

# Indian Music of the Pacific Northwest: An Annotated Bibliography of Research

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Few aspects of North American Indian history are as rewarding to study as the cultural achievements of the aboriginal inhabitants of the Pacific Northwest. Ever since the early studies of Boas, Niblack, Haerberlin, Emmons and Swan, a growing interest has generated hundreds of articles and accounts of the artistic achievements of the natives in this area. Unfortunately much of the early literature lies hidden in obscure journals dating back to the late nineteenth century, and remains relatively unknown to all but the interested scholar.

In earlier research the writer prepared an extensive bibliography<sup>1</sup> which documented over 700 titles encompassing native achievements in the creative arts. It included scholarly studies, catalogues of exhibitions, and a large body of literature which describes and illustrates the many diverse facets of native plastic and graphic art, dance, and music. From this interest there developed a growing conviction that early research in native Indian music generated by such scholars as Fillmore, Galpin, Densmore and Barbeau would be useful and pertinent for the development of educational curricula in both native studies and music. Furthermore, the information stored in many of these historical accounts could be of great interest to teachers and students wishing to further investigate the significant musical culture of the indigenous tribes of the region.

This compilation is the result of a systematic search through the Pacific Northwest collection in the University of Washington Library, the main catalogues of the University of British Columbia, the University of Victoria, and the British Columbia Provincial Archives library. Also examined were the various indexes to all related periodicals, government publications, and bibliographies of individual articles and books. From these sources the bibliography was annotated and checked for complete accuracy. The forty entries which the bibliography comprises represent the most useful and authentic accounts available to the reader today. From

<sup>1</sup> Ian L. Bradley, "A Bibliography of the Arts and Crafts of Northwest Coast Indians", *BC Studies*, no. 25 (Spring 1975), pp. 78-124.

these studies many examples of musical instruments, notated songs, texts and translations create a composite of a rich cultural heritage that belongs to the people of the Pacific Northwest.

Abraham, Otto and Erich M. von Hornbostel. "Phonographierte Indianermelodien aus Britisch Columbia." *Boas Anniversary Volume*. New York, 1906, pp. 447-474.

Research by the authors has resulted in the compilation of forty-three songs from the Salish tribes of the Thompson River area. Melodic notation and rhythmic notation (usually drum) are included. No Indian text or translation is supplied. In-depth analysis of melodic structure, pitch, intervals, tempo, dynamics and form add a scholarly dimension to this early work.

Barbeau, C. Marius. "Asiatic Survivals in Indian Songs." *The Musical Quarterly*, vol. 20, no. 1 (January 1934), pp. 107-116.

Barbeau traces northwest Indian origins to Siberia and China through similarities in song, the instruments used, and the manner of mourning. Five songs are included complete with notation, text, and translation. Four original photographs complement the text.

Barbeau, C. Marius. "Indian Songs of the North Pacific Coast." *Music in Canada*. Edited by Sir Ernest MacMillan. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1955, pp. 34-44.

The melodic and rhythmic notation of six native songs provide the material for Barbeau's discussion. Much of the material appeared earlier in the text *The Tsimshian: Their Arts and Music* edited by Marian W. Smith. However, a fuller explanation of the conditions under which the songs were collected is included. Some translations of the Indian texts are provided. Barbeau stresses that each song provides further support of his theory on the Siberian origin of American Indian culture.

Barbeau, C. Marius. "Indian Songs of the Northwest." *The Canadian Music Journal*, vol. 2, no. 1 (Autumn 1957), pp. 16-25.

Barbeau presents eight Tsimshian and Dénés songs fully notated with complete explanations of the given text. Translation and musical analysis are also included. Similarities between Northwest songs and those of Siberian origin lend support to the author's thesis that the native tribes of the Northern Pacific are recent arrivals from Eastern Siberia.

Barbeau, C. Marius. "Songs of the Northwest." *The Indians of British Columbia*. Compiled and edited by Jill A. Willmott. Vancouver, B.C.: Department of University Extension, The University of British Columbia, 1963, pp. 34-40.

