

SIEF is an international scholarly organization founded in 1964.

The major purpose of SIEF is to facilitate cooperation among scholars working within European Ethnology, Folklore Studies and adjoining fields.

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Flower market in Bolzano.

EDITORIAL

HERE IT IS – THE NEW SIEF NEWSLETTER!

This issue opens with a message from SIEF President Čarna Brković, inviting members to vote on bylaw changes. The deadline for voting is June 16.

We also warmly invite you to join us in Bolzano in August 2027 for the next major SIEF Congress, *Frontiers: Hidden, Visible, Mobile*. The call for panels will open in September.

We are delighted to introduce SIEF's new Historian, Hande Birkalan, and to present the new Working Group *Folk Arts and Vernacular Creativity*. You will also find updates from many of our long-standing working groups, which continue to organize inspiring events and activities for the SIEF community. The Working Group on *Museums, Material Culture and Communities of Practice* is beginning a new chapter with a new name and renewed mission.

This issue contains much more to explore, including calls for papers and publications, announcements of upcoming conferences, the *Wayland D. Hand Prize 2026* call for submissions, and new journal issues and book publications.

We remember our colleagues Ekaterina Anastasova and Ueli Gyr with sadness.



Sophie Elpers,
Executive Vice President SIEF

1 LETTER OF THE PRESIDENT

INVITATION TO VOTE ON PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGES

Dear SIEF members,

The Board of the International Society for Ethnology and Folklore invites you to vote and share your opinion on several issues relevant to the Society's present and future. The SIEF Bylaws are a living document, reflecting the pulse and tempo of its diverse and changing membership. Last updated in 2017, the Bylaws no longer correspond to the current situation. The members of the SIEF Board have therefore prepared several proposals to update them.

The SIEF Board has worked closely and collaboratively on the proposed changes to the Bylaws now before you. These changes reflect SIEF's core values, as outlined in its Mission, including excellent scholarship, open-mindedness, eclecticism, an exploratory spirit, respect for the richness of diverse academic traditions, a commitment to free and open communication across boundaries, borders, and disciplines, as well as a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The proposed articles also reflect changes that have already taken place within the Society. Over the last decade, the Society has outgrown the voting system based on a show of hands. While this method is appropriate for smaller groups that can operate informally and immediately, an international society with over 1,000 members requires a different voting mechanism. Such a system should enable broader democratic participation, ensure more balanced and stable representation, and guarantee anonymity. Following amendments adopted during an Extraordinary General Assembly in 2014, SIEF members are now able to vote online and collectively decide how the Society should be governed in the coming years. A broad participation in the vote on the Bylaws is needed for democratic representation, and we hope that SIEF membership will respond to the vote in large numbers.

LETTER PRESIDENT

SIEF members are invited to vote separately on each article for which a change is proposed, and to express their opinion if they disagree with any proposal. Should any proposals be rejected, the Board will take appropriate steps to facilitate broad discussion and knowledge-sharing among SIEF members on the issues related to those articles.

For all these reasons, please vote, dear SIEF members!

As a SIEF member, you should have received an email containing a link to the poll, together with further information and instructions regarding the voting process.

Čarna Brković, SIEF President



2 SIEF2027 IN BOLZANO, ITALY, AUGUST 3–6, 2027

FRONTIERS: HIDDEN, VISIBLE, MOBILE

“Frontiers” speak to the current global situation, which is affected by the return of nationalist ideologies, imperialist domination, colonial expansionism and wars. This puts into question the value of tolerance, democracy, and international law, suggesting that these have been illusions. It is timely to address the ambiguities, contradictions and paradoxes embedded in the notion of frontiers, reimagining them to envision and shape a better future for terrestrial life.

Frontiers do not only refer to social boundaries and historical political borders as complex “borderscapes”. They also mean “horizons” of discovery and expansion in both a metaphorical (e.g. the frontiers of science) and a literal sense (the frontiers of colonization). Whether visible or hidden, borderscapes and horizons are inherently mobile in space and time. They remind us of colonial enterprises and violence, as well as of decoloniality as a frontier paradigm.

A graphic design for the SIEF2027 congress. It features the words "HIDDEN", "VISIBLE", "MOBILE", and "FRONTIERS" in a bold, sans-serif font, arranged in a staggered, overlapping manner. Below these words, the text "18TH CONGRESS", "SIEF2027", and "BOZEN-BOLZANO" is displayed in a smaller, clean font. The graphic is set against a background of two vertical bars, one yellow and one orange.

Starting from these possible understandings of frontiers, SIEF2027 invites ethnologists, folklorists, anthropologists, and scholars from adjacent fields, to explore the many ways of framing visible, hidden and mobile frontiers.

WELCOME TO BOZEN-BOLZANO SIEF2027!

We are waiting for you in a multicultural city, with an old and a new town, several histories of migration over time, and three official languages – not to mention the many unofficial



ones. It is a place with a troubled history, including a battle over nationalist monuments, and a critical dissonant heritage of the twentieth century. It is a gateway to the Dolomites, where the Malinowski family made their home in the 1920s, and very close to the “Hidden Frontier” of ethnicity within the Alpine cultural ecology. So, it will be a fantastic place to discuss Ethnology and Folklore, from August 3 to 6, 2027 at unibz –the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano.

Call for panels

September 21 – November 2, 2026

Call for papers

November 30, 2026 – January 11, 2027



3 SIEF HISTORY AND ITS HISTORIANS NETWORKS, VOICES, AND ACTIVE PROJECTS

My work as SIEF Historian grows from a long-standing fascination with the transnational networks that shape European ethnology and folklore. Conferences, personal connections, and scholarly exchanges have long been central to these fields, revealing a rich, complex, and often negotiated tapestry of both collaboration and contestation that has been fundamental to the formation and development of our society.

Building on this research, I had the privilege of contributing to the marking of the 70th anniversary of a key moment in the history of ethnology and folklore: the 1955 CIAP Congress held in Arnhem, the Netherlands. *Congrès International d’Ethnologie Régionale* gathering was a pivotal and programmatic event, organized by Winand Roukens and hosted by the Dutch Academy of Sciences, and it played a formative role in shaping international scholarly networks in the field. According to the congress program, the central point was to facilitate a deep self-reflection on the state and future of our disciplines of ethnology and folklore.

In recognition of my ongoing engagement with SIEF’s institutional and intellectual history, I was honored to be appointed SIEF Historian at the Board meeting in Amsterdam in 2026, following my invitation to speak at the SIEF Congress in Aberdeen on the anniversary of the landmark 1955 CIAP Conference, that continues to resonate as a cornerstone of international scholarly networks.

SIEF’s history is shaped not only by its institutions and conferences but also by the people who have guided the society: its presidents, board members, and other key actors. Exploring these networks provides insight into SIEF’s international reach and the intellectual journeys of its members, showing how SIEF has fostered collaboration across national, personal, and scholarly boundaries.



Hande Birkalan-Gedik, SIEF Historian.

As SIEF Historian, my first focus is on uncovering the contributions of forgotten, marginalized, and sidelined female ethnologists and folklorists, both within SIEF and beyond. Highlighting these voices is vital for creating a more inclusive understanding of the association's past and for opening new perspectives on its future.

Building on the foundational work of Bjarne Rogan, I also plan to examine the intertwined histories of national institutions, personal trajectories, and scholarly milieus, alongside the pivotal role of SIEF

conferences in shaping the field. In addition, I will be developing collaborative research projects within SIEF to trace how members and their national traditions of ethnology and folklore have interacted with SIEF over time. As part of this work, I plan to conduct interviews with living SIEF presidents and board members to capture their experiences and reflections.

Alongside scholarly research and building on these materials, one immediate but ongoing project is to develop accessible, material ways of engaging with SIEF's history – such as archival postcards, posters, stickers, and pins – while also expanding the existing SIEF historical depository with new research outputs. This work will be carried out in a collaborative fashion, with the aim of presenting at least some of these materials at the 2027 SIEF meeting in Bolzano.

These efforts, I hope, will illuminate both the people and the networks that have shaped SIEF, highlighting overlooked voices while connecting the society's rich past to its dynamic present and future.

SIEF Historian, Hande Birkalan-Gedik

4 NEW SISTER ORGANIZATION

SIEF is happy to announce that the International Society for Folk Narrative Research (ISFNR) is now a sister organization of SIEF.



The International Society for Folk Narrative Research is a scholarly and professional organization of international specialists in the areas of folk narrative, popular literature, folklore, and related fields. According to its statutes, the Society's main goal is "to develop scholarly work in the field of folk narrative research and to stimulate contacts and the exchange of views among its members." Acknowledging developments in the field, this goal has broadened in recent years covering all aspects of narrative as representing the pivotal category of human communication.

The Society has an international membership which includes some 700 members from about 80 different countries.

5 NEW WORKING GROUP: FOLK ARTS AND VERNACULAR CREATIVITY

INVITATION TO JOIN THE SIEF FOLK ARTS AND VERNACULAR CREATIVITY WG



The [SIEF Folk Arts and Vernacular Creativity Working Group](#) welcomes researchers and students engaged in or interested in the study of various forms and aspects of the arts – including, but not limited to, folk arts, vernacular creativity, popular art, naïve art, and contemporary art – within current sociocultural contexts. Art is understood in a broad sense (hence the plural form in the title of the working group), encompassing visual, textual, and

performative forms. Additionally, the Working Group seeks to critically examine and rethink the terminology associated with folk art, folklorism, folkish art, popular art, vernacular creativity, peasant art, and related terms, as well as the broader notion of art(s) as a social and cultural phenomenon. The working group also focuses on contemporary (elite, professional) art besides folk arts and vernacular creativity, acknowledging their complex interrelationships and the roles, models, and values of the ever-changing “art of the people” in the contemporary world. The Working Group invites scholars who study any forms, functions, aspects, or uses of art(s) in contemporary cultures and societies, while also, if necessary, considering relevant historical backgrounds as much as needed for a comprehensive understanding. To join the mailing list, contact favc@siefhome.org.

MISSION

- 1 Conceptual & Terminological Clarification: To critically examine and redefine key concepts used in academic and public discourse. We will focus on the fluidity,

dynamics and hybridity found at the intersections of various creative genres and interpretations (high, provincial, popular, rural, peasant, folk applied and/or decorative art, art brut, arts and crafts, handicrafts, revival, DIY, “ethnic” and world music, vernacular verballity, and related forms.)

- 2 Practices & Perspectives: To analyze creative practices across time and geography, with attention to the interplay between material/digital forms and human agency, particularly regarding gender, identity, social contexts and power relations.
- 3 Social, Economic & Political Dimensions: To investigate the role of vernacular creativity in cultural economies, tourism, cultural markets, and creative industries, and its function in community resilience, identity formation, and social memory – including how it reinforces or challenges social hierarchies in both every day and festive contexts.
- 4 Digital Transformation: To explore how digital technologies and new media create platforms that reshape the creation, circulation, and meaning of vernacular expression and hybrid forms.
- 5 Interdisciplinary Cooperation: To widen the disciplinary field of study into neighboring disciplines and foster interdisciplinary dialogue in close collaboration with other SIEF working groups devoted to cultural heritage, museums, rituals, and religion.

BOARD OF THE WORKING GROUP

- Jonas Frykman (Lund University, Sweden) | co-chair; jonas.frykman@kultur.lu.se
- Ágnes Fülemile (Research Institute of Ethnology, ELTE University, Hungary) | co-chair; fulemile@gmail.com
- László Koppány Csáji (Research Institute of Art Theory and Methodology, Hungary) | co-chair and secretary; csaji.koppany@gmail.com
- Mare Kõiva (Estonian Literary Museum, Estonia) | board member; mare@folklore.ee
- Giuseppe Maiello (University of Finance and Administration, Czech Republic) | board member; giuseppe.maiello@mail.vsfs.cz

6 SIEF INSIGHTS: HOW AND WHY DEI MATTERS IN ETHNOLOGY AND FOLKLORE

The article “How and Why DEI Matters in Ethnology and Folklore,” by Marie Sandberg, Čarna Brković, and Dani Schrire, has been published in the latest issue of the *Journal of American Folklore* (JAF, 139, 552 (2026)).

It was commissioned by the JAF editors as part of their call for responses to the theme “Crisis and Action” and reflects an invitation to members of the SIEF Taskforce on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) to contribute their perspective. In this context, the article brings SIEF insights into ongoing debates about the relevance of DEI amid various far-right and governmental attacks on universities and scholarly life.

[Access to the journal.](#)



7 NEWS OF THE WORKING GROUPS

7.1 WORKING GROUP ON ARCHIVES

Notice of upcoming conference: Tradition Archives in Motion: Sounding out Good Practices and Challenges with Folk Collections International Conference
June 29–July 1, 2026, Freiburg, Germany

Organized by the Centre for Popular Culture and Music, University of Freiburg in cooperation with the SIEF Working Group on Archives and the Institute for Cultural Analysis of the Germans of Eastern Europe

Folklore and tradition archives, as well as GLAM institutions in general, are making more and more materials available online in a mediated world. Resources such as online collections enable direct access to ethnographic and historical sources and enhance research possibilities; curated online dissemination and exhibitions present selected holdings and research results. As the internet is a very audiovisual medium, such content is often built around attractive visual and sound documents in order to reach out to the general public and to communities connected to and interested in the collections.

