Historical Sources of Ethnomusicology in Contemporary Debate

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Historical Sources of Ethnomusicology in Contemporary Debate

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INTRODUCTION

Historical approaches in ethnomusicology, i.e., the study of any kind of oral, written, visual and audio sources embedded in this discipline's history by using modern historical theories and methods, is gaining ever more importance, yet only few publications on this topic have been available up to now. The majority of scholarly studies of ethnomusicology is focused on the analysis of contemporary fieldwork processes, drawing on fieldwork as the main methodological practice. However, historical research is a necessary field too, not only for the understanding of historical processes related to sound, music, collecting and archiving but also because this kind of research supplies an important background for contemporary work. At the same time, and due to the rapid institutionalisation of popular and oral-derived cultural expressions, older living and sometimes hidden traditions are scarce in 21st-century late modern cultures. This means that archival and other historical sources have become very important for knowledge production today. In many parts of Europe, and in other places in the world, there is a strong tradition in research applied to local cultural expressions; therefore, this publication will be an important contribution to the intersection of ethnology and historiography, the first based on fieldwork and the second on archival studies.

This anthology is a publication of the Study Group on Historical Sources of Traditional Music within the International Council of Traditional Music (ICTM). The study group was established in 1967 with the aim "… to contribute to more knowledge on the history of orally transmitted music". At the start, the focus was on historical sources of traditional music in Europe but since the 1990s the focus has shifted towards a wider international scope. Whereas written sources go further back in time, sound recordings have been possible only since the beginning of the 20th century—which is, nevertheless, a time span of more than 100 years.

Meanwhile, the study of historical sources has gained an international reputation. Thanks to the activities of the Study Group on Historical Sources of Traditional Music, symposia have been held every second year, and several conference proceedings have been published (see Ziegler 2010).

The present peer-reviewed collection of articles includes some of the contributions that were presented in two conferences organised by the Study Group; namely, the conference held in Vienna, Austria, in 2012 and the other in Aveiro, Portugal, in 2014. The articles cover a wide range of topics, which are organised into three sections:

Part One: Rethinking Archives and Collections: From Fieldwork to Digital Humanities
Part Two: Written Documents and Musical Instruments as Sources
Part Three: Individual Memory, Musical Practice and Heritage

Part One:
Rethinking Archives and Collections:
From Fieldwork to Digital Humanities

The first section of articles concerns archives, which on the one hand indicate the place where documents or sources (in this case mostly sound documents) are preserved and processed by institutions as well as accessed by users, and on the other indicate a wide and open concept, a "general system", as well as a place for memory with respect to "collections". The articles cover a wide range of thoughts, starting with rethinking the role and position of archives and the resulting epistemological findings. A number of case studies follow, dealing with the use of historical sources as additional documents for new approaches and goals, either in specific historical or comparative studies. The final two contributions present insights into archives in the 21st century and recently developed techniques, which have contributed to the archives' roles as providers of service and content as well as centres of excellence, joined together in online platforms or portals.

Miguel García breaks new ground by reflecting on archives as discursive knowledge, as the emergence from particular scientific paradigms, as aesthetically or ideologically oriented knowledge, and finally as multi-layered, fragmentary and unfinished discourses. In that way he contrasts archives seen as "things" against archives viewed as "knowledge" and, thus, opens a fresh new perspective on archives. Another new turn in the discussion about archives is the aspect of institutionalising and materialising music through sound sources, which Susana Sardo introduces. Her considerations and reflections are exemplified by Bruce Bastin's *fado* collection and concern the role of that particular archive, which shifted from treasuring silenced recordings to great public interest, and—after

fado's nomination as UNESCO Intangible Heritage—has gained consciousness as collective memory.

While these two contributions introduce a more epistemological approach to the concept of archives, the following studies utilise historical recordings for various approaches. Drago Kunej points out that commercial recordings (78 rpm recordings) have largely been overlooked by researchers in Slovenia and abroad, yet such folk music recordings have important cultural, ethnomusicological and folkloristic as well as ethnochoreological value. Thus, in his study on Slovenian folk music, the 78 rpm records offer numerous opportunities for research and constitute a complement to field recordings, or—as Kunej states—they represent the only sources for specific musical styles. The close connection or even dialogue between historical sources and fieldwork is the topic of Anda Beitāne's contribution. She demonstrates the dynamics between fieldwork and historical sources caused by a shift in Latvian ethnomusicology due to the political independence of Latvia in the early 1990s. As a consequence, historical sources were recognised as valuable and indispensable material for contemporary research.

