

Ethnography of archives – between past and present

MARIA CRISTINA CASTILHO COSTA¹

Abstract

The essay is concerned with the methodology of studying documental archives produced in Modernity as a way to understand the relationship that was established between state and society. From researches developed by Miroel Silveira Archive in the School of Arts and Communications of University of São Paulo, composed by trials of prior censorship to the theatre in São Paulo from 1930 to 1970, it attempts to explicit the ethnographic method as a way to interpret the information and the relationship between the parties involved. The ethnography also provides a bridge between the past and the present, a time marked by the proliferation of public and private archives.

Keywords: ethnography, archives, information, power.

Introduction

The Republic in Brazil was late - the arrival of the Portuguese royal family, the presence of the court, the long reign of Pedro II and the authoritarianism of monarchical institutions aborted liberal and republicans dreams in the country, so we kept semi colonial political institutions for decades. Perhaps for that reason, when finally the Republic was proclaimed, did not found in Brazil a people matured by years of subjection to the throne, but one population accustomed to centralization and authoritarianism, with weak feelings of citizenship and political participation.

For this reason, the early years of the Old Republic were signed by political instability and constant appeals to repressive resources seeking to silence unhappy conservatives and progressives with the direction of events. Thus, on one hand, it sought to modernize the country and give it a more impersonal, bureaucratic and rational as required by the new regime, while on the other hand, remained the features typical of authoritarian monarchy originated from colonialism.

¹Professora livre-docente da Escola de Comunicações e Artes da Universidade de São Paulo, onde é Coordenadora do Grupo de Pesquisa Arquivo Miroel Silveira e do Curso de Especialização em Gestão da Comunicação, e Presidente da Comissão de Pesquisa da ECA-USP.

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Among renewal and conservatism, there was an abuse of the power and there was an adaptation to the repressive systems of the Empire to the new system of governance.

Freedom of expression, a value that is part of the republican ideals along with concepts such as political representation, equality before the law and succession in power, was summarily ignored by the need to control public opinion and reduce the complaints and appeal of socialist ideas. The media were a prime target for a routine censorship, punctuated by more violent acts of closing newspapers, arresting journalists and condemnation to exile (Sousa, 2003:23). Along with *crazy people*, *prostitutes* and *sick patients* (Ibid.: 24), press workers were expelled from the country, with legal support of the republican constitution. Considered *troublemakers* or *conspirators*, they did not receive any kind of complacency in the face of criticizing the power. Not to mention the laborer press, trade unions newspapers and political parties that suffered from chronic weakness face to the State. Thus, the media were subject to common law, which, inspired by the monarchy, sought to silence and to dispel discontents and, among them, especially the spokesmen of the proletariat or of the socialist movements. Besides policing and legal repression, censorship economic, already existing, allowed the advertising resources of the public sector or that the state aid favor newspapers Situationists. Thus processed to the confrontation between power and public opinion in Brazil in the first half of the twentieth century. Antonio Costella comments:

Already employed in the vernacular by law was allowed to dawn Republican guess that, henceforth, we stormy days, although interspersed with quiet periods. Announced to contrasts between intermittent press freedom and vigorous prosecution.

The predicted weather policy was not misleading. Succeeded by periods of freedom, interspersed by the overt censorship, sometimes at short-term states of emergency, sometimes the endless persistence of dictatorships ... (Costella, 2007: 41)

But this did not occur only in the press - the same control and suppression were observed in other areas of symbolic production, such as theater shows and circus, film presentations and all manifestations with the presence of the public and upon a stage.

The theater, even as a kind of elite entertainment, was heavily guarded and suffered various forms of persecution – from the prejudice against the profession of

actor and actress, considered unworthy, to the censorship that manifested itself in the preliminary examination of the text for editing and staging, and monitoring the show.

Perpetuated the habit of dramaturgical text analysis performed by the intellectuals, religious and government authorities, along the lines established by the Brazilian Conservatory of Drama who worked on the Second Empire, when evaluating the suitability, adequacy and quality of artistic work. Also was noted the control upon scenic spectacle exerted by the police board overseeing the costumes, the lighting, the gestures, the decorum of the scenes and even the Portuguese used in the dialogues in an attempt to defend the native language. The legal support to these mechanisms had come from Decree No 3610 of 14.04.1900, establishing as duty of the republican state

inspect public associations for fun and recreation, theaters and public spectacles of all kinds, not only regarding the order and morality, as well as to the safety of the spectators. (Just like) chair to theaters and other public spectacles, according to the delegate appointed auxiliary (DOU: 1900: 439-457).

