting heritage. Many cultural institutions in the Sultanate of Oman have adopted the digital archiving system, which has made it easier for researchers to obtain and browse historical sources, in addition to the wide and comprehensive utilization of historical materials achieved by these institutions. The National Records and Archives Authority is one of the most prominent institutions in Oman, as it includes more than 75,000 manuscripts from different countries of the world. The oldest manuscript is about 500 years old, and many manuscripts and historical documents have been electronically archived to serve researchers and interested parties.

MR. MOHAMED HAMMAM FIKRI

[bio. on p. 38](#)

The Journey of British Documents from English to Arabic

Keywords: Qatar, Arabian Gulf, Bushire Residency, British Archive, digital archive

Project: Qatar and the Gulf States in the British Archive

This paper demonstrates the significance of documents as a source of written history. The history of the Gulf was linked to an important period of British presence when many incidents that occurred in the region were recorded and preserved in files deposited in British archives. This paper traced the history of such documents' origin, and how they

were transferred in the archives. Due to the importance of these documents, many scientific centers have searched for and provided them in paper or digital forms. Some of such centers have collected these documents, conducted studies on them, and reviewed, translated and published them to be available to researchers and knowledge seekers.

These documents, which were written in English, need to be understood, interpreted and explained, and be subject to criticism and scrutiny according to the standards and methods of modern science, and finally translated into Arabic in a way that makes citing them in the historical context consistent with the documents' original meanings.

This paper presents a practical experience in transferring a document from paper to digital form, and printing and publishing it translated into Arabic. It also reviews the experience of the Hassan Bin Mohammed Center for Historical Studies in completing its own project for translating Bombay government documents, selections from the documents of the Indian Archives - Delhi, and documents from the India Office Records at the British Library.

DR. AZZA EZZAT, DR. AHMED MANSOUR

[bio. on p. 37, 41](#)

The Importance of Personal Archives in Writing History: A Case Study on the Archive of Ahmed Pasha Kamal

Keywords: Ahmed Pasha Kamal, History of Egyptology, Personal Archives, Digitization, Bibliotheca Alexandrina

Archives are essential because they preserve a record of the past. They consist of collections of documents from various dates and in different forms, produced by public entities or individuals. Personal archives reflect not only what a person does or thinks, but also who they are, how they envision, and how they experience their lives. Individuals, families, and organizations all create their own archives. Historians, scientists, archaeologists, writers, and others with a professional or public background often leave behind an archive of personal documents.

This paper focuses on the personal archive of Ahmed Pasha Kamal, the Sheikh of archaeologists and the first Egyptian philologist and Egyptologist to write an ancient Egyptian dictionary. Kamal's personal archive is extensive; the Bibliotheca Alexandrina successfully acquired some of these documents from his family's archive, the National Archive of Egypt, and the Dar al-Mahfuzat archive in commemoration of the centenary of his death (1923-2023).

This archive has made it possible to uncover a wealth of information about Kamal's personal life. The documents include his birth and death certificates, details about his family roots, career, excavations, official letters, complaints, royal decrees, family photos, positions held, salaries received, and the languages he was fluent in. Kamal's career has been traced through archival documents preserved at both Dar al-Mahfuzat and the National Archive of Egypt.

The Writing and Scripts Center in Bibliotheca Alexandrina aims to build an integrated database to identify and collect Kamal's personal archive in addition to his dictionary that was given to the library in 2020 from his family to be digitized, restored and displayed in the Rare Books Library. This paper presents the first phase of such long-term project to document the archive of Ahmed Kamal Pasha at the Egyptian National Archive in order to understand the Egyptology practices at the early of twentieth century. Then, the digitization of its content, make it accessible for the scholarly world.

DR. EMAD HUSSEIN

[bio. on p. 39](#)

Archives of foreign institutions in the Arab countries: "American University in Cairo Archive" Case Study

Keywords: American university, Egypt, Archive, Modern history, Egyptian heritage

Monitoring our archival heritage that defines our identity is of great importance, but it is no less important than the heritage that formed our image in others' points of view, and

which creates many active conflicts in our reality, and therefore attention must be paid to answering the question: How was our image formed in others point of view? What are the institutions that created this image?

In the first half of the twentieth century, many foreign institutions spread throughout the Arab world, and the fields in which they interacted varied, according to known historical circumstances. The majority of the Arab world – and indeed the Islamic world – fell under the control of Western powers, and some of these institutions were affiliated with a main center in one of these countries, and then they sent periodic reports about the operated environment, thus they conveyed an image of our Arab world to different levels in the West, influencing the creation of Western awareness about our societies.

Therefore, the archives of these institutions are considered one of the sources that must be paid attention to, as it – although in a foreign language – express the events surrounding them from a contemporary point of view, and in this regard, we present: “The Archive of the American University in Cairo.” as a model.

In this paper, we are working to present a set of annual reports submitted by the American University to the Board of Trustees in the United States of America, regarding its work in Cairo in the period from the beginning of its work in 1919 AD until the revolution of 1952 AD. The introduction to the Annual report was to present the general situation in Egypt in that year, and therefore this presents a picture of Egyptian society – according to its vision – in this year, as well as her status and the extent to which her mission has been achieved in this society. This presents a picture of Egyptian society – according to her vision – in this year, and this was also followed by its status and the extent to which its mission is achieved in this society.

DIGITAL ARCHIVING – OTHER FIELDS

MR. AHMED EBEID

[bio. on p. 36](#)

Folksonomy and its Role in Archiving Heritage Photographs: Global Experiences

Keywords: Folksonomy, collaborative indexing, archiving photographs, photo libraries, visual heritage

The concept of folksonomy - or user metadata - is based on describing a set of holdings in a collaborative manner among users or beneficiaries through keywords that are assigned and formulated by the users themselves and in their free, unrestricted languages. Photographs are known to be very different in their nature, as information bases, from textual materials. They strongly embody multiple levels of meaning and are inherently ambiguous. A single photo can be of interest to a variety of beneficiaries and be used for different purposes, and thus, the use of folksonomy in describing and archiving photos is very attractive, being closely related to users.

This paper discusses the use of folksonomy in archiving heritage photographs and the extent to which this affects the quality of objective analysis and retrieval quality. It also demonstrates the importance of folksonomy with the use of AI apps in archiving images, while reviewing some global experiences in this regard.

MR. EBRAHIM FAWZY MOHAMED KHERIBA,

MRS. EMAN IBRAHIM FAWZY MOHAMED KHEREBA

[bio. on p. 37, 39](#)

Hockey: From Pharaonic Hucksha to Modern Sports Heritage in Sharqia Governorate

Keywords: Hockey in Sharqia, Hockey, Egypt, Academic connection, Community collaboration, Digital archiving, Physical culture, Egyptian sports heritage, Historical development, Achievement documentation, Sports clubs, Oral history, Archives

In a presentation on hockey in Sharqia Governorate, we explore its origins, dating back over 4,000 years as “Hucksha” in pharaonic times. The focus is on the Sharqia Club’s achievements, including 27 African championships and the founding of the Egyptian Hockey Federation in 1942. The research focus runs the gamut from game history and origins, to club accomplishments, and the importance of digital archiving for preserving documents. It highlights Olympic player Gamal Fawzy’s contributions, efforts to collect memorabilia, and the need to document oral histories through interviews. The research finally urges to preserve such documents against the imminent risk of loss due to environmental factors and human negligence. The presentation concludes with proposals for digital archiving and establishing a museum showcasing hockey’s historical developments.

MR. MOHAMED HUSSEIN AHMED

[bio. on p. 39](#)

Specialized Digital Archives: A proposal to create a digital archive for commercial records in the Arabian Gulf during the period between the 19th and 20th centuries

Keywords: Specialized Archives, Digital Archives, Arabian Gulf, Crowdsourcing, Intelligent Character Recognition

Archives are the memory of society and witness to its past. It’s our remaining legacy from which we derive knowledge and on which we build our future. In our study, we will focus on the specialized archives of one of the most important activities, or even the largest activity in the Arabian Gulf – at that time – as trade was the main engine of the Gulf economy, and behind that was a huge number of records, and thus this proposal came to confront several challenges, the first of which is dispersion, as these records – most of which – People and families keep them. Secondly, most of them are handwritten and difficult to read. Therefore, there was an urgent need to create a digital archive for commercial records in the Arabian Gulf, starting with collecting, selecting and digitizing the records by agreements with their owners, passing through the technical processes of archival description by the standards, and then making them available with permissions management. We will try to use artificial intelligence to read fonts and scripts, to provide readable text. The proposed initiative will use the concept of crowdsourcing, by involving interested parties in (Transcription and archival description, etc.) within several controls.

