

Jouni Ahmajärvi: "Letters in the National Library of Finland"

In my presentation, I introduce the methods, practices and processes, used in archiving letters held by the manuscript collection of the National Library of Finland.

The manuscript collection was founded in the 17th century when beside books also individual manuscripts were collected. However, it was only during the 19th century when it became common to collect also private archives including correspondence, diaries etc. Today the manuscript collection contains approximately 900 archives of individuals, families and associations. The annual accumulation is about 10 – 20 new archives.

Most of the private archives are from 19th and 20th centuries and belong to the men of letters, scholars, intellectuals, composers and musicians. Therefore it is natural that the majority of the private archives contain also correspondence.

The history of the collection is visible, not only in the documents, but also in the methods of archiving (arranging, describing, preserving) the archival materials including letters. This is a challenge for an archivist working today. In my presentation, I focus on the processes and practices that we use in making letters available to researches. I also discuss the history of arranging, describing and preserving letters and challenges we are confronting when archiving “letters” used in the digital world (for example emails).

Merete Morken Andersen and Lukas Lehner: "Small data, big picture. Working with letters in a digital timeline"

I will take as my point of departure Tidsånd.no, a digital timeline covering two hundred years of Scandinavian cultural history, originally developed in 2018 in collaboration with interaction designers at the University of Oslo. The timeline goes hand in hand with my book *Blodet i årene. Amalie Skram og hennes tid* (The Blood in the Veins. Amalie Skram and her times), a collective biography on the Norwegian author Amalie Skram and other writers and artists connected to the Scandinavian modern break through of the 19th century. It includes several hundred digitalized letters between Amalie Skram and her Danish husband Erik Skram, as well as many other letters of the times.

The timeline enables the reader to investigate for herself the zeitgeist surrounding the letters, as it can be sorted in various ways; by theme, person, place and date. It includes approximately 7000 events and hundreds of historical photographs, and this opens up for a wide range of possibilities for exploration of the letters. As it has turned out, the timeline seems to have left the book behind and taken on a life of its own on the Internet, attracting users from around the world, including students and school teachers using it as a tool in the education of digital literacy.

In my presentation I will discuss some of the future possibilities inherent in this way of curating letters in a digital context which I have discovered as a result of this work. I will show how patterns appear when the letters are read not only with “big data”, “distant reading” and the big picture (Moretti) in mind, but also with attention to the small data and the close reading of detail and what the philosopher Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht in his book *Atmosphere*,

Mood, Stimmung from 2011 refers to as “making present”: Letters make present a world long gone. Digitalized letters no less than letters on paper.

Merete Morken Andersen is associate professor of non fiction writing at the university of South Eastern Norway.

Zsuzsanna Bakonyi: “16th century Hungarian letters from Nagyszombat (Trnava)”

The State Archive of Trnava (Nagyszombat) is unique among Hungarian town archives in the way that it keeps approximately 5000 letters from the 16th century. In addition to Latin, German and Slovak documents the collection contains nearly 1500 Hungarian letters. This resource group provides valuable information about the history of the town and of Hungarian language. The preserved letters make information available about everyday life in the first line. Although the topics of the accounts are wide-ranging, they are mainly documents of finding an answer to commonplace problems of the town or its inhabitants. Most of them are connected to business in some way, as townsmen dealt with trading, handicraft and primary production, so cash flow was of crucial importance in their work. Beside these information, we find reports on events having an effect on the whole country. There are numerous accounts sent from the parliament in Bratislava, or from the synods, reports on the wars fought against the Ottoman Empire, or information about the conflicts between the catholic and the protestant church in the century of Reformation. In my lecture I would like to present the importance and the possible ways of using these letters from a historical point of view. First I briefly sum up the circumstances in which these documents came to an existence, then review the main topics they cover and finally highlight one of my favourite cases from the list.

Zsuzsanna Bakonyi is a research librarian at National Széchényi Library, Hungary. She received her doctorate in cultural history from Eszterházy Károly University. Her research interests include Hungary-related early prints and manuscripts with the focus of everyday life.

Paola Baseotto: “The Political Function of the Correspondence between Queen Elizabeth I and James VI of Scotland”

I propose to examine Queen Elizabeth’s letters to James VI of Scotland dating from the period of the acute crisis occasioned by Mary Stuart’s long imprisonment, controversial trial and execution.

The Elizabeth-James correspondence offers representative examples of Elizabeth's lifelong process of self-fashioning as a woman and as a monarch. It also offers significant evidence of her mastery use of rhetorical strategies in her conscious effort to rewrite her role in the Anglo-Scottish crisis.

In writing to the son of her cousin, Mary Stuart, the Scottish queen who was about to face trial and death on the scaffold, Elizabeth appropriates the rhetoric of affection, presenting herself as a mother (she defines James as her "natural good son"). James plays along with Elizabeth and addresses her as "my loving mother". Documentary evidence shows that at the same time as Mary Stuart's drama was speedily coming to its tragic close, Elizabeth and James were negotiating a league designed to unite England and Scotland. Indeed, references to "our league" are pervasive throughout the Elizabeth-James correspondence.

Shortly after Mary's execution, Elizabeth engages in a rhetorical construction of the image of a queen beset by Privy Councillors, Parliament and public opinion strongly critical of her reluctance to take the life of a fellow prince. Her desire to separate herself from the execution of Mary is manifest. She describes her painful negotiation of reason of State and private feelings: as a monarch, she is aware of the need to sacrifice Mary's life, as a woman, she portrays herself as overwhelmed by grief. The queen who had described herself as endowed with "the heart and stomach of a king" appropriates the Renaissance cliché of feminine frailty and permeability to emotion to create the discourse of her innocence in the trial and execution of an anointed queen.

