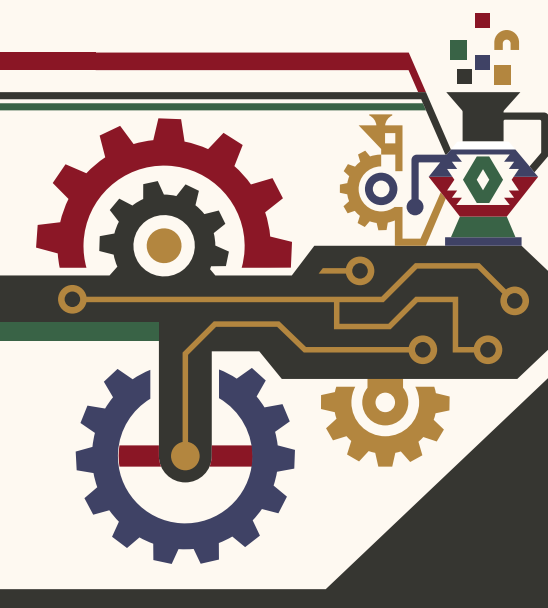


BOOK OF ABSTRACTS
INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

ETHNOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY THROUGH TIME

REFLECTIONS ON THE DISCIPLINE
AND THE HORIZONS AHEAD



1838

DEPARTMENT OF ETHNOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF BELGRADE
FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY

International scientific conference
**ETHNOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY
THROUGH TIME**
**Reflections on the Discipline
and the Horizons Ahead**

Belgrade | September 2026

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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The conference was held on September 11, 12 and 13
at the Department of Ethnology and Anthropology,
Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade

University of Belgrade – Faculty of Philosophy
Department of Ethnology and Anthropology

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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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CONFERENCE PROGRAM (TIMETABLE)

Thursday, September 10, 2026

Opening Reception

19.00–21.00 | Opening ceremony

Yugoslav Film Archive

Friday, September 11, 2026

Day I

08.00–09.00 | Participant registration

09.00–09.45 | Plenary lecture – Chris Hann

“Georgije Ostrogorski” Amphitheater

10.00–10.30 | Coffee break

10.30–12.10 | Session 1

Panel 1 – Discipline histories: global perspectives

Panel 2 – Regional disciplinary transformations

Panel 3 – Contemporary theory and epistemological issues

Panel 4 – Digital and emergent anthropology

12.10–14.00 | Lunch break

14.00–15.40 | Session 2

Panel 5 – Transformations of anthropology in Europe and the region

Panel 6 – Comparative perspectives on teaching and canon

Panel 7 – Subdisciplines and research fields

Panel 8 – Youth, identity and popular culture

15.40–16.20 | Coffee break

16.20–18.00 | Session 3

Panel 9 – Applied anthropology, activism, and consulting work

Panel 10 – Ethnographic movies, methodological innovations and collaborative fieldwork

Panel 11 – Memory, war, historical narratives and public discourse

Panel 12 – Gender studies, auto-reflexive ethnography, critical analysis

Saturday, September 12, 2026

Day II

08.00–09.00 | Participant registration

09.00–09.45 | Plenary lecture – Michał Buchowski

“Georgije Ostrogorski” Amphitheater

10.00–10.30 | Coffee break

10.30–12.10 | Session 4

Panel 13 – Anthropologist/ethnologist between local communities and decision makers

Panel 14 – Ethnography of organizations, communities and participation

Panel 15 – Ethnic communities, minorities and identity practices

Panel 16 – Medical, biosocial and health anthropology

12.10–14.00 | Lunch break

14.00–15.40 | Session 5

Panel 17 – Nature, space, landscapes, and cultural heritage

Panel 18 – Heritage policies and protection of cultural assets

Panel 19 – Museum collections, exhibitions and public anthropology

Panel 20 – Body, motion, materiality and art

15:40–16.20 | Coffee break

16.20–18.00 | Session 6

Panel 21 – Cultural heritage in different places – theory and praxis

Panel 22 – Heritage, ritual and transmission of cultural practice

Panel 23 – Anthropological research of tangible cultural heritage and food

Sunday, September 13, 2026

Day III

11.00–12.00 | Assembly of the Serbian Ethnological-Anthropological Society [EADS] – Elections (only for the EADS members)

“Georgije Ostrogorski” Amphitheater

cca 16.00–18.00 | Excursion (optional)

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Thursday, September 10, 2026

Opening Reception

18.00–21.00 | Opening ceremony

Yugoslav Film Archive

Friday, September 11, 2026

Day I

08.00–09.00 | Participant registration

09.00–09.45 | Plenary lecture – Chris Hann, Ethnology, Peoplehood and Trains, 1880s-2020s

“Georgije Ostrogorski” Amphitheater

10.00–10.30 | Coffee break

SESSION 1

10.30–12.10 | Panel 1 – Discipline histories: global perspectives

Room: 1

Zhang Jijiao, The Fifth Tradition in World Anthropology and Ethnology: Chinese Anthropology and Ethnology

Zhou Zixiang, Decolonizing Knowledge: Anthropological Disciplinary Transformation in China and the Global South

Xiaomin Zhang, Legacy, Innovation, and Dialogue: The Development of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and the Practice of the International Journal of Anthropology and Ethnology

Jiang Mei, Nation, State, and Society: Foundational Categories and Basic Problems in the Transformation of Ethnic Theory and Method

Moderator: **Vesna Vučinić Nešković**

10.30–12.10 | Panel 2 – Regional disciplinary transformations

Room: 2

Rajko Muršič, Enlightenment Ethnology, National Science, and Global Fundamental Science of Humanity: From Description of Peoples to Radical Anthropology in the 21st century

Mateja Habinc, Studying Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology in Contemporary Slovenia

Srđan Radović, Teaching Ethnology and Ethnological and Anthropological Content in Schools in Serbia

Branko Banović, Between Heritage and Anthropology: On the Limits of Disciplinary Transformation in the Montenegrin Context

Jelena Miljković Matić, The Debate Between Špiro Kulišić and Milenko S. Filipović in the Context of Communist Attitudes Toward the National Situation in Yugoslavia

Moderator: **Bogdan Dražeta**

10.30–12.10 | Panel 3 – Contemporary theory and epistemological issues

Room: 3

Lia Lola V. Kotnik, Anthropology in an Age of Open Lying

Jelena Čuković, Reality as a Collective Hallucination? Contribution of Cultural Anthropology to Contemporary Studies of Consciousness

Marina Simić, Deleuze, Guattari, and Anthropology: Toward Viveiros de Castro's Poststructural Anthropology

Anđela Pumpalović, Anthropology of Everyday Morality: Gossip as an Analytical Concept in Anthropological Theory and Methodology

Mariyam Kerimova, Attitudes of Russian Scholars Toward the Theoretical Foundations of Ethnographic Science in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century

Moderator: **Marija Brujić**

10.30–12.10 | Panel 4 – Digital and emergent anthropology**Room: 4**

Smiljana Antonijević Ubois, Why We Need Anthropology: When Human Life Becomes Training Data

Mladen Stajić, Thinking Like a Swarm: Translating Swarm Intelligence into Digital Anthropology

Anja Zlatović, Is the Future of Artificial Intelligence ‘Green’? – Exploring the Use of Artificial Intelligence Among Young, Green Activists

Dorđe Stojanović, Ethnology and Anthropology in the World of Algorithms: Theoretical and Methodological Potentials of the Discipline on the “Invisible” Field

Krinka Baković, The Role and Importance of Video Games and Gaming in Contemporary Anthropological Research: Consideration of the Possibilities and Challenges of Studying the Practices and Experiences of the “Close Other”

Moderator: **Sonja Radivojević**

12.10–14.00 | Lunch break**SESSION 2****14.00–15.40 | Panel 5 – Transformations of anthropology in Europe and the region****Room: 1**

Petko Hristov, New Ethnology in a New Europe. Construction of Identity and Cultural Memory in the Conditions of Pan-European Mobility

Aliki Angelidou, Toward an “Anthropological Federalism”: Greek Anthropology in Comparative Perspective

Ioannis Manos, Reconfiguring Regimes of Anthropological Knowledge in Greece: Negotiating Disciplinary Frameworks between Reproduction and Transformation

Viktor Fehér, The Scientific Approach and Research Directions of Hungarian Ethnologists and Folklorists in Yugoslavia between 1945 and 1989

Ana Luleva and Ivanka Petrova, The Cooperation Between the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Ethnography at SASA – a Quarter Century of Partnership and the Development of Ethnology/Anthropology

Moderator: **Mladena Prelić**

14.00–15.40 | Panel 6 – Comparative perspectives on teaching and canon

Room: 2

Miloš Milenković, Towards a New Curriculum in Ethnology and Anthropology: Between the Renewal of Interpretative Sovereignty and the Weakening of Global Evaluation Regimes

Vladimira Ilić, Vladana Ilić and Nina Kulenović, Ethnologists and Anthropologists in an “Ivory Tower”? (Self-)Positioning in the Domestic Public Sphere

Jevgenija Džuževa and Emilija Kartalija, Evgilije: The Popularization of Science and Art in Contemporary Society

Ljubica Vlahović, 120 Years Later: On the Possible Futures of Ethnology and Anthropology in Serbia

Sergej Avramov, Ethnology and Anthropology in Serbia and Russia

Moderator: **Srđan Radović**

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Room: 3

Gordana Gorunović, Literary Anthropology and/or the Anthropology of Literature? Problems of Defining a Subdiscipline

Jelena Marković, Folkloristics in Search of Its Own Name

Milan Tomašević, Ethnoastronomy as a Theoretical and Methodological Challenge in Serbian Ethnology and Anthropology

Biljana Anđelković, Orthodox Christianity in Serbian Ethnology and Anthropology: Towards the Formation of a Theoretical Framework for the Study of Orthodox Christian Religiosity

Bogdan Dražeta, Research on Bosnia and Herzegovina within Serbian Ethnology and Anthropology

Moderator: **Jadranka Đorđević Crnobrnja**

14.00–15.40 | Panel 8 – Youth, identity and popular culture

Room: 4

Armanda Hysa, Until We Meet First: K-Culture (South Korean Soft Power) and Albanian Youth

Nevena Milanović Minić, Negotiating Adolescence: Gen Z and Alcohol Consumption Practices

Mariya Slavcheva, Epistemic Transmission Beyond the University: Youth Research and the Reproduction of Ethnological Knowledge in a Post-Socialist Context

Nebojša Petrović, Tavern Narration of Late Socialism: Nervozni poštar as a Source for Ethnology and Memory Studies

Suzana Leković, A Contribution to the Study of the Acculturation of Scientific Migrants: Obstacles and Challenges in the Process of Acculturation During Scientific-Cultural Transfers in Non-Aligned Yugoslavia

Moderator: **Ivana Stojčetić**

15:40-16:20 | Coffee break

SESSION 3

16.20–18.00 | Panel 9 – Applied anthropology, activism, and consulting work

Room: 1

Vesna Vučinić Nešković, Is Applied Anthropology Possible in Neoliberal Postsocialism? Reflections from Urban Anthropology

Marijana Belaj and Tihana Rubić, Applied Anthropology in Croatia: Development and Challenges of Applying Academic Knowledge in Non-Academic Practice

Goran-Pavel Šantek, Anthropology Between Science and Social Action: Choosing the Discipline's Future

Radmila Djermanovic and Flavia Moens de Hase, Application of Ethnology and Anthropology in International Consultancy – a case study

Alexandra Desy and Diana Marre, Applying anthropology to Reproductive Medicine: Bridging Research and Patient Support

Moderator: **Anja Zlatović**

16.20–18.00 | Panel 10 – Ethnographic movies, methodological innovations and collaborative fieldwork

Room: 2

Yang Jingyao, Transformations in Chinese Ethnographic Films: Paradigmatic Shifts, Marginal Strategies and Entangled Negotiations

Viktor Trajanovski and Simon Marić, A Visual Treasury: The History and Contemporaneity of Ethnographic Documentary Film in Macedonia

Ildiko Erdei and Magdalena Sztandara, Laboratory of Collaboration: Transformative Field Practices as a Space of Shared Knowledge Production

Mario Katić, Alenka Bartulović and Mirza Džananović, Ethnographic Laboratory (EthnoLab) as a Method for Teaching Ethnography

