

I Conference

Feeling, Thinking, Living the Archive

Affective and collective dimensions of sensitivity

Universidad Nacional de La Plata

13 - 15 july, 2026

First Announcement

Rationale

The notion of the archive has been the object of multiple (re)readings in recent decades that depart from its conception as an organic set of documents and their storage. The archival turn, which finds its origins in the postmodern criticism of Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida and Georges Didi-Huberman, among others, understands the archive as a historical agent that, responding to various interests and logics of inclusion and exclusion, has the potential to render certain histories and events in-/visible (Arondekar et al., 2015). Ultimately, archives are built on a fiction of totality that marginalises and conceals everything that does not conform to a primordial norm and potentially endangers an established order (Gavrila 2021). We understand, then, that knowledge is not recovered from the archive but that it is through it, in articulation with the subjective experience of an individual in a given place and time (Mbembe, 2002), that knowledge can be produced (Stoler, 2010).

For their potential to alter the private order, emotions and affectivities have long been isolated as an archival source (Losiggio and Macon, 2017, 8). Recently, a new turn has emerged that allows us to think about the enunciative possibilities of the archive through a different lens: the affective turn, which, based on affectivity, invites us to reconfigure the social (Clough and Halley, 2007). Cvetkovich's (2018) foundational contribution refers to the ways of accommodating in the archival device those individual and collective experiences and trajectories that are particular to certain communities, marginalised or excluded from the dominant narratives that shape citizenship. In this line, the so-called sensitive archives are inscribed in a double dimension. On the one hand, they refer to documentation whose exposure may alter the integrity, privacy or rights of individuals or groups. On the other hand, the sensitive also refers to that which appeals to the senses, that which moves or questions from the affective, the corporal and the perceptual (Rancière, 2000). At this crossroads

between the ethical, the political and the aesthetic, this turn calls for a critical re-examination of archival practices, modes of representation, and access strategies.

Among the strongest potentialities of the archive is its configuration as an active manager of memories (Pomian, 1997). Its opening—and, in particular, that of the so-called ‘archives of repression’ (Da Silva Catela and Jelin, 2002)—sets in motion new cycles of sense production that have an impact on the activation of new lines of research (Caimari, 2017) and sources of memory (Da Silva Catela, 2002). In this way, each cycle of memories configures a specific way of organising and representing different expressions of violence, establishing a framework from which memory is conceived as a tool oriented towards critique and transformation both of the present and in the present (Da Silva Catela, 2002).

At the intersection between memory and archive, the duty of intergenerational transmission (Da Silva Catela, 2010) of memories is articulated, at the same time as its re-signification is proposed based on current demands and questions. The duty (Traverso, 2011) and the need to remember are, then, a question of transmitters and receivers (Candau, 2002 [1996]). Likewise, the diversity of affiliations and belongings that cross subjects in modern societies prevents the constitution of a homogeneous or unified memory (Candau, 2002 [1996]). In the light of the affective turn, it is of particular interest to examine the processes and consequences of the fragmentation of memories as a result of divergences and disagreements about contemporary issues that make up so-called ‘memory frames’ (Halbwachs, (2005) [1950]).

Any attempt to understand the materiality of the recent past is framed by current concerns (Escobar-Aguiar and Pires, 2025). Indeed, and as remarked by Enzo Traverso (2011), the past is reworked in the framework of present sensibilities that inaugurate constant struggles in the reconfiguration of senses. The recent past has been a recurrent node both in visual production and in artistic and social research, around which a fertile field has been shaped for the elaboration of discourses, aesthetics and practices that critically dialogue with the ways of narrating, representing and conserving archives. A battery of historiographical, critical and methodological tools and a series of widely visited themes have thus been consolidated. This sensitivity not only questions the content of the archive, but also its forms, its absences, its silences and its symbolic, aesthetic and political potential.