AI AND DIGITAL HUMANITIES

PROF. DAVID JOSEPH WRISLEY

[bio. on p. 45](#)

From Sparse Data to Shared Wisdom: Leveraging Collective Intelligence in Emerging Spaces of Digital Humanities

Keywords: Collective intelligence, Infrastructural sparsity, Artificial intelligence, Ground Truth Creation, Word Embeddings, Georectification

In recent decades, digital humanities have played an important role in organizing, enriching, and interpreting knowledge in regions where digitization is well-established, driving significant innovation in research methodologies and building the infrastructure necessary for social scholarship. However, in areas where knowledge remains under-digitized and infrastructural resources are limited, collaboration becomes even more essential for advancing digital research in the humanities.

While much attention has been given to the challenge of data sparsity in the age of AI—where the quality and quantity of data directly affect the reliability and inclusiveness of computational models—this talk will argue that communities can play a crucial role in bridging these gaps. By coming together, they can enrich digital humanities research with local knowledge, contextual insights, and diverse perspectives. Additionally, the concept of

infrastructural sparsity will be explored, examining its impact on efforts to harness collective intelligence in under-resourced contexts.

The presentation is structured around three collaborative projects in different areas of digital scholarship: computational text analysis of GLAM collections, the reuse and analysis of historical maps, and the development of handwritten text recognition (HTR) models for Arabic. These case studies illustrate various socio-technical challenges involved in mobilizing stakeholders, maintaining data quality, and addressing ethical considerations. The talk will argue that overcoming these challenges requires flexible, innovative approaches that integrate research advancement with community engagement, training, and development, paving the way for more inclusive and sustainable digital humanities practices.

ANCIENT ARABIC AND ISLAMIC DOCUMENTS AND MANUSCRIPTS – PRESERVATION AND ACCESS

DR. WALID GHALI

[bio. on p. 38](#)

Digital Philology: Textual Criticism of Arabic Manuscripts in the Digital Age

Keywords: Digital Humanities, Digitisation, Islamic manuscripts, Text re-use, Digital philology

Between the lack of digitisation projects in Arab countries and the pace of development of new tools and methods in digital humanities, there is still a long journey to discover and decipher the corpus of Arabic manuscripts worldwide. On the one hand, the corpus of Arabic manuscripts is vital to advance many disciplines in Islamic studies, such as Quranic manuscripts, book history, intellectual history and Arabic codicology, to mention but a few. On the other hand, the Digital Humanities project's reliance on digital manuscripts is undeniable; the more digital copies, the merrier. This paper intends to look into the politics of digitisation in the Arab world and how Digital Humanities offers new methods to engage with this corpus critically. The paper also aims to provide a critical background of the field of digital humanities in terms of its results.

DR. NAGMELDEEN MORSHED HAMZA

[bio. on p. 39](#)

Beyond the Visible: An integrated study of Islamic and Arabic manuscripts at the National Museum of Ras Al Khaimah

Keywords: Collection, Manuscripts, Preservation, Accessibility, Digitalization

The National Museum of Ras Al Khaimah reflects an eventful history, displaying a rich diversity of traditional architecture. Today the 'Late Fort' exhibits historical, ethnographical, and archaeological material relating to the emirate of Ras Al Khaimah and provides an interesting insight into the history and traditions of this area.

Arabic and Islamic manuscript collections at the National Museum of Ras Al Khaimah face many challenges, and such research promotes the strategy to learn, providing practical tools, and building capacity to achieve sustainable development in preservation for future generations accessibility.

The research objective sheds light on the role of digital technology in archiving, digitizing, and preserving Arabic and Islamic manuscripts from the National Museum of Ras Al Khaimah collection. Manuscripts and Books Collection. Significant watermarks were recorded from the collection, which gives more information about different European paper mills and studies the changes in manuscript design and the role of Arabic and Islamic culture on the changes in the manufacture of paper itself. The study approach on RAK manuscript texts and papers encompasses not only the physical attributes of the manuscripts but also their socio-cultural significance.

The research adopting integrated approach interdisciplinary methodologies, study employing techniques such as digital imaging for digitization, analysis such as morphological analysis for understanding history of paper making, and preservation strategy to achieve a sustainable plan for museum collections as valuable resources for understanding history, culture, and for research, education, inspiration, and extending the lifespan of collections.

DR. AHMED MANSOUR

bio. on p. 41

The Role of Writing and Scripts Center (BA) in Investigating the Egyptology Archives: Obstacles and Challenges

Keywords: History of Egyptology, Archive accessibility, Network of archives, Archive and national memory of Egypt, Ancient and Modern Egypt

The Writing and Scripts Center (WSC) -affiliated to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina- initiated a long-term project that aims at investigating the early Egyptology archives, such as the archive of Gaston Maspero, Selim Hassan, Mahmoud Hamza, Ahmed Kamal Pasha, Labib Habachi, Ahmed Fakhry and their role in promoting the studying of ancient Egypt. These archives are kept in different places: personal holdings, the Egyptian National Archive (Dar al-Watha'iq al-Qawmiya), and in Dar al-Mahfouzat archive, which is digitally, partially, kept in BA. In the meantime, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina paid much attention to conserve the historical archives of modern Egypt. It ensured the functionality of infrastructure that granted the online full access to the historical archives. One of the successful conservation archive projects is "Memory of Modern Egypt" <http://modernegypt.bibalex.org/collections/home/default.aspx> in which scholars can find interesting archival sources to reveal the different aspects of modern Egyptian history. One of the advantages of it, is that the users can consult the archive of Dar al-Mahfouzat, although it is partially accessible, but it is important to trace the history of the pioneers of Egyptian Egyptologists. This paper strives to explain the role of WSC in mapping up an investigation strategy of the historical archives of ancient Egypt, focusing on the importance of the interconnection between different archive types (personal/institutional-verbal/documented-digital/paper-sound/image) in order to unearth such history, with particular emphasis on archival accessibility, interdisciplinary collaboration, and obstacles and challenges in the archives. Moreover, the paper will discuss the obstacles that face the scholars in accessing the archival documents, and what are the challenges that they encounter to find interesting information for their work.

DR. ANDREW SIMON

bio. on p. 45

Alternative Archives: Writing Egypt's Recent Past

Keywords: Archives, Culture, History, Egypt, Media

Historians seeking to make sense of Egypt following the fall of the monarchy immediately confront multiple challenges, from inaccessible state archives and restrictive research clearances to censored periodicals and missing documents. In my contribution to this conference, I wish to contemplate the opportunities inspired by these obstacles. What historical materials exist in the shadow of the Egyptian National Archives and how might we preserve them going forward? In what ways might popular culture, in particular, not only complement what we already know about the past but also significantly reshape our understanding of it? And what is the future of digital archives in the field of Middle East Studies? Taking these questions as a starting point, I will contemplate the material traces of a once vibrant cassette culture in Egypt and introduce my efforts to make my private collection of cassette recordings public in a digital archive where anyone is able to access, explore, and enjoy Egypt's acoustic culture. Drawing upon fieldwork in Egypt, I will enter into

conversation with recent online initiatives, from *Gharamophone* to *Syrian Cassette Archives*, and will show how everyday objects make new stories about the past possible.

HERITAGE ARCHIVING: CASE STUDIES

MR. IBRAHIM MOHAMED ALI

bio. on p. 31

Developing Sustainable and Enhanced Access to Archival Collections from the Arab World: A Case Study on Customized Cataloging and Access Strategies

Keywords: Archives, Collections, Arabic language, Access, ArchivesSpace, Arab Art

Establishing sustainable access to archival collections across various institutions in the Arab world presents significant challenges. A major obstacle to creating digitally accessible platforms for Arabic archival collections is the lack of locally established guidelines and standardized lists for archival cataloging and description. Existing archival guidelines and standardized authority lists have notable limitations in covering Arab-related subjects and names of local authorities. These guidelines and lists primarily focus on cataloging materials in Latin-based languages and creating descriptions exclusively in those languages, even when collections contain materials in Arabic. This gap significantly hinders the process of creating accurate, comprehensive, and consistent cataloging for archival collections where Arabic is the primary language of the materials, ultimately impeding accessibility on digital platforms, particularly for the local communities from which these collections originated. To effectively develop a digital archive for collections predominantly in Arabic, it is essential to implement accurate and effective cataloging practices that prioritize the primary language of the materials, thereby ensuring broader accessibility for diverse audiences. This paper presents a case study in which innovative and customized approaches have been implemented to address the challenges of cataloging archival collections in the Arab world. The case study illustrates procedures aimed at enhancing the accessibility of archival collections, particularly for the local communities from which these collections originate. The approaches discussed include the development and implementation of internal cataloging guidelines, standardized authority lists, and customization of the cataloging platform to effectively bridge gaps in existing archival resources and enhance access to collections. These approaches have facilitated the proper processing and cataloging of collections, leading to the development and execution of a sustainable access plan.