Ongoing discussions in our field focus on the potentials and challenges that are created once the step into the digital realm has been taken. Collections of culture, in the form of digitized and born-digital data, become ‘mobile’: archival staff envision and implement new ways of processing, researching, presenting, and communicating information, while



Photo: Rühmeier/Univ. Freiburg.

considering participatory modes of design for research and archiving. These changes come with a whole range of conceptual and technical considerations that shape the ways in which folk and ethnographic archives deal with folklore/cultural heritage, partner institutions, and communities.

The conference aims to address topical issues such as long-term safeguarding, digitization, access to collections, community management, and target audiences, to name a few. While typical discussions often focus on ‘best practice’ examples, we would also like to spotlight what is feasible by asking what ‘good practice’ is in times of scarce resources, technological uncertainties, and institutional emphasis on ‘visibility’.

More on the conference at the [SIEF website](#) and the [University of Freiburg website](#).

7.2 WORKING GROUP ON CULTURAL HERITAGE AND PROPERTY

The SIEF Working Group on Cultural Heritage and Property (CHP) was established at the 2008 Derry congress, to address multiple dimensions of cultural heritage, its symbolic and economic power, as well as contingent political implications. Its interests and activities encompass issues of heritage policy, theory, and practice.

Any SIEF member is welcome to join our working group. To join, [visit the CHP WG page of the SIEF website](#) and [register online for the CHP WG listserv](#). If you would like to learn more, or become involved in WG activities, send an email to [Carley Williams](#) or [Robert Baron](#).

As ever, CHP members are involved in a number of important heritage related activities:

◆ Report on the legal and policy frameworks of crafts in Europe has been published

A research team from the Latvian Academy of Culture (LAC) associated with the UNESCO Chair on Intangible Cultural Heritage Policy and Law published the [Report on Legal and Pol-](#)

[icy Frameworks of Crafts in Europe: Approaches at the State Level](#), within the framework of the research project Tracks4Crafts. It analyses how crafts are supported, regulated and developed across different countries as part of cultural heritage and the creative economy. The report provides an in-depth overview of how craft skills and knowledge in Europe are being protected, transmitted to future generations, and adapted to contemporary social, economic, and cultural contexts. The [annex to the report](#) analyzes the reports submitted by European countries to UNESCO on the implementation of the 2003 Convention.

[Read the Report](#) | [Read the Report Annex](#)

◆ Rethinking Commemoration in Urban Spaces – international seminar

On April 13, 2026, the UNESCO Chair on Intangible Cultural Heritage in Public and Global Governance at the University of Warsaw contributed to the international seminar *Rethinking Commemoration in Urban Spaces*, organized within the World Cities Culture Fo-

rum Leadership Exchange Programme. The event explored how commemorative practices in urban environments relate to intangible cultural heritage, public memory, and participatory governance. It brought together city representatives, researchers, and cultural practitioners to reflect on evolving forms of remembrance in contemporary cities.

[More information.](#)

◆ Perspectives of Intangible Cultural Heritage Series

The UNESCO Chair on Applied Studies of Intangible Cultural Heritage at the University of Tartu hosts the series [Perspectives of Intangible Cultural Heritage](#), showcasing research and



Hanna Schreiber's contribution to the World Cities Culture Forum Leadership Exchange Programme in Warsaw, April 2026.

initiatives on intangible cultural heritage. Featuring monthly lectures and discussions, the series brings together scholars, students and practitioners working on and thinking about intangible cultural heritage and related themes. The final session of this series will take place on May 14: [Heritage Institutions Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage: Perspectives from Armenia and Scotland](#) featuring Christine Abrell and Emma Ramsay, alumnae of the [Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Education in Museums and Heritage](#) (EDUMaH). More details on the [website](#).

◆ Kaustinen ICH Summer Academy and Festival 2026



Kaustinen ICH Summer Academy, which runs in connection with the Kaustinen Folk Music Festival, creates space for exchange among students, researchers, practitioners, and performers working with intangible cultural heritage. The ICH Academy offers a Blended Intensive Program, organized by the Centria University of Applied Sciences in collaboration with the Finnish Folk Music Institute, enabling undergraduate students to gain course credits. Speakers, who come from Europe and beyond, have included

several CHP WG members. The programme of lectures and seminars aims to raise awareness and share best practices and grassroots methods for safeguarding ICH. Participants enrich their lived experience of traditional music and dance through immersion in the environment of this major festival.

[Kaustinen Festival & Program](#).

[Kaustinen ICH Academy](#) (2025 Program; 2026 details to come).

[Watch Programming from previous Academies](#).

SIEF & UNESCO ICH

CHP WG members continue to be heavily involved in UNESCO ICH activities as experts in State Party delegations, members of the Evaluation Body, and as active participants in the ICH NGO Forum and its Working Groups.

The ICH NGO Forum recently launched the online publication [Participatory Approaches to Living Heritage: NGO Perspectives](#). The editorial team from the Working Group Research and contributors included several CHP members. The publication includes an introduction to issues concerning community involvement and self-determination in ICH safeguarding as well as case studies from multiple regions of the world.

The eleventh session of the General Assembly of the States Parties to the Convention (11. GA) for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage will be held at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, from June 17–18, 2026. For two days, the 185 States Parties will gather to discuss issues relating to the safeguarding of living heritage around the world and the future of the Convention. The agenda will include the periodic reporting mechanisms of the Convention, a proposal for related amendments to the Operational Directives, the plan for the use of the resources of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund, and the accreditation of non-governmental organizations.

As SIEF is an accredited NGO to the 2003 UNESCO ICH Convention, members may attend the General Assembly in person, and anyone can follow the proceedings online. The 11.GA meeting page has a link for in-person registration, and the [link to watch live proceedings online](#) will be posted there in due course.

As SIEF is an accredited UNESCO NGO, any SIEF member can also join an ICH NGO Forum Working Group through emailing the contacts on the [working group page](#) of the ICH NGO Forum website. Activities of the ICH NGO Forum appear in its [newsletter](#), on the Facebook group: [Intangible Cultural Heritage and Civil Society](#) and the LinkedIn group: [ICH NGO Forum](#).

These upcoming ICH NGO Forum events and activities which will likely be of interest to our CHP working group members:



◆ **Call for Articles #HeritageAlive: Traditional Masks and Masquerades**

#HeritageAlive is a biennial journal supported by ICHCAP that highlights NGOs' experiences in safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) (HeritageAlive – ICH NGO Forum). The next edition, to be published by the end of 2027, will focus

on Traditional Masks and Masquerades. Submissions of articles are invited that showcase best practices in safeguarding the diverse manifestations of intangible cultural heritage associated with masks and masquerades. Deadline: May 31, 2026.

[Visit the website for full details.](#)



◆ **Call for Short Films: Safeguarding Living Traditions**

#HeritageAlive is also inviting accredited NGOs to submit short films (under 8 minutes) on the theme of living heritage and cultural traditions. They are looking for compelling visual stories that highlight

the safeguarding, transmission, resilience, and continuity of intangible cultural heritage traditions of communities from around the world. A total of 6 films will be selected and featured at a side event at the 21st Session of the Intergovernmental Committee of UNESCO 2003 Convention (21.COM) in Xiamen, China in 2026. Deadline: July 30, 2026.

[Submission and technical guidelines.](#)

NB: Please let [Carley](#) and [Robert](#) know if you are interested in submitting a film on behalf of SIEF, as only one film may be submitted by an NGO.

◆ **Interdisciplinary Conversations on Intangible Cultural Heritage and Tourism**

The ICH NGO Forum Working Group on ICH and Tourism has announced a new series of online ICH Tourism dialogues which will be of interest to the CHP Working Group and other SIEF members.

Interdisciplinary Conversations on Intangible Cultural Heritage and Tourism Dialogues will address important topics which include overtourism, festivals and world heritage sites.

A preview of the 2026 program:

- June 23, 3 pm–4 pm. CEST **Dialogue on tourism (and over tourism) in Carnivals in Colombia** with Giovanni Arteaga - Fundación Mundo Espiral (Colombia). Chaired by Martín Andrade-Perez (SIEF member / Fundación Erigaie / ICH NGO Forum)
- August 19, 3 pm–4 pm. CEST **Nationalized Heritagization Discourse in the Arabian Gulf Region** with Dr. AlAnood AlShaikh – Postdoctoral Associate, NYUAD, Vice Chair- ICOMO UAE and Saad Hanif, Adjunct Lecturer at the University of Bahrain. Chaired by Ananya Bhattacharya (Contact Base / ICH NGO Forum)
- November 5, 3 pm–4 pm. CET **Intangible Cultural Heritage Tourism in World Heritage Site: Case Study of Lijiang, China** with Dr. Junjie Su, Director of the Yunnan Provincial Research Base of Intangible Cultural Heritage and Associate Professor at the School of Ethnology and Sociology, Yunnan University, China. Chaired by Robert Baron (SIEF CHP WG Co-Chair / Goucher College / ICH NGO Forum)

This series of online dialogues takes place in the framework of the ICH NGO Forum's [Web Dossier on Intangible Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Tourism](#). Through open conversations, the Dialogues look to expand the scope of understanding around the relationship between ICH and tourism.

[Read more](#) about the series, recordings and resources from past dialogues, and abstracts and bios for upcoming events.

7.3 WORKING GROUP ON FEMINIST APPROACHES TO ETHNOLOGY AND FOLKLORE

◆ Workshop Embodiment Revisited August 13–14, Helsinki

In August 2026, the FAEF Working Group is hosting their second interim meeting. We will meet in Helsinki for a two-day workshop on the topic of ‘Embodiment Revisited’. Although embodiment has long been a central concern of feminist theory, we consider the topic as it intersects with feminist theory to be unfinished business. The concept of Embodiment has too often been reduced to mean ‘things that originate from the body,’ and there is a great need to advance this theoretically. With this workshop, we want to create the opportunity for all of us to develop our thoughts and research in a collective format, through discussion and critical thinking, to take advantage of the broad range of insights that can emerge through group interaction.



◆ Special Issue Cultural Analysis

Following the FAEF panels at the SIEF conference in Aberdeen, our FAEF Working Group is preparing a special issue of Cultural Analysis on the topic of ‘Unwriting through Feminist Approaches’. In this special issue, we take the position that whereas feminist approaches initially began as the process by which ‘silenced’ women’s voices were re-inserted into existing historiographies/narratives, it has expanded to question those unequal power structures that undergird those conventional narratives. That is, in our special issue, we seek to understand the inner workings and logic of existing methodologies and theoretical approaches, and to un-write disciplinary paradigms rather than merely making visible existing power mechanisms.

It is our hope that this special issue will begin the process by which feminist theory is integrated into our disciplinary discourses, not as an “add-on”, but as a fundamental component. The special issue is expected in late summer/fall 2027.

7.4 WORKING GROUP ON FOLK ARTS AND VERNACULAR CREATIVITY

Conference: Folk Art in the Contemporary – Practices and Challenges, April 23–24, 2026, University of Lund

The Lund University and the SIEF Folk Arts and Vernacular Creativity Working Group – with the generous support of the Gulli och Nils Strömboms Foundation – organized an international conference titled “Folk Art in the Contemporary – Practices and Challenges” at Lund University on April 23–24. The event continued the scholarly events started in Split 2024 and was followed by a three-part panel at the SIEF 2025 Congress in Aberdeen. The participants reconsidered academic terminology on folk arts, folklorism, folkish arts, vernacular arts, popular arts, etc., drawing on inductive insights and case studies from ethnology, cultural anthropology, and museology. After these three fruitful events with excellent contributions and thought-provoking discussions, Lund University plans to publish a book with chapters based on the papers presented at the three conferences, edited by Jonas Frykman and Björn Magnusson Staaf, and hopes to have it ready by the next SIEF 2027 Congress in Bolzano. The conference participants covered a wide range of topics of folk and popular arts, vernacular creativity, and related fields. Here is a short description of the papers, following the order of the presentations:

- **Ágnes Fülemile** (ELTE University, Research Center of Humanities, Institute of Ethnology) examined the process from the 19th century to the present, how folk life and folk art were perceived and imaged by painters, shaping the perceptions of not only the elite, but also evolving the demand for countless mediocre works and kitsch, penetrating an increasingly wild social strata with these images.

- **Fruzsina Cseh** (ELTE University, Research Center of Humanities, Institute of Ethnology) outlined the complexity of the institutionalization of folk and applied folk arts in Hungary during the Socialist and Post-Socialist Era, including folkish, folksy, and folkloristic art forms, as well as various forms of folklorism. Consequently, the qualification system constructed the status of (applied) folk artist.
- **László Koppány Csáji** (Research Institute of Art Theory and Methodology at the Hungarian Academy of Arts) explained the relation between historical reenactment, experimental archaeology, artistic reenactment, and the so-called (historical) tradition keepers in Hungary and their perceptions of folk art on the micro (individual) level, mezzo (groups) level, and their sociocultural context.
- **Jonas Frykman** and **Björn Magnusson Staaf** (Lund University) outlined the origins, history, and proliferation of Swedish summerhouses, and how this expanding phenomenon affected the urban and rural lifeworlds in interaction with social changes. Moreover, in the last decades of the 20th century, the summerhouse became an emblematic image and representation of Swedish culture, inspiring contemporary art as well.
- **Nikolette Mackovicky** (Oxford University) examined the relation between politics and contemporary forms of folk art in Slovakia. The endeavor to appropriate folk art by populist politics elicited several responses: using folk art as a tool and creatively rethinking folk techniques of social resistance. By blurring the borders between folk art and fine arts, these artistic expressions have become forms of social critique.
- **Mare Kõiva** (Estonian Literary Museum) discussed the interrelation between cultural complexity and environment in Estonia. She compared many examples of how cultural changes occurred in everyday life: the dialectics of folklore patterns and innovations were constantly constructed and reconstructed in various forms, creating, for example, toys, dolls, and objects of contemporary spirituality.
- **Alfonsina Bellio** (École Pratique des Hautes Études, EPHE-PSL, Paris) outlined the wide spectrum of folk, popular, and pop art as manifestations of reappropriation

in the margins of Southern Italy: Calabrian revival of ephemeral ritual plant-statues (pupazze), Gerardo Sacco's applied art based on antique and folk motives, and the folk-inspired works of e.g. Giuseppe Fata's Maria Simulacrum exhibition, in light of Antonio Stallano's and other theoretical frames.

