

eternal bickering of ‘the jazz people’ about the merits of one musician or another, which seems to be the lifeblood of the journalistic part of the milieu, is strangely missing from the account.

When all this is said, it must be mentioned that the book does contain a lot of valuable information: the mentioning of a host of jazz programmes throughout the whole period, the list of programmes in the Radio Jazz Club series 1947–53 (pp. 42–45), the list of contributors to Jazz News (p. 93), the overview of the radio big band’s activities (pp. 164–65), and the numerous portraits of radio people broadcasting on jazz. All this will probably prove important to further studies on music and radio. Also, more than 90 per cent of the spreads contain pictures, most of them musicians’ pictures taken by Jan Persson, but the programme hosts are well documented as well. In several places the details of the everyday life of the radio staff is illuminated and the accounts of changing policies and power structures are a useful background to this. So even though *Fortællinger om jazz* is methodological and theoretical old school and lacks a number of important perspectives it delivers useful information for future jazz and media studies.

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Michael Hauser

Traditional Inuit Songs from the Thule Area

Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 2010

2 vols., 1556 pp., illus., music exx.

ISBN 978-87-635-2589-3

DKK 998, USD 173, EUR 134

Michael Hauser’s two-volume publication offers an immensely rich study of the traditional drum-song of the Inuit, primarily the Inughuit from the Thule area, and from other arctic areas, e.g. Baffin Island. The nucleus of the work consists of Hauser’s ‘transcriptions and scientific processing’ (p. 19) of professor Erik Holtved’s collection of 134 traditional Inuit songs, mostly drum-songs, recorded in 1937 in the pre-World War II Thule area (Uummanaq, today called Pituffik). The analyses of this early material is supplemented by Hauser’s own substantial collections of approx. 340 songs (recorded in 1962 with Bent Jensen) and 240 songs (recorded in 1984 with Pauline M. Lumholt) from Qaanaaq, where the former Thule population settled after being forcibly removed in 1953 when the Thule Air Base was built. The book, dedicated to Holtved (1899–1981), is as much an accomplishment of a life’s work of his predecessor as of his own.

Traditional Inuit Songs from the Thule Area is a monumental piece of work in more than one sense: by its sheer physical proportions, by the huge number of transcriptions and analyses, by the effort put into it – Hauser has worked on more than 800 hours of recordings – and by the meticulous and thorough processing of the data. It is a veritable must-have for future researchers in the field of Inuit songs as well as for those who care to know what to listen for, or is looking for something specific, when venturing into the recording collections.

The first section provides an overview of the main sources of knowledge of traditional Inuit music originating from expeditions, collections, and studies relating to Inuit musical culture in the Thule area, on the Eastern and Western coasts of Greenland, and in Canada. In the second section, Hauser relates his deliberations on the analyses, the pentatonic tone material, and the adjusted notational system, according to which he transcribed Holtved’s, as well as his own collections, in order to facilitate comparisons. His accounts of the applied phonetic system, notational symbols, and abbreviations (pp. 137–39) are inserted in this sec-

tion as well and not, as one might expect, as appendices. This section serves as introduction to Volume II, which consists almost entirely of musical transcriptions (sections 12–15), the majority of which are ‘complete’ and ‘analysed’ transcriptions of Holtved’s collection.

Through more than 200 pages, the third section in Volume I presents meticulously the many informants and the form and melody types used by the Inughuit. The reader is told, for example, that one of Holtved’s main female informants, Amaunalik (1907–89), was the daughter of Canadian immigrants on her mother’s side and that she was an excellent storyteller and married to K’avigak (1901–71), who was a singer. Section 4 sums up the description of musical parameters of the transcribed melodies, their form and type. Addressing the song tradition in section 5, Hauser considers himself dealing with the ‘much more “intangible” and subjective aspects of the song performances’, as opposed to the transcriptions which ‘cover objective and measurable aspects’ (p. 425). This section is structured around verbal statements from informants addressing questions of performance, continuity, individuality, etc. Valuable information about the frame drum and playing technique is also found here.

Sections 6, 7A, and 7B trace areas of origin in Greenland and Canada (Baffin Island and the Copper Inuit Areas) respectively. The procedure of tracing areas of origin through the study of melodic type formulas is based on a firm reliance upon the stability and inalterability of the Inuit songs in question, which indeed can be questioned. Yet, the interpretational move from minute details in the transcription and analysis to macro-issues of migration is both fascinating and convincing. Hauser’s observations that, for example, immigrants to the Thule area originated from southern Baffin Island (and not the northern) have been confirmed by linguistic and genealogical studies and has thus contributed to the study of Inuit and Greenlandic migration, quite an achievement for a transcriber and musical ‘theorist’ as Hauser calls himself.

Conclusions are found in section 8; terminology for traditional Greenlandic songs in section 9; and section 10 presents a survey of publicly accessible sound recordings and films beginning with Knud Rasmussen’s Greenland film (1934) which uses William Thalbizer’s sound recordings from East Greenland (from 1906). References are shown in section 11. A useful index of Inuit groups, academic researchers, and informants are included in Volume II.