DR. FRANCESCA BIANCANI, DR. COSTANZA LISI

bio. on p. 35, 40

For a shared history of vernacular Cosmopolitanism through the salvage of endangered archives: the VERNACOSM project

Keywords: Egypt, 19th-20th century, archives, Italians of Egypt, Cosmopolitanism, subaltern studies

This presentation aims to show the scientific objectives and preliminary results of the Italian PRIN (Research Project of National Interest) project VERNACOSM, acronym for “Vernacular Cosmopolitanism: History and Archives of Italian Subalterns in Colonial Egypt (1864-1937)”. The main objective of the project is the recovery and enhancement of a highly specific set of archival sources currently held at the Historical Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome. In particular, VERNACOSM’s focus is on the fond “Egyptian Consular Archives in Cairo and Alexandria” in the period between 1860 and 1940, which contains the records of the Consular Courts, including civil and criminal trials. This fonds represents something unique in Europe in terms of archival quantity and completeness. Its importance, therefore, is not limited to the history of the Italian community, but offers an original perspective on Egypt’s contemporary history and the inter-community relations

that influenced daily life in the country. The project aims to reflect on the notion of cosmopolitanism in Egypt and the Arab world, going beyond elites and exploring details from below often overlooked by historiography. Within the theoretical context outlined, the aim of our intervention is to highlight the richness of the fonds contents and the importance of its digitization for a deeper understanding of the Mediterranean as a transnational space.

Our paper focuses on VERNACOSM's preservation and dissemination objectives. The fond includes correspondence certifying the consular activity, notarial deeds, civil status documents, successions and a relevant group of papers produced in order to support the Italian schools in Egypt. Currently, archival preservation risks are related to the poor quality of storage environment, lack of transparent access rules, and especially the absence of a comprehensive and systematic inventory of the documentation. This presentation will highlight how VERNACOSM intends to preserve documents through the creation of an inventory, a multilingual written and online catalog, and the digitization of some sources. The resources thus created will be made accessible in open access through a website dedicated to the VERNACOSM project.

Finally, the centrality of public institutions in preservation and their crucial role in ensuring continuity in the preservation, promotion and enhancement of documentation will be explored. In the specific context of VERNACOSM, the synergy between ASDMAE and public universities in achieving these goals will be discussed together with the need for restore and disseminate publicly the shared everyday history of Mediterranean cosmopolitanism the fond will help recovering to the both scholarly debate and public opinion in between Italy and Egypt.

DR. ALI FATHY ALSHERIF

[bio. on p. 33](#)

Digital Knowledge and Archive Services in the Post-Digital Repositories Era: A Case Study of the Digital Repositories for National Heritage Preservation Centers of the United Arab Emirates

Keywords: Digital Knowledge, Archive Services, Digital Repositories, Document Preservation, Heritage Preservation, Document management, National heritage

With archives playing a crucial role in facilitating access to informational content and utilising digital knowledge to offer new services that align with the evolution of archival technologies from personal computing to phone technologies and ultimately to the Internet of Things, digital technology has become the tool of cognitive civilization. Archives are evolving from traditional services to become a hub for creativity, learning, and cognitive innovation.

Heritage institutions need to build digital repositories to preserve national heritage. One of the key requirements for heritage preservation and restoration centers is the development of a digital repository to store Arab documents and heritage, transferring them from traditional formats to digital ones. This process requires taking the necessary measures and procedures to complete the digital management of their heritage collections. Digital repositories for heritage preservation are among the most important tools for open access and making intellectual output available to researchers via the internet. Therefore, they serve as effective tools for innovating and offering new services to reach readers and beneficiaries of the institution's archive. The United Arab Emirates is one of the first Arab countries striving to develop archives and adopt the latest global systems for archive management, offering creative and innovative digital services to the community.

This research paper presents a study of the innovative digital services offered by archives through the optimal use of digital content available in digital heritage repositories, ensuring the free circulation of information without compromising intellectual property rights and safeguarding information security. The researcher will observe and analyze the current state of building digital repositories for document and heritage preservation in national heritage

centers in the United Arab Emirates and assess how these repositories contribute to preserving national heritage and improving service delivery to beneficiaries. Additionally, the study aims to explore the future of digital archive services based on the digital knowledge content in these repositories. The study adopts the case study methodology and its tools, which is significant as it focuses on identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the phenomenon under investigation, providing detailed descriptions and precise interpretations, and examining its various aspects.

SCIENTIFIC DATA ANALYSIS IN THE ARAB WORLD

DR. ISMAEL AWAD

bio. on p. 33

The Maryut Lake region: Historical GIS case study from Egypt

Keywords: Maryut Lake, GIS, Kom, Karm, Shrine

The Maryut Lake region, located at the western margin of the Nile Delta, is known since antiquity for its wine and olive oil production, and also for its religious sites. However, the great interest expressed by the Egyptian government towards the region by the end of the 19th century for agriculture, industry and settlement construction had a direct influence on the land use history of this semi-arid region.

In order to overcome the lack of official cartographic coverage in the Maryut Lake region since the 1990s, the Centre d'Etudes Alexandrines (CNRS/Ifao) has decided to draft the most recent and accurate archaeological map of this rich and underrated region. For the purpose of making a complete digitize archive of all identified historical and archaeological sites.

This, by using the most relevant maps of different dates and editions, since the first topographic map of the French Expedition in 1801 till the most recent satellite image edited in 2022.

This GIS study project, established in 2013, helped us to detect the real locations and dimensions of ancient occupations, such as koms, karms, saqiyahs and quarries, beside the shrines, in order to try to protect their remains from extinction, especially that since 2019, several massive projects have been established all over the Maryut Lake area (<https://www.cealex.org/recherches/operations-en-cours/mareotide/>).

DR. AYMEN A. SOLYMAN

bio. on p. 45

The Power of Location: Location-based Information in Archives and Documentation

Keywords: Documentation, LBI, GIS, Location, Data

In the past, archiving and documentation mainly focused on the content of the archived and documented material. However, there has been a shift towards recognizing the significance of location information. Location-based information (LBI) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) have changed how we capture and use information within archives and documentation. By integrating the “where” along with the “what” and “who”, LBI provides many advantages. It enhances the historical context of records and documents and allows us to understand their deeper meanings within a specific geographical context. Moreover, it provides an efficient framework for organizing, searching, and retrieving archived data.

Most importantly, LBI enables us to observe historical trends and changes over time and to examine the relationship between location and time in archived and recorded data using GIS analysis techniques, which reveal new patterns. In this paper, we will discuss the integration of location data into the structure of archives for a better and more comprehensive understanding.

DR. DALIA GALAL ELABADY

bio. on p. 37

New Considerations Toward a Wide Data Transition in Official Statistics

Keywords: Fundamental principles of official statistics, Challenges, New and various data sources, National strategy for developing the statistical system in Egypt

In the era of evidence-based policy making, official statistics has a main role to make up the foundations for policy and decisions-making that can impact millions of citizens and influence economic and social developing process. Thus, it must obviously be relevant, precise, timely accurate and available as much as to be used by policymakers and others. An enormous growth of data happened by the rise of various data sources as Big Data that changes the context in which organizations producing official statistics operate. Big Data provides opportunities, but in order to make optimal use of Big Data, a number of challenges have to be addressed. This stimulates increased collaboration between National Statistical Institutes, Big Data holders, businesses and universities. As well as Administrative records that can provide a huge real data-base combined with population registry, building and housing units' registry, business registry, student records, property records, social security records, and other records that can be main sources for census data, if it is linked to the personal identification number given to each individual at birth. This provides an opportunity to build an integrated database from different sources, and publish census data and surveys with availability to all data users. Taking into consideration Professional standards which play a vital role in securing trust in official statistics. which includes an absolute respect for the confidentiality of data provided by respondents. Data collected for statistical purposes may never be disclosed and may never be used for other purposes. furthermore, official statistics are often taken for its granted, so modernization of NSOs systems should be essential to remain relevant in a fast-moving data landscape.

This paper, acknowledge changes in context of it's time to have multiple data sources managed by data science approaches, but in order to make optimal use of various data sources, a number of issues have to be addressed. This calls for increased collaboration with governmental and private sectors who have access to specific data sources and knowledge so we need to have a unified and advanced statistical system to ensure the unification of concepts and standards and to ensure the reliability of data and its easy flow.

