

PERFORMING AN ARCHIVE: AIMS, INTERESTS, IDEOLOGIES AND EXPECTATIONS

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Abstract: Public archives are repositories of human memory and history, which collect, preserve, and provide access to the records and documents creating a bridge between the past, present, and future. Archives are dynamic structures that can be interpreted as knowledge hubs, with channels of information flowing in them, activities performed within the “black box” of the institution invisible for outsiders, and channels to disseminate information for groups that they serve. These channels develop and are designed under the impact of several factors. In this article we present six factors that have shaped the development and functioning of the Estonian Folklore Archives. We first illustrate the impact of these factors, browsing through the historical periods of Estonian folkloristics. Successively, the articles of the current volume on various aspects of tradition archives are introduced and presented within the framework of the hub conception, and the relevant impact factors are highlighted. The article demonstrates that ideological framework, public expectations, institutional status, research paradigms, individual incentives of the people in charge, and (developments in) technological equipment constantly shape the content and operation of tradition archives in various time periods and circumstances.

Keywords: folklore archives, folklore collections, disciplinary history, ideology, knowledge hubs

INTRODUCTION

Archives are repositories of human memory and history, which collect, store, and provide access to the materials conveying records from past to present society, and from the present to the future. However, archives are never mere collections of documents, static or neutral entities. They are dynamic and complex systems that are influenced by several factors. There are always purposes, intentions for creating and using these collections, ideologies and public interests behind these intentions, and last but not least real persons, researchers and archivists who implement and factualise the intentions, as they have the power to control and direct streams in and out of archives. The current volume, based on the papers presented on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of the Estonian Folklore Archives (EFA; see Archives 2017), brings into focus the role of cultural archives as a mediator of knowledge between various times, interest groups, and communities.

An archive is a kind of black box, and what happens inside remains hidden for outsiders, direct or indirect users of archives, who are not aware through what kind of processes and selections the materials reach the archives, how the archival items are organised and systematised, and which materials and why are selected to be presented to the public. In conceptualising the essence of archives we also have to keep in mind the ambiguous role, dilemmas and opportunities of an archival researcher in fulfilling the public task, responding to the requirements of funders, and performing their personal agenda.

The current introductory article of the volume seeks to outline the conceptual framework of the main factors that contribute to the creation and performance of an archive and to reveal the influence of these factors and instances of reconciliations in the case of the Estonian Folklore Archives and, in a wider context, as presented in the articles of this volume.

FACTORS SHAPING THE PERFORMANCE OF ARCHIVES

The concept of a public archive encompasses a tacit or explicit agreement between an institution and society to (collect and) store certain kinds of materials for the future and for public purposes. We tend to consider archives as anonymous entities standing steady as rocks, performing their obvious actions without much ado. However, for the emergence of reliable archives, often a considerable effort of individuals, backed up by the communities concerned, socio-politically suitable momentum, and secure facilities are needed. The agenda and aims of an

archive, which for an outsider may seem self-evident, need to be configured as an intellectual effort of the people in charge. The practical activities within an archive require considerate weighing of the options and resources, and making responsible choices, keeping in mind the expectations and needs of the society and/or various communities, as well as predicting what might be relevant information for the future people. When planning and designing the collection and acquisition of materials, organising the materials, deciding what is relevant and what is not, and mediating these materials to the public or to the international research community, researchers and archivists have to find their way how to negotiate and reconcile different aims, interests, ideologies and expectations.

Based on our knowledge and experience in the history of folklore collecting in Estonia and maintenance of the Estonian Folklore Archives, we have listed six main factors influencing the performance of archives:

- ideological framework;
- sociocultural situation, public needs and expectations;
- institutional status & funding;
- research paradigms;
- individual interests & choices of archivists;
- development of technologies.

In the following we will illustrate the impact of these factors during various periods of the history of collection, maintenance, and dissemination of information related to Estonian folklore. In addition, the collection of articles dedicated to folklore archives offers us a splendid opportunity to test this conceptual framework with a wider set of experiences, to observe if and how much these factors are revealed in the research articles focusing on or at least relating to the archival matters.

