



Number 14
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Newsletter

International Society for Folk Narrative Research

In This Issue

An interview with Galit Hasan-Rokem sharing insights into the founding years of ISFNR and its scholarly community.

***New books and journals** – discover recent publications.*

***Conference reports and annual reports** highlighting key discussions and takeaways from recent meetings, and reflecting on the past year's activities and achievements.*

***Welcome to our new members** – meet the latest additions to the ISFNR community.*

***Updated regional contacts and working groups**, keeping you connected across the network.*

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News, Notes & Narratives



The **International Society for Folk Narrative Research** (ISFNR) is a scholarly and professional organisation of international specialists in the areas of folk narrative, popular literature, folklore, and related fields. The ISFNR works to foster and develop work in the field of folk narrative research and to stimulate contacts and the exchange of views among its members. Our society encompasses all aspects of narrative as a pivotal category of human communication.

ISFNR Newsletter was founded in 2006 as an instrument to stimulate contacts and exchange among the society's members. In addition to news, information about forthcoming events and reports on those recently held, we also publish short research articles, interviews, book reviews and other information of interest to ISFNR members.

Please send your contributions to *ISFNR Newsletter* to:
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Cover photo: Detail from Sensō-ji temple, Kaminarimon Gate, Asakusa, Tokyo (photo by Triin Laidoner)

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President's Address

Mirjam Mencej

Dear friends, dear colleagues, dear ISFNR members,

First, I would like to thank all our members who participated in our online *ISFNR General Meeting* that took place on 15 October 2025 and thus helped us reach the quota necessary for the meeting to be legitimate. As the ISFNR is registered as an NGO in Estonia, holding annual General Meetings at which the financial report of our Society is presented and approved is required. I would like to thank Ave Goršič, the ISFNR Treasurer, for preparing the annual financial report for 2024, and our Estonian colleagues Reet Hiimäe, Risto Järv, and Ülo Valk, for their administrative input on the NGO Board. In addition, I would like to thank Prof. Ulrich Marzolph and Prof. Kaarina Koski, who kindly agreed to serve as members of the Auditing Committee and undertook the task of checking the financial report and presenting their reports.



In the last ISFNR Newsletter, we issued a call for proposals for the so-called *Working Groups*, in order to bring together members working on similar topics, allowing their members more frequent, more informal, and more focused activities, (online) discussions, and communication than only meeting at conferences and congresses. As you have already been informed via email, we are happy to announce that we have received and approved four applications for Working Groups: *Environmental and Ecological Narratives*; *French and Francophone Fairy Tales and Fluidities*; *Heroic Material of Ireland and Scotland*; and *Short Folklore Forms*. You can see the announcement of the newly established Working Groups, with the description of the topics discussed within each group and planned activities, as well as the contacts of their coordinators, on pp. 37–39 of this issue of the Newsletter, and on the ISFNR website. If you would like to join any of the Working Groups, please contact the coordinators directly to find out about meeting dates, times, and Zoom links. Should you wish to propose new Working Groups, feel free to send your proposal to Prof.

Anne Duggan at a.duggan@wayne.edu; the EC will discuss and approve new proposals at least twice a year. I would like to thank Anne for taking over and overseeing the process of launching the Working Groups!

In the meantime, we have also been working on compiling a list of so-called *Regional Contacts*. The Vice Presidents have, each in their part of the world, contacted prominent scholars of folklore and asked them to serve as regional contacts – that is, to act as mediators between regional folkloristics and the ISFNR. This entails mediating information between folklorists in their own country or region and the ISFNR, and vice versa: encouraging local folklorists to share news about what is going on in folkloristics in their country or region with colleagues from other parts of the world by submitting information to the ISFNR Newsletter, sharing news about the ISFNR's activities among local folklorists, and encouraging young folklorists from their country or region to join our society. They are also the first contact persons for young scholars in their region who are considering joining our society, or who simply want to know more about folkloristics and obtain useful information about our activities. Some of the reports on local conferences and publications in this Newsletter are already the result of the efforts of the regional contacts, and I am very grateful to them for their work! You can find the tentative list of regional contacts, which will hopefully continue to grow, on the ISFNR website.

Given that this is the Christmas edition of the ISFNR Newsletter and thus the last issue of the year, I would also like to draw your attention to the *Annual Reports by the ISFNR Committees* – Belief Narrative Network Committee (by Judit Kis-Halas); Committee on Charms, Charmers and Charming (by Emanuela Timotin); and Committee Folk Narrative, Literature and the Media (by Anne Duggan). I am happy to see that all the Committees have been very active, and I would like to encourage particularly new ISFNR members to consider joining any of them. I would like to thank the Chairs of the Committees, Judit Kis-Halas, Emanuela Timotin, and Jill Rudy, for writing the reports!

This issue also brings another interview conducted by Malay Bera – this time with the former ISFNR President Prof. Galit Hasan-Rokem.

Last but not least, I am happy to inform you that the Call for Papers for the *ISFNR Interim Conference* to be held in Reykjavík, 13–16 June 2026, has sparked enormous interest, first in the phase of panel proposals (altogether 60 have been approved), and later in the phase of paper proposals – 620 abstracts have been approved for presentation. The Executive Committee is in regular contact with the local organisers, and I can assure you that the organisation of the conference is well under way. Although the Society always uses existing resources for travel grants to attend congresses and conferences, I would like to invite and encourage our members to consider making donations to support less fortunate members of the Society in attending these events. Donations can be made to the Society's PayPal or Swedbank

accounts with the keyword 'donation'. Account details can be found on the ISFNR website under the 'Membership' section. We look forward to seeing you in Reykjavík!

I hope you will enjoy the reading of the current issue of the Newsletter! As usual, huge thanks go to Triin Laidoner for editing and proofreading it, and also to everyone who contributed to it or encouraged their colleagues to do so. On behalf of the Executive Committee, I would like to wish you merry holidays and all the best in the forthcoming year!

Mirjam

Ljubljana, 22 October 2025

Interview with Galit Hasan-Rokem

The History of the ISFNR through Memories of Its Distinguished Members

Malay Bera, University of Tartu

"Folklore as a phenomenon has the capacity to enliven dead parts of cultures, to liberate oppressed parts of cultures, and to mobilize hidden powers of culture. It is the task of folklorists to study all these with all their abilities and might, and to contribute to the creation of a better world of equality, justice, and peace."

- Galit Hasan-Rokem

As the second feature in the ISFNR Interview Series, I had the pleasure of interviewing Prof. Galit Hasan-Rokem (Max and Margarethe Grunwald Professor of Folklore and Professor of Hebrew Literature, Emerita, Hebrew University of Jerusalem), who has been an Honorary Member of the ISFNR since 2009. She served as President of the ISFNR from 1998 to 2005 and is the first female president in the society's history. She has published numerous works on proverbs, Jewish folklore, poetics, gender and everyday life in Rabbinic literature, various aspects of folk narratives, and the theory of folklore and folk literature. Prof. Hasan-Rokem is renowned not only as an eminent folklorist but also as a poet, translator, and activist. She has been involved with the ISFNR since 1974, and in this interview, she shares her valuable memories of the society, insights on folklore as an academic field, and reflections on the transformative power of folklore to empower the oppressed and promote a world grounded in equality, justice, and peace.

Interview

Malay Bera (MB): You did an interview with Ave Tupits in Tartu, Estonia, on the last day of your ISFNR presidency during the 2005 Congress, where you talked about how your journey as a folklorist began.¹ So, I thought it might be interesting to go back to that interview and start from some of the things you have already

¹ See Ave Tupits, "Interview with Galit Hasan-Rokem," *Folklore* 30, no. 3-4 (2005): 202-204.

talked about before. Although you started out as a scholar of proverbs and have maintained an active interest in the topic, during this interview you noted that your research interests had shifted towards ancient folklore in the Hebrew Bible and Rabbinic literature of Late Antiquity (the Byzantine period in Palestine and Babylonia), with a special focus on their subversive aspects. You looked at them from a folk narrative perspective with a feminist angle. Looking back on your work in ancient folklore, how would you describe some of the key insights that emerged from your research? Are you still interested in this topic? Could you tell us a little more about what you are working on now, and if your research focus has changed over the last two decades?

Galit Hasan-Rokem (GHR): The ancient Hebrew and Aramaic texts of the Jews in Palestine and Babylonia that I studied captivated me and my imagination because they combined condensed and sometimes enigmatic poetics and an almost bewildering abundance and diversity of sources of inspiration. These texts are embedded in sociologically and religiously highly determined environments, that is, the rabbinic academies where the Hebrew Bible and its various interpretations were studied, interpreted and taught, and the synagogues where the Bible text is recited and sermons rooted in it are delivered to a less elite audience. Both these discourses, of the synagogue and of the rabbinic academy, encompass diverse and detailed ethnographic materials as well as folk literary compositions of various genres, especially narratives and proverbs. These, in turn, reveal an intense dynamic of culturally specific articulations as well as ecotypical renderings of tales known from other cultures alongside rich inspirations, influences, loans and dialogues with the other cultures living in the same space as the Jewish culture of the period, the local cultures as well as the imperial powers which ruled the area from the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea until beyond the twin rivers of Mesopotamia. Those empires came and went, from ancient Egypt, Assyria and Babylonia, Alexander the Great's Greece, the Hellenistic powers following his short rule with their transformations of classical Greek traditions, as well as Iran and Rome. The religious repertoire of the relevant area included, in addition to Judaism, both Greek and Roman polytheisms, Iran's various beliefs, foremost perhaps Zoroastrianism, and closest both geographically and content-wise, early Christianity in Palestine itself and around in Syria and Egypt. I focus on the cultural dialogues that reveal similarities as well as differences. The folklore materials seem more often to be dialogical and share traditions between groups, whereas institutionalised discourses often emphasise polemics between groups. Two of my books in this field were published in English in the early 2000s, *Web of Life: Folklore and Midrash in Early Rabbinic Literature* (Stanford 2000) and *Tales of the Neighborhood: Jewish Narrative Dialogues in Late Antiquity* (University of California Press 2003).

My research on proverbs began in parallel with the study of ancient folklore. As in many other cultures, in Hebrew and other languages spoken in Israel, especially Arabic, many of the proverbs are applied in speech, journalism or literature. My dissertation, which was published in 1982 in the folkloristic series per excellence *Folklore Fellows Communications* 232, was based on archival research in the Israel Folktale Archive established by my teacher Dov Noy, who was also among the founders of the ISFNR. I sampled folk narratives that included proverbs, and then did field work in the respective groups represented in my sample to collect narratives on the same proverbs that were still around in oral performances. The interpretation of the entire material had the form of a structural-semantic analysis, which led me to discover a common underlying logical deep structure of proverbs, especially when they are analysed in pragmatic speech and narrative contexts; that is, at the bottom of all proverbs there is an “if-then” argument, a conditional phrase. And this is how they become tools for telling people how they can succeed or, vice versa, how they will fail; they thus are supposed to provide an everyday guide for a good life based on the common accumulated experience of generations. Proverbs may parallel accepted moral and religious norms, but they may also subvert them. They add to daily speech a presence of poetic expression that is in principle available to everyone. This research also led to the establishing of the Proverb Indexing Project at the Folklore Research Center at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where during my 42 years of active teaching at the university I led this Center for almost 30 years, between Dov Noy, who founded it in the early 1970s, and the present director Dani Schrire. The project continues to serve students and scholars who analyse the materials and enlarge the database.

Behind, over and under all these research fields, and some others that I don’t have the time to elaborate on, I have had a steady interest in theory, of folklore, of literature, of culture. I think that the most widely read of my articles on theory may be “Ecotypes: Theory of the Lived and Narrated Experience” published in the journal *Narrative Culture* in 2016. Another one is “The Poetics of Folklore,” co-authored with Amy Shuman, published in the *A Companion to Folklore* volume that I co-edited with Regina Bendix, both internationally prominent folklore scholars. My theoretical approach may be characterised as a structural analytical semiotics of culture, inspired by context and performance, critical theory and hermeneutics of text and culture theories. Sources of inspiration include Lévi-Strauss, Bakhtin, Honko, Köngäs-Maranda, Bauman, Ricoeur and De Certeau.

MB: In addition to being a folklorist, you are also known for your poetry, and activism. How much of these various sides in you, do you think, interact with each

other in your work? Considering the humanitarian crises going on all over the world, what does it mean to you to be a folklorist in times of crises?

GHR: Following what I just told you about my study of ancient narratives, folklore is for me a means of studying understanding between neighbouring groups, and as a teacher I have always emphasised the importance and beauty of cultural variation that folklore reveals. Folklore is also an essentially democratic mode of expression, since everyone is entitled to be a participant-performer. More specifically, in our fraught, troubled, and often violent situation in the Middle East at large and in Israel/Palestine in particular, it has been my privilege to guide young scholars in their doctoral dissertations to lift up and make visible cultural production in marginalised and disempowered groups, such as women, Jews from Middle Eastern countries, and Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel, both Muslim and Christian. I have also been able to maintain contacts and exchanges of research with folklorists from the Occupied Palestinian Territories and from the Palestinian diaspora, which tend to remain less public for obvious reasons.

I am in general involved in resistance to the Israeli occupation and in promoting and developing the two-state solution, Israel and Palestine alongside each other, and have been part of the Editorial Board of *The Palestine-Israel Journal* since its founding in 1994, and where I now serve as Cultural Editor, bringing together poetry, prose, essays, and visual arts of Palestinians and Israelis who share the vision of equality, justice, and peace. It is unnecessary to say that we are at a terribly low and dangerous point in the relationship between the two nations, which nevertheless does not prevent us from working now on a special issue exactly on the vision and solution of two states. Where resistance is alive, there is hope.

