

2nd Symposium of the ICTMD Study Group on Sacred and Spiritual Sounds and Practices

Roots and Routes: Ritual and Liturgical Creativity in Sacred and Spiritual Music Traditions.

October 9-11, 2026. University of Szeged, Hungary.

Tentative program

Friday, 9th October 2026	
9:00–9:30	Registration
9:30–10:00	Conference Opening
	Words of Welcome & Opening Remarks Prof. Mihály Racsmány: Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (University of Szeged) Dr. habil. Sándor Varga: Head of the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology (University of Szeged) Prof. Svanibor Pettan: ICTMD Past President Dr. Irene Markoff: ICTMD SSSP Study Group Chair Dr. habil. Kinga Povedák: Local Arrangements Committee Chair
10:00–11:30	Panel 1 (Part 1) Blendings and Multimodalities in West African and Caribbean Sacred and Spiritual Rituals <i>Chair: Daniel Kodzo Avorgbedor</i>

	Daniel Kodzo Avorgbedor	Slouching towards the Secular? Bodily-Visual and Sonic Creativities in Contemporary Ghanaian Rituals and Ceremonies: Challenges of Social Media Appropriations and Representations
	Steven Friedson	Veiled Atmospheres: The Black Atlantic Pulse
	Marie Agatha Ozah	Nsibidi, Masquerade, and the Acoustic Archive: Multimodal Ritual Communication in Ejagham Ekpe Sacred Music
11:30–12:00	Coffee Break	
12:00–13:30	Panel 1 (Part 2)	
	<i>Chair: Daniel Kodzo Avorgbedor</i>	
	Andreas Meyer	Presenting Ritual Practice – The Salaka Feast in Tobago (West Indies)
	Genevieve Nrenzah	Reconceptualizing Sacred and Secular Boundaries in Contemporary Music in Ghana
13:30–14:30	Amos Darkwa Asare	Embodied lineages: Musical knowledge, spiritual mediation, and cultural stewardship in the priesthood of Baba Gasese
	Lunch Break	
	Panel 2	
	Rerouting South Asian Sacred Sound	
14:30–16:30	<i>Chair: Christian Poske</i>	
	Eben Graves	Imaginal and Material Routes of Devotion in the Sung Poetry of Bengal
	Christopher L. Ballengee	Sounding Ancestral Arrival: Ritualizing Migration in Indian Caribbean Musical Performance
	Pankaj Rawat	Drum Beats of Devotion: Ritual Jāgar Music and Community Identity in Uttarakhand Himalayas, India
16:30–17:00	Ayushi Koul	Embodying Mazloomiyat: Singing Vulnerability in Precarity
	Tea Break	

17:00–19:00	Panel 3 Reaffirming, Negotiating, and Transforming Heritage in Monotheistic Sacred Musical Practices <i>Chair: Christiane Strothmann</i>	
	Dóra Pataricza	Szeged Synagogue Soundscapes: 120 years of Liturgical Music
	Ivana Perkovic & Drazena Todorovic	When the Root Resists the Route: Serbian Folk Church Chanting and Compositional Practice in Vlastimir Perić's Kto Bog velij (Who Is A Great God But Ours?,1998)
	Maria Giangkitseri	Between East, West and Folk Song: Liturgical Traditions and Practices of Holy Week and Easter in Greece.
	Stephanie Molea	Theoretical Elements of Psaltic Music in "Bazul teoretic și practic al muzicii bisericești sau gramatica melodică [Theoretical and Practical Basis of Church Music or the Melodic Grammar]" by Protopsaltis Anton Pann
19:30	Reception	
Saturday, 10th October 2026		
9:00–11:00	Panel 4 Global Christianities: Orality, Musical Liturgy, and Spiritual Intersectionality <i>Chair: Monique M. Ingalls</i>	
	Monique M. Ingalls	Music Of and Beyond Belief: Conceptual Tools and Cross-Purpose Conversations for Research on Spirituality and Music-Making
	Anna Niedźwiedź	Between Tradition and Innovation: Orality and Sound in the Spiritual Practices of Ghanaian Catholic Women
	Henriette Stierlin	In the Lure of Magical Sounds: The Role of Music in the Jesuit Missions in Moxos (Bolivia) and its Effects Until Today.
	Isabel Frey & Ioannis Christidis	Provincializing Roman Catholicism: Sacred Sounds in a Postmigrant Vienna Neighborhood