HISTORICAL PERIODS OF FOLKLORE COLLECTING AND COLLECTIONS IN ESTONIA

This chapter observes how the abovementioned factors have impacted folklore collecting and archive formation as well as the research and public uses of the collections in different time periods of the history of Estonia. The periodisation is based on the main political and ideological turns: gaining independence in 1918, losing independence in 1940, and regaining independence in 1991.

Developing a nation under German and Russian colonisation (1850–1918)

By the nineteenth century Estonia formed part of Tsarist Russia. At the same time the region was locally ruled and administered by the Baltic Germans who had arrived in Estonia in the thirteenth century under the aegis of Christianisation but had step by step acquired the lands and enslaved the local people, Estonians. The romantic, Herderian views of folklore as a “true nature” of the humankind gained popularity in Europe, and reached the educated Baltic German upper class, who started to note down and also publish the information about Estonian folklore, mythology, customs, and habits. Folklore collection started among German Estophiles in the mid-nineteenth century.

In the second half of the nineteenth century more and more Estonians succeeded in receiving academic education. They inevitably found themselves on the borderlines of two social strata. Estonians started to publish books, calendars, and newspapers in Estonian and for Estonians, which led to the rise of national self-awareness and political movement. As most of the historical knowledge about Estonians was written down by foreigners, an idea evolved to collect information about the past of Estonians from Estonians themselves. The Society of Estonian Literati (1872–1893) was led by some of the most notable Estonians at the time (F. R. Faehlmann, F. R. Kreutzwald, J. Hurt) and the Society’s main aim was to publish books in Estonian to balance the great number of books in German; in addition, campaigns were launched to note down folklore and language.

The leading figure in some of the most important campaigns was pastor and linguist Jakob Hurt (1839–1907). He initiated a nation-wide folklore collecting campaign in 1888, which lasted up to his death in 1907. The call to collect folklore in its broadest sense was published in several daily papers. All these calls were positively received and the response to Hurt was larger than it had ever been for a collecting call (Mälk 1963: 251). It has been estimated that the amount of correspondents Jakob Hurt had was around 1,400 people. In parallel, and partly as a competition to Hurt’s campaign, a similar large-scale action was performed by M. J. Eisen, who turned his attention mainly to folk narratives and short forms and published several popular books within a short period of time. At the beginning of the twentieth century a large-scale collection of folk melodies was organised by Oskar Kallas under the aegis of the Estonian Students’ Society (Jaago 2005; Järv & Sarv 2014).

The nation-wide folklore collecting campaigns helped to increase political awareness and ambitions, forming a basis for the nation-state (like in several other countries) (Ó Giolláin 2000; Anttonen 2005: 82). Participation in folklore

collecting gave everyone a possibility of a personal input into the national processes and also encouraged women to step up from their previous hidden position in the public sphere (e.g., Kikas 2017). For this higher purpose there were contributors feeling motivated to educate themselves to read and write. The campaigns brought Estonians closer to the modern society with its literary culture and diminished gaps between the social classes and genders. The collecting work helped to increase the value of Estonian culture for Estonians themselves (since in the modernising society the ruling German culture as a literary culture was seen as more advanced, valuable and important), and to bring Estonians as a community first to the same level with Germans, but in a broader perspective closer to the image of a proper nation.

The collecting work of this period took place partly on a private initiative, but in many cases also under the name of larger societies or organisations, which gave a greater weight to the undertaking. For example, Hurt's collection campaign was officially conducted within the framework of scientific activities of the St Petersburg Academy of Sciences. Although the collections belonged to private individuals and societies, it was clear that they were intended to serve the public interests, that is, mainly the interests of the Estonian community. Hurt considered it necessary to write down "not only the beautiful, but also the obscure", including superstition and customs, which caused clashes with other pastors; he had to justify that all the information was necessary for the benefit of science and had to be accurate (Kalkun & Sarv 2014). In organising his collection actions, Hurt followed the model of the historical-geographic research paradigm emerging in neighbouring Finland and invited people to note down all the variants of the songs and other texts in all the details and linguistic peculiarities, as well as the data about the informant (his/her age or birth date and place of residence). Those principles yielded a large collection of folklore with decent metadata, suitable for scientific research.