My poetry is both an expressive channel and an option in my life, which is both separate from and connected to my research. I have published three volumes of lyrical poetry in Hebrew in which some of the topics that I studied are present. My poetry has been translated into English and other languages, and some of it is online. In the last twenty years I have especially worked on translating poetry into Hebrew from both my native, so-called mother tongues, Finnish and Swedish. My present translation project emphatically brings together my academic studies and research and poetry: I am translating the Finnish national epic, the Kalevala, and it will be the first translation into Hebrew from the Finnish original, and the first to include the entire text of the Kalevala. This project began with the isolation of the COVID period, and it has since filled my life with great joy.

MB: Although you have lived in Israel since you were 12, you were born and raised in part in Finland. And, as we know, Finland holds a special place in Folkloristics

mostly because of the Historic-Geographic method for studying folk narratives which left a great influence in the discipline since the second half of the 19th century, which is probably why your teacher, Dov Noy, encouraged you to return to Finland to study Folkloristics. On the one hand, you have been trained by folklorists from the Finnish school, on the other hand, you have also worked alongside American folklorists who had considerably different methodological approaches. Could you tell us more about your approaches to folklore reflecting on your formative years and later experience in the field? How much do you think methodologies and theoretical frameworks have evolved in the discipline since the inception of the Finnish Method?

GHR: I was born in Helsinki and, due to family reasons, emigrated to Israel at the age of 12. Straight after completing my first academic degree in English and Hebrew literatures, I was indeed encouraged by my teacher Dov Noy, whom I already mentioned, to continue folklore studies in Finland. This was 1968–1969, and Finnish folkloristics had already for several years been negotiating its geographical-historical legacy by including other theoretical options. My teacher Matti Kuusi, who began as a typical “Finnish School” exponent, was also a structuralist proverb scholar and a key figure in establishing paremiology, the study of proverbs as an independent field within folk literature. He notably founded the journal *Proverbium* in Helsinki, which, after his retirement, moved into the able and untiring hands of Wolfgang Mieder in Vermont, USA. Now, when Wolfgang, a devoted ISFNR member himself, has also retired, we are lucky to have a new inspiring team editing the journal, Hrisztalina Hrisztova-Gotthardt and Melita Aleksa Varga.

Lauri Honko, who has also inspired folklore research in India, became a very influential folklorist in the 1970s–1980s, and he also served as the second President of the ISFNR following the 1974 ISFNR Congress in Helsinki, which was my first participation and introduction to the ISFNR. He promoted international cooperation and publication and held very early on ecological views on folklore theory.

MB: You have spent years working in the field of folk narrative research. Could you tell us about when and how you first became involved with the ISFNR?

GHR: I have already mentioned my first congress in Helsinki in 1974; however, I became more active after completing my doctorate in 1982, soon being elected as a member and then chair of the Membership Committee. We were able to enlarge the membership and widen its geographical reach beyond Europe and North America. The ISFNR has become the most truly international academic society that I have ever been associated with. I was elected Vice President for some time in the early nineties. And in 1998, at the Congress in Göttingen, Germany, I was elected President. During

my seven-year term as President, the ISFNR convened in Kenya, Australia, Sweden, and in Estonia, where Ülo Valk was elected. The ISFNR has given me the opportunity to be inspired and, perhaps, also to inspire scholars from all over the world, especially promoting women folklorists as the first female president of the society.

MB: Unfortunately, we find very little documentation from the first few decades after the ISFNR was established. Dov Noy, your teacher was one of the founders of the ISFNR. Did he ever share his experiences with the ISFNR with you? Or, do you have any memories of him connected to the ISFNR? As a former president of the ISFNR yourself (1998–2005),² you are most likely one of the few people who have witnessed the ISFNR grow in its early years. Could you please share your recollections of the ISFNR from the period of your presidency, or before? Could you also reflect on how the ISFNR and its focuses have evolved over time? In your opinion, how did the objectives of the ISFNR shift under the leadership of its first few presidents leading up to your term? Do you remember any significant changes in policies, goals, or operations that influenced the ISFNR's trajectory as an international organisation?

GHR: Dov Noy shared some of his experiences with the ISFNR. I was very conscious of the fact that Dov, most of whose family was murdered in the Nazi extermination of Europe's Jews, was working with the first president of the ISFNR, a German professor, in an effort to recover from the terrible results that extremist nationalism had wreaked on the world, coping with the fact that folklore as a field was implicated in the cultural establishment of the perpetrators. Folklore scholars have indeed been aware of the past of the field and developed other subject positions than the national, such as class, gender, subaltern, queer, and transnational, to name just a few.

As I mentioned above, the main trajectory that I consciously chose to work through as ISFNR president was widening the society's international reach, and we have been lucky to have had a very able president from India as well, Sadhana Naithani, who also strengthened the profile of women as leaders in folklore studies and the strong post-colonial theorising of the field. We have continued to strengthen the theoretical development of the field by encouraging subsections³ that sometimes meet separately.

² The names of the ISFNR presidents listed successively: Kurt Ranke (1962–1974), Lauri Honko (1974–1989), Reimund Kvideland (1989–1998), Galit Hasan-Rokem (1998–2005), Ülo Valk (2005–2009), Ulrich Marzolph (2009–2016), Sadhana Naithani (2016–2024), and Mirjam Mencej (2024–Ongoing).

³ This is a reference to the ISFNR committees like (a) Belief Narrative Network (BNN), (2) Committee on Charms, Charmers and Charming, (3) Committee on Folk Narrative, Literature, and Media (FNLN) etc.

The online lecture series initiated during the term of Professor Naithani has further empowered international communication among folklorists.

Intersociety activities, such as joint conferences with the American Folklore Society (AFS) and the International Society for Ethnology and Folklore (SIEF) were initiated and strengthened during the term of Ulrich Marzolph as president.

MB: In your opinion, what could be considered some of the notable achievements that the ISFNR accomplished in its early years? What do you think has/have been the biggest achievement(s) of the ISFNR so far? Is there anything which, you think, sets the ISFNR apart from other scholarly organisations focusing on folk narratives?

GHR: As I already mentioned, the ISFNR is the most geographically diverse and internationally engaged society among the societies that I know, in folklore or other fields. That by itself is a huge achievement in a world as fraught with divisions as our present world. I personally have had the opportunity to be in close contact with folklorists from Egypt, Iran, Tunisia, and Morocco, which are countries that for many years did not maintain diplomatic contacts with Israel. Fortunately, we now have diplomatic and other contacts, including in academia, with both Morocco and Egypt.

The ISFNR is also characterised by wide theoretical openness and by the indigenous development of theory from Polynesia to Africa and Latin America. I was privileged to have doctoral students in Israel, from both Kenya and Japan, and to participate in the doctoral work of scholars from Sweden, Finland, the UK, Norway, Thailand, and the USA.

MB: During your presidency, ISFNR conferences had been held in Kenya, Australia, Sweden, and Estonia. Could you please reflect on your experience of organising ISFNR conferences at so many different places that are so distinct from each other?

GHR: Each place possessed its own unique charm, along with its own set of challenges. For instance, Australia had, at least at the time, no academic folklore scholars, but the conference was fine and enabled us to meet and learn much about Australia's diverse cultures. Naturally, going so far made it more difficult for many members, and especially students, to participate. Since then, mostly more "conventional" sites for congresses have been chosen.

MB: Has the membership process changed over the years? How did one become a member of the ISFNR back in the days compared to now?

GHR: I am not sure about the membership process. It used to be nomination by two members and a significant contribution to the field in the form of publications and/or teaching.⁴

MB: In the interview with Ave Tupits in 2005, you pointed out that folklore is often seen as situated outside the academic because of an inherent logical clash between the university as a hierarchic site of knowledge formation whereas folklore tends to be a “radically non-hierarchic form of knowledge”.⁵ Could you please elaborate on this in the contemporary context? How is the politics of folklore non-hierarchic? Do you think folklore can be used to talk back to the power, and/or regimes of oppression today? In your opinion, does folk narrative research have a strong future? What do you envision for the future of the ISFNR, given changes in global politics, funding policies and the ongoing challenges in the humanities and social sciences worldwide?

GHR: I think folklore may be a site of talking back to power, and its forms are very context-dependent. For instance, the strong resistance movement against the Gaza war, preferring the release of hostages over taking revenge on Hamas after the horrific massacre of 7.10.2023, has produced an enormous amount of folklore in words, such as slogans and songs, especially in visual culture, such as posters, shirts, etc., and in prolific online creativity of all kinds.

In general, the hierarchical structures of knowledge are undergoing rapid and drastic change due to the powerful dynamics of electronic media and their vast, almost violent, shaking of political structures. Folklore studies provide versatile tools for studying these. In Jerusalem, we see a constant growth of the field, the cuts and limits set on the humanities notwithstanding.

MB: Looking back at your presidency of the ISFNR, twenty years later, what message would you like to pass on to the future presidents of the ISFNR and its members?

GHR: Folklore as a phenomenon has the capacity to enliven dead parts of cultures, to liberate oppressed parts of cultures, and to mobilise hidden powers of culture. It is the task of folklorists to study all these with all their abilities and might, and to contribute to the creation of a better world of equality, justice, and peace.

⁴ At present, applicants are required to submit a completed application form, along with a CV and a short bio, by email. The application is reviewed by the Executive Committee for approval. For more, see <https://isfnr.org/membership/>.

⁵ Tupits, “Interview with Galit Hasan-Rokem,” 206.

Galit Hasan-Rokem



Biography

Galit Hasan-Rokem (Honorary Member, ISFNR) is the Max and Margarethe Grunwald Professor of Folklore and Professor of Hebrew Literature, Emerita, at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where she taught for more than four decades. She has also taught as a visiting professor at prominent institutions around the world. A leading scholar of proverbs, Jewish folklore, folk narrative, poetics, and gender and everyday life in Rabbinic literature, she has published widely and helped shape several generations of folklorists. She served as President of the ISFNR from 1998 to 2005, having previously been vice-president (1989–1998) and Chair of the Membership Committee (1995–2005). At the Hebrew University, she also headed the Mandel Institute of Jewish Studies and played a central role in establishing key programs in Jewish folklore studies. An accomplished poet and translator, Hasan-Rokem has published volumes of Hebrew poetry and translated works from Swedish and Finnish, including Nobel laureates Tomas Tranströmer and Harry Martinson. She has served on the Executive Committee and the Advisory Board of Folklore Fellows International since 1993 and has been an invited Fellow of the Royal Folklore Society

since 1995. She is also a corresponding member of the Finnish Literature Society (since 1982) and served on the International Committee of the American Folklore Society (2001–2006). She has been active on editorial boards of scholarly journals throughout her career, including *Journal of Folklore Research* (1991–1997), *Folklore* (2001–2024), *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Folklore* (1981–2026, founding co-editor), and *Proverbium: International Yearbook for the Study of Proverbs* (associate editor, 1983–2020). She is a founding editorial board member and cultural editor (1992–) of the *Palestine Israel Journal* and remains active in several NGOs dedicated to promoting justice, equality, and peace.

Select Publications

- 2023 *Sirens in the Rabbinic Academy: Poetics, Folklore and Hermeneutics in Leviticus Rabbah* (in Hebrew). Jerusalem: Bialik Institute.
- 2016 “Ecotypes: Theory of the Lived and Narrated Experience.” *Narrative Culture* 3, no. 1: 110–137.
- 2014 *Louis Ginzberg’s Legends of the Jews: Ancient Jewish Folk Literature Reconsidered*. Edited by Galit Hasan-Rokem and Ithamar Gruenwald. Wayne State University Press.
- 2012 *A Companion to Folklore*. Edited by Galit Hasan-Rokem and Regina Bendix. Wiley & Blackwell.
- 2003 “Martyr vs. Martyr: The Sacred Language of Violence.” *Ethnologia Europea* 33, no. 2 (*Sleepers, Moles, Martyrs: Cultural Communication in the Age of Terror*): 99–104.
- 2003 *Tales of the Neighborhood: Jewish Narrative Dialogues in Late Antiquity*. The Taubman Lectures on Jewish Civilization. University of California Press.
- 2000 *Web of Life: Folklore and Midrash in Rabbinic Literature*. Stanford University Press.
- 1999 *The Defiant Muse: Hebrew Feminist Poems from Antiquity to the Present: A Bilingual Anthology*. Edited by Tamar Hess, Shirley Kaufman, Galit Hasan-Rokem. The Feminist Press at the City University of New York.
- 1996 *Untying the Knot: On Riddles and Other Enigmatic Modes*. Edited by Galit Hasan-Rokem and David Dean Shulman. Oxford University Press.

- 1986 *The Wandering Jew: Essays in the Interpretation of a Christian Legend*. Edited by Galit Hasan-Rokem and Alan Dundes. Indiana University Press.
- 1982 *Proverbs in Israeli Folk Narratives: A Structural Semantic Analysis*. Folklore Fellows' Communications 232. Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica.

Notes and Acknowledgements

This interview was conducted via Zoom on 15 August 2025. The questions were prepared by Malay Bera (Early Career Scholar, Executive Committee, ISFNR), in consultation with Mirjam Mencej (President, ISFNR) and Dani Schrire (Executive Committee Member, ISFNR). Many thanks to Galit Hasan-Rokem (Honorary Member and Former President, ISFNR) for kindly participating in this interview and for generously sharing her valuable memories and insights.

Works Cited

Tupits, Ave. "Interview with Galit Hasan-Rokem at the 14th Congress of the ISFNR, 31 July 2005, Tartu." *Folklore* vol. 30, no. 3-4 (2005): 201-208. <https://www.folklore.ee/folklore/vol30/discuss.pdf>. Accessed April 17, 2025.

