

Yasmin Tarek Ismail (She/Her)

Email: yasmintarekismail@gmail.com | **Phone:** +201099749526 | **Location:** Cairo, Egypt

My name is Yasmin, and I am a graduate student in the Department of History at UC Santa Barbara. I study the modern history of the Middle East, with a focus on the social history of labor and bureaucracy, gender, and the life cycle of record-making. I approach these topics through archival and literary ethnography, public history methods, and critical digital humanities methodologies. My graduate research focuses on the social history of female clerks in modern Egypt. I am also a community archivist in Cairo and an interdisciplinary researcher in the humanities and social sciences, with professional experience in designing and managing research-educational programs as well as grants administration. More broadly, my work brings together historical inquiry, participatory research and learning, and critical engaging with digital methodologies to make historical knowledge more accessible.

Archiving Experience

Special Collections Archivist at Sard Center for History and Social Research (Shubra's Archive), July 2022 - Present (Part-time)

- Develop the Participatory Archival Charter (PAC), a community-driven framework guiding the processing of community archives from acquisition to reuse and production. The charter outlines agreements for collection curation policies, including community-based metadata creation, accessibility guidelines, shared copyright protocols, and collaboration policies with researchers.
- Lead the processing of specialized collections including arrangement, description, and rehousing.
- Supervise Sard Community Archiving Summer Internship Program (S-CASI) and train interns in processing specialized collections.
- Support visiting researchers in identifying and accessing relevant materials.

Special Collections Archivist at Nadim Foundation, Nov 2023 - Nov 2024 (Contract)

- Led the processing of specialized archival collections including arrangement, description, and rehousing.
- Developed the metadata for **Saad Nadim's** specialized collection, Egyptian Famous Filmmaker.

Special Collections Research Assistant at AUC Libraries, The American University in Cairo (AUC), Jan 2023 – June 2024 (Contract)

- Contributed to metadata creation for the **Sound of America Archive** audio tapes (Jan–Feb 2023).
- Supported metadata development for the **Huda Shaarawi** specialized collection (Jan–Jun 2024).

Research Experience

Research Assistant at Musawah Organization, Jun 2022 – Aug 2022 (Contract)

- Created an event report for the launch of *Justice and Beauty in Muslim Marriage: Towards Egalitarian Ethics and Laws* in Cairo, Egypt.
- Authored a reflective blog post on the event and panel discussion surrounding the book's launch.

Research Assistant in “The Global Politics of Moderate Islam” Project with Dr. Yasmin Moll and Rahma Esther Bavelaar, Sept 2022 - May 2023 (Contract)

The Global Politics of “Moderate Islam” is a project carried out by Dr. James B. Hoesterey (Emory University, PI), Dr. Yasmin Moll (University of Michigan, Co-PI) and funded by The Henry R. Luce Foundation, Initiative on Religion and International Affairs. My key responsibilities included:

- Data collection and conducting oral history interviews about the representation of “wasatiyya” – moderate Islam – in the life of African students at Al-Azhar University and the foreign policy of Al-Azhar institutions in North and East Africa.
- Presenting the research in the project closing workshop hosted Bali, Indonesia, 18-20 May 2025

Research Assistant/Intern at Center for Arab-West Understanding, Aug 2021 - Nov2021

- Cataloged and classified articles from the Arab West Report database.
- Translated newspaper articles from the Egyptian press, focusing on Coptic affairs and their intersections with government and foreign policy, from Arabic to English.

Ethnographic Researcher at Sard Center for History and Social Research (Shubra's Archive), Jul 2021 - Jun 2022 (Part-time)

- Conducted oral history interviews with former users and workers of Cairo's tramway.
- Produced podcast content about Cairo's tramway in the Egyptian cinema based on archival work.
- Developed a working research paper about Cairo's tramway between Modern Arabic Literature, ethnography, and archival documents from the Belgian Company of Cairo's Tramway, titled "A Space of Rebellion: Ethnography, Cairo's Tramway, and Modern Arabic Literature".

