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Abstract: 'Research data management' is booming. Urgently demanded and driven by such diverse actors as research funding institutions, who are interested in quality control and the efficient use of data, or the 'Open' movements, who advocate free access to knowledge, ethnologists and cultural anthropologists meet this topic with reluctance and often with skepticism. Rightly so, on the one hand, since the archiving of data and, above all, the intended reuse of data by third parties raise a number of practical, legal and ethical questions. On the other hand, the question of how digital data can be organized and especially permanently preserved and used is virulent also in the ethnological disciplines. In any case, the debate on the subject is urgent because overarching regulatory processes have long since been set in motion.

This contribution discusses different aspects of the debate on data management and sketches problem areas, open questions and opportunities which can arise for the ethnological disciplines. Not least, the changing conditions of knowledge production and circulation which occur alongside the establishment of digital techniques and technologies require historical contextualization. Therefore, this contribution also attempts a discipline-specific historical categorization.

Keywords: Ethnography, research data management, data policies, data archiving, secondary use of research data, scientific history of cultural anthropology.

Even though pen and paper maintain their presence, particularly in fieldwork, these days it is predominantly digital data that originates in almost any kind of research. According to the wishes of the research funding bodies, such research data in all disciplines should, in the future, not only be stored, evaluated, combined and interpreted, but also managed, archived on a long-term basis, exchanged as freely as possible and made available for future use.[1] However, what is called for under the term 'research data management' in science policy, what has often already been prepared in terms of technology and, in some disciplines, has already been practiced

* German version in *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* 2018, LXXII (2): 213–243. Translated by Stefanie Everke Buchanan.

1 Cf. the brief notes, available at: https://www.fwf.ac.at/de/forschungsfoerderung/open-access-policy/(accessed December 13, 2018) for Austria, and for Germany, for example, available at: http://www.dfg.de/download/pdf/foerderung/antragstellung/forschungsdaten/richtlinien_forschungsdaten.pdf. Accessed December 13, 2018.

for a long time is only gradually becoming evident in the methodological, research ethical and discipline-specific political debates of the ethnological disciplines and their specialist societies.[2] In the following, with the intention of contributing to this debate, some aspects of what is discussed in terms of 'research data management' and of how the developments are framed by science policy will be outlined. This will be followed by observations on the use of the term 'data' in the ethnological disciplines themselves, because, currently, it seems unclear what is to be understood as 'research data' in the ethnological disciplines. Finally, the question of which forms of secondary uses have been practiced in the ethnological disciplines to date and where the potential of data archiving for future use may lie will be investigated. The main focus will be on contemporary ethnographic fieldwork, nevertheless, similar questions may arise for contemporary history and microhistory research in terms of methods and emerging forms of data.

The main basis for this contribution are an online survey, interviews and many informal conversations with researchers of different status groups from the ethnological disciplines, research in the environment of research data repositories, and the observation of scientific policy debates and positioning which I was able to carry out within the framework of the *Fachinformationsdienst Sozial- und Kulturanthropologie* (FID; 'Specialized Information Service for Social and Cultural Anthropology').[3]

Beyond this, considering data management in a discipline – historical horizon also offers starting points for a reflection on the associated changes more as a part of a scientific and methodological development, not least concerning aspects driven by technology and science policy. In this sense, my primary concern in the following is to outline problem areas and name open questions. The development of specific, accepted and feasible solutions, and of elaborated strategies of data management for research practice in the ethnological disciplines requires further work, discussion and critical monitoring.

1. Notes on the debate

Petra Gehring, philosopher and current chairwoman of the *Rat für Informationsinfrastrukturen* (RfII; 'German Council for Scientific Information Infrastructures'),

2 'Ethnological disciplines' here means both the tradition of folklore studies/European ethnology and anthropology/ethnology.

3 The FID is located at the university library of the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and has been funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) since 2016 as part of the *Fachinformationsdienste für die Wissenschaft* program. In addition to myself, the project group includes information scientist Wjatscheslaw Sterzer and Matthias Harbeck, who heads the FID as subject librarian for ethnology at the university library. The FID is 'in charge of' the disciplinary groups of Ethnology and European ethnology; in addition to the topic of research data management, the work also includes other fields and services of information supply, for example, the licensing of online offers of publishers and the development of the disciplinary portal EVIFA. Cf. Harbeck (2018).

has recently written that digital change is still underestimated in reference to the sciences.[4] She pointed out that many of the new possibilities are faced with far-reaching changes in everyday research practice and methodologies in all disciplinary cultures and that, along with the quality of the methods, it was research itself that was at stake. Thus, in her words, research data management became the decisive enabling condition for research in general (Gehring 2018). The latter does not necessarily have to be seen as a special characteristic of digitized science (cf. Zedelmaier 2015) to recognize that digitality not only creates new fields for ethnographic research and permeates established research fields to a large degree, but that digital technologies and their tools have long since changed – and will continue to change – everyday research life and research practice.[5] This is the case even if one does not work with genuinely computer-aided "digital methods."[6] 'Research data management' is, therefore, initially a more or less bulky label under which various aspects of dealing with digitality in the sciences can be subsumed and conceptually linked: Firstly, there are a number of practical research problems, such as the ordering, organization and backup of data and files, data exchange and the joint use of data in research groups, and the implications of different software used. Under the heading of 'long-term archiving', negotiations are conducted to ascertain how volatile digital data can be preserved persistently across rapid technological change and how long 'long-term' can or should be, additionally, where – in the sense of actual storage space – files can be stored as permanently as possible and who is responsible for controlling the data. While, in this case, it is still the basic operations of knowledge production, searching and collecting, administering, processing and safeguarding of material that are concerned, data management, thirdly, also aims for something else: According to the DFG's *Leitlinien zum Umgang mit Forschungsdaten* ('Guidelines for the Handling of Research Data') (DFG 2015), for example, the long-term safeguarding and provision of research data should contribute to the traceability and quality of scientific work and opens up important possibilities for the connectivity of further research. This means, on the one hand, new forms of verifiability and quality control and, on the other hand, the reuse of data by third parties for the development and treatment of new research questions and, ultimately, increased efficiency of publicly funded research. Similar data should not be collected more

4 The RfII, set up by the Joint Science Conference of the Federal Government and the Länder (GWK) in Germany, has been working since 2014. It provides policy advice and, with a view to the development of information infrastructures in Germany, is intended to elaborate positions and mediate them in European and international debates. Available at: http://www.rfii.de/de/der-rat/. Accessed September 15, 2018.