Conference Report

The Agency of the Dead in the Lives of Individuals

Reasons, Triggers, and Contexts

2-4 July 2025, Ljubljana, Slovenia

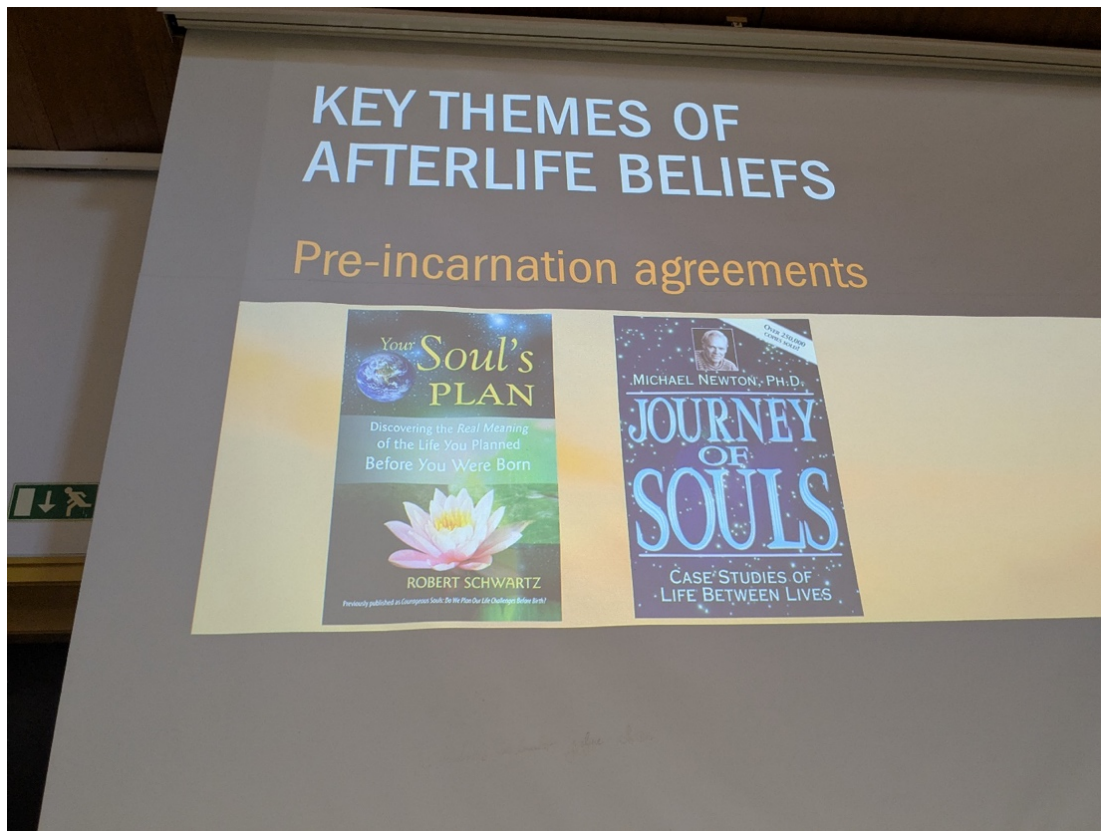
Nataliia Rygovska, MA student, University of Tartu

The second conference of the ERC Project DEAGENCY was hosted this summer by the Faculty of Arts at the University of Ljubljana. The interdisciplinary event gathered researchers from over 20 countries to discuss the agency of the dead in modern society. This year's conference, entitled **Reasons, Triggers, and Contexts**, focused on exploring the contexts in which the dead's agency manifests, examining when, why, where, and for what reasons the living experience a sense of the dead's presence. Are traditional reasons for encounters with the dead, such as violations of social norms and specific moments in time and space, still relevant? Additionally, how do new phenomena, such as digital spaces and social media communication, affect interactions with the dead? These topics were addressed in depth during panel discussions.

Terry Gunnell, Professor Emeritus at the University of Iceland, delivered the opening keynote. In a lecture titled *The Revenge of the Rejected: The Rise, Fall, and Background Context of Icelandic Beliefs in Family Ghosts*, he explained that family ghosts are primarily connected to the family rather than to a specific house. He focused on two main types of entities – male and female – discussing their characteristics, distribution, and the reasons for their uniqueness. Gunnell shared intriguing examples of interactions with the dead from traditional Icelandic society, including Jón Árnason's *Walking the Dead* manual. He concluded by addressing the current popularity of these spirits in modern Icelandic society.

Gunnell's lecture was followed by the panel discussion titled *Personal Experience Narratives in Vernacular Religious Frameworks*. This panel explored various presentations on how individuals interpreted their personal experiences related to death through the lens of their spirituality. For example, Tina Ivnik presented her findings in *The Afterlife as Context: Spiritual People Experiencing the Agency of the Dead*, which is based on her recent fieldwork in Bosnia. In her talk, Ivnik focused on the

popularity of reincarnation beliefs and how these beliefs influenced people's attitudes towards their deceased loved ones. A central concept for her interlocutors was the idea of pre-incarnational agreements.



The slide from Tina Ivnik's presentation *The Afterlife as Context: Spiritual People Experiencing the Agency of the Dead*. Photo: Nataliia Rygovska.

The next panel, titled *Dreamscapes*, examined the connection between dreams and death. Kaarina Koski shared her insights on nightmares following the death of a close relative. In her analysis, Koski suggested that nightmares can be a way to process the trauma of loss. However, for individuals who had complicated relationships with their parents, the death of a parent might lead to nightmares that continue to reflect those troubled dynamics, such as conflicts or bullying.

The second day opened with another keynote delivered by Francisco José Ferrándiz, Professor at the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC). His talk, titled *Cuelgamuros: The Decline of a Dictatorial Funerary Project*, focused on the activities and debates within Spanish society surrounding the Valley of Cuelgamuros, which is primarily associated with Franco's regime. Using terms such as *necrotoxicity* and *toxic monuments*, Ferrándiz shared his 25 years of experience in addressing the troubling heritage of the valley. His discussion covered topics such as mass graves, exhumation, and the concept of social memory.



*Francisco José Ferrándiz, with his lecture Cuelgamuros: The Decline of a Dictatorial Funerary Project.
Photo: Nataliia Rygovska.*

The section dedicated to mass graves, and another on violence and personal grief, explored traumatic experience, collective and individual memory, as well as memory-related spaces. At the same time, the panel *Materiality and the Dead* examined the material spheres connected with death, such as the endowment of money as an investment for the soul in 17th-century Bosnia, in Nihad Dostović's presentation.

In the panel discussion titled *Space for the Dead: From Collective to Private Place*, a variety of death-related contexts were explored. Simona Kuntarič Zupanc presented her talk, *Placemaking by the Dead: Cemeteries and the Agency of the Dead*, in which she described cemeteries as contact zones that connect the living and the dead. During her recent fieldwork in northeastern Slovenia, Kuntarič Zupanc found that informants perceive cemeteries as locations where the presence of the dead can be sensed in various ways and represented through different media.



Presentation by Simona Kuntarič Zupanc Placemaking by the Dead: Cemeteries and the Agency of the Dead. Photo: Nataliia Rygovska.

The third day of the conference featured parallel sessions, during which researchers discussed funeral and commemorative rituals, new technologies in communication with the dead, as well as connections through the deceased's properties. As every human has a body and is potentially vulnerable to multiple diseases, Jonathan Laszlo Mark's presentation may have resonated most with the audience. Jonathan delivered his presentation, entitled *Heart Caths and Holy Water: Vernacular Religion and Grief After Organ Transplant*, which was based on the author's autoethnographic experience as well as insights from the transplant community. The talk dealt with transplant identity, grief, and ghosts.



The chair of the session, Yseult de Blécourt, and Jonathan Laszlo Mark, delivering his talk, Heart Caths and Holy Water: Vernacular Religion and Grief After Organ Transplant. Photo: Nataliia Rygovska.

On the fourth day, the conference concluded with an excursion to the city centre and the necropolis of Žale, one of the largest and best-preserved memorial complexes in Europe. During the visit to Žale, participants enjoyed a walking tour that focused on the site's history and architecture. They also had the opportunity to learn about the workings of the crematorium. This experience left a lasting impression and sparked thoughtful discussions among the attendees.

The next conference will take place in Ljubljana, Slovenia, on 1–3 July 2026. It will be the third in the DEAGENCY series and will be titled *The Agency of the Dead in the Lives of Individuals: Communication with the Dead*.



Participants of the conference on a stare of the University of Ljubljana. Photo by organisational team.

Committee on Charms, Charmers and Charming (ISFNR)

Annual Report (September 2024–2025)

Emanuela Timotin, Institute of Linguistics of the Romanian Academy in Bucharest

Between September 2024 and September 2025, the Committee on Charms, Charmers and Charming (ISFNR) focused on three key directions: the publication of its journal, *Incantatio. An International Journal on Charms, Charmers and Charming*; the organisation of monthly online seminars; and the coordination of its annual conference. These activities aimed to advance international collaboration and disseminate research within the field.

All activities were promoted on the Committee's Facebook account by Laura Iliescu and on the Committee's official ISFNR webpage, thanks to the diligent efforts of Toni Saarinen (see <https://isfnr.org/special-committees/committee-on-charms-charmers-and-charming/>). ISFNR members were regularly informed about these initiatives through the efforts of Mirjam Mencej and Simona Kuntarič Zupanc.

Through these activities, the ISFNR Committee strengthened its role in facilitating academic exchange and innovation in the study of charms, charmers and charming practices.

I. Journal Publication

INCANTATIO. AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL ON CHARMS, CHARMERS AND CHARMING, 12 (2024)

Editor-in-Chief: Mare Kõiva

Guest-editor: Aigars Lielbārdis

Table of Contents:

Aigars Lielbārdis, *Introduction*.

Laura Jiga Iliescu, *The Tale of God as a Prayer, a Charm, a Fairy Tale*.

Daiva Vaitkevičienė, *Verbal Charm Vs. Prayer: An Emic Approach to the Lithuanian Terminology*.

Reet Hiimäe, *Verbal Magic in Contemporary Women's Narratives*.

Jonathan Roper, *Chugg's Charms: Authenticity, Typicality, and Sources*.

Eva Toulouze, *Stability and Change in the Udmurt Kuris'kon Prayers*.

Interview:

Jonathan Roper, *A Degree of Intertextuality: An Interview with Emanuela Timotin*.

Book-reviews:

Lea T. Olsan, *The Language of Magic*, edited by Eleonora Cianci and Nicholas Wolf

Toms Kencis, *A Deep Insight into Latvian Charms. A Review of Aigars Lielbārdis' Latviešu buramvārdi. Teksti, tradīcijas, konteksti [Latvian Charms. Texts, Traditions, Contexts]*. Rīga: LU Literatūras, folkloras un mākslas institūts, 2024.

Conference Reports:

Jonathan Roper, "The Materiality and Performance of Charms." Singapore, 29 August–1 September 2023.

Eleonora Cianci, "Conflicts and Catastrophes." Helsinki, 12–15 June 2024.

Alessandra Mastrangelo, "The Magical Turn? Room for Nordic Doctoral Students." Symposium, Uppsala, 11–12 April 2024.

II. Online Seminar

CHARMS, CHARMERS AND CHARMING SEMINAR

Contact person: Emanuela Timotin

December 2, 2024: Constructing Credibility in Divinatory Discourses at the Beginning of the 21st Century by *Laura Jiga Iliescu*.

December 9, 2024: Book Launch: *Textual Magic. Charms and Written Amulets in Medieval England* by Katherine Hindley, Chicago-London, The University of Chicago Press, 2023 with Katherine Hindley, Kate Leach.

January 20, 2025: Book Launch: *Charms from the Archival Sources (the 18th – the First Third of the 20th Centuries)*, Vol. 1, compiled by Tatiana A. Agapkina; Vol. 2, compiled by Andrey Toporkov and Aleksandra B. Ippolitova, Moscow: Indrik, 2023 and 2024. with Andrey Toporkov, Mare Kõiva.

February 17, 2025: “Powerful Prayers at the Service of the Faithful”. A Franciscan Practice of Benedictions and Exorcisms at a Hungarian Marian Shrine (18th–20th Centuries) *by Judit Kis-Halas.*

March 3, 2025: Emic Materialities of Oral Charms *by Frog.*

May 12, 2025: Is This a Charm-Type? *by Emanuela Timotin, Daiva Vaitkevičiene.*

III. Conference

SYNCRETIC ELEMENTS IN THE PROCESS OF CHARMING. THE 2025 CONFERENCE OF THE ISFNR COMMITTEE ON CHARMS, CHARMERS AND CHARMING.

Contact persons: Laura Jiga Iliescu, Emanuela Timotin.

Organisers: Committee on Charms, Charmers and Charms, International Society for Folk Narrative Research, The “Constantin Brăiloiu” Institute of Ethnography and Folklore of the Romanian Academy, The “Iorgu Iordan – Alexandru Rosetti” Institute of Linguistics of the Romanian Academy.

Venue: The “Iorgu Iordan – Alexandru Rosetti” Institute of Linguistics of the Romanian Academy, Calea 13 Septembrie no. 13, Bucharest, Alexandru Rosetti Hall.

List of Papers:

Yaich Aisha (Monte), *Veterinary Charms as Indicators of Social Status in Late Medieval England.*

Victoria Arakelova, *Protecting Cattle-breeders and their Live-stock: Charming Procedures in the South-Caspian Contact Zone (Yezidis and Talishis).*

Sandrine Bessis, *Historical Charms in Kuwae’s Geomylh, Vanuatu.*

Cristian Gaşpar, *The Art of the Curse Between Tradition and Innovation: Interpreting a Modern-day Tabella Defixionis from Banat.*

Davit Ghazaryan, Arsen Arzumanyan, *An Armenian Amulet Scroll written in Ruse in 1752 (National Archives of Romania, Hakob Siruni Collection).*

Liubov Golubeva & Sofiia Kupriianova, *Rituals of the Newborn’s Inclusion in the Family: Participants, Scenography, and Magic Props.*

Sabina Ispas, Presentation of a Documentary Film on a Ritual House Blessing: *Pusul cinstelor* by Radu Răuţu (Archive of the “Constantin Brăiloiu” Institute of Ethnography and Folklore).

