



On Tuesday January 28, 2025 at 2pm at CEDEJ **Dina Hussein** will be presenting her research: **An Indigenous Working-Class History of the Port City of Alexandria, Egypt: 1850-1919**

This talk, based on my doctoral dissertation, sets off by engaging with the conventions of digital archiving as played out in the British Library's newly digitized nineteenth-century Bonfils-Debbas photographic collection to understand the opportunities and challenges that the current surge in digitization bestows on the writing of subaltern working-class Indigenous history. It looks at how historians can suggest a revised reading of Alexandria's digitized nineteenth-century Orientalist historical photographs capturing ancient monuments to write the indigenous history of the local population. It borrows the central approach of microhistory by undertaking an 'intensive historical investigation' of a small object (the photograph) and the place it captured (the vicinity of the Greco-Roman Pompey's Pillar). It digs deeply into a few archival files – census and police records, as well as correspondence between the government bureaus in the period roughly between 1850 and 1919 - to put people's history back into the photograph and understand the lives of the indigenous working-class migrants from the hinterland (the *Aghrāb*), who have historically been marginalized by studies of Alexandria.

Dina Hussein is a trained historian with extensive experience as an editor and translator. She is currently the commissioning editor of al-Shabaka (The Palestinian Policy Network). Before joining al-Shabaka, she was a senior editor at the Alternative Policy Solutions research project at the American University in Cairo (AUC), where she led a team of social science researchers to publish policy digests tackling critical issues related to inclusive development and socio-economic change in Egypt. Dina has been teaching a special topics seminar at the AUC on the history of the Arab Spring while completing her PhD dissertation on Alexandria's urban history in the nineteenth century at the University of Melbourne. She tutored several undergraduate courses on the modern Middle East at the University of Melbourne and Georgetown University, where she earned two master's degrees in Arab studies and history.