

*Oh flowers we take,
oh songs we chant,
we enter the Reign of Mystery!
A least for one day we are together, my friends!*

*We ought to leave our flowers,
We must leave our songs
and go while the earth lasts forever!
My friends, enjoy; let's celebrate, friends!*

Aztec song, attributed to the Anonymous of Chalco
Cantares Mexicanos fol. 35v., lin. 16-20*

Flower World

Introduction to the Series

The bilingual series *Flower World – Music Archaeology of the Americas*, of which the present edition is the first volume, will raise the study of ancient music and music-related activities of the pre-Columbian Americas to the next level. For the first time, a book series featuring scientific investigations in this fascinating inter- and crossdisciplinary field, will be available. The series will encompass peer-reviewed studies by renowned scholars on both past and living music traditions from South, Central and North America, and thus constitute a platform for the most up-to-date information on the music archaeology of the continent. It will feature case studies and the results of research projects in the field, in which a great variety of music-archaeological approaches are commonly applied.

The title of the series, *Flower World*, refers to a mythological, even sacred place filled with the sweet scent of flowers, bird calls, pleasant sounds, and dance. It is a place full of happiness and joy, even if it belongs to the realm of the Dead, which sustains the enduring renewal of life on earth. Like the ancient Greek Arcadia, it is a realm drawn from counterparts in the natural world, fully realized and evoked in ritual performances. For the Aztecs the *Flower World* was related to the sphere of the rain god, a fertile place of bountiful, natural splendour and abundance (see López Austin 1994). It was inhabited by Xochiquetzal, Goddess of love and joy, and the female counterpart of Xochipilli, the God of music. Accompanied by birds and butterflies she danced in her sacred copse. For the ancient Maya civilization, the *Flower World* was a “multisensory sacred realm of sweet smells, musical sound, and graceful dance movement” (Looper, this volume), a “floral mountain that served both as an abode for the gods and ancestors and as a means of ascent into the paradisaical realm of the sun” (Taube 2004: 69). For the Moche, this place was supposedly related to the concept of the afterlife, in which the dead of all ages played music and danced, as shown in the vivid vase paintings with scenes of dancing skeletons. To pick out a contemporary reference, among the Yoreme (Sinaloa, Mexico), the *Flower World* is invoked frequently in sacred songs, “describing the enchanted world or ‘Spirit Land,’ a timeless world parallel to our own, [...] a world where even flowers have sound” (Simonett, this volume). The conceptual and metaphorical links that many indigenous societies of the Americas drew, and draw, between sound, scent, and flowers, is frequently related to the function of ritual music, song, and dance, understood as an offering to the spiritual world, and able to evoke and influence it.

What can be expected from a publication series featuring papers by scholars working in a huge but nevertheless confined and restricted field such as the Americas? It is the obvious but therefore no less exciting expectation that the concentration of otherwise widely dispersed knowledge may contribute to an increasingly precise music-archaeological mapping of this cultural area – huge in both spatial and temporal terms. It also will prepare the ground for a more profound and specialized discussion of topics whose specificity stems from the recognition of relationships and differences between the musical manifestations of a typical American nature.

Indeed, the Americas are characterized by an abundance of archaeological music cultures and living music traditions, many of them sharing virtually the same or at least very similar instrument types and comparable musical thoughts, aesthetics and socio-cultural contexts of music-making and related activities. Actual research questions, which are at the top of the agenda, concern the ethnoarchaeological problem of distinguishing true continuities from later inventions in contemporary cultures as a basis for research of past music cultures, and – still as part of the basic research – the pre-Columbian organology and acoustics, which are unexplored to a much greater extent than in many other cultural areas of the world. Related to the latter desideratum, we await further research on the indigenous aesthetics and conceptions of sound, which make the pre-Columbian music cultures so unique world-wide.