5 On this topic, see Roger Sanjek (2016) and the report by Gertraud Koch (in print) on the change of media, respectively, the technical equipment used over the course of her own academic work since graduation.

6 On the critique of the term see Raunig and Höfler (2018).

than once but rather 'used' more than once and as soon as possible after the completion of a project.[7] The call for and funding of data management and the necessary technical infrastructures are, therefore, also an element of the economization of academic knowledge production (cf. Audehm et al. 2015). At the same time, however, the contrary intentions of the 'Open' movements are also coming into play. In the spirit of 'Open Science,' the promise of more participation, justice and innovation is also expected to be kept (Scholl 2017). Here too, for example, under the slogan Öffentliches *Geld* – Öffentliches *Gut* ('Public Funds – Public Good'), a demand is made that content financed from tax money should be freely available for further use and not only for reception.[8] The overall aim is nothing less than the establishment of a new 'data culture' in academia, i.e. a cultural change in all disciplines towards a self-evident opening of data and data sharing as well as the necessary data management.[9] One also often likes to think big in terms of technology: In Austria, the *e-Infrastructures Austria* project is working on the infrastructural connection of nine universities and other research institutions; in Germany, a *Nationale Forschungsdateninfrastruktur* ('National Research Data Infrastructure') is to be established; and the European Commission has been planning the development of a *European Open Science Cloud* for several years.[10]

Saving Data. On current practice in the ethnologies

Surveys on the current handling of research data in recent years, however, have painted a somewhat sobering picture for many disciplines when measured against the high expectations and far-reaching plans.[11] There are often no standards for data archiving that are recognized and shared across disciplines, nor are there data

7 See Imeri, Harbeck and Sterzer (2018) on the different levels of handling research data: Process-accompanying data management, long-term archiving and reuse, and the contributions in Büttner and Hobohm (2011) on different aspects of research data management.

8 Cf., for example, a panel discussion entitled *Öffentliches Geld? Öffentliches Gut!* on September 21, 2018, in Berlin, organized by the Wikimedia Deutschland association. The video recording is available at: https://www.wikimedia.de/wiki/Monsters_of_Law_-_Crashkurs_für_die_Wiki-Welt (Accessed October 16, 2018).

9 The cultural change desired is often associated with a generational change, as emphasized by several of the lecturers at a recent event held by the *Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung* ('Federal Ministry for Education and Research') in Berlin entitled *Forschungsdatenmanagement – künftige Entwicklungen und aktuelle Fragen der Wissenschaft* ('Research Data Management – Future Developments and Current Questions in Science').

10 Available at: https://www.e-infrastructures.at/de, http://www.rfii.de/de/themen/, https://ec.europa.eu/research/openscience/index.cfm?pg=open-science-cloud. Accessed September 18, 2018.

11 Cf. Technische Informationsbibliothek ('Technical Information Library'), Hannover, FIZ Chemie Berlin, Universität Paderborn (TIB 2010) for Chemistry and Heinrich et al. (2014) for Classical Studies.

repositories which would be needed in which research data can be archived in a way that is adequate for the discipline, in which it can be maintained in a permanently traceable manner and, last but not least, it can be referenced by assigning persistent identifiers.[12] The ethnologies are no exception here: According to the survey by the FID Sozial- und Kulturanthropologie, data from completed research is stored primarily on computers, hard drives, USB sticks or commercial cloud services, and it is hardly possible to speak of long-term or even systematic data backup. Data maintenance in this way occurs individually and rather randomly and – particularly regarding data protection requirements – hardly in accordance with regulations. Almost half of all participants in the survey had not yet drawn up data management plans – which are regarded as a central instrument for the controlled handling of research data and increasingly need to be submitted when applications for third-party funding are made – for their projects; around a further 30 % do not know whether such a plan exists for their project or what it even is (Imeri and Danciu 2017: 14, 18). It is evident that the state of knowledge and practice in the ethnological disciplines are very different things and that – this is also becoming clear in many conversations – to date, the topic has tended to be brought to the ethnological disciplines' attention from the outside.[13]

Moreover, there are hardly any possibilities in the German-speaking countries to archive ethnographic research appropriately and, above all, to make them available for subsequent use. The results of the FID survey suggest that currently available generic data repositories are largely inadequate regarding the particularities of qualitative research and the resulting nature of the data because, for the vast majority of data, it will not be possible to simply be 'openly' available. What is required, therefore, are data archives that, for instance, guarantee controlled access or enter data usage agreements and which are characterized by an overall (discipline-) specific professionalization, which university data repositories, for example, can hardly afford because of a lack of resources (cf. Imeri 2018).

On the whole, an internal disciplinary understanding about requirements, difficulties and opportunities of research data management is urgently needed to be able to speak as a discipline in the debate and participate at all in the design of the regulatory processes that have long been set in motion.[14] The expression of specific

12 Such identifiers can be assigned by research data repositories. They permit the unambiguous identification of data sets in a similar manner to an ISBN. This ensures that data can be found sustainably, for example, in catalogues, but also a regulated form of citation.

