Introduction

This special issue of *Musicological Annual* reflects the acknowledgment and celebration of the official recognition (2021) by the International Council of Traditional Music’s Executive Board of the new Study Group, **Sacred and Spiritual Sounds and Practices**. The peer-reviewed articles found herein are revised versions of papers presented at the international, multidisciplinary symposium *Music – Religion – Spirituality*. Held online from August 26–28, 2021 (Ljubljana), with generous funding and support from various Slovenian agencies and institutions, the symposium served to fulfill a requirement for new ICTM Study Group affiliation.

As was the case with the twenty-two symposium papers, the eight articles in this publication exhibit diverse interests and expertise and investigate themes such as degrees of rapture, rupture, and disjuncture in Ghanaian Ewe royal funerary and installation ceremonies; music’s role as a “spiritual tool” in Hindu rites of passage ceremonies in Bali and in Hindu-based South Asian devotional worship (*arati*); the crucial role of Sufi texts as supports for socio-spiritual relationships in the Egyptian *hadra*; the construction of a possible ethics of hospitality viewed through the prism of Alevi teachings and musical heritage in Turkey; public and audio-visual media presentations of Alevi-Bektashi ritual music and kinetic forms in Bulgaria; media replacements for Catholic rites suspended by the pandemic in Central Italy; Slovenian Catholic musical traditions in the Swiss diaspora; aspects of the historical development of messianic concepts of the *Nueva Canción Chilena* in Victor Jara’s *Plegaria a un labrador*.

I conclude with an expression of indebtedness to my co-editor Maja Bjelica for her editorial competence, indefatigable efforts, and warm collegiality. We both highly appreciate the gracious and unfailing assistance and guidance of *Musicological Annual’s* editor, Katarina Šter, and technical editor, Špela Lah who are committed to maintaining the journal’s standards of excellence. I extend a final gesture of gratitude to Svanibor Pettan, ICTM’s current president, whose breadth of vision and organizational efforts contributed to the symposium, the establishment of the new ICTM Study Group, and the publication of these thought-provoking scholarly works.

*Irene Markoff, editor*