Whereas some Old World music cultures have been explored by scholars for centuries (especially in the case of ancient Greek music theory), true interest in the pre-Columbian music cultures – except the short but important phase of eyewitness accounts immediately after the 16th century conquests – only emerged at the end of the 19th century, contemporary to the first general outbreak of systematic music-archaeological research (Both 2010). Since then, however, studies in past Old and New World music cultures evolved in parallel and also stimulated each other, as most clearly demonstrated by the methodological and theoretical contributions to the discipline, among which many were drawn on the basis of music-archaeological research into South American and Mesoamerican cultures (see, for instance, Olsen 1990 and 2002; Mendivil 2004; Stöckli 2005; Both 2005 and 2009). Nowadays there is virtually no difference with regard to new approaches or technologies and research tools, such as the perspectives related to the archaeology of the senses and archaeoacoustics (see Scarre 2006), or 3D scanning and virtual analysis (see Both 2008). All this leads towards a more stable establishment of this – in many ways old but in other ways brand new – discipline called Music Archaeology, or Archaeomusicology, as some would say.

Recent years have seen a noticeable growth of interest in music-archaeological research worldwide. The credit belongs not the least to two institutions – the *ICTM Study Group for Music Archaeology* and the *International Study Group on Music Archaeology* (ISGMA) – both of which have stimulated and channelled studies on past music-making and related activities through regularly organized conferences and scholarly publications for over three decades. The two study groups, which for their part would not exist without the enormous and long-standing efforts that the renowned Ellen Hickmann put into them, encompass a global perspective of music-archaeological research.

Building upon their momentum, several special interest groups were formed recently, such as the *International Society for the Study of Greek and Roman Music and Its Cultural Heritage* (MOISA), the *Acoustics and Music of British Prehistory Research Network* (AMBP), or the *International Conference of Near Eastern Archaeomusicology* (ICONEA). The first step towards the formation of a special interest group on pre-Columbian music was the setting up a *Directory of Researchers Dedicated to the Ancient Music Cultures of the Americas and the Living Traditions*, which is currently hosted online (www.mixcoacalli.com) and includes over 80 researchers from all over the world. With the same intention the *First Meeting on the Music Archaeology of the*

Americas was organized on March 1-4, 2011 at the Universidad del Valle de Guatemala in Guatemala City, which attracted over 40 colleagues.

The demand for scholarly networks with a specific, often cultural-area-centred focus arises from particular research questions whose discussion often do not find an adequate platform at the wide-ranged symposia of the ICTM study group or the ISGMA. Apart from their consolidation of specialized musicological knowledge, networks like special interest groups can also be more productive regarding questions related to the cultural and historical background of past music making, as more researchers on a specific cultural area are gathered. The *First Meeting on the Music Archaeology of the Americas* indeed revealed a great need for scholarly reunions of this kind, especially with regard to the discussion of methodologies, terminologies, perspectives, and overall knowledge. The new series will take its part in responding to this need.

The academic discourse in the field of pre-Columbian music studies faces limitations which are partly related to language, since scholars tend to publish exclusively either in Spanish or English, thus hampering the results of their studies to be fully recognized more universally. Also, many works, especially those included in print-only journals, are widely scattered and often enough difficult to obtain, if not largely unavailable, a situation which inhibits the circulation of information. Among the goals of the present series is to take a part in changing this situation and feature both English and Spanish works, which for the widest possible publicity are distributed in printed and in electronic form. Also within the series will be published syntheses of recent landmark-studies and monographs, as well as translations of previously published works considered important, but so far unrecognized in both the English and Spanish speaking worlds.

The roots of the pre-Columbian music cultures can be followed through all periods of the pre-Columbian Americas and through the many cultures which all added their specific, individual faces. In some regions with a substantial ethnohistorical record these roots can even be followed through Colonial times to the early 20th century, whereas in other regions, in which often no archaeological or ethnohistorical record is present, living music cultures preserve certain aspects, which enable us to look and listen back on the musical past. The series' aim is to uncover more of this – in too many aspects – still hidden world.

Berlin, December 21, 2012
Arnd Adje Both, General Editor

* Note that the text is based on a free translation from the original, given in Spanish by Garibay (1964: 57). Although literal translations from the Aztec text differ in detail, a great portion of its original essence might be included in Garibay's version. The original text reads: *o aitqui huani xochitl / o atqui huanoncuicatl / quenonamican centiyahui / ayac mocahuaz in tlalticpac y ohuaya / ma oc cemilhuatl ye nica antocnihua / ayahue toconcauhtehuazque toxochiuh ye tocuic ayiahue / ticyaoncahuazque in tlalli maniac yiao / ma xonahuiaca antocnihuan ohuaye ya ohuaye / xonahuiaca a ohuaya.*

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