13 This may be different in individual segments, as is evident the archive DOBES (Documentation of Endangered Languages) to which ethnographers also contribute. Available at: http://dobes.mpi.nl/. Accessed September 18, 2018. See Widlok (2013).

14 The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Volkskunde ('German Folklore Association') has recently adopted a first position paper on the handling of research data, and the Société Internationale d'Ethnologie et de Folklore will also be discussing the topic.

problems that can be derived from ethnographic research approaches and strategies as well as requirements for the design of data archives is just as necessary in this endeavor as the search for alliances with neighboring disciplines which are faced with similar challenges, for instance, regarding the production of qualitative data (cf. Imeri 2018).

Legal aspects

Depending on the type of data, complex legal questions can become relevant at times at all levels of data management, which are touched upon here at least in a few aspects. Because the legal framework conditions for research data management are only gradually being formulated,[15] procedures and standards that allow legal certainty, on the one hand, but do not hinder or restrict research, on the other, must still be developed.

The most important and controversial topic in the FID surveys, especially regarding the long-term archiving and reuse of ethnographic data, is the maintenance of confidentiality that is assured in the research relationship – and, thus, a topic that can be located at the intersection of data protection, respectively, personal rights law and research ethics. Because ethnographic research – as well as qualitative and quantitative social research in the broader sense – regularly generates personal data which often fall under the "special categories of personal data,"[16] corresponding legal provisions already need to be followed. They have usually been realized in publications with different strategies for anonymization. However, issues relating to the implementation of these rules must be given new and greater weight with the possibilities and risks of digital storage and distribution, and not just or only when publications are prepared. In this sense, data management also means data protection management to a high degree. Above all, the question as to whether and in what form data can be passed on for subsequent use must, as a rule, be answered not only in legal terms but also in terms of research ethics. Data can be sensitive and fraught with risk even without necessarily having personal references, regarding milieus at the edge of legality, in the context of migration, political activism or the like. New requirements will also have to be put in place regarding the anonymization, respectively, pseudonymization of multimodal data collections in the case of a permanent archiving even if – or precisely because – data will not be openly available. This is the case because the extent to which it is possible to

15 Cf. the recently published results of a legal studies project at the Technische Universität Dresden (Lauber-Rönsberg, Krahn, and Baumann 2018).

16 This is data "revealing racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, or trade union membership, and […] data concerning health or data concerning a natural person's sex life or sexual orientation," Art. 9 General Data Protection Regulation (EU), paragraph 1.

balance the requirements for anonymization and the preservation of interpretability and explanatory power is also decisive for the post-use potential (cf. Reyes 2018).

In this context, ethnologists often take a skeptical position towards 'informed consent' – the central instrument of data protection law that permits the processing and archiving of personal data and its subsequent use – as long as it requires a formal, rather inflexible declaration which must, above all, be documented in advance and in writing.[17] There are many conceivable situations in the field in which it is not possible to obtain 'documented' consent even if research ethics require agreement and voluntary participation.[18] Regarding heterogeneous, open situations in the field and forms of participatory approaches to research, consent is understood more as a permanent task and a dynamic, reflexive process of negotiation in a field-specific form and generally without a standardized agreement: "It is the quality of the consent, not its format, which is relevant" (Albro and Plemmons 2016: 120; cf. also Imeri 2018). Generally speaking, in the future it will be necessary to combine a certain standardization of procedures with the necessary individual strategies for dealing with such questions and necessities which depend on the respective field of research in order to maintain the openness of ethnographic research processes and, at the same time, to arrive at reflected routines that conserve resources.

It should not go unmentioned that beyond this, questions of copyright and rights of use of research data are, at the most, in the beginning stages of discussion, and adequate laws are not always already in place.[19] Depending on the research field, aspects of the multilayered problem of 'cultural property' may also become relevant (cf. Widlok 2013).

2. Ethnographic data. Approaches to the use of the data concept

If data from ethnographic research are to be archived for the long-term, it will be necessary to reflect more strongly on the concept of data to highlight differences to other sciences and the more general use of the term, and possibly to develop one's own concepts in order to derive epistemologically justifiable consequences for tech-

17 Both the Datenschutz-Grundverordnung ('General Data Protection Regulation') and national laws provide restrictions and data protection requirements in favor of research (cf. Lauber-Rönsberg, Krahn, and Baumann 2018). See Corsín Jiménez (2018) for considerations on the implications of the General Data Protection Regulation.

18 Hansjörg Dilger (2017), for example, has reported this about his research on the living conditions of people with HIV/AIDS infections in Tanzania. It would not have been possible to obtain documented consent because the disease is associated there with stigmatization. Similar things may apply when illegal activities play a role in the research field, when the groups on which research is done are exposed to repression or when people in positions of power agree to engage in background conversations.

19 Research data, for instance, are not, to date, legal 'property,' cf. Linda Kuschel (2018).

nical and 'political' requirements for data archiving. This is due to the fact that publications and position papers on research data management normally use a highly pragmatic, generic concept of 'research data'. Research data, according to a paper by the aforementioned RfII, are data which originate in the course of scientific projects, for instance, through observations, experiments, simulated calculations, surveys, interviews, the study of source material, recordings, digitization and evaluations. The paper continues that, from the point of view of research pragmatics, although not always clearly differentiated, primary research data can be distinguished from secondary research data which document and contextualize the process by which primary data is created (RfII 2016: A-13). Against the background of technical and information science processes underlying the archiving of research data, 'data' generally refer to distinguishable digital objects that can be captured, described with metadata, secured, exchanged via interfaces and made interoperable, regardless of their context of origin and, initially, also of the content they represent. It is, thus, in many cases, an informational concept of data that is used, despite the fact that research data are also socially produced in communicative processes, are context-bound, loaded with theory and a product of media dispositives already at the time they are generated (cf. Knorr Cetina 1988) and, thus, a concept of data which tends to reduce or eliminate the dimensions of contextuality and referentiality which are central to the ethnographic research process (cf. Koch in print).