Branko Pjević, Applied Ethnology and Anthropology in Special Conditions

Moderator: **Slobodan Naumović**

16.20–18.00 | Panel 11 – Memory, war, historical narratives and public discourse

Room: 3

Yana Yancheva, Researches on Childhood and Pioneer Organizations in the Period of Socialism

Tanya Buchkova, The Crimean War on the Pages of Newspaper "Tsarigradski vestnik" (1848-1862) – Reception and Reflection

Yulina Mihaylova, Perspectives on the Jewish Past Through the Prism of Museum Narrative Concerning the Rescue of Bulgarian Jews During World War II

Maria E. Sysoeva, 'Reflections of the Ubykh. We exist': Strategies for Constructing Ubykh Identity

Moderator: **Branko Banović**

16.20–18.00 | Panel 12 – Gender studies, auto-reflexive ethnography, critical analysis

Room: 4

Miroslava Lukić Krstanović and Lada Stevanović, Research on Women and Gender: Confronting Experiences from Personal Perspectives

Lazar Barać, Grappling with Masculinity: Researcher Positionality and Methodological Challenges in the Anthropological Study of Masculinity

Egor Andreevich Krykov, The 'Object-Believer / Object-Researcher' Dilemma: Combining Participants / Observers in Object-Oriented Studies of Religious Conversion

Aleksandar Antunović, Participant Observation: Experiences in Researching the Relationship Between Music and Identity

Anda Srdić Srebro, Between Serbia and France: Autoethnographic Reflections on Language, Writing, and Disciplinary Identity

Moderator: **Marko Pišev**

Saturday, September 12, 2026

Day II

08.00–09.00 | Participant registration

09.00–09.45 | Plenary lecture – Michał Buchowski,
(De-)Imperialization of Anthropological Knowledge
from within Eurocentric Epistemic Traditions

“Georgije Ostrogorski” Amphitheater

10.00–10.30 | Coffee break

SESSION 4

**10.30–12.10 | Panel 13 – Anthropologist/ethnologist between local
communities and decision makers**

Room: 1

Rini Useini, Ethnological Projects as Bridging Mechanisms
between Ethnologists, the State, and the People (North
Macedonia case)

Zlatina Bogdanova, Auto-reflexive Ethnography and the
Study of Urban Activism in Post-socialist Southeast Europe

Mengxia Shi, Assembling into Being: Participatory Practice-
based Research in Post-industrial Communities in Salford
(UK) and Taiyuan (China)

Tamara Zarić, Between State Regulation and Experience:
Towards New Approaches and Methodology in Kinship
Studies

Bojana Bogdanović and Milena Jokanović, Between
Science, Society, and Art: The Exhibition “Heroines: The
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Moderator: **Ildiko Erdei**

**10.30–12.10 | Panel 14 – Ethnography of organizations,
communities and participation**

Room: 2

Lea Vučić, Between Silence and Memory: “May Day” Factory
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Nina Zdravković, Research on Organizational Culture
within a Scientific Institution: Challenges and Opportunities

Milica Stjepanović Kornilova, Methodological Challenges in the Anthropological Study of Non-Governmental Organizations: From Theory to Practice

Vesna Delić, "A Godmother Is No Button!" – An Anthropologist Among the Roma

Moderator: **Marko Stojanović**

10.30–12.10 | Panel 15 – Ethnic communities, minorities and identity practices

Room: 3

Nenad Karamijalković, Scientific Hypotheses on the Origin of the Serbs in Public Discourse – Historical and Recent Challenges

Jadranka Đorđević Crnobrnja, The Pluralism of Identity Practices as an Intergenerational Process: The Case of the Gorani Community in Serbia

Aleksandra Đurić Milovanović, Recognized but Not Equal: Religious Minorities and Epistemological Shifts in Postsocialist Anthropology

Aleksandar Repedžić, Vlachs Through the Prism of Ethnology in Serbia, Then and Now

Irena Arsić, The Ragusan Luko Zore (1846–1906) in His Time

Moderator: **Ivan Đorđević**

10.30–12.10 | Panel 16 – Medical, biosocial and health anthropology

Room: 4

Lidija B. Radulović, Living with Inequality as a Person with a Disability: Research Perspectives of Anthropology in Serbia

Vesna Trifunović, Anthropological Engagement in Research on Vaccination Communication in Serbia: Experience and Results

Jelisaveta Fotić, A Critical View of the Concepts of Biosociality and Biosolidarity in Postsocialist Contexts

Ljiljana Pantović, Sara Nikolić, and Ivan Đorđević, Medical Deserts as an Ethnographic Problem: Mapping Access to Reproductive Healthcare in Rural Serbia

Ognjen Parojčić, Anthropology and Addiction: Application of Field Theory as a Methodological Framework for Treating the Phenomenon of Addiction in Sociocultural Anthropology

Moderator: **Nevena Milanović Minić**

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SESSION 5

14.00–15.40 | Panel 17 – Nature, space, landscapes, and cultural heritage

Room: 1

Yao Peng, A Different Perspective on Agricultural Cultural Heritage: From Heritage Sites to Heritage Empowerment

Miha Kozorog, Wildlife in Slovenian Ethnology and Anthropology, with Ethnographic Reflections on the Relationship between Wildlife and the State

László Mód, Changing Riverscapes in the Hungarian-Serbian Borderland

Ivan Rajković, Balkan “Mixed-Races”: The Legacy of Modernization in Stara Planina

Saša Nedeljković, A Contribution to the Exoticization of Ethnological/Anthropological Research in Serbia: Duck Fights in Novi Pazar

Moderator: **Jelena Ćuković**

14.00–15.40 | Panel 18 – Heritage policies and protection of cultural assets

Room: 2

Nataša Mladenović Ribić, The UNESCO concept of “living heritage” as a “return to the roots” of the discipline: the application of ethnology and anthropology in the preservation of intangible cultural heritage

Robert Kapeš, From Theory to Fieldwork: The Role of Ethnologists in Shaping Cultural Policies and Heritage Preservation

Dušan Medin, Heritage as a Heated Political Field: Monuments, Dissonant Heritage, and Contemporary Culture of Public Memory in Montenegro

Ana Sibinović, The Work Methodology of Ethnologists/ Anthropologists in the Context of Safeguarding Immovable Cultural Heritage

Jelena Milanković, Andjelija Ivkov Džigurski, Dragana Vuković Vojnović, and Vesna Bulatović, Montenegrin Folklore in Vojvodina: Preservation, Practice, and Cultural Identity

Moderator: **Miloš Milenković**

14.00–15.40 | Panel 19 – Museum collections, exhibitions and public anthropology

Room: 3

Danijela Đukić, Museums in the Age of Global Change

Marko Stojanović, A Decade in the Museum: Are Museum Professionals Exclusively Ethnographers or Also Anthropologists?

Miloš Matić, Can the Ethnographic Museum Be Anthropological?

Ivan Maksimović, The Social Significance and Role of European Ethnographic Museums Today – Overlaps and Differences

Aleksandra Kozarev, Between Production and Memory: Musealization of Socialist Industrial Heritage on the Example of the Ethnology Department of the National Museum Zrenjanin

Moderator: **Marina Simić**

14.00–15.40 | Panel 20 – Body, motion, materiality and art

Room: 4

Dunja Njaradi and Miloš Rašić, The Invisible within the Canon: Researchers and Research of Dance in the History of Serbian Ethnology

Ivana Katarinčić, Ethnochoreology Based on Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology

Katarina Kuč, “The Artist as Ethnographer”: Nadežda Petrović and Clara Sipprell

Katarina Mitrović Ražnatović and Sonja Radivojević,
Between Documentation and Epistemology: Drawing
as a Mirror of the Transformations of Ethnology and
Anthropology through Time

Ivana Stojčetović, Domestic Ethnological and
Anthropological Approaches Towards Visual Arts

Moderator: **Vladimira Ilić**

15:40–16.20 | Coffee break

SESSION 6

**16.20–18.00 | Panel 21 – Cultural heritage in different places
– theory and praxis**

Room: 1

Hou Xiaochen, A New Perspective on Cultural Heritage
Research: From Ontological Description to Empowerment
Analysis

**Petya Vasileva-Grueva, Kremena Yordanova, and Violeta
Kotseva,** Cultural practices for heritage transmission based
on the example of several villages along the Mesta River
Valley, Southwestern Bulgaria

Violeta Kotseva, Contextualization and Use of Sacred Places
in Modern Times. The Case of Strandzha Mountain, Bulgaria

Mario Katić and Robert M. Hayden, Sedimentations and
Erosions of Hybrid Religious Heritage

Iveta Rasheva, On the Connection between the Serbian and
Bulgarian Songs about Kosara and Vladimir

Moderator: **Miloš Matić**

**16.20–18.00 | Panel 22 – Heritage, ritual and transmission of
cultural practice**

Room: 2

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Saint Celebrations and Sacred Trees in the Territory of the
City of Čačak

Marta Nešković, Heritage in Practice: Between Continuity and Contemporary Changes in the Transmission of Physical Skills in China and Thailand

Andrey B. Moroz, Cult Sites Through Time: Heritage, Continuity, Conflicts

Snežana Šaponjić-Ašanin, “God Appears” – Epiphany in Contemporary Anthropological Practice

Sara Vukotić, Where Is Home When Ritual Travels? Slava among Serbs in Nova Gorica and the Place of Anthropology Today

Moderator: **Mladen Stajić**

16.20–18.00 | Panel 23 – Anthropological research of tangible cultural heritage and food

Room: 3

Mirjana Menković, Horses and Mental Puzzles: Positioning the Discipline through Museum Collections and Research on Dress Culture in Serbia in the Late 20th and Early 21st Century

Katarina Radisavljević and Ana Seč-Pinčir, The Use of the Ethnographic Museum Collection for Anthropological Purposes: Self-identification of Vojvodina Slovaks on the Example of a Men’s Traditional Shirt

Saša Ivković, The Study of Material Culture in Domestic Ethnology and Anthropology

Ana Banić Grubišić, Development Directions of the Study of Nutrition in Serbian Ethnology and Anthropology

Andela Milinković, Tara Šegrt, Nemanja Pavlović, and Stefan Jovanović, The Watermill in Senokos as a Marker of Local Identity

Moderator: **Nataša Mladenović Ribić**

Sunday, September 13, 2026

Day III

11.00–12.00 | Assembly of the Serbian Ethnological-Anthropological Society [EADS] – Elections (only for the EADS members)

“Georgije Ostrogorski” Amphitheater

cca 16.00–18.00 | Excursion (optional)

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

Andreevich Krykov Egor (S3, P12)

Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russia

**THE 'OBJECT-BELIEVER' / OBJECT-RESEARCHER'
DILEMMA: COMBINING PARTICIPANTS/OBSERVERS
IN OBJECT-ORIENTED STUDIES OF RELIGIOUS
CONVERSION**

The paper examines the relationship 'object-believer' / object-researcher' through the lens of Graham Harman's object-oriented ontology (OOO) and the insider-outsider perspective. Writing as a recent convert, I proceed from the premise that an anthropologist who adopts the religion of their informants during fieldwork ceases to be an external observer and, through symbioses with the objects of the 'field', becomes an autonomous object that enters asymmetrical relations with other objects of the religious world: practices, texts, bodies, infrastructures. In Harman's OOO logic, conversion is not reducible to subjective conviction but appears as a symbiotic change in the configuration of real and sensual qualities of the research object, which transforms the process of getting anthropological knowledge. The insider position (the role of believer among believers) grants indirect access to previously hidden levels of ritual and affective reality, but also amplifies the risk of hazardous 'allure', a fusion of the anthropologist-object and the believer-object, whereby the researcher is drawn into the community's private ontology and loses analytical distance, which can lead to breaches of 'safety protocols', emotional shocks, and derealization.

Empirically, the paper draws on materials concerning Russian Shi'a converts, where the tension between inclusion and marginality is pronounced: the neophyte-researcher is simultaneously insider and outsider; a mediator between ethnic jamaats and the Russian-speaking milieu, an object of trust and suspicion. This duality demonstrates that the insider-outsider status is not intermediate but a specific kind of objecthood with its own epistemic productivity. Advantages include access to intimate practices and internal discourses; disadvantages include risks of selective vision and pressure from the normative environment. In conclusion, I propose to consider the 'anthropologist-convert' object as one whose validity depends on institutionalized reflexivity and procedures for maintaining distance. Within OOO, this position allows observation of conversion as ontological reconfiguration of a network of objects in which the researcher becomes a key node of interaction.