- **Anneli Palmesköld** (University of Gothenburg) focused on the links between traditional textile and handicraft making and contemporary home-made crafting (such as hand knitting) in light of what to do with leftover yarn and rugs. The attitude of creating as an act of caring can be found in both folk art and contemporary handicraft in Sweden. DIY (do-it-yourself) and DIT (do-it-together) are also common denominators.
- **Rasa Pranskevičiūtė-Amoson** (Vilnius University) focused on an international new religious movement (Anastasians) that originated in Russia in 1997, based on a novel series. They create love circles in the wilderness as an established, eclectic invented tradition, drawing on folk art elements and esoteric contemporary spirituality. This subcultural "imagined indigenoussness" reenacts something "folkish" that never existed.



The participants in front of the Lund University Building.



At the conference venue (Lund University).

- **Ewa Klekot** (University SWPS, Warsaw) outlined the persistence of the romantic myth of folk art. A new style was invented by the Polish artist Eleonora Plutyńska at the beginning of the 20th century in collaboration with a village weaver. Nevertheless, within three generations of local actors, the Podlasie-region style textile became a local brand, while the local tradition that Ms. Plutyńska rejected as a vernacular but tawdry style went out of fashion and ceased to exist.

After the 30-minute presentations, there were another 15 minutes to discuss them with questions and comments. Papers inspired a lively exchange of ideas and reflections on the presentations.

László Koppány Csáji,
WG Folk Arts and Vernacular Creativity Secretary

7.5 FRANCOPHONE WORKING GROUP AND WORKING GROUP ON THE RITUAL YEAR

Upcoming Conference: “RI-NA-RI-CA” (Ritualizing Nature, Ritualizing Care) October 24–27, 2026 .

The XXXVth Eurethno Workshop (Council of Europe), together with the 5th conference of the SIEF Francophone Working Group and the 16th conference of the SIEF Ritual Year Working Group, will be held at the Campus Carlone, October 24–27, 2026 – University Côte d’Azur – Nice (France). The topic of the conference is “RI-NA-RI-CA” (Ritualizing Nature, Ritualizing Care).



SCIENTIFIC STATEMENT

The challenges of this conference consist of linking current debates concerning the relativization of the notion of “nature” (Descola, Abram, Tsing, Kohn), on the one hand, and those postulating the growing need for a thought of “care” (Gilligan, Mol, Kleinman, Nussbaum), on the other hand.

In a context of widespread crisis (economic and political, ecological and climatic), it is no longer sufficient to criticize the ethnocentrism attached to Western conceptions of “nature.” These critiques are positive insofar as they have led to the rehabilitation of other visions of the world, in particular the “perspectivist” point of view (Viveiro de Castro), indigenous ontologies and epistemologies. They also allow us to become more aware of the stranglehold that humans have over the planet, by insisting on the need to respect the diversity of living things and by fighting against extractivism and cultural appropriation. Finally, they nourish a “decolonial” thought that has become crucial in a globalized world. But a critical discourse that is content to deplore the advent of the “Anthropocene” (Crut-

zen) or the “Capitalocene” (Haraway) does not necessarily allow us to find effective solutions to the problems that contemporary societies repeatedly encounter.

It seems to us that a potentially fruitful way to address the difficult question of “solutions” is to cross or, at least, work towards a rapprochement between approaches to nature in the humanities and social sciences and the questioning of care and the ethics of care. To achieve this, we call for studies focused on the processes of ritualization, both collective and

individual, of care and nature. How does progress in the thought of “care” require paying particular attention to “nature” and its manifestations? For example, what is at stake in the practices of naturopathy, sylvotherapy or in spiritual retreats “in nature”? What does the increasingly widespread desire to “reconnect with nature” mean, to include

animals and plants, even everyday objects, in a reflection on humanity? What are the new forms of ritualization (Houseman, Boyer, Humphrey & Laidlaw) that are developing, and what do they produce at the level of groups and individual trajectories? How does the person manage, through these ritualized practices, to establish privileged relationships with their environment? How does the ritualization of “care” in daily gestures and habits, in encounters with care professionals, in its institutionalization, allow the development of new conceptions of ecology?



How, conversely, do advances in ecological thinking and our relationship with nature imply a renewed thinking about “care”? How does attention to the complexity of life intertwine with attention to oneself and to others? How can we apply this new sensitivity to nature in fields such as urban planning or design? How are human relationships with green spaces and diverse forms of life evolving as a result? How does the ritualization of our relationship with nature allow us to revitalize our relationship with ourselves and with those who constitute our “ecological niche,” our social environment?

From a practical point of view, we draw on the different approaches and methods of the human and social sciences (pragmatic and cognitive approaches, micro-interactionists, but also cultural and social, contextual and configurational approaches), to provide answers to these questions and to envisage a common research agenda. We welcome proposals for communications exploring the place of natural elements (animals, plants) in the rituals of traditional societies, as well as studies on contemporary ritualization processes that involve a thought of “care” and/or nature. Among other possible themes, we would like to explore the reactions and militant desires provoked by ecological and environmental crises, post-traumatic rituals linked to climate disasters, ecopoetic approaches that accompany the mourning of natural spaces and fears linked to the Anthropocene, as well as any reflection on the relationships between ritualization of care and ritualization of nature.

ORGANIZERS AND VENUE

This conference is organized by the LAPCOS UPR 7278 research unit and the department of ethnology-anthropology of the Côte d’Azur University, together with the FER-Eurethno network (Council of Europe), the International Society for Ethnology and Folklore (SIEF) and the French Society for Ethnology (SEF).

The conference dates have been specifically chosen to coincide with the [AFEA \(French Association of Ethnology and Anthropology\) Congress](#), which will take place in Marseille on

October 28–30, 2026. This context will allow international participants to minimize their carbon footprint if they wish to participate in both events.

The call for paper is now closed. However, SIEF delegates who would like to join the conference as discussant are very welcome.

Please address any questions to colloquelapcos2026@gmail.com to get the full program when available.

[More information.](#)

7.6 WORKING GROUP ON MUSEUMS, MATERIAL CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

The working group Museums, Material Culture and Communities of Practice serves as a platform for dialogue, collaboration, and networking among ethnologists, folklorists, and other researchers interested in theorizing the museum practices in Europe and beyond.

Historically, museums have focused on collecting, preserving and researching material objects. In our understanding, museums not only offer material for researchers through their collections and archives, but they are also partners in and objects of research that can have national, local and personal significance.

Founded at the SIEF Congress in Zagreb in 2015, the group initially named Museums and Material Culture aimed to strengthen connections between ethnologists and the museum sector, with a focus on defining museums and analyzing their role in knowledge production. The working group was also intended as a forum for further developing the field of material studies within ethnology. In 2025, in Aberdeen, the group expanded its scope to



Exhibition Wohnwelten & Wohnstudio in Museum der Alltagskultur, Schloss Waldenbuch, LandesMuseum Württemberg.

the communities of practice, including museum professionals, visitors, artists, activists, and source communities, whose agency actively shapes museum practices. This shift aligns with the evolving policies of the International Council of Museums (ICOM), which emphasize the social role of museums and the importance of inclusive dialogues and collaborative partnerships.

NEW MISSION

Our mission is to advance critical and collaborative research on museums, material culture, and communities associated with all aspects of museum practice. Our working group is interested in the ways materialities of things shape human thought, emotions, social relations and bodily experiences. A further area of focus is how objects, collections and studies of material culture have been utilized to strengthen certain world views or agendas. We encourage explorations of the meanings ascribed to material culture throughout the processes of heritagization and musealization and seek to foster new critical approaches to material culture. We are equally interested in how the process of musealization and the

concept of museums are interpreted by various communities of practice, and we see museums as active sites of knowledge production and as well as social engagement.

We also aim to strengthen the role of ethnology and folklore studies in shaping contemporary museum and heritage debates and will strive to develop new approaches to study museums from ethnological and folkloristic perspectives. By studying museums through the lens of ethnography, oral history, and cultural analysis, we seek to generate more nuanced knowledge of how collections communicate relationships between past and present. In doing so, we examine whose meanings of material culture are preserved or marginalized in museums, how professional roles are evolving, and how knowledge is produced through everyday museum work.

To carry out our mission, we will:

- Build a transnational and interdisciplinary network that facilitates the development of joint research applications, exchange of fieldwork experiences, and other forms of cooperation between the museum scholars and practitioners.
- Create spaces for exchanging methodological practices by focusing on ethnographic fieldwork in museums, participatory and community-based approaches, and experimental formats of exhibition-making and knowledge production.
- Draw on the expertise of colleagues working in museums to reflect on contemporary discourses and issues of the museum sector – such as decolonization, repatriation, sustainability, or digital transformation – and bring them to the attention of the research community.
- Implement a series of professional activities between the years of SIEF congresses, such as thematic seminars and a reading group on key texts in material culture and museum studies.
- Develop specific strategies to connect with ICOM and related networks by initiating joint sessions, knowledge exchange formats, and cross-sector partnerships.

- Convene regularly and elect a governing body, as stated in the General Statutes for SIEF Working Groups.
- Collaborate with other SIEF Working groups, such as the Working Group on Cultural Heritage and Property and the Folk Arts and Vernacular Creativity Working Group.

CHAIRS

- Inkeri Hakamies, University of Helsinki, inkeri.hakamies@helsinki.fi.
- Vaishnavi Krishnan Vadakke Madam, Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, vaishnavikrishnanvm@gmail.com.

Please join the Working Group!

7.7 WORKING GROUP ON NARRATIVE CULTURES

Announcement of Online Summer Course From Tales to Memes: Traditional Narratives in Digital Culture

This course introduces participants to the fundamental concepts of traditional narratives, focusing on their circulation and adaptation in contemporary media. Combining classical approaches from repertoire studies with contributions from media studies and digital culture, it promotes critical reflection on how these narratives shape cultural imaginaries in the twenty-first century. Participants will learn to identify dynamics of transmedia adaptation, analyze narratives in film, video games and digital platforms, and apply methods for collecting and analyzing digital content, thereby developing analytical and practical skills for academic, pedagogical and professional contexts in communication and the social sciences.

For more information, please [see here](#).



7.8 WORKING GROUP ON THE RITUAL YEAR

RITUAL YEAR SEASONAL WEBINAR

Our series, organized with the technical support of the Estonian Literary Museum and the Centre of Excellence in Estonian Studies (Tartu) continued with online meetings:



The Ritual Year Seasonal Webinar #17 – Winter 2026 (part 1 & 2), February 19 and March 2, 2026.

The first 2026 online meetings were dedicated to Shrovetide traditions (Shrove Tuesday and related customs) in various European countries and regions: Guillem Castañer Rubio talked about traditions in Catalonia, Eva Toulouze in France, Arūnas Vaicekauskas in Lithuania and Georgiana Vlahbei, in the last part, in Southern and Western parts of Romania. Mare Kõiva and Irina Stahl moderated the meetings. Georgiana Vlahbei created her own poster.

The Ritual Year Seasonal Webinar #18 – Spring 2026, April 27, 2026.

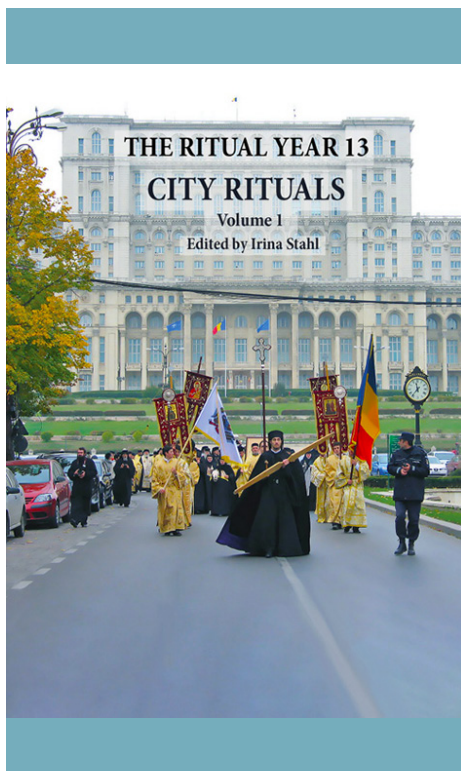
Continuing our mini-series dedicated to the ritual year on various continents, our third online meeting of the year, focused on research carried out in South America. The meeting, entitled Ritual and festive environmental relationality in Ibero-American mountain regions, welcomed Ana Correa, Paula Gabriela Nunez, Letizia Bindi, Tobias Boos and Daniela Salvucci, who presented their latest research on South American festivals. The meeting was moderated by Tobias Boos. Poster by Georgiana Vlahbei.

The recordings of the Ritual Year Seasonal Webinar series are available on our [working group's page](#).