Paola Baseotto has a PhD from the University of Reading, UK. She is Professor of English at Insubria University, Como, Italy. Her research interests include historical pragmatics, historical linguistics and especially the history of English, translation studies, early modern English theological, legal and medical treatises. She is the author of articles for academic journals and of three volumes (*Fighting for God, Queen and Country: Spenser and the Morality of Violence* 2004, "*Disdeining life, desiring leaue to die*": *Spenser and the Psychology of Despair* 2008, *Language to Language: applicazioni pratiche per gli studenti di Mediazione* 2008). She is co-editor of two collections of essays, one on dissent in Renaissance Europe, the other on translation. She has given invited lectures at Princeton University, City University of New York, Loyola University Chicago, Maison Française at Oxford University, Université Montpellier 3, Université de Genève.

Siv Frøydis Berg: "The truth is in the copying. A heavenly chain letter"

Heavenly letters were supposedly written by God himself and sent to earth by the angel. The legend of heavenly letters is old, but from around 1600 to 1850, handwritten and printed heavenly letters was widely spread through northern Europe. Various exemplars from different centuries show a remarkably stable body of text. The message of this type of letter is three-fold: it is true; it shall be displayed, and it shall be multiplied. It promises punishment

for those who doubt, reward for the believer – and for the copyist. The truth, authenticity, lies in the process of copying; it is the multiplication that gives it power and existence. The dynamics are in the depreciation.

This paper will discuss the textual copying process of the heavenly letter, with particular focus on the relationship between hand-written letters and printed copies. It will also focus on the historically changing relationship between the original and the copy. Two letters from the collections of the National Library of Norway play a main role: The first letter is a hand-written copy dated 1604, while the second was the lead object in a 1853 trial where the printer was judged by Supreme Court for blasphemy. In the long history of the heavenly letters, important aspects of modernity affect the changed relationship between the copy and the original: for example, reading skills and the technologies of letter writing such as handwriting, printing and digitisation.

Siv Frøydis Berg works as a research librarian at the National Library of Norway. She holds a doctorate in Intellectual History from University of Oslo/Center for Technology, Innovation and Culture (2010). Relevant publications: *Fortidens stemmer. Brev fra Nasjonalbibliotekets samlinger 1378-1776*, Nasjonalbiblioteket 2017, “Himmelbrev i reproduksjonens tidsalder” i *Litterære verdensborgere. Transnasjonale perspektiver på norsk bokhistorie 1519-1850*, red. Bjørkøy, Hemstad, Nøding og Rønning, Nasjonalbiblioteket 2019, “The proof of the original is in the copying. Heavenly chain letters” in *Museums as Cultures of Copies. The Crafting of Artefacts and Authenticity*, ed. Brenna, Dam Christensen and Hamran, Routledge 2019, “Med himmelen i hånda. Om kometer i tidlige norske skillingstrykk» i *Skillingvisene i Norge 1550-1950*, red. Brantzæg og Strand, SAP Scandinavian Academic Press, 2021.

Janet Garton: "A life in letters: Amalie Skram and her circle"

I have published several volumes of letters by the nineteenth-century Norwegian author Amalie Skram (1846-1905); intimate letters between her and her husband Erik Skram (*Elskede Amalie*, 2002), business letters to her various publishers (*Amalie Skram: Brevveksling med forlæggere*, 2010) and literary letters exchanged with other Nordic writers (*Amalie Skram: Brevveksling med andre nordiske forfattere*, 2005). I am now working on an edition of the correspondence between Amalie and Erik Skram and the Danish artist Georg Achen and his wife Ane Cathrine.

This correspondence extends over 30 years (1888-1919), though the bulk of the letters are from 1890-1905. It is full of information about the literary and artistic life of Copenhagen in the time just after the Modern Breakthrough; all are interested in the arts, and there are many discussions of Amalie and Erik Skram's novels and Georg Achen's paintings, as well as of other artists and writers. There is much information about contemporary social conditions and the details of domestic life, from worries about money and housing to the difficulties of finding a good maid and the problems of child-rearing (Skrams and Achens had daughters of the same age). The letters describe the dramatic events in the lives of all four. Georg Achen attempted to paint a double portrait of the Skrams, but was so frustrated by their unwillingness to sit for him that he slashed the portrait in two. Amalie confided her emotional crises in her friend Ane Cathrine; when she was admitted to mental hospital in 1894, it was

Ane Cathrine who visited her and arranged for her transfer to another hospital. She became the confidante of both Skrams as their marriage ultimately broke down. Read together these letters tell a vivid story about four sharply differing but intimately linked personalities.

Dr. Veronika Girininkaitė: "Working with letters in Vilnius university library"

This presentation about the experience of work with 18 century letters in the Manuscript Division of Vilnius university library touches on both approaches proposed by the organisers of this conference.

As for the institutional part, there is now implemented the initiative of splitting old big collections of letters, previously described as single units, by describing individual letters as separate items with separate entries in the electronic catalogue. Thus the historical collections are rearranged into a logical classification in virtual reality. This process has several benefits. Firstly, as the surnames, the locations, etc., previously unseen by the users, are added and thus become keywords, information in the descriptions becomes more precise, allowing search to become faster. Secondly, the new point of view, across the historically formed archives, gives the possibility to see the wider context of the correspondence and get a better glimpse of the whole communication process, which earlier was harder to do as the letters are stored in different places. It also leads to some unplanned discoveries as for example attribution of some of the letters, previously known as anonymous, by comparing the peculiar handwriting or deciphering incomplete signatures. Next step of the work is scanning of the letters and making the images available online via electronic catalogue entries.

As for the cultural perspective, the significance of the letters in question is shown. Those are letters, received by the head of the Vilnius University in the last decades of the 18 century, a period especially important as the epoch of fast progress in education, strengthening of international bonds of scientific society, as well as turbulent political and social changes happening in the last years of the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania.

