Report on the activities of the Sub-Study Group for Fieldwork Theory and Methods

This SSG is very strongly tied to projects in person, projects depend on an active volunteer local organizer and money for travel. The purpose is to make joint observations of a selected phenomenon or event from many different perspectives and to continuously compare and discuss the observations and notes in a field diary. The main themes of the joint research remain relevant and should test new methodological possibilities for investigating these phenomena:

1. Intangible cultural heritage
2. Festivals and festivities
3. Dance in urban settings
4. Folk ensembles and revivals

In the previous two years 2022-2023Czech and Slovene colleagues led by Daniela Stavělová and Rebeka Kunej have profited from a bilateral agreement and financial support of both Academies of Sciences: EÚ CAS in the Czech Republic and ZRC SAZU in Slovenia. Their joint project focuses on contemporary folk revivalism, jointly observing folk festivals in the Czech Republic (Strážnice, 25-26.6.2022) and Slovenia (Jurevanie in Črnomelj in Bela Krajina 24-25.6.2023). The research team observes these festivals from different ages, genders, and insider and outsider positions. Participants compare and discuss their field notes and the differing missions of the festivals. The main project of the SSG was a joint field research trip in Türkiye and Georgia from 13 – 23 October 2023. It was an innovative collaboration between the SSG on Music and Dance in the Black Sea Cultural Basin (of the StG on Music and Dance in Southeastern Europe) and the SSG on Field Research Theory and Methods (of the StG on Ethnochoreology). The project was organized by ICTM Türkiye (Mehmet Öcal Özbilgin – National Organizer, Abdullah Akat – Local Organizer, İdris Ersan Küçük – Secretary), bringing together 7 ethnomusicologists and 4 ethnochoreologists from 6 different countries. The participants explored diverse perspectives to re-think the music and dance in the Black Sea Cultural basin together. They visited 14 locations, conducting interviews and recording local music playing and singing in diverse settings.

Further joint research could also take place based on multi-sited ethnography, but its purpose should remain the investigation of one of the proposed thematic fields, on which enough participants agree so that the result is a coherent view of a particular phenomenon in a broader transnational context.

On behalf of the SSG Daniela Stavělová