While these two case studies use historical sources to complement and amend previous results, three more articles focus on comparative methods by analysing historical recordings for discussing cultural transformation. Susanne Fürniss analyses two historical collections of Mabi recordings made in Cameroon in 1908 and in Berlin in 1909. The problems that she faced when confronting the Mabi of today with these historical recordings represent the difficulty of linking archived sounds to their cultural meanings, which have changed during the last century: either some of the documented items of music are no longer practised today or some of today's dances were not documented in 1908, or other songs and dances were created only later on. The study of Claire Lacombe, on the other hand, focuses on the diachronic analysis of the Fang's xylophone music. She evaluates the persistence and modifications of orally transmitted music and, thereby, compares sources from different places and times. As a result, this diachronic analysis finally enters into a dialogue with the history of this music itself, showing the memory of the musicians and the memory on the place of recordings as well as the memory of the collector. Émeline Lechaux goes in a similar direction when she draws attention to the diachronic comparison of the *bwéte* ceremonies in Gabon in 1966 and in 2013. She discusses which methodology would best suit a diachronic comparison having heterogeneous collections of different ethnomusicologists at hand.

Such new approaches open the floor to the introduction to Digital Humanities, which have developed since the establishment of digital

support and online platforms for storing, organising and disseminating knowledge. Digital Humanities is a transdisciplinary field that combines knowledge of different disciplinary origins with the use of web technologies with the aim of facilitating the field's remote access and its growth through collaborative actions. This matrix closely coincides with the quality of the sound sources due to their material profile, which is perfectly transferable to digital support. Consequently, the Internet is now the most important medium for sound and music circulation and, based on the proceeding digitisation of analogue holdings or the preservation of digital born sources, "digital" sound archives have grown exponentially both in domestic and institutional contexts. Joséphine Simonnot carefully explains how the web-based platform for the French *CNRS – Musée de l'Homme*, called TELEMETA, deals with this new profile of sound archives. Her text narrates all of the processes through which the platform was conceived, based on open format, a collaborative premise and, especially, the opportunity to democratise the sound, transforming it into a collective patrimony accessible not only to specialists and researchers but also to all those who like or make music and are interested in it. However, producing an online archive includes, among other things, the necessity to classify music toward indexation. Marie-France Mifune meticulously describes the process through which a system of indexation is connected to a database when analysing DIADEMS, a structure that aims to provide new automatic tools for indexing and analysing the audio content of TELEMETA. Mifune refers to all of the steps needed to organise a classification system based on strong interdisciplinary work, which includes IT developers, acousticians, anthropologists, linguists, ethnomusicologists, sound engineers, archivists and experts in multimedia development.

The two last chapters of the first section of articles address new challenges for sound archives, framed by the development of Digital Humanities. While democratising access to sound and music patrimony, the digital platforms also create new systems of classifying music and sound, arising from the creation of the so-called friendly balance between the needs of the global user and the limits of technology. In a certain way, Digital Humanities open new possibilities for ethnomusicology and sound archives, and, simultaneously, they are an interesting place for critical enquiry that stimulates the production of new knowledge in these two fields.

Part Two:
Written Documents and Musical Instruments as Sources

The second part of this publication deals with two different kinds of historical sources: written documents, namely, handwritten song- or notebooks, and musical instruments.

Until now, personal song- or notebooks have been mostly neglected as sources and therefore rarely studied. The two articles on personal songbooks present sources from different times, and they approach the material from different perspectives. Shai Burstyn focuses on personal notebooks written by young Israeli girls between 1920 and 1960. He discusses them as important records in the socio-cultural context and historical testimonies of the tension between the individual and the community. The notebooks share the fate of being interesting sources, yet rarely preserved objects, with the Swedish personal songbooks presented in the article by Gunnar Ternhag. Ternhag's subject of research is historical songbooks, written mainly in the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. New research methods, commonly used in related, mostly text-oriented, disciplines, and terms like "musicking" (Small 1998) and "new literacy" (Barton et al., 2000) are successfully applied in studying this specific kind of historical sources in ethnomusicology. Both articles demonstrate that this approach in analysis can provide insight into practices connected with songs and singing in the past, and can contribute to a broader understanding of earlier folk traditions.

