

**Minutes of the General Assembly 2021**  
**of the International Society for Ethnology and Folklore (SIEF),**  
**Wednesday, 23 June 2021, 16:15–17:30**  
**The meeting is held digitally.**

**Members present: 162**

**1. Opening**

President Nevena Škrbić Alempijević welcomes the members at the General Assembly. She congratulates the colleagues in Finland on the anniversary of Finnish Ethnology.

**2. Appointment of acting chair and secretary of the meeting**

Monique Scheer is the acting chair, Sophie Elpers is the secretary.

**3. Approval of the agenda**

Approved without changes

**4. Approval of the minutes of SIEF's General Assembly of 16 April 2019 in Santiago de Compostela**

Approved without changes

**5. Report of President on the activities of SIEF in the last two years**

Nevena Škrbić Alempijević focusses on several main points:

1. International congress and conferences of working groups
  - The decision to go fully online has imposed some new challenges for the organization of the congress, but SIEF's Board, the Scientific Committee, the Local Committee and NomadIT have worked in synergy to offer a rich and inspiring program and to try to keep the open and friendly atmosphere of SIEF congresses in an online format.
  - The working groups have successfully found digital ways to gather scholars, prepare joint publications, organize conferences, workshops and roundtables.
2. Summer Schools
  - The summer schools reunion, organized in the frame of SIEF2021, has shown that SIEF manages to create a bond towards the Society through that program.
  - SIEF's third Summer School took place in virtual Siena in June/July 2020. Led by Fabio Mugnaini, and organized in cooperation with the Universities of Siena and Perugia, it brought together more than 30 participants, doctoral students, lecturers, and seminar coordinators. The summer school theme was 'Heritage, Tradition, Identity. A Case Study of the Palio di Siena'.
  - The fourth Summer School will take place in Warsaw, Poland, in June/July 2022. Its convener is Ewa Klekot.
3. Young Scholars
  - At each congress we see more and more early-career members participating in SIEF activities. On the wings of a successful start of the Mentoring Program at SIEF2019, this initiative is continued during SIEF2021. Three workshops are oriented primarily towards early-career scholars (but open to all the delegates): "How to get published?", "How to get funded?", "Career options for ethnologists and folklorists".
4. Journals

- SIEF gives support to the editors of SIEF's journals *Ethnologia Europaea* and *Cultural Analysis*. Both journals have been issued regularly, twice a year, and all the volumes are available in electronic format on the websites of the journals.
  - Laura Stark and Alexandra Schwell are the new editors of *Ethnologia Europaea*.
  - A special issue of the influential Spanish journal *Disparidades. Revista de Antropología*, which will be published very soon, will contain papers from the Santiago congress that highlight different aspects of the congress theme *Track changes - Reflecting on a transforming world*.
  - The next SIEF special issue on the congress theme of SIEF2021 will be issued by the Finnish flagship journal *Ethnologia Fennica*.
5. Sister organizations
- SIEF fosters collaboration with its sister associations, the American Folklore Society (AFS) and the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA).
  - EASA and SIEF promote their cooperation primarily through panels at congresses.
  - AFS and SIEF have founded a working group whose main task is to create an International Folklore and Ethnology Resource Guide.
6. Public awareness
- SIEF has established a film series under the title *Ethnological Matterings*. The series highlights the different areas and diverse modes in which we can apply ethnological and folklorist knowledge and skills.
7. Engagement in heritage institutions and heritage research
- SIEF has a status of one of UNESCO's non-governmental organizations.
  - Together with the Cultural Heritage and Property Working Group representatives and other experts on heritage, the Board has written the Position Paper *SIEF and UNESCO – Making a Difference*.
8. Number of members
- At this moment SIEF has 1168 members.

## **6. Report of Executive Vice-President on finances, statement of Audit Commission**

Sophie Elpers presents an overview of the financial balance of the years 2019 and 2020. There is a drop in reserve of 4000 Euros. This is in accordance with the Board's decision to restrain reserve growth by reinvest into the membership and putting 5000 Euros towards conference delegate support. The budget for the next two-year period shows significantly reduced costs on *Ethnologia Europaea* (now open access and not printed) as well as some savings from pandemic-reduced costs, which should lead to either increased reserves or the ability for the new Board to fund new initiatives.