A discussion of Barbeau's travels among the Carrier and Gitksan Indians and the folklore that inspires song. Several examples of differing song forms are presented but no musical notation is included. Mainly of historical interest.

Barbeau, C. Marius. "Totems and Songs." *Canadian Geographical Journal*, vol. 50, no. 5 (May 1955), pp. 176-181.

Barbeau discusses his visit with the Northwest Indians at Portland Canal between the Canadian Coast Mountains and Alaska. Customs and values are discussed in the life story of a chief named Saga-uwán or Mountain. The text of two songs without melodic notation as well as authentic photographs complete the article.

Barbeau, C. Marius. "Tsimshian Songs." *The Tsimshian: Their Arts and Music*. Edited by Marian W. Smith. Publications of the American Ethnological Society, vol. 18. New York: J. J. Augustin, 1951, pp. 97-280.

This publication documents seventy-five Indian songs from the Nass and Skeena River area. In collaboration with Sir Ernest MacMillan the author presents a completely notated version with analytic notes on the range, melodic movement, scales, phrasing and structure of each song. All songs have Indian text and English translations. A short biographical description of the singers, a map of the area and a classification of songs help to make this work one of the most valuable references available.

Boas, Franz. "The Arts." *Kwakiutl Ethnography*. Edited by Helen Codere. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966, pp. 346-352.

Indian words or notation are not provided for these eighteen Kwakiutl songs. A free translation in English is given for a variety of the songs which include warrior, love and mourning songs.

Boas, Franz. "Chinook Songs." *The Journal of American Folk-lore*, vol. 1, no. 3 (October-December 1888), pp. 220-226.

This article contains the Chinook text and English translations of thirty-eight Chinook songs. Chinook is a language that has sprung from French and English traders' attempts to communicate with Indian tribes located

from Washington territory north to Lynn Channel in Alaska. A glossary of words and meanings is provided. Three songs are notated.

Boas, Franz. "The Dances and Songs of the Winter Ceremonial." *The Social Organization and the Secret Societies of the Kwakiutl Indians*. Smithsonian Institution, New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1970, pp. 431-500, 665-733.

This reprint of the original Boas report, issued in 1895 by the National U.S. Museum, makes available a store of facts concerning tribal life on the Northwest coast in the last years of the nineteenth century. The observations, descriptions, illustrations and photographs complete one of the most comprehensive accounts ever compiled. The dances and music presented (complete with notations) by Boas and Fillmore add immeasurably to the scholarly works in existence. A comprehensive work.

Boas, Franz. "On Certain Songs and Dances of the Kwakiutl of British Columbia." *The Journal of American Folk-lore*, vol. 1, no. 1 (April-June 1888), pp. 49-64.

Several Kwakiutl legends, dances and songs are given with a description of initiation rites for the ancient custom of cannibal ceremonies. Notation for the melody and drum accompaniment plus the Indian words are given for a festival song and dance, two songs for the game of Lehal, and a mourning song. Boas includes a note that more songs may be found in *Vierteljahrsschrift für Musikwissenschaft*, published by Professor C. Stumpf in 1886.

Boas, Franz. "Songs of the Kwakiutl Indians." *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, vol. 9. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1896, pp. 1-9.

Eleven songs recorded on Vancouver Island, British Columbia, are presented. Four are notated. All songs include both the Indian text and translation. The symbols used to write the Indian text are explained and the approximate sounds are given.

Deans, James. "A Weird Mourning Song of the Haidas." *The American Antiquarian*, vol. 13 (1891), pp. 52-54.

The author describes the conditions of the Haidas living on the Queen Charlotte Islands during a great smallpox epidemic. The tribal custom of communication with the dead, somewhat similar to a seance, ended with a mourning song. No details of the song are given, nor is any text or notation included. The account is purely historical.

Densmore, Frances. *Music of the Indians of British Columbia*. Bureau of American Ethnology, Anthropological Papers, Bulletin 136, Washington, 1943. Reprint, New York: Da Capo Press, 1972.

Ninety-eight songs of the Indians of British Columbia are given, including such tribes as the Haida, Nootka, Quileute, Nitnat, Makah, Thompson and Fraser River Indians. All songs are notated but no text is provided. A free translation is included. Photographs of singers and a useful bibliography accompany the analysis of the melodic content. Densmore's work is recognized for its scholarship. This publication is no exception.

