

December 2004

## Research Centre for the Study of Music, Media and Place

# M.A. and Ph.D. Programs in Ethnomusicology at Memorial University

It's official! Memorial University will offer the first graduate program in Ethnomusicology in Atlantic Canada.

Ethnomusicology is a sub-discipline of music that is concerned with music as a social practice, and is eager to foster a lively respect for traditional and community based music. Given that this region of the country is renowned for the vitality of local music, the inauguration of this program is timely, some would say long overdue. Furthermore, the design of the program is unique in Canada, building on the historic strength of both Music and Folklore studies at MUN.

As the distinguished external appraisors of our program proposal said in their report: "Given the strength of both fields at Memorial, these graduate programs have the potential to build on Newfoundland traditions of the scholarly study of music making, thereby acknowledging the rich heritage of regional studies, and opening up new possibilities for the study of music as a dynamic marker of identities in our changing world."

The Folklore Department, established in 1968, has an enviable international scholarly reputation in which music has been a central research area of numerous faculty

*[Continued at "Grad Program" p. 2]*

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## Music, Media, and Culture Lecture Series

The third annual Music, Media, and Culture Lecture Series is carrying audiences from school yards to concert halls, from Newfoundland to Africa, and Finland. The themes of this year's lecturers challenge the conventional boundaries of music scholarship in various ways, by examining cross-overs between music and law, music and education, historical musicology and ethnomusicology, or music and story-telling.

In October, we welcomed the distinguished ethnomusicologist, Dr. Anthony Seeger, to MUN for a week-long residency.

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He presented a public lecture entitled "Who Owns Music and what should Ethnomusicologists, Folklorists, and Performers need to do about it?"



Dr. Anthony Seeger, Professor of Ethnomusicology at UCLA and Secretary General of the International Council for Traditional Music, headlines lecture series. See "Lecture Series p. 3.

# **MMaP to host International Conference—Post-Colonial Distances: Popular Music in Canada and Australia**

A major international meeting will take place at the School of Music, Memorial University, in St. John's, from June 24-28, 2005. The conference Post-Colonial Distances: The Study of Popular Music in Canada and Australia is sponsored by the Research Centre for the Study of Music, Media, and Place (MMaP) at Memorial University, the Department of Contemporary Music Studies at Macquarie University, and by the International Association for the Study of Popular Music (Canadian branch).

Because of their colonial past, Australia and Canada have often been compared from political, economic, and social perspectives. Little has been written, however, relating or contrasting the popular music of the two nations. This conference will both reflect and stimulate scholarly interest in the comparative study of the Industries, cultures, traditions, and forms of popular music in Australia and Canada. The theme of 'post-colonial distances' evokes several ideas. To some extent, both countries are "post-colonial" in that they occupy tangential positions with regard to the trans-national industry giants. Furthermore, within each nation, there are distinctive and flourishing "non-mainstream" popular musics produced by Indigenous and other culturally distinct communities, or created in unique regional and community contexts. Additionally, there are collaborations and systems of circulation that are inflected by physical, virtual, or symbolic distances. Until recently, there has been little exchange between scholars who work on popular music in these two countries. The event will promote a broader understanding of the problems and possibilities for popular music in "small" countries, and will lay the groundwork for collaborative research in the future.

Plans are afoot for several concerts involving some of Newfoundland's finest musicians, and featuring several Australian performers. One concert will focus on Indigenous music in the two countries.

Musicians and other members of the public are cordially invited. Preliminary program and registration information will be posted on the

conference website :

[www.mun.ca/folklore/canozpopmusic](http://www.mun.ca/folklore/canozpopmusic).

This conference is a great excuse to visit Newfoundland this summer. Indeed, stay for Festival 500 as well !