There is currently no generally shared understanding in the ethnological disciplines of what constitutes research data and if and at what stage of processing one can or should speak of 'data.' Accordingly, the term 'data' is not used uniformly: While some researchers write decidedly and regularly of collected data – 'ethnographic data' is often mentioned particularly in the Anglo-American language area – others do so rather *en passant*. The concept of data for many ethnologists seems to play a rather subordinate role, and it is often avoided altogether in favor of terms such as 'material,' 'documents' or 'sources' (cf. also Markham 2013; Lehmann, Stodulka, and Huber 2018: 67f.). In the sense that data are perceived as available goods, the term is also explicitly rejected.

On occasion, one can also find a distinction between 'primary data' collected with a view to a problem in the field itself and 'secondary data' collected by others or available in ethnographies, census data and historical material.[20] One distinction that is suggested is a differentiation between 'hard data,'– word by word transcripts which can be stored and analyzed repeatedly, and 'soft data,' impressions and recollections which cannot be archived.[21] Some ethnologists also speak of 'raw data' – a

20 Cf. with regard to the ethnographic comparison Ember, Ember and Peregrine (2015: 566).

21 However, the author himself describes this separation as equally problematic because "hard data" could not be adequately interpreted without "soft data" (Pool 2017).

concept that has by now been subjected to cultural scientific criticism[22] – when they work, for example, with statistical methods in the context of genealogical research or an "ethno-census" (Lang and Pauli 2002).

Around 1900. Data as facts

Historically speaking, the concept of data has been in use in the ethnographies for longer than one might assume in light of these ambiguities. A rough overview of research shows that the data term in ethnological texts and journals – in the broadest sense – was frequently used in the decades before 1900 in connection with temporal determinations, statistical information, descriptions of climatic conditions (e.g. Mori 1888: 239) or anthropometric measurements (e.g. Schellong 1891: 158, 182) and, thus, within the framework of general language use.[23] Beyond this, however, 'data' was also regularly mentioned more generally, for instance, in a statement relating that knowledge of a subject was enriched by the provision of "data from Scandinavian sources that was difficult to access"[24] or, in another instance, that some "ethnographic data had arisen by themselves" which were to be supplemented with earlier Hungarian records on a subject and communicated (Rubinyi 1902, 59). A statement by Adolf Bastian from an 1873 speech in the *Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte* ('Berlin Society for Anthropology, Ethnology and Prehistory') gives a clearer indication of the understanding of 'data' that came to bear here. He described that the many new insights in prehistory in their richness brought such an overwhelming abundance of completely unexpected discoveries that, for the moment, one still lacked sufficient orientation to even attempt a preliminary arrangement. In order not to revert to the earlier error of the deduction method and supplement a lack of facts by hypotheses and simultaneously distort them, he continued, one would have to wait until a sufficient number of "facts" was available that regularity would arise from them and form an organic connection. He also emphasized that in ethnology and in the closely related discipline of anthropology the completion of the collection of "data" required was still missing, however, only as a consequence of the imperfect means of gathering "data" as they were lying out in the open on the surface and only awaited their harvest (Bastian 1873: 3).

The image of data lying around and wanting to be harvested not only combines an almost poetic transfiguration of the different realities of the actual practice of collection (cf. e.g. Förster et al. 2018) into an act of caring with a certain comedic quality, but rather, in the equation of data with facts, points out that the use of the

22 Cf. the contributions in Lisa Gitelman (2013).

23 Cf. for example, Meyers Konversations-Lexikon (1894) for language use in German. A classification of the use in English since the 18th century can be found in Daniel Rosenberg (2013).

24 Michael Haberlandt in a review on Troels Lund (1902, 62).

term was by no means neutral. For Bastian, who, as a trained physician attempted to conceptualize ethnology as a scientific psychology,[25] it was rather a powerful positioning of the self-understanding of a discipline in the making which set itself up as, to paraphrase Bernd Weiler, a discipline supposedly bridging the natural sciences and the humanities and spanning all times and all peoples (Weiler 2006: 231) with the cornerstones of anthropology, ethnology and prehistory. Correspondingly, the orientation towards the claim of objectivity of the positivist natural sciences extended to the logic of the collection of material which was to provide reliable data for a valid formation of theory – in this case, the recognition of natural, respectively, developmental laws of human history[26] – and, thus, contributed significantly to anthropology becoming a powerful bastion of the belief in science of the late 19th century (Weiler 2006). What is also noticeable here is an understanding of "mechanical objectivity," which, according to Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, was characterized by the attempt to make one's own personality disappear from the collected material wherever possible. "Objectivity was a desire, a passionate commitment to suppress the will, and drive to let the visible world emerge on the page without intervention" (Daston and Galison 2007: 143) and, thus, also to render the made nature of data invisible. Conscious of the fact that objects and traditions were transient and constantly disappearing all over the world, the idea of a data harvest was also associated with an urgency that found a distinctive expression in the "empirical exhortation" (Weiler 2006: 87–89) of ethnology (and folklore studies) and is reflected in Bastian's idea that it was possible and necessary that the collection of data was completed first. The analysis and the formation of hypotheses, however, were postponed to a more or less distant future and, thus, placed in the hands of future researchers.