Densmore, Frances. *Nootka and Quileute Music*. New York: Da Capo Press, 1972.

This book basically describes the food, physical characteristics, occupations, clothing, tools, customs, songs, legends, dances and games of three tribes inhabiting the area of Puget Sound, Washington, through to the coastal area and north to West Vancouver Island, British Columbia. The text includes a classification of songs and a rhythmic and melodic analysis of all songs. A comparison of Nootka and Quileute songs with other Indian tribal songs is made. Twenty-four plates of pictures, maps, and a useful bibliography complete the book which, since its first edition, has become recognized as an authoritative text.

Drucker, Philip. "Musical Instruments (Drums, Rattles, Wind Instruments)." *Cultures of the North Pacific Coast*. San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Company, 1965, pp. 42-45.

Drucker provides a description of musical instruments used by Indians of the Northwest coast and how they were made. Good illustrations are included in the text.

Fillmore, John Comfort. "The Harmonic Structure of Indian Music." *American Anthropologist*, vol. 1, no. 2 (April 1899), pp. 297-318.

An examination of Indian music and related primitive music including selections from the Kwakiutl of the Northwest. The author pursues his thesis that all music tends to seek the tonic and its chord, if not even to be based on a specific scale. His adherence and tendency to harmonize all melody with triadic harmony reduces many selections to the level of gospel hymns!

Fillmore, John Comfort. "A Woman's Song of the Kwakiutl Indians." *The Journal of American Folklore*, vol. 6, no. 20 (January-March 1893), pp. 285-290.

This article presents "The Song of the Chieftainess at the Potlatch," with rhythmic and melodic notation and explanations on the circumstances and significance of the song. Included is an analysis of each measure and an affirmation of the author's belief that the predominating tones of primitive songs are harmonic in nature.

Galpin, Francis W. "The Whistles and Reed Instruments of the American Indians of the North-West Coast." *Royal Musical Association Proceedings*, vol. 29 (March 1903), pp. 115-138.

This historic article gives detailed descriptions and illustrations of whistles and reed instruments used by the Haida, Tlingit, Tsimshian, Wakashan and Salishan Indians. The text describes each of the instruments, how they were constructed, their decorations, the notes they could sound, and their use. Galpin also discusses the possible sources from which these instruments may have been derived. A most authoritative article showing rare examples.

Gellatly, Marjorie Gail. "Fourteen Northwest Coast Indian Songs Transcribed Into Musical Notation." Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Music Education, University of Washington, 1940.

This thesis investigates the importance of song in the life of the Indian. The usual thesis format is employed in the presentation of the materials, which includes a study of the many types of Indian songs (Spirit songs, Medicine songs, Love songs, etc.). Specifically, the study examines fourteen songs from the Muckleshoot reservation, a group belonging to the Puyallup Indian tribe. The musical characteristics and notations complement the collection.

George Graham. "Songs of the Salish Indians of British Columbia." *International Folk Music Journal*, vol. 14 (1962), pp. 22-29.

Fifteen of the sixty Salish songs originally recorded in 1912 by Dr. Marius Barbeau on the Upper Thompson and Lillooet Rivers are included in this analysis. Indian texts and translations are not given, as George is mainly concerned with musical analysis in terms of phrase structure, scale and interval. Notated melodies, scales, intervals and percussion accompaniments complete the article.

Gunther, Erna. "Musical Instruments." *Art in the Life of the Northwest Coast Indians*. Portland, Oregon: The Portland Art Museum, 1966, pp. 134-142.

Good photographs illustrate the text, which describes the rattles, drums and whistles of various tribal units of the area. Particularly good examples from the Rasmussen Collection held at the Portland Art Museum are identified and discussed in some detail.

Halpern, Ida. *Indian Music of the Pacific Northwest Coast*. Notes for two Folkways Records, Album Nos. FE 4523 (1967) and FE 4524 (1974).