The contribution of Hauser’s work to the study of Inuit and Inughuit traditional music is beyond dispute. But exactly how the work is meant to contribute to the ethnomusicology of the twenty-first century is not so obvious: Hauser’s book is not an ethnography of traditional Inuit music. So, what kind of book is this? Based on valuable and unique collections of recordings of traditional music in the Arctic area – kept at the Danish Folklore Archives in Copenhagen and the Greenland National Museum and Archives in Nuuk – this publication might therefore be understood as a meta-text, which shows a way ‘into the music’: what is going on in the recordings? Who is performing? What instruments are being played? As a comprehensive introduction to the collections and their musical content, the book is most welcome.

Hauser’s book belongs in the category of collecting-oriented studies preoccupied with collecting ‘facts’ and employing formalist analytical approaches to field data. For example, Hauser focuses on the technicalities of pentatonics, melodic structure and formulae, rhythmic patterns, and so on; information of this kind is offered generously. Yet, when it comes to methodological reflections and theoretical ambition (i.e. theory of the humanities, not music theory), the publication has much less to offer. It is written as if the ‘linguistic turn’ or ‘reflective turn’, which profoundly influenced musicology and ethnomusicology in the 1980s and 1990s, never happened. An example will illustrate this point.

Although section 5 contains rich information on the song tradition, Hauser’s observations might have been qualified further by relating them to theoretical definitions and discussions of the key concepts used. It remains, for example, unclear how the troublesome term ‘tradition’ is

supposed to be understood. Hauser observes a very interesting change in attitude among insiders towards drum-singing between 1962 and 1984, influenced at first by religious (Christian) tendencies to demonize pagan heritage, then turned into an increased awareness of the cultural value of this tradition. Still, one finds no discussion of revival and cultural heritage preservation, of post-colonialism in Greenland, or of the new concern for modern Inuit identity.

As this section is meant to say something about the meaning of the Inuit tradition in their life, and although Hauser does address insiders' and outsiders' reactions – some of the latter are wisely characterized as 'derogatory' (p. 785) – it remains an open question exactly whose understanding is represented: Hauser's understanding, or that of a group of Inuit? The desire to create order and structure in the songs – the heavy focus on pentatonics seems to confine the musical material as much as it opens it up – overshadows important issues of cultural *understanding* and production of *meaning* to the Inuit in relation to the musical practices under scrutiny. It would have enriched the cultural representation had Inuit understanding(s) of music and musical life been discussed and Inuit terms been allowed a greater impact on the prose, terms such as 'flakes' referring to song motifs, and '*taanera*' which refers to the nucleus of a song and is related to the Greenlandic word for soul, *tarneq* (p. 441).

Hauser is an experienced transcriber, who seeks perfection in the craft and art of transcribing. The consistency of the transcriptions is flawless and the simple design and Hauser's steady handwriting facilitates the reading. Yet, the technical saturation of the transcriptions and the analyses seem to address readers with advanced knowledge, rather than communicating to a broader audience. For a book based on transcriptions, the lack of methodological reflection on the problems involved in transcription is striking – only practical matters facing the transcriber are dealt with. For more than four decades ideas of transcription as an 'objective' strategy have been challenged which Hauser chooses to ignore. For example, certain intervals are described throughout as 'derivations', a term that hardly qualifies as being objective: what if the intervals performed have precisely the sizes they are meant to have?

Hauser has dedicated his work to the survival of Inuit drum dance and music by making the analyses and transcriptions publicly available. A CD with 59 music examples inserted in Volume II provides examples of the analysed material supplemented by other unique recordings by Jean-Jacques Nattiez (1976), Claude Desgoffe (1954), and others. One should also notice that the newly released CDs presenting a selection of Holtved's and Hauser's recordings in the series entitled *Traditional Greenlandic Music* include some of the earliest recordings from the Thule area made by Christian Leden in 1909.¹ The CD booklets contain detailed commentaries and are illustrated with photographs of performers and of the fieldworkers themselves. Some of the photographs are also included in Hauser's book with which these CDs are closely related. This is excellent for those who want to study the music, but one question remains: why publish more than 700 pages of transcriptions today? The transcriptions could as well have been placed in an open world-wide accessible database and thus bring traditional Inuit song and analyses into the digital realm, inviting students to interactively engage in the material.

The photographs presented in the book are illustrative of how fieldworkers and collectors often take part in the transmission and renewal of tradition: some of the illustrations are rare and fascinating portraits of Inuit performers dating back to the early twentieth century, and quite a few also portray the scholars who went to Greenland and Canada to make the collections. Thus, the story of traditional Inuit song is as much a story about researchers and the academic tradition of collecting. Also included are photos displaying Greenlandic nature and

1 Michael Hauser and Karsten Sommer (eds.), *Traditional Greenlandic Music, vol. 1: Thule 1906–1962, vol. 2: Thule 1962–1984*, Atlantic Music, ULOCD 165–166 (2010).

Inuit everyday life, such as floating icebergs, a woman repairing a seal hide, kayak frames, and so on, drawing an image of a serious scholar who cares about those who participated and made the collections possible. As they are not mentioned in the text, what do the photographs reveal? In their own poetic way they create a meta-narrative of their own as they seem to emphasize important connections between the stories, the music, the cold climate, and the ice-covered landscape, which arguably play a central role in defining the life conditions that collectors such as Hauser himself have shared with the Inuit. We know because Hauser tells us that the arctic cold is a major threat to recording equipment, but there is much more to this story, and I would love to hear Hauser tell it one day.

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