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and Susana Sardo, eds.

Historical Sources of Ethnomusicology in Contemporary Debate

Susanne Ziegler, Ingird Åkesson, Gerda Lechleitner and Susana Sardo, eds. *Historical Sources of Ethnomusicology in Contemporary Debate*. (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017. £61.99 [€70]. 280 pages. ISBN (10): 1-4438-7326-8, (13): 978-1-4438-7326-0).

At the end of 2017, Cambridge Scholars Publishing published an edited volume titled *Historical Sources of Ethnomusicology in Contemporary Debate*, which included a series of presentations given at two different international conferences organised by the Study Group on Historical Sources of Traditional Music in 2012 in Vienna (Austria) and in 2014 in Aveiro (Portugal). Most of the material discussed was audio, which of course cannot be directly reproduced on paper, but the contributions with images offer plenty of useful information on the transcriptions, instruments, iconographic and other handwritten documents.

The chapters discuss the topics of analysis and interpretation of historical sound recordings, music in manuscripts and other sources on music, such as field diaries, lists of recordings and handwritten songbooks. They demonstrate how research on historical sources reveals two key paradigms: on the one hand, they represent priceless documents that, for numerous ethnic groups/peoples, provide a clearer picture about certain musical phenomena that help (re)shape their identities; on the other hand, the problem with such material is that it was discovered relatively late and therefore the contextualisation for the contemporary researcher is more difficult and exposed to interpretation, which is not based on empirical data.

The book comprises eighteen chapters and an introduction, organised in three parts: Rethinking Archives and Collections: From Fieldwork to Digital Humanities, Written Documents and Musical Instruments as Sources, and Individual Memory, Musical Practice and Heritage. The first part combines contributions about new usages of historical sound material. The excellent first chapter by Miguel A. García “Sound Archives under Suspicion” is of key importance for the conceptualisation of the volume. García recategorizes the archive from a “collection of things” to a “collection of knowledge”, and establishes different scientific discourses on archives, which are understood critically as spaces open to a wide range of “interventions” that encourage and provoke new perspectives on understanding (sound) archives.

While the first part is a critical analysis of the concepts of the archive, the rest of the contributions are based on examples from individual collections with different methodological approaches. Susana Sardo's research topic "Institutionalising and Materializing Music through Sound Sources: The Case of Bruce Bastin's *Fado* Collection in Portugal" deals with recordings of Portuguese *fado* from the first half of the twentieth century. The author problematises the revaluation of a collected item into an "item of collective memory", a symbol of national identification and imaginative music. The book also features a contribution by a Slovene author Drago Kunej, titled "78 rpm Records as a Source for Ethnomusicology and Folklore Research: Experiences from Slovenia", which deals with the historical analysis of Slovene traditional music recorded on 78 rpm records, the wider history of recording Slovene music, and its publication and availability in American and European markets, whilst simultaneously emphasising the meaning of a (newly) discovered musical collection for the new understanding of the soundscape of Slovene music. Likewise, Anda Beitāne's chapter "Historical Sources and Fieldwork in Latvian Ethnomusicology: Experience and Results" demonstrates how the musical dimension had been neglected in the history of Latvian research until the 1990s, and how the newly discovered historical sources became the norm for the understanding of musical sources, as well as a point of reference for the applied use of musical heritage.

The next three chapters are based on examples of historical sound recordings of African music. The author of the first, Susane Fūrniß, attempts to contextualise examples from sound collections of music from south Cameroon recorded on wax cylinders in her chapter "Recordings of the Mabi People, Different Places Same Time: Cameroon 1908 and Berlin 1909". Although her methodological approach is clear and she is conscious of the fact that historical sound recordings are invaluable, she is not able to bridge the historical divide between recorded sound and the scientific reconstruction of music because of a lack of evidence. While Fūrniß problematises the lack of metadata in research, Claire Lacombe arrives at a different conclusion in her chapter "Fieldwork in Archives: A Methodological Approach of the Fang's Xylophone Music through Sound Archives (1908–2000)". Using the examples of music for the xylophone of the central African Fang people, recorded between 1908 and 2009, she performs an analysis of the memories of different protagonists and constructs the chosen musical genre based on the collected data. The core of Émeline Lechaux's chapter "When Past and Present Hold a Dialogue through Music: The Diachronic Comparison of Bwétè Ceremonies (Gabon)" describes the methodological approach to the scientific reconstruction of the initiation ritual in the central African country of Gabon with the help of historical sound recordings, offering ethnomusicological methods as a way of identifying the extra-musical context, suitable for anthropological research.