It is known that the conceptualization of 'data as facts' is not a historical fact but is highly virulent both in general language use and in some areas of research. The idea of 'hard numbers' with a direct reference to being, independent of observers and cleansed from disturbances and noise (Reichert 2018: 18f.), is currently critically reflected in many media and cultural studies works, especially regarding the consequences for the way in which knowledge is generated from big data.[27] A categorical distinction between big data and so-called long tail data, which have little standardization and usually a low data volume (cf. Rice and Southall 2016: 28), yet, as such, constitute research data in many disciplines, has hardly been made to date.

25 See Fiedermutz-Laun (1986) on Bastian's understanding of science.

26 Cf. the similar approaches in US American cultural anthropology by Franz Boas and his students (Johnson and Hruschka 2015: 99f.).

27 In an overview, for example, Iliadis and Russo (2016) and the contributions in Reichert (2014).

The cursory spectrum of data concepts could certainly be expanded.[28] And even if the problems of definition cannot be solved here, the ambiguities in the use of the term, in any case, indicate that the distinctions which are regularly made in the debate on research data between (objective) raw data, primary research data, processed data and interpretations which are located at the end of data analysis cannot simply be applied to all research in the ethnological disciplines. However, because – as is also evident in the quote by Adolf Bastian – data are part of epistemologies, i.e. theories and teachings about how valid knowledge is to be generated in the respective discipline (Koch in print), further discussions are necessary on the question of how the different terms relate to each other and which concept is used when material, documents or sources become data in the ethnographic research process. This is needed to facilitate the necessary communication across disciplinary and domain boundaries, especially regarding data archiving.

3. On the value of data. Scenarios of secondary uses

Science historians Michael Hagner and Caspar Hirschi have pointedly criticized that it would appear as though questions of provision, communication and participation function as new epistemic virtues which take precedence over older virtues such as originality, analysis and criticism (Hagner and Hirschi 2013: 10). Irrespective of the polemics, this poses a legitimate question about the reasoning behind large scale data archiving and provision. This question arises generally because even the permanent maintenance of the traceability, accessibility and interpretability of data is resource-intensive and regarding the considerable effort that has to be put into the processing of particularly qualitative research data: Contexts of data collection need to be documented in detail, metadata need to be created, legal questions clarified and data may need to be anonymized or pseudonymized. The actual time required and costs of processing can, at best, be estimated at this point. Not to mention the "tired user" whose capacities in terms of receptivity and time have not changed along with the digital production of research results and data (Groebner 2014: 109). However, the question also arises regarding the fact that folklore studies and ethnology have tried to free themselves, at great expense after 1945 at the latest, from the

28 There is also, by no means, any clarity in neighboring disciplines: It is always specific data terms that are the subject of consideration. Jörg Strübing, a qualitative sociologist, suggests, for example, differentiating between data and material in the following manner: Data are cognitive relations that we develop in the analytical process between parts of the material and our analytical – theoretical structure, i.e. the material itself (for example, an interview transcript) is not the datum but rather the relationship between the material and the emergent object-related theory bound by our analytical perspective. The differentiation emphasized the processual nature of data generation but leaves open the relationship, particularly to the information science data concept (Strübing 2018: 239). Data concepts in the historical sciences were also discussed at the Historikertag 2018 (Müller and Purschwitz 2018).

image or stigma (and the actual implications) of being a 'collection science.' Moritz Lazarus, for example, had remarked as early as 1891 in a lecture Über *Volkskunde als Wissenschaft* ('About Folkore Studies as a Science') regarding the encyclopedic principle that one should not merely engage in dull and stupid collecting but also had to interpret the material gathered.[29] In any case, it is not without irony that the current culture of searching and interpreting in the mode of databank queries, with ever new possibilities of recombination, pattern recognition and, not least, visualization, also lends new legitimacy to data collection itself (cf. Gugerli 2007). The latter is reflected, for example, in answers to the frequently asked question in the debate on data archiving as to which incentives need to be created for researchers to process their data and make them available for subsequent use. Reference is made here not only to unambiguous referencing and, thus, increased visibility of a data collection; rather, a call is made for their recognition as an original achievement that can be utilized in the scientific reputation economy (cf. e.g. Klump 2017; Wagner 2010).

Just under three-quarters of respondents in the FID survey rated the overall academic value of searchable and reusable ethnographic research data as "very high," "high" or "rather high." In detail, particularly the consideration of being able to generate new questions from 'old' data or facilitate comparisons with similar data was met with approval (Imeri and Danciu 2017: 19f.). Beyond such a general statement of approval, however, it is still largely unclear what benefits subsequent use and secondary analyses of ethnographic data may bring. To put it in other words: The status of such material for further research is unclear.

Long-term work with one's own material

The fact that hardly any scenarios for subsequent use are developed in recent research is also because it is primarily one's 'own' research that is the basis for many careers in the ethnological disciplines. This is, at least, the case when one thinks of subsequent use by third parties, colleagues in one's own or in other disciplines. For many, however, forms of subsequent use or reuse of one's own material, for example, are part of a research routine, as Gisela Welz, among others, has pointed out in her observation of temporalized field work. In such temporally discontinuous research scenarios, researchers return to the site of earlier stationary research, or 'permanent field sites' are maintained and visited through the years for shorter field stays, because intensive field relationships cannot be reestablished time and again in a researcher's life, emotional ties to people on-site can invite or oblige them to repeatedly invest time or the constraints of academic working environments do not permit

29 This is how the report of proceedings presents Lazarus' contribution. The lecture was held in the *Verein für Volkskunde* ("Protokoll zur Sitzung vom 27.2.1891" 1891: 231f.).

other forms of work (cf. Welz 2013). Self-produced material may be supplemented, expanded, repeatedly processed and reworked, rearranged and interpreted over long periods of time (e.g. Röttger-Rössler 2004).[30]

This form of long-term research allows not only new perspectives on 'old' material but also the description and evaluation of long-term social and economic changes, as Gisela Welz herself impressively demonstrated regarding *European Products* and the effects of a specific EU-European cultural heritage regime in Cyprus (cf. Welz 2015). However, this form of research also raises the question of when and at what stage of processing data can or should be archived if research is not organized in the form of a study of clearly limited duration, at the end of which data could be transferred to a repository.