Laura Jiga Iliescu, *Mother of God as Divine Agent in Romanian Charms.*

Tünde Komáromi, *Mediating Agents of Charming: Contemporary Research and Archive Materials (Aries River Valley, Transylvania).*

Mare Kõiva, *Distance Healing with Written Charms and Prayers.*

Aigars Lielbardis, *Charms and Charming in Latvian Historical Sources: Chronicles, Annals and Notes.*

Suzana Marjanić, *Ethnography and the Art of Amulets, Spells, Arcanas: The Antimuseum of Vladimir Dodig Trokut.*

Nidhi Matur, *Syncretic Threads in South Asian Charming Traditions: Intersections of Ritual, Script, and Sound.*

Davor Nikolić, *Secondary, Hybrid, Interdiscursive: Discussing the Verbal Charms as Complex Genres.*

Mihaela Nubert Chețan, *Sound Rhetoric in Incantations Performed by Children. With Examples from Romanian Folklore.*

Florenta Popescu Simion, *Magic of Herbs, Rituals and Beliefs Associated to Midsummer Day.*

Daniela Răuțu, Oana Niculescu, Carmen Radu, *Traditional Charms in the Romanian Phonogramic Archive.*

Kira Sadoja, *Magical Objects Used in Incantations by the East Slavic Population of the Carpathian Mountains.*

Luka Šešo, *Rethinking Fluid Boundaries: Syncretic Magic and Folk Belief in Croatia.*

Emanuela Timotin, *Romanian Linguistic Contributions to Charm Studies.*

Andrey Toporkov, *About one Type of Magic Formulae in the East Slavs: History, Symbolism, Structure.*

Danilo Trbojević & Mladen Stajić, *Between Curse and Cure: Magical Thinking, Vernacular Healing, and Ritual Speech in the Ethnographic Context of Rural Serbia.*

Maria Troshchilo, *Preserving Tradition: The Handwritten Notebook of Charms from Pinezh'e.*

Ilona Tuomi, *Portrait of a Charm Collector: Otto Räsänen 1892-1961.*

Daiva Vaitkevičienė, *Flowing Power: The Role of Water in Lithuanian Verbal Charm Practices.*

Tatiana Valodzina, *Manuscriptal Tradition of Charms.*

Inna Veselova, *In the Mode of Symbolic Plus Quam Perfectum: Archaisms in Actions, Words, and Objects in Traditional Magic.*

Anca Maria Vătășianu, *The Meaning of Plants as Props in Romanian Charms.*

Nicholas Wolf, *Tracking the History of the Irish American J.J. Lyons, Nineteenth-Century Proto-Folklorist and Charm Collector.*

Bucharest, 18 October 2025

Emanuela Timotin

Folk Narrative, Literature, and Media

Annual Report, 2025

Jill Rudy, President of the Folk Narrative, Literature, and Media Committee, Brigham Young University (Provo, UT, USA)

The ISFNR committee on Folk Narrative, Literature, and Media (FNLM) supports, recognises, and extends the work and achievements of scholars and practitioners who create, perform, and study folk narrative in relation to literature and media, widely conceived.

Leaders of the Folk Narrative Literature and Media committee have focused in 2025 on name recognition by commissioning a logo with the acronym FNLM.



Logo design by Sarah Darley

The design suggests the ways scholars and practitioners of folk narrative see traditional stories in relation with performances, adaptations, and study involving literature and media.

We are pleased that dozens of potential participants in the 2026 interim conference in Reykjavík submitted proposals for consideration in FNLM panels.

Annual Report on BNN Activities

January 2025–December 2025

Judit Kis-Halas, Chair

1. Membership

Currently BNN has 146 members.

2. Activities

2.1. Elections

According to the ISFNR statutes, a new BNN Executive Committee was elected this year. The elections were organized online, in the form of a Microsoft Outlook poll. By April 7 (the end of the nomination period), 12 candidates have been collected. The online voting took place between 11 and 14 April 2025.



The newly elected BNN Executive Committee consists of 12 members, who are the following, in alphabetical order:

1. Daisy Ahlstone
2. Petr Janeček
3. Judit Kis-Halas
4. Mare Kõiva
5. Kaarina Koski
6. Margaret Lyngdoh
7. Bela Mosia
8. Maria Ines Palleiro
9. Sonja Petrović
10. Nemanja Radulović
11. Evelina Rudan
12. Tok Thompson

According to the ISFNR BNN statutes the members of the executive committee elect the chairperson from among themselves. Judit Kis-Halas has been elected as chairperson for a second term.

2.2. Online lectures

We have kept organizing the lecture series, which has become a tradition by now. So far 39 international scholars have contributed to the initiative. This season proved that the original intention of the BNN Committee to indorse both well-known scholars and promising young researchers was successful. The average number of participants at each lecture is between 15 and 20, but some occasions yielded even a higher number of audiences. Between Jan 2025 and Dec 2025 there were nine online lectures. Scholars from Estonia (1), Finland (1), Hungary-Italy (1), India (1), Serbia (2), Serbia-Poland (1), England (1), the USA (1) presented their research findings. The November occasion was organized in cooperation with the American Folklore Society (AFS). A list of speakers and their talks is summarized in a table below.

Date	Speaker	Title
Feb	Reep Pandi Lepcha (India)	"Beyond a wish here and a wish there". Belief Narratives of Lakes among the Mutanchis
March	Ádám Mézes (Italy-Hungary)	Unnatural self-reproduction. The construction of revenant beliefs in 18th-century Habsburg Monarchy
April	Danica Jovic (Serbia)	Supernatural Experience Narratives of "Nedug". A Zoomorphic Entity in Braničevo
May	Dejan Ajdacic (Poland, Serbia)	Beliefs of the Slavs in Demons and their Humorous Interpretation: Witches and their Presence in Slavic Memes
June	John Björkman (Finland)	Patterns in the Locations of Belief Narratives
Sept	Reet Hiiemäe (Estonia)	From the Trajectories of the Plague Spirit to the Spatiality of Recent Health Infodemics: Mental and Narrative Mapping of Environmental Health Crises
Oct	Ethan Doyle-White (England)	From Wooden Incarnate to So of Herne. On the Changing Role of Paganism in Robin Hood Narratives
Nov	Bonnie O'Connor (USA)	Dead and/or Alive: Professional and Vernacular Discourses on Brain Death and Their Implications for Family Experience and Health Care Ethics
Dec	Ana M. Milinković (Serbia)	Exploring Anti-Legend. Genre Dynamics and Humour in Folklore

2.3. Online meetings of the executive committee

The committee held two quarterly executive meetings (June, September) via the Zoom platform. The results of the proceedings are summarized below.

- The most important issue of the agenda was the organisation of **BNN panels** for the forthcoming ISFNR Interim Conference. Two panels were agreed to be proposed, and later it was carried out accordingly.
- The executive committee agreed upon reviving the former **BNN Folklore Prize** intended to encourage young researchers / scholars to get involved in academic activities and networking. Kaarina Koski, Tok Thompson, and Mare Kõiva volunteered to be the members of the decision committee, and, as such, to elaborate the final call (eligibility, reward, financial background).
- The relaunch of the **BNN Newsletter** was also agreed, and Abhirub Sarkar (graduate student, University of Tartu, Estonia) was entrusted to edit the monthly issues.
- The committee concluded that an **executive meeting** is held in every three month a year.

Canadian Activities

Jennifer Schacker

Folklore Studies Association of Canada Award Call for Submissions Deadline Extended

**The Robert Klymasz Award for the Best Research Paper on a Ukrainian Folklore
Theme**

Deadline: December 31, 2025

The Folklore Studies Association of Canada (FSAC) is pleased to announce a new prize in the honour of Dr. Robert Klymasz, a renowned Ukrainian Canadian folklorist. The 2024–2025 award (CAN \$500) will be given for the best paper on any aspect of the expressive and creative culture of Ukraine written by a graduate student, underemployed scholar, or unaffiliated scholar. Eligible submissions must be rooted in the disciplines of folkloristics, ethnology, or closely related fields. Papers must have been written in 2024 or 2025 for either a university course or a publication. If the winning paper is unpublished, it will be considered for publication in *Ethnologies*. Applicants must be members of FSAC at the time of receiving the award.

Note: membership fees will be waived for award applicants residing in Ukraine.

Submission format: Submissions should include a copy of the paper, in either English or French, formatted according to the *Ethnologies* style guidelines [<https://www.acef-fsac.ulaval.ca/en/ethnologies/authors>]. Papers originally written in other languages and translated into English or French are eligible. Submissions must also include a cover sheet indicating the author's name, the institution for which the paper was written, and whether the paper has been published or submitted for publication. A short biographical statement should also be included.

The application package should be emailed to: **Dr. John Bodner** (Secretary-Treasurer of FSAC): acef.fsac@gmail.com. Please include "The Robert Klymasz Award" in the subject line.

The award is sponsored through an endowment gifted by Dr. Natalie Kononenko.

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Distinctions and Awards:

Natalie Kononenko, University of Alberta:

Canadian Association of Slavists Best Book award and Canadian Historical Association Clio prize for *Ukrainian Ritual on the Prairies: Growing a Ukrainian Canadian Identity*, 2024.

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Publications:

Bacchilega, Cristina, and Pauline Greenhill. 2025. *Justice in 21st-Century Fairy Tales and the Power of Wonder*. London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic. Open access and available online:

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Best, Anita, Martin Lovelace, and Pauline Greenhill, eds. 2019. *Clever Maids, Fearless Jacks, and a Cat: Fairy Tales from a Living Oral Tradition*. Utah: Utah State University Press. Open access and available online:

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Greenhill, Pauline, and Diane Tye, eds. 2014. *Unsettling Assumptions: Tradition, Gender, Drag*. Utah: Utah State University Press. Open access and available online:

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Kononenko, Natalie, 2024. "Witchcraft Beliefs in *The Witch of Konotop*," Introduction to Hryhoriy Kvitka-Osnovyanenko's *The Witch of Konotop*, translated by Michael M. Naydan and Alla Perminova. London and Oosterhout: Glagoslav Publications B.V. Pp. 14–19.

Kononenko, Natalie, 2024. "Courtship Rituals and Legends of the *Bohyni*." In *The Exeter Companion to Fairies, Nereids, Trolls and other Social Supernatural Beings*:

- European Traditions*, edited by Davide Emarcora and Simon Young. Exeter: University of Exeter Press. Pp. 243–260.
- Kononenko, Natalie, and Alevtina Tsvetkova. 2024. "Ukrainian Christmas Traditions in Kazakhstan and Canada: Folklore, Folklorism, and Preserving Heritage." *Canadian Slavonic Papers/Revue canadienne des slavists*, 66 (1–2), 153–178.
- Orme, Jennifer, and Pauline Greenhill, eds. 2024. *Just Wonder: Shifting Perspectives in Tradition*. Utah: Utah State University Press.
- Schacker, Jennifer, 2024. "Fashioning Spectacular Bodies: The Affordances of Dress in the 1804 Pantomime of *Cinderella*; or, *The Little Glass Slipper*." *Marvels & Tales* 38 (2), 168–186.

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Ethnologies

Volume 47, Issue 1–2, 2025

Comment dire, entendre la maladie? / Giving Voice to Illness

Guest Editors: Léonore Brassard, Véronique Guyaz, Simon Harel, Clarence Lampron, Catherine Mavrikakis

Published by the **Folklore Studies Association of Canada**.

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- Marquart, Sharon. "Care as an Ethic of Knowledge: Jamaica Kincaid's Failed Metaphors." Pp. 79–90.
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Chainey, Benjamin Gagnon. "Listening with Rembrandt's Eyes: A Theoretical Sketch of the Pictorial Experience in Jean Genet and Mathieu Leroux." Pp. 139-151.

St-Amand, Isabelle. "*Blood Quantum* and *Ekoci Nehirowatcihotan*: Indigenous Perspectives on Times of Crisis." Pp. 153-171.

Tisseur, Céline. "In His lifetime: Cinema as a Place of Vulnerability." Pp. 173-188.

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Satre, Hugo. "Impossible Patients: Kathy Acker and Antonin Artaud, Medical Monsters." Pp. 195-207.

Harel, Simon. "The Journey to Tulsa or the Disease of the Ideal: From Bob Dylan to Patricia Hale." Pp. 209-227.

Cormier, Paul H. "I Wanted to Say... Confessions of a Good Patient." Pp. 229-236.

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The University of Winnipeg's [International Fairy-Tale Filmography](#) is a continuously expanding online resource, regularly updated with new entries.

The IUAES Commission on the Anthropology of Religion

Reet Hiimäe

The IUAES (Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences) Commission on the Anthropology of Religion brings together researchers in anthropology, religious studies, indigenous studies, folklore, and related areas to investigate narratives, rituals, and beliefs related to official religions, indigenous worldviews, and vernacular belief systems. We understand religion as a category of analysis connected to multiple arenas of human life and human relations with the environment and non-human world. For instance, we discuss the relations between religion and more-than-human beings, disasters, ecology, diasporas, migration, youth, health, death, gender, politics, colonialism/postcolonialism, food, war, digital media, materiality, heritage, art, identity, the body, as well as lived experience and interreligious spaces. Our aim is to promote debates on theories, methods, ethnographic data, and experiences from a changing world in which religion is enmeshed in many domains of social life.

