# Archives of Conflict (online, 10-11 Dec 26)

Online, Dec 10–11, 2026

Ana Catarina Pinho

The international conference: "Archives of Conflict: Photography Between Vernacular and Institutional Practices".

Photography has long played a central role in the mediation of war and political violence, shaping how conflicts are documented and remembered across different historical and geopolitical contexts. Yet war photography exceeds the framework of documentary representation, emerging within broader institutional, technological, and archival systems that shape the visibility of conflict. Photography does far more than merely document warfare, it actively participates in the production, mediation, and circulation of conflict itself. As such, war photography emerges may emerge within broader state-sponsored structures through which conflict is visually organized and disseminated (Oldfield, 2019). In this sense, the history of warfare is inseparable from the history of its modes of perception and representation (Virilio, 1984). Images of conflict therefore operate not merely as records of violence, but as components of visual and archival regimes that determine what becomes visible, preserved, legitimized, or forgotten (Foliard, 2020).

State agencies, military organizations, humanitarian institutions, press networks, museums, archives, and digital platforms all participate in the construction of visual regimes that shape public understandings of warfare, political violence, and historical memory. At the same time, vernacular and non-institutional photographic practices often complicate or contest official narratives, foregrounding alternative forms of witnessing grounded in lived experience, displacement, survival, and resistance, and activism. As Allan Sekula (2003) suggests, archives must also be read “from below,” from the perspective of those displaced, silenced, or rendered invisible by dominant structures of power.

In contemporary media environments, where smartphones, satellite technologies, social media platforms, automated systems, and artificial intelligence increasingly structure the production and circulation of images, the boundaries between documentation, surveillance, testimony, propaganda, and evidence have become progressively unstable. At the same time, theThe archive’s transition into digital environments has introduced new questions regarding algorithmic visibility, machine-based search, and the limitations of online finding aids, generating new forms of archival silence and opacity (Ernst, 2002; Fowler, 2017). As recent scholarship has argued, contemporary warfare increasingly overlaps with processes of datafication through which everyday life becomes continuously recorded across networked and constantly reconfigurable archival systems. Under conditions of digitization, archives themselves become technologies through which warfare is extended, mediated, and operationalized, reaching deeply into intimate spaces and quotidian forms of experience (Agostinho et al., 2020).

This conference seeks to examine the visual and archival systems through which conflict is produced, mediated, circulated, and remembered across institutional and vernacular contexts. Bringing together perspectives from photography studies, visual culture, media studies, art history, archival studies, history, anthropology, and related disciplines, the conference aims to foster interdisciplinary discussions on the political, historical, material, and affective dimensions of conflict imagery.

The full programme and registration links are available here: https://archivesofconflict.weebly.com/

PROGRAMME

10 DECEMBER
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09:00 AM
WELCOME & INTRODUCTION
Ana Catarina Pinho and Gil Pasternak

09:15 AM - 10:40 AM
PANEL 1 | INSTITUTIONAL VISUALITIES: PHOTOGRAPHY, WAR, AND THE ORGANISATION OF VISIBILITY
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"Representing Colonial Conflict: Photography and Warfare in Liberal Italy"
Lorenzo Maida | University of Perugia, Italy

"Photographing Wartime Calcutta: Military Cameras, Blackouts and the Visuality of a Colonial City, 1942–45"
Moumita Roy and Sourapravo Chatterjee | Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad, India

"The Construction of the Image of the Spanish Civil War Through Photography: The (Opposing?) Cases of Visions de Guerra I Reraguarda and Estampas de la Guerra"
Inés Escudero Gruber | University of Zaragoza, Spain

"Photographs that Work: NGO-visualizations of the Ukraine War"
Sigrid Lien | University of Bergen, Norway & Mette Sandbye | University of Copenhagen, Denmark

10:45 AM - 12:10 PM
PANEL 2 | BETWEEN INSTITUTIONAL AND VERNACULAR ARCHIVES: MILITARY PHOTOGRAPHY, PERSONAL COLLECTIONS, AND CIRCULATING IMAGES

"The Circulation of Institutional Photographs in Private Collections: Complementarity or Counter-Power? The French Armée d'Orient (1915–1919)"
Violette Gautier | University of Picardie Jules-Verne / École du Louvre Research Centre, France

"1972: Photographers at war in today's Guinea-Bissau"
Daniel Barroca | University of Lisbon, Portugal

"Queen Victoria's Anglo-Boer War Albums"