Andelković Biljana (S2, P7)

Institute of Ethnography SASA, Belgrade, Serbia

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY IN SERBIAN ETHNOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY: TOWARDS THE FORMATION OF A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY OF ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN RELIGIOSITY

The paper starts from the thesis that a coherent theoretical-methodological framework for the study of Orthodox Christianity and Orthodox Christian religiosity has not yet been established in Serbian ethnology and anthropology. Until now, research into Serbian Christianity (Orthodoxy) has ranged mainly between folkloristic research into religion, folk Orthodoxy, and interpretations that looked at Orthodoxy primarily through the prism of nationalist and ideological discourse. Such approaches, very productive in certain social and political contexts, did not enable the development of an analytical model that would place Orthodox religiosity in the framework of real, sincere, and deep commitment to the church life of the members of the most numerous religious community in Serbia, which is why for a very long time there was a lack of systematic research and understanding of Orthodox Christianity as a practice that shapes the daily habits, personal identity, and value system of believers. Using the ethnographic material collected during the last fifteen years, the paper reexamines the scope of deconstructivist and critical paradigms that have marked the domestic anthropology of religion. The analysis shows that Orthodox religiosity in Serbia did not completely disappear under the pressure of socialist/atheist ideology but was transformed and reshaped into different forms of private piety, which somewhat calls into question the narrative about the discontinuity and return of religion in the post-socialist period. Based on these observations, the paper indicates the need for a theoretical framework that would overcome the reductionist observation of Orthodox religiosity and enable an integrated assessment of religious practice, personal religious experience, and “formal” obligations of Orthodox believers, which would open up space for a more systematic study of Orthodox Christianity in Serbia.

Angelidou Alikí (S2, P5)

Panteion University, Athens, Greece

**TOWARD AN “ANTHROPOLOGICAL FEDERALISM”:
GREEK ANTHROPOLOGY IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE**

Although Greece has not been a socialist country, the historical trajectory of Greek anthropology offers significant points of comparison with the development of ethnology and anthropology in countries of the former socialist bloc, also situated in the margins of Europe. Due to the Cold War division after World War II, Greece became mentally detached from its northern neighbors (Albania, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria) and was increasingly conceptualized by scholars as a “Mediterranean,” rather than a “Balkan,” society. As a result, it emerged as a key ethnographic field site and, throughout the second half of the twentieth century, came to be strongly shaped by Anglo-American and, to a lesser extent, French epistemological paradigms. Nevertheless, as in many societies of Southeastern Europe, Greek sociocultural anthropology was institutionalized only in the post–Cold War period.

Nearly four decades after its introduction into Greek universities, the discipline has consolidated its position within national academic fields and is gaining increasing visibility and professionalization beyond academia. This presentation seeks to trace contemporary trends in Greek anthropology and to reflect on its principal theoretical and methodological challenges at a moment when Greek society and scholarship are confronted with multiple internal and external pressures. Rather than providing a comprehensive historical account, we focus on three interrelated themes that merit closer examination: (a) crisis and the neoliberalization of Greek higher education; (b) Greece as an ethnographic site for the study of the “polycrisis” (mainly economic and refugee); and (c) the validity of ethnography as a method for apprehending the contemporary world.

We argue that, despite the growing difficulties, Greek anthropology is increasingly moving toward a more inclusive and polycentric orientation. It is part of the international anthropological community and, at the same time, has also begun a systematic dialogue with different non-metropolitan, local anthropological traditions that further enrich it. In this respect, it constitutes a concrete instance of the “anthropological federalism” envisioned by Papataxiarchis as a future trajectory for European anthropology*.

* Papataxiarchis, Efthymios. 2015. *For a European union of anthropological localities*. Green and Laviolette (eds.) *Rethinking Euro-Anthropology*, *Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale* 23(3), 333–334.

Antonijević Ubois Smiljana (S1, P4)

Ainthropology Lab, Chicago, U.S.

WHY WE NEED AINTHROPOLOGY: WHEN HUMAN LIFE BECOMES TRAINING DATA

Artificial intelligence (AI) is not “just another technology.” It is rapidly becoming a new cognitive and affective layer of society, an infrastructure of meaning-making that mediates how we learn, work, make decisions, and relate to each other, but also how we feel, what we value, what motivates us, and how we construct difference. In this sense, AI may be the deepest transformation humanity will face in our lifetime.

To reshape human worlds so profoundly, AI must first learn how those worlds are lived. Contemporary AI development therefore resembles an ethnographic project at planetary scale: AI systems learn from human traces – texts, images, conversations, and routines – and feed outputs back into society, reshaping culture in real time. Yet, unlike anthropology at its best, this “global AI ethnography” is rarely reflexive and routinely compresses human behavior into simplified computational proxies, overlooking context, history, and power. What can look like mere automation of tasks is better understood as cultural and political reconfiguration: new defaults for what counts as credible and true, new regimes of visibility and exclusion.

Anthropology cannot remain on the margins of these transformations. Drawing on Sarah Pink’s anthropology of emerging technologies – “theoretically informed, ethnographically rooted, and interventionally focused” – this paper argues for AInthropology as an anthropologically grounded approach to human–AI relations. It understands AI systems as partial, situated representations shaped by data practices and design choices, and asks what gets flattened, excluded, or made “normal” when sociocultural life is translated into code. Rather than treating AI as a “solution,” AInthropology approaches it as a generator of possibilities and reframes it as a field where culture is actively made and remade, categories are (de)stabilized, authority is reallocated, and values are negotiated.

If AI is becoming society’s operating system, anthropology must help write the code of the future.

Antunović Aleksandar (S3, P12)

Museum of Vojvodina, Novi Sad, Serbia

PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION: EXPERIENCES IN RESEARCHING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MUSIC AND IDENTITY

The relationship between music and local identity, using tamburitza music in Novi Sad as an example, was studied as the topic of a doctoral dissertation through the application of several ethnographic research methods, among which the qualitative approach predominated. Participant observation occupied a significant place within the applied qualitative methodology, since during the research I actively participated in the performance of tamburitza music, and used the acquired experiences as research material in the dissertation. This method enabled a different perspective on the researched topic, opening new aspects of analysis and allowing for a comparative approach in relation to the method based on in-depth interviews. It proved that participant observation represents an important source of data, gaining particular significance when compared with material collected through other methods. At the same time, the research experience also pointed to certain methodological challenges and limitations of the participatory approach. The paper will present the advantages and challenges arising from the application of participant observation in ethnographic-anthropological research, as well as an attempt to position personal experiences within existing theoretical considerations of this specific methodological approach.

Arsić Irena (S4, P15)

University of Niš, Serbia

THE RAGUSAN LUKO ZORE (1846–1906) IN HIS TIME

The emergence and activities of the intellectual circle of Catholic Serbs in Dubrovnik (Ragusa) over the course of an entire century (1841–1941) compel scholarly inquiry into the cultural and national identity of its most prominent representatives. Although this topic has been addressed sporadically, the problem of this identity has remained insufficiently clarified for two principal reasons: first, because approaches to its resolution have largely lacked scientific rigor; and second, because this period of Dubrovnik's cultural history has gradually fallen into obscurity.

The question of identity concerning dozens of Dubrovnik intellectuals in the aforementioned period allows for multiple interpretations. One of the most fruitful approaches lies in the study of individual figures and their diverse bodies of work, among whom Luko Zore – a Slavist, writer, publicist, and political actor – stands out as particularly indicative.

This paper examines the formation of the cultural identity of a prominent Serb in Dubrovnik during the final decade of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, based on an analysis of Zore's oeuvre. In addition to his literary works (the dramas *Stranputicama na put* and *Pokara*, the epic *Objavljenje*, and the autobiography *Zgode i nezgode*), this corpus includes literary historiography, philological studies, and journalistic writings (*Dubrovčani su Srbi!*, *Hrvatski razgovori i odgovori*). The analysis of Zore's literary and scholarly production is complemented by an overview of his political engagement as an active member of the *Narodna stranka*, as well as his decades-long editorial work in two Dubrovnik literary journals ("*Slovinač*" and "*Srd*"), which played a significant role in shaping both the cultural and political life of the city in this period.

An attempt to delineate the cultural identity of the prominent Catholic Serb Luko Zore will be made through the identification and illustration of his statements as expressed in his published literary works, as well as in his manuscript legacy, particularly his extensive correspondence. In this way, the study adopts a constructivist un-

derstanding of the concept of identity, shifting the focus of scholarly inquiry from abstract philosophical systems to concrete, individual utterances and statements. Such an emphasis on the very act of communication enables the linkage of political thought and its protagonists with the historical context of Dubrovnik in that era.

Avramov Sergej (S2, P6)

PhD Candidate, University of Belgrade, Serbia

ETHNOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY IN SERBIA AND RUSSIA

The paper presents an overview of the development and status of ethnology and anthropology in Serbia and Russia. A comparative analysis shows that ethnology and anthropology in these two countries have had a similar development path. In both cases the first phase is characterized by the collection of ethnographic material throughout the country and then, in the second half of the 20th century, a shift towards cultural anthropology and the application of methods of modern anthropology. The research topics in both countries were similar – starting from folk religion and life in the countryside, anthropology expanded its field of research to the city and phenomena related to it. The differences between anthropology in these countries are the special emphasis on those living in the Caucasus and the research on the indigenous peoples of Russia. In addition, anthropology in Russia can be divided into two units. On the one hand, there is anthropology that deals with a wide range of topics related to contemporary cultural phenomena. On the other hand, within the Institute of Slavic Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, at the Department of Ethnolinguistics and Folklore, the folk culture of Russians, but also other Slavic peoples, is studied through the prism of a structural approach.

Baković Krinka (S1, P4)

PhD Candidate, Institute of Ethnography SASA, Belgrade, Serbia

THE ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF VIDEO GAMES
AND GAMING IN CONTEMPORARY
ANTHROPOLOGICAL RESEARCH:
CONSIDERATION OF THE POSSIBILITIES AND
CHALLENGES OF STUDYING THE PRACTICES AND
EXPERIENCES OF THE “CLOSE OTHER”

The paper is based on four years of ethnographic research on the identity practices and experiences of video game players in the Republic of Serbia. It discusses the basic epistemological and methodological implications of the study of the “close other.” Furthermore, presentation relies on the redefined concept of “otherness” by Marc Auger in the context of the transformation of the anthropological discipline since the last quarter of the 20th century. Due to the interactive logic of video games, the method of “observation with participation” is almost organically applied among researchers from other social-humanistic disciplines, resulting in autoethnographies that, with their form and content, strive to legitimize scientific knowledge from an “inside” perspective, i.e., a “researcher-as-player” perspective. Positioning the experiences of the players in the center of the research, through the vertical relational axis “from above-below” by Michel de Certeau, the presentation questions the advantages and limitations of applying the autoethnographic approach in relation to the experiences of video game users. They are understood as active participants in the constitution and shaping the meaning and importance of that interactive medium. The primacy of the “bottom-up” approach formed a favorable climate for treating the gaming experience as an integral part of the individual’s lived experience. In this respect, video games represent an “anthropological place,” a shared space between researchers and interlocutors in which digital landscapes and biographical narratives, shaped by external cultural, historical, social, political, and economic circumstances, intertwine. The main goal is to present and articulate the scientific relevance of the phenomenon of video games and gaming practices for contemporary Serbian ethnology and anthropology not only as a research subject but also as a methodological tool for

studying various phenomena, processes, and problems from the cultural-historical and socio-political reality of a post-socialist society. By realizing the specificity of the “dual membership” position of the ethnologist/anthropologist in domestic science, the aim is to question the social significance of anthropological knowledge and its application in non-academic settings.