Irina Stahl

RITUAL YEAR PUBLICATION: CITY RITUALS 13, 1 (2024)

Divided into two volumes, *City Rituals* reunites thirty of the studies presented during the 13th conference of The Ritual Year Working Group (SIEF), held from November 7–9, 2018, in Bucharest, Romania, where it was hosted by the Institute of Sociology, Romanian Academy.



The first volume of *City Rituals* addresses ritual practices and public events (such as seasonal festivals and traditions, national holidays and commemorations, and religious feasts) that structure and animate the life of urban residents in all the corners of the world, from the United States, to the various countries in Europe, and the Philippines. Drawing on one, or more examples, the authors highlight their connection with local traditions and history, describe their evolution over time, and draw attention to more recent trends, due to globalization. The cases brought forward show the resilience of city rituals, their two-folded ability to be factors of stability as well as factors of change, to ground communities, while at the same time bringing the flexibility needed to push them forward. Despite the inherent

controversies around the introduction of new practices, the city rituals described in this volume are factors of cohesion and unity that bring people together, in the joy of shared experiences. The editor for this issue is Irina Stahl.

The volume is available online [here](#) and [here](#).

We are currently in the process of transforming our proceedings into a periodical publication and have started the process of indexing it in Scopus and other international databases.

Irina Stahl

OTHER CONFERENCES ORGANIZED BY OUR MEMBERS

The international conference *Balkan and Baltic States in United Europe – History, Religion, and Culture VI. Magic, Holiness and Mountains* took place at the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum (BAS) in Sofia, Bulgaria between October 3–5, 2025.

The event was dedicated to the memory of our beloved colleague and friend Ekaterina Anastasova, member of the Ritual Year WG and founding member of the Balkan and Baltic Society, having worked and connected scholars from these two regions for more than 30 years. A memorial panel in her honor, presented her work in the field and these regions by colleagues she had long term collaboration with. The conference included 13 panels, dedicated to sacred practices and spaces, protection of animals and species, beliefs and magic in the folklore and contemporary culture, Buddhism and shamanism, representation of the sacred, etc., exploring the intersection of the sacred, magical and mountains, intertwined in various cultures around the world. Sixty scholars from Russia, Ukraine, Estonia, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Romania, USA, UK, France, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden, Hungary and Spain entered into scientific discussion a rich and diverse empirical data and innovative theoretical insights, on the basis of their explorations of great variety of topics and communities from the Balkans and Baltics to Central Asia (Himalayas, Altay and Karakorum). See page 19 for some pictures of the conference.

Our enlarged community is already awaiting the next edition of *Balkan and Baltic States in United Europe – History, Religion, and Culture VII* to be held in Vilnius in 2027.

Svetoslava Toncheva

The participants during the commemoration of Ekaterina Anastasova, at Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum (BAS) in Sofia, October 3, 2025.



The participants at the conference, together with local folk-dancers and folk-music interpreters, at the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum (BAS) in Sofia, October 4, 2025.



The conference participants during the post-conference excursion, at the Rozhen monastery in the Pirin Mountains, Southwestern Bulgaria, October 5, 2025.

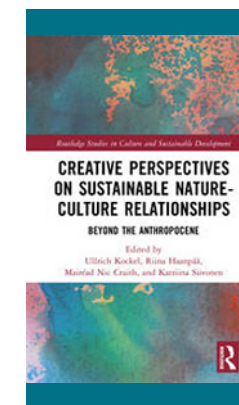


7.9 WORKING GROUP ON PLACE WISDOM

CREATIVE PERSPECTIVES ON SUSTAINABLE NATURE–CULTURE RELATIONSHIPS

The latest book arising from the SIEF Place Wisdom Working Group, *Creative Perspectives on Sustainable Nature–Culture Relationships*, edited by Ullrich Kockel, Riina Haanpää, Mairéad Nic Craith and Katriina Siivonen, is due to be published as part of the *Routledge Studies in Culture and Sustainable Development* series.

The book draws on current debates in multispecies studies, bringing together approaches from environmental activism to community art practice and critical heritage studies. Focusing on ecological relationships underpinning the making of meaningful places, it combines theoretical exploration with case studies that raise themes, issues, and eco cultural practices that have relevance across the world. Contributors evaluate intangible cultural heritage and traditional ecological knowledge for their potential to augment sustainable development, thus encouraging the rethinking of sustainability as a human ecological concept indicating how new, locally rooted relationships with nature may create policy oriented pathways towards cultural sustainability transformation.



Ullrich Kockel, Riina Haanpää, Mairéad Nic Craith, Katriina Siivonen, *Creative Perspectives on Sustainable Nature – Culture Relationships Beyond the Anthropocene*, Routledge, 2026. ISBN: 9781041215875, 228 pages.

[See here for further details.](#)

8 OTHER NEWS

8.1 SCHOLARSHIPS IN ETHNOMUSICOLOGY BY FONDAZIONE GIORGIO CINI, VENICE

The Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice offers 9 residential scholarships to PhD students and postdoc students who must not be over 40 years old on June 30, 2026, interested in spending two consecutive months in Venice at the Vittore Branca International Center for the Study of Italian Culture between January and December 2027.

HOW TO APPLY AND SELECTION

Candidates shall send their scholarship application, complete with the required documents (see below), in .pdf version to: centrobranca@cini.it by June 30, 2026 (online applications will be considered as valid if received by 11.59 PM on June 30, 2026).

Every application shall include the following documents:

- application form (downloadable from “Centro Vittore Branca” in (Vittore Branca Center));
- degree certificate(s) with marks for individual exams;
- copy of a degree dissertation (for PhD students) or doctorate thesis (for postdoctoral researchers) and copies of any other relevant academic works;
- curriculum vitae, including knowledge of languages (knowledge of Italian recommended);
- research project (around 1,500 words) of the study program that the candidate will follow specifying aims, time scale, and materials and documents to be consulted at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini;
- One reference letter from professors and scholars who supervise or have supervised the candidate on university headed paper.

Candidates considered to be suitable on the grounds of the documents presented will be invited for a video-interview in English with one or more directors of the Fondazione Giorgio Cini and may be asked to provide supplementary information.

The scholarship will be awarded by the Fondazione with no right of appeal. Both positive and negative results of the assessment of the scholarship applications will be communicated in October 2026. Anyone who has already been awarded a Vittore Branca Center scholarship to the Vittore Branca Center is not eligible to apply again, whereas those who have applied but received no scholarship can apply again.

Contacts

Centro Vittore Branca

centrobranca@cini.it

T. + 39 041 2710253

For more information, please [see here](#).



8.2 CALL FOR PAPERS

First International Congress of Studies on Popular Cultures in Greece and Rome from II Millennium BCE to Modern Folklore. Rome, September 9–12, 2026 – Università di Roma Tre, via Ostiense 236.



Although Greek and Roman literature rarely focuses explicitly on popular culture, a substantial body of evidence allows us to reconstruct what may be described as the folklore of the ancient world. From precious testimonies emerge beliefs and ‘superstitions’, folktales and proverbs, imaginary beings, songs and other types of musical forms, folk-pharmacopoeia and medicinal remedies, apotropaic gestures and practices, along with many other traits characteristic of a popular culture of the ancients. This Greek and Roman folklore can often be approached (and effectively compared) on the one hand with other ancient Euro-Mediterranean traditions, and on the other hand with the documentation of modern popular culture, especially in certain culturally conservative areas such as central Greece and southern Italy. Studies on ancient Greek and Roman popular culture have witnessed significant developments in recent decades. New approaches and new research have contributed to a renewed reading of Greek and Roman authors and texts. Building on the experience of folkloricum.it, the time now seems ripe for organizing an International

Congress of Studies, aiming to bring together scholars from different disciplines (including Classics, folklore studies, anthropology, history of religions, and archaeology) and devoted to all aspects of popular culture in the Greek and Roman world.

These will be the main fields of interest:

1. Definitions and Methods. What is ‘popular’? ‘Lower’ and ‘upper’ cultures; ancient and modern cultural levels; diachrony and synchrony; popular’ and ‘learned’ magic; comparison and philology; orality and literacy.
2. Material Cultures. Art; archaeology; history and sociology; objects; dress and clothes; amulets; games and toys; frescoes and gems.
3. Languages and Non-verbal Codes. Non-standard and vernacular grammar, morphology and lexicon; proverbs and popular sayings; gestures; music and dances; riddles; dreams; curse formulae.
4. The sacred and the supernatural. Cults and rites; festivals; religious practices (weddings, mourning, funerals, child-related protective practices); ‘superstitions’ and beliefs; Evil Eyes; figures of fear: monsters, witches, and others;
5. Nature and Techniques. Animal-, plant- and stone-lore; agricultural practices; popular medicine, remedies and pharmacopoeia; beliefs about stars and celestial phenomena.
6. Beyond Literature and Orality. Narrative patterns (types and motifs), myths and folktales; fables; legends and belief tales; fairytales; sub-literary genres (folk theatre, mimes, popular narrative literature); popular songs (work-songs, festival-songs, seasonal and quest-songs).

The list is not intended to be exhaustive, and proposals addressing related topics are also encouraged.

Anyone interested in contributing a paper to the conference is invited to submit their title and a brief abstract (in English, Italian, French, Spanish, German: languages of Congress) of no longer than 200 words to the two organizers:

Prof. Tommaso Braccini (tommaso.braccini@unisi.it) and Prof. Emanuele Lelli (prof.emanuele.elli@gmail.com) by **August 1, 2026**.

Please send a Word document and cc to both organizers. Scholars at all levels of juniority/ seniority are equally welcome.

We will evaluate all submissions and inform all applicants about acceptance or rejection by mid-August. Papers should be no longer than 20 minutes. Each accepted paper must be accompanied by a handout/abstract in English no longer than 3000 characters (including spaces). Only in limited cases will online participation for speakers be possible.

The conference fee is € 100,- including welcome dinner on September 9, three lunch buffets, material and proceedings volume.

With the Patronage of ‘Associazione Italiana di Cultura Classica, Delegazione “Antico e Moderno”’ and ‘Fédération Internationale des Associations d’études classiques’.



Scientific Committee: Igor Baglioni, Simone Beta, Tommaso Braccini, Ignazio E. Buttitta, Andrea Ercolani, Emanuele Lelli, Sonia Macrì, Camillo Neri, Riccardo Palmisciano, Giulia Pedrucci, Eleonora Rocconi, Silvia Romani, Andrea Taddei.

8.3 UPCOMING CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOP

◆ Folklore on the Move, Elphinstone Institute, University of Aberdeen, June 5–7, 2026

The Folklore Society’s annual conference will be hosted by the Elphinstone Institute, University of Aberdeen. In addition to the in-person conference June 5–7, there will be an online-only day on June 10. This year’s theme is ‘Folklore on the Move’.

See the [full programme](#) and [find out how to attend the conference](#).



‘The Wayfarer’ by Hieronymus Bosch.

◆ Young Folklorists Conference (YOFO), Ljubljana, October 1–3, 2026

The Young Folklorists Conference (YOFO) is an international conference for MA and PhD students, as well as early-career researchers in folklore, ethnology, and related fields. Previous editions have been held in Estonia, Finland, Lithuania, and Latvia. The 15th edition, titled *Transcending Boundaries, Connecting Worlds*, is moving south for the first time, to Slovenia at the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana. The conference will bring together 70 young scholars from 18 countries, creating a space to share research, meet peers, and exchange ideas.



◆ **Post-Conference Workshop Knowledge networks for teaching resilience and academic freedom in European Ethnology/Cultural Anthropology/Empirical Cultural Studies/Folklore Studies across Europe, Dresden, Germany, September 23, 2026.**

Roundtable: 9.00 – 10.30 a.m. (CEST)

Post-Conference Workshop for Curriculum development: 2.30 – 5.00 p.m. (CEST)

September 23, 2026, Dresden, Germany

The events will take place as part of the conference on higher education from the *German Society for Cultural Analysis/European Ethnology (DGEKW)* in Dresden (September 21–23, 2026) on the topic “Nexūs. Netzwerke in Wissenschaft und Gesellschaft” ([full program](#))

DGEKW Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Empirische Kulturwissenschaft

Roundtable and Post-Conference Workshop

Ieva Puzo (Riga), Sophie Elpers (Amsterdam), Marie Sandberg (Copenhagen - virtual participation), Marion Näser-Lather (Innsbruck), Sabine Hess (Göttingen), Moritz Ege (Zurich); Moderation: Gertraud Koch and Lara Hansen (Hamburg).

Currently, manifold open or subtle practices seek to undermine academic freedom in teaching and research as developments across Europe and in the US show. They predominantly address research areas that work against sexism, racism and capitalist exploitation, and specifically enfold power in the context of (soft) authoritarian governments with direct impact on research administration and funding. These activities create an antidemocratic climate that paves the way for hostile practices against science on a broader basis in everyday life that affects ethnographic research in a problematic way.

However, at the same time a large body of ethnographic research on these pressures against research fields that problematizes sexism, racism and capitalist exploitation shows that there are as manifold ways to empower democratic understandings of research and teaching, and strategies to reject or hinder hostility against science. Moreover, researchers, activists, artists, lawyers and other professions in contested fields develop strategies and tactics to respond and counter these anti-democratic activities against academic freedom.

Networks for academic freedom seek to bring together the diverse approaches for connecting the potential of these strategies and counter actions against academic freedom on a larger level. They connect the knowledge, the people who create and practice it, and they act as multipliers in the dissemination of this knowledge for enfolded in networks for enhancing academic freedom, cultural diversity, political discourse and justice.