11:00–11:30	Tea Break	
11:30–13:00	Panel 5 Between Preserving and Reconfiguring Bön and Buddhist Sonic Ritual Practices <i>Chair: Christiane Strothmann</i>	
	Christiane Strothmann	The <i>Precious Bundle</i> - A Grammar of Tibetan Ritual Melodies? Melody (ké), Textual Modularity, and Ritual Creativity in Tibetan Yungdrung Bön
	Lars Gajda	Ritual Practice Beyond the Monastery: A Case Study of a Former Tibetan Monk
	Edris Voet	Magical Melodies: Musical Notation in the Five Great Mantras, 1485
13:00–14:30	Lunch Break	
14:30–16:00	Panel 6 Blurring the Boundaries of the Sacred and the Secular <i>Chair: Svanibor Pettan</i>	
	John Plemmenos	"God May Have a Sense of Humour": Religious Parodies in Modern Greek Culture
	Mira Kopanarov	Do Letters Sing? A Glagolitic Perspective into Sacred Sound, Rhythm and Lyrics.
	Nathan Myrick	What Counts as Participation? Neurodivergent Children and Worship's Participatory Infrastructure
16:00–16:30	Tea Break	
16:30–18:00	Panel 7 (Part 1) Alevi and Alevi-Related Expressive Culture: Embodiment and Alevi Cem Rituals <i>Chair: Irene Markoff</i>	
	Mark Soileau	Tradition in Motion: The Ritual Re-Synchronization of the Alevi Mirağlama

	Manami Suzuki	Voicing Grief: Women’s Voices as Ritual Practice in Alevi Cem
	Çiğdem Abda	Music as a Medium of Divine Encounter: Sacred Sound and Embodied Ritual in Otman Baba Cem Practices
18:00–18:15	Short Break	
18:15–19:45	Panel 7 (Part 2) Alevi and Alevi-Related Expressive Culture: Khorasani/ Alevi-Bektashi Minstrelsy and Sung Mystical Poetry <i>Chair: Irene Markoff</i>	
	Ameneh Youssefzadeh	Ebrāhim Adham in Performance: Sacred Narrative and Musical Transmission in Khorasan
	Irene Markoff	The Confluence of Traditional Roots and Transnational/Intercultural Routes in the “Becoming” of a Contemporary Alevi Aşık (Minstrel) and Composer: The Case of Ahmet Ihvani”
	János Sipos	A Special Melody of the Bektashis in Thrace
Sunday, 11th October 2026		
9:00–11:00	Panel 8 Politics / Resistance <i>Chair: István Povedák</i>	
	Fatma Belma Oğul & Seyede Moozhan Ayatollahi	Choreopolitics of the Grave: Raghs-e Soog as Embodied Resistance in Post-2026 Iran
	Christian Poske	In the Cauldron of Conflict: Political Trajectories of Christian Cultural Expressions in Contemporary Naga Music Culture
	Indira Anna Hajnács	(Re)Sounding the Steppe: Re-enchantment and Neo-Pagan Imaginaries in Contemporary Hungarian Folkloresque Music
	Brenda Sailsman	Reggae Music and Rastafari Spirituality
11:00–12:00	Business meeting	

12:00–13:30	Lunch Break	
13:30–16:00	Panel 9 Revivals and Transformations <i>Chair: Kinga Povedák</i>	
	Michelle Collins	Voicing Grief Beyond the Wake: Keening, Affect, and Contemporary Ritual Practice
	Paweł Karolczyk	Following the Sounds. Ritual Songs Circulation among Native Faith Communities in Poland
	Nana Amowee Dawson	Re-Authoring the Sacred: Ritual Negotiation, Media, and Artistic Translation in Mekra
	Helena Varga & Lili Kriston	Songs, Community, Identity: Autoethnography and Video-Elicitation in Romani Religious Musical Transformation
	Kinga Povedák	Sonic Agency and the Reconfiguration of Sensory Regimes in Roma Vernacular Religious Practices
Farewell Dinner		