DIGITAL HUMANITIES - TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE AND NEW METHODOLOGIES

DR. FORGET CHATERERA-ZAMBUKO

bio. on p. 36

Towards sustainable digital records management in the UAE

Keywords: Sustainability, Digital Records, Emerging technologies, Regulatory frameworks, Net zero carbon emissions

Sustainable digital records management is a critical goal particularly in the face of increased global warming caused by severe climatic changes. Several sectors including records managers and archival scientists have been pledging to take a leading role in promoting sustainable practices in their respective operations. In that light, this paper seeks to provide a discourse on the sustainable management of digital documentary heritage. The overarching argument is that sustainable digital records management is a complex task that involves various aspects including best practices, fast paced technological advancements and legal frameworks. It is well documented that UAE has excellent digital transformation initiatives which employ cutting-edge technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Analytics, and Robotic Process Automation (RPA) to enhance business operations. Despite the use of leading technologies, challenges still exist pertaining to the integrating legacy systems, resistance to change by employees and skill gaps in emerging technologies. In efforts to address these obstacles,

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the UAE has implemented sustainable information management practices, aligning with the UAE Green Agenda 2030's focus on energy efficiency and renewable energy. The country has also developed regulatory frameworks for technologies such as blockchain to ensure compliance with data privacy laws. Overall, this paper underscores UAE's commitment to sustainability, through highlighting investments that UAE has done to promote clean energy with the goal of reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

DR. RADWA ZAKI

[bio. on p. 46](#)

From the Library of Alexandria to ChatGPT: Exploring Modern Egypt's Historical Archives Using AI in the Bibliotheca Alexandrina

Keywords: Library of Alexandria, Historical archives, AI, Modern Egypt, Technological advancements, Ethical considerations

The Library of Alexandria houses priceless historical records, including the "Memory of Modern Egypt", the ultimate digital archive for culturally and historically significant material concerning with the modern history of Egypt. It also includes the annals captured in the Napoleonic expedition (1798-1801) in "Description de l'Égypte" encyclopedia. This authentic resource holds immense potential for scholarly inquiry on the vibrant past of modern Egypt and the Arab region. However, realizing this potential depends on overcoming challenges of accessibility and availability.

This study explores how integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) with the historical archives can advance innovative ways of historical research by employing AI's applications and models. It highlights the use of some AI technologies such as using Large Language Models (LLMs) for text-based data search and analysis, Handwritten Text Recognition (HTR), text to voice recognition (TTS), and intelligent character recognition (ICR) or extracting text from historical documents, and image analysis for extracting information from visual materials. These technologies can enhance the understanding and interpretation of genuine insights and facilitate profound searches of the Modern Egypt's past through the historical archives in the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. This paper employs a case study research methodology through an in-depth exploration from the Bibliotheca Alexandrina's historical archives. It reveals the potential of using AI in analyzing vast historical materials, and offer invaluable assistance by enhancing accessibility and facilitates research on a significant unprecedented scale. Moreover, the study addresses the ethical considerations of AI technologies considering their capabilities and limitations, including biases, cultural sensitivities in historical interpretations, and accuracy and integrity of research findings. It also considers the downsides of human factors and the high error rates that should be taken into account when involving AI with historical archives. Overall, this study opens the doors to further research, and invites scholars and technologists from different disciplines to collaborate in exploring the endless opportunities of AI in advancing historical research. It aims to engage broader audiences with the precious historical resource of the library of Alexandria, promoting a deeper understanding of the modern Egypt's rich past.

MR. MARCIN WERLA, DR. ARIF SHAON

[bio. on p. 45](#)

Long-Term Digital Preservation of Cultural Heritage Content at the Qatar National Library

Keywords: Digital preservation, Digital collections, Qatar National Library, Digitization projects, Repositories

The potential loss of valuable knowledge resulting from natural disasters, conflict, negligence, and swift technological transformations poses a significant threat to the fabric of society, culture, and the economy. An illustrative example is the regrettable destruction of Gaza's primary public library, highlighting how knowledge of cultural and social importance can be

lost due to the ongoing war in Gaza. Thus, failure to protect today's knowledge may impede future generations' ability to access and utilize information, ultimately hindering their progress.

As a modern national library, Qatar National Library (QNL) recognizes its responsibility to facilitate patrons' access to information important to their lives by developing rich cultural heritage collections for the people of Qatar. This commitment is evident in the library's mission to acquire, safeguard, and enable access to both local and global knowledge. This encompasses cultural heritage materials that serve as a testament to Qatar's rich history and ongoing societal development. As such, these materials must be preserved and made accessible as valuable sources for future research and education.

This case study provides an insight into the Library's ongoing initiative for digitally repatriating the nation's cultural heritage through collaboration with other national libraries (such as the British Library and the French National Library) to identify and digitize (if needed) archival collections relating to Qatar and the Gulf region. The Library aims to repatriate these contents to Qatar through digitization, curation, digital preservation, and dissemination through its online platforms, such as the Qatar Digital Library (QDL).

As part of its digital repatriation initiative, the Library has made a substantial investment in acquiring a growing volume of digital assets (over 2.4 million digitized images). These assets require careful curation and preservation to ensure effective long-term accessibility and reusability. The Library has also established a modern, cloud-based IT infrastructure using Microsoft Azure, offering efficient data backup and archiving capabilities. However, insights from international digital library communities emphasize that these measures alone may not adequately mitigate the risks of data integrity loss due to rapid advancements in computer technology. These have motivated the Library to implement a comprehensive digital preservation solution alongside its traditional backup and archival strategy.

In addition, the case study examines the Library's responsibility as a custodian of the national and regional cultural heritage to assist other Qatari institutions within the cultural, research, and scientific domains in curating and preserving the nation's intellectual output. Notably, QNL currently stands as the leading memory organization with an established digital preservation service in Qatar. However, a prevalent issue is the limited awareness surrounding the importance of digital preservation, both nationally and within the broader regional context. This gap was notably highlighted during a 2022 online event hosted by the Library, bringing together repository managers from the region who collectively recognised the lack of understanding and implementation of digital preservation. To address this gap, the Library has already initiated providing digital preservation solutions to other institutions in the country through its recently launched nationally coordinated digital platform for research material, named Manara.

DIGITAL LIBRARIES IN THE ARAB WORLD

ENG. ESLAM MESBAH

bio. on p. 42

Preserving History: The Imperative of Digital Archiving in the Arab World

Keywords: Preservation, Arab world, Cultural heritage, Historical rare books, Historical sites

Introduction: The preservation of historical knowledge, whether in the form of documents, books, or buildings, is essential for passing on this legacy to future generations. However, in the Arab world, this heritage is under threat from various factors such as neglect, poor storage conditions, and armed conflicts. digital archiving has emerged as a promising solution to preserve history and ensure its accessibility for future generations.

Constraints and Challenges:

1. Neglect and Poor Storage Conditions: Many historical documents and artifacts in the Arab world suffer from neglect and inadequate storage facilities, leading to deterioration and loss.
2. Armed Conflicts: Conflict zones pose a significant threat to historical sites and archives, as they become targets of destruction or looting.
3. Lack of Resources: Limited funding and infrastructure hinder efforts to preserve and digitize historical materials effectively.
4. Technological Barriers: Access to technology and expertise for digitization and digital archiving may be limited in some regions.

By combining historical context and future possibilities for preservation, Digital technology can safeguard the heritage of Palmyra (as a case study) and provide a sustainable and innovative solution to ensure that Palmyra's cultural treasures are not lost to time.

DIGITAL LIBRARIES IN THE ARAB WORLD

MRS. SHATHA AL-OWN, ENG. AHMED OMAR

bio. on p. 33, 43

Digitization at Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research

Keywords: Digitization, Reports preservation, Cataloguing, Collections management, Searching, Copyrights

Established as a pivotal entity within Kuwait's network of specialized libraries and information centers, the National Scientific and Technical Information Center (NSTIC) undertakes the multifaceted responsibility of collecting, organizing, disseminating, and fostering awareness about scientific and technical knowledge resources. NSTIC actively engages in information provision and scientific exchange at national and regional levels, striving to be a national center of excellence in both scientific and technical information. The center plays a crucial role in advancing research within the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) and the broader scientific community by providing advanced information and knowledge solutions to support Research & Development (R&D) activities and programs throughout the country.

NSTIC-KISR sees reports digitization as a crucial part of its mission. Through this paper, we explore the process of digitization at NSTIC-KISR.

The Digital Assets Factory (DAF) is a core component of the systems developed by the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. It is responsible for managing the entire digitization workflow, from the initial planning and preparation of materials to the final quality control and archiving of the digitized assets. KISR Digital Repository (KDR) the digital repository at KISR. This system stores and manages the KISR digital collections, ensuring their long-term preservation and accessibility.

DR. TAREK OUERFELLI, DR. AÏDA CHEBBI, DR. HANAE LRHOUL

bio. on p. 43, 36, 40

Web archiving and digital repositories in the Arab Universities

Keywords: Web archiving, Open repository, Digital record-keeping, Sultanate of Oman, Tunisia, Morocco

Academic websites and open digital repositories are the main sources of official and scientific information in universities. Those artefacts must be managed and preserved according to their evidential, historical and informational value. However, there are still three major challenges to be met: 1/ the standardization and structuring of data generated by the use of those web technologies to guarantee its quality; 2/ the establishment of infrastructures and interoperability standards to ensure the exchange of data between different platforms and institutions; 3/ the development of data preservation and website archiving policies for university websites and open repositories to offer the possibility of the reuse and the long-term accessibility of the university documentary heritage.