Banić Grubišić Ana (S6, P23)

University of Belgrade, Serbia

DEVELOPMENT DIRECTIONS
OF THE STUDY OF NUTRITION
IN SERBIAN ETHNOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

In this presentation, in a diachronic perspective, I explain several research perspectives of the study of nutrition in Serbian ethnology and anthropology. The research is based on a bibliographic review of domestic periodicals and relevant publications, with the aim of mapping key topics, as well as theoretical and methodological approaches related to food and nutrition, from early records in Srpskom etnografskom zborniku/Serbian Ethnographic Collection to contemporary anthropological research. Special attention will be paid to changes in how nutrition is conceptualized within the discipline. At the beginning of the eighties of the last century, in domestic science, Srebrica Knežević first problematized methodological and theoretical issues of nutrition. In our ethnological literature, nutrition was often described as a set of dishes, ingredients, and methods of preparation, while less attention was paid to the social and cultural function of alimentation. As the discipline further developed, different theoretical and methodological perspectives expanded its analytical scope. The study of nutrition gradually developed from the ethnographic-descriptive recording of food practices to their interpretation as an important field of cultural, social, and symbolic processes. Contemporary anthropology of nutrition in the domestic context includes topics such as ethnicity, migration, tourism, cultural heritage, media, and popular culture. Thus, it confirms that it is a dynamic and complex research field that opens wide possibilities for future theoretical and empirical reflections.

Banović Branko (S1, P2)

Institute of Ethnography SASA, Belgrade, Serbia

BETWEEN HERITAGE AND ANTHROPOLOGY:
ON THE LIMITS OF
DISCIPLINARY TRANSFORMATION
IN THE MONTENEGRIN CONTEXT

A long tradition in university education, a specific trajectory of theoretical development, and strong infrastructural resources have positioned Serbia and Belgrade in particular as one of the key centers for the development of ethnology and anthropology in the region. The different phases in the development of the discipline in Belgrade have also been reflected in the formation of professional profiles beyond Serbia, especially in Montenegro. The majority of currently active ethnologists and anthropologists in Montenegro were educated in the period following the formal theoretical and methodological transformation of the discipline at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, when anthropology was administratively incorporated into the study program alongside ethnology. The introduction of anthropology broadened the thematic and theoretical scope of the discipline, as well as the possibilities for its social application. However, social expectations in Montenegro have remained predominantly tied to a traditionally conceived ethnological expertise, associated with tradition, history, and folklore. One consequence is that ethnologists and anthropologists are today primarily employed in museums, cultural institutions, and administrative bodies, which has given the discipline a pronounced heritological orientation. Although socially recognized expertise in the field of cultural heritage has ensured relatively stable professional positions, it has simultaneously constrained the development and visibility of the discipline beyond the heritage discourse. Furthermore, although ethnology has been taught at the University of Montenegro since 1994, and anthropology has become part of the university discourse since the late twentieth century, these efforts have not resulted in the establishment of a stable academic or research center. With this in mind, the paper analyzes the prospects and limitations of the anthropologization of ethnology in Montenegro through a review of ethnological-anthropological production and in-depth interviews with representatives of different generations of ethnologists and anthropologists. Particular attention is given to the

analysis of thematic interests expressed during their studies and in their final theses, in relation to their later scholarly production. The aim of the paper is to demonstrate that the institutional transfer of theoretical transformation does not necessarily lead to a transformation of the discipline's social role, and to raise the question of the conditions under which it is possible to overcome the reduction of anthropological expertise to a heritage-oriented framework.

Barać Lazar (S3, P12)

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**GRAPPLING WITH MASCULINITY:
RESEARCHER POSITIONALITY AND
METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES IN THE
ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDY OF MASCULINITY**

Researching masculinity as a construct that brings together representations and practices of manhood constitutes a complex task for several reasons. Unlike femininity, which has for decades been (albeit insufficiently) a visible and central concern of feminist scholarship, masculinity is far more implicit, less verbalized, and often “unmarked” from the perspective of men themselves – especially in the case of conventional or dominant masculinities. In addition, while participant observation is considered a key anthropological method, it often cannot by itself generate adequate ethnographic material on gender dynamics. A particular challenge lies in the verbalization and narrativization of “ordinary” and everyday male experience. In this sense, a migratory context can function as a kind of “experimental” setting in which certain patterns of action, practice, thought, and representations of masculinity become more traceable. Accordingly, this paper presents my own research experiences and the challenges encountered while studying this phenomenon. The paper shows how masculinity as an object of research tends to elude direct observation and requires a combination of narrative and biographical approaches, as well as sustained reflection on the researcher’s positionality. Furthermore, the paper examines how researcher positionality, relations of trust, and the negotiation of closeness and distance shape what becomes available as ethnographic knowledge about gender roles. Drawing on research among the Serbian diaspora in Sweden, the study contributes to methodological debates on investigating masculinity in migratory contexts. It approaches masculinity not only as a complex relational, situational, and processual phenomenon, but also as a demanding field of inquiry that challenges attempts to access lived experience. The conclusions suggest that masculinity cannot be understood as a stable identity category, but rather as a dynamic field of practices, narratives, and negotiations of meaning. Its study therefore requires methodological flexibility as well as epistemological reflexivity on the part of the researcher.

Belaj Marijana (S3, P9)

University of Zagreb, Croatia

Rubić Tihana (S3, P9)

University of Zagreb, Croatia

APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY IN CROATIA: DEVELOPMENT AND CHALLENGES OF APPLYING ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE IN NON-ACADEMIC PRACTICE

This presentation focuses on the role, discontinuities, and orientations of contemporary and future ethnology and cultural anthropology within the sphere of public engagement, their responses to contemporary social needs, and the relevance of the discipline itself. Although qualitative research and the employment of anthropologists are standard practices in a number of global companies and organizations, in Croatia the (self-)recognition of the professional roles that ethnologists and cultural anthropologists can perform is still largely limited to teaching, academia, museums, and conservation. Nevertheless, the range of professional opportunities available to ethnologists and cultural anthropologists is gradually expanding, and their research, knowledge, and skills are increasingly being recognized in the fields of entrepreneurship and community development. Through qualitative ethnographic, field-based, and interpersonal research, ethnologists and cultural anthropologists gain insight into numerous aspects of human cultural diversity, as well as into the complexities and critical points of lived everyday life. In doing so, they are able to offer nuanced responses to questions of how particular ideas, development programs, services, and products – designed for people – function within specific contexts and in relation to layered cultural and local knowledge and practices. The development of applied anthropology in Croatia, as well as the challenges of applying academic knowledge in non-academic contexts, will be illustrated through two aspects derived from our research and long-standing teaching practice: (a) the results of a recently conducted study on the experiences of alumni of ethnology and cultural anthropology in the field of applied anthropology, including their career paths, job tasks, and work environments; and (b) the design and implementation of a reformed study program in ethnology and cultural anthropology in Zagreb, which, among other aims, seeks to promote the development of applied anthropology in Croatia, while simultaneously maintaining an essential humanistic and critical reflection on this development.

Bogdanova Zlatina (S4, P13)

Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies
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AUTO-REFLEXIVE ETHNOGRAPHY AND THE STUDY OF URBAN ACTIVISM IN POST-SOCIALIST SOUTHEAST EUROPE

This paper offers a methodological reflection on auto-reflexive ethnography as an approach to researching contemporary urban activism and community formation in post-socialist Southeast Europe. In line with the conference's focus on disciplinary transformations and methodological challenges, the paper examines how the researcher's positionality within urban initiatives reshapes the production of anthropological knowledge.

The study is based on multi-sited qualitative fieldwork conducted across initiatives related to informal education, participatory design, and civic cultural production. Methodologically, it combines participant observation, semi-structured interviews, visual and digital ethnography, and a reflexive analysis of the researcher's own involvement in workshops, festivals, and collaborative urban projects. Rather than treating participation as an incidental aspect of fieldwork, the paper conceptualizes the researcher's engagement as a deliberate methodological strategy. This approach allows access to informal networks, temporary collectives, and volunteer-based practices that are characteristic of post-socialist urban environments and difficult to capture through detached observation.

Drawing on traditions of reflexive and positioned anthropology, participant observation, and multi-sited ethnography, the paper demonstrates how knowledge about urban communities is produced through situated interactions, shared tasks, and collective problem-solving. Empirical cases from Southeast European urban initiatives function as methodological laboratories where boundaries between researcher and participant become fluid, and analytical insights emerge from embodied involvement.

The novelty of the research lies in its systematic integration of auto-reflexive participation into the methodological core of urban anthropology in post-socialist contexts. The paper argues that contemporary project-based, networked, and event-driven forms of civic action require methodological frameworks that acknowledge the researcher's embeddedness, proposing auto-reflexive ethnography as a necessary epistemological shift within the discipline.

Bogdanović Bojana (S4, P13)

Institute of Ethnography SASA, Belgrade, Serbia

Jokanović Milena (S4, P13)

University of Belgrade, Serbia

**BETWEEN SCIENCE, SOCIETY, AND ART:
THE EXHIBITION “HEROINES:
THE STRENGTH OF ROMANI WOMEN”**

This paper presents the challenges involved in creating the exhibition “Heroinas: The Strength of Romani Women” as one of the outcomes of the citizen science research project “Heritage of Emancipation: Empowering Romani Women Networks of Solidarity (HEROINE)”, conducted by the Institute of Ethnography of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SASA), the Romani Women’s Center “Bibija,” and the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, under the auspices of the Center for the Promotion of Science of the Republic of Serbia. Following the mapping of the heritage of Romani women’s emancipation through a participatory community-mapping methodology, the next task was the interpretation and presentation of the project results within the exhibition space of the SASA Gallery of Science and Technology. In this paper, particular emphasis is placed on the collaborative process of the musealization of counter-memory, in which anthropologists, art historians, and collaborators from the Romani community participated on equal terms. The selection of the exhibition content, as well as the mode of its interpretation, resulted from teamwork between researchers and Romani women – that is, between those who traditionally conduct research and those who have traditionally been positioned as research subjects. The process itself challenged established hierarchies between expert and experiential knowledge, author and subject of representation, researcher and interlocutor. In this way, the exhibition became a space of encounter and negotiation between scientific knowledge production, social engagement, and artistic interpretation. Finally, “Heroinas: The Strength of Romani Women” is considered as a medium that simultaneously produces knowledge, empowers the community, and artistically interprets experience, thereby opening questions of methodological shifts in anthropology, particularly regarding participatory and collaborative approaches, as well as the redefinition of relationships between the discipline and other fields of knowledge.

Buchkova Tanya (S3, P11)

PhD Candidate, Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies
with Ethnographic Museum BAS, Sofia, Bulgaria

THE CRIMEAN WAR ON THE PAGES OF NEWSPAPER
“TSARIGRADSKI VESTNIK” (1848-1862)
– RECEPTION AND REFLECTION

The Crimean War (1853-1856) is one of the most significant conflicts in the mid-19th century with profound consequences for the redrawing of Europe's political map and the Balkans, and its echo can be found even in today's conflicts. The study of the war on the pages of “Tsarigradski vestnik” (Tsarigrad newspaper) provides a different perspective on the processes, their reception, and reflection on society and the individual. The newspaper “Tsarigradski vestnik” is an important source of information for the period as it offers a view of the events from both the Ottoman government's point of view and from the perspective of the ordinary citizen. It's a very popular Bulgarian periodical in the 19th century not only in the Ottoman capital, which Bulgarians call Tsarigrad, but also in all major cities of the Ottoman empire and Europe with a Bulgarian population. The newspaper has the longest publishing life of fifteen years (1848-1862) and covers the entire period of the Crimean War and the events before and after. Through analyzing the news and reports in this newspaper, we can understand how the war was perceived by various social groups within Bulgarian society and beyond, and how it affected them personally and globally. The study of the Crimean War through materials in “Tsarigrad Newspaper” provides valuable context for understanding the historical, political, and cultural dynamics of the Balkans in the 19th century. It emphasizes the importance of local media as sources of information and testimonies about significant historical events that shape the future of the region.