There was still, as in the press, economic censorship, since the existing cramped public in the early twentieth century called for a show to be staged, was subsidized by the government. From the Empire, funds collected by lotteries were aimed at promoting the theater (Costa, 2006:50).

The New State - censorship and formation of archives

However, the censorship was established by Vargas government as an impersonal, routine and bureaucratic resource, in the mold of dictatorships of nationalist character, and even Nazi-fascists in Europe. Admirer of Benito Mussolini and Antonio Salazar, Vargas established the New State and an effective instrument of control and rationalization of power.

Vargas knew the importance of controlling cultural industry - the media and especially radio, one of the most popular media at the time. He created an unprecedented organizational structure to make use of the media, control them and censor them. On July 2nd, he 1931, created the Department of Official Advertising - DOP, which was going to control the newspapers and broadcasting. Linked to the Ministry of Justice and Internal Affairs and working as an appendix to the Official MATRIZES, São Paulo (Brazil), v. 3, n.2, pp 171-186, jan./jun.2010 <http://www.matrizes.usp.br> 173

Press, the DOP made circulate news from official sources for the press in general, becoming the legitimization resource of government action Vargas (Goulart, 1990).

The labor market was extremely limited, because the newspapers had everything ready from the National Agency. The press bureau were four or five people who did all the paper. All came ready with the order, including publishing on that page, with such emphasis.

... no sign of rebellion cut the paper and advertising. The publicity, the government controlled, let's say, 60%, while intimidated private companies. Nobody wanted to stand against the Bank of Brazil. Under the terms of censorship, I believe the New State was darker because it had no exit. Today there is the resource of leaving the blank space. At that time, if I did that, they would close the newspaper (Silveira 1979).

The legal grounds for the control of the media came to the Press Law of 1934, which allowed censorship during states of siege and enabled the seizure of newspapers, and the National Security Act of 1935, placing at the disposal of the government various resources of repression. As for censorship, so the authorities thought

Censorship is not a violent mean of restricting freedom. It is exclusively a remedy prophylactic, preventive, which makes use of public authority, in exercising legitimately its self-defense to prevent that, in most cases, even in good faith, honest press would undermine the measures of greatest relevance to the establishment of order or the institutions restrengthening wounds. It is therefore legitimate the censure, and its practice is up and overriding duty of the constituted authorities (Apud Souza, 2003:99).

In 1937, under the pretext of eliminating a possible Communist revolution, Getulio Vargas establishes the Estado Novo in Brazil. The bureaucracy of control and development of media and artistic events reaches its peak. To this end, in 1939, was created the Department of Press and Propaganda - DIP - a mega agency, as the SNI of Salazar, accumulated functions of advertising, publicity, information, documentation and research, publications, promotion of culture in schools and barracks, control and supervision of shows, prior censorship of newspapers and public entertainment, the regulation of employment contracts of cultural enterprises, production and distribution of films, defending the language, increasing tourism in the country and many other issues, such as the dissemination of weather.

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In 1940, were assigned 53 different services to DIP, incorporating agencies like the Department of Propaganda and Cultural Diffusion (DPDC), the National Propaganda Department (DNP) and the Film Censorship Committee, under the Ministry of Justice and Internal Affairs, that without forget the Police and Public Health. Besides the headquartered which worked in Rio de Janeiro, were constituted the DEIPs, branches to take care of the processes being handled by individual states and to ensure homogeneity of thought and ideology.

There was in this form of rule and control the society a unique way of understanding the public functions of the State, which manifested itself in ideological precepts and bureaucratic procedures. On one hand, recognized the importance of information as an essential element to the exercise of power. Second, is practiced all forms of arbitrariness in the name of defending the population, always regarded as dependent and helpless. All the bureaucratic rationality that this control policy instituted passed, so the legal apparatus, the complexity of public processes and the creation of archives with which they managed the information and intervene in society.

One of the results of this form of government was the emergence of collections gathering documents and information, through which censorship was exercised by the impersonal and bureaucratic procedures, as we shall see, responded to different functions: to understand the symbolic production that was processed in the media communication and artistic spaces, control ideologically the society, subjecting the producers, directors and others involved in the rigors of the state and make them available to the propaganda.

This practice established in Brazil by Vargas survived him, the Estado Novo, and the other periods of dictatorship that succeeded it, and arrived at the dawn of the 21st century, when the functions of the state were reviewed and their relations with society were redefined.