We attempt to answer the following research questions: What are the types of documents published on the websites and open repositories of academic institutions? Which digital record-keeping methods are adopted to manage documents resulting from the use of those web technologies?

Our proposal attempts to take stock of the situation in Arab universities, more precisely the case of three countries: Tunisia, Morocco and the Sultanate of Oman. Our research is based on comparative research methodology employing cybergenre theory and digital diplomatic as conceptual frameworks. We also map open repositories in the Arab region, to identify indicators about scientific publications and research data.

Preliminary findings indicate no national or institutional policies for managing and archiving both academic websites and research data in digital repositories

We propose recommendations to strengthen the archiving and the accessibility of academic websites and digital repositories. We also present a model of web archiving policy that can be applied in the Arab universities.

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bio. on p. 30, 45

Memory of Modern Egypt: A Case Study about Egyptian Cultural and Historical Preservation through Digital Archiving

Keywords: Online archiving, Digitization, Cataloging, Collections, Culture preservation

Since digital archiving has always been the primary method of preserving history, the Al-Kindi Informatics award-winning website Memory of Modern Egypt (MOME) is an attempt by the Bibliotheca Alexandrina (BA) to preserve the past and provide future generations with universal access to knowledge by digitally archiving an enormous collection of cultural and historical materials about Egypt's contemporary history, spanning from the era of Mohamed Ali in 1805 to the end of Al-Sadat's presidency in 1981, providing an authentic and comprehensive look at Egypt's rich history. The material was gathered and digitized from many institutes and private collections pertaining to Egypt's modern history throughout several years, along with collections of specialized libraries owned by prominent Egyptian politicians, writers, and historians. Employing BA's vast expertise and advanced technologies, led to the development of a wide repository of various items such as documents, pictures, audio, videos, maps, articles, stamps, coins, etc. that created an index of 14 different material types. The content of MOME has undergone scanning, cataloging, indexing, and OCRing processes to establish a fully searchable online archive that is open to both the general public and academics. The repository's interface and underlying infrastructure facilitate facet browsing, which enables optimal data filtration and a more precise browsing experience. Furthermore, the repository was built to support expandability, enabling ongoing content addition. Thus, this extensive online repository enriches the younger generations with their heritage and provides the user with a very informative visual picture of Egypt's contemporary history.

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From 2010 to 2018, Ibrahim served as a preservation and digitization specialist at the Grand Egyptian Museum Conservation Center. He has completed internships focused on the preservation of museum and archival collections at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the National Gallery of Art, and the Smithsonian National Museum of American History (NMAH). Between 2011 and 2017, he participated in the Middle East Photograph Preservation Initiative (MEPPI). Ibrahim has taught courses and delivered lectures on the documentation and preservation of archival collections in Egypt, The United Arab Emirates, and Japan.

Ibrahim holds an MA in Museum Studies from George Washington University and a BA in Conservation from Cairo University.

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Azza is a seasoned Project Manager with extensive experience in system analysis and development. She has successfully led and executed strategic initiatives across various domains, including her work as an Archive Specialist in the archives department at the National Library and Archives of the UAE. Azza's deep expertise in electronic archives has enabled her to design and implement highly effective data management systems. Her critical role in record management and long-term preservation projects has been instrumental in safeguarding digital information for future generations. Through her innovative solutions, Azza has significantly contributed to the success of numerous key projects, establishing herself as a leader in the field.

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He is experienced in media and marketing fields, and he has practical experience in journalism and communication, public relations and government excellence, comprehensive quality systems and continuous improvement, government development and strategic planning. He is skilled in establishing and leading communication and marketing departments, and in work team motivation and results achievement.

He started his career as the head of the local news section at Al Khaleej newspaper from 1992 to 1999. His writings had a significant impact in shedding light on negative practices and praising and consolidating positive aspects.

Afterwards, he has held the position of the President of Corporate Marketing and Exhibitions Department at Dubai Municipality since 2000; he supervised the development of the corporate identity and the management of its media affairs, and the management and organization of exhibitions held by the municipality. He assumed the position of Editor-in-Chief at the News Center at Dubai TV, and then headed the editing of television programs.

He currently holds the position of Director of Corporate and Community Outreach Department at the National Library and Archives (NLA) since 2012; leading historical awareness and education programs for the education sector in the country and managing corporate and community communications operations to create a strong NLA corporate image. He has supervised the development of the corporate identity guide for the NLA, defining its mission, objectives and services, and enhancing its corporate reputation.

He has been the team leader in many strategic plans that resulted in winning local and international awards, most notably: the Sharjah Government Communication Award, European Quality Leader (EQL) Award, Five-Star Customer Experience Award, Stevie Awards, and other awards.

He has many professional skills in public relations, effective communication skills, writing for television, visual and radio advertisements, development of strategic plans and performance indicators, comprehensive quality systems, etc. He has led many volunteer works and chaired many volunteer committees. He has distinguished expertise that contributed to strengthening the corporate identity of the entities where he worked.

His media efforts extended outside the country, as he had distinguished media coverage in the United States of America, Russia, Germany, Spain, Kosovo, Korea, Somalia, and many Arab countries. He holds a bachelor's degree in Mass Communication from the United Arab Emirates University in 1992, and obtained a Diploma in Strategic Communication Planning in 2010. He has participated in many training courses and got high-level certificates in several fields.

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Hamad serves as the Director of the Archives Department at the National Library and Archives (NLA) of the UAE. Under his leadership, the department encompasses five key sections: Historical Archives, Government Archives, Presidential Archives, Electronic Archives, and Preservation and Restoration.

Al Mutairi spearheaded a collaboration between the NLA and Sorbonne University - Abu Dhabi, resulting in the launch of pioneering academic programs in records management and archival science. These programs, the first of their kind in the region, include bachelor's and master's degrees as well as a specialized six-week course for professionals.

An active member of the International Council on Archives (ICA), Al Mutairi co-chairs the Programs Committee for the ICA Congress - Abu Dhabi 2023. His influence extends to various local and regional councils and committees dedicated to advancing archives and standardizing records management practices.

Currently, Al Mutairi is pursuing a doctoral dissertation focused on the applications of artificial intelligence in archiving and records management. His academic background includes degrees in computer science and information technology.

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- Worked as an Instructor of Information Technology at and Libraries manager at Jumeira University.
- Notable projects include leading the digitization of Arabic manuscripts at the Juma Al Majid Center for Culture and Heritage and overseeing the automation and development of libraries under the UAE Ministry of Culture and Knowledge Development. His contributions to digital repositories and library innovation have been recognized with several research publications and awards, including the Sharjah Library Literature Award.

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work, published in international scientific journals and publications, edited in three languages Arabic, English and French. Actually, he is the Coordinator of a new project funded by Barakat Trust foundation concerning the GIS study of the Shrines of the Maryut Lake region.

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She has extensive experience in developing plans and work mechanisms for media communications, supervising executive work in the operational plan, and enhancing the corporate reputation of the National Library and Archives.

She is skilled in strategic thinking, budgeting, communication and communication skills, employee development, change management, analysis and reporting, and in using computer and its applications.

She started her journey from the National Library and Archives (Documentation and Research Center), where she held the position of Corporate Communication Officer from 2004 to 2007. She played a role in the development programs related to enhancing institutional reputation, and in following up on plans and programs that affect it.

She held the position of Events Supervisor in the Corporate and Community Outreach Department at the National Library and Archives (National Center for Documentation and Research) during the period 2007-2012.

She has been in charge of the Corporate Communication Unit in the Corporate and Community Outreach Department at the National Library and Archives since 2013, and contributed to strengthening the links between the Archives, the National Library and its audience, and raising the awareness of its importance.

She assumed the position of Head of the Corporate Relations Section at the National Library and Archives (NLA) in 2015. In this position, she supervised the development and organization of internal event plans, traditional and electronic media plans, printing plans, and the support and sponsorship of NLA activities.

She supervised and contributed to the launch of seven social media channels, in addition to four electronic channels.

She supervised the development of the strategic plans for the NLA Printing and Press Unit and the launch of its policies and operations, which contributed to raising the level of internal printing and reducing financial budgets.

She supervised the corporate identity and its launch in two phases: the National Archives phase, and the National Library and Archives phase.

She also supervised the development of marketing strategies and policies, and corporate communication programs to increase the level of employee loyalty. She supervised the promotion of NLA image in all types of media, the development of mechanisms, strategies and channels of communication with stakeholders, and the organization of conferences.

At general task levels, she developed the department's strategic plan and contributed to its development, followed up on performance indicators, and prepared achievement reports, the annual training plan, and the department's strategic and organizational policies.

