

Panel 2: **Disciplinary Histories and Archives in Anthropology, Folklore, and Oral History: Actors, Formats, and Mediality in Knowledge Production**

Monday, 4 December 2023 – Stream 1

[Session I: 17:00-18:45 pm CET // Session II: 19:30-21:15 pm CET]

This panel brings archivists and other scholars together to discuss the theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical roles of archives in disciplinary histories and in the production of knowledge. We will pay special attention to the actors and collaborators involved in archives; the types and formats of archives and documents; and the mediality of archival material, particularly in the face of digitalisation. We will also examine key issues raised by archives as institutions for knowledge production, including issues of power relations and of access. Whose voices are heard and whose are silenced? How do the relations, and in some cases collaborations, between collectors and informants shape the material? Can we address “gaps” by reading against, or along (Stoler 2009), the archival grain? Working with “native communities” brings questions of ethics to the fore, not least regarding ownership of material. Ethical considerations are crucial at every step of the archival process: acquiring, appraising, and classifying material, as well as protecting and ensuring access to the material. In terms of knowledge formats, what different forms of archives and material formats do archivists and disciplinary historians deal with? Lastly, we welcome contributions on the mediality of archives. Among other things, digitisation has made archives and archival material more accessible. However, it has also created issues regarding data protection and the loss of contextual knowledge. Can we conceptualise archives as places where we encounter different knowledge economies?

Convenors: **Hande Birkalan-Gedik** (Goethe University), **Susanne Österlund-Pötzsch** (The Swedish Literature Society in Finland), **Katre Kikas** (Estonian Literary Museum)

Session I [17:00-18:45 pm CET]

Dmitry Arzyutov (University of Oulu, Finland) – Sergei Kan (Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, US), Laura Siragusa (University of Oulu, Finland)

The Transatlantic Republic of Letters of Franz Boas: Re-Imagining the History of Arctic Anthropology

In our paper, we aim to re-examine the history of relationships between the pioneer of American anthropology Franz Boas and his Russian colleagues and

friends of the period between 1897 and 1942. For this purpose, we employ two epistemically intertwined concepts: the newly emerged notion of "paper tools" and the well-established but rarely applicable to the history of anthropology concept of *Res Publica Literaria*. If the former has a very strong material and pragmatic dimension in understanding knowledge production, the latter adds to it a tendency to expand our horizons beyond national borders. As historians of science remind us, writing, sending and receiving letters were an essential part of producing scientific knowledge in intellectual circles of Renaissance and early modern Europe and remained likely the same in later epochs. By merging these notions together, we argue that the voluminous collection of letters of Franz Boas, Waldemar Bogoras, Waldemar Jochelson and some other American, Russian and Scandinavian anthropologists materially constituted the pre-war Arctic and Siberian anthropology as a certain *Res Publica Literaria*. The careful reading of those letters by generations of historians of anthropology not only revealed the networks of friends and conflicts but also shaped the genealogy of the field. In other words, the letters were a cosmopolitan means of transnational communication of like-minded scholars who epistemically constructed transnational ethnographic regions such as the Arctic. The very material meaning of knowledge production allowed the letters to intersect the public and the private, the national and the transnational and as a result to re-imagine the intellectual life of Arctic anthropology. The research is based on our long-term archival work and sums up the collective editorial work of the volume of correspondence between Boas and Russian anthropologists prepared for the *Franz Boas Papers: Documentary Edition* series.

Anne Dalles Maréchal (University of Saint-Étienne, France)

Reading between the lines: the archives of Catholic missionaries in Manchuria as primary sources on Indigenous encounters with Christianity

The Catholic mission in Manchuria was founded in 1838 and lasted until 1949. In this vast territory, the missionaries attempted to evangelize a multi-faceted population, made of a dozen different groups. These cross-cultural contacts provided essential data for the production of knowledge on the Indigenous peoples of this region prior to the 20th century. These archives consist in manuscript documents, photographs, and publications (mainly periodicals). In this presentation, I propose to analyze the Native discourse during these first encounters with Christianity in Manchuria, by attempting to read between the lines of the missionary archives to bring out the Native voice which is very often silenced by the missionaries in their writings. Then, I will analyze the role of the nature of the relations between the missionaries and the different local populations in shaping these materials. Lastly, I will focus on the "receiving end"

of the archival materials by questioning the role of the publication process in bringing the mission “back home”, and with it, a euro-centered perception of Manchuria. This last point will trigger a discussion on the importance of the digitalization of the archives in producing knowledge for mission studies but also by replacing this process within the history of the publicization of missionary data. This presentation is based on the archives kept by the Paris Foreign Missions (MEP) and by the French National Library (BnF), which I consulted as part of a research collaboration, with the BnF, whose aim is to facilitate the digitalization of some of these archives.