Using 'foreign' data

In addition to the reuse of one's own material, there are also more or less established forms of the shared use of data in the ethnologies. The first area to be addressed here is collaborative research in teams, provided that the context of the project provides for a joint 'data practice' and allows or even requires it. Even though it is rarely explicitly stated which strategies have been developed for the joint work on the same data, one major difference to secondary uses is certainly the fact that, at least potentially, reciprocal influence can be exerted on data production and analysis and that any necessary translation services can be provided in a direct exchange (cf. Amelang 2007; Clerke and Hopwood 2014). Long-term studies involving several 'generations' of researchers are a more concrete form of subsequent use. Thus, anthropologist Lisa Cliggett, for instance, has described the enormous effort involved in working her way into data from several decades of research from the *Gwembe Tonga Research Project* in which research has been undertaken since 1956 – originally with the intention of observing the effects of the construction of a dam on the Zambezi River in Zambia on local populations (Cliggett 2016).

The fact that dealing with 'foreign' material can cause difficulties is evident in an entirely different example. Bernd Rieken, a folklorist and psychoanalyst, had conducted interviews with survivors and those affected about ten years after an avalanche disaster in Galtür, Austria. Within the framework of qualitative disaster research, Rieken was particularly interested in coping processes and the integration of the event into life stories (Rieken 2010). He later asked colleagues, including European ethnologist Michael Simon, to interpret three of these interviews from their own professional perspectives for a publication. However, Simon had reservations: He felt that the task was "extremely ticklish" because foreign data was concerned,

30 In this study, the author draws, among other things, on material which she collected in the early 1980s (Röttger-Rössler 1989).

and he knew little about the way it had been collected. He pointed out that he had not been present at Rieken's surveys in Galtür, had not been able to get to know the people with whom Rieken spoke, had not been able to sense their presence and gain an impression of the location. While the psychologists and psychotherapists who had also been asked for an interpretation did not comment at all on this circumstance, Simon writes that it took a great effort to comply with this request and that such forms of exchange caused difficulties for an ethnologist (Simon 2015: 93f.). What he then unfolds on just a few pages is an attempt to reinterpret temporally current 'foreign data,' including methodological reflections on the process of interpretation – something that has hardly been seen to date in European Ethnology. His observations are instructive, even if the 'subsequent use' here was intended by the primary researcher himself, i.e. the material was not selected for answering one's own research question. Simon initially tried to obtain context material for the three interviews (which were quite short, averaging 35 minutes), such as photos and videos available on the Internet that showed the interviewees. He further describes that the initially problematic lack of closeness to Rieken's interview partners had also made interpretation easier in comparison to material collected by Simon himself, without, at the same time, giving up a respectful basic attitude. Simon ultimately decided to focus on the interaction between the interviewer and their interview partners and to view the interviews more like historical material. Although he by no means spares his colleague, the respectful handling of his work is clearly perceptible in the text.

The latter leads to an observation from the FID surveys: The disclosure of research data to third parties can be associated with fears; the internal editor who might impair the habitual ways of asking, looking and noting, the loss of openness and impartiality, for example, are mentioned. This is so because the intensive being in the field, the researcher's participation in the events extends to their entire person which "does not represent an independent quantity but has a significant impact on research achievements with all their human strengths and weaknesses" (Simon 2015: 93). If researchers themselves become recognizable in their data as persons – and this is likely to be the case on a regular basis – data can also be sensitive in this respect, and in the future, it may be necessary to consider particular research ethical standards for subsequent use.

The unclear status of such material is, therefore, also related to its quality for secondary analysis. It remains unknown, for example, how the contextualization of research data mentioned above, which is indispensable for interpretation, can be adequately realized because "Datasets don't speak for themselves" (Lederman 2016: 261). This does not only concern the documentation of general project background or research strategic decisions, even though such project-specific knowledge often remains implicit, especially in individual research projects or small research teams

(Smioski 2013). Rather, the close connection of all steps of processing to theoretical and methodological perspectives as well as conditions and opportunities that are specific to a field raises questions about the different levels of 'context.' Researchers determine what 'context' is not so much along defined sets of circumstances, conditions or elements of a specific setting; rather, a decision as to which information should ultimately be relevant is made in a dynamic process (cf. Medjedović 2014; for pointers towards a "good documentation of data," Smioski 2013: par. 17–19). 'Context,' in this sense, would also include relational, implicit and intuitive knowledge embedded in the research relationship; this has been repeatedly pointed out in our surveys (cf. also Lehmann, Stodulka, and Huber 2018; 69). The physical and sensual experience, which is so important for ethnographic knowledge production, and the "epistemic affects" (Stodulka, Selim, and Mattes 2018) of the researchers are also part of this; both are reflected in "headnotes" (Ottenberg 1990) but only to a limited extent in the form of data.

In any case, it will not be possible to use ethnographic data immediately for secondary research without further ado – neither in one's own discipline nor in other disciplines.[31] Therefore, adequate procedures and strategies for the documentation of contexts are needed for different types of material, not least regarding temporal and financial resources, because the so-called metadata will hardly suffice.

