



Société Internationale d'Ethnologie et de Folklore

The Ritual Year Working Group

An inaugural meeting proposing the establishment of a SIEF working group on “The Ritual Year” was held at the Department of Celtic and Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh, on 11 July 2003. The meeting was convened by Emily Lyle who had previously prepared a proposal and approached the SIEF President, Regina Bendix. Based on the general topic of ritual activities, customs and festive celebrations throughout the yearly calendric cycle, The Ritual Year Working Group was officially established on 29 April 2004, during the 8th Congress of the International Society of Ethnology and Folklore (SIEF), in Marseille.

Since, the working group has organised fifteen conferences and nineteen panels; it has published twelve volumes of The Ritual Year Working Group's Yearbook series, as well as various other volumes reuniting the WG's panel papers; in October 2020 the working group started The Ritual Year Seasonal Webinars series.

Email: ritualyear@siefhome.org

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Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/148137881914062

Conferences of The Ritual Year WG

20–24 March 2005, First Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), Department of Maltese, University of Malta, Junior College, Msida, Malta.

7–11 June 2006, Second Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), *The Ritual Year and Ritual Diversity*, Institute for Dialectology, Onomastics and Folklore Research, Gothenburg, Sweden.

- 25–29 May 2007, Third Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), *Ritual Year and History*, National Institute of Folk Culture, Strážnice, Czech Republic.
- 22–26 June 2008, Fourth Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), *Ritual Year and Gender*, Folklore and Ethnology Department, University College Cork, Ireland.
- 2–6 July 2009, Fifth Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), *The Power of the Mask*, Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas, Lithuania.
- 4–7 June 2010, Sixth Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), *The Inner and the Outer*, Estonian Literary Museum, Folklore Archive, Tallinn, Estonia.
- 10–13 November 2011, Seventh Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), *Performer, Performance, Researcher. Co-Designing Heritage, Co-Designing Performance*, Institute of Slovenian Ethnology Scientific Research Centre, Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Ljubljana, Slovenia.
- 26–29 June 2012, Eight Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), *Migrations*, Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, and “Paisii Hilendarski” University of Plovdiv, Plovdiv, Bulgaria.
- 14–16 March 2013, Ninth Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), *Politics, Feasts, Festivals*, Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology of the University of Szeged, “Bálint Sándor” Institute for the Study of Religion, Szeged, Hungary.
- 25–28 September 2014, Tenth Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), *Magic in Rituals and Rituals in Magic*, Institute for History and European Ethnology, University of Innsbruck, Innsbruck, Austria.
- 4–7 June 2015, Eleventh Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), *Traditions and Transformation*, Kazan Federal University, Kazan (Volga Region), Russia.
- 8–12 January 2016, Twelfth Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), *Regulating customs*, Elphinstone Institute, University of Aberdeen, Findhorn, Scotland.
- 7–9 November 2018, Thirteenth Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), *City Rituals*, Institute of Sociology, Romanian Academy, Bucharest, Romania.
- 1–4 June 2022, Fourteenth Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), *Commerce and Traditions*, National Library of Latvia, Riga, Latvia.
- 11–13 December 2024, Fifteenth Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), *Food, Feasts, Festivities & Folklore*, University of the Philippines Diliman, Manila, Philippines.

The Ritual Year WG panels

- 16–20 June 2008, 9th SIEF Congress, *Liberating the Ethnological Imagination*, Derry, Northern Ireland. The Ritual Year WG panels: *The Ritual Year and Folk Religion I*, *The Ritual Year and Folk Religion II* and *Masks and Mumming in the Nordic Area*.