Dr Veronika Girininkaitė (Vilnius University Library, Lithuania). In 1999 began studying at the Vilnius University in the Philology faculty and studied Russian philology (BA, *cum laude*) and Slavic linguistics (MA, *magna cum laude*). In 2005 started working in the Vilnius university library as a temporary job, but later was accepted for the permanent position at the Manuscript Division, mainly describing the Early Modern manuscripts in Polish and other languages for the electronic catalogue. Published some scientific articles in Lithuanian, Russian and English, primarily based on the research of the manuscripts. In 2019 defended the PhD in Sociolinguistics based on the analysis of one of the manuscripts in this library <<https://docplayer.lt/196793089-Kalb%C5%B3-ir-kult%C5%ABr%C5%B3-s%C4%85veika-keliakalbio-idiolekte-atvejo-analiz%C4%97-vytauto-civinskio-dienora%C5%A1tis.html>>.

Is interested in the research of the multilingualism, egodocuments, Early Modern correspondence, science and education history. After taking part in the meeting of COST Action IS1310 "Reassembling the Republic of Letters" <<http://www.republicofletters.net/>>, which happened in Oxford (UK) in March 2015, concentrated her work on the description of

the correspondence of the professors of the Vilnius University in the late 18th century. She presented the work in progress at the conference in the British Library (London, UK, 28 XI 2017) <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p2Ed9UpGpSg>>. Based on the knowledge gained while describing the letters, wrote about the correspondence of the astronomer Marcin Poczobut (1724–1810) in the library of the Vilnius University <<http://www.liti.lt/failai/veronika.pdf>>, the instances of code-switching in some of the letters, which he received <<https://www.journals.vu.lt/taikomojikalbotyra/article/view/22105>> and about the letters of the reverend Remigian Korwin Kossakowski (1730–1780) to his teacher, colleague and friend Marcin Poczobut <<https://www.journals.vu.lt/open-series/article/view/22660>>. Part of the correspondence she described is already digitised, uploaded, and available for the researchers at the *Digital Collections* of the Vilnius University Library <<https://kolekcijos.biblioteka.vu.lt/en/manuscripts>>.

Jorunn Hareide: "The Making of an Author. Hanna Butenschøn's strategies and networks as revealed in her correspondence"

In my paper I will give a brief presentation of Hanna Butenschøn's authorship before discussing her approaches to some of her many correspondents, mostly influential authors, critics and publisher. I will show how she asked for their support and advice in order to promote her literary reputation.

Jorunn Hareide, dr. philos., is former professor of Nordic Literature at the universities of Trondheim and Oslo. Relevant publications: *Magdalene Thoresen og Georg Brandes. En brevveksling 1865-1872* (red.), Emilia forlag 2002. *Magdalene Thoresen. Brev 1851-1903*, v. 1-3, (red.), Emilia forlag 2009, "*Kæmpe, til jeg kan ej mere.*" *Magdalene Thoresen. En forfatterbiografi*, Aschehoug forlag, 2012. In press: "Min dybeste Trang." Forfatter og sositetsfrue: Helene Dickmar alias Hanna Butenschøn

Dr. Martin Klöker. "Reconstructing the story of a forbidden love. Possibilities and limits of working with 17th century letters"

Life writes the best stories. And this is truly one that no novel could have invented better: the story of a forbidden love between the virgin Catharina von der Hoyen and the secretary of the estonian knighthood, Caspar Meyer, married to an older woman. In around 100 secretly exchanged german love letters from the years 1636 to 1652, the lives of the two lovers are unfolded in the old Baltic Sea town of Reval (today Tallinn). The letters, which also contain poems, are now kept in two different archival stocks. They are largely undated and must first be ordered and decrypted in order to be able to unfold the story behind it realistically and to make it understandable.

In the letter text itself, the great attraction is the immediacy of the personal statement. In contrast, a great deal of effort often has to be put in order to be able to assign the backgrounds mentioned (often only with single allusions) to contemporary events. Broad social and

cultural-historical analyzes based on archival materials are necessary for this. However, a second, so to speak complementary story of this love can be read from these supplementary documents. A complete Edition of the letters with comments will be published during this year.

dr phil. Martin Klöker M.A. Senior researcher at Under and Tuglas Literature Center of the Estonian Academy of Sciences. Born in 1966. 1993 Magister Artium at the University of Osnabrück (thesis "Reiner Brockmann and the Reval poets and scholars in the early 17th century"). 1993-96 scholarship holder in the Osnabrück DFG graduate college "Bildung in der Frühen Neuzeit". 1996-2010 Research assistant in projects for the "Recording and indexing of personal occasional writings" (Prof. Dr. Klaus Garber) at the Chair for Neuere Deutsche Literaturwissenschaft / Interdisziplinäres Institut für Kulturgeschichte der Frühen Neuzeit at the University of Osnabrück. 2004 doctorate with the thesis "Literarisches Leben in Reval in der ersten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts." 2010-13 lectureships at the University of Osnabrück. 2012 guest researcher in Tallinn and Tartu (Estonia). Since 2013 Senior Researcher (exterritorial) at the Under and Tuglas Literary Center of the Estonian Academy of Sciences in Tallinn (Estonia). Numerous publications on the literature and culture of the early modern period, especially in the Baltic region. Publisher of the series "Baltische Literarische Kultur" at Publisher "Lit" (Münster) and member of the extended group of editors of "Forschungen zur baltischen Geschichte". Member of the "Baltische Historische Kommission" (since 2007).

Further information and list of publications at:

https://www.etis.ee/CV/Martin%20Antonius_Kl%C3%B6ker/eng?lang=ENG

Øivind Larsen and Randi Sørsdal: "Letters to a mother – some methodological challenges"

The surgeon Sverre Sørsdal (1900-1996) came from the small city of Hamar in Norway. He started his medical studies at the Royal Frederiks University in Kristiania in 1919. From then on, he wrote letters to his widowed mother in Hamar, Ingeborg Schjervheim Sørsdal (1867-1962). The correspondence continued during his professional life. Sverre Sørsdal had an interesting career, also because he as a student had an alter ego as a boxing champion. He participated in the Olympic Games in 1920, 1924 and 1928.