In this process of recasting, or “renegotiation” as Boaventura de Sousa Santos (1999:33) call it, the old archives were closed, abandoned or destroyed, passed into the hands of bureaucrats and other departments, scientists, nongovernmental organizations, museums and became witnesses to a period that seems to last and ended. It's time to rake the saved, roll your archives, rearrange documents and interpret the information,

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trying to recreate the relationship they legitimize and sanctify. Not only to rebuild his memory and continuity, but, as proposed by Michel Foucault (1995:6), to find discontinuities and emergence of new developments.

One of these archives, created by DEIP Sao Paulo, arrived today - now called Miroel Silveira Archive, is under the custody of the Library of the School of Arts and Communication, University of São Paulo. This is a collection of 6205 cases of theatrical release for public viewing, forwarded to the Office of Censorship Department of Public Entertainment in the State of São Paulo, between the years 1930 to 1970, with all the opinions, stamps, and cuts the censors, besides the original parts that should be staged, many still new.

Knowing the importance of such documentation, Miroel Silveira - author, translator, director, critic and teacher – could saved it from destruction when, in 1988, the Constitution eliminated the censorship of the arts and the communication media in Brazil. After his death, this collection of documents was delivered to the ECA Library, constituting, in his honor, the Archive Miroel Silveira.

It was from this information that Silveira made his doctoral thesis *Comedy of Manners - Period Italo Brazilian: subsidies for the study of the Italian contribution to our theater*, which examines the formation of groups, theatrical production and its subsequent dissemination in theater groups. A study of the “paulista” theater workers - amateur groups composed of industry workers, often immigrants, who saw the staging of parts a way to defend libertarian ideas and disseminate, and preserve their culture of origin: Italian, Portuguese, Russian or Lithuanian.

Since the year 2000, this archive is studied by individual research projects and thematic already gathered more than forty researchers in different academic levels ranging from pre-initiation to post-doctoral scientific, seeking re-create and learn in depth the phenomenon of censorship symbolic production. This study has produced seminars, courses, dissertations, theses and various publications and articles like this, which analyzes the archive itself as a public procedure and policy and object of study of various human disciplines such as history, the sociology and science communication.

Censorship - processing of a submission process of symbolic production to the State

Foucault says, explicitly:

The document, therefore, is not more to the story, this inert matter through which she tries to reconstruct what men have done or said, what is past and that leaves only traces: it seeks to define the very fabric documentary units, sets, sets, relations (Foucault, 1995:7)

The deal with document reveals that they are, above all, the links of relationship established, while the hermeneutic analysis allows the revealing of intentions, values, desires, retreats, presents not only in all that is explicit, but also what is omitted or concealed. Extract from Miroel Silveira Archive understand those informations and understand how acted the censorship has always been the main objective of the survey, whose results we now report in that part of the text.

Since 1939, when DIP was established, the processes of censorship to the theater were gathered in a single sector, the Division of Public Entertainment Censorship that organized them chronologically, giving them a sequential number archiving. For a play could be staged, the author, director or producer should submit to the Division two copies of the original manuscript, typed, printed, mimeographed or photocopied for reading and assessment. Accompanied the text of a letter requesting, addressed to the director with information about the submission: name and address of the applicants, title, author, genre, number of acts of text, place and date of the show.

Director dispatched the process for a censor by an official of the Division. The censors were men of a certain intellectual gloss or political importance that considered this task as an honest intellectual activity and at the same time, an allowance that fattened their incomes. The work was easy and required only that the censor passed once a week in the Division of censure to get the processes on which should arbitrate with release, veto or cuts in the text. The appointment was the most common cut of words, speeches, excerpts, scenes or characters. Each cut was done in pencil annotations in red, and the leaves received the stamp with the word *censored*. Was joining the process of gathering a tab of stamp duty and certificate of authorship of national texts with the collection of royalties due.

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The plays released were given a certificate whose validity ranged from three to five years. Such expiry, the plays should be reviewed again for new productions, with one single release by individual company interested in taking to the stage the same work. Each case had different requests, certificates and opinions of the censors, with a single process for each play throughout the history of their productions.

In the case of cuts, one of the copies of the text was filed and the other went to the requestor, who made obey the determinations of the censors or request a review of the evaluation. On the eve of the show premiered, was branded a rehearsal attended by the censor bearing the archived copy to verify that the information had been met or not. It was a very delicate time, because, having invested the resources and manpower in performing the show, the company had to submit to censor privately, leaving it to the authorization of his debut. Several directors and actors interviewed mention the embarrassment that was established between censors and artists, while the companies sought deal on a friendly representative of the state.