This raises questions at various scales, for example methodological questions of positioning in ethnographic research and re-actualization of teaching professionalism, organizational culture of the university and practical resilience strategies such as mapping, guidelines and procedures.

Therefore, the panel discusses the role of ethnographic researchers within these networks and thereby reflects in which ways networks can contribute to resilience in ethnographic research, what resilience is in this context, and how this can be embedded in teaching ethnographic research by teaching collectives across Europe.

The workshop aims to explore the discussions during roundtable and build concrete **Knowledge networks for teaching resilience**. Therefore, it brings together university faculty and areas of practice in European Ethnology/ Cultural Anthropology/ Empirical Cultural Studies/ Folklore Studies and explores based on current developments on democratic science and approaches, how teaching can fulfill its important role in strengthening democratic scholarship.

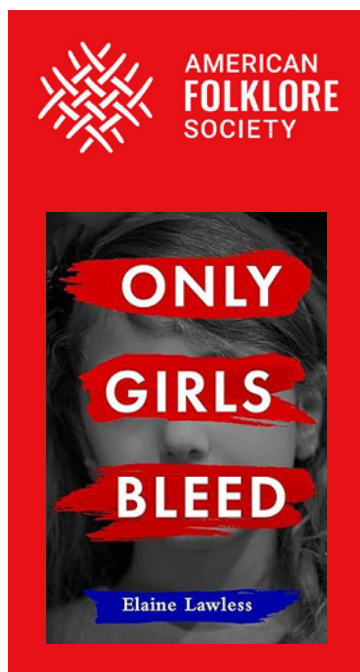
The event continues the work of the DGEKW initiative [Resilience Structures for Democratic Sciences](#) and is also connected to the SIEF Transnational Syllabus Initiative initiated by Čarna Brković and seeks to facilitate Teaching Collectives.

To help us plan better, please let us know if you would like to attend the workshop:

lara.hansen@uni-hamburg.de.

Gertraud Koch & Lara Hansen

8.4 NEWS FROM THE AMERICAN FOLKLORE SOCIETY



AFS Past President Elaine Lawless retired from academics in 2020 and moved to N.C. to write fiction full-time. Her debut novel, *Only Girls Bleed*, is being published by Legend Times Publishing, London, UK, in 2026 (Kindle version release is June 18, 2026; Print version release is Sept 22, 2026; both are currently available online for preorder at most book outlets).

Her novel, inspired and informed by her many years of ethnographic research on the lives and stories of women facing crises and discrimination, features the harrowing journey of a Missouri mother and her ten-year-old pregnant daughter seeking an open reproductive clinic following the Supreme Court decision in 2021 that rescinded the landmark Roe vs. Wade decision and banned all abortions in the US. For more information

see her [website](#) or write to her at drelainelawless@gmail.com.

A Special Session at [AFS 2026 in Asheville](#), N.C., October 27–31, is planned with Recent Past President Amy Skillman in conversation with Lawless about her book and their shared history serving as folklorists in Missouri. *Only Girls Bleed* will be on sale in the AFS book room at the conference.

8.5 NEW JOURNAL

This summer, MDPI are launching *Crafts* (ISSN 3042-8718), a peer-reviewed, open access scholarly journal that publishes on all aspects of craft research, such as the design, preservation, exhibition and making of designed objects, artworks, and artifacts; the market for it; and education on it. The journal aims to explore and challenge the boundaries of craft research as a vital contributor to cultural, technological and societal innovation. Papers are accepted, inter alia, in the following fields: Traditional craftsmanship and folkcraft; Material Culture; Tools; Digitalization and globalization of crafts; Education and apprenticeships; Economics and societal aspects of craftsmanship. APC waivers may be available.



The joint editors-in-chief will be **Prof. Dr Sarah Kettley**, School of Design, Edinburgh College of Art, University of Edinburgh, Scotland, and former SIEF President **Prof. Dr Ullrich Kockel**, Institute for Northern Studies, University of the Highlands and Islands, Inverness, Scotland.

[Journal Website](#).

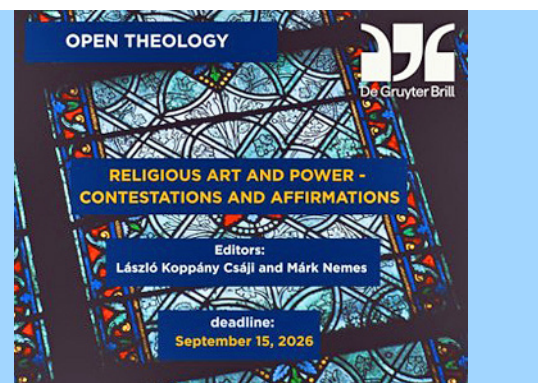
Editorial Office: crafts@mdpi.com.

8.6 CALLS FOR PUBLICATIONS

◆ Open Theology's Special Issue *Religious Art and Power – Contestations and Affirmations*

Open Theology invites submissions for the special issue *Religious Art and Power – Contestations and Affirmations*, edited by László Koppány Csáji and Márk Nemes (Research Institute of Art Theory and Methodology, Hungarian Academy of Arts, Budapest, Hungary).

Interlacing culture and society, religious art has traditionally been a hub of social reflections. A field of creativity, intuitive expression, professionalism, communication, and even



social agency, religious art appears in many forms of expression and activity. It can be studied “through the prism of the genre,” as Leonard Primiano suggests, using the frameworks of architecture, dress, photographs, artifacts, narratives, bodily communication, and even dance, music, or song. Artistic expressions often incorporate reflections on power, whether affirmative and

legitimizing or critical and resistant, even on the level of vernacular religiosity. Religion and power also have a complex relationship and interaction, as professional religious art – whether at the level of the individual, the religious community, or society at large – has the capability to address contemporary issues of “mundane” power. Within these frameworks, urgent issues such as climate change, crises, war, migration, and social discrimination can also be addressed. However, art is not merely a tool for expressing a critical position and commentary on social, cultural and political power, but can function as an agent that shapes and affirms it. This special issue of *Open Theology* seeks novel approaches to these intertwined subjects, with a thematic focus on how power, authority, and agency

play out the vernacular and institutional levels, and on how power is bestowed, legitimized and subverted through social and spiritual frameworks. We encourage submissions on inductive, fieldwork-centered research; theoretical overviews of the relationship between art and power applied to case studies; theoretical overviews of the relationship between art and power applied to case studies; and critical methodological reflections on prior research or approaches on the subject group. Submissions should aim to articulate proposals with real traction – normative and operational – attentive to feasibility, measurable change, and transferability.

Submissions should primarily (but not exclusively) address the following questions:

- How is religious art used as a manifestation or legitimization of power?
- How is religious art used to criticize or subvert authority, legitimacy, and power?
- What kind of interactions can we observe between power and religious art?
- What kind of discursive practices appear in religious art?
- What is the role of emotions and the senses in legitimizing or subverting forms of power and authority?
- How do new media and new technologies shape religious artistic practices by empowering marginalized voices, deconstructing traditional hierarchies, or creating alternative narratives?
- How do performative approaches in religious practices play a crucial role in expressing, shaping, or contesting religious authority or power?

About the submission process

Submissions will be collected until **September 15, 2026**, via the [online submission system](#). Please choose section/category: special issue Religious Art and Power. Before submission, authors should carefully read the Instructions for Authors, [available here](#).

All contributions will undergo peer review before acceptance for publication.

Further questions about content for this thematic issue can be addressed to

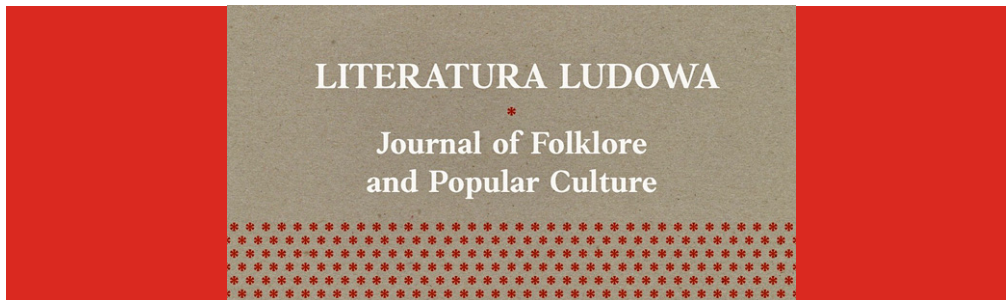
Dr. László Koppány Csáji (csaji.koppany@mma-mmki.hu) and

Dr. Márk Nemes (nemes.mark@mmammki.hu).

Because *Open Theology* is published under an open access model, as a rule, publication costs should be covered by Article Publishing Charges (APC), paid by authors, their affiliated institutions, funders, or sponsors. Authors without access to publishing funds are encouraged to discuss potential discounts or waivers with OA Portfolio Manager Magdalena Skoneczna (magdalena.skoneczna@degruyterbrill.com) before submitting their manuscripts. In case of technical problems with submission, please write to: Assistant.Managing.Editor@degruyterbrill.com.

Further information about OT on [Facebook](#).

◆ Journal of Folklore and Popular Culture



1 Languages and Their Intangible Cultural Heritage

In this issue we want to explore the multifaceted relationship between languages and the intangible cultural heritage in particular, problems such as:

- transmission of oral traditions and folklore in different linguistic contexts
- documentation and preservation of endangered/diminishing, minority, regional, contested etc. languages and dialects

- revitalization efforts and strategies for language and intangible cultural heritage conservation
- bilingualism, multilingualism, language politics and their impact on folklore and heritage dissemination and interpretation
- linguistic diversity and its intersection with cultural diversity in folklore studies
- the role of language in shaping folklore genres, narratives, and performance practices
- language ideologies and their influence on folklore interpretation and transmission.

Submission deadline: **December 31, 2026**. Detailed information [on the website](#).

2 Collections of Identities and Topographies of Counter-Memory

In this issue we will focus on the analysis of grassroots, community-based, and non-institutional practices of producing knowledge about the past in particular, problems such as:

- grassroots museums and community archives as alternative knowledge infrastructures
- speculative and reconstructive approaches to collections and permanent exhibitions
- memory walks, historical routes, guided tours, and activist forms of public narration
- grassroots, educational, and engaged tourism as counter-narrative practice
- reenactment groups, site-specific narratives, and performative modes of storytelling
- vernacular and communal memory as a form of epistemic repair
- relationships between memory, dignity, recognition, and narrative agency
- reactivation of historical violence in relation to contemporary social conflicts
- tensions between official narratives, “sustainable” tourism, and vernacular accounts
- the material modesty of memory practices versus their symbolic and affective intensity
- informal education projects addressing gaps in official curricula
- guides, narrators, and community leaders as figures of epistemic authority

Submission deadline: **November 30, 2026**. Detailed information [on the website](#).

We also recommend the last two issues of our journal, which were published in open access:

- Vol. 69, No. 1–2, [Stories of Faith](#).
- Vol. 69, No. 3–4, [The Past – Phantasms – Fantasies](#).

◆ ***Ethnologia Fennica: Ethnological and Cultural Approaches to Nature***



Nature – its meanings, materialities, and effects on human life – has become an important focus of interest within ethnology and related disciplines. Growing interest in human–nature relationships and nature experiences resonates strongly with the post humanist turn (see, e.g., [Ethnologia Fennica 2/20](#)) and with theoretical frameworks such as affect theory and new materialism. These approaches invite us to consider how cultural research can illuminate the entanglements between humans and environments. At the same time, research into the significance of nature is intertwined with the academic community’s broader commitment to fostering ecologically sustainable and socially just futures. Cultural knowledge of nature can reveal how values, affects, practices, discourses, and imaginaries shape the ways people respond to shifting ecosystems.

For *Ethnologia Fennica* issue 1/27, we invite original research articles that explore nature from diverse perspectives. We particularly welcome contributions that engage with environmental affect, nature experiences, nature connectedness, and culturally embedded nature practices. Potential articles could focus, for example, on the experiences of urban nature, changing practices linked to natural environments, or the role of nature in fostering well-being.

Please submit your article abstracts (300 words maximum) by **June 30**. After preliminary approval in August, the authors should submit their full article manuscripts by November 30. The deadline for reviews, reports, and commentary texts is February 28, 2027. The issue will be published in June 2027.

Ethnologia Fennica, a journal published by the Association of Finnish Ethnologists (*Ethnos ry*), is an international journal that publishes original scholarly articles, review articles, congress reports and book reviews that promote Ethnological research. The articles undergo double-blind peer review. The journal is published twice a year with full open access. See here for [more information](#).



◆ ***Wonder Tales: Critical and Creative Approaches***

Wonder Tales: Critical and Creative Approaches publishes innovative scholarship and creative engagement with wonder tales across cultural traditions, offering a platform for critical studies that examine wonder as narrative mode and cultural practice. We position wonder tales as a rich transnational corpus that travels between orality and print, folklore and literature, performance and digital media, traditional storytelling and creative experimentation. Volumes in the series will engage with wonder as a concept with varied cultural, aesthetic, political, and ethical dimensions, while also addressing approaches and traditions that remain under-represented in existing folklore and fairy-tale studies. Collaborations among scholars, translators, artists, and storytellers are encouraged.



