

Francesca Lessa, PhD

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AT A GLANCE

Since 2010, Dr Lessa has built a track record of *excellent research in human rights and transitional justice*. She has published one monograph, nine articles in peer-reviewed journals, nine book chapters, and three edited volumes. She regularly writes op-eds for *Al Jazeera*, *The Argentina Independent*, and *Puchero News*. Her research has been funded, amongst others, by the European Commission, the British Academy, the Leverhulme Trust, the Society for Latin American Studies, and the Economic and Social Research Council in the UK, as well as the Open Society Foundations' Human Rights Initiative. Dr Lessa has delivered presentations about her work at research, policy and practitioners' institutions in *Europe*, the *US*, and *South America*, including at the UN, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the International Center for Transitional Justice, the Center for Justice and International Law, the Washington Office on Latin America, the Chilean Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, the Universidad de Buenos Aires, the City University of New York, and the Pontificia Universidade Católica de Minas Gerais (Brazil). She regularly presents her research at key conferences in the field, such as the *Latin American Studies Association*, the *International Studies Association*, and the *Law and Society Association*. Finally, she has been interviewed about her work by the BBC, the Guardian, the New York Times, CCTV America, Uruguayan national TV channels, *Canal10* and *Canal5*, and national radios, *Radio Uruguay*, *CX30* and *AM Libre*.

EDUCATION

- 09/2005 – 01/2010 *PhD*, Department of International Relations, **London School of Economics and Political Science**, United Kingdom
- 09/2002 – 12/2003 *Master of Arts in International Studies and Diplomacy* (awarded with Distinction), Centre for International Studies and Diplomacy, **School of Oriental and African Studies**, University of London, United Kingdom
- 09/1999 – 08/2002 *Bachelor of Arts in European Studies* (Second Upper Class 2:1), **Royal Holloway**, University of London, United Kingdom

CURRENT POSITION

- 08/2016 to present *Marie Skłodowska-Curie Research Fellow*
Project “Operation Condor: Accountability for Transnational Crimes in South America,” **Latin American Centre**, Oxford School of Global and Area Studies, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

PREVIOUS RELEVANT POSITIONS

- 10/2014 – 07/2015 *Visiting Professor*, Department of Political Science and International Studies, **Universidad Torcuato Di Tella**, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 02/2011 – 04/2015 *International Country Specialist*, **Chr. Michelsen Institute**, Bergen, Norwegian Centre for Human Rights, University of Oslo and Universidad Diego Portales, Santiago
- 03/2010 – 06/2010 *Visiting Lecturer*, Faculty of Psychology, **Universidad de la República**, Uruguay

10/2006 – 06/2009 *Graduate Teaching Assistant*, Department of International Relations, **London School of Economics and Political Science**, United Kingdom

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS AND AWARDS

- 01/2019 to present - *Academic Affiliate*, Bonavero Institute of Human Rights, University of Oxford
- 09/2018 to present - *SCR Member and College Advisor*, St Antony's College, University of Oxford
- 08/2016 – 07/2020 - *European Commission*, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, Individual Fellowship (Global) (€212,463.00)
- 04/2015 – 05/2016 - *British Academy/Leverhulme Trust Small Research Grant* (£10,000)
- 05/2015 – 04/2016 - *University of Oxford's ESRC Impact Acceleration* (£45,270), with Dr Diego Sanchez-Ancochea
- 10/2014 – 12/2015 - *Open Society Foundations* (\$24,000), with Professor Leigh Payne

PUBLICATIONS (selection)