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## **cont. Grad Program**

(Buchan, Widdowson, Goldstein, Rosenberg, Narvaez, Hiscock) and an occasional subject of inquiry for several others (Ashton, Halpert, Lovelace). The publications of this prestigious group and those of their graduate students include the definitive study of bluegrass (Rosenberg), a ground-breaking anthology on Canadian folklore and women (Tye), bibliographic and discographic projects (Taft, Mercer, Thomas) and significant studies of country music (Rosenberg), folk collectors (Lovelace), traditional music and dance (Quigley, Wareham), song history (Hiscock, Guigne) and mumming (Halpert, Story). Nineteen M.A. theses and seven Ph.D. dissertations have been completed in Folklore on music-related topics, including studies of performers, song makers, and performance contexts. While Neil Rosenberg has recently retired Folklore hired Dr. Cory Thorne whose work on Newfoundland diasporic traditions (see MMaP Newsletter 2/2) and his study of both West African and Balinese music adds important dimensions to the faculty strength. In addition to faculty based in St. John's, Dr. Doreen Klassen, who teaches both folklore and anthropology courses in the Social / Cultural Studies program at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College in Corner Brook, will also be associated with the new program.

Ethnomusicology courses have been offered in the School of Music since the appointment of Dr. Kati Szego in 1993. The curriculum in this area expanded with the addition of courses in local performance traditions (accordion, fiddle, and Newfoundland song) taught by some of the finest traditional musicians in St. John's, and with the establishment of the Canada Research Chair in Ethnomusicology, filled by Dr. Beverly Diamond. Areas of particular strength in Music are Asia-Pacific studies (Szego), and Indigenous studies (Diamond). We offer expertise in urban ethnomusicology, feminist musicology, and cultural theory. Additionally, other colleagues in Music study complementary subjects, for instance, performance practice

(Gosine), sacred music in indigenous communities (Gordon), music theatre (Rice), and world percussion (Power).

Other important resources for the program include two exceptional archives: Memorial University Folklore and Language Archives and the Centre for Newfoundland Studies. In addition, the Research Centre for the Study of Music, Media, and Place offers study space, professional training in audio and video technology, as well as employment for graduate students on research projects.

**For further information about admission qualifications or program requirements, contact [bdiamond@mun.ca](mailto:bdiamond@mun.ca), and check the web-sites of the School of Music and Folklore Departments early in the new year.**

To apply to the program, go to [www.mun.ca](http://www.mun.ca), click on Applications, and follow the links to get information, and application forms.

Congratulations to Andrea Rose who has been given a prestigious 3-M Teaching Award.

Congratulations to Neil Rosenberg on his recent retirement.

#### **MMaP is:**

Director: Beverley Diamond, [bdiamond@mun.ca](mailto:bdiamond@mun.ca), 709-737-3701; Fax: 709-737-2018.

Secretary: Maureen Houston, [mhouston@mun.ca](mailto:mhouston@mun.ca), 709-737-2051.

Digital Audio Studio Coordinator: Spencer Crewe, [spencerc@mun.ca](mailto:spencerc@mun.ca), 709-737-2057.

Executive Board: Anita Best, Tom Gordon, Martin Lovelace, Peter Narváez, Andrea Rose, Neil Rosenberg, Christina Smith, Kati Szego.

Community Advisory Group: Tim Borlase, Jean Hewson, Ruth Matthews, Doreen Klassen, Jim Payne, Stan Pickett, Eric West.

## cont. Lecture Series

We heard glimpses of his own experience from 1988 to 2000 as Executive Producer for Smithsonian Folkways, overseeing the production of about 250 recordings. Seeger also presented lectures on his work with the Suya of Brazil, in the School of Music, and on the Harry Smith Anthology of American Folk Music in the Folklore Department.

Dr. Virginia Caputo, Director of Women's Studies at Carleton University, opened the series with a presentation entitled "We Pass it Around the World": Making Music, Childhood and Place." As an ethnomusicologist and social anthropologist, Caputo works on issues of gender and music, and on the politics of childhood and youth. Here she examined the serious messages learned in the creative play of children singing while skipping, hand clapping, or doing other schoolyard activities. She explored differences between their performances with and without adult supervision.

There's more exciting lectures in the Winter term, 2005. On January 27, in ED4036, Dr. Doreen Klassen, who teaches folklore and anthropology courses at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College, on the other side of the island, will join us. Her many research interests include wall murals in Winnipeg, Mennonite oral history in Mexico, Mennonite music, and oral narrative in Zimbabwe. On this occasion she will speak about her work in Zimbabwe, at 4 p.m, in a presentation entitled "You can't say those words without using your hands": Language, Gesture, and Veiled Speech in Zimbabwean Shona Women's Storytelling."