The series editors welcome proposals for monographs, essay collections, creative-and-analytical work, and/or story collections with critical apparatus, centering wonder and wonder tales from various oral traditions, literary works, films, and/or digital media. Proposals ranging from 8 to 20 pages should follow the [press's guidelines](#).

Submit your proposal to the series editors:

[Cristina Bacchilega](#) (University of Hawai'i i-Mānoa)

[Veronica Schanoes](#) (Queens College, City University of New York)

[Elena Sottilotta](#) (University of Cambridge)

◆ **SIEF Series in Ethnology and Folklore – *New Directions in the Study of Everyday Life, Past and Present***

Following its formal launch at the SIEF2025 Congress in Aberdeen, the SIEF Series in Ethnology and Folklore – *New Directions in the Study of Everyday Life, Past and Present* – is now actively seeking proposals for monographs and coherently edited volumes.

Co-edited by Hande Birkalan-Gedik (Goethe University Frankfurt) and Anthony Bak Buccitelli (Pennsylvania State University) and published by Berghahn Books, the rigorously peer-reviewed series brings together work from ethnology and folklore studies — fields distinct in their historical formations but united by a shared concern with the cultural and historical study of everyday life. The series welcomes scholarship that pushes the intellectual or ethnographic boundaries of contemporary or historical research, broadly defined, as well as work that addresses pressing everyday issues of global concern through exemplary ethnographic study.

The series is supported by an international editorial board: Marcin Brocki (Jagiellonian University), Peter Jan Margry (University of Amsterdam), Solimar Otero (Indiana University), David Shankland (Royal Anthropological Institute), and Ju Xi (Beijing Normal University).

We particularly welcome proposals from across SIEF's working groups and from colleagues whose research engages everyday life in its full breadth – from heritage, ritual, and material culture to digital practice, performance, foodways, community, and beyond. Both single-authored monographs and tightly themed edited volumes are within scope.

Inquiries about the fit of a potential project may be directed to the co-editors:

- Hande Birkalan-Gedik
irkalan-gedik@em.uni-frankfurt.de
- Anthony Bak Buccitelli
abb20@psu.edu

Formal proposals should be sent to Berghahn Books at editorialus@berghahnbooks.com, following the publisher's submission guidelines, available at berghahnbooks.com.

If you have a manuscript in development, or know of colleagues whose work would suit the series, we warmly encourage you to be in touch.

sief

*SIEF Series in Ethnology
and Folklore*

**New Directions in the
Study of Everyday
Life, Past and Present**



9 SIEF JOURNALS

9.1 FORTHCOMING: ETHNOLOGIA EUROPAEA 56.1 (2026)

We are delighted to announce that the next issue of *Ethnologia Europaea – Journal of European Ethnology* will be out in mid-June. It is a lively and wide-ranging issue, moving from the politics of personal names in Swedish academia to experiences of wildfire, fear of wild animals, culinary creativity, cake exchange in Norwegian confirmation celebrations, and changing agrarian worlds in the Italian Eastern Alps. As you journey through this issue, you'll discover thought-provoking discussions on daily life, rituals, interactions with the natural world, and a tapestry of unexpected connections.

The issue features contributions by Maja Povrzanović Frykman and Eleonora Narvselius, Jenny Ingridsson, Riin Magnus, Auður Viðarsdóttir, Hildegunn Valen Kleive, and, in the Ethnographic Snapshot, Almut Schneider and Elisabeth Tauber. We look forward to sharing the new issue with you soon!

Contents

- Personal Names in Swedish Academia: Ambiguities of Difference from the Perspective of Postmigration | Maja Povrzanović Frykman and Eleonora Narvselius
- Making Sense of Wildfire: Dislocatory Experiences, Landscapes of Dwelling and Understanding of Time | Jenny Ingridsson



- The Fear of Wild Animals: Self-Reported Experiences in Cultural and Environmental Contexts | Riin Magnus
- Collective Culinary Creativity: Ethnology's Role in Transdisciplinary Research | Auður Viðarsdóttir
- Sweet Relations: Exchange of Cakes in Norwegian Confirmation Celebrations | Hildegunn Valen Kleive

Ethnographic snapshot

- Unveiling Hidden Changes: Ethnographic Perspectives on Agrarian Worlds in the Italian Eastern Alps | Almut Schneider and Elisabeth Tauber

Ethnologia Europaea is part of Berghahn Open Anthro, a subscription-to-open model that enables open-access publication. To ensure its sustainability, please [recommend it to your library](#).

Alexandra Schwell & Patrick Laviolette (editors-in-chief),
Agnieszka Pasięka (section editor),
Victoria Lammer (editorial assistant)

[Ethnologia Europaea overview.](#)

9.2 CULTURAL ANALYSIS 24.1 (2026): TRANSLATION IN/OF FOLKLORE STUDIES:

Perspectives from East Asia. Guest Editor: Timothy Thurston



This special issue of *Cultural Analysis* uses the example of folkloristic research in and about China – where translation of English-language theoretical writing, and minority traditions play a key role in the history, current status, and future trajectories of the folkloristic discipline – to re-center perspectives on translation in folkloristic theory and stimulate interest in translation work within the discipline. Each article brings a different theoretical and topical concern to the panel, but all fundamentally seek to understand translation in studies of expressive cultures from the People’s Republic of

China. Though the editors do not intentionally exclude Taiwan, Singapore, or other parts of the “Sinophone world,” the contributions to the volume come from research with communities in the People’s Republic of China by virtue of our own positioning and research interests rather than by design. However, it may also reflect the relative importance of translation and the folkloristic project in these different locations.

Articles

Timothy Thurston | University of Leeds, United Kingdom

[Translation in Public Folklore Projects: Thoughts and Experiences from a Collaboration in Tibet](#)

Wenhong Luo | William Paterson University, USA

[American “Quilt” in Thick Translation: An Autoethnography from a Museum Translator](#)

Mark Bender | The Ohio State University, USA

[Winged Ones: Translating Aku Wuwu’s Poetic Worlds](#)

Juwen Zhang | Willamette University, USA

[Ideological Agenda in Translation: A Look at Two Chinese Folktales](#)

Responses:

Jing Li | Gettysburg College, USA

[The Folklorist as Translator: Translation, Folkloristics, and Disciplinary Self-Reflection](#)

Jason Baird Jackson | Indiana University Bloomington, USA

[Two Notes on the Topic of Translation](#)

You can find the whole issue here [Cultural Analysis 2026](#) and here [Cultural Analysis vol 24.1 Translation in/of Folklore Studies: Perspective from East Asia \(pdf\)](#)

10 NEW PUBLICATIONS

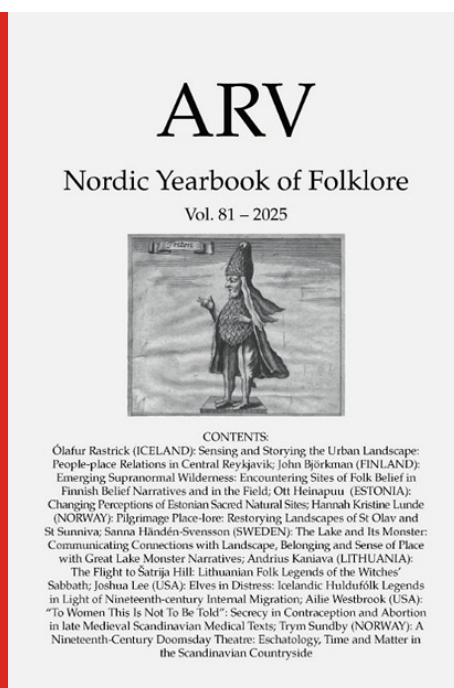
10.1 JOURNAL ISSUES

◆ ARV. Nordic Yearbook of Folklore 81 (2025)

Folklore and landscape are deeply interconnected. Landscapes embody stories, rituals, material culture, and historical events through a variety of cultural practices and forms

that contribute to place-making, shape collective identities, and influence heritage and conservation processes. The contributions to the themed issue of Arv 2025 explore how memory and belief are articulated in placelore. Through case studies of both physical and narrated landscapes, the volume presents analysis of the complex interplay between culture and natural environments, drawing on material from the Nordic and Baltic regions. The volume also includes independent research articles and book reviews.

[Access](#) to the journal.



◆ Special Issue *WORLDS: Journal for Ethnology, Anthropology and Folkloristics* 4, 1 (2026): Medical Anthropology from the Region of Former Yugoslavia

We are pleased to announce the publication of a new special issue of *WORLDS: Journal for Ethnology, Anthropology and Folkloristics* (Vol. 4, No. 1, 2026), titled *Medical Anthropology from the Region of Former Yugoslavia*.

WORLDS publishes articles and reviews in the fields of ethnology, social and cultural anthropology, folklore, museology, conservation, and cultural studies. The journal is committed to the humanistic unity of the world while respecting the diversity of lived experiences, traditions, environments, and social contexts.

This special issue brings together contributions that explore health, care, and medical systems in the post-Yugoslav region. The articles address historical continuities and contemporary transformations, engaging with themes such as socialist legacies, neoliberal reforms, public health, migration, childbirth, medicalization, research ethics, and collaborations in public health. The thematic section was edited by Uršula Lipovec Čebtron, Jelena Kupsjak, and Pia Krampf and includes the following contributions:

- Introduction to Medical Anthropology from the Region of Former Yugoslavia | Uršula Lipovec Čebtron, Jelena Kupsjak, Pia Krampf
- At Home With Medical Anthropology in the Former Yugoslavia: Between Socialist Legacies and Neoliberal Realities | Tanja Bukovčan, Uršula Lipovec Čebtron
- Between Bureaucracy and Community: Thinking With Public Health Collaboration in Serbia and Croatia | Jelena Kupsjak, Ljiljana Pantović



- Communication Between Healthcare Professionals and Foreign Language Speaking Parents of Newborns at the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit of the Maternity Hospital in Ljubljana | Anja Marolt
- People on the Move During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Health and Access to Healthcare | Pia Krampfl, Neža Vodopivec
- The Medicalisation of Childbirth: A Technocratic Model of Birth in Public Hospitals in Croatia | Danijela Paska
- Echoes in the Field: Confronting the Unexpected Deaths of Interlocutors in Medical Anthropology Research | Jelisaveta Fotić

Together, these articles explore a wide range of themes, from public health collaboration and migrant health to reproductive politics, communication in clinical settings, and the emotional and ethical dimensions of ethnographic work, while collectively advocating for an engaged, reflexive, and socially responsive medical anthropology. Beyond the thematic section, the issue also features a Varia article examining the construction and marketing of culinary identity in the Solčava region, highlighting the interplay between tourism, tradition, and local development.

The issue includes two book reviews addressing historical perspectives on midwifery and contemporary reflections on the role of anthropology in the world today, alongside an in-depth interview with anthropologist Susan Levine, who discusses the concept of debilitation and the broader political stakes of medical humanities. A series of reports provides insights into recent academic events, including conferences and symposia related to medical anthropology and ethnographic practice, reflecting the vibrancy of current scholarly exchanges in the region.

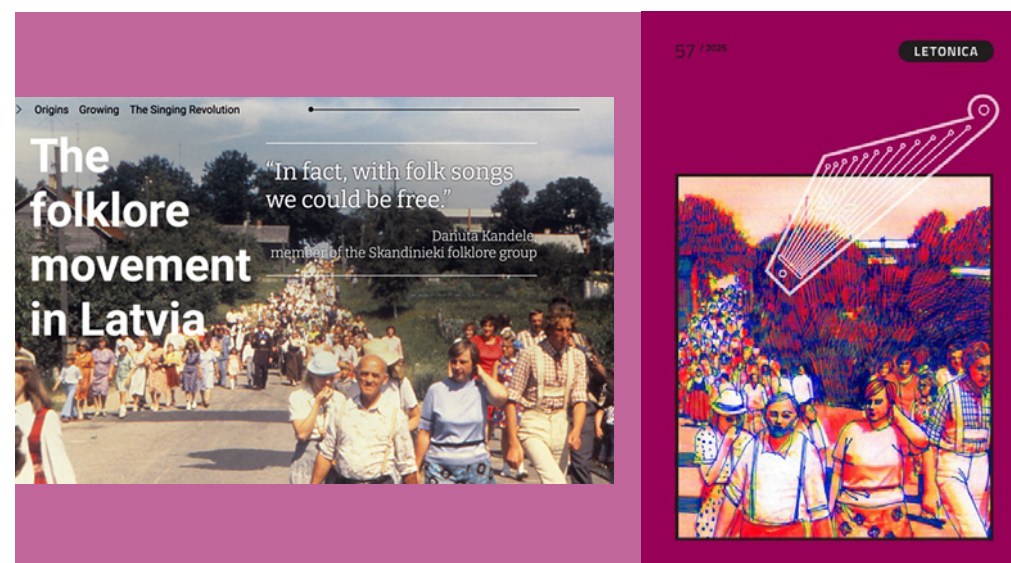
Finally, the issue introduces a new section titled Multimodal Anthropology, which opens space for experimental and creative forms of ethnographic expression. This section features a collection of student contributions that explore language, identity, and belonging

through diverse narrative and sensory approaches, marking an important step toward expanding the boundaries of anthropological writing and representation.

Overall, this issue not only showcases current research but also contributes to building a collaborative regional platform for rethinking health, care, and anthropology in a rapidly changing world. The issue aims to establish a long-term anthropological network for applied research on health and health policy in this post-socialist and migration context.

The full issue is [available in open access](#).