Subsequent use of historical material

It is interesting to observe that both folklore studies and ethnology – despite all the difference in detail – show features of extensive joint or subsequent use of data in projects with the decoupling often practiced of the collection of material from the evaluation and interpretation up to the 20th century. The extensive data harvest called for by Bastian could only be mastered by a collective which, moreover, often brought with them the sort of local expertise that was crucial for success. Accordingly, researchers regularly arranged and analyzed material that had been gathered, collected, bought or even stolen by others, for example, travelers and colonial officials, interested elementary teachers and members of scientific associations and local heritage societies.[32]

This division of labor – starting with British social anthropology – only lost its legitimacy with the implementation of the fieldwork paradigm as a result of the research and teaching activities undertaken by Bronislaw Malinowski, who himself had still written his doctoral thesis on Aboriginal Australian families on the basis of secondary material (Kuper 2015 [1973]: 9). The establishment of this new form of

31 A similar discussion is taking place for data from humanities research (cf. Sahle and Kronenwett 2013: 82).

32 Cf. e.g. Sabine Imeri (2017) for folklore studies.

ethnographic practice, with the centering of knowledge work in the person of the field researcher,[33] also resulted in large quantities of the collected material being much more closely tied to the person undertaking the research – and, thus, being 'privatized' – than before.[34]

The sometimes extensive material collections of older folklorist traditions, coming partly from problematic contexts of origin, also bear witness in an eloquent way to the practice of the division of labor to this day (cf. Schmitt 2005).[35] They have certainly been used for secondary evaluations: As early as the 1960s, Ingeborg Weber-Kellermann, for example, undertook a reinterpretation in terms of social and cultural historical aspects in her work on harvest customs based on Wilhelm Mannhardt's interview material from the mid-19th century (Weber-Kellermann 1965). In a lesser-known study, Ulrich Bentzien had, at the same time, used an unintended surplus in Richard Wossidlo's extensive material collections, created between approximately 1890 and 1939, for linguistic research and evaluated it under entirely new aspects in *Das Eindringen der Technik in die Lebenswelt der mecklenburgischen Landbevölkerung: Eine volkskundliche Untersuchung* ('The Intrusion of Technology into the Living Environment of the Rural Population of Mecklenburg'; Bentzien 1961). As Bentzien pointed out, Wossidlo had, without having systematically researched the position of this group of people on technology, nevertheless, conscientiously noted casual statements by farm laborers and farmers. Bentzien continued that in addition to these informal statements, Wossidlo had faithfully recorded the penetration of technical elements into folklore genres (e.g. sagas, stories) and the vernacular terms of technical objects and processes (Bentzien 1961: 13). At the same time, Bentzien reflected on the limitations of this form of secondary analysis in terms of both the quantity of actual usable material – measured against the size of Wossidlo's collections of material – and it being shaped by the perspectives of the primary researcher himself. Bentzien pointed out that Wossidlo's decidedly romantically influenced nature of a collector who was always mindful of the age of the heritage items might at times have instinctively resisted the recording of more modern forms (Bentzien 1961: 329).

However, more recent studies that have explored the potential uses of old material have also been published: Michael Simon, for example, has studied the value of the material of the *Atlas der deutschen Volkskunde* ('Atlas of German Folklore') for answering contemporary questions and how it can contribute to the understanding of 'folk-medicine' ideas and practices of the interwar period. Lioba Keller-Drescher,

33 Alexa Färber shows that this went along with a de-formalization of labor relations in the field (with locals, colonial officials, traders, etc.) but that cooperation, nevertheless, took place (2009).

34 Malinowski himself repeatedly evaluated his material from his research on the Trobriand Islands until 1935 and published it in seven monographs (Kuper 1997 [1973]: 18).

35 Some of these collections have been or are being digitalized (Meyer et al. 2014).

together with students, has explored the extent to which material from dialect surveys carried out by the *Tübinger Arbeitsstelle Sprache in Südwestdeutschland* ('Tübingen Research Centre for Language in Southwest Germany') can be used to investigate the performativity of language (cf. Simon 2003; Keller-Drescher 2009).

Apart from the question, asked anew time and again, what an adequate handling of the legacies of older research may or should look like, there is a variety of practices and works to draw on when thinking about the potential of subsequent use of research data for one's own discipline. One question that could be pursued is the extent to which data in permanent archives change their state or their register, as described by Krzysztof Pomian for objects in museum collections (cf. Pomian 1998 [1987]). Even if the change of register may not turn research data into something else in the same radical manner, by being separated from their context of origin, even with every care taken in the documentation of context, they can no longer be used by third parties in the same way as by the people who collected the data themselves. However, they do not simply become historical material either as long as the multilayered contexts of their collection are still present. This only happens when, as historian Almuth Leh put it regarding oral history interviews, the preservation survives the witness when not only research partners pass away, but research perspectives and methods also become historical (cf. Leh 2018). In any case, the usual procedures of a qualified critical dealing with sources that are established in the humanities will have to be applied as regularly as necessarily.

Participants in the FID survey repeatedly voiced the assumption that the value of ethnographic data for ethnographic research itself was likely to increase the longer the survey was in the past. Therefore, many consider an unlimited archiving to be desirable (Imeri in print).