In the final lecture of the academic year, Dr. Glenn Colton (Lakehead University) will speak about "Music and Patriotism in Pre-Confederation Newfoundland" in Room 1032, in the School of Music, 7:30 p.m. on March 9. Dr. Colton has just finished a term as Chair of his department. His research interests include Canadian music, nineteenth- and twentieth-century music, and interdisciplinary studies.

## Visiting Music Scholars at MUN

Country music scholar, Dr. Linda Daniel, was one of several visitors working in MUNFLA in July, 2004. Daniel received a Ph.D. from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (University of Toronto) for a dissertation on women in Canadian country music. She came to St John's to create a detailed database for the Russworm collection of LPs, a rich country music resource that was donated to the archive in the 1960s. The database design was the creative work of MUNFLA curator, Patricia Fulton, and Folklore graduate student, Tara Simmonds, in consultation with Neil Rosenberg and Beverley Diamond.

We are pleased to welcome back to Newfoundland Dr. Glenn Colton from Lakehead University. He is spending a sabbatical in the province to conduct research on various aspects of the history of music in Newfoundland. Watch for a report in the next MMaP Newsletter.

In January 2005, we look forward to a visit by Matt Brennan, a Ph.D. student from the University of Stirling in Scotland who is conducting a historical study of the tension between art and commerce in the popular music press, especially jazz and rock criticism between 1917 and 1972.

## Women, Music, and Technology: Symposium

In collaboration with the International Sound Symposium in the summer of 2004, the MMaP Research Centre sponsored a day-long series of events presented by the "In and Out of the Studio Project," a team research project on women, music and technology directed by Dr. Andra McCartney of Concordia University. Other members of the research team are Dr. Karen Pegley (Queen's University), Dr. Ellen Waterman (University of Guelph), Victoria Fenner (sound artist), and Dr. Beverley Diamond (Memorial University). In the morning, a small group of soundwalkers braved rain and cold weather to record in and around the Arts and Culture Centre. Andra McCartney prepared the group by advising them to listen intimately ("as you would to a lover or close friend"), musically, and ecologically. In some ways these recordings were hardly place-specific; they all had the "beep beep beep" of trucks backing up, a sound that McCartney has heard on every soundwalk she has ever conducted. But unique discoveries were made: the loud and varied resonance of the (failing?) cooling unit on the Coke machine,



The day after the "Women, Music, and Technology" symposium, three members of the "In and Out of the Studio" project team (left to right: Victoria Fenner, Andra McCartney, and Karen Pegley) explored the Very Nervous System installation of David Rokeby, at the International Sound Symposium in St. John's in July 2004. They are discovering new sounds in the air by moving their hands and bodies through 64 sectors of space, each generating a different array of sounds

the gentle combination of rain and wind, the different textures of walking surfaces, all were recorded. Participants were then taught how to edit and multitrack their recordings. While some practiced cross-fades and pitch shifting, one person completed a short composition by the end of the morning.

In the afternoon, the In and Out of the Studio group was joined by Lesley Howell (graduate of the Recording Arts program of CONA in Stephenville), Pamela Morgan (CD producer, musician, songwriter) and Francesca Swann (CBC producer and host of

Musicraft). They discussed their experiences in learning to use the music technologies they currently need for their work and modes of collaborating with technicians. While some emphasized that women have found ways to become technologically adept and “to get the job done,” others identified ongoing gender biases within institutions. In the final session of the day, the research group presented issues that arose in interviews with women who do audio production, film sound, composition, and radio, and in detailed observations of technology training projects.

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## **Dr. Cory Thorne Joins Folklore Faculty**

*By Cory Thorne*

Originally from Torbay, I began my affiliation with Memorial University of Newfoundland as an undergraduate in the School of Music. I graduated with a Bachelors of Music in music history and literature in 1996, having worked primarily with musicologist Paul Rice, ethnomusicologist Kati Szego, and trombonist Ken Knowles. My graduating thesis was on Afro-Cuban drumming and the music of Santería, an interest that was sparked while attending AfroCubanismo, a festival and conference on Afro-Cuban music and culture held at the Banff Arts Center in Alberta in 1994. Prior to graduating, I received my first contract as a performing musician with the Utah Shakespearean Festival, in Cedar City, Utah (1995 and 1996 seasons). This position grew out of an interest in early-music performance (thanks to Jane Gosine) and the sackbut (thanks to Ken Knowles).