His mother took care of the letters and they were taken over further on by Dr. Sørsdal and his wife. When they passed away, a pile of plastic bags containing a total of 256 letters was found in their home by their daughter Randi Sørsdal. After being worked on by herself and Øivind Larsen, the letter collection was deposited in the National Archive in Oslo.

Reply letters from mother to son have not been found. However, some diary material from Dr. Sørsdal, covering the same periods, also has been available. Entries there could be compared to the information in the letters. In addition has Dr. Sørsdal's daughter (R.S.) personal memory as background for working with the letters.

The letters were transcribed, and a selection was published with comments¹. Working with the letters arose a series of methodological considerations. They were personal messages from

a son to his mother and should be considered as just that. On the other hand they render insights of public interest into the life of a student, an athlete and a young professional. 37 of the letters were written during the Second World War, when Dr. Sørdsal was head of the local hospital in the city of Vardø in Northern Norway. Norway was under German occupation, and Vardø was subject to intense allied bombardments. The letters from these years obviously had been tailored to pass the German mail censorship, but at the same time to convey information on the situation. Where is the separation line between private and public considerations in a material like this?

Øivind Larsen (f. 1938) is emeritus professor in medical history at Institute of Health and Society, University of Oslo

Randi Sørdsal (born 1937) is a physiotherapist, also holding a master's degree in English language.

Francis Neary and Sally Stafford: "Opening up Darwin's letters: using technology to reach wider audiences"

The Darwin Correspondence Project is publishing all of the known correspondence to and from Charles Darwin, amounting to over 15,000 letters, in book form and online. Our website (HYPERLINK "<https://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/>" <https://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/>) was a popular and trusted resource for researchers worldwide but the rich stories that the letters hold deserved a wider audience. Following consultation with teachers we developed learning resources based on the letters aimed at 7 to 14 year olds. We have created articles, commentaries and are beginning a series of simple interactives for casual visitors to the site. But at a time when every web user is bombarded with requests to give feedback, how do we know we are reaching and engaging with our target audiences? The suite of tools provided by Google allows tracking of user behaviour on websites, it can be used to drive traffic to the site and to suggest improvements of the user experience.

In this talk we discuss our use of Google tools, including Analytics and Search Console. Analysing the data from these tools has enabled us to develop new content and make adjustments to the navigation, structure and existing content to help us to attract new audiences and to better meet the needs of our existing ones. The site has grown from a research tool, attracting mainly academic users, to one that interests multiple types of user. These include formal and lifelong learners, and an expanding general audience who are sparked by curiosity, just like Darwin.

Francis Neary and Sally Stafford works at the Darwin Correspondence Project, University of Cambridge.

Ane Ohrvik: "Mapping a Cultural Network: Exploring the letter collection of Peter Christen Asbjørnsen (1812-1885)"

The Norwegian legends-and fairytale collector Peter Christen Asbjørnsen had an extensive international network. Consisting of artists, authors, academics, politicians, publishers and the like, this network came to influence and shape Asbjørnsen's engagement with folklore collecting and his views on folk and nation and a specific national culture.

This paper will focus on the evolution and nature of his particular network and view it as a specific form of "knowledge community". Although a bulk of letters left by Asbjørnsen has formed part of the Norwegian Folklore Archive (Norsk Folkeminnnesamling: NFS) at the University of Oslo since its beginning in 1914, the letters themselves have never previously formed part of any systematical study. The current study represents the first attempt towards providing a general and transparent description of the collection of letters and the cultural and social network that lies behind them. It will also present various examples and reflections about the nature of Asbjørnsen's communications and his role as a cultural conduit at the heart of the national romantic period in the nineteenth century.

Ane Ohrvik is an Associate professor of Cultural History at the Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages, University of Oslo. She has a background in folklore studies and received her PhD degree in cultural history at the University of Oslo in 2012. Ohrvik has written and co-edited seven books and written numerous articles within topics such as book and manuscript history, witchcraft and magic, ritual and tradition, history of medicine, and heritage studies by studying both early modern and contemporary material from the Nordic countries.

Patryk Sapala: "Undique conquirere: Stanisław Górski's archive of letters and other political materials from the reign of Sigismund I Jagiellon"

The archive created by the Cracow Canon Stanisław Górski (1497–1572) has no close analogies among extant manuscript collections in Poland dating from the beginning of the Early Modern Period. From the 1540s almost until his death, Górski accumulated and disseminated detailed political information among the elite in a way hitherto unseen, in so doing promoting his own views on public affairs. He produced a number of multi-volume collections traditionally known as the Acta Tomiciana, approximately 100 folios in total, containing copies of correspondence by leading policymakers, including the King, Chancellors and members of the Royal Council, supplemented with materials of various kinds such as instructions for envoys and legal acts.

The documents relate mainly to the relatively long reign of Sigismund I Jagiellon (1507–1548). They are large, elegant manuscripts, neatly written in humanistic script, and were given as gifts by Górski in the 1550s and '60s to the Royal Council and King Sigismund I's successor, Sigismund Augustus (d. 1572). The persuasive potential of these original texts, which are generally perceived as a more objective source of knowledge about history than narrative texts, was intentionally exploited by Górski to encourage his readers subtly in a

particular political direction and discourage them from actions he considered undesirable. The effectiveness of this tool for political engagement was augmented by the fact that Górski selected texts in line with his own opinions, juxtaposed them in a way that suggested connections between different events, adjusted certain passages (deleting some sections, rewriting others) and added his own notes – supposedly explaining who people were or clarifying the text, but in fact presenting his own personal judgements.