Two further articles deal with musical instruments as ethnomusicological sources. The text by M. Emin Soydaş presents research on an extinct musical instrument in Turkey, the *kopuz*. He discusses possible ways of its reconstruction on the basis of iconographical and written historical documents, and views the revitalisation of this important instrument as the ultimate aim. Andreas Meyer's article has a broader approach and considers how cultural memory is expressed in three different exhibitions of musical instruments. On the example of African musical instruments, he analyses arrangements of artifacts, based on terms and methods of semiotics and narratology, and illustrates how cultural memory is created in a museum's exhibition.

Part Three:
Individual Memory, Musical Practice and Heritage

The last section deals with individual memory versus collective history. Individual memories, stored and combined in collections and archives, are creators of collective history; they have played a significant role in multiple individual, collective, aesthetic and political discourses of national or ethnic history and identity as well as other aspects of identity. Many individual collections, in their turn, are integrated in institutional archives. Through different processes of selection and authorisation, in which individuals as well as cultural institutions play significant roles, documented cultural expressions have become representations of "cultural heritage" or legacy. Individual memories and expressions may become charged with meaning by different kinds of actors or agents but may also be re-evaluated and re-charged later on by other agents. The five articles in this section demonstrate a variety of aspects on collected and created memory, on musical practices as vehicles of identity, and on processes and problems concerning the idea of heritage.

In the first article, Ingrid Åkesson discusses how processes of selection, concerning individual singers in field recordings as well as style elements derived from these singers' practice, can contribute to the creation of aesthetic ideals in contemporary practice of traditional songs. As few traditional singers were still alive and active in Sweden in the late 20th century, archival recordings were brought forward to create an ideal for the present by listening to segments of the past. The related acquisition of sound ideals and style elements from other song cultures indicates that the process represents the creation of an (imagined) aesthetic and sound-related past rather than a past with national or ethnic characteristics.

National identity is, however, at the centre of Olli Heikkinen's article. His topic is the literary and musical creation of Finnish identity in the 19th century based on folk melodies. The author points out that the collecting of lyrics as well as of melodies was permeated with literary ethos; a national identity should be represented by printed publications of edited and arranged songs. The songs went through processes of entextualisation, decontextualisation, recontextualisation, literisation and literarisation – common elements in the cultural heritage process.

The text by Ingrid Bertleff concerns an example of a many-layered cultural and ethnic identity. The author's starting point is the song culture of Germans who, in the 18th century, settled and cultivated land along the Volga River and near the Black Sea. Many members of these still coherent and German-speaking cultural groups later migrated to the United States.

Around 1970, their traditional songs were reinterpreted as symbols of a newly created group identity, as American Germans from Russia, now regarding the group's history from the perspective of the present. Thus, the present need for cultural identity is presented as the driving force behind creating a new discourse about the past.

Christiane Gesierich's article also focuses on memory and reconstruction. She studies the Russian *gusli* singer Aleksandr Kotomkin through the prism of three dimensions of memory. As a representative of the traditional performance of *byliny*, old Russian heroic epic songs, in post-WWII Germany where he took refuge, he contributed to the memories of this tradition in accompanied form, as well as acquiring a prominent place in the collective memory of his readers and listeners. In his autobiography, he resurrected the Russia of his childhood based on his own memories.

The last article in this anthology, building a bridge to the first article by Miguel Garcia, takes a critical and theoretical stance. Tala Jarjour discusses the concepts of archive, safeguarding, representation and authority, as well as the discourse surrounding these concepts. She focuses on the relationship between the contemporary safeguarding of musical traditions endangered by violence, and questions of representation and authority. Jarjour especially problematises current attempts to preserve the music of Christians in Syria, where not only the music but also the performers are under constant threat of annihilation. The article suggests close affinities between pain, agency and the authority to represent, and, pointing at a few examples, poses critical questions about collecting music and about the kinds and levels of contextual awareness that inform such representational engagement. Among other theorists, the author refers to Jacques Derrida concerning the archive, and Talal Asad concerning agency and pain.

With this anthology the editors endeavour to contribute to the ongoing discussion about archives and open a discussion about historical sources and their role in the field of ethnomusicology. Our goals are to promote critical reflection on the past, and determine the position and stress the value of historical sources in contemporary debate. Therefore, we encourage other colleagues to review and reconsider the material preserved in archives and other collections.

