



Moise A. Khayrallah Center for
Lebanese Diaspora Studies



مكتبة قطر الوطنية
Qatar National Library

Conference Program: Public History in the Middle East

First Day | Focus: Foundations, Frameworks, and Institutions

Monday
19
October 2026

08:30 – 09:00 AM

Registration

(coffee break)

09:00 – 09:45 AM

Opening Plenary

- Opening Remarks: the organizing committee
- Welcome Address: Tan Huism, Executive Director of QNL.
- Keynote Address: Dr. Akram Khater

09:45 – 10:00 AM

Break

10:00 – 11:30 AM

First Panel

Digital Public History: Archives, Access, and Networks

This panel explores how digital technologies are reshaping the preservation of social history and increasing public access to historical records.

1. Paul Love (Doha Institute for Graduate Studies): A Public History Project to Digitize Manuscripts from Jebel Nafusa, Libya

2. Fatma Belhouari (Sultan Qaboos University, Department of History, College of Arts and Social Sciences): Digital Public History in Oman: The Experience of the NRAA
3. Said Badawi (Palestinian National Library): Digital Social History Archives: Palestinian Memory Beyond the Official Narrative
4. Maryam Al-Mutawa (Qatar National Library): Institutional and Community Collaboration for Preserving History: The Digital Family Papers Project

11:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Prayer and Lunch Break

12:30 – 02:00 PM

Second Panel

Museum Practices: From State Narratives to Private Collections

A critical look at how museums—both state-led and private—construct national identity and manage cultural heritage.

1. Beth Derderian (Crown Center for Middle East Studies, Brandeis University): Challenges and Affordances of Private Art Archival Initiatives in the Gulf

2. Mariam I. Al-Hammadi (Qatar University): Sheikh Faisal Bin Qassim Al Thani Museum: From Private Collections to Public Benefit
3. Badriya Al-Nabhani (Sultan Qaboos University): Methodological Shifts of Private Museums in Oman: From Individual Space to Collective Memory

02:00 – 03:30 PM

Third Panel

Community, Gender, and Oral Traditions

Focusing on bottom-up history, this panel highlights the role of oral history and community-led archives in preserving everyday life.

1. Maria Bashshur Abunnasr (Independent Scholar, Lebanon): Practicing Public History in Lebanon: Oral History as Method and Public Engagement
2. Sumayya Ahmed (University of Chicago): Dar Bellarj: Community Archives and the Documentation of Moroccan Women's History

3. Eman Abdelrasul (Al-Sayyid Muhammad Bin Ali Al-Senussi Islamic University): Oral Memory in Libya and the Symbolic Resistance to the Italian Colonial Narrative (1927–1931): The Novels of Yusuf al-Barghathi as a Case Study
4. Shaikha Al-Kuwari (Virginia Commonwealth University): Community Memory and the Virtual Reconstruction of Home in Al Ghariyah, Qatar

04:00 – 05:00 PM

Heritage Library Tour

Second Day | Focus: People, Spaces, and Living Heritage

Tuesday

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09:30 AM
Coffee Break

10:15 – 11:45 AM
Fourth Panel

Urban Memory and the History of the Marginalized

This panel examines “history from below,” focusing on marginalized voices within urban environments and post-conflict spaces.

1. Moez Dridi (Qatar National Library): The Marginalized and the Silenced in Islamic Societies: A Study of Their Representation through Legal Documents and Private Correspondence
2. Hossam Gad El-Naggar (Independent Scholar, Egypt): Voices of the Marginalized in Historical Cairo: From the Confines of the Official Narrative to the Horizons of Public Narratives
3. Carol Fadda (Syracuse University) & Zeina Misk (Independent Researcher, Lebanon): Beit Beirut: A Living Space of Public Memory-Making
4. Marina Wondrich (University of Bamberg): Kurdish History Beyond the State: Public Archives, Digital Access, and Shared Memory

11:45 AM – 01:00 PM
Lunch Break

01:00 – 02:45 PM

Fifth Panel

Cultural Heritage, Landscape, and Education

Exploring how history is lived and taught through music, the environment, and school curricula.

1. Lina Ounissi (University of Basel): Mâlûf as a Resonant Form of Public History: Sonic Traces and Collective Memory in Constantine
2. Niveen Kassem (Independent Researcher, UAE): Living Archives: Mangroves, Memory, and Public History in the UAE
3. Nayla Khodr Hamadeh (Lebanese Association for History): Teaching the Untaught: Civil Society and the Lebanese Civil War in School Curricula
4. Arwa Sharaf (Damascus University): City as a Mirror of Public History: Deconstructing Official Narratives of Marginalization and Control in Damascus

03:00 – 03:30 PM

Closing Remarks

Summary of the gathering and future outlook for the Public History network in the Middle East

04:00 – 06:00 PM

Tour of the National Museum of Qatar

Wednesday

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Workshops

(registration required)

There will be two workshops sponsored by Northwestern University in Qatar, in collaboration with University of Luxembourg and North Carolina State University. Further information will be provided soon.