

Report on the SIEF Ethnology of Religion Working Group's activity

2014-2015

The Working Group organized its 11th conference with the title 'Making Sense of Religion: Performance, Art and Experience' in Lisbon, Portugal on May 22-23. The hosts were Clara Saraiva, Eugenia Roussou and Diana Espirito Santo from NAR-Anthropology of Religion Group of the Center for Research in Anthropology (CRIA). The conference had 4 thematic sessions (Gender, healing and the senses; Senses and possession; Music, performance and embodiment; Art, materiality and space) with 21 papers.

During the conference on May 22 a working group meeting was held where only 2 of the 4 board members (Clara Saraiva, István Povedák) and all the paper presenters participated. As great part of the presenters (15 from the 21) in Lisbon participated at the WG conference for the first time the meeting had two focuses: the introduction of the WG and the issue about the planned WG series. Clara Saraiva, the chief editor mentioned that the first volume after more than two years of hard work was basically finished by May 2014 and when Peter Jan Margry the former chair of the WG finished his introduction for the volume they could upload it to the LitVerlag Publisher House. According to Povedák although the editorial board (Clara Saraiva, José Mapril, Lionel Obadia and Kinga Povedák) did a great job with editing the papers that would be suggested to organize a new editorial team that would also include the local organizers in order to fasten up the editing process. Later a longer discussion started about the possible publishing solutions if there would be any difficulties with the LitVerlag.

Basically the conference was successful in attracting new members (some of them remained active members and will participate at the Zagreb congress too) but according to some the call for papers was more connected to anthropology than ethnology thus could be unattractive for others.

Later in 2014 the WG Board (Marion Bowman, Anna Niedzwiedz, Clara Saraiva, István Povedák) decided that the Editorial Board for the planned series would consist of the chair, the board members and the local organizer person. Povedák collected the papers from the 2012 Szeged, 2013 Tartu conference while Saraiva started to collect the papers from the 2014 Lisbon conference. As later only 5 papers arrived to Povedák there's no chance to publish a separate volume from Szeged and Tartu thus a joint volume with the Lisbon papers could be a solution. (The issue will be discussed during the congress in Zagreb)

In 2014 Povedák created a facebook page for the WG which already has more than 100 followers. All the information about the group members, conferences and other information concerning the WG's interest are posted there too.

For the SIEF Congress in Zagreb the WG Board organized two sessions. 'The heritagization of religious and spiritual practices: the effects of grassroots and top-down policies' under the name

of Niedzwiedz and Saraiva; ‘Almost Heaven. Vernacular utopias and the culture of belief’ by Povedák and Leonard Norman Primiano. In Zagreb an election will be held for the chair and the board member positions.

István Povedák