SIEF's audit commission, consisting of elected members Anders Gustavsson and Ingrid Slavec Gradišnik, has checked the accounts. Anders Gustavsson presents the commission's report to the GA and proposes to discharge the board of its financial duties. The GA discharges the board.

## **7. Summer School 2022**

Ewa Klekot announces the SIEF Summer School 2022 which will be held in Warsaw, 27 June - 2 July 2022. The Summer School will focus on expressions of urban heritage on the right bank of the Vistula River.

## **8. SIEF and UNESCO – Making a Difference: Position Paper**

Bernhard Tschofen presents the position paper ([SIEF-UNESCO position paper.pdf \(siefhome.org\)](#)). The paper is the product of a collaborative process of the Board and diverse experts.

Main objectives of the paper:

- Informing SIEF Working Groups and SIEF members about the implications of the UNESCO NGO accreditation,
- Communicating between SIEF and different stakeholders in the field of ICH within and beyond UNESCO,
- Encouraging reflexivity in the diverse scholarly and political practices relating to the field.

Main points of the position paper:

- SIEF's legacy and responsibility in the field of ICH,
- Presentation of Ethnology's and Folklore's ways of thinking and working along some key concepts,
- Outline and justification of our significant role in the field,
- Opportunities of SIEF's engagement and indications of possible contributions – understood also as opportunities for SIEF and its members and Working Groups.

The GA has no questions or comments.

### **9. Joint International Folklore & Ethnology Resource Guide**

Luisa Del Giudice, American Folklore Society, advertises the tool which AFS and SIEF develop in cooperation with each other. The guide will map university departments, museums, associations, academic societies, archives and journals in Folklore and Ethnology all over the world. Luisa Del Giudice thanks all who have contributed to the guide. The guide will be published at the AFS website and the SIEF website. Comments and suggestions can be sent to [luisadg@humnet.ucla.edu](mailto:luisadg@humnet.ucla.edu).

### **10. Election of SIEF's Executive Board**

The following candidates are up for election:

*Presidency:*

Marie Sandberg (President, first term)

Tom McKean (Vice President, first term)

Sophie Elpers (Executive Vice President, fourth term, can serve for more than two terms in the same position (Bylaws SIEF, Article 11))

*Executive Board members:*

Čarna Brković (first term)

Evangelos Karamanes (first term)

Hanna Snellman (second term)

Dani Schrire (first term)

Irina Stahl (first term)

Jiří Woitsch (first term)

The list answers to article 11 in the Bylaws: The Executive Board should represent different regions of Europe as well as different schools and traditions of ethnology and folklore. At least one of the members should be on the Board or presidency of one of SIEF's Working Groups.

First vote on the mode of the election: the approval of the entire list.

Results: yes: 90%, no: 7%, abstain: 3%.

Second vote on the list.

Results: yes: 93%, no: 0%, abstain: 7%

Nevena Škrbić Alempijević hands over the president's baton to Marie Sandberg.

**11. Address by incoming president**

Marie Sandberg thanks the GA for their trust. She thanks the Board members who step down (Cyril Isnart, Robert Glenn Howert, Ewa Klekot, Fabio Mugnaini, Nevena Škrbić Alempijević, Bernhard Tschofen) for their great work during the last years. Special thanks go to Nevena Škrbić Alempijević. Marie Sandberg emphasizes the need of international societies, community and solidarity. The critical role of researchers in society and freedom of research are important goods.

**12. Any other business**

None.

**13. SIEF2023**

The next congress will take place in Brno, Czech Republic, 7-10 June 2023.

Jiří Woitsch, Director Institute of Ethnology of the Czech Acad. Sci., Daniel Drápala, Head of the Department of European Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University in Brno, and Martin Šimša, Director of the National Institute of Folk Culture in Strážnice, invite all SIEF members to come to Brno.

**14. Closure**

The chair closes the meeting and announces that SIEF 2025 will take place in Bucharest.