As for regular activities, the commission organises a topical webinar every one to two months, which all interested researchers (including non-members of IUAES) are welcome to attend. Our most recent event was a webinar in October 2025, titled “Traditional Religions and Medical Systems in South Africa: Philosophy, Practice, Identity and Interactions with Christianity and the Health Care System”, with presenters Dr. Lily-Rose Nomfundo Mlisa – traditional healer, clinical psychologist, teacher, nurse, theologian, and researcher at the University of the Free State, South Africa – and Dr. Ullrich Kleinhempel – research fellow, University of the Free State, South Africa. In November, several commission members will present panels, round tables, and presentations at the World Anthropological Union (WAU) Congress 2025 in Guatemala. The commission’s next webinar will take place in December, in collaboration with the IUAES Commission on Migration, and will focus on religion and migration.

Additionally, we organised the “Portraying Religion and Health Photo Essay Award” in collaboration with the IUAES Commissions on the Anthropology of Religion, Visual Anthropology, Museums and Cultural Heritage, Medical Anthropology and Epidemiology, and the Anthropology of Pandemics. This initiative

is part of the hybrid WAU Congress taking place in Antigua, Guatemala, from 3–8, November 2025. The award is intended as an opportunity to address, through visual exploration, the intersections between religion and health, and was open to young scholars (university, college, masters, and PhD students). It will result in a round table and photo exhibition at the WAU Congress 2025, an exhibition book (open access), and the 2026 calendar.

Currently, the commission has approximately 60 members, but we are constantly expanding. We are happy to invite members of ISFNR to join us! You can join our Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/IUAES.religion>) to gain a deeper insight into our work and/or send your request to join the commission to the co-chairs. The commission is also open to ideas regarding joint initiatives and collaborations (for instance, joint webinars with ISFNR members).

Co-chairs of the Commission:

Daniela Calvo (dnlclv7@gmail.com); Reet Hiiemäe (reet.hiiemae@folklore.ee)

For information on joining a working group and on meeting dates and times, please contact the Working Group Coordinators. Most groups meet once a month or once every two months.

Environmental and Ecological Narratives

Working Group Coordinators

- Lidija Stojanović, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University (lidijast@ukim.edu.mk)
- Goran Djurdjević, University of Zadar (goran.djurdjevich@gmail.com)

The working group on Environmental and Ecological Narratives (EEN) seeks to bridge Folk Narrative Research with environmental concerns, fostering collaboration across disciplines and generations of scholars. By building on the foundational work of folklorists like Lauri Honko, Matti Kamppinen, Åke Hultkrantz, Tok Thompson, and Cristina Bacchilega, our group aims to deepen the understanding of folk narratives through inter- and transdisciplinary lenses. This approach could yield fresh insights into how traditional stories reflect ecological issues and humanistic challenges. We intend to focus on the following areas of research: nature and digital/artificial environments in human psychology; the position of women in various environmental contexts; ecological narratives across cultures and time periods; environmental storytelling and belief systems; econarratives from ideas to materiality.

French and Francophone Fairy Tales and Fluidities

Working Group Coordinators

- Anne Duggan, Wayne State University (a.duggan@wayne.edu)
- Fanny Marchaisse, Northwestern University (fannymarchaisse2023@u.northwestern.edu)

In the history of French and Francophone fairy tales, there are strong tendencies of gender and other forms of fluidity that challenge gender binaries as well as those underpinning human vs. non-human animals, beings vs. things, nature vs. culture,

etc. In the 1690s cross-dressing and other forms of metamorphosis often challenged normative models of gender and sexuality and supported egalitarian relations between women and men; authors of fantastic tales explored queer relations between humans and things within unstable universes, neither fully fictional nor fully realistic. In the nineteenth century, fairy tales were rewritten in ways that often blurred the boundaries between imagined, magical worlds and “real,” historical ones. Our group will explore the many forms of fluidity – between human and non-human, feminine and masculine, the real and the imaginary – found within the French and Francophone fairy-tale traditions.

Heroic Material of Ireland and Scotland

Working Group Coordinators

- Síle de Cléir, University of Limerick (sile.decleir@ul.ie)
- Ailbhe Nic Giolla Chomhaill, University of Galway (Ailbhe.NicGiollaChomhaill@ollscoilnagaillimhe.ie)

Our working group will explore hero tales and other heroic narrative material such as songs or lays, in Ireland and Scotland. The heroic story cycles form an important part of Irish and Scottish oral tradition, but because of their importance to the Irish and Scottish Gaelic languages, to date they have mainly been examined in the context of linguistics and Celtic history and archaeology. We propose instead to explore how hero tales and lays can shed light on the dynamic relationship between manuscript and oral traditions, and to look at Irish and Scottish heroic material in its cultural context: this would include a deeper exploration of narrators and their world, and the relationships between the narrated stories and the worldview or life experience of the communities in which they were told.

Short Folklore Forms (SFF)

Working Group Coordinators

- Rok Mrvič, Institute of Slovenian Ethnology (rok.mrvic@zrc-sazu.si)
- Saša Babič, Institute of Slovenian Ethnology (sasa.babic@zrc-sazu.si)

The Working Group on Short Folklore Forms (SFF) brings together scholars of folklore to explore a wide range of short folklore forms, with particular attention to the multimodality of their everyday manifestations. The group was established in

recognition of the fact that many of these forms do not fit traditional genre categories, leaving them overlooked, underexplored, or misinterpreted within international folkloristic research.

Moving beyond the well-studied realms of *proverbs*, *riddles*, *swearwords*, and other relatively well-established genres, the group seeks to investigate short folklore forms, emphasizing that through their diversity and interconnectedness they play a vital role in shaping contemporary vernacular culture and everyday communication. The main objectives of the working group are to highlight the cultural significance of short folklore forms in present-day creativity across various linguistic and cultural contexts, advance their comparative study across genres, foster innovative theoretical and methodological approaches, and work toward conceptual and terminological clarity in international research. The group is open to all researchers, regardless of their specific genre interests, since its scope is not limited to one genre but embraces the full spectrum of short folklore forms.

The 21st Issue of Féeries: Conclure: les fins des contes (Concluding: The Ending of Tales)

Edited by Anne E. Duggan and Cyrille François

Issue no. 21 of the journal *Féeries*, “**Conclure: les fins des contes**”, is now available online: <https://journals.openedition.org/feeries/6491>



The formula “Once upon a time” represents an opening to a marvellous world, demarcating an imaginary space where the action of the tale unfolds, unravels, often culminating in a “happily ever after”. The endings of tales, however, often turn out to be more varied and ambiguous. Even if the story ends with a “happy ending”, the addition of a moral can extend the text and resituate the tale in the context of the “real”, non-marvellous world. Furthermore, the end of the text can even call into question the end of the story or the work of magic. And what is the ending of the text when the tale is inscribed within a frame narrative? There are also many cases where princes and princesses “did *not* live happily and did *not* have many

children” and tales that end in tragic or unexpected ways.

The articles presented in this special issue on the endings of tales encourage us to ask ourselves what constitutes the ending of a tale, what are its material limits and what does it signify. The examples discussed in the various studies, whether from ancient or modern corpuses, clearly show that the genre lends itself wonderfully to a play between tradition and variation: it is undoubtedly the supposed rigidity of the form of tales and the power of formulas used in their introductions and conclusions in the collective imagination that allow authors to thwart expectations about endings or to pretend to fulfil them in order to better show their limits.

Articles

Anne E. Duggan and Cyrille François

Introduction. Conclure – Les fins des contes

Introduction. Concluding – The Endings of Tales

Charlotte Trinquet du Lys

Malheureux pour toujours ? Les fins hétérodoxes des contes de fées littéraires français de l'Ancien Régime

Forever Unhappy? The Heterodox Ending of Early Modern French Literary Fairy Tales

Allison Stedman

Marie-Madeleine de Lubert (1702-1785) et la fin du merveilleux

Marie-Madeleine de Lubert (1702-1785) and the End of the Marvelous

Bochra Charnay and Thierry Charnay

Franchir le seuil pour revenir : comment s'échapper de l'ethno-contes

Crossing the Threshold to Return: How to Escape the Ethno-Tale

Hans Färnlöf

Motivation et finition. Les contes de Perrault réécrits par Tahar Ben Jelloun

The Motivational and Finishing Touch. The Tales of Perrault Rewritten by Tahar Ben Jelloun

Soraya de Brégeas

Mensonge colonial et vérité poétique. Des « immorales moralités » des contes martiniquais

Colonial Lie and Poetic Truth. On the "Immoral Moralities" of Martinican Tales

Christiane Connan-Pintado

Au-delà de la fin, quand le conte continue pour les enfants

Beyond the End, When the Tale Continues for Children

Martina Stemberger

Il était... encore une fois : en fin de conte, la fanfiction

Once More Upon a Time: Fanfiction and Its Unending Fairy Tales

Makedonski folklor / Macedonian Folklore, vol. 88, 2025

Kristina Dimovska

Skopje: “Marko Cepenkov” Institute of Folklore. 318 pages.

The Journal *Makedonski folklor / Macedonian Folklore* is a peer-reviewed journal published by the “Marko Cepenkov” Institute of Folklore, University “Ss. Cyril and Methodius” in Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia. It was first published in 1968 as a reflexion of the research and scientific practices of the “Marko Cepenkov” Institute of Folklore. The journal continues to be published twice a year, with papers in Macedonian and English, and since 2022 it has been available in electronic format. To date, 88 volumes have been published, which are available [here](#).

The current issue, volume 88, contains three sections. The first section is dedicated to papers presented at the biannual international conference on Balkan folklore organised by the Institute. It contains thirteen conference papers presented at the conference *Folkloristics and Cultural Heritage*, held in Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia (22 November 2024). The second section consists of papers on various folkloristic and interdisciplinary topics, with four papers covering different contemporary themes. The final section is dedicated to reviews of published works and contains a review of the first volume of the book *Ġorġi Donevski – a Doyen in the Preservation of Folklore Creation from Aegean Macedonia* by Natasha Didenko.

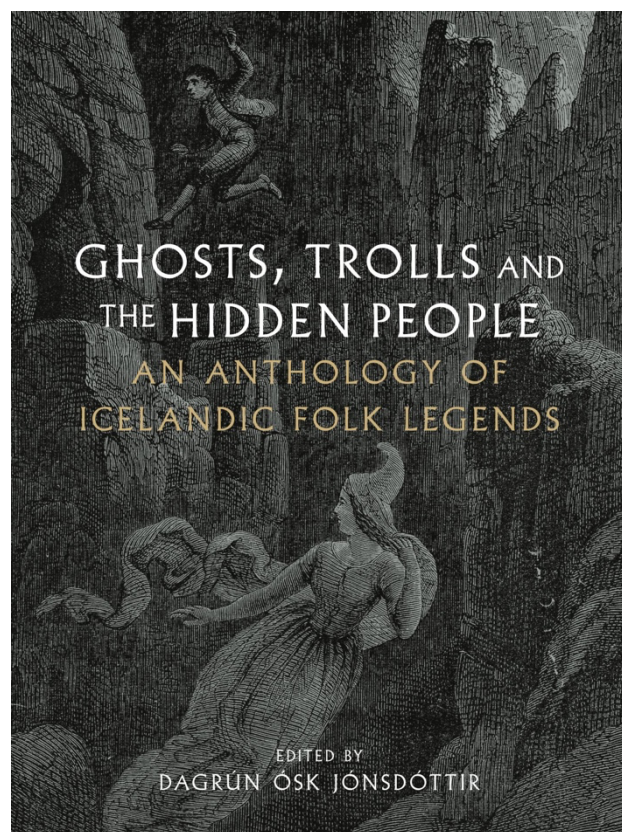
The papers are available [here](#).

New Book

Ghosts, Trolls and the Hidden People *An Anthology of Icelandic Folk Legends*

Dagrún Ósk Jónsdóttir, University of Iceland

London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 2025, 248 pages



From the land of the sagas, a collection of little-known, little tales from myth and lore – many available in English for the first time. [CLICK HERE](#)

This unique and enchanting book opens the door to a captivating world of Icelandic folk legends unfolding across six chapters, each based on a different setting: farm, wilderness, darkness, church, ocean, and shore. The anthology provides translated tales from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as well as introductions by the author that place these often supernatural happenings in the context of Icelandic society. The legends include tales of hidden people, trolls, ghosts, sea monsters, and even polar bears,

exploring themes of love, revenge, and conflict. The book highlights the tension between Christianity and heathen beliefs, past and present, nature and humanity, and divides within society. Drawing from a wide variety of Icelandic sources, the book makes these colorful, entertaining, lively stories available to non-Icelandic speakers, many for the first time.

Dagrún Ósk Jónsdóttir teaches folkloristics at the University of Iceland and has published widely in the field of Icelandic folk legends.

“The line between the natural and supernatural is blurred in Iceland, where, for over a millennium, farmers and fishermen have eked out an existence and told stories about wizards, hidden folk, ghosts, murderers and trolls. Jónsdóttir’s selection of these Icelandic folk legends immerses the reader in a perilous landscape and provides glimpses into the dangers of the unpredictable behaviors of supernatural beings, while capturing the evolving role storytelling plays in understanding the world around us and the ways in which legend creates meaning for its tellers and audiences alike. *Ghosts, Trolls and the Hidden People* is a masterful and much needed addition to our growing scholarship on Icelandic and Nordic folklore and will delight readers of all ages and backgrounds. Oh, and be very careful when driving past Skriðinsenni . . .”

– Timothy R. Tangherlini, author of *Danish Folktales, Legends and Other Stories*

“Dagrún Ósk Jónsdóttir has selected here nineteenth-century Icelandic legends that offer insights into past beliefs, social attitudes and daily life. They reveal views on gender, class and traditions in rural households. Her commentary provides a deeper understanding, offering a historical perspective from the common folk’s viewpoint.”

