

Sounding the Depths: Tradition and the Voices of History

By Dr. Victor A Grauer



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(This work was originally released on the Internet and may be read, free of charge, at the following website: http://soundingthedepths.blogspot.com/. The paperback for sale here is intended for readers, students, educators, etc., for whom a printed format would be more comfortable or appropriate. NB: The many photos, diagrams and other illustrations in the online version, along with the audio and video links, could not, for various reasons, be included in the paperback; however, all these materials, clearly referenced in the printed text, can easily be accessed online via specially designed pages linked to the blog website. For details, see "Preface to the hard copy edition" opposite the Table of Contents.) "Sounding the Depths" is an innovative inquiry into the origins and deep history of some of humankind's most venerable and highly valued traditions, suggesting "solutions to mysteries that, until recently, were thought to be completely beyond the reach of systematic investigation." Building on his many years of research on world music, the author draws on a wide range of anthropological, archaeological and biological evidence, with special emphasis on the revolutionary genetic research behind the widely discussed "Out of Africa" model of early human history. A major objective is to demonstrate that evidence distilled from the music of contemporary indigenous peoples can function as a kind of cultural "genome," roughly analogous to the biological genome currently being explored by geneticists. Indeed, it is the author's hope that his research may some day do for cultural history what population genetics is currently doing for our biological history; going, in both cases, all the way back to our beginnings in Africa. Written in a straightforward, non-academic style, this book should appeal to a wide range of readers, from anyone with an interest in world music, cultural evolution or early human history, to students and professionals in fields such as anthropology, archaeology, population genetics, ethnomusicology and pre-history.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Dr. Victor Grauer, based in Pittsburgh, PA, is a composer, musicologist, film maker, media artist, poet and dramatist. He holds a Masters Degree in Ethnomusicology from Wesleyan University, with additional studies in that field at UCLA, and a Ph. D. in Music Composition from SUNY Buffalo. He was co-creator, with Alan Lomax, of Cantometrics, a systematic approach to the worldwide comparative analysis of traditional vocal music, and worked on the Cantometrics Project for several years, under Lomax's supervision. His creative work has been presented in many venues worldwide, including Lincoln Center (the New York Film Festival), Carnegie Institute (Pittsburgh), The Kitchen (New York), The Mattress Factory (Pittsburgh), the Barbicon Center (London), etc. His writings on musicology and the arts have been published in journals such as Ethnomusicology, Semiotica, Art Criticism, Music Theory Online, Other Voices, Millennium Film Journal, The World of Music and Before Farming. He is a recipient of the Pittsburgh Filmmakers, the Pittsburgh High School of the Creative and Performing Arts and Chatham College. He is presently engaged in research linking his work with Lomax on Cantometrics with current developments in genetic anthropology and archaeology.

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