Journal Articles

- Lessa, Francesca. 2019. "Operation Condor on Trial: Justice for Transnational Human Rights Crimes in South America" *Journal of Latin American Studies* 51(2), 409–439;
- Lessa, Francesca. 2015. "Justice beyond Borders: The Operation Condor Trial and Accountability for Transnational Crimes in South America". *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 9(3): 494–506;
- Payne, Leigh, Francesca Lessa and Gabriel Pereira. 2015. "Overcoming Barriers to Justice in the Age of Human Rights Accountability". *Human Rights Quarterly* 37(3): 728–754
- Lessa, Francesca and Cara Levey. 2015. "From Blanket Impunity to Judicial Opening(s): H.I.J.O.S. and Memory Making in Postdictatorship Argentina (2005–2012)". *Latin America Perspectives* 42(3): 207–225;
- Lessa, Francesca. 2014. "Elusive Justice, Changing Memories and the Recent Past of Dictatorship and Violence in Uruguay: An Analysis of the 2012 Public Act in the Gelman case". *International Journal of Conflict and Violence* 8(1): 75–90;
- Burt, Jo-Marie, Gabriela Fried Amilivia and Francesca Lessa. 2013. "Civil Society and the Resurgent Struggle against Impunity in Uruguay (1986–2012)". *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 7(2): 306–327;
- Lessa, Francesca. 2011. "Beyond Transitional Justice: Exploring Continuities in Human Rights Abuses in Argentina between 1976 and 2010". *Journal of Human Rights Practice* 3(1): 25–48.

Books and Edited Books

- Lessa, Francesca. 2014. *¿Justicia o impunidad? Cuentas pendientes en el Uruguay post-dictadura*. Montevideo: Penguin Random House Uruguay;
- Lessa, Francesca. 2013. *Memory and Transitional Justice in Argentina and Uruguay: Against Impunity*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan (paperback edition December 2014). Shortlisted for the Latin American Studies Association "Best Recent History and Memory Book Contest;"
- Lessa, Francesca and Leigh A. Payne (eds.), 2012. *Amnesty in the Age of Human Rights Accountability: Comparative and International Perspectives*. Cambridge University Press;
- Fried, Gabriela and Francesca Lessa (eds.), 2011. *Luchas contra la impunidad: Uruguay 1985-2011* [Struggles against Impunity: Uruguay 1985-2011]. Montevideo: Trilce;
- Lessa, Francesca and Vincent Druliolle (eds.), 2011. *The Memory of State Terrorism in the Southern Cone: Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Book Chapters

- Lessa, Francesca. 2019. "Transitional Justice in Latin America: The Enduring Legacy of the Past Three Decades after Democratic Transition." In *South America, Central America and the Caribbean*. London: Routledge;

- Lessa, Francesca and Cara Levey. 2018. "Human Rights Activists and Advocacy in South America." In *Handbook of South American Governance*, edited by Pía Riggirozzi and Christopher Wylde. London and New York: Routledge, 286-295;
- Lessa, Francesca and Elin Skaar. 2016. "Uruguay: Halfway Towards Accountability." In *Transitional Justice in Latin America: The Uneven Road from Impunity towards Accountability*, edited by Elin Skaar, Jemima Garcia-Godos, Cath Collins. Abidgon: Routledge, 77-102;
- Lessa, Francesca. 2013. "Investigative Commission on the Kidnapping and Assassination of Former National Representatives Zelmar Michelini and Héctor Gutiérrez-Ruiz (Uruguay)," "Parliamentary Investigative Commission on the Situation of Disappeared Persons and its Causes (Uruguay)" and "Peace Commission (Uruguay)". In *Encyclopedia of Transitional Justice*, edited by Lavinia Stan and Nadya Nedelsky. New York: Cambridge University Press, Volume 3: 255-260; 353-357 and 361-366;
- Lessa, Francesca. 2012. "Barriers to Justice: The *Ley de Caducidad* and Impunity in Uruguay." In *Amnesty in the Age of Human Rights Accountability: Comparative and International Perspectives*, edited by Francesca Lessa and Leigh A. Payne. Cambridge University Press: 123-151;
- Lessa, Francesca. 2011. "*No hay que tener los ojos en la nuca*: The Memory of Violence in Uruguay, 1973–2010." In *The Memory of State Terrorism in the Southern Cone: Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay*, edited by Francesca Lessa and Vincent Druliolle, New York: Palgrave Macmillan: 179-208.