◆ *Letonica* 57 (2025): Folklore Revivals in Non-Democracies



The latest thematic issue, *Folklore Revivals in Non-Democracies*, of the journal *Letonica* focuses on folklore revival movements in non-democratic regimes. The 1960s–1980s of the 20th century were a time when folklore and folk music revival movements developed in

approaches these efforts as reclaiming rural dreams. The scholars have a choice to step in and support minorities in the process.

JEF is a multidisciplinary scene for imaginative, stimulating and cutting-edge scholarly contributions. We aim to encourage discussions in a challenging, creative and experimental scholarly spirit. JEF publishes articles in the research areas, including but not limited to ethnology, folkloristics, museology, cultural and social anthropology, sociology, semiotics, history, human geography, cultural studies, heritage studies, and critical theory.

Art Leete, Editor-in-Chief of JEF, art.leete@ut.ee

[See the whole special issue](#) | [JEF Instagram](#) | [JEF Facebook](#).

◆ The Yearbook of Balkan and Baltic Studies

1 The Yearbook of Balkan and Baltic Studies 8,1 (2025)

The first number of the eighth volume of the Yearbook of Balkan and Baltic Studies is organized by geographical region rather than theme and consists of articles from Lithuania. Some of the articles are connected with the history of ethnology and folkloristics (Ž. Šaknys, J. Šlekonytė, I. Šidiškienė, L. Petrošienė); two articles analyze the theme of intangible cultural heritage (S. Urbonienė, V. Tumėnas); two articles are dedicated to the COVID-19 pandemic, using comparisons of the specificities of Lithuanian and Bulgarian culture (R. Paukštytė-Šaknienė, R. Račiūnaitė-Paužuolienė); several other articles are devoted to traditional Lithuanian religions (G. Lukoševičiūtė, D. Senvaitytė); and one article is dedicated to the interaction of tradition and innovation (V. Džekčioriūtė). The issue ends with a in memoriam for Ekaterina Anastasova, editor-in-chief of this journal (L. Gergova).

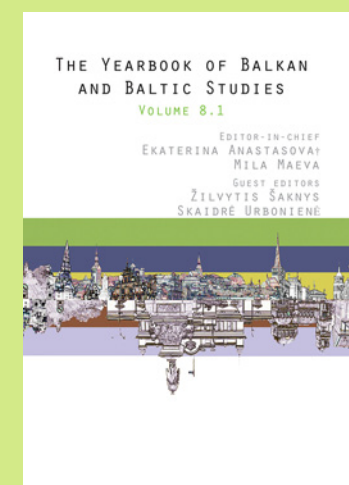
The editors for this issue are Skaidrė Urbonienė and Žilvytis Šaknys.

2 The Yearbook of Balkan and Baltic Studies 8,2 (2025)

The second issue of Volume 8 of the Yearbook of Balkan and Baltic Studies presents current research results from Bulgaria, Poland, Estonia, Türkiye, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan. The contributions explore youth folklore, crime narratives and horror stories (E. Kalmre); everyday rituals and practices; festivals and funeral customs (V. Özkan, P. Vasileva-Gruева, M. Markova); child mortality in GULAG camps (Z. Saktaganova, A. Gladysheva, A. Ventsel); horticultural cooperatives, cultivation in the windowsills, balconies, rooftop gardens (M. Kuperjanov, A. Kuperjanov, M. Kõiva); mental cartographies at the intersection of local tradition, mythology, and science (R. Hiimäe, M. Kalda, K. Villem); saints and pilgrimage (T. Kalniuk); socialist ritual music (I. Sikorska, O. Letychevska, I. Lisniak), and grunge (A. Ventsel).

The editors for this issue are Mare Kõiva and Mila Maeva.

All the issues of the Yearbook of Balkan and Baltic Studies [are available online](#).



◆ **Special Issue *In memoriam Paul H. Stahl (1925-2025)* 36, 5-6 (2025):**

Revista română de sociologie



Invited editor Irina Stahl

This special issue of the *Revista Română de Sociologie* (Journal of Romanian Sociology), which compiles contributions in English and French, is dedicated to Paul H. Stahl (May 4, 1925–September 16, 2008), a Romanian sociologist of French and

German descent. The son of Henri H. Stahl, he fled to France in the late 1960s, to escape communist censorship and persecutions, eventually becoming a significant reference in the field of European Ethnology. The volume completes the series of memorial issues dedicated to former members of the Romanian school of sociology (no.1–2/2005 dedicated to Dimitrie Gusti, founder of what is known as the Sociological School of Bucharest, and no. 3–4/2001 dedicated to Henri H. Stahl, one of the school’s most prominent members).

Paul H. Stahl was part of the last generation of Romanian sociologists trained after World War II. Unable to continue his social studies, he took refuge in ethnology and art history studies, with a particular interest in comparative studies with the neighboring Southeast European regions. In many ways, he was a continuator of the school’s principles. However, bringing in a comparative – at first South-Eastern and later, European – perspective, he was also an innovator, taking these principles one step further.

Anchored in the Romanian sociological tradition, but well-tuned to the Western scientific knowledge (especially the French tradition) and informed of the South-East European scholarly production, Stahl created a unique oeuvre. Grounded in genuine fieldwork mate-

rials and completed by historical and linguistic sources, it is difficult to be placed in a particular scientific landscape or discipline. The major themes he investigates (social structures, blood as a social construct, the social and cultural dimensions of the skull etc.) and the methodology through which he approaches them are original and innovating. His inherent ability to avoid any contamination by political or other ideologies, a very timely topic today, provides an excellent lesson on how to cultivate a healthy sense of intuition through fieldwork experience. Stahl’s life in itself is an enduring example of how academic integrity can be preserved, the living proof that any obstacle can be overcome through academic honesty, moral strength and determination.

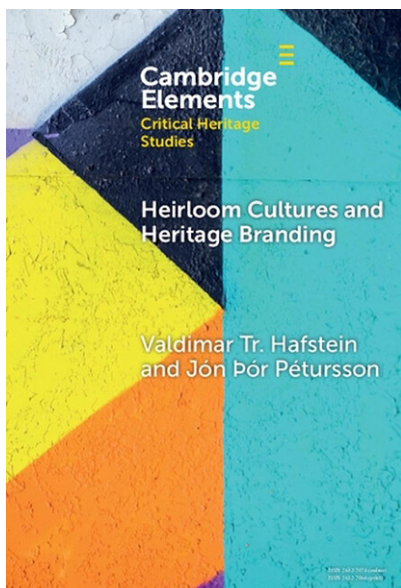
Paul H. Stahl’s contributions to the field of social sciences and humanities comprise many aspects yet to be investigated. His books are still to be reedited and translated, and many of his articles are yet to be regrouped in thematic collections. The main goal of this memorial issue, reuniting articles by authors who knew him, is to bring Stahl’s substantial works to the attention of established and emerging scholars and to open new pathways for future studies.

The volume is [available online](#).

Irina Stahl

10.2 BOOKS

HEIRLOOM CULTURES AND HERITAGE BRANDING: THE CREAMY CASE OF ICELANDIC SKYR



Heritage branding and heirloom cultures are twin strategies for building brands in global markets. In this book, European Ethnologists Valdimar Tr. Hafstein and Jón Þór Pétursson analyze these strategies through skyr; a traditional, sour dairy from Iceland. They explore how live microbial cultures in skyr have been 'heritagized' as heirloom cultures to build a brand advantage. Live skyr cultures, they show, illustrate symbiotic relations over millennia between microbial cultures and human cultures. The industrialization of this species interaction in the 20th and 21st centuries, the authors argue, ultimately converted a mutualistic relation into a parasitic one. Moreover, they demonstrate a parallel inversion of

gender relations in the production and consumption of skyr as part of its industrialization and export. Ironically, these transformations undermine the industry's promotion of the cultures and heritage to which it has effectively put an end. The book asks whether there is a more general lesson in this about the relationship between industrialization, capitalism, and heritage.

Valdimar Tr. Hafstein, Jón Þór Pétursson, *Heirloom Cultures and Heritage Branding: The Creamy Case of Icelandic Skyr*, Cambridge University Press, 2026.

ISBN: 9781009530323, 100 pages.

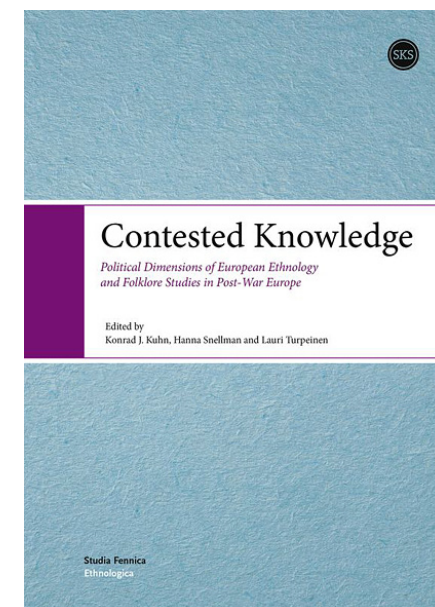
For more information, please see [here](#).

CONTESTED KNOWLEDGE. POLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF EUROPEAN ETHNOLOGY AND FOLKLORE STUDIES

This volume explores how European Ethnology and Folklore Studies in post-war Europe were shaped by political agendas, ideological control, and the contested production of ethnographic knowledge. Comprising various case studies from both socialist and non-socialist contexts, the volume traces how scholars navigated authoritarian pressure, Cold War divisions, disciplinary reforms, and competing national narratives.

The volume is peer-reviewed, open-access and appears as volume 19 of *Studia Fennica Ethnologica* by the Finnish Literature Society (SKS). First discussions for this volume were held within SIEF-contexts and as part of the Historical Approaches to Cultural Analysis (HACA) Working Group. The volume contains articles by Anete Karlson, Marleen Metslaid, Indrek Jääts, Hande Birkalan-Gedik, Tihana Petrović Leš and Ivan Grkeš, Sanna Kähkönen, Eija Stark and Fabio Mugnaini.

The book offers a collection of case studies that reveal the mechanisms through which ethnological and folkloristic research was organized, appropriated, resisted, and transformed in shifting academic and political landscapes after the Second World War. It sheds light on the varying ways in which individual ethnologists from the Baltic countries negotiated the restrictions placed upon them by the Soviet Union, with some deciding to continue their research in exile, while others stayed and tried to create niches for themselves within the Soviet system. It also explores the roles of different nationalisms within ethnological re-



search after the Second World War. This terminology appears in the form of competing nationalisms as a concept of research or in the context of funding for ethnological research. The volume highlights the creation of new perspectives within research and in the context of the discipline's entanglements with day-to-day politics and history. The book offers historically grounded insights for researchers in European Ethnology, Folklore Studies, and the broader humanities seeking to understand the political uses, limits, and vulnerabilities of contested cultural knowledge.

Konrad J. Kuhn, Hanna Snellman, Lauri Turpeinen, *Contested Knowledge. Political Dimensions of European Ethnology and Folklore Studies*, (Studia Fennica Ethnologica 19), Finnish Literature Society (SKS), 2026. ISSN 2669-9567.

The paperback is [available to order online](#).
[Open access download](#) (EPUB or PDF).

A FOUR-EYED WORLD: HOW GLASSES CHANGED THE WAY WE SEE

An engaging and informative cultural history of glasses that explores their origins, stigmas, future in technology, and more.

Eyeglasses have become so commonplace we hardly think about them, unless we can't find them. Yet glasses have been controversial throughout history. Roger Bacon pioneered using lenses to see and then spent a decade in a medieval prison for advocating that he could "fix" God's creations by improving our eyesight. Even today, people take off their glasses before having their picture taken, despite how necessary they are.

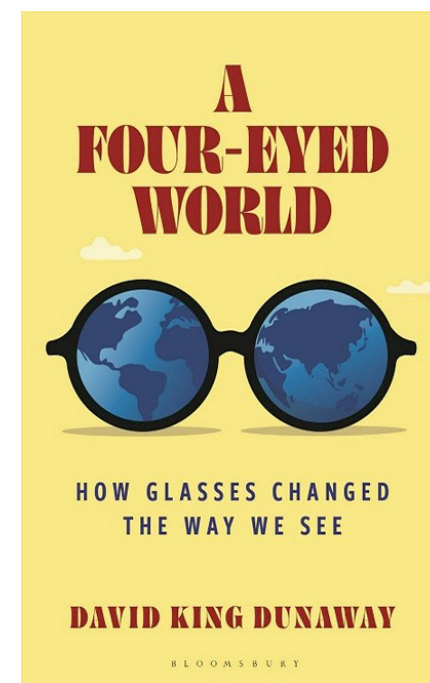
A Four-Eyed World: How Glasses Changed the Way We See is the first book to investigate the experience of wearing glasses and contacts and their role in culture. David King Dunaway

encourages readers to take a look at how they literally see the world through what they wear. He explores everything from the history of deficient eyesight and how glasses are made to portrayals of those who wear glasses in media, the stigma surrounding them, and the future of augmented and virtual reality glasses, highlighting how glasses have shaped, and continue to shape, who we are. Interwoven is Dunaway's own experience of spending a week without his glasses, which he has used since childhood, to see the world around him and his newfound appreciation for his visual aids.

This is the story of how we see the world and how our ability to see things has evolved, ultimately asking: How have two cloudy, quarter-sized discs of crystal or glass originally riveted together become so essential to human existence? Shakespeare famously said eyes are windows to the soul, but what about people who see only by covering theirs with glasses? Readers will find out together through this fascinating and insightful cultural history of one of humanity's greatest inventions.