During this period the collecting work was carried out largely on the initiative of individuals, without the constant institutional and state support, although there was some support from the different academic societies of that period. On the other hand, these initiatives fell on fertile ground in society, as a necessity emerged to foster national identity in the conditions of colonial suppression. The Estonian-oriented reputation of public figures, such as Hurt, Eisen, and Kallas, made it easier to draw people into the collecting actions.

The wide thematic range and the archiving principles worked out by Jakob Hurt determined the scope and standards of folklore collecting, archiving and folkloristic research in Estonia for a long time. Matthias Johann Eisen started to give the collected folklore (folk narratives, riddles, etc.) back to people through popular publications of (reworked) folklore texts, thus feeding into the activity

of folklore collecting but at the same time actively contributing to the tradition of literary transmission of Estonian folklore.

Although Estonians' (predominantly peasants') literacy rate was exceptionally high due to the wide network of elementary schools, amounting to 97% according to the 1897 census, the writing habits took time to spread (Raun 2017). As Estonians were, by and large, excluded from the administrative organisation of life, the necessity to use writing was limited and the peasant society functioned predominantly as an oral community. From 1866 the administration and courts of lower levels were transferred to Estonians (Traat 1968) and after that writing skills among peasants improved gradually. The folklore collecting activities induced by the first nationwide calls in the 1880s turned out to be the first serious attempts for many of the contributors to express themselves in writing (Kikas 2014). In order to organise a collecting campaign of folk melodies, Oskar Kallas needed people with specific notation skills. The solution was found through engaging in the fieldwork the students who had started their academic education in the St Petersburg Conservatory (Sarv 2002). The post service and the print media (newspapers) played an important role in folklore collection.

This period is also characterised by the early spread of more advanced technology for documenting reality. The phonograph was invented already in 1877 and by the end of the century the commercial production of recording machines and wax cylinders was established. The first voice recordings of Estonian folklore were made by Finnish folklorist A. O. Väisänen in 1912 with a phonograph acquired by the Finnish Literary Society, an organisation established in 1831 to promote the Finnish language and literature, and to collect and document Finnish folk poetry.

Independent Republic of Estonia (1918–1939)

After gaining independence, the ideological situation in Estonia changed. The long-dreamt freedom had been gained, and the first concern was to establish all the state's functions. Tartu University was reorganised to provide education in Estonian (instead of Swedish, German, or Russian as before), and the chairs to develop research and education in the fields relevant for Estonia were established, among others the Chair of Estonian and Comparative Folklore. The students and emerging scholars in various Estonian studies needed the folklore collections to be available, as did the writers and composers. One of the brightest students of the newly established chair, Oskar Loorits (1900–1961), took the initiative to establish a folklore archive, a place where to gather all the private folklore collections, and make them available for the public. His ideas

found support, and in 1927 the Estonian Folklore Archives was established as an independent institution within the framework of the Estonian National Museum, with stable facilities and some permanent funding from the state (Berg 2002; Järv 2013). The archives also took the task of systematic folklore collecting, aiming first to cover the “white spots”. Most of the work was still done with pen and paper, but the archive acquired a phonograph for sound recordings, and at the end of the 1930s recording of the best singers and players was organised at the studio of the Estonian National Broadcasting, using shellac discs. The number of audio carriers was limited, however, and only selected best examples of songs and instrumental music were recorded. In the fieldwork also the photo camera was used on a regular basis. The archives also benefited from the use of typing machines; several copies enabled to systematise the texts and spare the original manuscripts. For indexing the content registers and card file systems were established. As the folklorists working at the archives obtained a profound knowledge of the functioning and performance of folklore during their systematic fieldwork, the ethnological viewpoint on the collection as well as the research paradigm developed at the archives next to previous, mainly philological one: it was considered necessary to not only record and analyse texts, but also to inquire how, when, and for what purpose folklore was used or performed (Västriik 2005: 208). At the end of the 1930s the network of voluntary correspondents was established, guidelines and questionnaires were published, and the tradition to hold gatherings of the correspondents was started. In this way the connection with the communities providing information was re-established and maintained. In the changed political situation, it was now considered necessary to collect folklore not only from Estonians, but also to some extent from the representatives of the other peoples living in Estonia (Swedes, Russians, Romani, Germans, Jews).