Research Assistant/Intern at UN-ESCWA Technology Centre, Nov 2020 - Jan 2021

- Led the process of verifying, collecting, and evaluating data about the sustainable entrepreneurship ecosystem in Lebanon regarding both the private and the public sectors.
- Reviewed the strengths and weaknesses of laws related to the entrepreneurship environment, private sector practices, human capital, and financing opportunities.
- Developed an analysis report about the sustainable entrepreneurship ecosystem in Lebanon.

Programs Management Experiences with Sard Center for History and Social Research (Shubra's Archive)

Special Collections Archivist and Fellowship Co-Programmer [With Ruqayyah M. Al-Jaafari, Socio-Computing Dep. Cairo University], *Shubra's Archive Fellowship in Community Archives & Critical Digital Humanities*, Pilot Edition, Project Title "**From Raw to Relational: Visualizing Metadata of Community Archives as a Site of Knowledge Production**", Sep 2025-June 2026), Funded by AFAC&C2DH.

Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) and Resident Archivist [With Dr. Mina Ibrahim, Dr. Eftychia Mylona], Program Title "**Life Around the Courts: Legal Practices of Ethnic and Religious Pluralism in Egypt, 1910s-1950s**", July 2025-Dec 2026, Funded by Endangered Archives Programme, British Library. More details [here](#).

Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) and Resident Archivist [With Dr. Mina Ibrahim], Program Title "**Shubra's Archive Toward a Sustainable Infrastructure for Community Archiving in Egypt**", Jan 2025- March 2026, Funded by Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C2DH). More details [here](#).

Program Manager, Sard Annual Research Education Program (S-AREP), Second Edition, Program Title "**Family House: Home as Archive for the Changing City**", 2023-2024, Self-Funded.

Project Coordinator, Sard Annual Research Education Program (S-AREP), First Edition, Program Title "**Salam Tram: Archiving the Lost Tracks of Cairo's Tramway**", 2021-2022, Funded by AUC HUSSLab and The Egypt Exploration Society (UK).

Other Professional Experiences

Freelance Translator at Integral Media Company, Apr 2019 – Dec 2022

- Translated cultural, political, and economic articles from English into Arabic to be published on ArabiPost and SasaPost.

Teaching Experiences

Alternative Education, Training, and Community Outreach:

- Lecturer, Master Class titled: "The Making of Community Archives: Theory, Practice, and Production". It was delivered for a collective of visual Sudanese artists called People Manifesto, supported by Gotha Cultural Institute, Cairo, 25th of October 2024.
- Lecturer, workshop title: "Identifying the Personal and the Private Data of Community Archives". It was delivered for undergraduates in history and urban studies at Patterns of Cairo Initiative, a project supported by Megawra| Built Environment Collective, Cairo, 29th of July 2024.
- Lecturer, Course titled: "The Nationalization of Motherhood: The Ethnography of the Ideal Mother in Modern Arabic Literature". It was delivered at Sard Center for History and Social Research (Shubra's Archive), Cairo, Summer 2023.

Academic Teaching Assistance:

- Teaching Assistant, SOC 1099 (01\02) - Selected Topics for Core Curriculum: Gender and Sexuality, Department of Sociology, Egyptology, and Anthropology, The American University of Cairo, Fall 2024
- Teaching Assistant, SOC 2402 (03) - Family, Kin and Friends in Egypt, Department of Sociology, Egyptology, and Anthropology, The American University of Cairo, Spring 2024
- Teaching Assistant, SOC 2101 (01) - Introduction to Sociology, Department of Sociology, Egyptology, and Anthropology, The American University of Cairo, Spring 2024