- 17–21 April 2011, 10th SIEF Congress, *People Make Places – ways of feeling the world*, Lisbon, Portugal. The Ritual Year WG panels: P204 *Ritual places through the ritual year (I)* (<https://nomadit.co.uk/conference/10#740>), convenors Laurent Fournier and Irina Sedakova; P230 *Ritual places through the ritual year (II)* (<https://nomadit.co.uk/conference/10#903>), convenors Laurent Fournier and Irina Sedakova.
- 30 June – 4 July 2013, 11th SIEF Congress, *Circulation*, Tartu, Estonia. The Ritual Year WG panels: The Ritual Year WG panel: P10 *Differentiation of the ritual year(s) through time and space: selectivity and its reasons* (<https://nomadit.co.uk/conference/21#1856>), convenors Laurent Fournier and Irina Sedakova.
- 21–25 June 2015, 12th SIEF Congress, *Utopias, Realities, Heritages. Ethnographies for the 21st century*, Zagreb, Croatia. The Ritual Year WG panels: Heri013 *Folk costume in the ritual year and beyond: heritage, identity marker & symbolic object* (<https://nomadit.co.uk/conference/38#3462>), convenors Irina Sedakova and Nina Vlaskina; Reli005 *The transformation of traditional rituals: imposed change or natural evolution?* (<https://nomadit.co.uk/conference/38#3409>), convenor Irina Stahl.
- 26–30 March 2017, 13th SIEF Congress, *Ways of Dwelling: Crisis – Craft – Creativity*, Göttingen, Germany. The Ritual Year WG panels: Sui06 *Statics vs. dynamics, nature vs. culture in the dwelling-connected practices of the ritual year* (<https://nomadit.co.uk/conference/48#4996>), convenors Nina Vlaskina and Irina Sedakova; Urba07 *Dwelling in the festive city* (<https://nomadit.co.uk/conference/48#4916>), convenors Tobias Boos and Fabio Mugnaini.
- 14–17 April 2019, 14th SIEF Congress, *Track changes: Reflecting on a transforming world*, Santiago de Compostela, Spain. The Ritual Year WG panel: *Tracking the ritual year on the move in different cultural settings and systems of values* (<https://www.siefhome.org/congresses/sief2019/panels.shtml#7122>), convenors Irina Sedakova and Laurent Fournier.
- 19–24 June 2021, 15th SIEF Congress, *Breaking the rules? Power, participation, transgression*, Helsinki, Finland (online). The Ritual Year WG panels and roundtable: Perf01a,b *Calendric rituals: a time to break the rules(I and II)* (<https://www.siefhome.org/congresses/sief2021/panels#9568>, <https://www.siefhome.org/congresses/sief2021/panels#10595>), convenors Irina Sedakova and Laurent Fournier; Perf03a,b,c *Old rituals, changing environments, new rules (I and II panels; III roundtable)* (<https://www.siefhome.org/congresses/sief2021/panels#9591>, <https://www.siefhome.org/congresses/sief2021/panels#10633>, <https://www.siefhome.org/congresses/sief2021/panels#10634>), convenors Nina Vlaskina and Irina Stahl.
- 27–28 October 2022, 10th International Conference *Synergies in Communication* (SiC2022), Bucharest, Romania (online). The Ritual Year WG panel: Panel5 *Synergies in rituals and folklore texts* (https://sic.ase.ro/wp-content/uploads/SiC2022_Final-Conference-Program_28-oct_FINAL.pdf), chairs Irina Sedakova and Irina Stahl.
- 7–10 June 2023, 16th SIEF Congress, *Living Uncertainty*, Brno, Czech Republic. The Ritual Year WG panels: Perf01 *Uncertainty, improvisation and constancy in the ritual year*

(<https://www.siefhome.org/congresses/sief2023/programme#12680>), convenors Laurent Fournier and Irina Sedakova; Reli06 *Rituals of faith and religion during uncertain times* (<https://www.siefhome.org/congresses/sief2023/programme#12828>), convenors Irina Stahl, Maria Bernadette L. Abrera and Jesus Federico Hernandez.

3–6 June 2025, 17th SIEF congress, *Unwriting*, Aberdeen, Scotland. The Ritual Year WG panels: Perf03 *Writing and Unwriting Rituals* (<https://www.siefhome.org/congresses/sief2025/programme#16173>), convenors Jesus Federico Hernandez and Mary Josefti Nito; Perf05 *Un-writing and reshaping the ord rural ritual year in the new urban setting* (<https://www.siefhome.org/congresses/sief2025/programme#16205>), convenors Irina Sedakova and Irina Stahl.

The Ritual Year Working Group's Yearbook series

ISSN 2228–1347

Mifsud-Chircop, George (ed.). *The Ritual Year 1: Proceedings of the First International Conference of the SIEF Working Group on The Ritual Year, Malta, 20–24 March 2005*. San Gwann, Malta: Publishing Enterprises Group, 2006, 540 p.

Midholm, Lina and Nordström, Annika (eds.). *The Ritual Year 2: The Ritual Year and Ritual Diversity* [Proceedings of the Second Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), Gothenburg, Sweden, 7–11 June 2006]. Gothenburg: Institutet för språk och folkminnen, 2007, 377 p.