To the authors, directors or producers of texts vetoed only remained to seek political support to reverse the situation, which required many ups and downs and sometimes dozens of attempts and passes by private authorities. An example of this occurred, as told us Gianfrancesco Guarnieri, during the staging of *The Seed*.

We can then verify that the documents in the Archive Miroel Silveira bear the marks of each of these steps, with handwritten orders, stamps, newspaper clippings, programs and subscriptions that accompany these procedures. They also bring, at times, opinions of authorities or censors imposed on the texts, defending or justifying the cuts or vetoes. Some cases also have information on theater companies and their legal situation.

The proceedings of the Archive Miroel Silveira covers a period from 1926 to 1970. It is noticed in that documentation an improvement in the review process involving a growing number of people and instances in which the texts should go the way of the stage. Moreover, there are some cases that ended in the hands of political authorities external to the Division of Censorship, revealing action of non-passivity of the theater class before the vetoes received. Have some relative, acquaintance or friend in the state, facing a veto, allowed the search for possible support. *Perdoa-me por me*

traíres, by Nelson Rodrigues came to the table of Jânio Quadros, then governor of the state.

When the play debuted at last, some seats in the audience were reserved for the staff of censorship that could, on any day he wanted to, watch the show and make sure they respect the determinations of censorship. If nothing else blocked the scenario, the process ended with a stamp “File it”, accompanied by the certificate of censorship. However, nothing prevented that some authority, watching the spectacle, thought that the censors had been condescending and ask for the end of presentations. *Roda Viva* by Chico Buarque de Holanda, in São Paulo, was banned a few months after opening.

As is evident, censorship forced the artists to approach the State to try and reduce the malicious nature, erotic, satirical or critical parts, to practice self-censorship and to be subservient to the censors. These, in turn, felt flattered by artists living with, being the target of their attention and are entitled to attend the shows freely. Thus, the procedures in cases censorial, by itself, producing effect modifiers in the texts and performances. As one of the artists interviewed: “we knew we could not talk about abortion”.

Moreover, the State met substantive information on the artistic production - who wrote what, who staged, who belonged to companies where they would perform, when and for how long. In addition, these processes allow the government to intervene in the organization of companies, contracts and other demanding professional requirements, administrative and legal, which often served as a subterfuge for interdicts.

Walter de Sousa Junior, in his thesis on circus-theater in São Paulo (Sousa Junior: 2008), shows us that the authors of circus often were forced by censorship bureaucracy, to declare themselves the authors of texts that actually were a collective production. Do not forget that the artistic field organized this first half of the twentieth century and that the obligations imposed by the organs of censorship helped institutionalization. In the interviews conducted, Sousa Junior received the following testimony by Waldemar Sousa Junior, son of the clown Arrelia:

So, whenever my father was inaugurating a new play, launched a new play, premiered that new play, he always had something that he said suddenly, he put back in history, something that was contrary to current standards ... So the day after the premiere he was called in DEIP to tell the sheriff that there was what could not, or something ... So he went there, talked to him, that

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animated conversation that he had, told jokes, did a grace, everything, and they became friends. Almost the whole department was almost friend of my father. So much that they gave a gold watch for my father with registration (Sousa Júnior: 2008: 177).

As we can see, the relations that the censorship required among public officials, authorities and artists, helped set up the artistic field, to *name*, identifying authors, constitute professional relationships at work. The constant presence of documentation of the Brazilian Society of Playwrights, SBAT, processes, as well as information about the regulation of companies, reveal the paternalistic nature of legislation and regulatory intentions of Getulio Vargas.

Moreover, these meetings between censors and artists are mentioned in more than one of the interviews collected in the projects archive Miroel Silveira. Nídia Lycia tells us she had to rely on friends to release plays, Gianfrancesco Guarnieri appealed to well-known influence to present *Eles não usam Black Tie*, Dercy Gonçalves said that censorship never harmed her, what was confirmed by the censor Hameletto Capriglione Filho when he assured that everyone knew Dercy spoke impromptu and dirty words, but that was no use trying to stop her. The censor Coelho Neto said he had been responsible for the release of several texts, using tricks and distracting the attention of colleagues in rehearsals, at moments of stress or criticism.