Conferences, Seminars, and Workshops

- Presenter, (with Mina Ibrahim), "**Archiving Communities: Theories, Methods, and Realities**". Workshop Archives, organized by Laurie Merigeaud (AMU, CEDEJ K Affiliate) and Leila Musson (Collection Specialist-IISH), at Cedej Khartoum (Relocated to Cairo), 13th of November 2024.
- Presenter, "**Participatory Archival Charter (PAC): A Popular Approach Towards Decolonizing Reuse and Metadata in Community Archives (Shubra's Archive Case)**". Panel: Anthropology and archival sources: institutional experiences and possibilities of use, World Anthropological Union Congress, Johannesburg, South Africa, 12th November 2024. Online Abstract: <https://waucongress.org/paper/?id=1318>
- Presenter, (With Iman Afifi), "**Making Histories of Family Collections: The Blurred Lines Between the Personal and the Public**", Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Kairo (DAI KAIRO), Cairo, 20th of May 2024.
- Presenter, (With Mina Ibrahim), "**Shubra's Archive: Community Archive as Vernacular Academic Critique**", CEDEJ Tuesday Seminars, CEDEJ Egypt, Cairo, 27th of February 2024.
- Presenter, "**Turning Ethnographic Research into Art Practice: Shubra's Archive Case**". Panel: Participatory Knowledge Through Art Publishing, Cairo Art Book Fair, Ghurnata City, Heliopolis, Egypt, 9th December 2023.
- Presenter, (With Mina Ibrahim), "**A Tale from Shubra: The Subjectivity and Making of Communal Grassroot Archives**", AGYA Annual Conference, Cairo, 11th of November 2023.
- Presenter, (With Mina Ibrahim), "**An Egyptian Archive of Sexual Education: Towards a Communal Approach to a Private Matter**", MESA, Round Table VI-4, 2023 Annual Meeting, Montreal, Canada, 3rd of November 2023.
- Presenter, "**A Space of Rebellion: Cairo's Tramway and Ethnography in Modern Arabic Literature**", SARD Center for History and Social Research 2022 Closing Ceremony, The American University of Cairo, 16th of June 2022.

Awards and Fellowships

International Council on Archives, Paris, France

Fellow, New Professionals Programme, 2024- Present

Arab Council for Social Sciences (ACSS), Beirut, Lebanon

Fellow, New Generation of Social Scientists in the Arab Region Program, 2022-Present

Albukhary International University, Kedah, Malaysia

Participant at TALC 2017: Culture and Language Camp, Jul 2017 – Sep 2017

Technical Skills

Creative Design

- *Adobe InDesign*: Layout design and content alignment
- *Procreate*: Designing event posters for both social media and print

Data Analysis

- Working proficiency in Python, R, and SQL for data analysis and visualization

Education

Graduate Student, MA/PhD in History

University of California, Santa Barbara, Starting in Late Sep 2025

Graduate Student, M.A. in Sociology-Anthropology

The American University in Cairo, Jan 2024 – May 2025

Enrolled for three semesters; completed two semesters of coursework due to unstable university funding. GPA: 4.0 / 3.83

B.A. in Arabic Language, Literature, and Islamic Studies

Ain Shams University, Cairo, Egypt, Sep 2019 – Sep 2022

Non-degree coursework in Islamic Economy, School of Business

Albukhary International University, Kedah, Malaysia, 2018 – 2019

Egyptian High School Diploma (94,4%)

Al-Warraaq Secondary School for Girls, Giza, Egypt, 2016

Affiliations

- South Asian American Digital Archives (SAADA), Philadelphia, USA: Volunteer, Community Scribe
- International Council on Archives, Paris, France: Member
- World Anthropological Union Congress, Johannesburg, South Africa: Member

Publications

- “A Space of Rebellion: Cairo’s Tramway and Ethnography in Modern Arabic Literature.”

The Arabic version of this article was published in *Shubra’s Archive Logs I* (دفاتر أرشيف شبرا), issued in January 2023 by Honna Publishing House (Elles), under the title: (سلام ترام: أرشفة المسارات المفقودة لترام القاهرة), edited by Mina Ibrahim and Tamer Nady.