In 1996, I moved to Ohio to attend graduate school at Bowling Green State University. I was attracted to Bowling Green by their ethnomusicology program, run by Steven Cornelius (Afro-Cuban and West-African drumming and dance) and David Harnish (Balinese Gamelan). I was soon recruited into the popular culture department

as well, where I worked primarily with Jack Santino (folklore, popular culture, festival, ritual, and public display). While a student in Ohio, I also worked as a teaching assistant (popular culture, world music, Japanese music, and African music), and lecturer (popular culture). During this time, I conducted field research in Newfoundland (on nationalism and music), and in Bali, Indonesia (on the folk/ popular/ elite continuum of Balinese gamelan).

In 1999, I continued my studies at the University of Pennsylvania, in Philadelphia, in the graduate program in folklore and folklife. Here I completed an M.A. in folklore under Roger Abrahams, with a thesis on nationalism and identity in Newfoundland music, based on field research from a variety of folk festivals and interviews with musicians on Fogo Island, the Burin Peninsula, Gander Bay, and St. John's. At the University of Pennsylvania, I also studied with Dan Ben-Amos, Regina Bendix, Lee Haring, and Galit Hasam-Rokem (visiting professor from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem). My dissertation advisor was Mary Hufford, and my readers were Roger Abrahams, Bob St. George, Douglas Massey (sociologist at Princeton University), and Gerald Pocius. While working toward my Ph.D., I served as a teaching assistant (American folklore and alternative medicine), and taught discipline-based writing classes (folklore and popular culture). I also interned with the Philadelphia Folklore Project, under Deborah Kodish, where I did fieldwork and wrote essays for a teacher's guide to the Multi-Cultural Arts and Education Program in Philadelphia public schools. This was a program that helped bring community-based artists into Philadelphia classrooms. My essays covered Liberian dance and the Liberian civil war, Philadelphia's Afro-Cuban drumming and Latin jazz scene, South African music and anti-apartheid activism, African-American heritage gardening, and Trinidadian Steel Drum construction.

My dissertation, *Come From Away: Community, Region, and Tradition in*

*Newfoundland Emigrant Identity*, is based on field research across southern Ontario, the east coast of the United States (from Florida to Massachusetts), and in Newfoundland. It is an ethnography of Newfoundland expatriate community associations, focused primarily around the Cambridge Newfoundland Club (Cambridge, Ontario) and the Newfoundland military bride community of Virginia Beach and Spotsylvania County (Virginia). Using theories of critical regionalism, I explore the role of tradition and popular culture in the development of civic commons among expatriate Newfoundland communities. Critical regionalism, as I define it, is 1) the study of the relationship between local and larger than local; 2) the study of the complexities and need for balance between social, cultural, and ecological regions; and 3) the analysis of commons as the root of community and region, and thus the foundation of knowledge and understanding of worldview. Because many expatriate communities now reside in suburban spaces, spaces that are designed without proper attention to social, cultural, or ecological needs for sustainability, commons and community development are increasingly weakened. Using the example of suburban expatriate communities, I argue that Newfoundland folklore, as a part of the popular discourse of Newfoundlanders, supports the development of commons within this community. Folklore becomes a counter-hegemonic tool within spaces of universalized architectural design – a tool for increasing the power of the local.

I have presented work at a variety of regional, national and international conferences, including the Society for Ethnomusicology, the American Folklore Society, the Folklore Studies Association of Canada, the Congress of the Americas (at the University of the Americas in Puebla, Mexico), the Popular Culture Association/ American Culture Studies Association, the Holiday, Ritual, and Public Display conference (in Ohio and in Alcala, Spain), and the Canadian Society for Traditional Music. I am also a member of the Modern Languages Asso-

ciation, former co-chair of the Society for Ethnomusicology Sexualities and LGBT Concerns Committee, and past-editor and board member of the Middle Atlantic Folklife Association.

