

Editor's Column

With the present double issue (volume 3, numbers i-ii), *Oral Tradition* returns to the format of a miscellany, that is, of a collection of essays on a wide selection of traditions intended to familiarize specialists with parallel or analogous developments outside of their home areas. The next number (3, iii) will be a special issue, edited by Issa Boullata, on Arabic oral traditions, and will include twelve essays by eminent scholars from the Near East, Europe, and the United States. In the fourth year of its existence, *OT* will feature essays on Italian lullabies, African praise poetry, the musical background of Romanian oral narrative, Central Asian epic, and numerous other subjects; part of one number will also be devoted to translations of core writings by Marcel Jousse, V. V. Radlov, and Matija Murko, all scholars who were important influences on Milman Parry and the evolution of the oral theory.

Within these pages the reader will find the second and concluding installments of two state-of-the-art, or survey, essays: Mark Edwards on ancient Greek and Alexandra Hennessey Olsen on Old English (see, respectively, *OT* 1, ii:171-230 and 1, iii: 548-606 for the initial sections). Similarly, Brynley Roberts, Librarian at Aberystwyth, offers a thorough account of oral traditional studies in Welsh. In addition to these three surveys, the present issue offers three analytical essays. Olga Davidson probes the formulaic structure of the Persian *Shâhnâma* of Ferdowsi, Richard Swiderski considers the interdependency of orality and literacy in a south Indian tradition, and Victor Mair looks at the impact of the Buddhist storytelling tradition on the development of written vernacular literature in Chinese.

The annotated bibliography of research and scholarship, which follows the six essays, now extends through 1985. It has profited from the readership's suggestions and contributions, but we continue to ask for your assistance in making this research tool as useful as possible. Please send *OT* two copies of all relevant

publications for review and annotation, and feel free to suggest other titles we should be including. Our reviews in fact begin with this issue, as does the Symposium section. David Henige inaugurates this latter feature with a query about the terminological barrier that stands between disciplines in the area of oral tradition. We hope that others will want to take advantage of the Symposium venue, which is intended for reactions to current scholarship or policies, and which is open to all.

Finally, it is a pleasure and an honor to dedicate this issue of *Oral Tradition* to *Milton D. Glick*, formerly Dean of Arts and Sciences at the University of Missouri/Columbia and now Provost at Iowa State University. In a commitment to broad humanistic research and scholarship, Dr. Glick, himself a chemist by training, was the moving force in establishing the Center for Studies in Oral Tradition at Missouri, and thus in supporting not only *OT* but also the Lord Monograph Series and the Encyclopedia of Oral Traditions. Our readership, and all those associated with the interdisciplinary field of oral studies, owe him a profound and continuing debt.

John Miles Foley, Editor