She contributed to the winning of many NLA awards, most notably the Sharjah Government Communication Award in three sessions, and in different categories, UAE Ideas Award, Stevie Awards, and YouTube Silver Shield for the National Library and Archives.

She graduated from Zayed University in Abu Dhabi with a bachelor's degree in communication and media sciences in 2003. She has volunteer experience in many official economic companies in the country and has participated in many training courses. She has proven her worth through her membership in a large number of committees that contributed to the development and excellence of the National Library and Archives.

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In 2006, I was awarded the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development Award for the best translated book from English into Arabic, “*Histoire de l’écriture de l’idéogramme au multimédia.*” In 2016, I taught a course titled “Journey of Writing in Egypt” on edX (founded by Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology) in collaboration with the Professional Training Institute (PTI), Bibliotheca Alexandrina.

I am also the Editor of *Abgadiyat Journal*, co-published by Brill, which documents and interprets writing, calligraphy, paleography, epigraphy, and inscriptions worldwide. Additionally, I am working on the methodology of Ahmed Kamal Pasha’s Hieroglyphic Arabic-French Dictionary, which was donated to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in 2020 by Kamal’s family.

I have been selected as a member of the National Network of Science Centers and Museums (SciHer Network) within the Academy of Scientific Research and Technology. I am also a member of the Scientific Committee for the Conferences of the Hellenic Institute of Egyptology in Athens and a member of the General Assembly of the 33 Principal Partners and Founding Members of the Hellenic Institute of Egyptology. I have extensive experience in producing digital archive projects related to cultural heritage and database management.

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Ebrahim Fawzy’s biography combines math and sports, as he served as the Director of Mathematics Supervisory in the Sharqia Governorate while discovering his passion for field hockey from a young age. His journey began in 1972 at Zagazig Secondary School for Boys, where he participated as a local player and national team member. He held several positions, including Secretary General of the Sharqia Hockey Association from 1984 to 1986, a member of the Board of Directors of Al-Sharqia Club from 1992 to 1994, a member of the Egyptian Hockey Federation from 1996 to 2000, and a technical advisor for hockey in the Higher Committee of the Sharqia Governorate from 2002 to 2004. He contributed to the development of competition systems, club ranking, and provided various recommendations to enhance the performance of national teams.

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IT Sector, obtained a PhD in National Strategies philosophy from Higher Military Academy with first class honors, in 2021 and a fellowship from National Defense College in Strategic studies and research with honors & Excellent Grade in 2018. Assigned to be a supervisor for dissertations of Egyptian and expatriate doctoral students at military Academy, cooperates with Center of Strategic research of Higher Academy, Participates in Egyptian Demographic Atlas in cooperation of CEDEJ Center with CAPMAS. Obtained a Master Degree in Spatial Statistical Analysis from Sorbonne University, France, 2016, as well as another Master Degree in population, demography and development research from Demographic Center in Cairo/National Planning Institute, 2014. obtained several diplomas in population studies, as well as several specialized training programs provided by international universities in cooperation with the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, as (ESLSCA university in Cairo) in Strategic Management, (GUC) in Entrepreneurship, USAID ORG (in Project Management), (ESCWA ORG) in Statistical Leadership for Arab Statistical System, (UNICEF ORG) in Statistics, Participates as a Team Leader in National Projects as the last E- Census of Population, Housing and Establishments 2017, Nowadays works on developing the technical system for CAPMAS statistical outputs. Ensuring applying international models & standards and comprehensive quality frameworks to develop statistical programs outputs, preparing strategic plan of CAPMAS and participating with ministries and agencies on preparing National Strategy for Developing the Statistical System in Egypt, as well as participating in preparing the draft of New Statistical Law for Egyptian national statistical system. Participated in many projects and activities. Represents CAPMAS in many national and international forums, whether by attending or presenting research papers.

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Mr. Hammam is an expert in Qatar History. He has made invaluable contributions to "Qatar and the Arabian Gulf States in the British Documents", a project under the auspices of His Excellency. He also has facilitated the collection of rare and ancient maps of Arabian Gulf.

He published numerous significant books and papers, to name a few:

- *Qatâr fi-al-Qalb wa-al-târikh* (Qatar in the Heart and History)
- *Treasures from the Arab Scientific Legacy in Europe: Selections from the Arab and Islamic Heritage Library*, QF
- *The Early Translations of the Meanings of the Holy Qurân in Europe*
- *The Early Translations of the Arabian Night in Europe*
- *Al-Rihlath Al-Hijaziyyah* - First Edition, 1999
- *Avicena (980-1037A) Sheikh of Philosophers - Prince of Doctors*, Doha, Qatar, 2003
- *Ya Shajaratha thooth* (O' the Berries Tree) (Short Story Book), 1999
- *Al-Khurooj minal Hamish* (Short Exit from the Sidelines) (Story Book), 1993

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Senior Conservation Scientist and archaeobotanist at the Grand Egyptian Museum from 2010 to 2022. Currently, I hold the position of Senior Conservation Scientist at the National Museum of Ras Al Khaimah in the UAE.

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- Manager of Academic Website of Islam Online Network (shut down)
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Currently, I am a Master's researcher in Documents and Archives at Cairo University, with more than 8 years of experience in archives, libraries and information science.

Currently, I am working as the Acting Director of Fujairah Digital Library, and as the Director of the Records and Archives Center at Fujairah Charity Association, UAE.

I have previous experience as an archivist at Juma Al Majid Center for Culture and Heritage, UAE.

I have published research entitled "Machine Learning and Extracting Bibliographic Data from Textual Information Sources: A Proposed Model for Arabic Textual Materials", and a contribution to the 12th Conference of the Department of Libraries, Documents and Information Technology, Faculty of Arts, Cairo University.

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Eman Khereba is a workplace joker and humanitarian, a passionate artist and craftswoman, and a former professional field hockey national athlete. She graduated from the American University in Cairo (AUC) in 2017 with a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree majoring in Anthropology and minoring in architectural design and community development and organization. Khereba has five years of project and program coordination experience with local and international NGOs both inside and outside of Egypt, including Save the Children, the John D. Gerhart Center for Philanthropy, Civic Engagement, Responsible Business, and NileCapd in South Sudan (remotely). Intermittently, she provided freelance digital marketing and graphic design

services to companies and individuals, and led her own art and craft projects. Remarkably, some projects turned into successful small businesses. In 2020, she acted as a librarian and communication officer to develop the Digital Humanities Program at AUC Libraries and Learning Technologies. Khereba's broad and diverse range of work experience has nourished her understanding of what it takes to implement disruptive changes while paying great attention to execution details.

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Frédéric Lagrange is Professor of Arab Studies at Sorbonne Université, Paris. His research interests include the history of music in contemporary Egypt, dialectology, and the modern Arabic novel. His most recent work deals with cultural studies, at a crossroads between gender studies, linguistics and pop culture. His latest edited volumes are *Culture Pop en Égypte, Entre Mainstream commercial et contestation* (2020) and *Les Mots du Désir, La langue de l'érotisme arabe et sa traduction* (2020). He co-edited two special issues of Arabian Humanities dedicated to Pop Culture in the Arabian Peninsula (2020 and 2023), following a 2 year residence in Abu Dhabi for CEFREPA research center. He is also a translator of Arabic literature, classical and contemporary. Among his translations into French are Saudi author Abdo Khal's *Tarmī bi-sharar* (2014) and Egyptian novelist Mohamed Rabie's *'Utarid* (2021).

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Costanza Lisi holds a BA in Medieval History from the University of Rome La Sapienza. Specialised in archival sciences, she has worked as an archivist for several cultural institutions over the years. She has been research collaborator within the ERC project "Open Jerusalem-Opening Jerusalem Archives: for a connected history of 'Citadinité' in the Holy City (1840-1940) and is currently a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia within the Italian PRIN project VERNACOSM- "Vernacular Cosmopolitanism: History and Archives of Italian Subalterns in Colonial Egypt (1864-1937)" funded by the NextGeneration EU Program. She has extensive expertise in the archives of the Italian consulates in the Ottoman Empire, especially in the pre-unitary period. Her publications include: *Materiali per la storia della diplomazia*, ed. Vincenzo Pellegrini, research by Costanza Lisi and Patrizia Mengarelli (Roma: Ministero degli Affari Esteri, 1999); *Inventario dell'Archivio del Consolato del Granducato di Toscana in Roma (1817-1853)* (Roma: Ministero degli Affari Esteri, 1996 *Indici dell'Archivio storico*, X); with M. Bettini Prosperi, *L'Archivio di Cesare Merzagora* (Roma: Segretariato generale della Presidenza della Repubblica - Archivio storico, 2013); *Un nuovo strumento per la ricerca negli archivi consolari preunitari italiani: archiviconsolari.it/ A new tool for researching Italian pre-unification consular archives: archiviconsolari.it* (Rivista dell'Istituto di Storia dell'Europa Mediterranea, n.13/I n.s. December 2023, pp. 137-146). She directs the archival project 'archiviconsolari.it' (https://archiviconsolari.it/?sf_culture=en).