Buchowski Michał

Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland

(DE-)IMPERIALIZATION OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE FROM WITHIN EUROCENTRIC EPISTEMIC TRADITIONS

This presentation examines two interrelated phenomena: intellectual puzzles and relations of power within the ethno-anthropological academic enterprise. By juxtaposing them, it seeks to yield unexpected insights. First, the paper scrutinizes the project of de-imperializing ethno-anthropological knowledge from within the very Eurocentric epistemic traditions that enabled anthropology as an empirebuilding discipline and ethnology as a nation-building discipline. It is argued that although contemporary anthropology strives for decolonization and ethnology for the deimperialization of knowledge, and both advocate epistemic plurality, they remain rooted in European modernity and universalist ideas. Therefore, the quandary arises: Can profound epistemic transformation occur through frameworks inherited from the Eurocentric colonial and nationalist knowledge systems that underpin present-day ethno-anthropological modes of thought, or is this attempt to free the discipline from its epistemic and methodological doxa merely an illusion?

Second, it addresses the long-standing hierarchies of knowledge within the ethnoanthropological domain worldwide and attempts to dismantle them. An established pecking order of disciplinary wisdom in Europe is reflected in the still-perceptible differential assessment of knowledge quality produced by ethnology and anthropology. Such a hegemonic view is rooted in existing economic inequalities, judgments about the political situation that conditions academic freedom and creative potential, and inherited symbolic capital. These regional intradisciplinary relations should be understood in the context of the global anthropological scene, in which two essentialized blocs, the Global North and the Global South, have been discursively constructed and opposed to each other. This post-Cold War rearticulation of an old division between the West and the Rest obscures the intricate relations within Europe itself, not only between continental ethnology and general anthropology, but also between the European West and East.

The interplay of these global, regional, and intradisciplinary forces sheds light on the position and relevance of divergent conventions in the ethno-anthropological realm. Complicity, resistance, disobedience, or collaboration create various theoretical constellations ranging from conservative rigorism to convergences to revolutionary epistemic disobedience. Currently circulating fashionable notions such as decolonizing knowledge, challenging singular authority, provincializing Europe, and deromanticizing alterity can function as empty signifiers, taking on different meanings for anthropologists located in different corners of the world, raised in various traditions, having different sensibilities, and interested in divergent forms of decolonization or de-imperialization.

Ćuković Jelena (S1, P3)

University of Belgrade, Serbia

REALITY AS A COLLECTIVE HALLUCINATION?
CONTRIBUTION OF CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY
TO CONTEMPORARY STUDIES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Contemporary theories of human consciousness in cognitive sciences and neurophilosophy abandon the view that perception is a passive registration of the external world. Instead, they turn to the possibility that it is a process of its active construction. Within approaches based on predictive brain theory and enactive cognition, the reality we experience is understood as the result of a constant alignment of sensory experience and predictive models generated by the brain. In some interpretations of these theories, perception is also described as a form of “controlled” or even “collective hallucination”.

Such formulations raise the question of social and cultural dimensions of predictive models that structure the human experience of the world. If perception is largely mediated by expectations and learned patterns of interpretation, then culture is the key framework within which these models are formed, stabilized, and reproduced. It is in this context that cultural anthropology can offer an important contribution to contemporary interdisciplinary discussions about consciousness.

I intend to bring contemporary discussions about the predictive nature of perception into dialogue with long-term anthropological reflections on the cultural shaping of the experience of reality. In my presentation, I will discuss how anthropological theories of perception, space, and environment can contribute to modern theories of consciousness and why the inclusion of a cultural perspective is key to understanding how people collectively constitute reality.

Delić Vesna (S4, P14)

Independent Researcher, Podgorica, Montenegro

**“A GODMOTHER IS NO BUTTON!”
– AN ANTHROPOLOGIST AMONG THE ROMA**

This presentation problematizes the choice of a field of scholarly activity and the professional development of a graduate ethnologist and anthropologist, as well as the way in which this choice has influenced both professional and personal positioning within society. The aim is to present, after nearly twenty years spent among the Roma community in Montenegro, the complex processes between the researcher and minority groups, in which the anthropologist is identified by Roma people as one of their own, while simultaneously being marginalized by the majority society and institutions, just as the Roma themselves are. By choosing Roma socio-cultural systems as a subject of study, anthropologists become a “trigger” for the expression of attitudes and markers of ethnic affiliation in situations where they are no longer conducting research, but themselves become the subject of inquiry. Through years of analyzing situational relationships in which I participated, a series of questions emerged, among them: To what extent does research on marginalized communities stigmatize the researcher as well? How much has this juxtaposition contributed to the quality of scholarly work? What is the role and function of anthropologists within the social system to which they themselves belong? And besides “protecting” their interlocutors, do anthropologists primarily protect one another?

Desy Alexandra (S3, P9)

Postdoctoral researcher, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain

Marre Diana (S3, P9)

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain

APPLYING ANTHROPOLOGY TO REPRODUCTIVE MEDICINE: BRIDGING RESEARCH AND PATIENT SUPPORT

Assisted reproductive technologies (ART) are integrated into highly specialised medical systems in which the technical and biomedical aspects of treatment often take precedence over the socio-cultural and relational dimensions of reproductive experiences. Ethnographic research conducted in fertility clinics in Barcelona highlights how patients undergoing assisted reproductive treatments face fragmented care pathways, multiple professional interlocutors, and a wide range of non-medical concerns related to kinship, identity, family formation, and decision-making. These dimensions, although fundamental to patients' well-being, are rarely addressed in the clinical setting.

Drawing on long-term research conducted by the AFIN Research Group (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona), this article examines how anthropological knowledge can be translated into applied practices within reproductive healthcare. It presents an award-winning anthropological support service developed by the AFIN Research Group to accompany both patients and healthcare professionals throughout assisted reproduction processes. Based on qualitative methods and ethnographic approaches, this initiative aims to address the gaps produced by the fragmentation of reproductive care, providing culturally informed support, facilitating communication between patients and professionals, and offering guidance on the social implications of reproductive technologies.

By analysing this initiative as a form of research transfer and public engagement, this paper reflects on the broader social role of anthropology in contemporary healthcare contexts. It argues that anthropological perspectives contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of health as encompassing social well-being, and demonstrates how the theoretical and methodological tools of anthropology can be mobilised to address practical challenges related to reproduction. In 2021, the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA) awarded the AFIN-ART Support Service with the first prize of the Annual Apply Awards to the best applied anthropology project.

Džuževa Jevgenija (S2, P6)

PhD Candidate, University of Belgrade, Serbia

Kartalija Emilija (S2, P6)

PhD Candidate, Institute of Ethnography SASA, Belgrade, Serbia

EVGILIJE: THE POPULARIZATION OF SCIENCE AND ART IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

In the contemporary public and media sphere, scientific and professional knowledge is often presented in a fragmented manner, through the prism of current social and political issues, while research, processes of knowledge production, and the specificities of individual disciplines rarely come into focus. Proceeding from the assumption that the topics addressed by ethnologists and anthropologists have the potential to be highly accessible to a broader audience, as well as to serve as a basis for wider interdisciplinary dialogue, the project *Evgilije* was established.

The cycle of popular science lectures *Evgilije* has been running since April 2025 and is intended for the general public. Within the framework of the series, public events are organized once a month at the Belgrade City Library, bringing together experts from various fields – including ethnology, anthropology, medicine, pharmacy, architecture, and the arts – who present their research, topics, and professional practices. The aim of these events is to bring contemporary scientific and artistic knowledge closer to a wider audience in an accessible and unbiased manner, free from pseudoscientific narratives and daily political interpretations. Following each lecture, the audience completes an anonymous evaluation questionnaire, enabling continuous assessment of the quality of the content, organization, and participants, as well as further adaptation of the program to the interests and needs of the audience.

This paper examines the *Evgilije* project as an example of a contemporary approach that integrates public engagement, interdisciplinary collaboration, and the communication of knowledge beyond academic frameworks. Particular attention is given to the potential of such formats to enhance the visibility of scientific disciplines, foster dialogue between different professional fields, and build trust between researchers and the public. From a comparative perspective, the paper also considers similar projects in Anglophone and

Russian contexts, where such models of public science communication are widely accepted and popular. In this sense, the project is viewed as a relevant example of practices that align with the thematic framework of the conference and open space for reflecting on the social role of ethnologists, anthropologists, and other experts in contemporary society.

Dražeta Bogdan (S2, P7)

University of Belgrade, Serbia

RESEARCH ON BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
WITHIN SERBIAN ETHNOLOGY
AND ANTHROPOLOGY

Research on Bosnia and Herzegovina within Serbian ethnology and anthropology has been less represented compared to studies of other regions within the present-day territories of the Republic of Serbia and Montenegro. This is the result not only of political and social developments from the late 19th century onward – beginning with Austro-Hungarian rule and the later formation of the Yugoslav Kingdom – but also of the scientific-administrative regionalization established during the period of Yugoslav socialism. During that time, a widespread museum network was developed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, while academic engagement with ethnology was not fully institutionalized. The breakup of the former Yugoslavia further deepened this academic gap, but also gave rise to a number of local museum ethnologists who began studying the traditional culture of Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats. A relatively small number of ethnologists and anthropologists from Serbia remains today, as well as from other countries of the former Yugoslavia, Europe, and beyond, who focus on Bosnia and Herzegovina, compared to other parts of the Balkan Peninsula and Southeast Europe. In addition to these issues, this paper focuses on how Serbian ethnology and anthropology can engage in dialogue with local researchers from Bosnia and Herzegovina – both from the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska – thereby creating space for scientific, institutional, and broader forms of collaboration.

Djermanovic Radmila (S3, P9)

PhD Candidate, University of Belgrade, Serbia

Moens de Hase Flavia (S3, P9)

Mott MacDonald, Madrid, Spain

APPLICATION OF ETHNOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY IN INTERNATIONAL CONSULTANCY – A CASE STUDY

Social scientists worldwide are trained for academic work, theoretical inquiry, research and teaching, with the expansion of the range of potential application of our training and knowledge. Our paper will present one such niche: international social performance consultancy in the energy sector. This field requires navigation through large volumes of information, international regulation and guidance such as the International Finance Corporation Performance Standards, functioning between globalised and local realities – for which the social sciences education provides the appropriate foundations. This includes understanding of the basic technical concepts of the projects in question and their socio-economic, political and environmental aspects, which enables us to engage in them effectively. The case study will be based on the operations of the global consulting company Mott MacDonald in which the authors are engaged as social performance experts.

Firstly, we will showcase the diversity of social practice roles within our company – our responsibilities, methods, and practice goals. We will map the range of activities undertaken by social practitioners – anthropologists, sociologists, geographers and other related disciplines. This includes their contributions to generating social value across projects and their expertise in subjects such as social impact assessment, accessibility and inclusion, Indigenous Peoples, resettlement, ecosystem services, labour management plans, cultural heritage and human rights impact assessment – to name but a few.

Secondly, to illustrate how these roles unfold in practice, we offer the insiders' point of view in presenting the preparation of a Livelihood Restoration Plan (LRP) for a regional wind farm project. Through participant observation, field engagement, data gathering and interpretation and iterative problem-solving, we see how social expertise shapes infrastructure projects in ways that are both pragmatic and critically informed.

Together, these two perspectives – structural overview and practical example – reveal some of the ways in which social sciences can thrive within a business environment. Far from being confined to academia, the social sciences prove to be deeply relevant in addressing contemporary development challenges, offering insights that help reconcile global frameworks with the lived experiences of people. Through such involvement, social science practitioners can actively contribute to a more just global transition to cleaner and renewable energy sources.

Dorđević Crnobrnja Jadranka (S4, P15)

Institute of Ethnography SASA, Belgrade, Serbia

THE PLURALISM OF IDENTITY PRACTICES
AS AN INTERGENERATIONAL PROCESS:
THE CASE OF THE GORANI COMMUNITY
IN SERBIA

This paper examines the issue of the pluralism of identity practices among members of the Gorani minority community in the Republic of Serbia. It proceeds from the assumption that the intergenerational transmission of knowledge, beliefs, social and cultural practices, as well as models of expressing collective belonging, is shaped by specific historical, social, and political circumstances. Within this framework, the paper explores the ways in which different generations within the Gorani community negotiate between local, cultural, religious, and civic forms of identity. Particular attention is devoted to social and cultural practices and to migration experiences, through which older generations transmit symbolic capital to younger ones. The pluralism of identity is understood as a dynamic and situationally conditioned process. The paper seeks to highlight the dynamic relationship between continuity and change in the construction of minority identity. At the same time, it aims to demonstrate that the pluralism of identity practices represents both a concept and the outcome of continuous negotiation between inherited patterns, collective and individual experiences, and the influence of social factors operating within a given historical context. The paper contributes to ethnological and anthropological research on minority communities, as well as to a broader understanding of minority identity policies in the post-socialist society of Serbia.