Adrianna Link (American Philosophical Society, Pennsylvania, US)

Archiving Anthropology’s History: Reflexivity, Crisis, and Collection Development at the American Philosophical Society

This paper traces the growth of the American Philosophical Society’s anthropological archives during the mid-20th century in order to highlight the connections between the field’s documentary impulse and its disciplinary reckoning. Founded in 1743 to “promote useful knowledge,” the Society now houses collections ranging in scope from documents chronicling the founding of the United States to the papers of scientists working from the 18th through the 21st centuries. Its archives likewise serve as a central repository for materials related to the languages and cultures of Indigenous peoples from across the Americas, many of which were gathered and assembled following the salvage impulse championed by Franz Boas and his students. Yet a closer look at the APS’s collection development during the second half of the 20th century reveals how the Society came to serve not just as a storage facility for ethnographic fieldnotes, but as a site where American anthropologists could reflect on the role of archives for defining the utility of their field. I situate the expansion of the APS’s anthropological collections alongside the designation of history of anthropology as an academic subfield during the 1960s to argue for their co-creation in response to anthropology’s mid-century moment of crisis and disciplinary transformation. In doing so, this paper seeks to move beyond salvage narratives typically associated with anthropological archives in favor of ones that proactively engage the layered histories of these collections in order to improve their stewardship and use in the present.

Tom Fogel (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel)

"A living Semitic poetry": re-contracting folk knowledge production in the ethnographic archive of S.D. Goitein

The paper deals with the ethnographic archive of S.D. Goitein. In the Early 1950's Goitein launched a wide ethnographic survey among the Yemeni Jewish community in Israel. Through the survey, Goitein aimed to document a "true" Arab Jewish culture. He chose the community of a small village in southern Yemen, whose inhabitants immigrated to Israel in 1950. Goitein engaged an 'indigenous' research assistant, Yussif Sayyani, in order to interview these Jews in their Arabic language. Sayyani left hundreds of hand written reports, containing a detailed description of the village, its history, houses, domestic and social life, as well as the folktales, proverbs and songs of its people. The paper will address the process of knowledge production between the scholar, the assistant, and their interlocutors, focusing on the documentation and interpretation of Yemeni women folk songs.

Eszter Ruttkay-Miklián (Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Hungary)

Regulyversum and Reguly Archive – publishing the manuscripts of the Hungarian Ethnologist Antal Reguly (1819-1858)

Antal Reguly is known as a Romantic explorer who travelled to Siberia searching for the ancestors of the Hungarians in the middle of the 19th century. The knowledgeable polyhistor had a short but intense life, leaving his collected linguistic and folklore materials in Khanty and Mansi languages untranslated for the future as he passed away at the age of 39. Understanding and analysing his material is a continuous work in the field of Finno-Ugric studies: several scholars have been working on publishing his materials. Nevertheless, his ego-documents (letters, diaries, notes) are not yet published. At the bicentenary of his birth, a project started led by Eszter Ruttkay-Miklián for transcribing, translating and publishing this material. The electronic site for publication will be opened in spring 2024. It will contain a wide selection of letters, diaries, maps preserved in the Archives of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, and also a collection of ethnographic objects from the collection of the Museum of Ethnography. The project started at the Antal Reguly Museum and House of Arts and Crafts in the town of Zirc, where the documents (and data collected during the research) has been used to build a permanent exhibition about the life and work of Reguly. The exhibition opened in September 2021. In this presentation I would like to introduce the scholarly heritage of Antal Reguly, focusing on some important questions of the history of anthropology. I will show examples from the website as well as the exhibition itself.

Session II [19:30-21:15 pm CET]

Filip Wróblewski (Jagiellonian University, Poland)

Ethnographic archives after years. Recycling and re-use

Paper will be focused on the issue of pontificated use of archival resources produced by anthropologists. Indicated issues will be presented in relation to archival materials used to write history of anthropology. In relation to the practices of making digitized collections available to a wider audience. Based on selected examples from Polish anthropology archival initiatives will be presented examples: The case of the Digital Archive of Józef Burszta will be used to show power of impact on local communities of materials "liberated" in accordance with open access and creative commons policies. It will also allow the presentation activities on the borderline of disciplines and the "opening" the history of anthropology to artistic activities. A research project focused on the generation of the last witnesses of World War II, using materials left over from the Nazi "Racial and Folklore Research" at the Institute for German Studies in the East (IDO), will show, above all, the dangerous potential inherent in ethnographic archives. It also provides an opportunity to reflect on describing "uncomfortable" aspects of anthropology history. The project of digitizing the archive and field materials of Stanislaw Poniatoski is a great example of restoring the memory of the anthropological community of somewhat forgotten researchers. Popularization activities carried out by the Ethnographic Museum in Krakow based on the resources of the Laboratory for Documenting Folk Art is a great example of attempts to tell the history of 20th century anthropology and build a meta-commentary on the research practices of anthropology and its discourse.