– Rósa Þorsteinsdóttir, Associate Research Professor in Folkloristics, Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies

“In Icelandic culture from the eighteenth, nineteenth and well into the twentieth century, ghosts, trolls and the hidden people were an integral part of everyday life. Stories of these beings were shared during the long nights at the so-called winter-evening gatherings (*kvöldvaka*), and these creatures felt just as real to Icelanders as the people sitting beside them. In this remarkable book, readers are invited into that world through the stories told during those times, brought to life and expertly analysed by one of Iceland’s most promising young folklorists, Dagrún Ósk Jónsdóttir. With her insightful commentary, she offers a deeper understanding of these tales and their significance. This is a book no one with an interest in the world of northern European folklore should miss.”

– Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon, Professor of Cultural History, University of Iceland

“Richly illustrated and accompanied by carefully researched contextual material, this book opens a gateway into the wonderful world of Icelandic folk belief of the past, providing access to a number of narratives that have previously only been accessible to those who speak Icelandic. Dagrún Ósk Jónsdóttir invites readers to enter a shadowy world of Nordic darkness, mystery and enchantment; unforgettable surroundings populated by powerful nature spirits, lovelorn ghosts, vengeful outlaws and marauding monsters.”

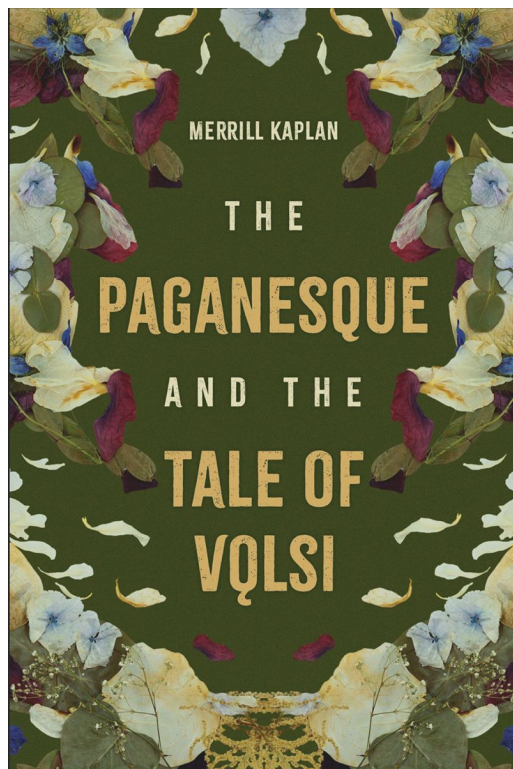
– Terry Gunnell, Professor Emeritus in Folkloristics, University of Iceland

New Book

The Paganesque and The Tale of Vølsi

Merrill Kaplan, The Ohio State University

Studies in Old Norse Literature, Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2024, 192 pages, [CLICK HERE](#)



The Paganesque extends the modern folkloristic concept of the “folkloresque” into the study of Old Norse literature. In the Tale of Vølsi, a family of Norwegian pagans, stubbornly resisting the new Christian religion, worship a diabolically animated preserved horse penis, intoning verses as they pass it from hand to hand until King Olaf the Saint intervenes. Scholars have long read the tale as evidence of a pre-Christian fertility cult or else dismissed it as an artless obscenity. In a new approach, this book shows how the Tale of Vølsi deploys a range of vernacular genres, from verbal dueling and mythological poetry to folk belief about milk-stealing witches and the reanimated dead, to create the flavor of paganism — the “paganesque” — the air of a religious culture older than and inimical to

Christianity. Throughout, the study challenges the notion that the horse penis is the key to understanding the narrative.

Finalist, 2025 Wayland D. Hand Book Prize, History and Folklore Section of the American Folklore Society

Review:

Kaplan offers a convincing interpretation of the Tale in its fourteenth-century Christian context... her argument is detailed and subtle, and makes for a good read.
TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

New Book

Fieldwork in Folkloristics and the Study of Religions: An Interdisciplinary Introduction

A special thematic issue of Marburg Journal of Religion, vol. 25 no. 1 (2024)

Matthias Egeler (ed.), Institut für Skandinavistik, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main, Germany

Open access at <https://archiv.ub.uni-marburg.de/ep/0004/issue/view/321>

Articles

Editorial: Fieldwork in Folkloristics and the Study of Religions: An Interdisciplinary Introduction, by Matthias Egeler, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17192/mjr.2024.25.8692>

Doing Fieldwork at Home: Enchanted Spots in Strandir Area, by Dagrún Ósk Jónsdóttir and Jón Jónsson, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17192/mjr.2024.25.8691>

When One's Life Becomes the Field: Assessing the Field in Collaborative Autoethnography, by Lotta Leiwo, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17192/mjr.2024.25.8693>

Sufi Devotional Aesthetics: Fieldwork in Contemporary Sufi Communities in the Balkans, by Sara Kuehn, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17192/mjr.2024.25.8694>

Who Am I and What Am I Doing Here? Learning to Take Yourself and Your Experiences Seriously, by Frog, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17192/mjr.2024.25.8695>

Spirit Possession and Exorcism in Tanzania: Reflections on Participation, Perception and Spirituality, by Katharina Wilkens and Anna Daniel Sanga, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17192/mjr.2024.25.8696>

Research on the Historical, Cultural and Religious Significance of a Religious Object in a Museum, by Susanne Rodemeier, DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.17192/mjr.2024.25.8697>

Pedestrian Research or Walking as Method, by Matthias Egeler, DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.17192/mjr.2024.25.8698>

Cycling as a Fieldwork Aid to Historical Interpretation, by Clive Tolley, DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.17192/mjr.2024.25.8699>

Things to Remember When Interviewing Modern Pagans: The Inside Perspective, by Kestrel, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17192/mjr.2024.25.8700>

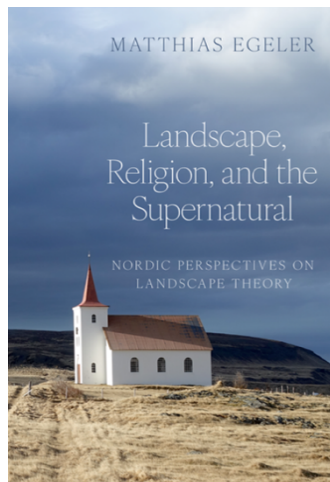
New Book

Landscape, Religion, and the Supernatural *Nordic Perspectives on Landscape Theory*

**Matthias Egeler (ed.), Institut für Skandinavistik, Goethe-Universität
Frankfurt am Main, Germany**

New York: Oxford University Press, 2024, 352 pages

Open access at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780197747360.001.0001>



Landscape, Religion, and the Supernatural presents a summa of current and classic theorizing on religion and the supernatural in relationship to the land and develops this theorizing further by confronting it with a rich set of folkloristic and historical data. Focusing on the themes of “time and memory,” “repeating patterns,” “identity formation,” “morality,” “labor,” “playfulness and adventure,” “power and subversion,” “sound,” “emotions,” “coping with contingency,” “home and unhomeliness,” and “nature and environment,” the book engages with a broad range of theoretical concepts and approaches from the

interdisciplinary field of landscape theory and the study of religions. It brings this theorizing into dialogue with the rich culture of local storytelling and landscape-related traditional beliefs of the Strandir district of the Icelandic Westfjords. In this rural region, landscape-related traditions have been collected since the early nineteenth century and continue to be important to this day. Confronting this rich heritage with the insights of landscape theory both in and beyond the study of religions allows important new contributions to theorizing landscape and religion, especially when it comes to considering the perspectives on landscape held by rural populations rather than the urban upper classes that have stood in the focus of research to date. The example of the Icelandic Westfjords shows the extreme richness of religious and supernatural approaches to the landscape that can be developed in rural communities, and how they are significantly and characteristically different from the urban perspectives of literature and the arts.

Singer's Voice Hidden in the Formula: "The same, but different" in Beowulf and Serbian Epic Songs

Danijela Lekić, Institute for Literature and Arts

Folkloristics, Belgrade: Institute for Literature and Arts, 2025, 308 pages

The study represents the revised version of the author's dissertation. As an English literature scholar and folklorist, the author offers a unique and valuable perspective on fundamental questions concerning epic poetry. This comparative analysis of the Old English poem *Beowulf* and Serbian epic songs is framed within a systematic, academically grounded and clearly defined methodology, implying meticulous and substantial research. Drawing on oral-formulaic theory (whose origins lie in the comparative study of South Slavic and predominantly Ancient Greek epics) and on the frameworks proposed by John Miles Foley (whose concept of the formula extends beyond that of Milman Parry and Albert Lord), the author explores different levels of formulaity. These levels, considered from the narrowest to the broadest units, are: word and phrase level, half-verse and verse level, theme level, and story-pattern level. Each is analysed in a separate chapter, preceded by an introduction and followed by a conclusion.

Through a progressive examination of juxtaposed verses, the author deduces that the origins of *Beowulf* can indeed be found in oral literature. However, the conclusions provided by this study go beyond the boundaries of national literary studies, offering insights into the very essence of epic poetry, understood by the author as a layered and complex phenomenon. Every argument made in the book is



supported by numerous examples (presented visually and, in places, through statistical analysis) and by indispensable references.

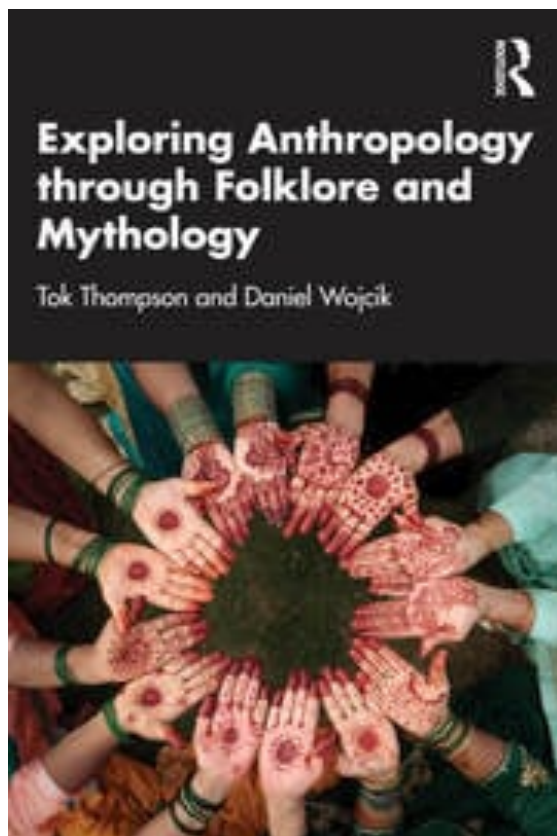
It is important to note that the author studied *Beowulf* in Old English and also translated it into Serbian (drawing on the only existing Serbian translation as well as relevant modern English editions). When published, this translation will be a significant contribution to Anglo-American studies in Serbia, and the forthcoming English translation of this study has the potential to become a valuable source in orality studies.

New Book

Exploring Anthropology through Folklore and Mythology

Tok Thompson, University of Southern California, and Daniel Wojcik, University of Oregon

London and New York: Routledge, 2025. 234 pages. [CLICK HERE](#)



Exploring Anthropology through Folklore and Mythology is a comprehensive textbook which examines how people around the world express themselves culturally, and how these practices provide a window into the diversity of human culture.

Using a genre-based approach, this book takes a globalized perspective and promotes intercultural exchange and understanding. It presents students with in-depth examples of a wide range of traditions as well as an understanding of how such traditions are studied. In explicating key concepts and applying these to specific practices and performances, we introduce students to the fundamentals in the study of human culture and creativity. Topics include mythology, folktales, legends, dance, music, trance states, magic, the spirit world, internet

folklore, festivals, street art, subcultural style, rituals, celebrations, body art, and tattoo traditions.

Exploring Anthropology through Folklore and Mythology offers a fascinating display of global cultural diversity and is an essential, new textbook for students making their first steps into the fields of folklore, mythology, anthropology, and cultural studies.

New Book

Hunger, but Serbian? A Small Lexicon from Folklore to Transhumanism

Lidija Delić, Institute for Literature and Arts

Folkloristics, Novi Sad: Akademska knjiga, 2025, 306 pages

ISBN 978-86-6263-582-2



Hunger, but Serbian? A Small Lexicon from Folklore to Transhumanism, by Lidija Delić, represents a methodologically intricate convergence of folkloristics and cultural studies, enriched by the conceptual frameworks of cognitive linguistics and contemporary media theory. The work begins with the ostensibly simple notion of “hunger”, which, within the Serbian collective imagination, signifies not merely a physiological deprivation but also embodies profound layers of existential yearning, cultural bereavement, and spiritual pursuit. In this context, “hunger” functions as a multidimensional metaphor, weaving together an array of thematic registers, from traditional folkloric motifs to digital culture

and extending into the conceptual terrain of transhumanist discourse.

Structured as a lexicon, the volume comprises a series of interrelated studies and analyses, each devoted to central motifs such as hunger, death, sacrifice, and the miraculous. This lexicographical approach provides both methodological flexibility and epistemic accessibility, rendering the work relevant to a broad spectrum of readers, from undergraduate and postgraduate students to established researchers and intellectually engaged members of the wider public. Delić’s investigation transcends the simple tracing of traditional forms into contemporary contexts; it examines the ways in which emergent technologies and contemporary ideological paradigms, particularly transhumanism, summon mythic structures, latent desires and culturally mediated anxieties.

The monograph demonstrates persuasively that traditional folkloric schemas have neither disappeared nor diminished in significance; rather, they have undergone

transformation, persisting and exerting subtle yet pervasive influence across popular culture, digital narratives and even scientific and technological imaginaries. The analyses collected here are notable for their interpretive breadth, the impressive comprehensiveness of the source materials engaged and the precision, ingenuity and analytical rigour underpinning each study.