Sedakova, Irina (ed.). *The Ritual Year 3: The Ritual Year and History* [Proceedings of the Third Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), Strážnice, Czech Republic, 25–29 May 2007]. Strážnice: Národní ústav lidové kultury, 2008, 208 p.

Butler, Jenny (ed.). *The Ritual Year 4: The Ritual Year and Gender* [Proceedings of the Fourth Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), Cork, Ireland, 22–26 June 2008]. Edinburgh: Traditional Cosmology Society (a joint publication with Cosmos 25), 2011, 251 p.

Vaičekas, Arūnas (ed.). *The Ritual Year 5: The Power of the Mask* [Proceedings of the Fifth Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), Kaunas, Lithuania, 2–6 July 2007]. Kaunas: Vitautas Magnus University, 2013, 150 p.

Kõiva, Mare (ed.). *The Ritual Year 6: The Inner and the Outer* [Proceedings of the Sixth Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), Tallinn, Estonia, 4–7 June 2010]. Tartu: ELM Scholarly Press, 2011, 400 p.

Fikfak, Jurij and Fournier, Laurent Sébastien (eds.). *The Ritual Year 7: The Interplay of Performances, Performers, Researchers, and Heritages* [Proceedings of the Seventh Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), Ljubljana, Slovenia, 11–13 November 2011]. Ljubljana: ZRC Publishing, 2012, 270 p.

- Gergova, Lina and Parusheva, Dobrinka (eds.). *The Ritual Year 8: Migration* [Proceedings of the Eighth Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), Plovdiv, Bulgaria, 26–29 June 2012]. Sofia: Paradigma, 2014, 484 p.
- Barna, Gábor and Povedák, István (eds.). *The Ritual Year 9: Politics, Feasts, Festivals* [Proceedings of the Ninth Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), Szeged, Hungary, 14–16 March 2013]. Szeged: Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, 2014, 283 p.
- Minniyakhmetova, Tatiana and Velkoborská, Kamila (eds.). *The Ritual Year 10. Magic in Rituals and Rituals in Magic* [Proceedings of the Tenth Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), Innsbruck, Austria, 25–28 September 2014]. Innsbruck–Tartu: ELM Scholarly Press, 2015, 598 p.
- Stolyarova, Guzel; Sedakova, Irina and Vlaskina, Nina (eds.). *The Ritual Year 11: Traditions and Transformation* [Proceedings of the Eleventh Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), Innsbruck, Austria, 25–28 September 2014]. Kazan–Moscow: T8, 2016, 296 p.
- McKean, Thomas A. (ed.). *The Ritual Year 12: Regulating Customs* [Proceedings of the Twelfth Conference of The Ritual Year WG (SIEF), Findhorn, Scotland, 8–12 January 2016]. Moscow: Polymedia, 2021, 205 p.

Other working group publications

(selection)

- Fournier, Laurent Sébastien and Sedakova, Irina (guest eds.). *Folklore. Electronic Journal of Folklore*, vol. 60: *The Ritual Year*, 2015, 152 p. <https://www.folklore.ee/folklore/vol60/>
- Sedakova, Irina and Vlaskina, Nina (guest editors). *Folklore. Electronic Journal of Folklore*, vol. 66: *Folk costume*, 2016, 207 p. <https://www.folklore.ee/folklore/vol66/>
- Stahl, Irina (guest editor). *Revista Română de Sociologie* [Romanian Journal of Sociology], XXVII, nos. 1-2: *Transformation of Traditional Rituals*, Bucharest, 2016, 162 p. <https://www.revistadesociologie.ro/content/nr-1-2-2016>
- Fournier, Laurent Sébastien and Sedakova, Irina (guest eds.). *The Yearbook of Balkan and Baltic Studies*, vol. 3: *Tracking the ritual year on the move in different cultural Settings and Systems of Values*, Vilnius–Tartu–Sofia–Riga, 2020, 254 p.
- Sedakova, Irina; Vlaskina, Nina and Stahl, Irina (guest eds.). *The Yearbook of Balkan and Baltic Studies*, vol.5: *Memory, Tradition and Ritual in the Balkan and Baltic Contexts*, ELM Scholarly Press, Vilnius–Tartu–Sofia–Riga, 2022, 327p. https://www.folklore.ee/balkan_baltic_yearbook/YBBS/issue/view/vol5/55
- Sedakova, Irina; Vlaskina, Nina and Fournier, Laurent S. (guest eds.). *Folklore. Electronic Journal of Folklore*, vol. 87, 2022, 263 p. <https://www.folklore.ee/folklore/vol87/>

The Ritual Year WG's publications (in pdf format), as well as the recordings of The Ritual Year Seasonal Webinars are available on the SIEF website: www.siefhome.org/wg/ry.

