

## Editor's Column

Let me start this editor's column with an invitation before the menu. As always, we seek to publish the best available scholarship on the world's oral traditions, oral-derived texts, and related forms. Perhaps even more insistently than in prior years, as we near the turning of the millennium, studies in oral tradition need both greater breadth and increased depth. That is, *Oral Tradition* is eager to print articles treating both living traditions (whether fieldwork- or archive-oriented) and manuscript- or text-based works. We welcome your voice, and look forward to your joining the conversation.

Long-range, that conversation will be featuring two new initiatives. As well as our ongoing commitment to comparatively oriented issues, we will be producing two more focused special collections—one on the Minority Folk Literatures of China and the other on Oral Tradition and Contemporary Criticism. At this point, the plans for these special issues are still very much on the drawing board, so please let us have your ideas, either about subjects to be covered or about a potential contribution that you would like to propose.

The present number of *Oral Tradition* reflects the heterogeneity for which we have been striving since the inaugural issue in 1986. Thomas Hale begins the discussion with a look at *griot(te)*, the controversial term widely applied to African singers of tales. From African epic, Vaira Vīķis-Freibergs takes us to Latvian folksongs and the phenomenon of associative structuring. Leslie Stratyner's article deals with a fascinating hybrid text in Old English, "The Dream of the Rood," poised between orality and literacy and between the Germanic heroic code and Christian sacrifice. From AngloSaxon England we then journey first to Mongolian and then to Uzbek oral epic in east Asia. Chao Gejin, from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, offers an overview of the Mongolian epic territory, while Walter Feldman provides a case study of two performances of the "Return of Alpamiş." Finally, Catherine Quick adds to our annotated bibliographical series with the 1986-1990 installment of books and articles pertaining to oral-formulaic theory and related approaches to the study of oral tradition. We plan to bring the series up to 1995 soon. All new installments, as well as the original 1982 bibliography, will be available electronically at the website for the Center for Studies in Oral Tradition: <http://oraltradition.org>.

Next in the publication queue (13, i) stands a special issue devoted to Native American oral traditions, featuring the subject of co-translation by teams composed of one Native and one non-Native.

Once again, we welcome your input.

*John Miles Foley, Editor*

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