

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

23rd SEAPAVAA CONFERENCE

25th – 30th June 2019
Nouméa, New Caledonia

“Memory, History, and Archives”

The relationship between memory and history is a complex one. Memory is continuously shaped and reshaped by the fickleness of remembering and forgetting. History is a partial representation of the past framed by the limited lenses of the present. French historian Pierre Nora posits that, “memory and history, far from being synonymous, appear now to be in fundamental opposition.”^[1] This tension manifests in the archive as *lieux de memoire* where the politics and processes of memory formation and historical narratives assert their fluidity. Archives enable as much as they question what is told, recollected, and ignored. In the same manner that the existence of the archive takes form through the fragments of memories and the framings of histories. Memory, history, and archives therefore are not absolute nor fixed. They are incomplete, perpetually in a state of becoming.

These dynamics open the archive to possibilities and immense responsibilities. What is the role of archives in forming collective memories and national narratives? Can archives be critical of such homogenous assertions? How can archives account for multiple memories while authenticating historical claims of the past? In what way can archives bridge the personal and the communal when it comes to remembering and forgetting? How should archivists handle memories and narratives of trauma while enabling healing and reconciliation? What is the role of the archives in the pursuit of transitional justice?

SEAPAVAA brings these discussions to the Pacific Islands where oral tradition underpins collective memories, identity formations, and historical narratives. As Chief Reklai Raphael Ngirmang once uttered to archivists in the Pacific,

“Our archives do not have written documents and books. Our culture and historical records are contained in oral histories and legends, which are stored in the collective memories of the people of Melekeok and which have been passed from generations to generations over the centuries.”^[2]

How do we then conceive of the archive, theoretically and pragmatically, taking into consideration the seeming dialectic between our oral traditions and our documentary heritage? Are archival concepts and practices emanating from the written culture of the West appropriate for preserving the nuances of our oral cultures? How do we utilize audiovisual technologies and by extension our audiovisual archives in bridging the intangible and the tangible? What are the measures we need to employ to shape inclusive archives that reflect the cultures of our people? Given all of these, how can our indigeneity inform our archival thought and practice?

The 23rd SEAPAVAA Conference seeks to address these issues by gathering different voices during its two-day Symposium. We invite archivists, librarians, historians, anthropologists, cultural workers, academics, scholars, and others actively engaged with the theme of the conference to submit proposals. Topics of interest revolve around three key words – memory, history, and archives – with particular focus on the audiovisual and the context of the region. Topics include but are not limited to the following:

- Archives as source of collective and individual memories
- Preservation and management of collective and individual memories
- Preservation of digital-born memories
- Politics of Memory
- Oral history and archives
- Metadata and archiving of oral tradition
- Access to archived oral tradition

- Protection of heritage through oral histories
- Role of national archives in governance and accountability
- Role of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in archives
- Role of audiovisual and digital archives to community development, identity, and heritage
- Challenges in addressing and managing damaged or lost documentary heritage and archives
- Preservation and management of audiovisual materials
- Indigenous memory and the archives

TIMELINES TO NOTE:

Submission of proposals:	11 th January 2019
Notification of accepted proposals:	4 th February 2019
Confirmation to present:	4 th March 2019
Symposium proper:	25 th – 30 th June 2019

1. Submit proposals in English via e-mail as a MS Word file to Michaela Navato [secretariat@seapavaa.net] by 11th January 2019.
2. The proposals should include:
 - Title of proposal
 - Abstract, maximum of 250 words
 - Name and Institution (where applicable) of proponent(s)
3. The SEAPAVAA Executive Council will review all submitted proposals and will send notifications to accepted proponents by 4th February 2019
4. Accepted proponents must confirm their ability to attend the conference and present by 4th March 2019
5. The travel expenses, accommodation and subsistence of attending the 23rd SEAPAVAA Conference are the full responsibility of the Presenter(s) of accepted proposals. All attendees, including Presenter(s), are required to register and pay the full conference registration fee.

You may contact Ms. Navato [secretariat@seapavaa.net] for any queries.

The 23rd SEAPAVAA Conference and General Assembly are co-hosted by the Bibliothèque Bernheim and the Tjibaou Cultural Center-ADCK.

The event promises the definitive warmth and hospitality that SEAPAVAA is known for. For more information regarding the Conference including the programme, workshops, registrations, and hotel accommodations, visit <http://seapavaaconference.com>

[1] Nora, Pierre. *Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire* (1989)

[2] Chief Reklai Raphael Ngirmang. Address at the 9th Biennial Conference of PARBICA, Palau (2001)