Hunger, but Serbian? constitutes a pioneering endeavour in Serbian scholarship, seeking to synthesise the study of transhumanism and digital culture with the analytical sophistication of folkloristics. Its originality derives from its capacity to merge the insights of cultural tradition with avant-garde inquiry, all the while maintaining fidelity to rigorous scholarly discourse. Rather than offering definitive conclusions, the work stimulates ongoing reflection, critical dialogue and further research. For scholars engaged in cultural studies, folkloristics, or the philosophy of technology, it offers both inspiration and intellectual challenge, demanding a willingness to navigate and transcend disciplinary boundaries.

The author invites readers to reflect upon the fact that, even in an era dominated by digital culture, we continue to rely upon, recognise, and engage with traditional forms, and that these enduring structures shape our conceptualisations of self, otherness, temporality and the future. Ultimately, *Hunger, but Serbian?* reminds us that the “hungers” shaping human experience extend far beyond material deprivation; they encompass desires, symbols, anxieties, and archetypes, persisting and adapting within even the most contemporary modalities of communication, thereby bridging the historical and the digital, the mythic and the technological.

New Book

The Interface between the Oral Tradition and the Printed Page

The Uses of Folklore in the Bulgarian Periodicals of 1860s and 1870s

*Nikolai Vukov, Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with
Ethnographic Museum – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences*

Sofia: Gutenberg Publishing House, 2024, 393 pages



The book is the first comprehensive study on the publication of folklore materials in Bulgarian periodicals in the last decades before the end of the Ottoman rule in 1878. Drawing on abundant archival materials from the periodicals of the period, the book traces the first steps in collecting and documenting of folklore texts, their publication and distribution through printed forms of communication, and their interpretation in line with nation-building processes. The analysis shows how the interface between the oral tradition and the printed press was not only a point of crossing and interaction, but also a transition between two close but inherently different cultural systems. This transition took place in the context of enhanced social and cultural

dynamics, and itself catalysed changes towards a new type of relationship conditioned by the introduction of the printed press in Bulgarian lands in the mid-19th century.

Project

Field Research on the Oral Tradition of Southern and Southeastern Serbia

Smiljana Djordjevic

Project funded by Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Branch in Niš, 2018– (ongoing)

The long-term project *Field Research on the Oral Tradition of Southern and Southeastern Serbia* was initiated in 2018 under the auspices of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SASA), Branch in Niš, engaging researchers from several leading institutions, including the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Niš, the Institute for Balkan Studies of SASA, the Faculty of Philology of the University of Belgrade and the Institute for Literature and Art in Belgrade. Directed by Professor Danijela Popović Nikolić, PhD, the initiative arose from a clearly recognised need to document, archive and make accessible the oral traditions of a region that has historically lacked systematic field research.

The project's initial phase entailed a comprehensive survey of published academic and archival sources pertaining to the history and traditions of Southern and Southeastern Serbia, coupled with the design and refinement of a fieldwork questionnaire. Subsequent research has been conducted in 65 settlements, employing semi-structured interviews to capture a broad and nuanced spectrum of oral traditions and associated cultural practices. These encompass narrowly defined oral genres as well as broader manifestations of traditional culture, including calendrical



rituals, life-cycle customs, vernacular meteorology, folk medicine, everyday practices, and oral history. This methodology facilitates the preservation of living knowledge while simultaneously generating a detailed record of the current conditions and ongoing transformations affecting intangible cultural heritage in the region.

A central dimension of the project involves exploring innovative strategies for the digital presentation and long-term accessibility of the collected materials. The envisaged online platform is intended both as a robust research infrastructure to support future folkloristic and interdisciplinary studies and as an instrument for the promotion, transmission, and safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. In this endeavour, the project draws upon insights and experiences from the earlier initiative *The Oral Tradition of Zaplanje*, portions of which have already been made publicly accessible online: <https://stiutz.filfak.ni.ac.rs/>.

Doctoral Defence

Women's Body and Women's Health: Representations, Practices, and Narratives of Menstruation

*Mila Bankova, Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with
Ethnographic Museum*

Dissertation , Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 24 October 2025

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vihra Baeva (IEFEM – BAS)

Academic jury: Prof. Dr. Ana Luleva (IEFEM – BAS), Assoc. Prof. Dr. Valentina Ganeva-Raycheva (IEFEM – BAS), Prof. Sc.D. Margarita Karamihova (University of Veliko Tarnovo), Prof. D.Sc. (Phil.) Milena Kirova (Sofia University), Assoc. Prof. Dr. Violeta Kotseva (Sofia University).

The PhD thesis explores the historical transformations of cultural representations of menstruation in Bulgarian society, analysing how they contribute to the construction of womanhood – shaping women's self-perception, social roles, and position within the social structure, while also influencing their embodied menstrual cycle experiences. The study approaches menstruation not as an isolated biological fact of the female body but as a culturally constructed stage on which power relations, symbolic meanings, and identity models are enacted, and where the biological process is continually reinterpreted and invested with new meanings.

The research on perceptions and narratives of menstruation spans from antiquity to the present, drawing on a wide range of sources: from biblical and theological texts, through folklore and ethnographic materials, to medical and historical studies, health policies and publications, as well as personal narratives and interviews. The cultural history of menstruation in Bulgaria is traced across six chapters, beginning with Christian theological notions that define menstrual blood as impure and dangerous, and folkloric understandings that regard it as important and sacred. It then follows the transformations brought by the establishment of the national state, modernisation, and the rise of medicine and gynaecology, followed by the socialist state's regulation of women's bodies and hygiene, and the subsequent reshaping of the menstruating body through these modernising processes. Finally, it foregrounds women's personal narratives, showing how lived experiences both

reflect and resist dominant cultural, medical, and political discourses surrounding menstruation.

The research contributes to understanding how menstruation functions as a cultural barometer, revealing the shifts in the ways gender identity is constructed and deconstructed. Ideas about menstruation also act as a mirror reflecting historical transformations in the conceptualisation of the body, intimacy, and its relation to the collective. Interpretations of this physiological process are negotiated at the intersection of religious, folkloric, scientific, political, economic, commercial, and feminist discourses. At the same time, representations and perceptions of the menstrual cycle are shaped through the interaction between male and female voices in society, each asserting its own interpretation of the significance that this bodily process carries. Depending on the dominant framework, the woman is either marginalised or empowered, according to who holds the power to define the meaning of her body and its bleeding. The text not only uncovers how knowledge about the female body and health is institutionalised, but also how mechanisms of resistance, rewriting, and affirmation of new forms of bodily and social identity operate. An anthropological perspective on menstruation thus offers insights into how societies manage the forces of life, sexuality, and reproduction. Ultimately, the study illuminates the deep and multilayered interconnection between the biological body and culture, showing how an intimate process like menstruation is entangled in a dense web of power relations, social regulation strategies, institutional decisions, and ideological notions that either establish or challenge the boundaries between the intimate and the public.

New Members (accepted June 2025):

Pallabi Borah, Dept. of Folklore Studies, Gauhati University, Guwahati, Assam, India

Interests: Open and recreational spaces, place name legends

Contact: pallabiborah@gauhati.ac.in



David Rotman, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Interests: Jewish folk narratives, spanning from late antiquity to modern times, the cults of Rachel the Matriarch in contemporary Israel and the ethnographic work of Hayim Hazaz.

Contact: david.rotman@mail.huji.ac.il



Niger Sultana, PhD candidate, Dept. of Folklore and Ethnomusicology, Indiana University Bloomington

Interests: South Asian Shia women's memory-making in diaspora, rituals, memory-making, protest lore, digital folklore and South Asian Diaspora, including Muharram ritual, material culture, intangible cultural heritage, heritage and environment, cultural performance, and everyday resistance

Contact: nisultan@iu.edu



New Members (accepted September 2025):

Adegboye Adeyanju, University of Abuja-Nigeria

Interests: Linguistics, genre studies, language rights and policy, sustainability

Contact: adegboye.adeyanju@uniabuja.edu.ng



Ingibjörg Águstsdóttir

Interests: Contemporary women's historical fiction and rewritings of women's history; representations of the Arctic in Scottish literature from the nineteenth century to the present; Scottish women travellers in Iceland in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; the mythmaking of Arctic exploration; the significance of polar bears and their use in literature; rewritings of Greek myth.

Contact: ingibjoa@hi.is



Dejan Ajdačić, University of Gdańsk

Interests: The folklore of the Slavs, ethnolinguistics, folk demonology, the relationship between Slavic folklore and literary science fiction and speculative fiction

Contact: dejajd@gmail.com



Tatiana Argounova-Low, University of Aberdeen

Interests: From mobility and roads to climate change and thawing permafrost, issues of indigeneity, traditional material culture, art and the ownership of ancestral heritage.

Contact: t.argounova-low@abdn.ac.uk



Inkeri Aula, Aalto University, Finland

Interests: Environmental relationships, cultural imagination, relational onto-epistemology, Afro-Brazilian heritage, forest myths, anthropology of the senses, walking ethnography, artist collaboration, and creativity and wellbeing.

Contact: inkeri.aula@aalto.fi



Sowparnika Balaswaminathan, Concordia University, Montreal

Interests: The politics of heritage under conditions of religious nationalism; techniques of self-making in artisanal communities; how community and folk narratives are employed in the creating historical and cosmological belonging, especially with respect to land, labour, and earthly resources.

Contact: sowparnika.nathan@concordia.ca

Lodewyk Barkhuizen, University of Tartu

Interests: How belief narratives are used by South African traditional healers to construct and contest vernacular forms of knowledge; vernacular expressions of religion, knowledge, aesthetics, and didactics, and in particular the overlap and interplay between these domains.

Contact: lodewykmb@gmail.com



Carlos Batista, Columbia University

Interests: The construction of the touristic Mayan Train in Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula; the politics of Indigeneity in Mexico, and the capture and commodification of Indigeneity.

Contact: carlos.arroyo@columbia.edu



Nataliya Bezborodova, University of Alberta

Interests: Interdisciplinary approaches including anthropology, ethnography, and cultural and religious studies; the meaning of space and place in migrations, and the role of religion in public space and in the circumstances of society in turmoil.

Contact: bezborod@alberta.ca



Judit Farkas, University of Pécs, Hungary

Interests: Rural eco-communities, ecovillages, permaculture, environmental humanities, and new religious movements, with a focus on the Hare Krishna movement and Hinduism in Hungary.

Contact: farkas.judit@pte.hu



Kelly Fitzgerald, University College Dublin

Interests: The intellectual history and development of Irish folkloristics and archives, along with other aspects of folklore studies and oral history: the collecting of oral histories in the development phase of Dublin's Tenement Museum, and the collection of oral history initiatives in social housing communities in Dublin.

Contact: kelly.fitzgerald@ucd.ie



Jessica Hampton, University of Liverpool

Interests: Language, land, and heritage, with a focus on ecolinguistics, folk narrative, and marginalised voices; storytelling, placemaking, and ecological linguistics; oral traditions, environmental histories, and community memory, particularly in northern Italy.

Contact: jhampton@liverpool.ac.uk



Snjólaug Guðrún Jóhannesdóttir, University of Iceland

Interests: Urban environment and how people form affective and narrative relationships with places; place attachment through personal stories, memories, emotions, and sensory experience; memory, materiality, and folk narrative in contemporary urban contexts

Contact: sgj@hi.is



Rakel Jónsdóttir, independent researcher, Iceland

Interests: Vernacular practices, everyday culture and the interpretation of the everyday; food culture; commensality; new materialism and more than human perspective; emotional practices; trash; consumerism and food waste.

Contact: raj11@hi.is



Áki Guðni Karlsson, University of Iceland

Interests: UNSECO's attempts to define folklore as intellectual property; cultural property; material culture; maritime folklore; heritage and cultural tourism; human-microbial interaction in daily life (Symbiosis); and encounters with places of the past in the urban terrain.

Contact: akigka@gmail.com



Audun Kjus, Norwegian Museum of Cultural History

Interests: Historical topics and contemporary studies, various kinds of narrative analysis; the connection between learned and vernacular expressions: transitions and overlaps between sociocultural strata; the cultural history of death, interactions between humans and supernatural beings, and studies of play and games.

Contact: audun.kjus@norskfolkemuseum.no



Katharina Lange, Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin

Interests: The Middle East, notably Syria and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq; oral history and social change, and in particular: women's and rural perspectives, agricultural knowledge and practices, the effects of war and violence on everyday life, human-environment relations.

Contact: katharina.lange@zmo.de



Lotta Leiwo, University of Helsinki

Interests: Settler colonial and nature narratives within the context of Finnish North American women and children in the North American Labor movement in the early 20th century; the intersections between nature narratives, labour history, and settler colonialism.

Contact: lotta.leiwo@helsinki.fi



Photo: Veikko Somerpuro

Christina A. Lord, University of North Carolina, Wilmington

Interests: Nonhumans in literary and visual storytelling; transnational and transmedial processes of circulation, recycling, and the adaptation of science fiction imagery and narratives, such as alien/UFO encounters and Indigenous cosmologies.

Contact: lordc@uncw.edu



Fionnán MacGabhann, University College, Cork

Interests: The combination of ethnographic fieldwork and archival study with comparative and performance-based approaches; Irish-speaking communities in the west of Ireland; the expressive culture and worldview of the contemporary *seanchaí*—vernacular historian and storyteller—in such communities; synchronic and diachronic approaches to folk



narrative, focusing on the Irish oral tradition, while maintaining a comparative outlook across space, time, and media.

Contact: fmacgabhann@ucc.ie

Jana Maneva-Chuposka, "Marko Cepenov" Institute of Folklore, Skopje, North Macedonia

Interests: The creation and production of textile fabrics; Macedonian Folk Costumes, with a Special Focus on the Miyak (Miyak people – an ethnographic group from western North Macedonia, known for their traditional customs, costumes, and cultural heritage); interdisciplinary approaches in scientific research and professional-artistic projects and exhibitions.



