



CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS

Inward Outward Symposium

Emotion in the Archive

6–9 April 2021 | Online

- Please note the CFP deadline has been extended to Feb 8, 2021 -

The symposium Inward Outward investigates the status of **moving image** and **sound archives** as they intertwine with questions of **coloniality, identity** and **race**, and seeks to bring theory and practice into dialogue by drawing together people from different professional and creative backgrounds. This year's symposium will take place as a series of sessions spread across **April 6–9, 2021**, where we'll gather online due to the constraints of the pandemic.

In exploring the intersection of archives and coloniality, we understand the archive as both the physical structures (e.g. national, regional, local or personal) that safeguard and preserve (hi)stories through the collections they attend to, as well as the more conceptual framing of the “cultural archive” described by Gloria Wekker as the “racialized common sense” cemented in memories, cultural beliefs, everyday knowledge, and institutional practices (*White Innocence* 19).

The upcoming Inward Outward will focus on **Emotion in the Archive**. This theme emerged during the first symposium, and has since occupied increasing space as a direct response to recent global occurrences. Various events this year have deeply resonated with our efforts to grapple with the materiality of sounds and moving images of coloniality, and have illuminated two key aspects of archival work that we wish to explore in this coming digital edition of Inward Outward.

First, as we saw collectives and communities working towards justice-oriented futures by protesting systemic violence and racism, dismantling symbols of coloniality in public spaces, calling out the silencing of victims of sexual assault, and voicing the continued battles of queer, trans and gender non-binary people, it struck us that at the core of our workings in and with the archive, is the question of witnessing. **Archives are not just repositories of the past but spaces that are activated and built with stories of the now.**

Second, 2020 amplified an array of emotions as we witnessed and participated in collective calls to redress socio-economic, gendered and racial inequities played out at local and global scales, and made starker by an unprecedented health and ecological crisis. As we work to document the current moment, and continue to interrelate our archival workings with the afterlives of colonialism and the identity, memory and racial politics that inform our present, we are moved by discomfort, anger, refusal, love. **The work we do in and with archives is implicated in, and/or driven by, the emotional.**

If the year 2020 brought about complex assortments of affects, and archival practices are invested in documenting and cataloguing the now, how then do we archive our emotions?

And what of the emotions that we encounter in doing archival work? Where do we encounter emotions, affects and feelings in the archive? And how are these captured in both sounds and moving images, and the practices used to organize them in the archive?

The session topics outlined below call on a series of emotions to be explored in the context of sound and moving image archives. These are organizing threads, and we understand that emotions invite each other and exist in complex patterns, for example love and compassion can be very much related to grief and sorrow or anger. This is to say that we understand emotions are often entangled and we offer space for interpretation and expansion within the topics outlined below. While we invite participants to explore these themes in the context of sound and moving image collections across geographies, we especially welcome presentations that probe the position of Dutch identity and the specificities of European contexts in their various manifestations.

Sessions

Session: Defiance & Anger

Anger and defiance undergird the archive. In its power to determine which voices of the past are heard, and in its capacity to collect and organize the present, the archive is a catalyst to anger, felt through the painful documents and objects it houses and the politics that surround its collection building and access or lack thereof.

Now finally, as more researchers come with affective relationships to the painful experiences of trauma and colonialism catalogued in the archive, the question of how trauma as anger informs how we engage with the archive calls for critical attention. Working in/with the archive also requires acts of defiance in the strategies we deploy to address the silences and absences we encounter. Examples of defiant stratagems can be found in Saidiya Hartman's "critical fabulation," which entails actively studying archives to "fabulate" stories based on figures who seem pushed to the background and offers a form of creative semi-fiction that brings the suppressed voices of the past to the surface; or "walking methods" (see for example Maggie O'Neill and Brian Roberts) in which researchers tread in the footsteps of their protagonists, thus proposing work that is situated, relational, and material.

Locating anger and defiance in various material, spatial, and practice-oriented aspects of the archive—from the events documented, to the cataloguing of sounds and images, and the research produced with the archive—this panel invites presentations that engage with the following questions:

- How do we as individual archivists engage with stubborn archives and the structural violences embedded in how they think of gender, race and dis/ability? What strategies exist to navigate working within such institutions?
- How can sound and moving image archives keep record of particular nuances of anger and/or defiance that may not be otherwise audible?
- Are networked platforms such as Youtube, Twitter and Instagram more apt at capturing emotions of the current moment? And if so, how can/should these privately owned, yet collectively populated spaces of documentation and engagement be inserted into (national) memory institutions?
- How do we document and archive defiance, such as social justice movements, without exoticising or exploiting those most invested in resistance?
- What spaces of care and respect does anger generate in the archive?