Đukić Danijela (S5, P19)

JU Museum and Gallery Tivat, Montenegro

**MUSEUMS
IN THE AGE OF GLOBAL CHANGE**

This paper examines the contemporary position of museums in light of disciplinary transformations in ethnology and anthropology, with a particular focus on the challenges these institutions face in the postsocialist period. Drawing on the theoretical framework of critical heritage studies, the paper problematizes the traditional role of museums as guardians of national identity in contrast to contemporary demands for democratization, inclusivity, and the deconstruction of grand narratives.

The study focuses on the question of how museum institutions today exist between a dual positioning: inherited national expectations and contemporary international museological standards that emphasize reflexivity and public engagement. Museums are increasingly transforming from spaces of static cultural representation into active arenas for dialogue on crises, migration, sustainability, and climate change. The organization of public forums within museums has become a necessity in a society saturated with information disseminated through media outlets, online portals, and the internet.

Particular attention is devoted to the relationship between museums and local communities, as well as to the ways in which old and new cultural identities are constructed through intangible cultural heritage. The aim of the paper is to highlight the potential of museums as key sites for applied anthropology, where the theoretical insights of the discipline directly intersect with public discourse and the needs of contemporary society.

Đurić Milovanović Aleksandra (S4, P15)

Institute for Balkan Studies SASA, Belgrade, Serbia

**RECOGNIZED BUT NOT EQUAL:
RELIGIOUS MINORITIES AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL SHIFTS
IN POSTSOCIALIST ANTHROPOLOGY**

This presentation proceeds from the thesis that the ways in which religious minorities have been studied and conceptualized in postsocialist societies constitute an important reflection of epistemological shifts within ethnology and cultural anthropology. Although after the 1990s religious minorities have been formally recognized as legitimate social actors, their social position remains marked by persistent forms of symbolic marginalization, selective visibility, and unequal access to the public sphere. This paradox of “recognition without equality” pertains not only to the social status of religious minorities, but also to the ways in which they are positioned within society and to the nature of society’s relationship toward them. The paper analyzes changes in theoretical frameworks and research perspectives in approaching religious minorities in postsocialist anthropology – from earlier ethnological and nationally oriented models, through cultural-anthropological analyses of identity and pluralism, to contemporary approaches that situate religion within a broader field of politics, law, and transnational networks. Particular attention is devoted to Neo-Protestant communities as an analytical “testing ground” for these epistemological shifts, given that they often elude dominant narratives of religion, nation, and tradition. Based on ethnographic and archival research conducted in postsocialist contexts in the Balkans, the paper demonstrates how the anthropology of religion is shifting from a descriptive study of “otherness” toward a critical re-examination of its own role in processes of recognition, legitimation, and the production of knowledge about religious minorities, thereby opening space for a broader discussion on the contemporary social relevance of the discipline.

Erdei Ildiko (S3, P10)

University of Belgrade, Serbia

Sztandara Magdalena (S3, P10)

Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland

LABORATORY OF COLLABORATION: TRANSFORMATIVE FIELD PRACTICES AS A SPACE OF SHARED KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

Starting with an assumption that the classroom is a potentially transformative space, we propose to consider it as a specific kind of laboratory for the collaborative creation and testing of knowledge. In this presentation, we discuss experiences from international cooperation in organizing student fieldwork research conducted together with ethnology and anthropology students from Belgrade and Kraków during the period 2018–2022.

The implemented projects was of an experimental character and were based on the principles of “research-based learning,” connecting innovative research approaches with new forms of presenting results. At the same time, they functioned as spaces of laboratory work in which we examined the possibilities of crossing “boundaries” in various forms: between theory and practice, science and art, between different historical and social backgrounds of our disciplines, and even the personal comfort boundaries that anthropological fieldwork often entails. These projects also proved to be fertile ground for creating academic friendships and maintaining long-term cooperation and support as alternatives to the hierarchical and competitive models of knowledge production embedded in dominant academic regimes. In this sense, they fit within the framework of “transformative pedagogy” (Freire, Shor 1987; hooks 1994), as a form of shared emancipatory action and a “practice of freedom” (cf. hooks 1994).

Fehér Viktor (S2, P5)

University of Novi Sad, Serbia

THE SCIENTIFIC APPROACH AND
RESEARCH DIRECTIONS OF HUNGARIAN
ETHNOLOGISTS AND FOLKLORISTS IN YUGOSLAVIA
BETWEEN 1945 AND 1989

In my presentation, I will undertake an analytical presentation of the works, research directions, and scientific approaches of ethnologists publishing in Hungarian, primarily folklorists, from the period following World War II until the end of the 1980s. I am interested in the socio-political circumstances under which Hungarian ethnographic research in Yugoslavia came into being and became institutionalized, as well as the scientific, political, domestic (Yugoslavian) and foreign (primarily Hungarian) trends that shaped the researchers' approaches and research directions.

In 1959, the Department of Hungarian Language and Literature was established at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Novi Sad to train the Hungarian intellectual elite in Yugoslavia, and in 1969, the Institute of Hungarian Studies was founded. These were the institutions that created the framework for researching Hungarian traditional culture in Yugoslavia. In my interpretation, it was the university lecturers and research institute staff who determined the knowledge of their own group's history and culture.

The continuation of these processes seems to have already dispensed with the category of "Yugoslav Hungarians" and to have established the category of Hungarians in Vojvodina, who took on the representation of the group in their marked political involvement after 1989, where, under the umbrella of increased material and socio-political support from Hungary, the forms and goals of knowledge and knowledge production about their own culture are being put at the service of the survival of the Hungarian minority under the changed conditions of the state system. However, in order to examine these processes, I believe it is necessary to gain a deeper understanding of the scientific outlook of the period between 1945 and 1989, which I will attempt to do in my presentation.

Fotić Jelisaveta (S4, P16)

PhD Candidate, University of Belgrade, Serbia

A CRITICAL VIEW OF THE CONCEPTS OF BIOSOCIALITY AND BIOSOLIDARITY IN POSTSOCIALIST CONTEXTS

This paper examines the phenomenon of the development of new forms of community and interpersonal relations among people with chronic illnesses. More specifically, by following two diabetes associations – in Belgrade and Zagreb – the paper critically reexamines the applicability of the concepts of biosociality and biosolidarity to the postsocialist context. After Paul Rabinow and Bridget Bradley coined these terms, researchers applied them almost exclusively to examples from economically developed Western societies, concluding that stable ties, kinship-like feelings of closeness, and a need for activist engagement develop among people with the same illnesses. This paper reexamines the influence of postsocialist neoliberalization, that is, the transformation of the role of the state in healthcare systems, on the formation of relations among people with the same illness and on their involvement in patient associations, thereby also reexamining the very understanding of biosociality and biosolidarity. The research is based on fieldwork, interviews with members of the associations, and participant observation of association activities. The results show that instead of stable biosocial and biosolidary ties, interlocutors articulate fragile forms of community emerging through empathy, interdependence, and continuous work on maintaining relationships in conditions of institutional shortcomings in healthcare. The analysis demonstrates that biosociality and biosolidarity in this context are not fixed and stable social categories, but positions that are constantly negotiated through everyday encounters, shared activities, and moral economies of care. The importance of this paper lies in the nuanced reconsideration of the theoretical concepts of biosociality and biosolidarity, necessary for researching contexts that do not fit into the matrix of Western societies.

Gorunović Gordana (S2, P7)

University of Belgrade, Serbia

LITERARY ANTHROPOLOGY AND/OR
THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF LITERATURE?
PROBLEMS OF DEFINING A SUBDISCIPLINE

This presentation examines whether the differences between literary anthropology and the anthropology of literature are purely terminological or whether they reflect deeper semantic and conceptual distinctions in approach, subject matter, and methodology. The point of departure is a review and critical analysis of key works in anthropology and literary theories, combined with a reflection on the author's own pedagogical experience teaching a course on the anthropology of literature, as well as an overview of the development of literary studies within Serbian ethnology and anthropology. The theoretical discussion outlines the historical premises and paradigms that have shaped both perspectives. In addition to cases of overlap in the content designated by these terms, literary anthropology is sometimes defined as a discipline that employs anthropological concepts to interpret literary texts, and at other times as an anthropological subdiscipline that emphasizes the literariness and stylistic qualities of anthropological and ethnographic writing akin to literature. The anthropology of literature, by contrast, entails the study of literature as a social and cultural-institutional phenomenon within an anthropological framework. A third option is identified in the form of a hybrid discourse that involves the use of literary works and texts for diverse and freely selected purposes within the research and interpretative practices of the social sciences and humanities. Through an analysis of terminological usage, methodological preferences, and research questions, the paper identifies points of overlap (e.g., interests in ritual, symbolism, and individual and collective narratives), as well as differences (e.g., theoretical orientation, the status of the text within research, and the aims of interpretation).

Habinc Mateja (S1, P2)

University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

STUDYING ETHNOLOGY AND CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY IN CONTEMPORARY SLOVENIA

In 2025, the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, celebrated 85 years of existence. Although the Chair of Ethnology and Ethnography had already been envisaged when the University of Ljubljana was established in 1919, it was only on 22 November 1940 that Niko Zupanič delivered the first lecture. The winter semester began with his lectures entitled *The Beginnings of Slavs and Slavic Nations*, as well as a seminar practicum, both planned for the following three interwar years. It is not clear whether they actually took place, but we do know that Zupanič left Ljubljana in 1943, and that lectures at the department resumed in the winter semester of the 1946/47 academic year and have continued ever since. In the meantime, the conceptualisation of the profession changed – from an auxiliary historical and humanistic discipline, it developed into a social science, interested in contemporaneity and power relations. The department last renamed itself at the beginning of the 1990s, when cultural anthropology appeared in its name; however, major changes to its curricula were brought about by the Bologna system introduced at the beginning of the new millennium. The most recent major changes to the study programmes, which adapted the study of ethnology and cultural anthropology to various sociopolitical circumstances as well as the changing landscape of university education in Slovenia, were introduced a couple of years ago. The presentation will therefore reflect current study programmes at the department, present other possibilities for studying ethnology and anthropology in Slovenia, and highlight limitations and some challenges the profession faces in contemporary Slovenia.

Hann Chris

Max Planck Institute, Halle (Saale), Germany

ETHNOLOGY, PEOPLEHOOD AND TRAINS,
1880S-2020S

Established in the 1880s, little changed throughout the 20th century, struggling to meet international standards by the turn of the 21st, in need of radical modernization by the 2020s: does the history of the railway joining Budapest and Belgrade have a parallel in the history of scientific ethnology? Thanks to Chinese investments, the train connection is now much faster. This lecture will explore the history and conceptual infrastructure of ethnology. Is Budapest's new Ethnographic Museum a shining example of how the discipline can change from within? Or is fresh intellectual investment from outside the field needed to attain the scientific equivalent of the high-speed locomotives? If so, where should the necessary resources come from?

Hou Xiaochen (S6, P21)

PhD Candidate, University of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences,
Beijing, China

A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON
CULTURAL HERITAGE RESEARCH:
FROM ONTOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION
TO EMPOWERMENT ANALYSIS

Early research within the international academic community and related disciplines indicates that the established tradition of “ontological description” struggles to address the novel phenomena and challenges emerging during the “traditional-modern” transition of cultural heritage. This approach fails to adequately comprehend the self-sustaining logic of cultural heritage development within the modern context, nor does it offer effective explanations for the evolution and growth of fine traditional Chinese culture in new and creative ways in the new era.

From the perspective of the great tradition of Chinese culture, once culture exists, it can begin to empower. Against the backdrop of societal transformation, culture and economy are deeply integrated, while tradition coexists harmoniously with modernity. Contemporary heritage studies not only address the local social contexts and regional cultural ecosystems associated with heritage itself, but also engages with the developmental path chosen by Chinese culture, the transformation of socio-economic development models, and the significant mission of enhancing national discursive power and constructing an independent knowledge system within a global perspective. Therefore, cultural heritage studies are not merely an ontological discipline but also a field of social development closely intertwined with cultural heritage. To this end, we should adopt a new perspective on cultural heritage research, shifting the focus from “ontological description” towards “empowerment analysis”. By constructing an academic discourse aligned with societal transformation across both epistemological and practical dimensions, collectively explore new directions for the future development of cultural heritage studies.