Contact: maneva5@yahoo.com

Fanny Alice Marchaisse, Northwestern University, Chicago

Interests: How 17th-century French fairy tales authored by women transform cultural ideals around gender, power, and embodiment; fairy and folkloric narratives; early modern gender and sexuality; and the intersections of queer theory and literary history.



Contact: fannymarchaisse2023@u.northwestern.edu

Willow Mullins, University of Edinburgh

Interests: Relationships between the local, vernacular, and traditional and the global particularly in relation to foodways, seasons, and material culture.



Contact: willow.mullins@ed.ac.uk

Helen Nohgwe Yogo, Leibniz University, Hannover

Interests: Research focused on ethnography, health, migration, consultancy, policy and folklore; women's mental health within the Cameroon Development Corporation's Rubber Plantations in Fako Division, Southwest Region Cameroon: how social and structural conditions impact female workers' well-being; indigenous oral traditions in Northwest Cameroon; folk narrative, ethnographic methods, cultural identity, gender and health (reproductive & mental health), migration, policy and sacred ecology.

Contact: helenpangout@gmail.com



Mircea Paduraru, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of IASI

Interests: The ethnology of religion, material religion, demonology, sexual folklore, relics and relic memorates, the history of ethnology, ethnology and power, and related objects.

Contact: mircea.paduraru@uaic.ro



Annapurna Devi Pandey, University of California, Santa Cruz

Interests: Aging in India and the Indian Diaspora; South Asian religion; and the challenges, struggles, and celebrations of immigrant women in the Diaspora; Indian women's religiosity, agency, entrepreneurship, and empowerment in India and the Indian Diaspora.

Contact: adpandey@ucsc.edu



Oleksander Pankieiev, University of Alberta

Interests: The history of Steppe (Southern) Ukraine, Ukrainian Canadian diaspora studies, ethnography, and digital folklore; narratives of the Russo-Ukrainian War; personal narratives of



Ukrainian families who resettled in Alberta, Canada following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Contact: pankieie@ualberta.ca

Shantanu Parashar, Gauhati University, Assam

Interests: Socio-cultural History; performance; oral tradition, ethnography, research methodology.

Contact: shantanu00349@gmail.com



Nicola Perencin, University of Padua

Interests: Overlaps between international folktales and classical Greek and Latin literature, especially in Romania.

Contact: nicola.perencin@unipd.it



Valentina Punzi, ERC-funded project: PaganTibet

Interests: The narratological and performative study of Tibetan-script ritual manuscripts and the use of vernacular literacy in the Sino-Tibetan borderlands, with a particular focus on the Baima and the Eastern Minyag communities.

Contact: valentina.punzi@gmail.com



Liina Saarlo, Estonian Literary Museum

Interests: Runosongs, formulaic expressions, and the typology of runosongs; the history of folklore collection, publication, and research; the history of Estonian folkloristics, especially the reception of runosongs and the adaptation of folklorists to Soviet academic policy during the early decades of Sovietization; narratives that provide context for the runosong tradition, its representations, the personality of singers, and the interactions between singers and folklorists.

Contact: liina.saarlo@folklore.ee



Tomaž Simetinger, University of Ljubjana

Interests: Music and dance folklore; masks; belief narratives and certain areas of mythology.

Contact: tomaz.simetinger@ff.uni-lj.si



Victoria Somoff, Dartmouth College, Hanover

Interests: Oral poetics, orality and literacy, genre theory, folk narrative, folklore adaptations, narrative and consciousness, the theory and history of the novel, Ukrainian language and culture; cumulative folktales, fairy tales, and tongue twisters, literary and cinematic adaptations of folklore and literary narrative, narrative theory and the European novel tradition.

Contact: victoria.somoff@dartmouth.edu



Haley Stevens, "Dunărea de Jos" University of Galați, Romania

Interests: Jewish and Eastern European folklore, fiction writing, climate narratives, and creative pedagogy.

Contact: haley.stevens@fulbrightmail.org



Benjamin Storsved, Indiana University

Interests: The folklore of Central Asia and Siberia, and specifically that among Kyrgyz people and other Turkic speaking communities; all forms of oral narrative; epic poetry and associated genres; textualized folk narrative materials housed in archives; epic traditions around the world, cultural exchanges among communities in the Eurasian steppes and tundra, and the intellectual history of folk narrative in academic and political thought.

Contact: bejstor@iu.edu



Charlotte Trinquet du Lys, University of Central Florida

Interests: The politics of heritage, and particularly the “folkloresque”; the intersection of post-digital narrative cultures, oral traditions, folklore and popular media cultures; everyday storytelling concerning ecology, climate and consumption.

Contact: charlotte.trinquetdulys@ucf.edu



Manuel Trummer, Ludwig Maximilians-Universität, Munich

Interests: The politics of heritage, and particularly the “folkloresque”; the intersection of post-digital narrative cultures, oral traditions, folklore and popular media cultures; everyday storytelling concerning ecology, climate and consumption.

Contact: trummermanuel@aol.com



Juliane Wuensch, Skidmore College, New York

Interests: Nineteenth century German women writers, fairy tales written by women, socialist utopias, and language pedagogy.

Contact: jwuensch@skidmore.edu



Sang-Keun Yoo, Marist University, New York

Interests: Science fiction studies, Asian American literature, and Korean popular culture.

Contact: sangkeun.yoo@marist.edu



Aixin Zhang, Shanghai Theatre Academy

Interests: How totemic narratives shape cultural identity, religious practices, and contemporary artistic expressions across diverse societies; totemic narratives in Buddhist visual culture, Mayan mythology, and contemporary art; cross-cultural analysis of totemic folk narratives, the transformation of oral traditions



into visual art; sacred animal stories in religious contexts; the revival of indigenous narrative traditions in contemporary artistic practices; the transformation from oral traditions to visual narratives.

Contact: aixin.zhang.art@outlook.com

New Members (accepted November 2025):

Priyanka Bharti, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India



Interests: The return of the wild, animal-human relations (especially wolves, and their negative connotations in folklore), environmental justice, ecological thinking, cultural narratives, myths and beliefs around nature, feminist interpretations of fairy tales, stories and beliefs which shape human minds and behaviour towards non-humans.

Contact: priyanka06jnu@gmail.com

Ainjel Stephens, Memorial University, Newfoundland, Canada



Interests: The intersection of Internet culture, queer theory, and how audiences respond to fairy tales. Ainjel is particularly interested in queer responses to fairy tales and continuing the scholarly dialogue on fairy tales as transgressive stories.

Contact: alstephens@mun.ca

Bharat Sharma, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India



Interests: The intersection of folklore, ecocriticism, and ecological ethics, with a particular focus on the genre of fairy tales. Eastern European folklore, especially Lithuanian traditions.

Contact: bharatsharma975@gmail.com

Dubhán Ó Longáin, Ulster University, Northern Ireland

Interests: The Ossianic lays, and their development, both in terms of content and language in the Modern Irish period; how folkloric tales and historical figures are referenced in modern and contemporary literature; how original composers may have created *Fiannaíocht* material and how subsequent performers responded to, and adapted, the material.

Contact: dubhanolongain@gmail.com



Danile Wojcik, University of Oregon, USA

Interests: Apocalyptic belief, visionary culture, narrative and belief, legends and memorates, mythology, anthropology, art and trauma, subcultures, alternative spiritualities, eschatology, UFOs, and memorialisation.

Contact: dwojcik@uoregon.edu



Neill Martin, University of Edinburgh, Scotland, UK

Interests: Language and ritual, ballads, traditional drama and supernatural belief.

Contact: neill.martin@ed.ac.uk



John Watson, University of Glasgow, Scotland, UK

Interests: Literary and folk ecologies of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Scotland.

Contact: jsw19692@icloud.com



New Members (accepted December 2025):

Kirsten Møllegaard, University of Hawaii

Interests: The intersectionality of places, people, and stories past and present. Specifically, narratives that engage with the effects of colonialism, migration, and trauma in folk narrative, literature, and popular culture

Contact: mollegaa@hawaii.edu



Georgios Tserpes, Academy of Athens, Greece

Interests: Short folklore genres and especially proverbs; paremiology in a comparative cross-cultural and cross-genre perspective.

Contact: gtserpes@academyofathens.gr



Kasi Eswarappa, Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, India

Interests: Anthropology and the interdisciplinary areas of Development Studies, Area Studies, Tribal Studies, Tribal Development and Politics, Political Sociology, Women leadership and Governance, Marginality and Politics, NGOs, Civil Society, and South Asia.

Contact: kasie@igntu.ac.in



Teresa Mateus, California Institute of Integral Studies, USA

Interests: Oral wisdoms, folklore, mythologies and More-than-human narratives from the Andean territories of South America and the global Andean diaspora towards building Indigenous



Futurism and Kinship of human and more-than-human kin across the Andean territories and beyond.

Contact: tmateus@mymail.ciis.edu

*Faith Ben-Daniels, Akenten Appiah-Menka University
of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development,
Ghana*



Interests: Storytelling cultures around the world, migration literature and speculative fiction; indigenous Ghanaian storytelling and its influence on the Ghanaian theatre; comparative analysis of supernatural beings in folk narrative cultures from West Africa and Europe.

Contact: fbdaniels@aamusted.edu.gh

ISFNR Regional Contacts

The ISFNR regional contacts act as key links between the ISFNR and folklorists in their respective countries or regions. They help share information both ways: updating local colleagues about ISFNR activities, encouraging contributions to the ISFNR Newsletter, and supporting young folklorists who may be interested in joining the Society. They also serve as first points of contact for early-career researchers seeking guidance or information about folkloristics in their region.

The current list of regional contacts can be found below:

EUROPE

- BELGIUM:** Juan Javier Rivera Andia jjriveraandia@gmail.com
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Barbara Hillers bhillers@iu.edu

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BRAZIL: Luciana Hartmann luhartm71@gmail.com

MEXICO: Mercedes Zavala mercedes.zavala@colsan.edu.mx

In Memoriam: Vilmos Voigt (17.01.1940–8.06.2025)

By Kincső Verebélyi

Born on 17 January 1940 in Szeged (Hungary), Vilmos Voigt was a folklorist, anthropologist, comparative philologist, and semiotician with a strong interest in theory. He completed his primary and secondary schooling in Budapest and earned his university degree with honours in Hungarian philology and ethnography (1963) at Eötvös Loránd University (Budapest).

He received his *Dr. phil. sub auspiciis* in folklore at the same university. He later obtained the degrees of *Cand. Sc. (litt.)* and *Dr. Sc. (etn.)* from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and became *Prof. Dr. habil.* in 1995 at Eötvös Loránd University.

From 1963 onward, he worked at the Chair of Folklore at Eötvös Loránd University, becoming chair in 1979 and later serving as full professor. He was also Director of the Institute of Ethnography at the same university. He was a member, board member, or honorary member of numerous Hungarian and international scholarly associations, committees, editorial boards of journals, and book series, and served as a UNESCO expert.

His scholarly activities extended to Hungarology; Finno-Ugric, Scandinavian, and Baltic studies; comparative religion (with special emphasis on shamanism); as well as the theory and history of culture. He also engaged deeply with theoretical problems of folkloristics and with the history of folk-artistic genres, including fairy tales, legends, and proverbs. He published extensively on Finnish folklore and Scandinavian legends. He introduced semiotic studies in Hungary and devoted considerable attention to folklorism. In his versatility, he stood alongside earlier professors such as Lutz Röhrich and Leander Petzoldt.





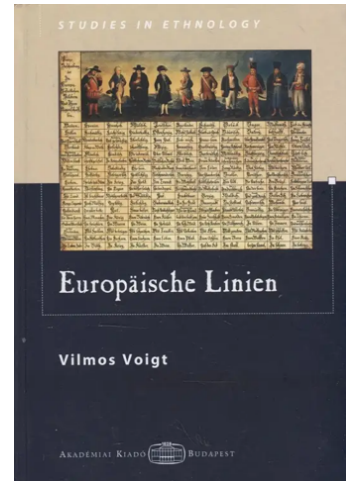
Vilmos Voigt. Photo courtesy of Egy.hu (Gáspár Kinga)

He served as Vice President of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society and Vice President of the International Association of Hungarian Studies. He was the founding President of the Hungarian Association for Semiotic Studies and founding Chairman of the International Board of the European Centre for Traditional Cultures (Budapest). He was also a member of the International Committee of Finno-Ugric Congresses (ICFUC), a board member of the Folklore Fellows, and a board member of the International Association for Semiotic Studies.

His honours include the Higher Education Award, the Gyula Ortutay Prize and the István Györfly Prize (both awarded by the Hungarian Ethnographic Society), the Sándor Scheiber Prize for promoting Jewish studies in Hungary, and the György Lukács Prize for studies in the aesthetics of folklore. He also received the Medal of the Kalevala Society (Helsinki), was made an Honorary Member of the Finnish Semiotic Society and the Porthan Society, and was awarded the title of Knight of the Order of the Finnish Lion.

He published approximately 30 books and around 2,500 papers or essays in various languages and countries. His fieldwork and research took him to numerous countries in Europe, Africa, America, and Asia. He was a visiting lecturer in many countries and visiting professor at several universities, including Helsinki, Turku, Tartu, Berkeley, Nashville, London, Nitra, Novi Sad, Sofia, Marburg, Hamburg,

Berlin, Innsbruck, and Cluj/Napoca. He was editor and author of several university textbooks and handbooks in Hungary. For many years, he served as the Hungarian member of the editorial team of the *Internationale Volkskundliche Bibliographie*. He was the founder and director of the PhD program “Hungarian and Comparative Folklore” at Eötvös Loránd University, and later Director of its PhD programs in ethnography and folklore.



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**ISFNR Committee on
Charms, Charmers and
Charming ([ChChCh](#))
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