

GUEST EDITORS' PREFACE

This issue of the *Yearbook* contains articles which are revised and expanded versions of presentations made at the 37th World Conference of the ICTM held in Fuzhou and Quanzhou, China, 4–11 January 2004. This conference was the largest ever held by the ICTM, involving about 260 papers from 280 scholars. For that conference, Niles served as Chair of the Program Committee and Tsao was co-chair of the Local Arrangements Committee and a member of the Program Committee—hence, our collaboration as guest editors for this volume.

The articles presented here address a number of the specific themes chosen for the conference, as well as reflecting new research activities, all focussing on Asia and the Pacific. Margaret Kartomi expands upon some of her Aceh, Indonesia, research presented at the conference, relating ideas about music and dance to local conceptions of space, thus developing two of the themes from the conference relating to the insights musical instruments shed on musical systems and the interactions between dancers and musicians in performance.

Wang Xiaodun and Sun Xiaohui consider another theme from the conference concerning interpretations of transmission and change in traditional Chinese music. Here they focus on court banquet music, its complex migration and the transmission of court musicians and musical types during the fourth to sixth centuries. Such historical studies continue a long tradition in Chinese musicology. However, it is with regret that there were not more submissions to this issue by local Chinese scholars, despite their large attendance at the conference. While it is obvious that language is the greatest obstacle, there might be other factors involved. For one thing, there exist differences in the focus and methodology between local Chinese musicology and the tradition advocated by ethnomusicology in the West. A vivid example is, while “describing a thing as it is” is well accepted as scholarly endeavour by local Chinese musicologists, it might be viewed by scholars in the West as “merely descriptive” and lacking “theoretical abstraction”, and, therefore, “non-academic”. Secondly, difference in cultural experiences results in information that is of “common knowledge” to the local Chinese musicologists, but is foreign to the general readership in the West. A most common complaint is “if I have to stop and explain everything that is of common knowledge, I will never have time to actually write what I want to write”.

If ethnomusicology deals with cultures on their own grounds, should we pay more respect to such local scholarly traditions, whether they be from China, India, Papua New Guinea, or elsewhere? Rather than enforcing “our” “rules of the game” onto every other local scholarly tradition, should we give other scholarly traditions a forum? Someone made a suggestion that there ought to be a separate publication of local scholarship, so that the work and contributions of local musicologists could be fully recognised. While this would provide an outlet for descriptive contributions, difficulties might still exist if there is a lack of “common knowledge” between author and reader.

Returning to the contents of this issue, Mikyung Park contrasts the improvisational techniques of a number of Korean shamans, attempting to

provide musical explanations for the general feeling amongst Chindo Islanders that such performances have degenerated in recent years.

The possible development of Japanese *kagura* is considered by Terence Lancashire, who sees historical links from a type of spirit possession to a ritualised theatre.

Shifting geographical focus to the Pacific, Jane Freeman Moulin explores various social and musical relationships between Tahitian dancers and musicians in performance activities.

Linking the Pacific with mainland Asia, as well as pursuing the theme of transmission and change in Chinese music, Frederick Lau's article considers the Chinese Qingming festival as performed in Honolulu and how this festival reflects Chinese Hawaiian identifications.

Finally, again straddling the Pacific and exploring themes of representation, Minako Waseda examines how GI songs during the American occupation of Japan were utilised in different ways by Japanese and Americans, but appealing to the attraction of the exotic for both.

Because the ICTM conference had to be delayed for six months, the schedule for the *Yearbook* also had to be revised, and we appreciate the assistance of all for helping meet the numerous deadlines. We thank all the authors who submitted papers for consideration for this issue; the anonymous reviewers for their comments which helped shape the contents; Kay Dreyfus and Wim van Zanten for numerous clarifications; Stephen Wild, General Editor, for his guidance and advice during the process; and, Kelly Salloum, Publications Coordinator, for seeing the articles through to publication, answering a wide variety of editorial queries, and showing such patience and ingenuity in resolving Niles's difficulties in accessing online proofs. We are particularly appreciative of the authors represented here for their contributions and prompt attention to any questions raised during the editing process.

**DON NILES
TSAO PENYEH**