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Affective Archives: Fragments of Contested Histories, Memories, and Aspirations in South East Europe

Thursday 4 June 2026 15:00 (1h 30m)

What kinds of feelings reside in archives, and what kinds of archives are made of feelings? What feelings do archives evoke in different people? This panel explores the entanglements of affect and archival practices across South East Europe ethnographically asking how different public feelings shape what is remembered, forgotten or imagined for the future. From state repositories to digital platforms and community collections, archives emerge as unstable terrains where histories are contested and futures are aspired to. Drawing on theories of affect (Navaro, Berlant, Cvetković, Stoler, Ahmed, Stewart) and cultural memory (Stoler, Appadurai, Assman, Hirsch, Erll), the panel invites discussion on the archival as a living, affective process rather than a static record. How might anthropology of archives illuminate the everyday politics of remembering, and how do affects; hope, nostalgia, longing, grief, fatigue, frustration, desire, disappointment, disillusionment become modes of worldmaking in a region marked by transition and transformation?

Track Classification: South East Europe Working Group