Anna Caroline Haubold (Herder-Institut, Germany)

The archives as a field site: from the threshold of the archives to the reading room and back to the researcher's desk

Anthropologists see the archives as field site and not as a static institution preserving archival documents. The archives are subject to various dynamics, e.g., power relations. Archivists are gatekeepers and may have great influence on the outcome of the research. But not only does the accessibility to archival documents affect the research but also the "allure of the archives" (Farge 2013). The archives have power to delight, astonish and absorb the researcher (but also to overwhelm and frustrate). The critical analysis should not begin when the researcher sits in the reading room bended over the historical documents but when she/he crosses the threshold of the archives. In my paper I examine on the one hand the archives as social field with encounters and (unwritten) rules, and on the other hand emotions during fieldwork and their influence on knowledge production. The sensory and emotional experiences of archival research as well as the archival documents with their material power(fulness)

gain epistemological value and should be an indispensable part of the ethnographic writings.

Kelly Fitzgerald (University College Dublin, Ireland)

The Irish Folklore Commission and the Irish Civil War

The Irish Folklore Commission, now housed in the National Folklore Collection, UCD, was formed in 1935. The foundation of this Commission occurred twelve years after the end of the Irish Civil War. Members involved in the creation of the IFC fell on both sides of the 1921-22 Treaty Debate. The IFC had folkloric, ethnographic fieldwork carried out by full-time and part-time collectors. The collectors worked in areas where they were most likely were reared and raised. They worked at a local and regional level in the name of the national. The Bureau of Military History Collection, 1913-1921 is a collection of witness statements, photographs and voice recordings that were collected by the State between 1947 and 1957, in order to gather primary source material for the revolutionary period in Ireland from 1913 to 1921. The Bureau's voice recordings were produced with the co-operation of the IFC during the period 1950 to 1951. In this age of digitisation, previous archival collections can be brought together in ways not previously imagined. Critical engagement with this process reveals the nuances of history. In particular, evidence emerges demonstrating the continued impact of the Irish cultural revolution and revival along with religious identity. This, in turn, allows political ideologies to be surpassed. Assessments of this nature facilitate a thorough examination of the workings and processes behind such organisations. The result allows us to ascertain more clearly how the uncertainties of a civil war may have influenced Irish ethnographic collections.

Diego Ballesterio (University of Bonn, Germany)

Epistemologies, Devices and Archives of "Otherness"

Towards the end of the 19th century, Anthropology faced a complex problem: the plausible disappearance of its study object. As a corollary of colonialist expansion, the Indigenous Peoples who had remained "immutable" for centuries seemed doomed to "extinction". As a discipline devoted to the study of "races", Anthropology was confronted with the imperative of a profuse recording of these peoples in order to codify and archive their "otherness" for future studies. Taking into account the described context, I analyze the epistemological and material devices implemented by the German anthropologist Robert Lehmann-Nitsche (1872-1938) in order to build a flow information model and a multimedia archive of the Argentinean Indigenous Peoples. During his 30 years as head of the

Anthropology Section of the Museum of La Plata (Argentina), Lehmann-Nitsche made photographs, sound recordings and written records in order to obtain, materialize, inscribe and store the "otherness" of the aforementioned peoples. Thus, I examine how these data functioned as material, stable, immutable and transportable inscriptions. At the same time, I explore the complex and extensive network of collaborators, including Indigenous People systematically invisibilized in official publications, which provided him with financial, instrumental and epistemological resources to achieve his objectives. Finally, I show how this case was part of collaborative projects to build transatlantic anthropological archives, which granted temporal immanence to the "otherness" of Indigenous Peoples and proliferated their knowledge in different spaces of knowledge.

Ana Carolina Arias (National University de la Plata, Argentina)

Teachers' participation in collective gathering of folkloric and anthropological data

In 1921, a large territorial folkloric collection was carried out in Argentina through the administrative networks of elementary schools. In eight months, the National Council of Education, the organism that had promoted this initiative, gathered a set of 88009 files. A total of 3250 collectors from different provinces and national territories participated. The folklore collection was guided by a set of instructions, which also established a classification of what was to be collected. The main categories were four: Beliefs and Customs, Narrations and Proverbs, Art and Popular Knowledge. This presentation focuses in particular on the responses associated with the category of Popular Knowledge, inside the Province of Buenos Aires. This category includes procedures and recipes for curing diseases; vulgar names of animals, plants and celestial phenomena; names of geographical features, sites and roads; and indigenous tribes and languages; among others. Through a set of cases, we analyze where the compiled information came from and what type of data was prioritized in the answers. What I am trying to show is the central role that teachers played in the collection, processing and classification of data related to the anthropological sciences. Especially, regarding indigenous tribes, their customs and languages.