After more than eight years of living in the United States, I have returned to Newfoundland as assistant professor in the Department of Folklore. I look forward to working also with the School of Music and MMAP, while continuing research in folk music, ethnomusicology, popular culture, migration, space, and critical theory.

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## Review

By Anna Kearney Guigné

*Songs of the Newfoundland Outports and Labrador / Chansons de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador* (TCDA 19082-2) Canadian Museum of Civilization: Archives of the Canadian Museum of Civilization and Tout Crin Discs, 2003. CD, bilingual booklet 32 pp, photos.

This new release of songs in CD format comes from the vast sound archives of the Canadian Museum of Civilization (formerly known as the National Museum of Canada). The CD is a sampler of 24 field recordings derived primarily from the collections of classical composer and musician, Kenneth Peacock (1922-2000) and American folklorist Mac-Edward Leach (1896-1967) who separately carried out research on vernacular song traditions in the province in the 1950s and 60s. Peacock made six visits to Newfoundland between 1951 and 1961, eventually collecting 766 songs and melodies: 638 on tape and an additional 128 in manuscript from 38 communities on the island. He later published a three volume collection *Songs of the Newfoundland Outports* (1965) the history and political position of which has been studied by Guigné (2004). Leach traveled to Newfoundland in 1950 and 1951, and then to Labrador in the summer of 1960 under contract to the Museum collecting over 400 songs, subsequently publishing the majority of his Labrador collection in *Folk Ballads and Songs of the Lower Labrador Coast* (1965). Only in 2004 did Leach's Newfoundland and Cape Breton collections become accessible on a website

created by MUNFLA and MMap at Memorial University ([www.mun.ca/folklore/leach/](http://www.mun.ca/folklore/leach/)).

Since 1911, the time of Marius Barbeau's early work, the Museum has played a key role in documenting the nation's musical traditions. Historically the institution has steered away from issuing sound recordings, preferring instead to print folksong anthologies. This sampler is a nice departure. We can now experience the original performances of such well-known singers as Patrick Rossiter of Fermeuse, Becky Bennett of St. Pauls, Charlotte Decker of Parsons Pond, Gordon Willis of St. John's and Benjamin Letto of Lance au Claire exactly as they sang decades ago. Field recordings such as these are a powerful reminder of the role of traditional singers in communities and of the diversity of the province's musical traditions.

The CD contains an eclectic and representative mixture of songs including local compositions, lumbering songs, Child ballads, songs of the sea, broadsides, romantic songs, cumulative songs as well as Gaelic and French material. The CD comes with a 32-page glossy booklet itemizing each song by its title, the collector's field tape number, and singer's name. Below each song is a transcription of the song itself based on the field recording. The producers include photographs of five singers, all from Peacock's collection.

The sampler is really biased toward Kenneth Peacock's research; 21 of the 24 tracks come from his collection. MacEdward Leach's work is poorly represented with just two tracks; "Heights of Alma" and "The Stump." Considering Leach's landmark research in this area of the province and that few of his field recordings from this period are available,<sup>1</sup> this is somewhat of a disappointment. However, new material by these collectors does appear in the CD: "Dance at Daniel's Harbour" (91-738) and "Boire un P'tit Coup" (130-904) (tracks 2 and 20) recorded by Peacock in 1958 and 1959; "Heights of Alma" (14-100) (track 13) by Leach. Peacock also collected a version of "Heights of Alma" (1965, 3: 1000-01). There is a 1968 field recording of John Joe English of Branch performing "Black Velvet Band" (track 12) for the American folklorist, Michael Owen Jones.

Considering the chronological sequence of the Museum's collecting activities in the province, the inclusion of this last song is out of

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<sup>1</sup> Some were released on *Songs from the Outports of Newfoundland* (Smithsonian Folkways, FE 4075) in 1966.

context. We learn nothing in the liner notes about Owen Jones or about why he came to Newfoundland. Jones did receive funds from the Museum to carry out research on belief traditions, later publishing *Why Faith Healing?* (1972). In the process, he evidently collected folksong material. A better choice would have been to include something from Margaret Sargent McTaggart's 1950 collection which also holds material from the Branch and St. Brides area of Newfoundland including several songs which she recorded from John Joe English sixteen years earlier (Duke 1981, 843; Guigne 1998, 21). Understandably, as Sargent did not publish her field research, she is often left out of collections and acknowledgments. It was Sargent not Peacock who pioneered the Museum's Newfoundland research program.<sup>2</sup> Peacock took over the Newfoundland research because of his connections to her as a former School of Music classmate at the University of Toronto.

