

process of change in the spatial arrangement of the pictorial composition that will come to full accomplishment in the Tang period. Here, the strength of Loveday's analysis lies precisely in the way she deals with these sixth-century visual sources. By avoiding and questioning any over-interpretation of the iconographical details in light of later Pure Land imageries, she is able to capture the gradual translation and assimilation of the *Guanjing* into images.

The second phase sees the maturation of the stylistic changes discussed in the previous section and the apogee of Pure Land iconography in China, of which Dunhuang is the most representative site. Here, Loveday discusses how the new spatial and iconographical arrangements, featuring the combination of narrative scenes framed by lateral columns and a central iconic scene, allow for a vertical reading of the representation. This new organization, which "creates around the sequence of actions a unified scenery, dictated by the internal logic of the narration", provides a formal solution to the specific case of the *Guanjing*.

Overall, Ducor and Loveday's book is an extremely successful example of how textual- and visual-based analysis can mutually support each other in providing a more compelling if not consistent narrative. However, the book remains anchored in the division between the philological and iconographical parts, and lacks final comparative discussion of the two, which would have strengthened the authors' overall argument.

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MATT GILLAN:

Songs from the Edge of Japan: Music-Making in Yaeyama and Okinawa. (SOAS Musicology Series.) 220 pp. Farnham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012. £55. ISBN 978 1 4094 2404 8.
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In the 1990s and 2000s, soap operas such as *Chura-san* contributed to the promotion of Japan's postcolonial periphery, the southerly Okinawan islands, as a place of blue skies and sandy beaches, a world apart from the stresses of modern, urban Japanese living, heralding a huge domestic tourist boom to the region. Gillan's text explores how, during the 1990s, a group of Okinawan musicians capitalized on this image, producing waves of laid-back records comprising a "mixture of traditional Okinawan reggae, Hawaiian music and pop", culminating in the concurrent Okinawan cultural boom which continues to the present day. Of the many Okinawan musicians who contributed to the boom, a disproportionate number originated from the most remote corner of an already remote part of Japan, the far-flung Yaeyama islands situated on Japan's south-westernmost rim, close to Taiwan. Drawing on ten years of research in the region, Gillan's text provides a pathway into the musicians and musical culture behind Okinawa's musical boom. The author sets out to ask why Yaeyama, with its total population of 52,000, has such a disproportionately large impact on mainland Japanese cultural life, taking the reader on a journey through islands which are "one of the few regions in Japan where traditional music thrives as a meaningful part of everyday life". A place which is, in the words of the Okinawan scholar Iha Fuyū, "like the island of Zeus from Homer's Ulysses, with music which has the power to lure passing travellers and capture them eternally".

The text opens with an overview of the recent study of islands, which has shifted the conception of islands to “places of cultural contact, rather than isolation”, leading the author to locate the “island identity” of Yaeyama “within the context of its long history of cultural and political relationships”. The text is structured in two sections. The first, chapters 2 to 6, presents an in-depth musical ethnography of local Yaeyaman traditions in their traditional contexts. Chapters 2 and 4 are analysis chapters, focusing on song and dance, and ritual music respectively. These provide an excellent overview of the construction of Yaeyaman music and its relationship to the Ryūkyū court and to Chinese traditions and notation systems. Musical analysis is central to these chapters and deals with complex vocal traditions with minute variations in pitch which are difficult to capture in transcription but are supported by the inclusion of video examples on the accompanying website, a very helpful addition. Chapter 5 explores the social organization of Yaeyaman music, and chapter 6 focuses on a single song in the Yaeyaman repertory, the *Tubarāma*, a famous Yaeyaman song that connects to local geography and the discourse of Yaeyaman history, society and politics. In this chapter the author brings to the forefront discussion of Yaeyaman feelings towards American occupation and their subsequent reunification with Japan, taking the *Tubarāma* as a metaphor for the struggles which the Yaeyamans face in reconciling themselves to the turbulent events of the past century and their uncertain present in which a sense of local resistance emerges against the “Age of Yamato [where] we are dragged/Everything has been turned upside down”, as mainland Japanese companies buy up land for tourist development projects.

The second section of the book lies in the concluding chapter, which moves away from Yaeyama towards an analysis of the roots of the Okinawan music boom, situating it within the context of the emergence of a distinctive Japanese World Music (*wārudo myūjikkū*) genre and exploring the contribution of Yaeyaman musicians to the boom.

This thoughtful text engages fully with both the Japanese and Western literature and includes a comprehensive discography which is a useful introduction to both Yaeyaman traditions and some of the popular music traditions which form part of the Okinawan music boom.

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TERENCE LANCASHIRE:

An Introduction to Japanese Folk Performing Arts.

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Over the many decades of his career Honda Yasuji (1906–2001), a leading scholar of *minzoku geinō*, the Japanese Folk Performing Arts, developed and refined a highly influential classification system. This system has dominated indigenous and foreign approaches to the study of Japan’s folk performing arts. It continues to form the backbone of encyclopaedic and dictionary definitions of the Folk Performing Arts and is the system underpinning *minzoku geinō* classification in the *bunkazai hogo hō*, the national Cultural Properties Protection Law. While