Finally, we would like to express our sincerest thanks to all our authors-colleagues for contributing and providing insight in their current research. We are very grateful to Aoife Hinley, Emily Schalk and Marlene de Wilde for language checking and proofreading.

The Editors

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PART ONE:

RETHINKING ARCHIVES AND COLLECTIONS: FROM FIELDWORK TO DIGITAL HUMANITIES

CHAPTER ONE

SOUND ARCHIVES UNDER SUSPICION

MIGUEL A. GARCÍA

This article is an exogamic venture: an attempt to think about sound archives beyond the boundaries of ethnomusicology.[1] In recent years, ethnomusicology has usually—but not always—been the "natural" field of research and criticism for field-recording-based sound archives. Despite the fact that ethnomusicology has a heterogeneous and polyphonic texture due to its proximity to other social and humanistic disciplines, most of us share a strong presupposition: archives are "sets of things" or "sets of objects" that must be named, classified, studied and put in order, mainly according to their materiality. I use the concept "materiality" in order to emphasise the status that recordings acquire when their aural, sensitive and human dimensions are underestimated or made invisible.

Generally, we bear this presupposition in mind to different degrees and in a conscious or unconscious manner all along the different stages of our research with any kind of sound recordings. Of course, this is not a perspective that must be abandoned because it has been the background of many research projects and institutional programmes that have produced high-quality results. But, in my opinion, it would be theoretically healthy to think of sound archives by setting this perspective apart, at least for a while. Thus, in this paper I aim to replace the concept of "archives as sets of things" with the concept of "archives as knowledge". Due to my broad approach to this matter, I hope that some conclusions may be directed towards other types of archives or documents.

If we provisionally accept that archives in general, and sound archives in particular, offer us or, let's say, are some sort of knowledge, then we could suggest five interweaving archive attributes:

1. Archives are discursive knowledge
2. Archives emerge from particular scientific paradigms
3. Archives are aesthetically oriented knowledge
4. Archives are ideologically oriented knowledge

5. Archives are shaped by multi-sourced, fragmentary and unfinished discourses[2]

Archives are discursive knowledge

Unfortunately, we have few theoretical works on archives and even fewer on sound archives. However, some stimulating discussions on archives and the Internet have emerged in recent years regarding accessibility, decentralisation, democratisation, copyrights and so on.[3] Most of these discussions seem to overlap the concepts of archive and file. Usually, both concepts are used to refer to something like bits of information moving across the Internet and being manipulated by different powers and technologies. Also, we have works that draw attention to the relationship between archives, memory and colonialism. García Gutiérrez´s book, *Otra memoria es posible. Estrategias descolonizadoras del archivo mundial* (2004), is perhaps the most provocative example of that perspective. To put it simply, García Gutierrez denounces the colonialist procedures behind some archives and makes claims for the democratisation of the world memory. In ethnomusicology, Ana María Ochoa Gautier (2011) argues that nowadays the role of sound archives is mainly to contribute to the reorganisation of the senses and the redistribution of the sensitive. Ochoa Gautier takes into consideration how new technologies create forms of self-production that help to move archives from formal institutions into the private sphere. From a very peculiar point of view, the French philosopher Jacques Derrida, in his book *Mal de Archivo. Una impresión freudiana* (1997), speculates on Freud's notebook, and on his house in Vienna becoming a museum and archive. Frankly, Derrida's writing is very erratic and it does not help us to define what an archive is. Quite different is Michel Foucault's *Archaeology of Knowledge* (2004 [1969]), in which the discursive character of knowledge is highlighted and a definition of archive is provided. On one hand, from Foucault's perspective, scientific discourse—we could say ethnomusicological discourse—is not a surface upon which pre-existing objects—let's say songs, recordings, cylinders, etc.—are described but rather a *locus* where objects are recreated or even invented.

On the other hand, Foucault points out that archives are

(…) systems that establish statements as events (with their own conditions and domain of appearance) and things (with their own possibility and field of use) (146) (…) the archive defines a particular level: that of a practice that causes a multiplicity of statements to emerge as so many regular events, as so many things to be dealt with and manipulated. (…) it reveals

the rules of a practice that enables statements both to survive and to undergo regular modification. It is the general system of the formation and transformation of statements. (147)

Summarising Foucault's point of view, we can say that systems of statements create events and things, and that the archive emerges like "the general system of formation and transformation of statements" (147). Clearly, it is possible to reconstruct the history of many sound archives from Foucault's approach and to show how the discursive handling of all the agents involved works.