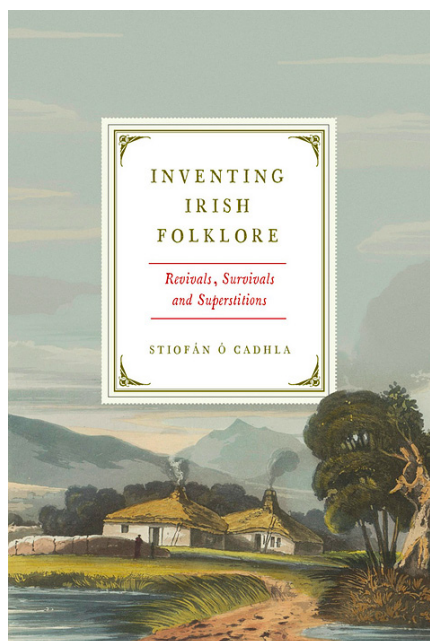
David King Dunaway, *A Four-Eyed World: How Glasses Changed the Way We See*, Bloomsbury, 2026. ISBN: 9798881804831, 296 pages.

For more information, please [see here](#).



INVENTING IRISH FOLKLORE: REVIVALS, SURVIVALS AND SUPERSTITIONS

Folklore's age of innocence, heralded by the conclusion of an extended period of centenaries, including those of the state, the Folklore of Ireland Society (2027), and the Irish Folklore Commission (2035), is coming to an end. A retrospect of the keywords and worlds of Irish folklore, *béaloideas* in Irish, is timely and, given their far-reaching ramifications, crucial.



This book moves from English to Irish, zero folklore to folklore, Anglophone Irish folklore to *béaloideas*, back to no folklore again. The lead up to the relatively shallow revolutionary period following the invention of the term is counter-balanced with examples from the deeper time of ancestral inventiveness. While written in English the keynote is that the Irish language lifeworld, in one way or another, is its main burden or gravitas. There is no avoiding the fact, attested by the monumental archive of the historical commission, that the language of much of the lore and the lore of much of the language are prejudicially partitioned. This is the starting point of a genealogy traced through a remarkable series of chronological coincidences and clashes, in and out of lexicology, etymology, antiquarianism, history, folklore, ethnology, and anthropology, in short the science of life writ large.

Ireland is a Gaelic Galápagos, there are few places in the world where the manifold roots of the scientific and cultural revolution go deeper. It epitomizes coloniality worldwide, but its exemplarity is sunk deep in a collusive decolonialism aligned with manifest history. From the stone age to the phone age a protohistoric cant for framing the long concatenation of

invasive maneuvers on the island was curated in layers of chronology and chronicle that reached a crescendo in the nineteenth century. By the dawn of the twentieth it was charismatically ignited as a re-enlightenment or rebirth. To begin to separate wheat from chaff imagine three things, first the Hibernophone seanchas of the autochthonous lifeworld, second Anglophone Irish antiquarianism, folklore, and anthropology, and third *béaloideas*, often, though by no means always, Anglophone Irish folklore Gaelicized, quasi-learned or otherwise. This book is essential reading for anyone at all interested in Ireland.

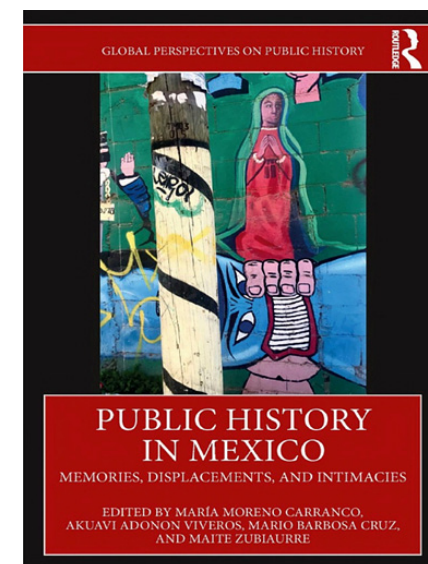
Stiofán Ó Cadhla, *Inventing Irish Folklore: Revivals, Survivals and Superstitions*, Cork University Press, 2026. ISBN: 9781782050940, 720 pages.

For more information, please [see here](#).

PUBLIC HISTORY IN MEXICO: MEMORIES, DISPLACEMENTS, AND INTIMACIES.

This collection of chapters explores how history is created, shared, and contested in urban and marginalized spaces by examining memory, displacement, resilience, and community-driven historical interventions across Mexico.

Bridging academic research with lived experiences, the book shows how public history is a powerful tool that both reflects on the past and projects more egalitarian futures of justice, representation, and cultural affirmation. Centered mainly around Mexico City, but also touching on the impact of migration at the northern border,



it contributes to the debates around new forms of history construction and covers topics including territorial dispossession, deportation processes, the violence entailed in erased histories, and the reconfiguration of daily life during the COVID pandemic. Through diverse approaches and methodologies such as documentary film, digital storytelling, public art, museum interpretations, grassroots activism, and other collective or community work, it provides readers with valuable insights into how historical narratives shape identities, social movements, and public policies, as well as a deeper understanding of how communities engage with their past to reclaim space, resist erasure, and foster belonging.

This book is a useful resource for all upper-level undergraduates, postgraduates, and scholars interested in urban history, public history, cultural studies, anthropology, and Latin American studies.

María Moreno Carranco, Akuavi Adonon Viveros, Mario Barbosa Cruz, Maite Zubiaurre, *Public History in Mexico: Memories, Displacements, and Intimacies*, Routledge, 2025. ISBN: 9781003413295, 294 pages.

For more information, please [see here](#).

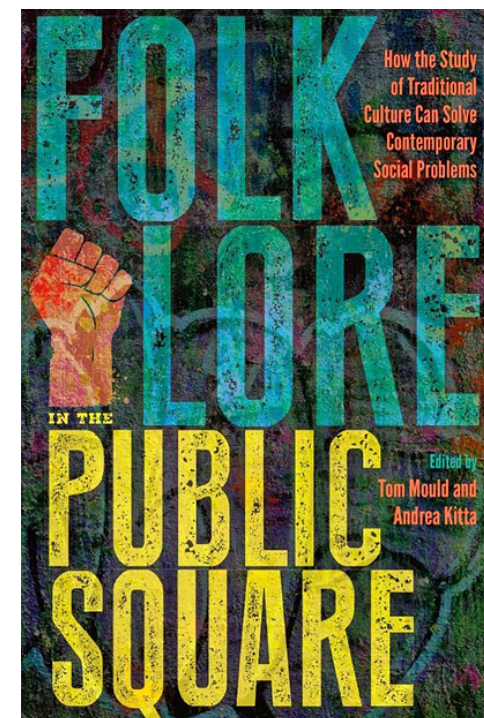
FOLKLORE IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE: HOW THE STUDY OF TRADITIONAL CULTURE CAN SOLVE CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Folklore is often positioned at the center of critical social issues. While folklorists have acknowledged this power and explored how folklore has been used for political ends, far less attention has been paid to the role folklorists and folklore scholarship can play in addressing contemporary social issues in public discourse. *Folklore in the Public Square* explores how folklorists apply their research to engage general audiences and address the challenging issues we face daily.

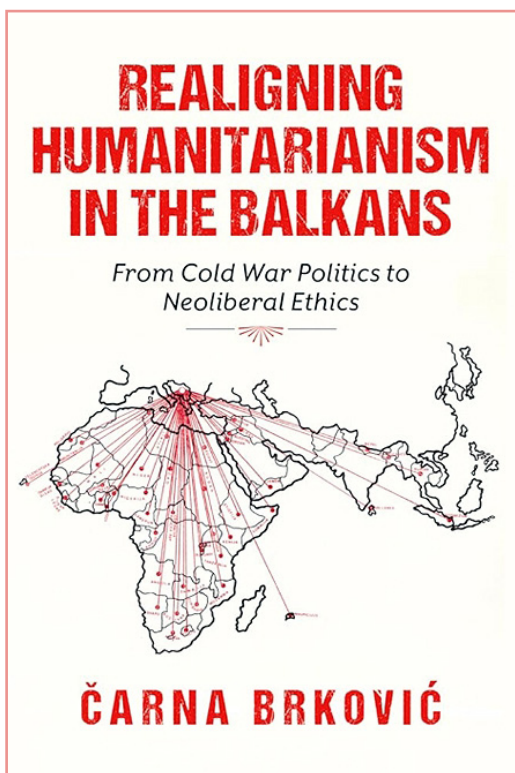
Folklore in the Public Square brings together folklorists working in the humanities and the social sciences committed to applying their research to help solve contemporary social challenges, formalizing an undercurrent of thought that has gained growing attention. Case studies apply ethical research to address pervasive questions about the environment, poverty, health and healthcare, political partisanship, war, tourism, stigma, racism, and conspiracy theories, among others. Building on conversations raised by folklorists who have contributed to public programming or conducted collaborative research in local communities, this book appeals to anyone interested in contemporary social issues, applied research, or collaborative and ethical fieldwork.

Tom Mould, Andrea Kitta, *Folklore in the Public Square: How the Study of Traditional Culture Can Solve Contemporary Social Problems*, Utah State University Press, 2026. ISBN: 978-1-64642-891-5, 404 pages.

For more information, please [see here](#).



REALIGNING HUMANITARIANISM IN THE BALKANS: FROM COLD WAR POLITICS TO NEOLIBERAL ETHICS



During the Cold War, humanitarianism became the focus of intense debates among intellectuals, politicians, and diplomats from capitalist, socialist, and nonaligned countries about the boundaries between political and nonpolitical. However, with the fall of socialism near the end of the twentieth century, these discussions over what humanitarianism is, what it could be, and what it ought to be were largely forgotten.

Realigning Humanitarianism in the Balkans examines how the fall of socialism changed humanitarianism in the Balkan region, beginning with the work of the Yugoslav Red Cross within the Non-Aligned Movement in the 1970s and

continuing with the work in Montenegro by local organizations in a refugee camp between 2000 and 2018. Author Čarna Brković traces how humanitarian regimes of care and discipline, implemented by local staff, have become the main source of support and the main channel of sociocultural integration of displaced communities in the Balkans. Within these regimes, though, structural problems generate a profound sense of disappointment for both humanitarians and displaced people.

By tracing the shifts in humanitarianism between the West, the East, and the South, Realigning Humanitarianism in the Balkans uncovers how the fall of state socialism shaped not only humanitarian practices but also how we analyze them – often in ways that have gone unnoticed.

Čarna Brković, *Realigning Humanitarianism in the Balkans: From Cold War Politics to Neoliberal Ethics*, Indiana University Press, 2026. ISBN: 9780253075222, 208 pages.

For more information, please [see here](#).

11 OBITUARIES

EKATERINA ANASTASOVA | APRIL 19, 1962 – JUNE 15, 2025

The news of the sudden passing of our dear Bulgarian friend and colleague, Ekaterina Anastasova, reached us early last summer. Katya was a long-standing and exceptionally active member of The Ritual Year Working Group. An accomplished ethnologist and specialist in Slavic studies, she was known for her outgoing and sociable nature. With friends and colleagues spanning the globe, she was a true “diplomat of science” and a vital mediator between cultures.



Ekaterina Anastasova completed her doctoral studies in Moscow, earning a PhD in ethnolinguistics in 1996 under the supervision of N.I. Tolstoy. Her dissertation focused on the

Old Believers in Bulgaria – a subject that became a lifelong pursuit as she expanded her research to include Popovtsy and Bespopovtsy communities across Moldova, Ukraine, Russia, the Baltics, Romania, and the USA. Katya possessed a remarkably broad scientific curiosity; she was a pioneer who embraced bold new directions in the humanities, often anticipating or setting modern trends. Beyond her foundational work with the Old Believers, she was a key figure in the study of Balkan national minorities (Vlachs, Turks, Roma), ethnic identity, migration, and intangible cultural heritage.

Starting in 1989, Ekaterina worked at the Institute of Thracology of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. In 1996, she joined the Institute of Folklore in Sofia – later reorganized as the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum (IEFEM) – where she remained for the rest of her career. During her tenure, she headed the Departments of Balkan Ethnology and Comparative Folkloristics and spearheaded numerous international research projects. Notable among these was her extensive study on the veneration of Saints Cyril and Methodius (2008–2013), which produced significant fieldwork, conferences, and publications. A dedicated educator, she also taught at various universities and mentored many doctoral students.

Katya was full of initiatives and ideas, which she generously shared with her colleagues. One of her latest enterprises was to bring together scholars from Balkan and Baltic countries, many members of The Ritual Year working group. She became the editor-in-chief of The Yearbook of Balkan and Baltic Studies (9 volumes have already been published, see https://www.folklore.ee/balkan_baltic_yearbook/YBBS).

We will miss her cheerful and lively presence, her lively spirit and her restless mind. May she rest in peace!

Irina Sedakova, WG The Ritual Year

UELI GYR | JUNE 1, 1945 – JANUARY 10, 2026

Ueli Gyr felt a close connection to SIEF from early on and throughout his entire active career.

As a senior assistant at the University of Zurich at the time, he played a key role in preparing the content for the 3rd SIEF Congress in 1987, entitled ‘The Life Cycle’, and bore the main organizational burden for what was by far the largest congress of our scholarly association to date. These memories were important to him, and he enjoyed sharing them until the very end.



*Prof. Dr. Ueli Gyr on an excursion together with his students in Eisenerz, Styria in 2007.
© Annina Wettstein.*



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