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“SS. CYRIL AND METHODIUS” UNIVERSITY IN SKOPIE
 FACULTY OF NATURAL SCIENCES AND MATHEMATICS
 INSTITUTE OF ETHNOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
“MACEDONIA IN ETHNOLOGICAL
AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL SCIENCE –
FROM WITHIN AND BEYOND”

Conference Program

Link: meet.google.com/jgu-qjgy-gvc

20 Years since the Foundation of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology
 and 25 Years since the Launch of the *EthnoAnthroZoom* Journal
 (September 12–14, 2025, UKIM Congress Center, Konjsko Village, Ohrid)

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE “MACEDONIA IN ETHNOLOGICAL AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL SCIENCE: FROM WITHIN AND BEYOND” (12–14 SEPTEMBER 2025, UKIM CONGRESS CENTRE, KONJSKO, OHRID)

There are several interpretations regarding the origin of the name of the village of Konjsko in the Ohrid region. One of them suggests that the village was named after a shepherd who migrated from the transmountain Prespa village bearing the same name. It was precisely this idea of “bridging” one place with another that became the symbolic thread of the international conference organized by the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, entitled “*Macedonia in Ethnological and Anthropological Science: From Within and Beyond*”, held from 12 to 14 September 2025 at the UKIM Congress Centre in Konjsko, Ohrid.

The occasion marked a double jubilee: 20 years since the establishment of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, and 25 years since the publication of the first issue of the journal *EthnoAnthroZoom*. Over the three-day conference program, 39 presentations were delivered by 47 participants from 11 countries. The participants included the Institute’s staff, ethnologists and anthropologists from Macedonia, long-

standing colleagues from neighbouring countries and beyond, as well as new researchers who found space for networking and exchange.



Photo 1. The Rector of UKIM, Prof. Biljana Angelova, PhD, at the opening of the Conference.



Photo 2. The Dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Prof. Davorin Trpeski, PhD, at the opening of the Conference.



Photo 3. The Head of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Prof. Ilina Jakimovska, PhD, at the opening of the Conference.



Photo 4. Participants and guests at the opening of the Conference.

To understand the importance of these jubilees, one must look back nearly seven decades. The Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology at the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics is the result of decades of persistence, enthusiasm, and conviction that ethnology and anthropology have an essential role in understanding (our) society. Following the discontinuation of the Ethnology Department in 1953, through persistent initiatives and resistance by generations of enthusiasts, the Institute was finally institutionalized in 2005. This persistence, which grew out of a “vacuum” on the margins, transformed ethnology and anthropology in Macedonia into a vibrant and open field that today brings together scholarship, teaching, and fieldwork. Naturally, this development deserved to be marked through a series of events organized by the Institute during 2025, among which this conference held a central place.

In the early morning hours of 12 September, the hallways of the UKIM Congress Centre in Konjsko were already awakened by the voices and footsteps of participants. Old colleagues met again, new acquaintances were made, posters were examined, and the rich

program was explored. The smell of coffee mingled with the fresh morning air coming from Lake Ohrid, as everyone awaited the beginning of three days of shared knowledge, dialogue, and exchange.

The day continued in the main conference hall, where the opening addresses were delivered by the Rector of UKIM, Prof. Biljana Angelova, the Dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Prof. Davorin Trpeski, and the Head of the Institute, Prof. Ilina Jakimovska. Prof. Jakimovska offered a brief retrospective of the contribution of Prof. Aneta Svetieva to the development of the Institute. As part of the formal opening, a thirty-minute film composed of archival photographs by the Slovenian photographer Jože Rehberger Ogrin was screened. This allowed participants to revisit or become acquainted with memories from the Institute's developmental history, and to remember those ethnologists and anthropologists who are no longer with us but whose work left a significant mark on the IEA.

Regarding the presentations, the first day highlighted topics on the connections between folklore, anthropology, and everyday life, as well as the application of the disciplines in contemporary contexts of culture and memory politics. The day concluded with a segment dedicated to the twenty-five-year history of *EthnoAnthropoZoom*, in which Prof. Ljupcho Risteski guided the audience through the journal's visual and conceptual evolution, including changes in graphic design over the years and the introduction of new accessibility features such as audio versions of articles.

The second day began with discussions on Macedonia's postsocialist heritage, questions of identity and visibility, and academic and museum policies concerning heritage studies. Sessions continued with reflections on the significance of regional research and interdisciplinary approaches. Participants had the opportunity to hear firsthand how Macedonia is researched and written about "from beyond".

In the evening, in a warm and friendly atmosphere, a "*Music Evening of Heritage*" was held, dedicated to collectors Peter Endendijk and Annemiek den Ouw, long-standing enthusiasts of Balkan traditional music and tireless researchers. Their shared passion, which began in the 1980s, led them through many Balkan countries, where they collected, documented, and preserved music recordings and editions from the region. In recognition of their contribution and their generous donation of collected materials to the Institute, they received a certificate of appreciation presented by Prof. Risteski. The evening continued informally, filled with the sounds of old *čalgija* tunes from Vataša.

The third and final day concluded with presentations on Macedonian folk dances, ethnographic film, and gender studies, which collectively addressed questions of belonging and new methodological directions in researching cultural heritage. Symbolically, the last session ended with a screening of the ethnographic film *Hemboy* by ethnologist Elizabeta Koneska.

Beyond the themes and events, the conference will also be remembered for the conversations—those that began in the hall as part of the formal discussions, and those that continued in the courtyard over coffee, under the warm sun, filled with voices carrying new ideas. These informal encounters created a genuine atmosphere of closeness and collegiality.

The conference concluded in the late afternoon with gratitude and applause, but more importantly, with a shared recognition that the question for ethnology and anthropology in Macedonia is no longer “Are these disciplines necessary?” but rather “How do we move forward with them?”

Just like the village of Konjsko—whose name carries a story of crossing and connecting—this conference became a place of bridging. A reminder that institutions and development policies may move slowly, but curiosity, enthusiasm, and mutual support always take a step (or a leap) ahead.

Until the next jubilee!