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Hanae Lrhoul is a Professor at the School of Information Sciences. Her research interests span open science, scientometrics, competitive intelligence, and science mapping. She is currently an advisor to the Minister of Higher Education, Scientific Research, and Innovation for implementing open science policy in Morocco.

She is the vice president of the International Association of Francophone Librarians (AIFBD). Additionally, she is an Associate Editor for the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) and the chapter lead of Creative Commons Morocco.

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Prof. Basma Makhoulf Shabou is leading Master programme of Information Sciences at Geneva School of Business Administration (HEG_HESSO) at University of Applied Sciences and Arts Western Switzerland. She is also the head of ArchiLab at HEG_HESSO. Her research domain is on archival appraisal, automation of records processing, data quality measurement and information governance. Her recent work is on ecological impacts of records and archives processing during the different phases of their lifecycle management.

Prof. Basma Makhoulf Shabou is ICA coordinator of Africa programme (francophone section). She is involved in different national and international archival associations, communities, and research projects.

Prof. Basma Makhoulf Shabou holds a bachelor's degree in social studies (Tunis, 1997), a master's degree in management of administrative documents and public archives (Tunis, 2000), and a Ph.D. in Information Sciences (Montréal, 2011).

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Ahmed Mansour (PhD), Director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina's Writing and Scripts Center. He is an Egyptologist by study, researcher in the history of Arabic printing and in the history of writing by work and research. He has got his PhD from Alexandria University. In addition, He has obtained two master degrees; one from Alexandria University and one from Turin University (Level II Master). He has joined several archaeological missions: Luxor (Harwa Tomb 2011-2012), in Alexandria (Nelson Island 2011-2012), and visiting member to Wadi el-Jarf archaeological mission and Ain el-Sukhna missions at the Red Sea (2011-2013). In 2005, he published *The Bulaq Press* monograph for he was awarded the Incentive State Award in Social Science in 2008. He was also the recipient, in 2006, of an award from the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development for the best translated book from French into Arabic *Histoire de l'écriture de l'idéogramme au multimédia*. In 2016, he delivered an online course entitled "Journey of Writing in Egypt" on edX platform. In 2022, He was enrolled in Egyptological Archive Summer School organized by Egypt Exploration Society (EES) in Cairo, then he had been a visiting scholar at Egypt Exploration Society (EES) in London, where he has been visiting many important museums and archaeological sites, he is now working on the preservation and study of the archives of Egyptian pioneers in Egyptology such as Ahmed Pasha Kamal. In addition, he is focusing in using the digital technologies in the preservation of heritage.

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Nathalie Martial-Braz has been a professor of private law and agrégé des Universités since 2011. She is an honorary member of the Institut Universitaire de France.

Nathalie Martial-Braz wrote her doctoral thesis on Security Interest on intellectual property rights, which was published in 2007 by PUF Aix-Marseilles. She is the author of numerous publications on digital law (Daloz, JCP, Daloz IP/IT, RDBF). She is also co-author of the book "Droit Français des données à caractère personnel" (French Data protection Law) published in January 2020 by Daloz.

Nathalie Martial-Braz is also scientific co-director of the journal *Communication Commerce électronique* (Lexis-Nexis).

Nathalie Martial-Braz has been working at University Paris Cité since 2014 and heads the digital department of the Centre de droit des affaires et de gestion de l'Université de Paris (CEDAG), of which she was elected director in November 2022 for the next term 2024-2028. Since September 2021, she has been delegated to Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi.

She has been co-director of the Intellectual and Digital Property Department of Trans Europe Experts since its creation in 2009.

In 2020, Nathalie Martial-Braz founded and co-directed at University Paris Cité with Professor Anne Debet, Professor of Private Law and member of the CNIL, the first Master's degree exclusively dedicated to Data Protection Law.

Nathalie Martial-Braz is regularly interviewed by the public institutions in charge of digital issues, thanks to her recognised expertise in financial and securities law, as well as in intellectual property and digital law, and particularly in the area of data protection law. Her work on the 'uberisation' and 'platformisation' of society, on social networks, on the digital economy in general such as fintechs and cryptoassets, and on the economics of health data, all of which has been published, has given rise to expert missions for the European Parliament, the French Council of State, the French Ministry of Health, the UNCITRAL and members of French or European Parliament responsible for reporting on these subjects.

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Eslam Mesbah is a seasoned architect with over 20 years of experience in document digitization at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, specializing in the preservation and digital transformation of rare and historical items, Eslam has played a pivotal role in modernizing the library's archival processes. His work has enhanced global access to Egypt's rich cultural and historical assets, ensuring their longevity and availability for future generations.

Eslam Holds an MBA from AASTMT and a BSc in Architectural Engineering from Alexandria University, he has spearheaded the digitization of significant projects including the Description of Egypt, Dar, CEDEJ, KISR and all of the BA digital production since started. His expertise in blending architectural knowledge with digital technology has been instrumental in preserving and enhancing access to Egypt's cultural heritage.

Eslam is the Deputy Director of Digital Lab. of bibliotheca Alexandrina since 2016. He was born and raised in the great Mediterranean city of Alexandria. Beyond the digital realm, Eslam is a passionate advocate for building and heritage conservation and a connoisseur of contemporary fine arts.

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Ebtehal Ibrahim is a librarian at the CEDEJ since 2016 and a graduate of the department of library and documentation of the faculty of arts - Cairo university with a very good grade. Ebtehal uses MINISIS and BA-LIS (Marc 21) library programs to do proofing, weeding, cataloging and quality control. She receives the public as well. Ebtehal had several trainings at the New Central library of Cairo University, the National library and Misr Public library in 2013-2016. She was a member of the organization committee of the "Digital Archiving Conference" held in Abu Dhabi in 2019.

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- Ahmed Moudjeb has Master's degree in Archival Science at University of Algiers, he taught records management and archival science at the University of Algiers for 12 years, and has 35 years of experience in the field of records management and archives.

- He contributed to the development of records management and archive systems in several institutions in U.A.E. And he participate in preparing regulatory texts, policies, procedures at National Library & Archives and government agencies in the country, and in several projects inside and outside the United Arab Emirates in the field of document management system.
- He managed projects to construct archive buildings in government agencies in the country.
- He is currently working as Technical Archivist at National Library & Archives and part time teacher for the professional certificate in Records management and Archives at Sorbonne University - Abu Dhabi.

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Ahmed Omar is a Software Project Manager at the ICT Sector, Bibliotheca Alexandrina. He obtained his Master's degree in 2015, from the Faculty of Engineering, Alexandria University.

He joined the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, in 2009, as a software engineer. Omar has a wide expertise in the library systems, media digitization solutions, digital repositories and media viewers. He participated in several endeavors pursued by the BA; including the Digital Assets Repository (DAR), BA multimedia Repository (BAMM), Digital Assets Factory (DAF), the digitization of Dar el Mahfouz (the National Archives of Egypt) and KISR digital repository (KDR).

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- Assistant Professor in Records and Archives Management at A'sharqiyah University, Oman
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- PhD in Information and Communication Sciences from Grenoble 3 University, France
- Publication of many articles in international conferences and indexed journals
- Coordination of two international conferences on audiovisual archives
- Coordination of a special issue of the journal "Les cahiers du numérique" Ed. Lavoisier France, on the use of digital audiovisual archives, 2023
- Director of Studies and internships at Higher Institute of Documentation in Tunisia 2020-2021
- General Secretary of Arab Federation for Libraries and Information AFLI 2013-2019

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Maurice Pomerantz is Professor of Literature and Arab Crossroads at New York University Abu Dhabi. He also serves as the Executive Director of the NYUAD Institute where he oversees a wide range of public lectures, academic conferences, and spearheads strategic initiatives.

Pomerantz is a noted expert in the literature of the Abbasid period. He completed his PhD, in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago in 2010 under the direction of Prof. Wadād al-Qāḏī. Throughout his career, Pomerantz has traveled, lectured, researched, and taught throughout the Middle East region.

He was a Fulbright Senior scholar in Lebanon and Jordan in 2012-3 and a Member of the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton in 2015-2016. Since 2014, Pomerantz has been an editor of The Library of Arabic Literature published by NYU Press, a groundbreaking series of facing-page translations of the classic works of the Arabic Literary Heritage.

His first book is entitled *Licit Magic: The Life and Letters of al-Şāḥib b. 'Abbād*. Leiden: Brill, 2016. *Licit Magic* is the first study of letters of the tenth-century vizier and littérateur al-Şāḥib b. 'Abbād and their political, social and cultural dimensions. Exploring both the

aesthetic and pragmatic sides of the vizier's letters, the book portrays the vital role that literary eloquence played in early Muslim statecraft. The book was recently translated into Arabic with the title, *al-Şiḥr al-Ḥalāl* and published by Dār al-Mashriq in Beirut.