Policy Briefs

- *Investigating Crimes against Humanity in South America: Present and Future Challenges*, February 4, 2019, available in English, Spanish, and Portuguese, <https://www.lac.ox.ac.uk/article/news-policy-brief-released>;
- *Justice without Borders: Accountability for Plan Condor Crimes in South America*, November 1, 2016, available in English, Spanish, and Portuguese, <https://www.lac.ox.ac.uk/article/launch-of-policy-brief-0>.

Articles, Op-Eds and Media Engagement (since 2015)

- Lessa, Francesca. "Argentina's Operation Condor trial opens up new paths to accountability for past atrocities in South America and beyond," August 1, 2019, <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/latamcaribbean/2019/08/01/argentinas-operation-condor-trial-opened-up-new-paths-to-accountability-for-past-atrocities-in-south-america-and-beyond/>
- Lessa, Francesca. "Rome Court of Appeals Condemns 24 to Life Imprisonment for Murders during Operation Condor," July 15, 2019, <https://impakter.com/court-condemns-24-to-imprisonment-for-operation-condor/>
- "Italian court jails 24 over South American Operation Condor," The Guardian, July 8, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jul/08/italian-court-jails-24-over-south-american-operation-condor>
- Lessa, Francesca. "In the Footprints of Operation Condor," *JusticeInfo*, December 20, 2018, <https://www.justiceinfo.net/en/justiceinfo-comment-and-debate/opinion/39815-in-the-footprints-of-operation-condor.html>
- Lessa, Francesca and Jo-Marie Burt, "New Ruling by Uruguay's Supreme Court of Justice once again Jeopardizes the Search for Truth and Justice for Dictatorship-Era Crimes," November 7, 2017, <https://www.wola.org/analysis/new-ruling-uruguays-supreme-court-justice-jeopardizes-search-truth-justice-dictatorship-era-crimes/>
- *15 convicted in 'Operation Condor' trial in Argentina*, CCTV America, May 28, 2016 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ruXvuBsZXU0>
- *Argentine Court Confirms a Deadly Legacy of Dictatorships*, The New York Times, May 28, 2016, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/29/world/americas/argentine-court-confirms-a-deadly-legacy-of-dictatorships.html>
- *Operation Condor: Landmark human rights trial reaches finale and Historic Operation Condor trial verdict expected*, BBC News, May 27, 2016, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-36394820>
- *Timing of US president's Argentina visit criticised*, BBC News, March 23, 2016, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/world-latin-america-35882469/timing-of-us-president-s-argentina-visit-criticised>

- Lessa, Francesca. “Justice at a Crossroads in Uruguay,” March 6, 2015, <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2015/03/justice-crossroads-uruguay-150304101945537.html>
- Lessa, Francesca. “Justicia más allá de las fronteras,” *La Diaria*, May 19, 2015, <http://ladiaria.com.uy/articulo/2015/5/justicia-mas-alla-de-las-fronteras>

INVITED AND CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS (selection)

- 03/06/2019 – **Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA)**, Washington DC, symposium on “New Research on Human Rights Trials in Latin America,” together with Jo-Marie Burt, Lorena Balardini, and Gabriel Pereira
- 31/05/2019 – **Center for Justice and International Law**, Washington DC, presenting the policy brief on “Investigating Crimes against Humanity in South America: Present and Future Challenges”
- 30/05/2019 - **Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR)**, Washington DC, presenting the policy brief on “Investigating Crimes against Humanity in South America: Present and Future Challenges”
- 30/05-02/06/2019 - **Law and Society Association Annual Meeting**, Washington DC, United States
- 25-27/07/2018 – **FLACSO-ISA Joint International Conference**, Quito, Ecuador
- 04-08/04/2018 - **59th Annual Conference of the International Studies Association**, San Francisco, USA
- 20-23/06/2017 - **Annual Congress of the Law and Society Association**, Mexico City, Mexico
- 29/04/2017 - **XXXV International Congress of the Latin American Studies Association**, Lima, Peru

ORGANISATION OF CONFERENCES AND PANELS (selection)