The aim of this conference is to contribute new elements that articulate the new sensitive turn with the already known archival turn and thus encourage a reflection on the relationship between the archive and sensitivity in relation to experiences of domination and marginalisation, as well as artistic experiences, in the particularity of the Latin American territory. This congress also seeks to expand the limits assigned to the sensitive archive, understood as plotted on the basis of intimate, family or personal memories, which involve emotional experiences as a source of knowledge. Thus, from an interdisciplinary perspective, we will seek to address other axes that enrich the category of the sensitive archive. We are interested in understanding the archive as a political praxis that spatialises time and invites us to consider alternative ways of representing the past (Taccetta 2017). It is a question, then, of restoring to the archive its historicity and materiality while examining the ways in which the

archive, as an institution, conditions the meaning, legitimacy and reading of its records (Lewi, 2024).

This conference seeks to open a space for academic and artistic reflection, critical and interdisciplinary, that articulates theoretical analysis with practical experiences of archives, art and activism. Its aim is to contribute to the consolidation of a field of studies on sensitive archives, taking into account the ethical, political and epistemic challenges posed by their approach in the present.

The four thematic axes that structure this call intertwine different lines of research involving multiple disciplines:

1. **Sensitising for memory:** this axis focuses on the archive as a tool for building citizenship and collective memory and as an initiator of inter-subjective processes deployed in institutional frameworks. In post-dictatorship contexts, armed conflict or other types of violence, archives have been fundamental in processes of justice and reparation. This axis invites reflection on the pedagogies of memory, the public uses of the past and the potential of the archive from a critical perspective.
2. **Sensitive information:** this axis invites reflection on the ethical dilemmas in the treatment and handling of documentation containing personal data or testimonies linked to experiences of violence, discrimination or vulnerability. The discussion on the right to access versus the right to be forgotten, anonymisation protocols, and institutional responsibility in the curatorship of digital archives becomes particularly relevant. Faced with the risk of re-victimisation or extractivist appropriation of testimony, it is urgent to discuss strategies for ethical archiving, care of data and epistemological justice.
3. **The sensitive in art:** this axis is interested in artistic practices that operate as alternative archives of collective memory. From the visual arts to performative practices, art has been configured as a propitious space to address and reinscribe the traumatic, the intimate, the silenced and the disruptive, appealing to sensitive, performative and embodied languages. This axis seeks to explore how sensitivity manifests itself in the field of art as a strategy of registration and visibilisation, as well as a political gesture in the face of violence and erasure.
4. **Sensitivities of feminist movements and sexual and gender dissidences:** this axis orients to think about archives from the experiences and memories of LGBTIQ+ collectives, from which alternative archival practices emerge that question the authority of the archive as a producer of truth and propose new forms of visibilisation. This axis promotes a discussion on the archive as a place of recognition and encounter, but also of agency and resistance in the face of diverse forms of violence.