Given Górski's additions to the texts in the Acta Tomiciana, his interference in their contents and careful control of the message they delivered, he should not be considered a mere collector, compiler or editor but rather an author. To understand properly his magnum opus and how he used the texts contained in it, we need to perform a close analysis of his editorial processes. The starting point for this is an examination of the manuscripts, copies of which appear in the Acta Tomiciana. Fortunately, the original papers assembled, edited and annotated by Górski are to a large extent preserved. These papers, the Teki Górskiego or "Górski's Archive", are mainly housed today in the National Library of Poland, which holds the largest and most valuable part of the collection, and the Czartoryski Library in Cracow. The whole collection comprises 6,000–7,000 items, mostly rough drafts of letters by Sigismund I and the Vice-Chancellor Piotr Tomicki, original letters to the King and his officials from other monarchs, Popes, leading figures in national and international politics, and some humanists, writers and thinkers, such as Erasmus, and copies from different sources, often in Górski's own hand. The part of the collection housed in Warsaw, recently catalogued in detail, contains around 3,900 items (4,500 texts), including most of the original letters and rough drafts from the collection.

This paper looks at a preliminary stage of the creation of the Acta Tomiciana, namely how the texts included in the work were acquired. I examine the provenance of the original material and trace the sources of copies included in the archive.

Patryk Sapala works at the Manuscript Department, National Library of Poland. Author and co-author of finding aids for manuscripts in Poland, editor of primary sources for the history of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Research interests: historical collections, early modern Latin manuscripts, early modern correspondence.

Karen Arup Seip: "Working with Voices of the Past"

In this paper, I would like to present a new digital edition with transcriptions of the letters which were published in the first volume of the National Library's series Fortidens stemmer. Brev fra Nasjonalbibliotekets samlinger 1378 - 1776. (In English this translates to: Voices of the Past: Letters from the National Library's collections 1378 - 1776.) While the hardback edition of the book aimed at conveying interesting examples of material from the National Library's collections, and to tell how diverse the letter genre is, by presenting the letters in a modernised version, the goal of this e-book has been to make the letter texts available in their original version.

The transcribed letters cover about 400 years. The oldest letter is a legal document written in 1378. The latest letter was written by a servant in 1776. During these 400 years, the art of

writing a letter went from being a kind of professional secret in a small group to become something even a maidservant could master. The appearance of the letters also changed greatly, from small parchment letters to paper letters that could extend over several sheets, and Norway was given a postal service that distributed the letters. The documents in this edition thus bear testimony to significant changes in society.

The aim of this paper is twofold. Firstly a presentation of the work with this digital source edition. Secondly to give examples of how the letters in this publication can be used to illustrate different aspects of the history of letter writing, including a deep dive into the history of reading and writing skills of the letter writers in Norway during the period covered by the book.

Karen Arup Seip works as a research librarian in the department of Rare Books and Manuscripts at the National Library of Norway. She holds a doctorate in history from University of Oslo (2016) based on her research on conspicuous consumption among the nobility in early modern Denmark-Norway. She has written several articles about conspicuous consumption and has co-edited an online edition of the diaries of Christiane Koren (2015) and the volume *Lov og lovgivning i middelalderen: Nye studier i Magnus Lagabøtes Landslov* (2020). She is working on an online scholarly edition of the letters published in Siv Frøydis Berg, *Fortidens stemmer. Brev fra Nasjonalbibliotekets samlinger 1378-1776* (2017).

Lucrezia Signorello: “The literary academy of Arcadia and Queen Christina”

In 1690, the literary academy of Arcadia was founded in Rome, under the patronage of Queen Christina of Sweden, by Giovanni Vincenzo Gravina and GAcademy, one of the greatest literary expressions of Neoclassicism in Italy, had Pietro Metastasio among its most representative poets.

Currently the book and archival heritage of where the Academy is located. Among the preserved eighteenth large number of letters exchanged between the Archive.

The treatment of this material is very copoetic texts subsequently edited. A heritage that the Academy wants to enhance today cataloging in the manuscripts catalog of the Italian State: the database "Manus Online".

What is the best way to organize the catalog's data? How to relate the letters owned by the Academy of Arcadia and those kept in other institutions, not only libraries but also archives? Can the full digitalisation support the knowledge and study of this material? The cataloging treatment of the letters of the Arcadia Academy and the poetic texts contained in them constitutes an interesting “study case” for a theoretical reflection on the cataloging of this “border material”. Keywords: letters, poetry, literary academy, Neoclassicism, digitization, cataloging, online database.

Lucrezia Signorello is Curator of Rare Book and Manuscript collections at the Malatestiana Library in Cesena and member of the Working Group for the *Manus Online* Authority File (ICCU – Central Institute for the Union Catalogue of Italian Libraries and Bibliographic

Information). At the University of Rome “La Sapienza” she obtained with honors a three-year degree in “Modern Literature: Italian Studies”, a master’s degree in “Archive and Library Theory and Management” and a specialization degree in “Archive and Library Heritage”. Since 2015 she has been collaborating on cataloguing projects in Italian and foreign libraries (Vatican Library, Arcadia Accademy, National Library of Rome, etc.) and in 2019 she won a CERL Internship and Placement Grant to work on the *Provenance Digital Archive* at the Koninklijke Bibliotheek in The Hague (supervisor Marieke van Delft). Currently she is also PhD student in “Sciences of books and documents” at Sapienza. Her research project is aimed at the identification and reconstruction of the library of the Roman Augustinian convent of Santa Maria del Popolo in the 16th century (supervisor Valentina Sestini, co-supervisor Paolo Tinti).