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| 06/2019 | Conference, “ <i>Justice for Transnational Human Rights Violations - At the Crossroads of Litigation, Policy and Scholarship</i> ,” held at Mansfield College and St Antony’s College, and jointly organized by the Latin American Centre, the Bonavero Institute of Human Rights, and Oxford Transitional Justice Research Network, June 19-20, Oxford (UK) |
| 05/2019 | Organiser of two roundtables entitled <i>Académicos y académicas en riesgo en América Latina: diagnostico, avances y retrocesos (partes 1 y 2, Special LASA Invited Sessions)</i> ; one panel entitled <i>Accountability Advocates: The Long and Winding Road to Justice in Latin America</i> ; and one roundtable entitled <i>Operation Condor: New Facts and Analysis about the Alliance that Internationalized Military Repression</i> at the XXXVII International Congress of the Latin American Studies Association, May 24-27, Boston (USA) |
| 05/2018 | Organiser of the workshop entitled <i>Investigating Crimes against Humanity in South America: Present and Future Challenges</i> , organised with Argentina’s Prosecutor’s Office for Crimes against Humanity, May 8 and 9, Buenos Aires (Argentina) |
| 06/2016 | Organiser of the conference and workshop entitled <i>Forty years on from Operation Condor: Comparative Experiences in the Southern Cone and Brazil</i> , organised with Uruguay’s Observatorio Luz Ibarburu, June 22 to 24, Montevideo, Uruguay |
| 12/2015 | Organiser of the conference and workshop entitled <i>Forty years on from Operation Condor</i> , organised with Chile’s Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, December 18 and 19, Santiago, Chile |

TEACHING ACTIVITIES (selection)

03/2019	Invited Professor, Seminar on “Transitional Justice: Accounting for the Past in the Aftermath of Atrocity,” Giacomo Leopardi School for Higher Studies , University of Macerata, Italy
12/2018	Invited Professor, Learning Unit on Transitional Justice, Blanquerna University , Barcelona, Spain
2016 & 2017	Instructor, Raphael Lemkin Seminars for Genocide Prevention (Latin American Edition), Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation , Oświęcim, Poland (2017) and Montevideo, Uruguay (2016)
10/2011 – 06/2014	Associated Teaching Staff for the course <i>Human Rights in Latin America</i> , Latin American Centre , University of Oxford, United Kingdom
03/2010 – 06/2010	Visiting Lecturer for the course <i>Memory, Human Rights and Transitional Justice in Uruguay (1973-2010)</i> , Faculty of Psychology, Universidad de la República , Uruguay

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

05/2019	Co-chair for the Track “Truth, Justice, Reparations and Non-Repetition” for the 2020 Latin American Studies Annual Conference
10/2013 to present	<i>International Consultant</i> , Observatorio Luz Ibarburu, Uruguay
01/2014 – 03/2014	<i>Co-convenor of the Latin American Centre Seminars</i> , Hilary Term 2014, Latin American Centre, University of Oxford, United Kingdom
02/2011 – 10/2014	<i>Member of the Latin American Centre Teaching Committee and Management Committee</i> , Latin American Centre, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

MEMBERSHIP

2017 to present	<i>Co-Founder</i> , Academics under Threat Research Network
2015 to present	<i>Affiliate Member</i> , Latin American Transitional Justice Network
2011 to present	<i>Co-Founder</i> , Uruguay Research Network
10/2011 – 06/2013	<i>General Editor and Committee Member</i> , Oxford Transitional Justice Research
01/2012 – 12/2020	<i>Member</i> , Latin American Studies Association
2008	<i>Member of the Editorial Board</i> , <i>Millennium Journal of International Studies</i> , London School of Economics and Political Science, United Kingdom
10/2007 to present	<i>Member</i> , International Studies Association

OTHER

Languages: Italian, English, and Spanish (fluent/advanced); and Brazilian Portuguese (intermediate);

Reviewer of journal articles and book manuscripts for the *Journal of Latin American Studies*, *International Studies Review*, *Political and Legal Anthropology Review*, *International Journal of Transitional Justice*, *The Latin Americanist*, *Revista Uruguaya de Ciencia Política*, *Law & Society Review*, *Palgrave Macmillan*, *University of Pittsburg Press*, *Rutgers University Press*, *Leuven University Press* and *Cambridge University Press*.