Let us focus on a case study. Since 2011, I have been working at the Phonogramm-Archiv of Berlin with three wax cylinder collections of Kawésqar (or Alakaluf), Selknam (or Ona), and Yagan (or Yamana) songs and verbal utterances. The recordings were made in Tierra del Fuego—an archipelago at the southernmost tip of South America—between 1907 and 1923 by Charles Wellington Furlong, an American explorer, Wilhelm Koppers and Martin Gusinde—both German anthropologists and missionaries of the *Societas Verbi Divini (*Society of the Divine Word).[4] In all, the collectors made 76 recordings, which were sent to the Phonogramm-Archiv of Berlin for preservation and study. Thanks to Susanne Ziegler of the Phonogramm-Archiv, it was possible to reconstruct the history of the three collections. The cylinders were sent to Berlin by the collectors before the Second World War. During the last days of the war, all the cylinders were evacuated from the museum in order to protect them from the bombardment. In total, 2000 cylinder cases were sent to Silesia. At the end of the war, the cases were under the control of Soviet forces and sent to Leningrad. In 1960 they were moved to East Berlin, and when the Wall fell, they were returned to the Ethnological Museum in Berlin-Dahlem. This explains why for a period of almost 40 years the cylinders were thought to be lost.

Table 1 shows information about the collectors and the recordings.

One of the aims of my research on these collections and collectors was to reconstruct "discursive lines", that is, dialogical nets, shaped by researchers and information on people from Tierra del Fuego and their songs. I realised that not only had the collectors tried to characterise Fuegian songs but also many travellers, military men, anthropologists, other missionaries, one psychiatrist and, more importantly, four ethnomusicologists: Erich von Hornbostel (1913, 1936, 1948, 1986), the Argentine ethnomusicologist Jorge Novati (1969–1970), the American folklorist Alan Lomax (Chapman 1972), and the French musicologist Gilbert Rouget (1970, 1976). What I found extremely interesting in these studies and the dialogues between those ethnomusicologists was that very

Collector	Number of cylinders	Recording date	Location (Tierra del Fuego)	Ethnic group
Martin Gusinde (1886–1969)	13	1923	Canal Smith, Mejillones, Muñoz Gamero, and Remolino	Alakaluf, Selknam, Yagan
Wilhelm Koppers (1886–1961)	30	1921–1922	?	Alakaluf, Yagan
Charles Wellington Furlong (1874–1967)	33	1907–1908	Lauwi, Najmish, Puerto Harberton, Punta Arenas, Río del Fuego, and Río Douglas	Selknam, Yagan

Table 1-1 Collectors and early recordings in Tierra del Fuego

easily and very early on the analysis and discussions moved from the "recordings of Fuegian songs" to the "Fuegian songs themselves". That means that the object of research was changed, almost imperceptibly. The first object of research, "the recordings of Fuegian songs", included some awareness of the presence of technological mediation—the phonograph and the wax cylinders—and the intentions of the collectors. In the second object of research, "Fuegian songs themselves", technology and collectors were both deleted. It was not an innocuous or naive change but involved a significant epistemological transformation.

If Michel Foucault were alive, he would probably say that a system of scientific statements gave origin to something called "Fuegian songs" and now we have something called a "Fuegian songs archive" that allows us to form new statements. Namely, the "Fuegian songs archive" was created by discursive procedures. Since—according to Foucault's concept—discourse is not limited to verbal utterances, it is possible to affirm that musical analyses carried out by Hornbostel (1936, 1948) and Rouget (1970, 1976) were also statements that contributed to creating the Fuegian songs. To be coherent with this viewpoint, we could say that the songs from Tierra del Fuego were created twice, first by Fuegians and then by scientific discourse. An ethnocentric image of the Fuegian was created by scientific discourse; in this manner their songs were conceptualised as the "most primitive" and "exotic" sounds from around the world, the "oldest living testimonies" of our own music.[5]

Archives emerge from particular scientific paradigms

Since this is the most evident attribute of archives, I will address it briefly. Even though scientific paradigms influence every moment of research, I only focus on one aspect.[6] The cornerstone of many archives with which we work is collecting. An idea strongly rooted in collectors' positivistic imaginary of the beginning of the 20th century was that sounds were "things" to be collected. In that scientific paradigm, the word "collection" implies that:

a) Collected "things"—such as songs—are free of the collector's influence
b) These "things" can be removed from their contexts
c) These "things" can be alienated from their creators
d) These "things" can be lodged in containers: archives, files, discs, wax cylinders, diaries, shelves, cases, etc.
e) In spite of all these manipulations, these "things" can keep the qualities they had before the collector's intervention