An Smets: "From Franciscus Cranevelt to Georges Lemaître and back: the collection of letters and autographs from KU Leuven Libraries Special Collections"

In September 2017 KU Leuven Libraries Special Collections acquired a collection of ten letters between Georges Lemaître (1894-1966) and his colleague Arthur Beer (1900-1980), an Anglo-German astronomer. As Georges Lemaître, a Belgian scientist well known for what was called later the Big Bang theory, was also a professor of physics at the KU Leuven, this was a major acquisition for our library. It is also an important addition to our collection of letters, which is mainly known for the 385 letters sent to the jurist Franciscus Cranevelt (1485-1564) by Erasmus, Thomas More and other humanists*, a collection recognized as ‘masterpiece’ by the Flemish government. But beside these two ‘subcollections’, with a very different scale, the collection of letters also contains a few hundreds of other items, which we are now making available to the (scientific) community with the collaboration of interns. They help the staff with the cataloging of the letters from the 19th and the 20th century; almost 400 letters have been cataloged so far. They will also make digital exhibits and Facebook posts to reach a wider audience. The large variety of letters, concerning very different topics and not always written in a clear handwriting –which sometimes is an understatement! – can be very challenging. On the other hand, this variety is also one of the major assets, as a rich collection opens the way to different types of dissemination and scientific research.

For more information on the Cranevelt correspondence, see [HYPERLINK](https://expo.bib.kuleuven.be/exhibits/show/de-cranevelt-correspondentie-/the-correspondence-of-frans-c) "https://expo.bib.kuleuven.be/exhibits/show/de-cranevelt-correspondentie-/the-correspondence-of-frans-c" <https://expo.bib.kuleuven.be/exhibits/show/de-cranevelt-correspondentie-/the-correspondence-of-frans-c>.

An Smets is curator at KU Leuven Libraries Special Collections (Belgium). She is the point of contact for the manuscript collection, follows up on the digitisation projects and is responsible for the website and the Facebook and Twitter accounts. She also gives guided tours and introductions to the students and other visitors, and has coached many trainees in recent years.

Elizabeth Smith: "Epsilon: developing a space for nineteenth-century science letters"

This paper presents the HYPERLINK "<https://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/>" Darwin Correspondence Project's work with our host institution, Cambridge University Libraries, to develop the new portal for nineteenth-century science letters, HYPERLINK "<https://epsilon.ac.uk/>" Epsilon (Epistles of Science in the Long Nineteenth century). Letters, by their very nature, are connections between people, 'a (written) act of communication within a communication continuum' (Stadler, Illetschko and Seifert 2016, p. 13, HYPERLINK "<http://journals.openedition.org/jtei/1433>" <http://journals.openedition.org/jtei/1433>). In recent years, there have been considerable efforts to provide points of access for large collections of both archive- and transcription-based correspondence data, from HYPERLINK "<http://emlo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/>" Early Modern Letters Online, which maps the Republic of Letters, to correspSearch, a TEI-based database of scholarly editions of correspondence made possible by CMIF (Correspondence Metadata Interchange Format). The nineteenth century, though, presents its own challenges, not least the sheer volume of correspondence both written and preserved.

In the talk I discuss some of the challenges faced in developing Epsilon and point to some new historical questions that we hope it can answer. In creating Epsilon with our original partners, we became aware of the different formats being used to represent similar sets of data; in many cases, edited correspondences were available only in print (such as that of Michael Faraday), while some were born-digital but lacking a platform. We had to build enough flexibility into Epsilon to incorporate these different formats but also data from calendars of correspondence to transcription-based editorial projects, and in the future data from archive collections catalogued to item-level. Much of the work devoted to scientific correspondence is still largely given over to the work of famous men. However, the work of numerous lesser-known individuals lurk within these collections, and their important contributions can be more easily revealed by combining collections and enabling searches across them.

Elizabeth Smith works at the Darwin Correspondence Project, University of Cambridge

Thomas Stern: "The Dresden collection of archives and letters"

Collecting archives and letters has a long tradition in the Saxon State and University Library Dresden (SLUB), an institution going back to the Electoral Library founded in 1556. The first family archives including correspondence came to the library in the 17th century. The manuscript collection contains the archives of artists, writers, scientists and musicians as well as numerous collections of autographs. In addition, the SLUB also maintains its own collection of autographs of Saxon personalities, which is continually being expanded.

All autographs and archives are indexed in the joint database Kalliope. The database originated from the central index of autographs of the Berlin State Library. In addition to the holdings of libraries, archives and museums in Germany, Kalliope also lists the papers of public figures in Austria, Switzerland or of persons of German-speaking origin from other

countries in accordance with the applicable international and national standards for cataloguing papers and autographs. On the basis of the standardised data used here (persons, institutions, geographical information, subject headings), these can be clearly assigned and related to each other.

In addition to the preservation of the originals and their indexing, the SLUB's Dresden Digitisation Centre offers the possibility of producing high-quality digitised material suitable for long-term archiving. This interplay of different competencies offered, among other things, the possibility of publishing the digital edition of August Wilhelm Schlegel's (1767-1845) correspondence from 2012 to 2019 in cooperation with the University of Marburg and the Trier Center for Digital Humanities. The edition brings together more than 5,000 printed and handwritten letters of Schlegel's correspondence, of which more than 3,000 original letters are contained in the papers of the critic and translator who, together with his brother Friedrich (1772-1829), the philosopher Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814) or the writers Ludwig Tieck (1773-1853) and Novalis (1772-1801), shaped the Romantic school in Germany.

The lecture will present and contextualize the history, scope, and characteristics of the Dresden collection and outline points of contact for correspondence research and letter edition.

Thomas Stern is Head of Unit Manuscripts, rare Books and map collection at the Saxon State and University Library Dresden (SLUB). He studied Visual Arts, Music and Modern Media at the University of Marburg. He is specialised in estates, the Libri amicorum collection and early modern and modern autographs. He is also responsible for the library's Culinary Collection.

Caroline Szyłowicz: “The correspondence of Marcel Proust: an open-ended play in three acts and a hundred years.”