Helen Lewandowski | Royal Collection Trust, United Kingdom

"From the Front to the Archive: Vaso Radulović, War Photography and the Making of Visual Memory in Montenegro, 1912–1918"
Maja Đurić | University of Donja Gorica, Montenegro

12:10 PM - 02:30 PM BREAK

02:30 PM - 03:50 PM
PANEL 3 | CIRCULATING CONFLICT: MEDIATION, MOBILISATION, AND THE POLITICS OF THE IMAGE

"Circulating the Jharkhand Movement: Photography, Vernacular Print and Adivasi Political Mobilisation in the Nishkalanka"
Rinald D'Souza | KU Leuven, Belgium

"Curating a Contested Conflict: Photographic Archives, Memory and Mexico's Cristero War (1926–29)"
Lucy O'Sullivan | University of Birmingham, United Kingdom

"Archives of Heritage Protection: Photographs and Documents for Self-Representation in Italy between War and the Postwar Period"
Anna Contro | Università degli Studi di Genova, Italy

"Ukrainian War Photography in the Authorial Archive Born of Shocks: Institutional Visual Practices and Regimes of Memory of the 2022-2025 War"
Yana Hladyr | Slavic Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Poland

04:00 PM - CLOSING SESSION

11 DECEMBER
—
09:00 AM
WELCOME & INTRODUCTION
Ana Catarina Pinho and Gil Pasternak

09:15 AM - 10:40 AM
PANEL 4 | ARCHIVES FROM BELOW: VERNACULAR PHOTOGRAPHY, COUNTER-MEMORY, AND POLITICAL RESISTANCE

"Beyond Atrocity: Vesna Pavlović's Archive of Other Serbia during Yugoslav Wars"
Vana Filipovski | IMT School for Advanced Studies, Italy

"Making the Invisible Visible: Vernacular Photography, Counter-Archives, and the Politics of Urban Eviction in Islamabad"
Ashraf Kakar | Independent Researcher, Pakistan

"Małgorzata Mirga-Tas and the Archival Afterlives of the Romani Holocaust"
Patrycja Ignaczak | University of Warsaw, Poland

"Archiving the Ephemeral: Digital Countermemorials in the Struggle for Visibility in Tamil Eelam"
Simon Vagts | Academy of Fine Arts Münster, Germany

10:45 AM - 12:10 PM
PANEL 5 | ARCHIVAL AFTERLIVES: PHOTOGRAPHY, MEMORY, AND THE TEMPORALITIES OF CONFLICT

"Returning the Image: Susan Meiselas, Nicaragua and the Afterlives of a Conflict Archive"
Sandra Bustamante | Independent Researcher, Seville, Spain

"Stepping on the Name: Photographic Afterlives of Gwangju 1980"
SaeHim Park | Chinese University of Hong Kong, China

"Extending the photographic history of the Spanish Civil War: a look at the photographs of mass graves (1936-2026)"
Lucille Saillant | Independent Researcher, France

"On the Archive of Differential Survival: Anachronism and Historical Legibility in Al-Ghassaniyah"
Monica Zakka | The British School Al Khubairat, United Arab Emirates

12:10 PM - 02:30 PM BREAK

02:30 PM - 03:40 PM
PANEL 6 | CONTESTED EVIDENCE: PHOTOGRAPHY, VERIFICATION, AND EMERGING ARCHIVAL REGIMES

"Smokescreens and Precision: Open Source Techniques against Military Narratives in Lebanon"
Ahmad Baydoun | TU Deft, Netherlands

"The Image War Within the War: Visual Evidence and Competing Archives in the Russia–Ukraine Conflict"
Julie Huang | Independent Scholar, Paris

"Keeping the Order: The Feed, the Running Order, and an Archive of How War Is Encountered"
Juna Janoné | University of Luxembourg

"Ways of Machine Seeing in the Photographic Archive: Representing the Unrepresentable through an Ethics of Care"
Maribel Hidalgo-Urbaneja | King’s College London, United Kingdom

03:50 PM - 04:50 PM
GUEST SPEAKER: MARIANNE INGLEBY
"Operation Detachment: How can we remember what we have never seen?"

04:50PM - 05:00 PM
CLOSING REMARKS
Ana Catarina Pinho and Gil Pasternak

Attendance is free, but registration is required via the conference website:

https://archivesofconflict.weebly.com/

Organizing Committee
Dr Ana Catarina Pinho | IHA-NOVA University of Lisbon
Professor Gil Pasternak | PHRC, De Montfort University

Reference:
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