

Department of Anthropology and Sociology (ANSO)

Academic year 2019-2020

Archive, Memory, History

ANSO117- Spring - 6 ECTS
[Schedule & Room](#)

Course Description

This course explores questions of archive, memory, history, and historiography, focusing especially on more vernacular versus state and institutionalized modes of knowledge production. Throughout we will be especially concerned with the dynamics of archival formation, memory work and commemorative practice, and with popular historiographies emergent and significant at different political, historical, and sociocultural conjunctures. Relevant are theorizations such as that of the 'living archive,' a perspective that highlights volatility and change against the conventionally assumed stasis of the archive as well as counter-archives that challenge or present alternatives to the more official archives of institutions and the state. Material memory, archives of the silenced, disappeared, and (soon to be) lost, or the archives of the urban everyday all bring different ways of understanding to how the past is mediated and becomes embedded or congeals in artefacts and public space, as does the work of artists who make or draw upon archives and incorporate 'found objects' into their practice. Equally importantly, we will consider how processes of digitization raise theoretical questions concerning the materiality, value, and historicity of different sources, knowledge production and the work of memory and, crucially, participation in and access to the archive, its constitution, and interpretation.

> PROFESSOR

[Patricia Spyer](#)

[Office hours](#)

> ASSISTANT

[Purbasha Mazumdar](#)

[Office hours](#)

Syllabus

Evaluation: Active student participation is expected. Each week 1-2 students will be responsible for presenting the material in class (guidelines will be provided). The main assignment of the class is an archive or museum-based research project of the student's choice. This must be formulated early and a journal must be kept about the research and the experience with the archives and/or collections consulted.

The final grade will be based on the following assignments:

In-class presentation(s) on course readings	20%
1 response paper to UN archive tour	20%
1 presentation on archive/collection project	20%
1 final essay on archive/collection	40%

The assignments will be posted on Moodle.

Lecture Topics and Assigned Reading:

- February 19** *Introduction*
** Screening of Eugenia Kisin's *Citizenship Archive* (14 min.)
- February 26** *Sounding the Archive*
Charles Merewether (2006) "Introduction: Art and the Archive," *The Archive*, Cambridge: The MIT Press, pp.10-17
Marlene Manoff (2004) "Theories of the Archive from Across the Disciplines," *portal: Libraries and the Academy* 4(1): 9-25
Kajri Jain (2009) "Archive, Repertoire or Warehouse? Producers of Indian Popular Images as Stakeholders in a Virtual Database" *Tasveer Ghar: A Digital Network of South Asian Popular Visual Culture*, pp.1-14
Ariella Azoulay (2012) "Archive" *Political Concepts: A Critical Lexicon*, pp.1-9
<http://www.politicalconcepts.org/archive-ariella-azoulay/>
- March 4** *In the Archive – From paper to electronic trace*
Arlette Farge (2013) *The Allure of the Archive*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Foreword by Natalie Zemon Davis, pp.ix-xvi, pp. 1-17, 53-78
Arjun Appadurai (2012) "Archive and Aspiration." *Archive Public. A Research Art Project* (online source) <https://archivepublic.wordpress.com/texts/arjun-appadurai/>
- March 11** **NO CLASS (Select and visit your archive)**
- March 18** *The Pulse of the Archive*
Ann Laura Stoler (2009) *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Pp. 1-53
** **Individual Archive Project plan due**
- March 25** **League of Nations/UN Archive tour (with Mr. Jacques Oberson)**
Jarrett M. Drake, "Graveyards of Exclusion?: Archives, Prisons, and the Bounds of Belonging"
- April 1** Students present **Individual Archive Project** plan
Please look at before class:
"A big archive of occult recordings"
<http://www.openculture.com/2018/02/a-big-archive-of-occult-recordin>
Simon Schama (2018) "Treasures from the Color Archive," *The New Yorker*, 27 August 2018

- April 8** *Historiography: Critical Engagements*
 Carlo Ginzburg (2012) *Threads and Traces: True, False, Fictive*. Ch. X “Micro-history: Two or Three Things I know about it,” pp.
 Alessandro Portelli *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History*. Ch.X “What Makes Oral History Different,” pp.45-58
 Ann Laura Stoler and Karen Strassler (2000) “Castings for the Colonial: Memory Work in ‘New Order’ Java” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 42: 4-48
 Nora Caplan-Bricker, “The Challenge of Preserving the Historical Record of #MeToo, *The New Yorker*, 11 March 2019
- **** **Exhibition response paper due**
- April 15** **No Class – Easter Break**
- April 22** *Archives of the Disappeared I*
 Michelle Caswell (2014) *Archiving the Unspeakable: Silence, Memory, and the Photographic Record in Cambodia*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, Intro & Chs. 1-2, pgs. 3-96.
- **** Film: *The Lost Picture*, dir. Rithy Pahn
- April 29** *Archives of the Disappeared II*
 Michelle Caswell (2014) *Archiving the Unspeakable: Silence, Memory, and the Photographic Record in Cambodia*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, Chs.3-4, Conclusion, pgs. 97-165.
- **** Film: *Don’t Think I’ve Forgotten: Cambodia’s Lost Rock and Roll*, dir. John Pirozzi
- May 6** *Archives/ Counter-Archives/Collections*
 May Chew et al. (2018). *Archives/ Counter-Archives*. *Public 57* (summer), selections.
 Mary Murrell (2017) “Out of Print: The Orphans of Mass Digitization” *Current Anthropology* 58, Supplement 15, pp. 149-59.
<https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/pdfplus/10.1086/688868>
 Charles Merewether (1997) “Archives of the Fallen.” In *The Archive*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, pp.160-162
 Walter Benjamin (1955) “Unpacking my Library: A Tale about Book Collecting,” *Illuminations*. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, pp.59-67
 Ydessa Hendeles (2016) “Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)” *The Keeper*, pp.169-179
****** Film: *Digital Amnesia*, dir. Bregtje van der Haak
- May 13** *The City in the Archive/The Archive in the City*
 Tapati Guha-Thakurta (2011) *The City in the Archive: Calcutta’s Visual Histories*. Calcutta: Center for Studies in Social Sciences.
 Karen Strassler (2020) “Street Signs,” *Demanding Images: Democracy, Mediation, and the Image-Event in Indonesia*. Durham: Duke University Press, Ch.4, pp. 167-218
- May 20** *The Living Archive*
 Carolyn Hamilton (2002) “Living by Fluidity” Oral Histories, Material Custodies and the Politics of Archiving.” In C. Hamilton et al, eds. *Refiguring the Archive*. Dordrecht: Springer Source and Business Media, Pp.209-227
 Fred Myers (2017) “Whose Story is This? Complexities and Complicities of Using Archival Footage.” In Jane Anderson and Haidy Geismar, eds. *The Routledge Companion to Cultural Property*.
 Sophie Feyder (2015) “Searching for the ‘source community’: The Ronald Nglima photographic archive and the politics of local history in post-apartheid South Africa.” In

Christopher Morton and Darren Newbury, eds. *The African Photographic Archive: Research and Curatorial Strategies*. London: Bloomsbury, pp.135-155

Linda Barwick, Jennifer Green and Petronella Vaarzon-Morel (2020) *Archival Returns: Central Australia and Beyond*. Sydney: Sydney University Press (selections).

May 27

Students present their final projects

NB at #mMetoo archive in the making