Act One in the publication of the correspondence of French writer Marcel Proust (1871-1922) began in the mid-1920's, soon after Proust's death at age 51, in various monographs, magazines and six volumes of “Correspondance générale” edited by Proust's brother. These letters were presented by correspondent and were often heavily redacted, as many of the people cited in them were still alive.

In his 1938 dissertation, “La Correspondance de Marcel Proust, Chronologie et Commentaire critique” (U. of Illinois Press), the American scholar Philip Kolb established his research method for editing a correspondence that is essentially undated, and provided a detailed critical apparatus and dates for the several hundred letters which had already appeared. In 1950, Kolb signed a contract with Proust's estate to produce a vast, comprehensive edition of the correspondence in chronological order, to include as many letters as he could find. For the next 20 years, he painstakingly tracked and edited letters. Act Two culminated with the publication of the first volume in 1970. Kolb published over 5,300 letters, in 21 volumes, the last of which appeared posthumously in 1993.

In Act Three, a French-American team, recognizing the impossibility to integrate in a print edition the new letters that continually resurface, or the many resulting corrections to the

existing apparatus, endeavored to develop a framework to establish a dynamic, digital edition that is compatible with this constantly expanding and shifting corpus. The team is facing new challenges posed by the seemingly endless, open-ended nature of a digital environment. While it continues to improve its working prototype, the editorial team has established three principles to guide its work: it uses established scholarly methods, practices caution in updating editorial information, and aims to be accessible to diverse types of readers.

Caroline Szyłowicz: Associate Professor at the University Library of University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (USA), Kolb-Proust Librarian and Curator of Rare Books and Manuscripts

Michelle A. Tisdel: "Entangled Histories, National Libraries, & Contact Zones: Unpacking the Letters of George Padmore, Dorothy Pizer, & Ivar Holm"

Travel, exploration, empire building, migration, cultural contact, and intellectual exchange have created “entangled” histories and objects (cf. Thomas 1991). The presence of documents of foreign provenience in special collections of national heritage institutions reflects world-system exchange and entanglement (cf. Thomas 1991). Adopting Nicholas Thomas’s (1991) perspective on material culture, value, and the political economy of exchange, the proposed contribution analyzes the correspondence of George Padmore, Dorothy Pizer, and Ivar Holm as “entangled objects” in the collection of National Library of Norway. Furthermore, Tisdel explores both the correspondence and the national library as contact zones (Pratt 1991, 1992)—spaces of contact where social actors can mediate different and competing perspectives, create new understanding, and serve as a shared space for voicing and appraising contradictions and meaning. The paper discusses how anthropological approaches to letters as ethnographic objects of exchange can enhance our understanding of entanglement, history, and heritage as both social processes and a discourse on the past.

Contact zones and the political economy of value

Notions of relevance and value are contingent on interpretations of knowledge, history, and heritage. Cultivating critical heritage perspectives and collections management practices can yield new perspectives and influence notions of value and relevance (Tisdel 2017).¹ Although national libraries have institutional notions of value, they operate in an international political economy of value. Archiving libraries, such as National Library of Norway, engage in the “exchange” of information as part of national and international research infrastructures.² For Thomas (1999), entanglement and exchange involve creating, sustaining, and altering social relations.

Thus, this contribution explores letters as material culture and biographical objects (Hoskins 1998) in social life and as contact zones in collections of heritage institutions. The material draws attention to exchange and world-system entanglement through the prism of international activism and social movements supporting pan-Africanism, anti-colonialism, and social justice. These issues were common interests of Padmore, Pizer, and Holm, and reproduced through their correspondence, which spanned Great Britain, Norway, and Ghana.

1 Collections management involves negotiation, transactions, and different symmetrical and asymmetrical relations. Institutional practices occur in a context of international knowledge production that resembles other forms of world-system entanglement.

2 In this context, exchange refers to making objects and collections accessible to the public and promoting them as valuable sources of information for documentation and research. In return, institutions gain legitimacy, recognition, prestige, and professional accolades for the value, quality, management, and promotion of collections.

Michelle A. Tisdell works as a research librarian at the National Library of Norway. She holds a doctorate in Social Anthropology from Harvard University (2006) based on her research on Cuban museums and Afro-Cuban heritage production. Tisdell's research interests include cultural policy, heritage production, and discourses of belonging in Norway and Cuba. She co-edited the volume *A Literary Anthropology of Migration and Belonging: Routes, Roots, and Rhizomes* (2020). In 2020, she created Lift Every Voice-LEV, a documentation project about antiracism in Norway. Tisdell served on the committee for cultural heritage preservation of Arts Council Norway (2009-2011) and on the board of the Norwegian Museum of Cultural History (2008-2017). Currently, serves as a board member of Museums in Akershus (MiA) and the chairperson of the members' organization INN - Ethnic Minorities in Norwegian Cultural Life.

Lik Hang Tsui, "The Many Lives of Epistolary Manuscripts in Imperial China"

No cultural history of letters is complete without considering the materiality of letters. Probing into their materiality, however, requires us to direct attention to the material form of letters not only as the format of the containers of communicative messages, but more importantly as the outcomes of epistolary cultures that augment, supplement, and even disrupt those messages.

A unique case worth studying in this light is the materiality of epistolary writings in Chinese history. My paper analyses how the genre of letters and its sub-genres (especially *chidu*, informal notes) functioned in its various written, inscribed, and reproduced forms throughout the socially transformative and culturally vibrant period of Song China (960-1276). During that time, letters have not only become an increasingly important and sophisticated literary genre, but also the means of constructing a common cultural knowledge, a medium for original and reproduced calligraphic art, and above all, a crucial form of communication for learned elites. Literati officials (*shi*) transformed the written communicative practices during this key period of Chinese civilization, and their practices have set the paradigm for later traditional Chinese as well as East Asian letter writing practices.