Hristov Petko (S2, P5)

Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, Sofia, Bulgaria

NEW ETHNOLOGY IN A NEW EUROPE.
CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY AND
CULTURAL MEMORY IN THE CONDITIONS OF
PAN-EUROPEAN MOBILITY

The beginning of the new millennium has posed new challenges for ethnologists in the Balkans. The disintegration in 1990s of multi-national states such as Yugoslavia and the USSR, the drawing of new dividing lines in the process of EU enlargement, and the protracted candidacies of Turkey and the Western Balkan countries have drastically transformed the map of Southeastern Europe. The subject of ethnological research has changed dramatically, and the construction of multidimensional identities in European countries has become the rule, not the exception. In Ukraine, new identities are taking place in the context of the most acute armed conflict in Europe since WW II, accompanied by millions of refugees seeking asylum in EU countries.

In the context of pan-European mobility, the nature of national identity, as well as the attitude towards cultural heritage and historical memory (often understood as “national tradition”), is changing dramatically. The questions facing ethnological research in Europe, and especially in the Balkans, are becoming more numerous, and the search for answers is becoming more and more responsible. The presentation shares some observations in this regard from a Balkan perspective, related to the dynamically changing subject of our research.

Hysa Armanda (S2, P8)

Center for Historical and Anthropological Research, Tirana, Albania

UNTIL WE MEET FIRST:
K-CULTURE (SOUTH KOREAN SOFT POWER)
AND ALBANIAN YOUTH

In the summer of 2024, while browsing recent updates from friends on Instagram, I encountered a post that had gone viral. LKA – Let's Korean Albania, a South Korean community association operating in Albania, was organizing a "Korean Day in Albania," featuring a variety of activities related to Korean cuisine and consumer products, K-pop, K-dramas, the Korean language (Hangul), and the wearing of traditional Korean attire – hanbok for both girls and boys. To my surprise, the large hall hosting the event, located on the outskirts of the capital, became fully crowded within minutes.

The majority of participants were teenagers – predominantly girls, though boys were also present – alongside a notable number of adults in their thirties and forties. These adults attended not merely as companions to their children but actively engaged in the activities themselves. Food products sold out within an hour, as participants, already familiar with Korean cuisine, eagerly purchased ramyeon (Korean instant noodles), tteokbokki (a dish of rice cakes characteristic of Korean cuisine), and kimchi (spicy fermented vegetables). The most sought-after product was Kopiko caramel coffee candy, widely recognized from its frequent appearance in K-dramas.

While dressed in hanbok and consuming Kopiko, groups of girls took photographs and, laughing, repeated a well-known line from K-dramas: "Are you tired? Here, have a Kopiko to get some energy." A significant number of the teenagers present could read Korean and were familiar with basic vocabulary, much to the surprise of the Korean staff in attendance. The event continued with adolescents forming circles to sing and dance to K-pop songs by groups such as BTS, Blackpink, and Enhypen. The winner of a K-pop quiz competition was awarded an original BTS album as a prize.

This presentation seeks to move beyond conventional discussions and themes within Balkan ethnology and anthropology. It highlights how non-Western soft powers – emanating from regions with limited historical, cultural, political, or economic ties to the Balkans – are reshaping the ways in which Albanian youth perceive the world.

Young people are increasingly engaging with distant cultural traditions, languages, and customs, while participating in global fandoms, particularly the ARMY fandom associated with BTS, and expressing a growing desire for access to Korean products that remain scarce in local markets.

Through this research, I propose an opportunity for Balkan ethnologists to move beyond binary debates of insiderness and outsiderhood and instead focus on the rapidly shifting cultural realities encountered by younger generations.

Ilić Vladimira (S2, P6)

University of Belgrade, Serbia

Ilić Vladana (S2, P6)

Independent Research Associate, Belgrade, Serbia

Kulenović Nina (S2, P6)

University of Belgrade, Serbia

ETHNOLOGISTS AND ANTHROPOLOGISTS IN AN "IVORY TOWER"? (SELF-)POSITIONING IN THE DOMESTIC PUBLIC SPHERE

When not reduced solely to ethnology as the study and preservation of national culture and tradition, ethnology and anthropology – understood as the recording, investigation, and analysis of sociocultural reality, as a comparative science of alternatives to the prevailing sociocultural order, or as cultural critique – are excluded from the key frameworks through which, in the domestic context, not only the dissemination, (re)production, and transformation of sociocultural reality take place, but also its analytical, symbolic, or critical treatment. Ethnology and anthropology are not only excluded from domestic primary and secondary education, but are also rarely present in the domestic public sphere as a whole. Taking as its contextual backdrop the growing body of interdisciplinary scholarship produced through the lens of the subdiscipline of public anthropology, the aim of this paper is to explore ethnologists' and anthropologists' own representations of their (self-) positioning within the domestic public sphere, and to map the causes, reasons, and consequences of this (self-) positioning. The material for analysis will be collected through semi-structured interviews with members of the Department of Ethnology and Anthropology at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade. The interpretive lens is focused on this group because it possesses socioculturally legitimized capital on the basis of which it can strongly influence the generation, transformation, and distribution of representations of its own discipline – its role, function, and interpretive powers – both within the academic sphere and beyond it. This is a group that possesses the social and symbolic capital to, through the reproduction of academic staff and the production of new members of the ethnological-anthropological community, simultaneously participate in the production of representations of the community to which it belongs and which it produces, both within the academic community itself and within the wider public sphere.

Ivković Saša (S6, P23)

PhD Candidate, University of Belgrade, Serbia

THE STUDY OF MATERIAL CULTURE IN DOMESTIC ETHNOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

The study of material culture began with the very beginnings of anthropology as an independent discipline. In fact, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the three basic anthropological fields in the West could be identified as material culture, social organization, and physical anthropology. From the first expeditions at the end of the nineteenth century to contemporary approaches, the study of material culture has gone through different interpretative phases, while definitions of material culture have changed with each generation of anthropologists.

On the other hand, in domestic scholarship, material culture long retained an exclusively descriptive character. More or less detailed descriptions of the external characteristics of objects served for different classifications, while their functions, areas of distribution, and similar aspects were studied. Certain theoretical breakthroughs made during the 1970s and 1980s were more exceptions than the rule, so approaches to the study of material culture remained unchanged somewhat longer than approaches in some other ethnological and anthropological fields. However, these breakthroughs laid the foundations for the theoretical expansion of topics related to material culture, which later caught up with contemporary global theoretical frameworks. In this paper I will attempt to provide a historical overview of ethnological and anthropological engagements with material culture through a comparison of Western European and American scientific trends with domestic ones.

Jiang Mei (S1, P1)

PhD Candidate, Yunnan University, Kunming, China

NATION, STATE, AND SOCIETY:
FOUNDATIONAL CATEGORIES AND BASIC PROBLEMS
IN THE TRANSFORMATION OF
ETHNIC THEORY AND METHOD

The foundational concepts of nation, state, and society deeply shape how research objects are constructed, how problem consciousness is formed, how analytical scales are selected, and how evidence is organized, thereby defining the pathways and boundaries of knowledge production in ethnology. This paper addresses three interrelated problems. First, it revisits the foundational debate over what a nation is, examining three major conceptualizations of the nation – as a historical formation, an imagined community, and an objectively existing socio-cultural form – and their respective epistemological consequences. Second, it analyzes the reconfiguration of theories of the nation–state relationship in cross-border contexts, focusing on two analytical pathways: “nation–state” and “state–nation.” Third, it explores how these conceptual frameworks shape the epistemological transformation of social scientific observation, especially as research objects expand to transregional networks and digital platform spaces, thus requiring a reconstruction of the relations among concepts, scales, and evidence.

The paper argues that the key to the contemporary transformation of ethnic theory and method lies not in abandoning the triad of nation–state–society, but in shifting it from a taken-for-granted analytical tool to a reflexive object of analysis. Such a move can foster deeper innovation in ethnology at both the theoretical and methodological levels within contemporary anthropology.

Kapeš Robert (S5, P18)

Ludberg Town Museum, Ludberg, Croatia

**FROM THEORY TO FIELDWORK:
THE ROLE OF ETHNOLOGISTS IN SHAPING CULTURAL
POLICIES AND HERITAGE PRESERVATION**

Applied ethnology plays a crucial role in the preservation of cultural heritage and the shaping of cultural policies within local communities. This paper examines the role of ethnology in the local community of Ludbreg, with particular emphasis on its contribution to heritage preservation and public engagement. It analyzes how ethnological approaches, especially through participatory models, enable the active involvement of communities in the processes of preserving and reinterpreting cultural customs and traditions. Drawing on concrete examples from practice – such as exhibitions, publications, and cultural projects – the paper explores the role of participatory museums as platforms that allow communities not only to preserve heritage but also to shape cultural identity grounded in shared values. Special attention is given to museum practices in Ludbreg, where local residents are actively involved in the creation of exhibitions and educational content, thereby fostering dynamic and relevant interpretations of cultural heritage. The participatory approach in the museum context contributes to the sustainability of cultural practices by enabling the community to become an active agent in cultural production. Using methodological frameworks from ethnology and anthropology, the paper investigates the application of theoretical insights in practice, linking academic approaches with the needs of the local community. It also addresses the challenges of preserving traditional customs and values in the post-socialist period, which has brought significant changes to the media, consumer, and cultural landscape. Research narratives often reveal a sense of nostalgia for socialist era, perceived as “better times,” while museum institutions strive to adapt their activities to processes of globalization and digitalization. This creates a certain tension between tradition and contemporary modes of presentation, while simultaneously expanding the reach of cultural heritage through digital channels to broader audiences. This paper contributes to a deeper understanding of the role of ethnological disciplines in shaping cultural policies and promoting active community engagement in heritage preservation, highlighting the importance of ethnological approaches in the transformation of local cultural spaces and social practices.

Karamijalković Nenad (S4, P15)

Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments Kragujevac, Serbia

SCIENTIFIC HYPOTHESES ON THE ORIGIN OF THE SERBS IN PUBLIC DISCOURSE – HISTORICAL AND RECENT CHALLENGES

This paper presents a description of scientific hypotheses regarding the origin of the Serbs, as well as an analysis of their (mis)use in Serbian public discourse, especially from the end of the twentieth century onward.

Most theories concerning the origin of the Serbs, emerging from the late nineteenth century onward, generally follow two directions in interpreting ethnogenetic processes. The first, provisionally called the classical approach, seeks the bearers of the Serbian name (though not exclusively) among Slavic ethnic groups that migrated to the Balkan Peninsula during the early Middle Ages. The second, provisionally called the autochthonous approach, connects the Serbian ethnos more closely with Balkan, and more broadly European, indigenous communities whose roots extend back to Antiquity and even prehistory. Within these directions there are further divisions, although the first is generally associated with a critical and more objective approach, while the second is associated with a constructionist and more subjective approach. In other words, the origin of the Serbs (as well as other Balkan peoples) was initially predominantly studied by Serbian/Yugoslav historians and ethnologists within state academic institutions, more or less following established methodological principles of critical source analysis and processing of materials. However, during periods of national and political crisis, scholars with alternative approaches also appeared, gaining increasing support among the general public. As supporters of this second option gradually gained more space in Serbian public discourse, especially with the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the rapid expansion of mass media, relations between advocates of the classical and autochthonous theses regarding the origin of the Serbs became increasingly polarized.

The paper seeks to analyze different models of approaching the public/citizenship employed by these two groups (traditions), as well as the dangers arising from “ceding the field” to proponents of ethno-historical populism, which reduces the possibility of understanding the issue of Serbian ethnogenesis and, consequently, understanding neighboring nations and ethnic groups.