In summary, the word "collection"—collecting—in a positivistic framework means harvesting and accumulating. Of course, not all of these ideas are explicitly expressed by collectors, and sometimes they are even criticised. But, in fact, these ideas lead all research and archival procedures. Regardless of the fact that nowadays we know that to collect means to represent, I wonder to what extent this positivistic conception is still alive in our imaginary. Even though we are living under new scientific paradigms—poststructuralism, postcolonialism, or whatever— some traits of old paradigms usually stay alive in an unconscious or uncritical way.

Archives are aesthetically oriented knowledge

This point could also be called "the wheeled phonograph". Let me show you why. The German anthropologist Robert Lehmann-Nitsche recorded aboriginal and Creole songs in Argentina at the beginning of the 20th century. The following table shows some information on his recordings.

Recording date	Location	Ethnic group	Recorded material	Number of cylinders
1905	La Plata, Province of Buenos Aires	Creole popular musicians	Urban and rural popular genres: 62 *estilos*, 29 songs, 15 *milongas*, 6 *cifras*, 4 *huellas*, 4 *tangos*, 2 *vidalitas*, 2 *gatos*, 2 *zambas*, 1 *aire*, and 2 Spanish music imitations.	129
1905	La Plata	Tehuelche	Songs, performances of musical bow, narratives and one vocabulary.	62
1905 (and 1907?)	La Plata (?)	Araucano (Mapuche)	Songs	7
1906	San Pedro de Jujuy, Province de Jujuy	Toba, Chiriguano, Wichi and Chorote	Songs, vocabularies and one instrumental piece.	40
1909	?	Toba	Songs	8

Table 1-2 Recordings made by Robert Lehmann-Nitsche in Argentina

In the field, Lehmann-Nitsche faced two unexpected situations. First, he realised that some performances of shamanic songs had huge dynamic differences; *fortissimo* was suddenly followed by *pianissimo*. In order to attenuate those differences, he put the phonograph on a small wheeled table and moved it backward and forward. Later, when he was recording Creole songs, he discovered that some expressions were too long for the recording time of wax cylinders. So, some stanzas had to be omitted.[7] The singer, or maybe the collector, had to decide which stanzas to keep and which others to leave out. It is evident that in both cases aesthetic judgements were taking place: a technical limitation required an aesthetic decision. On this point we can bring into the discussion Hayden White's perspective. Let us remember that in order to show the discursive and aesthetic character of historiography, the American philosopher, in his book, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (1973), put forward the phrase "poetics of history". If we agree that aesthetic conditioning is usually active in archive creation and development, then we can say that there is something like a "poetics of archives".

Archives are ideologically oriented knowledge

I approached this point extensively at the ICTM Conference in Canada (García 2011b). My hypothesis is that very often ethnomusicological and archival procedures become a colonialist repertoire of routines for the control and reduction of Otherness. But to what extent can colonialist ideology lead concepts and methodological procedures? Once again, it is possible to find an example from the Tierra del Fuego archive.

According to several philosophers,[8] colonialism produces difference and creates a part of "reality" imaginatively located in the borders. At the same time, a supposedly "universal", "scientific" and "objective" knowledge is produced in this part of "reality", usually viewed as "poor" and "underdeveloped". In order to produce this sort of knowledge, musical expression must sometimes be mutilated, and singers, musicians and also analysts must be made invisible. Gilbert Rouget devoted 33 pages of an article (1970) to present the analysis of five seconds of a Selknam song. His work is a display of methodological and technical virtuosity: several musical and linguistic transcriptions, graphs made by the sonograph and stroboconn, a discussion about Hornbostel's interval definition, etc. From Rouget's point of view, the Selknam song displays uniform durations, presence of stresses, modulation of intensity, strong importance of vocal timbre and interdependence between frequency and vocal timbre, among other features. With regard to voice, Rouget found in the Selknam song a high larynx, reduced pharyngeal cavity, a reduced vocal cavity, etc. In this way, Rouget provides a very fragmented image of the Selknam song. Moreover, he did not give any information about Selknam culture. From his standpoint, the Selknam song is music without context, sung by people without culture or history. In addition, it is remarkable how Rouget managed to disappear in the thickness of the technical, detailed and apparently exhaustive analysis. Ethnomusicological research was, in many cases, something that went hand in hand with colonialism, recording musical expression before their creators had disappeared, or marching behind colonialism, analysing music once their creators were dead. In my opinion, the seeming ingenuousness of the aesthetic appreciation, the seemingly "natural" functioning of the ear and the artificial, cold and meticulous musicological analysis are very often accomplices of colonialism.