The materiality of these epistolary manuscripts from this context is only attracting more attention recently. Since those manuscripts are traditionally taken to be works of literati calligraphy, research on them had usually been about the study of art objects. Epistolary manuscripts carry important information about literati culture and warrants examining from other cultural history perspectives as well. With this in mind, my study of imperial Chinese

epistolary manuscripts transcends the rather deceiving concept of “originals”. It gives proper attention to previously neglected but extant reproduced manuscripts from Song China, including written artefacts on letter paper recycled for printing, engraved model letters in rubbing collections, and copied letters in completed works of authors.

Given the underestimated significance of Chinese letters, an in-depth discussion of its material aspects breaks important ground in the multicultural study of epistolary culture and will contribute to the exploration of the many manifestations of letters as actors within concrete cultural contexts. Based on my earlier comparative work, examining the materiality of Chinese letters and their calligraphy will also be tremendously useful for comparing the colorful epistolary culture of imperial China with the world’s other letter writing traditions.

Lik Hang Tsui is Assistant Professor of History in the Department of Chinese and History at the City University of Hong Kong. He holds a bachelor’s degree in History from Peking University and a doctoral degree in Oriental Studies from the University of Oxford. Before his current post, he worked as a Departmental Lecturer at the University of Oxford and a Postdoctoral Fellow at Harvard University with the China Biographical Database (CBDB). He has also held visiting appointments and fellowships at Academia Sinica, Peking University, and the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science. He specializes in medieval Chinese history as well as the digital humanities. He is currently writing a book on epistolary culture in Song China and planning another one on digital humanities and Chinese history. A Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, he is a Reviews Editor of *Cultural History* and an Associate Editor of *Digital Transformation and Society*. His research has been funded by various grants and fellowships.

Dr. Viktorija Vaitkevičiūtė: "Letter Collections and Their Research in the National Library of Lithuania"

The Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania holds a total of 229 manuscript collections, of which 149 came from the 19th-20th-centuries private archives (Lithuanian writers, scholars, artists, and cultural figures who lived in Lithuania and abroad). A large number of letters on various topics constitute an integral part of those archives. Usually the descriptions of letters housed in the library are short providing only a very general overview of the specific collection. A more thorough and detailed research is currently lacking. In my presentation I will discuss a project “Migration in the Arts and Sciences—A Europeana Migration Thematic Collection” which the National Library of Lithuania implemented with partners in 2017-2019. Among other artifacts, a number of letters in other than Lithuanian language belonging to four Lithuanian diaspora representatives were submitted to the Europeana database, becoming a valuable source for European cultural heritage researchers

interested in the topic of migration. Another project I will talk in my presentation is the database of private written Lithuanian language implemented by the Institute of the Lithuanian Language in 2011-2013, in which the National Library of Lithuania participated as a partner. The database, which can be accessed on-line (www.musulaiskai.lt) contains letters and other personal manuscripts in Lithuanian written in Lithuania, the US and elsewhere. This project is a good example of how letters can be used in the research of the Lithuanian language, as well as in everyday history, sociology, and cultural anthropology.

Dr. Viktorija Vaitkevičiūtė, the head of Rare Books and Manuscripts Unit of Documentary Heritage Research Department in the Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania.

The field of scientific interests is the religious literature of the Baroque and Enlightenment of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, also the culture and history of the 15th-18th century books. Currently, the focus is on the functioning and distribution of the old books by identifying the various types of marks that have remained in the books.

I published the monograph "Catholic Baroque Sermon of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania: between *ars vivendi* and *ars moriendi*" (2008), the catalogue of incunabula of the Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania (2014). At this moment I and my colleagues are preparing the catalogue of *Officina Plantiniana* books in the collection of Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania.

Mette Refslund Witting and Marius Wulfsberg: "How to make Camilla Collett's letters readable today. Some reflections on the institutional work with letters"

Since 2014, we have been publishing the letters of the Norwegian feminist and writer Camilla Collett (1813-95). Her letters from the youth was published in the mid-war years, so our effort focus on her correspondence from the year 1841 to her death in 1895. These letters are an important source to her biography as well as our cultural history. The ambition is to publish all her letters in the collection of the National Library and establish a reliable text for research.

Because of the nature of Collett's correspondence and her handwriting, we have encountered a number of philological challenges that we will present in our lecture.

Collett's letters are written in Gothic script which is rather difficult to decipher. We have thus been confronted with methodological and hermeneutical questions concerning the relation between her handwritten letters and our transcriptions.

Further, the letters are written in historical situations and to recipients that in part are forgotten. That has led us to consider to which degree the letters need to be commented and the hermeneutical function of the commentaries.

Thirdly, we publish the letters in a series of yearly volumes, and therefore the question of how to organize the letters have been crucial. We started by publishing letters to well-known Norwegian authors, but in the two latest publications we organize the letters chronologically. The difference between the two principles of organization, have made us aware of issues of gender and ideology.

Finally, we publish the yearly volume of her letters digitally. That gives each publication a specific status. On the one side, because it continues the earlier publications in the series; on the other side because it will be continued by later publications. Each publication thus have a status as both supplementary and preliminary publication.

By presenting these four philological challenges, we will shed light upon both the correspondence of Collett and some important issues in our institutional work with letters.

Mette Witting is a research librarian in the department of Rare Books and Manuscripts at the National Library of Norway. Primarily she works with the arrangement and cataloging of letters, diaries, manuscripts, and other documents within private archives. She is also working on an online scholarly edition of the letters of the female writer Camilla Collett (1813–95).

Marius Wulfsberg is a research librarian at The Department of Books and Language at The National Library of Norway. Primarily he is doing research on norwegian literature from 19th and 20th century. At the moment he is working on an online scholarly edition of the letters of the writer Camilla Collett (1813-95), and he is a taking part in the research project "Making Memories. Contemporary Aesthetic Articulations of Norway in the Second World War".