

Presenter: **Anna Szlejcher**  
(Argentina)

Presentation Title:  
**The Archival Teaching in the "Age of Access"**

### **Biography:**

University Archivist and History Professor at the National University of Cordoba in Argentina and Professor of Archival Science and Record Management, since 1970, at the same University.  
Director of Archival School of the National University of Cordoba (1998-2002)  
Professor of the "Centro Interamericano de Desarrollo de Archivos" in the National University of Cordoba with the financial support from OAS (Organization of American States (1974-1988)  
Full Member of the Bureau ICA/SAE (2004-2008)  
Coordinator of RIBEAU (Red Iberoamericana de Enseñanza Archivística Universitaria) permanent Committee of ALA, branch of ICA (2001- )  
Chosen by the University of British Columbia, Canada, as a member of CLAUD Team (Caribbean and Latin America InterPARES Dissemination), representing Argentina in the setting of the "Memory of the World" Programme, UNESCO has granted InterPARES Project to achieve the dissemination of its findings.  
Attended the Master in Cultural Heritage, Administration, Preservation and Legislation, at the National University of Cordoba.

### **Abstract:**

The purpose of this paper is to reflect about the impact of modern technology on the identity of the archivist, on his role in the preservation of memory, and therefore on the organization and selection of the curricular contents of his professional education.

It is necessary to face the challenge represented by the increasing volume of information and by the characteristics of the technology used for its production, organization, dissemination and use. In light of the facts that we are the guardians of valuable sources of information in digital form and that we should be well prepared for such task, a new conceptual framework must be outlined.

During the last few years, in Argentina, archival theory has experienced a radical transformation by adopting the concept of the records "life cycle", that was first applied in France, United States, and Canada, thereby extending the aim and scope of its body of knowledge. The same has not happened in all South American countries, because some of them still regard the archivist as the preserver of the records, according to the traditional paradigms.

The concepts of the archivist-historian and the archivist-erudite have been predominant in most European countries even after the Second World War. However, at the beginning of 1940, the sheer amount of documentary material produced as a result of the war efforts forced archivists to become involved in the function of records management and to put aside their old identity of assistants of historic investigation.

Several decades later, we should ask ourselves whether we are adequately fulfilling the purpose that made us change our role: Are we, keeping up with the evolution and changes that the new technologies involve have brought about? Are we adapting and developing archival science in a way that meets the needs of society? Are we able to guarantee the authenticity of the records preserved in electronic systems?

Today in Argentina, archival education is the subject of a debate between supporters of two types of degrees, on the one hand, a specialized and independent course of archival education, represented by the Archival School of the National University of Cordoba, and, on the other hand, an integrated archival and library program, represented by the Bachelor's Degree at the University of the North East. A third scenario is offered by the National University of Buenos Aires, which considers a Professional level degree as a Librarian a pre-requisite for any archival training.

De facto, the Cordoba School, which for almost 30 years, has been the only one providing academic training in Argentina, has become the center for education in archival studies in Latin America.

Considering the archivist's responsibility to deepen the investigation of the new types of records generated by digital technologies in order to be able to control them throughout their life-cycle and to ensure their long-term authentic preservation, it is increasingly necessary to develop additional programs of graduate archival education that involve dedicated research aimed at the development of new theories and methods.