The notes accompanying the recordings provide a rich resource for Kwakiutl and Nootka tribal music. Extensive research by Ida Halpern on Vancouver Island has resulted in authentic recordings and precise descriptions of the style and characteristics of the selected songs. Biographical data on representative singers and explanations of Indian word meanings are also included. Analysis of each song complete with melodic notation enhances the informative booklet.

Halpern, Ida. "Kwa-Kiutl Music." *International Folk Music Journal*, vol. 14 (1962), pp. 159-160.

A condensation of Halpern's previous articles, this work includes a short description of the sociological rules regulating the music-making of the Kwakiutl, the origins of songs, their particular use, and a discussion of the rhythmic and melodic elements of the music. One example is notated.

Halpern, Ida. "Music of the B.C. Northwest Coast Indians." *Proceedings of the Centennial Workshop of Ethnomusicology*. Edited by Peter Crossley-Holland. Victoria, B.C.: Government of the Province of British Columbia, 1968, pp. 23-41.

This is a detailed analysis of not only Indian music, but also the culture of the Indians as revealed in or related to the music. The reader is constantly referred to songs on the "Indian Music of the Pacific Northwest Coast". In fact, this article is almost identical to the booklet provided with the first record album. Melodic notation is provided for some songs and texts and translations.

Herzog, George. "Appendix: Songs." *Folk-Tales of the Coast Salish*. Edited by Thelma Adamson. New York: Memoirs of the American Folk-Lore Society, vol. 27, 1934; New York: Kraus Reprint Company, 1969, pp. 422-430.

Nineteen songs transcribed by Dr. George Herzog are contained in the Appendix of this text. Each song is an essential part of a folk-tale of the

Salish tribe. Clearly notated with texts and translations, the collection provides valuable source material for reference and research.

Herzog, George. "Salish Music." *Indians of the Urban Northwest*. Edited by Marian W. Smith. New York: Columbia University Press, 1949, pp. 93-109.

Although no actual examples of Indian music are given, the author provides a brief sketch and authoritative critique of previous work conducted by such researchers as Eells, Stumpf, Abraham and Hornbostel, Boas, Roberts, Haerberlin and Densmore. Essential characteristics of Salish music and comparisons of neighbouring tribal music are included together with a description of the related although somewhat divergent elements present in native music of the Northwest.

Kiefer, Thomas M. "Continuous Geographical Distribution of Musical Patterns: A Test Case from the Northwest Coast." *American Anthropologist*, vol. 71, no. 4 (August 1969), pp. 701-706.

The intervallic patterns of the music of ten Northwest Indian and Eskimoan groups were analysed. Significant similarities were found between several tribes but the similarities decreased with distance, thus indicating a corridor effect. A discussion of early research and a bibliography enhance the article.

Meek, Jack. "Primitive Musical Instruments of the Northwest Coast." *The Midden*, vol. 4, no. 3 (June 1972), pp. 11-17.

Meek discusses the instruments used in song and dance as accompaniment during religious ceremonies and dramatic dances. Illustrations and descriptions of whistles, reeded woodwinds and rattles are given. A list of museums where instruments of the Northwest coast may be found is also included.

Niblack, Albert P. "Music." *The Coast Indians of Southern Alaska and Northern British Columbia*, U.S. National Museum Report for 1888. New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1971, pp. 329-332.

An excellent collection of photographic plates showing a diverse range of rattles, whistles, trumpets and drums which belonged to the Tlingit, Tsimshian, Haida, Skidegate and Sitka tribes. Each example is carefully documented as to origin and use and method of construction. Two songs of the Haida and Sitkan tribes are notated with descriptive notes. All examples are located in the U.S. National Museum.

Peacock, Kenneth. "Folk and Aboriginal Music." *Aspects of Music in Canada*. Edited by Arnold Walter. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969, pp. 64-71.

This article surveys the research to date in native Indian and Eskimo music. Peacock describes the important contributions recorded on Edison wax cylinders and magnetic tape and stored at the National Museum of Canada, Ottawa. An outline of areas remaining to be researched is also included. No notated examples are given.

Ravenhill, Alice. "Songs, Dances and Musical Instruments." *The Native Tribes of British Columbia*. Victoria, B.C.: King's Printer, 1938, pp. 89-92.

