

Annual report on BNN activities between Oct 2021– Sept 2022

Judit Kis-Halas

chairperson of the BNN Executive Committee



1. Membership

Between October 2021 and September 2022 two new members joined the BNN:

Iris Odyuo, (associate professor, Nagaland University, India)

Tiber Falzett (associate professor, University College of Dublin, Ireland)

Currently BNN has 142 members. Hopefully, if the pandemic is over and the lockdowns are raised, more personal contacts at public events will draw more new members.

2. Activities, events

2.1. Online lectures

The idea of online occasions presenting research on belief and narratives stemmed from the previous committee. Our Online Lecture Series deals with folk beliefs of all kinds, and the narratives that are used to pass them on. We kept the same date as last season, the first Friday of every month. The Committee decided that we intend to endorse both well-known scholars and young researchers in our series. Furthermore, the committee has chosen a banner with a new logo designed for the online lectures. The flyers of the individual lectures also gained a new template.

Between 2021 October and 2022 June, 9 online lectures have been delivered by international scholars representing India (1), Wales (1), Iceland (1), Russia (2), England (1), Italy (1), Czechia (1), and Estonia (1).

2021		
Oct	K. K. Gopalakrishnan	Theyyam, the Ancient Ritual Folk-art Tradition of Hindus and Muslims in Northern Kerala (India)
Nov	Robin Gwyndaf	Magic, Reality and Relevance: Why do Certain Narratives Never Die? (The Fairy Wife from a Welsh Mountain Lake and a Family of Renowned Physicians)
Dec	Eva Þórdís Ebenezersdóttir	Yuletide believe and activism. Stekkjastaur and his brothers, from past to present and into the future
2022		
Jan	Alevtina Solovyeva	‘A miracle walking tree’: The supernatural in the landscape mythology and social space of contemporary Mongolia

Feb	Mare Kõiva	Wereseals, Merpeople and the Pharaoh: A Complex Phenomenon of Nordic and Baltic Folk Belief in Comparative Perspective
March	Simon Young	“Boggart Taxonomy: from Generic North English Ghoul to International Fantasy Goblin”
April	Petr Janeček	Ghost of Kyiv, White Tights and Spring Man: Eastern European wartime rumours in comparative perspective
May	Davide Ermacora	“The good old method of the nail.’ Nail murders and “the nail in the skull”-legend
June	Alexander Panchenko	Mind viruses: How Folklore research benefit from memetics

The presentations provided an exciting overview on recent trends and areas of belief narrative research. Despite the pandemic, these occasions helped participants to distract from the actual circumstances and provided a cosy hub which allowed researchers, scientists and interested people from all over the world to engage in meaningful dialogue and debate. For more information on the lectures, please check the website: <https://isfnr.org/online-lectures/previous-lectures/>

2.2. Conferences, symposia

The BNN announced a panel titled **Transformation in/of Belief Narratives from Shape-Shifting and Cross-Dressing to Intermediality and Blurring of the Media** at the Interim Congress of ISFNR, held in London at the London College of Fashion, University of the Arts London, 20-23 July 2022. The panel consisted of three sessions: **Dress and Cloth; Folk Narrative and Transformation; Animal Encounters and Transformation**, with ten presentations. The presentations covered novel fields, such as graphic narratives, performative acts like dressing statues, dressing and shape shifting in folk narratives and folk costumes, mythical motifs and creatures in movies and science-fiction literature etc.

<https://isfnr.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/2022-London-BNN-CFP.pdf>

3. Media, communication

The last issue of the BNN Newsletter, which used to have four issues per year, was published in December 2021. In January 2022 the committee decided that instead of quarterly newsletters distributed via our mailing list we move to our social media platforms (FB group, website) which enables faster and more efficient information transfer. Nevertheless, the BNN Online Lectures and occasional CfPs are still circulated via emails, too. Anyone interested in our activities, the upcoming events, conferences, workshops, is welcome to our Facebook group at

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/625573241323757>