Oskar Loorits established the archives as a multifunctional hub, which combined collecting, storing and systematising, research and publishing of folklore. The archives found itself in an international context that followed similar paths in the neighbouring countries, forming a network of collaboration and mutual counselling (Bula 2017).

World War II and Soviet occupation (1940–1991)

The war brought about the loss of independence and almost 50-years-long Soviet occupation. Estonia was occupied by the Soviet Red Army in 1940 and was incorporated into the USSR. Extensive mass deportations to Siberia were carried out in 1941. The Soviet occupation was followed by the German occupation in

1941–1944, and by another Soviet occupation from 1944 onwards (along with the second wave of mass deportations in 1949, and repressions among the members of the cultural elite). For fear of the latter, ca 80,000 Estonians fled to Sweden, Germany, and other Western countries.

After a decade of reorganisations and instability, breaks in the operation of the archives, evacuation and re-evacuation of the collections, the Estonian Folklore Archives ended up in the following situation. The Estonian National Museum was divided into a literary museum (including the folklore archives) and a museum of ethnography. The Estonian Folklore Archives was renamed as the Department of Folklore of the State Literary Museum of the ESSR. In addition, the research function was separated from the archival function, and for that a new institute of language and literature was established in Tartu in 1947 and it moved to Tallinn in 1952 (Kulasalu 2017). The official agenda of the archives was supplemented by the compulsory “public enlightenment” or popularisation function. Oskar Loorits, the former head, ideologist and motivator of the archives, had fled to Sweden during the wartime, but one of the co-workers, musicologist Herbert Tampere, succeeded in stepping up and taking charge of the position of the head of the archives from 1952 to 1967.

The whole period is characterised by double ideologies: that of the occupants, backed up by administrative and military power, and the nationalistic one seeking to preserve the national identity, language, culture, tacitly omnipresent but suppressed in the conditions of occupation, and, by and large, hidden from public communication (see, e.g., Annus 2018). In the performance of the archives both ideologies had to be negotiated to follow the principle of the proverb “the wolves are fed and the sheep are safe”: it was necessary to obey all the commands and regulations from “above” but it was done as little as possible. Instead, the archives strived to proceed with the action plan established by Oskar Loorits (who had become persona non grata in the conditions of the new political situation). On the one hand, the archive was working according to the new ideology and its demands, on the other hand the staff continued many of their previous practices. Especially in the first decades of occupation one had to be very cautious with any kind of expressions of nationalism. The head of the archives, Herbert Tampere, having been repressed and spent a year in prison, nevertheless succeeded in conveying the action principles and mentality of the prewar archives to the new co-workers, carried on and advocated the ethnological direction in the research, was concerned about the new generation of specialists in the field, and encouraged young co-workers to dedicate themselves to research. His way to maintain the archives, adhere to its action principles and conduct the research was challenging in the political-institutional situation of the time (Kippar 1999; Hiiemäe 2009; Goršič 2018).

Later on, in the 1970s and 1980s, the contacts with Finnish folklorists brought about fresh winds and new research directions, for example those related to children's lore and contemporary folklore (Järvinen 2008).