Archives are shaped by multi-sourced, fragmentary and unfinished discourses

This attribute of archives is closely related to the first point. If, as I have stated, archives are not "things" but knowledge—discursive knowledge— then we could accept that many people—collectors, researchers, archivists, technicians, museologists, etc.—intervene in that knowledge. This has at least two consequences. On one hand, as many people with different interests, epistemological perspectives, and technologies become involved, this knowledge is always open to a wide range of interventions: new classifications, digitalising, links to other sources, provocative or perhaps old-fashioned interpretations, etc. In addition, several disciplines often converge in the study of sound recording collections, transforming them into multidisciplinary knowledge. On the other hand, if we have many interventions, we have several ideological and aesthetic conditionings taking place. In this manner, archives are knowledge in process, not a set of documents. Every intervention on an archive helps to keep the knowledge it expresses active and to feed its never-ending structure.[9]

Epilogue

Maybe all these archive attributes are completely evident to us. Maybe what I have written sounds like a platitude. In spite of this, most of us are usually unaware of them or simply ignore them. Why? Because we feel more comfortable and less anxious when we handle "things" than when we deal with ethereal, vanishing and sometimes contradictory knowledge. Don't we feel more comfortable and safer when we handle musical transcriptions than when we handle sounds? However, in my opinion, some anxiety is always a good starting point for developing fresh perspectives on sound archives. And that requires keeping sound archives under suspicion.

Notes

[1] A shorter version was presented at the *19th Meeting of the Study Group on Historical Sources of Traditional Music* (Vienna, March 6 to 10, 2012). Moreover, some ideas were expressed in a longer article in Spanish (García 2011a and 2012, chapter 3).

[2] In order to be understood, I've expressed these premises in a very compelling way. But, of course, they are very controversial.

³ These topics have been developed with different degrees of profundity in many of the articles published in the last decade. A pioneer article which offers a provoking agenda is "Music and the Internet" by Steve Jones (2000). Additionally, several articles on the subject can be found in the book *New Media, Old Media: a history and theory reader*, published by Wendy Hui Kyong Chum and Thomas W. Keenan (2006). Also, a paper with a strong theoretical content with regard to the accessibility and formation of the archives can be consulted: "Envisioning the Archival Commons" by Scott Anderson and Robert Allen (2009).

⁴ The recordings on wax cylinders by Koppers and Gusinde appear in the Phonogramm-Archiv in Berlin as "Koppers Feuerland" and "Gusinde Feuerland", respectively. The first one corresponds to the recordings made in 1922 and the second to those made in 1923. The reading of documents from different sources suggests that both correspond to Gusinde despite the fact that the first one bears the name of Koppers (Wilhelm Koppers accompanied Gusinde on his third journey to Tierra del Fuego). The reasons for the existence of a labelling which might be equivocal are still difficult to elucidate, and approaching them exceeds the limits of this contribution.

⁵ I approached this topic with more detail in García 2012 (Chapters 4 and 5).

⁶ Anthony Seeger clearly expressed the importance of the researcher's theoretical perspective in the conformation of the field-recording based archives: "Field researchers are not omniscient, and field collections are compromised (as well as strengthened) by the assumptions and theoretical perspectives of the fields for which they were prepared." (1999: 2)

⁷ It is possible to find more information about Lehmann-Nitsche's work in García 2009 and García and Chicote 2008.

⁸ The whole book *Otra memoria es posible*, by García Gutiérrez (2004), is based on this idea.

⁹ The unfinished character of archives is currently being taken into consideration by a few authors (for instance, see Ernst 2006). After the presentation of the ideas contained in this article, Verne Harris also gives a report of such character: "Notwithstanding the fantasy of a comprehensive, complete archive, always an archive is an assemblage of fragments […] there are dynamics of both inclusion and exclusion." (2015: 10).

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