Selecting suitable data

The question remains which data and materials from ethnographic research may be suitable for subsequent use. There have been interesting publications recently by contemporary historians which demonstrate the potential that can be found, for example, in the reevaluation of interviews which were conducted for a different purpose. Thus, for instance, for a study on the controversial work of the Treuhand-Anstalt, commissioned in the early 1990s to privatize the former national wealth of the GDR, Marcus Böick also evaluated around 50 interviews which were conducted by ethnologist Dietmar Rost with employees of the upper and middle management level of the Treuhand-Anstalt in 1992/93 in order to document individual 'interior views' on the work of the agency (Böick 2018). Neither the original recordings of the interviews nor the accompanying material were archived in a comprehensible manner; Böick came across disks with transcripts in private possession that had

been preserved rather by chance (2018: 55). Dietmar Rost himself provided him with supplementary analyses and information on the interviews – an indication of the importance of the contact with the primary researchers, particularly when research contexts have been inadequately documented.[36]

There are also considerations in the context of qualitative sociology which take recourse to the subsequent use of interview material as an independent research strategy (cf. Medjedović 2014); the potentials for subsequent use of other forms of material (e.g. observation logs, images or videos) will need to be examined, preferably in designated projects. Some things may not be suitable. One controversial issue, for example, is the 'reusability' of field diaries which, even though the way in which researchers employ this highly specific format of documentation varies greatly, may be of great value for the production of insight as a type of material that is not only individual but also highly personal material. At the same time, however, the interweaving of the researcher with their material can become particularly obvious here. Accordingly, it is a recurring argument that field notes cannot be adequately understood by third parties and data sharing is often associated with particular reservations (cf. Imeri in print; Lederman 2016; and, Jackson 1990 fundamentally on the importance of field notes for the professional identity of field researchers). It may also be that, for more general reasons of data security, the separation often practiced between the documentation of observations and notes in diary form becomes more common in the future (cf. Cliggett 2016).

As mentioned above, it will be necessary in the future to examine which material is 'worth' permanent archiving at which stage of processing. Even if digital communication channels seem to promise infinity in, as Groebner puts it, the form of unlimited reproducibility and time at a standstill (Groebner 2014: 107), it cannot be the goal to archive all data from all research in its entirety, not only regarding the resource-intensive procedures of long-term archiving (Oßwald, Scheffel, and Neuroth: 16f.). There are also epistemological reasons for making a selection: Completeness – less in the encyclopedic sense but rather regarding data collection – constituted an ideal and epistemic virtue of science, particularly in the 19th century, and was also closely associated with ideas of objectivity and scientific progress. The totality of fossils, all inscriptions, an entire culture – Bastian's idea of a data harvest which

36 In a similar manner, Christina von Hodenberg (2018: 195) contacted the authors of the *Bonner Längsschnittstudie des Alterns* ('Bonn Longitudinal Study of Aging'), a gerontopsychological study in which numerous interviews were conducted between 1964 and 1985, which she reevaluated for her study *Das andere Achtundsechzig* ('The Other Sixty-eight') in a new and interdisciplinary manner. In the case of BOLSA, tape recordings and other materials have been transferred to the Historische Datenzentrum Sachsen-Anhalt, where they are being digitized and made available for further use. Available at: https://www.geschichte.uni-halle.de/struktur/hist-data/bolsa/. Accessed September 10, 2018.

could be completed also points to this. However, the ideal of completeness had already been criticized by contemporaries: Literary historian Richard M. Meyer, for example, called it "bureaucratic" and of little use for scientific insight. In his view, one would unlearn to separate the important from the unimportant and then help oneself to the feeble excuse that everything was important in science. As he put it, "completeness mechanized and dulled the eye" (Meyer 1907: 14).

It will be important, therefore, to develop criteria that can form the basis for the selection and evaluation of data that is suitable for long-term archiving. It will have to be discussed whether this is done in similar forms as those that are also practiced in archives and collections or with new procedures. This is not only because research funding institutions, such as the DFG, expect that discipline-specific data policies in the future will also provide information on which data should be retained for the long-term and for which data archiving can be foregone (DFG 2018). This also provides opportunities less for the control of the quality and the value of ethnographic material but more for the reflection and self-assured assertion, in addition when facing other disciplines, science policy and other public spheres.

Conclusion

Surprisingly few participants in the FID survey answered the question as to whether they could imagine using data from other researchers with a clear "no." Whether there will be studies in the ethnologies in the future which are exclusively based on a reanalysis of 'old' data and without designated field work of one's own – and which may then also increasingly use digital methods – or whether these data will be used in addition to other material, will depend not only on methodological – theoretical openness, the ability to integrate and the willingness to experiment but also on the acceptance such research will be met with.

However, the prerequisite for potential subsequent uses are not only the necessary steps of processing, selection, description, contextualization and legal consideration. There is also a need for data archives or repositories which accept discipline-specific approaches, research strategies and research ethical principles, can establish suitable procedures and develop technical solutions under these conditions. Even if such data archives presently exist, at best, in a rudimentary fashion, it can be assumed with some certainty that they will be developed. The way in which processes of archiving, regulations and standards, and the services of such data archives will be designed will not least depend on whether ethnologists, folklorists and cultural anthropologists who are engaged in research will intervene and position themselves specifically and with which intensity and expertise.

This also applies to the overarching controlling processes. Even though many questions remain unanswered, one thing is very clear: The demand to preserve research data for the long-term and to open them up for subsequent use will continue

to exist, be intensified and gain momentum within the framework of science policy guidelines, regulations on research funding, and university agendas and guidelines. Data management, as part of the digital transformation of science, will continue to change the research practice of European ethnology and cultural anthropology. Therefore, data management should be reflected on regarding both the risks and the opportunities, and also increasingly under methodical and methodological aspects as well as the epistemological consequences.[37] If nothing else, it will be necessary in the future to develop concepts for further training, to integrate data management into the methods curriculum already during the degree programs, and, in doing so, not only to impart more or less generic skills,[38] but, above all, specific, reflexive knowledge about dealing with research data.

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37 Cf. also Gertraud Koch's considerations (in print) on this.

38 As it is promoted by the German *Stifterverband*, for example, with a view of competence requirements beyond academia that is oriented at the labour market within the framework of "Data Literacy Education." Accessed September 18, 2018. Available at: https://www.stifterverband.org/data-literacy-education.

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