In terms of folklore collection, the network of co-workers was carefully maintained throughout the whole period. In addition, it was decided to conduct extensive (and sometimes interdisciplinary and interinstitutional) yearly fieldwork expeditions. Pen and paper, typewriters, and post service were still relevant. The development of tape recorders enabled the archives to make more and better-quality recordings during fieldwork, although tape supplies were still limited and clear preference was given to musical folklore.

Also, folklorists did their best to organise seminars and meetings with informants and co-workers in different corners of Estonia, to continuously collect and fill in the gaps in folklore collections, given the limiting possibilities of political ideology.

In the conditions of censorship and ideological pressure there were subjects that had to be avoided in the collections as well as in public output. The study of (folk) religion and religiosity was condemned; there was only one proper viewpoint on "bourgeois Estonia". It was clear that especially in the early Soviet occupation, but to a remarkable extent up to the end of the occupation it was not possible to document the real opinions, viewpoints, religiosity, or humour that circulated unofficially among the public. In the 1950s the collections of the EFA were censored for anti-Soviet, Christian and sexual folklore (Kulasalu 2013). The political framing also limited the possibilities of collection and research – it was safer to focus on historical and unpolitical records of folklore (Saarlo 2023). However, conditions permitting, even banned actions such as folk belief research were cunningly presented as following the political orders (Goršič 2018).

The independent Republic of Estonia (1991 until today)

The end of the 1980s was strongly carried by the national spirit. The transition to independence brought its own problems, but also new opportunities. This meant changes in the directions and conditions on many levels, most prominently political, but also institutional, financial, and technical, as well as in the research directions and archival work.

After regaining independence Estonia once again faced the task of establishing all the state institutions in the conditions of a tight economic situation. Folklore archives still formed a part of the literary museum that was renamed as the Estonian Literary Museum (instead of the previous State Literary Museum).

In 1995 the original name of the Estonian Folklore Archives was re-established. The unleashed feeling of nationhood was blossoming and interest in folklore collections as one of the cornerstones of cultural independence grew. Since then, interest in various phenomena of traditional folklore has been increasing, the collections of traditional folklore are in consistent use in different kinds of creative re-uses, most visibly in the contemporary music scene where the branches of traditional and folk music enjoy the popularity comparable to pop and rap. It has been pointed out that while the national awakening of the nineteenth century gave rise to the tradition of song festivals, the regaining of independence at the end of the twentieth century was accompanied by a wide-spread rise of folklore movement (Rüütel 2010: 615). This also meant that there were communities who immediately needed services and counselling from the experts at the archives in order to engage in their professional activities or hobbies. The importance of the archives was made loudly heard by the communities of musicians and cultural organisations in 2020 when the archives faced funding problems in connection with the reorganisation of the research funding system. A public appeal concerning the funding of the humanities and Estonian studies was made to the ministry and the parliament (Avalik pöördumine 2020), which draw attention to the research funding issues, and among other things led to establishing a specific research funding programme on Estonian culture.

In the 1990s the definition of folklore broadened considerably (see, e.g., Jaago 1999), and that in turn opened some doors that had been closed for quite a while. In the new political situation already from the end of the 1980s, it was possible to start collecting political folklore, student folklore, soldier folklore, children's folklore, organise expeditions to collect the folklore of diaspora Estonians, record in growing amounts urban folklore and folklore in the online environment; also conscious observation, recording and research of belief folklore was carried out, which under the Soviet regime had been suppressed. Many publications were based on the results of recent collection campaigns, so what was collected in campaigns reached the public faster than before, and research and publications were more connected with a specific topic (Hiimäe 2002).

Research began to resurface alongside collection work already in the earlier decades but was not presented as work of primary importance. In 1997 the official status of the Estonian Literary Museum changed from the sub-institution of the Academy of Sciences to a research and development institution under the Ministry of Education, and from 1998 onwards the Estonian Folklore Archives was mainly funded as a research group. Now research rose to the forefront alongside collecting work, also being greatly influenced by folklorists' personal interests. The folklorists working in the folklore archives were strongly motivated to publish research articles, participate in international research communication,

and obtain academic degrees, as it gradually became more and more important to secure the funding and continuation of all the activities of the archives. The funding scheme neglected the need to finance archival work for a long time. Later a special funding programme was established for research collections, and by now the collections of the Estonian Literary Museum are directly funded by the Ministry of Education and Research, while research funding, on the other hand, is, by and large, project-based.