Thus, we find that the censorial actions had an amplitude that went beyond the interference on plays and shows, since it placed face to face artists and representatives of the State. It helped to make known the power and the public, make them commit themselves to certain limits, to recognize artists, to identify issues, define the genre and to map the amateur and professional cultural production. As a result, Maria Aparecida Laet, studying the processes of censorship to the theater belonging to Archive Miroel Silveira, believes that the DEIP promoted a true information management. About certain processes more robust in which it is possible to recognize back and forth, arguments and resistance, she says. "The sequence of the documents shows the actions of those involved in the bureaucratic process of censorship - a real clash of social forces in some cases - can be translated into flows of information / communication" (Laet, 2007:67.)

The good and the evil of the Archive

At the conference *Archive's evil - Freudian Impression*, issued in London in 1994 and subsequently published, Jacques Derrida (2001) talks about Judaism, psychoanalysis and the importance of archives. The author points out two main directions of the latter: the historical order and order nomological or legal of the documents.

The first is responsible for temporal and historical information succession and the second by establishing rules and structure information. To explain them, Derrida refers to the origin of the Greek word that means “arkhe” that means *start* and *command*. It is on archive, in the records of the archons, that everything begins. The arkhêion Greek was originally a house, a home, an address, the residence of the superior magistrates, those who commanded, the space where official documents were deposited. They were responsible for the security of such information, as well as its interpretation or hermeneutics responsibility (Derrida, 2001:13.) Exercising such functions, they created and based laws.

In addition to this lawsuit and historical process, normative and bureaucratic, the formation of the archives is also responsible, according to the author, by the passage of the acts of secret and individuals to public and collective. In this sense, the archive is settlor, creator of new realities:

Every archive is both settlor and conservative. Revolutionary and traditional. File economic this double sense: guard, put in reserve, save, but not so natural, that is, making the law (nomos) or enforcing the law (Ibid.: 17).

We see in archive Miroel Silveira, clearly, all these bodies - one hand is law and the exercise of the law - the law that forbids, cuts or releases, the censorship law, judges appropriate and permitted, the inappropriate and banned. It is the practice of law that depersonalize and bureaucratizes - that makes everyday life, acting and instrumental form of automatic and supposedly impartial. However, on the other hand, deploys systems, organizing information, labels, responsible, establishes. Thus, documentation of prior restraint to the theater to help nominate the artistic field and instituting it - the art becomes a product with writer, producer, director and actors and actresses. Thus generates an economy of symbolic production. Finally, initiating the process and to

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regulate it, organizes and compiles a chronological order that makes the story that then seek to deconstruct. It also produces a *topology* which it refers, at the same time, to the distribution of power and authority among those who keep the file and the names and labels that distribute the process among the facts that archive search. Cases censorial identify agents from artistic field, nominate them at the same time that are of authority - authority to speak or be silent - those who in some way interfere in the actions of censorship.

These two sides of the case - the normative and historical - can be considered as good and evil of the archive, what is needed and what is repulsive. It is this constitutive ambiguity of devices that serve both to knowledge and the exercise of power that impresses Nuno Porto (2007: 128) when analyzing the files of the Portuguese empire in Angola. He says

Failing to control the empire, controlled himself, at the good times, the knowledge produced about empire: civil servants made censuses, statistics, lists of birds, were packing it all in a number of different classifications and put the papers to circulate (Porto, 2007: 129).

Starting with Derrida, Puerto deepens analysis between setting up archives and processes of domination, especially the colonial. Shows the alliance between the files, the science that helps them to establish and to base epistemologically, and political administration that has the legal power to generate and record information. From this alliance emerge communication networks that include spaces, actors, technologies, organizational processes and control the movement of information, forming what he entitles *enlightened colonialism* (Ibid.: 132). The author concludes: "The empire is primarily an administrative challenge, run from the British Museum, Royal Geographical Society and the universities" (Porto, 2007: 129).

It's an information economy - production, circulation, consumption - established by the State, this economy that replaces the traditional colonial relations based on trade in commodities. In place of commodity exchange, colonialism is expressed in the exchange of information managed by the archives. It is a new form of occupation not territorial but ideological and identity. Museums and archives represent the passage of the material realm to the realm of spiritual life and social and collective identity.

And it is precisely for dealing with the symbolic, ideological, information that Porto proposes to study the archives and museum ethnography. He says

The ethnography of the archive based on the notes on the matches, similarities, regularities, references, or the reverse, that the archive provides. This is based on the records of others of their own experiences, historically circumscribed in most cases not directly controllable by that, "naturalized" (in rating and ranking completed by the structure of the file). Ethnography of an archive share, necessarily, the condition of the file: it protects itself whether it is an archive, but that in itself is a product-specific articulation of concrete structures and agencies (Porto, 2007: 127).