References

- Arondekar, A., Cvetkovich, A., Hanhardt, C. B., Kunzel, R., Nyong'o, T., Rodríguez, J. M., Stryker, S., Marshall, D., Murphy, K. P. and Tortorici, Z. (2015). Queering the Archives. A Roundtable Discussion. *Radical History Review*, 122, 211–231.
- Caimari, L. (2017). *La vida en el archivo. Goces, tedios y desvíos en el oficio de la historia*. Siglo Veintiuno Editores.
- Candau, J. (2002). *Antropología de la memoria*. Ediciones Nueva Visión.
- Clough, P. and Halley, J. (eds.). (2007). *The affective turn: theorizing the social*. Duke University Press.
- Cvetkovich, A. (2018). *Un archivo de sentimientos. Trauma, sexualidad y culturas públicas lesbianas*. Edicions Bellaterra.
- Da Silva Catela, L. (2002). El mundo de los archivos. En L. Da Silva Catela and E. Jelin (comps.), *Los archivos de la represión: Documentos, memoria y verdad* (pp. 195–218). Siglo XXI.
- Da Silva Catela, L. (2010). Exponer lo invisible. Una etnografía sobre la transformación de Centros Clandestinos de Detención en Sitios de Memoria en Córdoba, Argentina. En T. Medalla, A. Peirano, O. Ruiz and R. Walch, *Recordar para pensar. Memoria para la Democracia Elaboración del pasado reciente en el Cono Sur de América Latina* (pp. 44–56). Ediciones Böll Cono Sur.
- Da Silva Catela, L. and Jelin, E. (comps.). (2002). *Los archivos de la represión: documentos, memoria y verdad*. Siglo XXI Editores.
- Escobar-Aguilar, M. and Pires, M. P. (2025). Hacia una pedagogía de la memoria generizada: experiencias en el curso de ingreso a las carreras de Letras en la Universidad Nacional de La Plata en 2024. *Catedral tomada*, 12(23), 198–231.
- Gavrila, C.C. (2021). Archivos sensibles e historias de vida. Reflexiones sobre la emergencia de las narrativas en primera persona de las mujeres mayores. *Fronteras*, 17(2), 126–136.
- Halbwachs, M. (2005 [1950]). *La memoria colectiva*. Prensas Universitarias de Zaragoza.
- Lewi, O. (2024). *Témoigner de la Shoah*. Presses universitaires de Rennes.
- Losiggio, D. and Macon, C. (2017). *Afectos políticos. Ensayos sobre actualidad*. Miño y Dávila.
- Mbembe, A. (2002). The Power of the Archive and its Limits. En C. Hamilton, V. Harris, J. Taylor, M. Pickover, G. Reids and R. Saleh (eds.), *Refiguring the Archive*. David Philip Publishers.
- Pomian, K. (1997). Les archives. Du Trésor des chartes au Caran. En P. Nora, *Les Lieux de Mémoire III*. Gallimard.
- Rancière, J. (2000). *Le partage du sensible: esthétique et politique*. La Fabrique Éditions.
- Stoler, A. L. (2010). Archivos coloniales y el arte de gobernar. *Revista Colombiana de Antropología*, 46(2), 465–496.
- Taccetta, N. (2017). En nuestra pequeña región de por acá: de la desclasificación del documento al contraarchivo en la obra de Voluspa Jarpa. *MERIDIONAL Revista Chilena de Estudios Latinoamericanos* 9, 235–260.
- Traverso, E. (2011). *El Pasado, instrucciones de uso*. Prometeo Libros.

Key Speakers

Dra. Ludmila da Silva Catela (Universidad Nacional de Córdoba / CONICET)

Cristina Jiménez Calero (Centro Académico de la Memoria de Nuestra América, Universidad Autónoma de la Ciudad de México)

Prof. Pascale Delormas (Sorbonne Université)

Scientific Committee

Prof. Dr. Matei Chihai (Bergische Universität Wuppertal)

Dra. Pilar Godayol (Universitat de Vic-Universitat Central de Catalunya)

Dra. María Laura Spoturno (Universidad Nacional de La Plata / CONICET)

Dra. Teresa Basile (Universidad Nacional de La Plata / CONICET)

Dr. Maxime Decout (Sorbonne Université)

Dra. Henriette-Rika Benveniste (University of Thessaly)

Prof. Paul Bernard-Nouraud (Paris I Panthéon, Sorbonne Université)

Prof. Pascale Delormas (Sorbonne Université)

Organizers

Prof. Olivia Lewi (Cergy Paris Université)

María Escobar-Aguiar (Universidad Nacional de La Plata / CONICET)

Prof. Pascale Delormas (Sorbonne Université)

Participation and submission guidelines

Proposals for papers, workshops, panels, and other forms of participation, artistic or otherwise, that highlight the sensitive nature of archives will be accepted. Researchers and artists may submit an abstract of up to 500 words that includes a description of their research or project.

All proposals will be evaluated by the scientific committee based on their relevance, academic quality, originality, and clarity of presentation. Abstracts must follow these formatting guidelines: Times New Roman, 12 pt, 1.5 line spacing, and comply with APA citation standards. Abstracts may be submitted in Word or PDF format and must be received by **20 February 2026**.

Accepted proposals will be presented during the colloquium and may be published in the conference proceedings. This event is an opportunity for researchers, professionals, artists, and academics to share their recent work and foster collaboration in a rapidly expanding field.

For submission instructions, detailed information about the colloquium, and to submit proposals, please write to the following addresses:

marialaura.escobar@uvic.cat , olivia.lewi@insei.fr