Pictures from the 13th Ritual Year WG conference, *City Rituals*, Bucharest, Romania, 7–9 November 2018



Fig. 1: Opening of the 13th Ritual Year WG (SIEF) conference, *City Rituals*, at The House of the Academy, Bucharest, Romania. From the left to the right: Laurent S. Fournier, Irina Sedakova, Acad. Cornelia-Sabina Ispas, Irina Stahl. 7 November 2018. Photo: Ion Șerban.



Fig. 2: The audience during the opening of the 13th Ritual Year WG (SIEF) conference, *City Rituals*, at The House of the Academy, Bucharest, Romania. 7 November 2018. Photo: Ion Șerban.



Fig. 3: Plenary session: Academician Cornelia-Sabina Ispas during her keynote speech, *Processions and religious celebrations in the city: New trends and terminology*. The 13th Ritual Year WG (SIEF) conference, *City Rituals*, The House of the Academy, Bucharest, Romania. 7 November 2018. Photo: Ion Șerban.



Fig. 4: Plenary session: Laurent Sébastien Fournier during his keynote speech, *City rituals in the "longue durée": Permanence and change*. The 13th Ritual Year WG (SIEF) conference, *City Rituals*, The House of the Academy, Bucharest, Romania. 7 November 2018. Photo: Ion Șerban.



Fig. 5: Panel 1.B *Rituals of Body Modification*. Alexander Novik, presenting *Male circumcision: A custom among urban and rural populations of the Western Balkans*. The 13th Ritual Year WG (SIEF) conference, *City Rituals*, The House of the Academy, Bucharest, Romania. 7 November 2018. Photo: Ion Șerban.



Fig. 6: Panel 2.C *Folk Orthodoxy and the ritual year*. Ksenia Klimova, presenting *Folk Orthodoxy in contemporary Greek city culture*. The 13th Ritual Year WG (SIEF) conference, *City Rituals*, The House of the Academy, Bucharest, Romania. 7 November 2018. Photo: Ion Șerban.



Fig. 7: Panel 2.B *Documenting old and new rituals within the ritual year*. Digne Üdre presenting *Contemporary calendar: Virtual ethnography as a research method for a ritual year*. The 13th Ritual Year WG (SIEF) conference, *City Rituals*, The House of the Academy, Bucharest, Romania. 7 November 2018. Photo: Ion Șerban.



Fig. 8: Bucharest city tour: the conference participants visiting the National Village Museum "Dimitrie Gusti". 8 November 2018. Photo: Irina Stahl.



Fig. 9: Bucharest city tour: the conference participants visiting the National Village Museum "Dimitrie Gusti". 8 November 2018. Photo: Žilvytis Šaknys.



Fig. 10: Bucharest city tour: the conference participants visiting the Visual Archive of the National Museum of the Romanian Peasant. 8 November 2018. Photo: Irina Stahl



Fig. 11: Walking tour: the conference participants at Radu Vodă Monastery in Bucharest, taking part in Saint Nektarios' feast. 9 November 2018. Photo: Tatiana Minniyachmetova



Fig. 12: Walking tour: the conference participants at Radu Vodă Monastery in Bucharest, taking part in Saint Nektarios' feast. 9 November 2018. Photo: Tatiana Minniyachmetova



Fig. 13: Walking tour: the conference participants at the Romanian Patriarchate, posing in front of the Parliament building (former House of the People). 9 November 2018. Photo: Tatiana Minniyachmetova.



Fig. 14: Excursion: the conference participants at the Pelișor Castle, in Sinaia. 10 November 2018. Photo: Irina Stahl.



Fig. 15: Excursion: the conference participants visiting the fortified Saxon church in Prejmer. 10 November 2018. Photo: Irina Stahl.



Fig. 16: Excursion: the conference participants during dinner, after visiting the Museum of Urban Civilization in Braşov. 10 November 2018. Photo: Irina Stahl.