The contribution by Joséphine Simonnot, „The CNRS – Musée de l'Homme Sound Archives from 1900 to the Present: A Long Way between Heritage, Knowledge and Technologies“, reveals the historical aspect of how the archive of the *Musée de l'Homme* in Paris (France) came into existence with numerous collections of different sound carriers, from wax cylinders to contemporary forms of sound recording, and she also presents the process of digitalisation of materials and the creation of a

platform for online access to the materials. Her positive assessment of the possibilities of public access to sound heritage is carried on in the chapter by Marie-France Mifune (“Automatic Indexation and Analysis of Ethnomusicological Archives: Issues and New Challenges”), which introduces the platform Telemeta CNRS – Musée de l’Homme for accessing music and related metadata. She problematises the multidisciplinary concept of the project that combines the viewpoints of different sciences, with the aim of developing tools for the machine recognition of different kinds of music and therefore the goal-oriented selection of sound content for research.

The chapters in the second section move from sound material to manuscript and iconographic sources, and consider their suitability for analysis. Shai Burstyn uses handwritten songbooks to redress the space that is omitted from the so-called editorial and ideologically motivated politics of published songbooks in his chapter “Remarks on Israeli Song Notebooks”. For Gunnar Ternhag (“Personal Songbooks: Neglected but Informative Sources in Ethnomusicological Research”), handwritten songbooks are the research objects of the musical and textual creativity of “normal” people, those without an institutionalised musical education, and he also problematises the lack of a contextual framework that could explain microhistories within common history, such as written commentaries or personal discussion.

The next two chapters discuss the analysis of sources about instruments. In “Evaluating Different Sources for the Reconstruction of an Extinct Instrument: The Turkish *kopuz*”, M. Emin Soydaş describes the methodological attempt to reconstruct the “extinct” sound of the instrument and the style of playing it, through iconographic and historical sources and a comparative analysis of medieval instruments. Andreas Meyer’s analysis in “Cultural Memory and the Exhibition of Musical Instruments: A Textual Approach” focuses on select museum presentations of instruments, through the prism of museum presentation concepts and consequently of different cultural memories.

The third part moves on to the role of archival sources about music in the (re)construction of heritages, memories and identities. In “From Archival Recording to Aesthetic Ideal: How Individual Performers Have Influenced Style”, Ingrid kesson critically analyses the transmissions of past examples of Swedish vocal traditions, asking how personal and institutional selections of materials influence the creation of aesthetic and performance models up till now. Olli Heikkinen writes about the constitution of the national musical language in the nineteenth century with the help of the model of folk song adaptations in his chapter “Textual Strategies for Collecting and Publishing Finnish Folk Melodies in the 19th Century”. Ingrid Bertleff similarly discusses the construction of identity in “‘We Sing Our History’: Songs and the Politics of Identity and Remembrance among Russian-German Immigrants in the United States”, in which she writes about the formation of the common identity of German-Russian immigrants in the US, whose unifying element became the song archive. While Heikkinen’s is an example of the analysis of collective identity, Christiane Gesierich bases her writing on the personal heritage of a musician to construct a new personal identity built on the distant past and memories, and observes the process of personal identity transforming itself into collective memory in “The Russian *Gusli* Singer Aleksander Kotomkin: Three Dimensions of Memory”.

Finally, at the end of this section there is a chapter by Tala Jarjour titled “Safeguarding Tradition and the Authority of Representation”, which deals with the archive as a key factor in the construction of individual stories and collective history. This contribution successfully rounds off this themed volume that offers the reader a variety of case studies (manuscripts or musical and published materials), and at the same time opens the possibility and the necessity of understanding such material from diverse scientific and methodological standpoints. This precisely proves the importance of historiographical, (ethno)musicological, ethnological, anthropological and technical interpretations of old materials for the understanding of present-day knowledge and of contemporary musical and cultural phenomena, be it as ground-breaking interpretations or as fresh research of already discussed topics. The multidisciplinary nature of the book addresses a wide spectrum of readers, from archivists to ethnomusicologists, ethnologists and anthropologists. I therefore recommend the book to anyone interested in the analysis and interpretation of not just historical but also contemporary sources, since the authors introduce numerous interesting methodological approaches to understanding both music sources and the music itself.

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