His most recent book, co-authored with Bilal Orfali, *The Maqāmāt of Badī' al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī: Authorship, Texts, and Contexts*, Reichert Verlag: Wiesbaden, 2022 explores important dimensions of the life of the picaresque tales known as maqāmāt. This book was translated into Arabic as *Maqāmāt Badī' al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī* and is published by al-Dār al-'Arabiyya lil-'Ulūm.

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Yara Ragheb is a skilled professional with experience in logistics coordination and communication project management. She has a strong background in strategic communication, creative storytelling, and project management. Yara is the one responsible of logistics for the DAAW 2024 conference, and has worked on communication projects for various organizations, including UN Women, ILO, CAPMAS, Red Crescent, Plan International, Asmae Association, UNFPA, UNICEF, and UNDP. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Commerce from Ain Shams University (French section), and a DUM 2 Diploma from Poitiers University France.

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Dr. Yann Rodier, head of the History Department and Associate Professor at Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi, has implemented and developed executive, undergraduate, and postgraduate programs in records management and archival science, in collaboration with Sorbonne University (Dr. Bertrand Haan) and the UAE's National Library and Archives (Hatem Younis). Since 2019, he has been coordinating the executive training, as well as the bachelor's and master's programs in records management and archival studies at SUAD, while also expanding the outreach of these programs by developing international students' mobility and by hosting academic events in the field. Dr. Rodier holds a PhD in Early Modern History, supervised by Prof. Denis Crouzet, and in 2020, his thesis was awarded the *Prix du XVII^e*. His current academic research focuses on the archival resources related to the European presence in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf from the 16th to 17th centuries.

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Ahmed Samir currently serves as Head of ICT Sector at Bibliotheca Alexandrina. He obtained his BSc. in Computer Engineering in 2001 from the Faculty of Engineering, Alexandria University, then he acquired his Master of Business Administration (MBA) from the Arab Academy of Science and Technology in 2016. Later, he obtained his Doctorate degree in Business Administration (DBA) in 2021, specifically in software project management from the International Business School of Scandinavia (IBSS), Denmark. He is also a member of the ALTO board since 2018.

Ahmed Samir's expertise encompasses different areas of digital preservation. He has supervised the creation of several digital library projects such as the BA's Digital Library of Inscriptions, and the award-winning Memory of Modern Egypt digital archive among others, as well as his experience for 20 years in building solutions and software management, which represent the core of the BA's institutional infrastructure through different and integrating systems, such as the Content Management System, Archiving, Workflows of Administrative Procedures and Oracle-based Enterprise Resources System; which manages personnel, finance, purchasing, inventories, and many others.

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Andrew Simon is a historian of media, popular culture, and the Middle East at Dartmouth College. He was a fellow at the Center for Arabic Study Abroad in downtown Cairo during the 2011 Egyptian Revolution and is the modern history book review editor for the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. Andrew is the author of *Media of the Masses: Cassette Culture in Modern Egypt* (Stanford University Press), which will be made available in Arabic by Dar El Shorouk later this year (2024). Currently, he is writing a biography of Shaykh Imam and is making his private collection of cassettes public in a digital archive for anyone to access.

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Dr. Aymen Solyman joined the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in 2008 and is currently the Director of Center for Documentation of Cultural and Natural Heritage (CULTNAT). He holds a master and doctoral degree in Geographic Information Systems. Prior to joining the library, he worked in various international and local organizations, including the Information and Decision Support Center (IDSC) of the Egyptian Cabinet, the Center for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE), the General Authority for Statistics in Saudi Arabia (GASTAT), and Parsons Transportation Group (Dubai). He also participated as an expert and speaker in several local and international conferences, in addition to publishing and contributing to numerous research papers.

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Marcin Werla is the Director of Digital Collections at Qatar National Library. Marcin has over 20 years of international experience in designing and developing digital libraries, repositories and metadata aggregation platforms in the cultural heritage sector. His department in QNL is responsible for electronic resources, Qatar Digital Library, long-term digital preservation of collections, as well as Open Access, and all copyright and licensing matters.

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David Joseph Wrisley is Professor of Digital Humanities at NYU Abu Dhabi. His research interests include comparative approaches to medieval literature in European languages and Arabic, as well as a variety of computational approaches to the humanities, including text analysis, spatial humanities and AI and computer vision. He co-directs two research projects: OpenGulf, with Nora Barakat (Stanford) which focuses on digital analysis of historical sources from and about the Arabian Gulf and the Paris Bible Project, with Estelle Guéville (Yale) which uses automatic transcription and machine learning to study the production and diffusion of Latin Bibles in medieval Europe. He is an advocate for building communities of interdisciplinary digital practice, with a focus on training, infrastructure and open scholarship—both regionally and internationally. A long-term resident of the Arab World, Wrisley taught at the American University of Beirut from 2002 to 2016, before joining the faculty at NYU Abu Dhabi.

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Hatem serves as Technical Expert, at the National Library & Archives (NLA), of the United Arab Emirates for the last 15 years.

Younis has created the first government contract between the NLA and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), to establish the Strategy, Policies and Procedures of the Document Archiving. The project is last for 3 years, and the benefits to NLA, MoFA and the entire UAE is tremendous.

One of the biggest achievements of Mr. Younis, is Jeddah Municipality (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) project which it last for 2 years, and the NLA team have created the Policies, Procedures and the Guidelines for Jeddah Municipality of the Electronic and Physical documents of the Archive and Semi-Active documents as well as for the Archiving as well.

Younis has initiated the collaboration between the NLA and the Sorbonne University - Abu Dhabi, to create the 3 Archiving and Records Management as follows:

- Professional Certificate in Archives & Records Management
- Bachelor in Records Management & Archival Science
- Master in Records Management & Archival Studies

Currently, Younis is working as an independence consultant for a variety of consulting firms at the UAE and Egypt.

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- Dr. Radwa Zaki, a researcher and Islamic Art and Architecture Historian, she is currently a Head Researcher at the Center for Islamic Civilization Studies, Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Egypt. She held a PhD in Islamic architecture from the University of Alexandria. She has granted numerous internships and participated in training school in Islamic Heritage at Center for Arabic Studies & University of Granada, Spain (2020), and in Islamic studies at Department of Islamic Studies, Philipps-Universität Marburg, Germany (2022).
- Radwa is an author of five academic books; in addition, she has participated in several academic publications and published a number of book chapters and peer-reviewed research articles in journals and international conference proceedings in Egypt and beyond.
- Recipient of the 2021 State Encouragement Award in Social Sciences - History Category in Egypt, and awarded the Cairo International Book Fair in the 51st edition (2020) best book award in the Art History category. She was also nominated for the long list of Sheikh Zayed Book Award 2018-2019.
- Dr. Zaki has delivered numerous lectures and talks in conferences, seminars and workshops in Instituto Cervantes Istanbul, Turkey (2023), *Center for Islamic Archeology*, University of Exeter, London (2020), and "The International Symposium "Digital Archiving in the Arab World", Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi, Emirates (2019).
- She is an academic committee-member in "Cost Action CA18129 - Islamic Legacy of the Mediterranean (1350-1750)", funded by European Union, Spain Since 2020, and an academic reviewer, Algerian Scientific Journal Board, Algeria: Since 2019 to present. A member in Academic and Cultural societies in Egypt including Supreme Council of Culture and Arab Archaeologists union.

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Prof. Ahmed Abdullah Zayed Hegab was appointed Director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in August 2022. He is a member of the Egyptian Senate. Since graduating from the Faculty of Arts, Cairo University, he took on different faculty positions, from Lecturer to Professor of Political Sociology in 1991. He also held many administrative and academic positions over the past years, the most prominent of which was his work as a Cultural Attaché at the

Egyptian Embassy in Saudi Arabia and Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Cairo University. He has lectured at many Egyptian and international universities, such as Qatar University, United Arab Emirates University, Omdurman Islamic University, and Bielefeld University in Germany. He has received many awards, most notably the State Prize for Scientific Excellence in Social Sciences in 2004, the State Appreciation Award in Social Sciences in 2007, the Cairo University Award for Excellence in Social Sciences, and the Al Owais Cultural Award. Prof. Zayed has been participating in general cultural work by writing periodically for newspapers and magazines and contributing to many conferences and symposia. He also writes bi-weekly articles for *Al-Ahram* newspaper. His list of publications comprises more than 200 titles, the most important of which are: (1) *The Contradictions of Modernity in Egypt*, (2) *The Political Structure in the Egyptian Countryside*, (3) *The State between Theories of Modernization and Subordination*, (4) *The Voice of the Imam: Religious Discourse from Context to Reception*, in addition to translating different works.



CREDITS

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