In the new era, also fieldwork equipment and the digitisation of archival records started to change rapidly, and has continued until today. The creation of the Estonian Literary Museum's file repository KIVIKE in 2010–2012, of which the EFA's collections form a part, and its numerous specific web-gates based on the archival collections, have given a new direction to the technical operation and accessibility of the archive. However, reaching the digital world does not automatically mean solving the problems of archiving and data accessibility, but new and more complicated ones have also arisen. Digital systems need their own innovations and solutions. The data carriers, programmes, etc., change quite quickly, which means considerable visionary work in folklore archives: what happens to the current data carriers, how to preserve them, how different programmes and storage units understand each other and are to be read in the future. Also, digital open-access archives mean a new responsibility for the folklore archives, since not all data are meant to be reached and used by the wider public. By now, a large part of the cultural communication takes place through electronic channels and online fieldwork and collecting campaigns have become an essential method of documentation next to in-person fieldwork and interviews. In the field of place lore, the geoinformation technologies have opened up new ways to document, disseminate, and analyse the information. While in the previous decades the main issue was scarcity of data carriers (wax cylinders, magnetic tapes, photo films), today we face the problem of excessive abundance of available information, and the question is how to make meaningful choices about what to consider valuable enough to preserve in the archives.

Despite all the turns and changes, the main aims of the performance of the Estonian Folklore Archives have remained the same throughout the almost a hundred years of its existence. Oskar Loorits's visions and aims (see, e.g., Loorits 1932) have proved to be justified, as have his principles to combine collection, archival work, research and dissemination under the same institution. From today's viewpoint this seems to be the key to a fully functional folklore archive. In so doing, the materials of the archives have become well known and are in wide academic and popular use in the society.

This same question of what an archive could achieve with its materials and open accessibility is pounding in the heads of most folklorists working in folklore archives across the globe: here we often find ourselves involved in another dance of the good and the (d)evil – that of the obligation to collect, preserve and give back to the society, but also to protect and stress the value of privacy and data that is accumulated in the ever-evolving knowledge hubs that the folklore archives are.

ARCHIVES AS KNOWLEDGE HUBS

On the one hand, and already by definition, archives have the task of collecting and perpetuating knowledge from the past and/or contemporary era for the future, while on the other hand, archives already live in this future – the formation of public archives often proceeds from the need to have access to valuable materials or documents. For an outsider managing archives or collections may seem to be mainly technical work consisting in preserving items and making them accessible. Insiders know very well, though, that there are several aspects that shape the in- and out-flow of information, and the activities in-between, in the core of the hub.

We can divide the articles of the current volume into three groups: (1) the ones dealing with the flow of materials into archives; (2) the articles that focus on the actions and activities within the archives that by and large remain invisible on the outside; and (3) the articles inquiring about the new life and uses of archival materials that through different channels and dissemination have flown out of the archives.

In his article on ethnographic fieldwork at the Veps, **Indrek Jääts** details the five expeditions made by Aleksei Peterson, director of the Estonian Ethnography Museum, and his colleagues to the Southern Veps' villages (Leningrad Oblast, northeastern Russia) in the late 1960s. As an important insight into disciplinary history, the article also highlights the person of Aleksei Peterson and his mission in recording the Veps material and the bond nurtured between the Estonian ethnographers and the Veps locals. Here, the personality of the researcher, the sociocultural situation, ideological background, institutional framework, recording technologies, as well as research paradigms directing the fieldwork are equally handled. **Jacek Jackowski** explores the value of different types of sources of traditional music in the context of contemporary Polish folk music research and practices, contemplating the real quality and historical truth of the contemporary revival or reconstruction of music. On the one hand the article focuses on the work of folklore collector Oskar Kolberg, and the use

of technologies in documenting musical folklore, on the other hand it observes how the different contemporary communities of musicians can make use of those recordings. **Yanina Hrynevich** examines the formation circumstances and development of folklore collections in Belarus, concentrating on the main ideas and the most influential collectors and groups of collectors and the ebbs and tides of the political eras that have influenced this process.