Session: Shame & Guilt

“All of us have to remember those things others forget for each other. We have to remember for each other. And we have to help each other not to forget those things we wish had never happened.” (Kalumba in *Mukoma wa’ Ngugi, Mrs Shaw* 184)

As *Mukoma wa’ Ngugi* reminds us, archival work entails a relentless engagement with the twinned affects of shame and guilt, of being present for, and haunted by, violent events as either victim-survivor or perpetrator. In this session, we are interested in exploring how shame and guilt function, and why they are such powerful organizing emotions of archival work, especially as they intersect with coloniality. Moving beyond personal accounts and testimonies of feelings of culpability, indignity, and allyship, we invite explorations of the role of guilt and shame as constructive elements of the archive, and unpack how they may play a role in archival practices that are empowering and healing. Questions that arise then are:

- How to remember, when archives are saturated with testimonies to coloniality that catalyze shame and guilt?
- If our sound and moving image archives are repositories of witness accounts, of testimonies and documents to centuries-long crimes against humanity, which only recently are being named as such, how do we testify to such painful histories without narrativizing through our own shame and guilt?
- In what ways do shame and guilt determine how archives are organized in terms of acquisition, access, categorization and ownership, on national, regional, local and individual levels?
- Taking shame and guilt as potentially generative of empowerment and healing, how, in the words of Sarah Ahmed, might we preserve the deviations produced by shame so as to preserve the queerness afforded by them?

Session: Love & Compassion

As Joseph Drexler-Dreis points out, love, especially decolonial love, can only take place in its “orientations [...] to conflict and even violence” (*Decolonial Love* 154). To acknowledge defiance, anger, shame and guilt as constitutive of the archive, entails addressing the sister emotions of love and compassion as equally generative of our compulsion to document and collect. Archives are places in which we hold the stories we love, out of compassionate identity building. We cherish our records because they enable us to have sympathy for our own identities and to generate kinship with others. Yet, under the banner of love, archives also help to construct the pressing and patronizing politics of nationhood, and its violent workings. Furthermore, historical records give insight into the politics of love: genealogical annals painstakingly show where love and (com)passion were allowed to go, and who was considered worthy of being cared for in the archive. Questions that arise:

- How can we move from, or rather with, the emotions of shame and guilt into more generative spaces of love and compassion?
- Where do love and compassion exist, or lurk, in the archive?
- How do love and compassion inform archival work and our impulse to uncritically create and recreate the archive as an official source of knowledge?
- What should be figured in an ethics of compassion when working with archives of coloniality?
- Can love for the archive drive us to unlearn and undo the archive?

Suggested Presentation Formats

- **Artistic intervention:** This could take different forms for example: audiovisual works such as a film, multimedia or dance performance, poetry, etc.
- **Academic paper presentation:** in a classical academic conference format; 20 minutes, excluding general Q&A.

- **Show-and-tell presentation:** presentation that critically engages with a case study, artwork or archival material, including but not limited to archival and institutional approaches, collections, a historical document, short film, video, or photograph, etc.; 20 minutes, excluding general Q&A.
- **Performative lecture:** 20 minutes excluding time for general Q&A.

Submission & Deadline Information

We invite **researchers, archival practitioners, artists, filmmakers, curators** and more to submit a proposal.

Please send a single doc or docx file titled: <YOUR SURNAME_InwardOutward2021> with a 300 word abstract and 50 word bio (per presenter) to inwardoutward@beeldengeluid.nl before **February 8, 2021 at 10am CET**. (Deadline extended from February 1).

Please also name the specific session you are applying for.

Should you have a presentation you feel fits the overarching theme of Emotion in the Archive, but not a specific session, please don't hesitate to reach out to us.

Practical Information

- Inward Outward takes place 6–9 April, 2021 online. A series of sessions will be spread out over these 4 days.
- Organization takes place in the Netherlands, and as such session times will align with Central European Time, but we'll do our best to accommodate the times of contributors who are located elsewhere.
- Attendance is free, but we'll request registration to join.
- All sessions will be held in English.

We look forward to receiving your presentation proposals, if you have questions please email us at inwardoutward@beeldengeluid.nl.

Warm Regards,

The Inward Outward Programme Committee:

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Eleni Tzialli (Sound and Vision)

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Inward Outward is organized by the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies ([KITLV](#)) and the Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision ([Sound and Vision](#)) with special support from the Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen's Research Center for Material Culture ([RCMC](#)).