The CD's liner notes are troublesome. The producers observe that Peacock initiated his field research in 1951 making six trips and finishing in 1960 in the Port aux Basques and Seal Cove area. As Peacock's tape index in the Museum's archives indicates, his collecting activities extended into 1961 where he closed his field season in Ferryland on the Southern Shore of the Avalon Peninsula (Pea Tape 209) (Guigne 2004). In their note to Becky Bennett's "Dance at Daniel's Harbour" the producers comment that six Bennett family members of St. Paul's gave Peacock 100 songs between them. In fact the musical tradition of this family was more extensive. Peacock actually collected 140 songs from eight Bennetts, eventually publishing 93 songs from this family's repertoire in *Outports* including 12 from Becky Bennett. Sadly, beyond mentioning the three Child ballad numbers, the producers have also chosen not to include annotations to link the material to other related collections. Often the notes seem to be inadequate. For "She Died in Love" the producers simply remarked "This song is related to 'She's Like the Swallow'." A reference to the versions collected by both Peacock and Maud Karpeles might have helped users make the

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<sup>2</sup> For her account of going to Newfoundland see specifically Margaret Sargent, correspondence to Marius Barbeau, 1942-49, Marius Barbeau Collection, Box 237, Library and Documentation Services, Canadian Museum of Civilization.

connections (Peacock 1965, 3: 711; Karpeles 1934, II: 1970).

The transcripts of the songs contained in the liner notes are based on the actual field recordings. The texts Peacock published in *Outports*, on the other hand, frequently differ in small ways from the singers' performances because Peacock regularly altered the texts and melodies of songs, to make them more singable. (This is understandable as his publication was created at the height of the Canadian folk revival; see Guigné 2002:1-6). These variances are worth noting. Mrs. Wallace Kinsloe's actual rendition of "The Unquiet Grave" on track 10 contrasts with the version Peacock published in *Outports*, a text-tune compilation by this singer and Jim Keeping (1965, 2: 410-11). Track 15 is Mike Kent's complete performance of "Lady Margaret"; the version Peacock published was combined with stanzas from recordings he made of the performances of three other informants (1965, 2: 390-95).

Audio collections such as those created by Peacock and Leach present a dilemma. Typical for the time period both collectors said little about their informants, devoting the page space to the songs. This was the focus of their research. By revisiting Peacock's field collection, it is still possible to acquire new details on singers and their repertoires and on singing traditions allowing us to make valuable connections with the past (Guigne 2003:47-63).

Field recordings such as these would be more useful if efforts had been made to contextualize this material. Peacock notes that he was drawn to certain singers because as traditional performers they represented "the highest flowering of the tradition" (1965 1: xxiv). As we are now discovering, even though many of these individuals have since passed away, within the community context, their reputations live on. Knowledge still exists pertaining to the songs they performed. Some of this information would have enhanced the material in this CD production. Although collectors such as Peacock and Leach admired the singers they interviewed, the details of their informants' lives and the contextual details were often considered irrelevant to the task at hand. Later researchers have started to gather information leading to a new appreciation of these individuals and the material they performed (Bennett 1989; Halpert and Widdowson 1990). Becky Bennett (1978), Charlotte Maria Decker (Boe 1980), Patrick

Rossiter (Stapleton 1973), Gordon Willis (Hewson 2001) and John Joe English (1991) are among those who have been acclaimed or made the subject of an individual study.

The Museum is to be commended for making this collection available to the public. It will appeal to both musicians and researchers. The CD will also be a useful demonstration tape for instructors wishing to give students a sample of the extraordinary singing traditions Peacock, Leach and Jones were able to record. Those wishing to know something more about several of the singers presented in this collection are advised to consult the list of works below.

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