

## FOREWORD

Once again the contents of our yearbook offer a selection of the results achieved in the past year by associates of the MTA-SZTE Research Group for the Study of Religious Culture. The three world religions: Christianity, Judaism and Islam continue to provide the frame. Within this the case studies interpret different phenomena and reflect different processes. Various approaches are taken: they are in part historical, in part anthropological, analytical or descriptive in nature.

Four studies deal with monarchic rites in the last decades and years of the Hungarian monarchy, analysing representations of the ruler's anniversaries. The coronation (1916) held in a time of war and according to Roman Catholic rites is presented on the basis of religious tradition and community memory in the Neolog Jewish interpretation, in which modern civil self-definition and the notion of religious equality are reflected. We can form a picture of the attitude of Jews in the Holy Land to the religious, Christian ruler and the different ways in which the Western and Eastern (Galician) Jews interpreted loyalty to the ruler and national identity. At the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century rites surrounding the ruler's anniversaries appeared within a denominational and religious frame, supplementing or, in cases, substituting the secular rites of commemoration. God himself defends the continuity of the rule of the Habsburg house. These studies involved new sources in their analyses. They show the connection between different world views, the ancient past and the eschatological vision of the future.

The studies of prayer books for soldiers and the bells requisitioned for military purposes offer an interpretation of wartime events within a religious frame.

The description of a neo-pagan sacred place throws light on the colourful religious scene in Hungary today. The analysis of the Afro-American influence on Christian Popular Music opens a wider perspective. We learn about the role played by *halal* in religion, food economy and Muslim identity, through the contemporary food practice of Muslims living in European cities and the rules applied.

Our yearbook also includes studies by three doctoral students. It is instructive to see through private photos what religious events a Calvinist community or private individuals and families considered important to record in images and how they were represented. Another study shows the religious education given within the Heart Brigade, an association established for children in the 19<sup>th</sup> century within the frame of veneration of the Sacred Heart. This thorough religious education made effective use of symbols and aimed at the emotions in preparing children for a life as believing adults. The "spiritual family" representing a new religious movement occupies a special place among the charismatic movements operating within the frame of the Roman Catholic Church. The study presents two such forms: the *Community of the Beatitudes* and the *Verbum Dei Missionary Fraternity and Missionary*

*Family.* Their members, clergy and lay persons, men and women, married or single, strive to live their religion within strong community ties.

The case studies in this volume clearly reflect the multifarious attitudes and methodological approaches brought to religious phenomena in the Szeged workshop.

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editor