The articles and discussions concentrating on the internal, hidden work of the archives constitute the bulk of this volume. **Rūta Žarskienė** analyses the activities of the Lithuanian Science Society and the history of its folklore collecting, pointing out the utopian ideals the researchers of the early twentieth century had, which proved to be the stronghold of the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore and the Lithuanian Folklore Archives. The article also illustrates the laborious work of compiling collections and modern digital databases. **Liina Saarlo** illustrates in her article the chess game between the politics, ideologies, folklorists and archives on the example of the Estonian Folklore Archives. Saarlo, on the one hand, explores the Soviet modernist worldview expressed in research policy, including folkloristics, and its acceptance among Estonian folklorists, and on the other, analyses the balancing act of authenticity in folklore research. **Päivi Mehtonen and Tarja Soiniola** describe an interdisciplinary project set up for the collection of manuscripts produced during the period of ca. 1780–1830 by craftsmen and peasants along the coast of the Gulf of Bothnia in Finland, the preservation process of the collection, but also the background of the not necessarily positive backdrop of forming such a historic collection. Here, the focus lies on the ability of digital technologies to bring together the bits of information stored in different archival collections. **Victor Denisov** lists the important work of Udmurt and Estonian researchers in collecting and preserving Udmurt folklore; **Katalin Lázár** describes the labour and pains of compiling an elaborate database on Hungarian traditional games; and **Mall Hiimäe** discusses the historical process of collecting folklore in Estonia and how the Estonian Folklore Archives has built itself up as a knowledge hub, and the responsibility it bears to its informants.

In the out-flow frame, **Helen Kõmmus** studies, compares and analyses participatory music making at Estonian and Finnish folk music festivals. Kõmmus argues that although the social dynamics of Finnish and Estonian festival participants may vary, the ultimate goal is still to form a united community, (re)presenting the old for the future of the new, also describing the dynamics of the groups. **Sille Kapper-Tiisler** analyses a part of dance folklore that is not so easily archived, described or reproduced – the bodily dimension of dance movements. She points out that as well as archives, human bodies are also knowledge hubs, which collect, preserve, develop and pass on knowledge.

In order to understand the dance manuscripts in their depth, the dance descriptions need to be re-bodied to realise their true nature. The article highlights the deficiency of technologies in storing bodily habits and experiences. **Carne Oriol and Emili Samper** illustrate the experience of opening a folklore archive structured under a university to the society and the social impact an archive could possibly have on the society with its activities and open-access databases.

CLOSING REMARKS

It is a common mistake to think that a folklore archive is something local. The truth is that folklore archives are very international in their content. The Estonian Folklore Archives stores, as also exemplified in this volume, in addition to the material and metadata on and from Estonians, some special collections from Estonian ethnic groups, neighbouring nations, rare recordings or back-up copies from other Finno-Ugric nations. Yet, they are bound together by the fact that the archive was established and is administered in Estonia.

As we can see from the historical turning points, ideals, and dilemmas discussed in this volume, also the problems folklore archives or indeed, other memory institutions, face, are quite similar, if not the same. Political funding decisions, ideological frames, strong independent researchers and the balancing act between the public requests of open access and the need to protect (meta) data privacy constantly shape the content and operation of a folklore archive. It may sometimes even require patient waiting after political decisions before moving on with archival and research work.

We hope that with this volume we can illustrate the agenda and aims of a folklore archive from the perspectives that are not necessarily so obvious. Even if on a larger scale this does not alleviate the constant pressure on a folklore archive to prove its necessity, it hopefully provides a deeper understanding of a living, evolving, and forward-looking knowledge hub that an archive is.

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