On ethnography, the anthropologist Roberto Cardoso de Oliveira teaches that this is a scientific method of empirical research, whereby we start to get the rites to the senses of these rites, expressed by those who participate to finally build the significance or that is, what is clear from the interpretation of ethnographic research (Oliveira, 2000:22).

This interpretation requires a dialogue between observer and observed, an ethnographic encounter capable of breaking down boundaries and overcoming challenges. Ethnography is the appropriate method to overcome and understand the power relations established either by institutions or by the ideology of the scientist, whether by the processes of scientific classification. For this, the author recommends, in a disciplined way: look, listen, write ...

This research methodology that have greatly contributed to the study of communication allows the analysis of document collections, such as traces of long-lasting relations between social groups involving power and domination. And between the colonial administration and the colonized, the archives files marked distances and delimit areas of contact, as James Clifford (1997: 188-219) called them, or spaces for the ethnographic encounter, as called them Cardoso.

What we are trying to report here was this stage of our research in which we seek to take the Archive Miroel Silveira, not just censorship, as our object of study, poring over it for us to understand the game of domination and that it involves relations it establishes between social groups which interconnects. We seek to go beyond the visible and readable, considering it as a text and seeking their lines. We use the sociological imagination, or the ethnographic interpretation, seeking to understand the

meaning beyond the meaning of censorship to the State and artists, to the formation of the artistic field and to the public, hidden protagonist of these acts.

As stated in the text, the process of censorship in the theater show that the most important were the relationships that were established between artists and power, subjecting them, as well as their achievements, to the wishes of government bureaucracy and the dominant ideology. Furthermore, we affirm the importance of the steps in the formation and institutionalization of the artistic field, in the appointment of authors, artists, producers, and other professionals involved.

Ethnography is the most appropriate methodology to understand the exchanges that take place in these relations, the context in which the plays were judged, evaluated, cut or vetoed. It is the ethnography that allows us to more precisely identify each other, that this relationship mediated by the documental logical and bureaucratic, placing themselves in the process of symbolic exchanges, in which interchanged words, meanings, characters, situations and discourses.

Conclusion - Modernity and archives

Even having its origin in antiquity in the Classic Antiquity, in West, the archives in Modernity proliferated with the formation of national states, the implementation of bureaucratic and administrative methods with technological development and communications. Porto says

This historical setting is marked by a collapse, unprecedented of time and space - with the advent of the use of the railway, the steamship, telegraph and telephone - dethroned a sequential type of knowledge, replacing it by a kind of knowledge that allowed simultaneous access to information (Porto, 2007:129).

The archives also multiplied with the development of sciences, each developing their own classification systems and their research methodologies that resulted in large series and documentary collections. Colonialism and anthropological research also generated files, requiring management systems. Dictatorial political regimes such as those that settled in Europe and America in the first half of the twentieth century were also responsible for similar processes in its methodology and purpose, the Archive Miroel Silveira.

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In this limitless universe of mass of documents of the contemporary era, we reached the twenty-first century, when a rupture takes place in the patterns of modernity. Emerge a global society that emphasizes the communication network, in which the information, but become more important, suffer from an intense process of privatization. Digital media produce institutional and personnel archives automatically, the informations beyond the field of administering political society and lose political power monopoly management of production processes and, therefore, producers of goods and material and symbolic. As a result, weakened the state, the archives are to be discarded, destroyed, forgotten, donated, spread by museum institutions, scientific or administrative.

The organization and reading of these files by universities, museums, scientific and administrative go growing interest. The contemporary focuses on your past to deconstruct it, understand it and remember it. It is in this context that this essay makes sense – presenting Archive Miroel Silveira not only as testimony to the past, but as an example of the new interest in the existing social science research by reading ethnographic files.

How to deal with documents, how to manage information, how to make them available to society, how to interpret their clues, how to face the consequences of such knowledge, how to absorb this experience and, as proposed by Foucault, see its continuities and discontinuities in the present - here are some fundamental questions of research that are developed from collections, collections and archives (Cunha, 2004). It is also vital to know how to apply this methodology in a society that has in the production of files, documents and information one of its most important features.

It is to this discussion that the experience gained in research with the archive Miroel Silveira intends to contribute - the attempt to establish a bridge between past and present, realizing breaks, but certainly continuities. Thus, control, surveillance, intervention of the power over artistic production does not occur as in the past, but takes place through new strategies and configurations, which the Archive Miroel Silveira represents a past, but not too remote.

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