A short description of the distinctive features of the Northwest Coast forms of expression is given. These include the character of songs, dances and the manner of execution, and percussion instruments and their use. No notation is included.

Roberts, Helen H. and Herman K. Haerberlin. "Some Songs of the Puget Sound Salish." *The Journal of American Folk-lore*, vol. 31, no. 122 (January-March 1918), pp. 496-520.

As a result of field-work conducted by Haerberlin in 1916 eleven songs are transcribed with Indian texts and translations. Analysis of each song from either the Snohomish or Snoqualmu tribes is presented with clear copy of the melodic notation. Unlike Barbeau, the authors find in some songs a resemblance to European music, particularly in scale patterns, although the songs bear no trace of European influence. A useful collection.

Roberts, Helen H. and Morris Swadesh. *Songs of the Nootka Indians of Western Vancouver Island*. Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, vol. 45, part 3. Philadelphia, 1955, pp. 199-327.

Ninety-nine songs of the Nootka Indians are notated and analysed for their form, melodic structure, intervals, time and metre. This fine monograph is based and developed from the phonographic records and from linguistic and other field notes made by Edward Sapir in 1910 and 1913-14 for the Geological Survey of Canada. In the transcriptions by Dr. Roberts which form the nucleus of the study, there is a remarkable sensitivity to melodic patterns, and an uncanny sense of pitch, providing a reliable analysis for the musicologist, linguist and ethnologist. A most scholarly and extensive work.

Sapir, Edward. "Songs for a Comox Dancing Mask." *Ethnos*, vol. 4, no. 2 (April-June 1939), pp. 49-55.

Sapir, a prominent linguist, investigated the language and culture of the Nootka on Vancouver Island and obtained two songs associated with the legend of the Comox people. The legend, songs, dance steps, Indian texts and translation, accompaniment and photographs are included. Explanations of the method of singing are also given.

Söderberg, Bertil. "Jingle Rattles of Puffin Beaks." *Ethnos*, vol. 34 (1969), pp. 58-62.

A short account of the few remaining examples of rattles made of Puffin beaks and the present whereabouts of several, presumably from Kodiak Island and Vancouver Island. One illustration and a description of their use in dance and ceremonial rites shed light on the significance of a rare musical instrument. Several references conclude the article from Stockholm.

Stuart, Wendy Bross. "Coast Salish Gambling Music." *Canadian Folk Music Journal*, vol. 2 (1974), pp. 3-12.

Ms. Stuart's article includes melodic notation, some Indian words, a description of accompanying instruments and how they should be used, and an analysis of pitch, scale, contour, melodic range, harmonic structure and form for some of the eight Lehal songs listed. An explanation of how to play Lehal is included.

Stuart, Wendy Bross. *Gambling Music of the Coast Salish Indians*. Ethnology Division, Mercury Series, Paper No. 3. Ottawa: National Museum of Man, 1972.

This publication is the result of field research undertaken with the support of the National Museum of Man. The work (which basically was prepared as an M.A. thesis for the University of British Columbia) investigates the Indian gambling game of Slahal played on the Northwest Coast. All of the many songs notated and analysed were collected by the author within a 75-mile radius of Vancouver, B.C. The result is many fine examples of easily sung songs carefully notated and representative of gambling songs in use today in British Columbia and Washington State.

Swan, James G. *The Northwest Coast*. Washington: Ye Galleon Press, 1966, pp. 200-202.

Only three pages of Swan's historic account are related to Indian music. However, the seven songs which are notated provide useful examples of children's songs with single rhythmic patterns and pentatonic characteristics. This edition is an exact reproduction of the original edition published by Harper and Brothers, New York, in 1857.

Swanton, John R. "Haida Songs." *American Ethnological Society Publications*, vol. 3. Edited by Franz Boas. Leyden, Holland: E. J. Brill, Publishers and Printers, 1912, pp. 3-63.

One hundred and six songs are transcribed here. Melodic and rhythmic notation are not given; only the Indian words, their exact translation and their free translation, with a few necessary notes on Indian customs necessary to the understanding of the songs, are included.