Katarinčić Ivana (S5, P20)

Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research, Zagreb, Croatia

ETHNOCHOREOLOGY BASED ON ETHNOLOGY AND CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Within the disciplines of ethnology, folkloristics, and ethnomusicology, inspired by the 19th-century idea of preserving the (original) tradition of music and dance, ethnochoreology, a special sub-discipline of ethnology and cultural anthropology, was developed in the Institute of Ethnology and Folkloristics in Zagreb. With a focus on human movement and dance as the primary subject of research, ethnochoreology takes unique research methods from the disciplines it relies on. Along with ethnochoreology, dance research is conducted within related disciplines such as dance anthropology, dance ethnology and ethnography, anthropology of human movement, dance studies (within cultural studies), or performance studies. In addition to being marked by different terms, the mentioned disciplines partly differ in their approaches: they are connected in a different manner with other disciplines and are especially historically oriented to different aspects of dance research. In the presentation, I will analytically present the basic historical stages of the development of ethnochoreology in Croatia and its decisive influence on the development of other disciplines, organizations, institutions, and individuals.

Katić Mario (S3, P10)

University of Zadar, Croatia

Bartulović Alenka (S3, P10)

University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

Džananović Mirza (S3, P10)

University of Zenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina

ETHNOGRAPHIC LABORATORY (ETNOLAB) AS A METHOD FOR TEACHING ETHNOGRAPHY

In this presentation, we introduce and critically examine the five-year work of the Ethnographic Laboratory (EtnoLab) (2021–2026), an educational and research platform designed to bring ethnography closer to students of ethnology, anthropology, and cultural studies through a combination of theoretical discussion and practical fieldwork. EtnoLab has developed as a space for learning ethnographic approaches in locations in Bosnia and Herzegovina marked by polyphony, identity complexity, and rich fieldwork potential for studying everyday life and contemporary social realities. The program includes students and professors from Ljubljana, Zadar, and Zenica, giving the laboratory from its inception a regional and interdisciplinary dimension.

To date, six EtnoLab meetings have been held: two in Vareš, three in Zenica, primarily focused on practical fieldwork, and one in Ljubljana, dedicated to theoretical and methodological discussions. After five years of continuous activity, this presentation offers a reflexive self-analysis of the work conducted so far and opens up questions regarding the role, limitations, and possibilities of EtnoLab as a model for learning ethnography through experience, dialogue, and collective reflection on research practice.

Katić Mario (S6, P21)

University of Zadar, Croatia

Hayden Robert M. (S6, P21)

University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, U.S.

SEDIMENTATIONS AND EROSIONS OF HYBRID RELIGIOUS HERITAGE

Religious heritage in SE Europe reflects a history of changing patterns of interactions between people adhering to different forms of Islam and those adhering to different forms of Christianity and Judaism. Current attributes of specific sites may thus be architectural palimpsests reflecting changes in these interactions. For example, the Church of St. Anthony of Padua in Drniš, Croatia was originally built as a mosque, but was converted into a Catholic church with the expulsion of the Ottomans from the place in the 18th century. On the other hand, the Fetija mosque in Bihać, Bosnia & Hercegovina, had been built in the 13th century as a church dedicated to St. Anthony of Padua, but was converted into a mosque in the late 16th century, when the town fell to the Ottomans. The mosque-church in Drniš and the church-mosque in Bihać are both Ottoman heritage – but they are also Christian heritage. We argue that such structures should not be approached as discrete sites identified as Muslim, Christian or Jewish but rather as nodes in intersecting religioscapes of those communities as they changed through time. Religious heritage – Muslim, Christian and Jewish – manifests in physical form the changing patterns of social and cultural hybridity of states and societies. We argue that such structures should be analyzed in terms of sedimentation and erosion, the physical remains of the shifting tides and currents of interactions between the various communities who have made up the populations of SE Europe since the 14th Century. In our view such sites are hybrid in some ways, such as location and size, even when their structural forms seem to be purely Islamic, Christian or Jewish in style. Methodologically, our approach does not seek to disentangle sacred sites into delineated historical layers, but instead examines how processes of sedimentation and erosion overlap, remain partially visible, and generate a textured field of coexisting meanings across time.

Kerimova Mariyam (S1, P3)

Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russia

ATTITUDES OF RUSSIAN SCHOLARS TOWARD THE THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF ETHNOGRAPHIC SCIENCE IN THE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

This paper will present the evolution of views regarding the subject matter and goals of ethnography, as well as its theoretical foundation as a distinct field of knowledge.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, from the 1830s to the 1850s, Slavophiles, advocating the idea of Slavic reciprocity and the national revival of Slavs living in other countries, significantly influenced the development of Slavic studies as a comprehensive science. University Slavists, in their lectures within departments of history and literature of Slavic dialects, began discussing the subject and content of ethnography as a separate field of study.

The continuation of the empirical phase and the parallel theoretical understanding of the subject and goals of ethnography were connected with the founding of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society and its Department of Ethnography (1848). The fundamental principles of ethnographic science were outlined by N.I. Nadezhdin, K.M. Baer, and K.D. Kavelin.

The First All-Russian Ethnographic Exhibition in Moscow (1867) marked a new phase in the development of ethnography, striving toward scientific, educational, and political goals: the establishment of the Ethnographic Department of the Imperial Society of Natural Science, Anthropology and Ethnography Lovers and the Dashkov Ethnographic Museum, demonstrating the multiethnic and multiconfessional nature of the Russian Empire, as well as the unity of Eastern Slavs and Slavs living in other countries.

The establishment of specialized departments of geography and ethnography at imperial universities (1884) initiated debate regarding the classification of ethnography as either a social or natural science. D.N. Anuchin's article "On the Tasks of Russian Ethnography" (1889), published in the first issue of the journal *Ethnographic Review*, raised questions concerning the history of the emergence of ethnography in Russia, its goals and research principles (Anuchin's

“triad”), and the contribution of Russian scholars to the formation of ethnographic knowledge.

The struggle for the establishment of an independent department of ethnography in Russian higher education institutions and the first textbook, *Ethnography*, by N.N. Kharuzin, addressed the subject area of the discipline and the terms “ethnography,” “ethnology,” and “folk knowledge.”

The results of the discussions (1902, 1916) concerning the subject and tasks of ethnography will also be presented.

Kotnik Lia Lola V. (S1, P3)

University of Primorska, Koper, Slovenia

ANTHROPOLOGY IN AN AGE OF OPEN LYING

In recent years, the normalisation of what can be conceptualised as the open lie has become increasingly visible in political and public spheres. The open lie denotes a blatant, excessive, face-to-face falsehood concerning realities that are easily verifiable and collectively recognisable. It emerges as a defining feature of what may be termed the age of mentirocracy – a socio-political condition in which lying, manipulation, gaslighting, and deception no longer represent a deviation from communicative norms but increasingly function as a governing logic of public communication. This paper examines the role of anthropology in an age in which epistemic authority is performatively reconfigured and truth is not merely contested but openly undermined, destabilised, and redefined. It is argued that the contemporary open liar can be understood as a truthifier, classifier, and authoritifier: this figure does not merely distort facts but actively restructures regimes of truth, systems of classification, and hierarchies of legitimacy. These processes profoundly affect how communities define reality, authority, belonging, and knowledge. Situating the analysis within European and especially post-socialist contexts, the paper explores how anthropology – historically positioned between national projects and transnational epistemic standards – can critically examine emerging “classification struggles” and shifting regimes of credibility. In societies marked by institutional distrust, political polarisation, and media-tised populism, open lying and transparent manipulation become embedded in everyday social practice, identity politics, and state–citizen relations. In the present conjuncture, anthropology’s relevance lies in its capacity to reflexively and ethnographically trace how truths and lies are socially produced, contested, embodied, mediatised, and institutionalised. Rather than defending abstract notions of truth, anthropology can analyse the cultural logics, moral economies, and affective infrastructures that sustain mentirocratic communication. In doing so, anthropology demonstrates its critical relevance as a humanistic discipline uniquely equipped to study the social life of truth-telling and lying in times of epistemic instability.

Kotseva Violeta (S6, P21)

Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Sofia, Bulgaria

**CONTEXTUALIZATION AND USE OF SACRED PLACES IN
MODERN TIMES. THE CASE OF STRANDZHA MOUNTAIN,
BULGARIA**

The report presents the results of field research conducted over the past three years in the Bulgarian part of Strandzha Mountain, and focuses on sacred sites and objects in the region. In the context of the demographic collapse, isolation and border position of the region, sacred sites acquire a new symbolic value and are understood in a new and different way. This leads to their revival and new value in the cultural map of the region. A comparison is made of their role and importance in the recent past and their current state in order to highlight changes and explore the reasons for this.

The whole process is placed in the context of the specific situation in the Strandzha region and its imposed new vision as a sacred place. Insofar as this vision reflects the external view, the role of the local residents in this process is sought.

The research was conducted using the methods of ethnology and cultural anthropology, conducting structured and semi-structured interviews, but also using interdisciplinary methodology from the fields of history, demography and statistics.

Kozarev Aleksandra (S5, P19)

National Museum Zrenjanin, Serbia

**BETWEEN PRODUCTION AND MEMORY:
MUSEALIZATION OF SOCIALIST INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE
ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE ETHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT
OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM ZRENJANIN**

This presentation aims to introduce the initial research questions, the results of fieldwork, and further plans related to the musealization of the heritage of the Zrenjanin textile industry from the period of Yugoslav (post)socialism. As the curator of the Ethnology Department of the National Museum Zrenjanin, I am currently working on documenting the oral histories of former factory workers, collecting objects and other relevant materials in order to establish a new museum collection. Within its existing collections, the Ethnology Department preserves nearly four thousand objects, whose common characteristic is that they represent traditional ways of living, dressing, and economic activity, that is, they were created and used during the period when Central Banat was predominantly an agrarian area with a present, though insufficiently developed, industry. An analysis of the previous exhibition and publishing activities of the department's curators also confirms their focus on the study of (im)material elements of traditional culture. In the post-Yugoslav region, however, there is a growing number of researchers dealing with the cult of the socialist worker, shock work, the double burden, work culture, working conditions, nostalgia, and other topics important for understanding the functioning of the socialist industrial sector and the experience of labor within it. Although Zrenjanin developed during the second half of the twentieth century into one of the more significant industrial centers of former Yugoslavia, the topics of factory labor and the working class have remained marginalized in the local museum to this day, while objects associated with local factories have been collected only sporadically and unsystematically. The passive attitude of museum workers toward the socialist heritage of the city, as well as toward the period of postsocialist transformations during which the entire textile sector was shut down, contributed to the local community's understanding that objects and stories from our recent past have no museological or cultural-historical value. The presentation therefore seeks to indicate several challenges I face in my research

work, but also the need to redefine the role of the museum and the museum object in the contemporary context. Finally, based on the analysis of available materials and the recorded nostalgic narratives of former factory workers, I will demonstrate why it is important for ethnologists-anthropologists specifically to encourage the musealization of the aforementioned topics.

Kozorog Miha (S5, P17)

Institute of Slovenian Ethnology ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana, Slovenia

**ANIMALS IN SLOVENIAN ETHNOLOGY AND
ANTHROPOLOGY, WITH ETHNOGRAPHIC
REFLECTIONS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
WILDLIFE AND THE STATE**

Anthropology and related disciplines have recently experienced an animal turn. Animals are, of course, not a new topic in the discipline, which also applies to its local traditions such as Slovenian ethnology, as they have been treated as part of the peasant economy, hunting, and folklore representations. Nevertheless, broader disciplinary trends of transcending anthropocentrism have also introduced many novelties to ethnological and anthropological approaches to animals in Slovenia. Contemporary, and arguably extensive, research on animals can be described using various distinctions: domestic and wild animals, narrativised and real animals, historical and contemporary animals, animals represented by activist research and animals represented in a quasi-neutral manner, etc. Among the various approaches, addressing real animals within human ecological niches – an approach influenced by ethnoecology and political ecology – appears particularly prominent. In addition to a brief overview of animals in Slovenian ethnology, the paper will present research on wildlife as an emerging field within the latter approach. One topic the author is exploring is the relationship between wildlife and the state.

The presentation will focus on select relations between wild animals and the state. While (certain) European states are legally the owner and the guardian of wildlife, wildlife is a free-roaming form of life that does not recognize the attributes of the state, such as state borders. Three examples from Slovenia will illustrate different relations between the state, the border, and wildlife. In the first case, wildlife is a victim of the state's border control. In the second case, the different legal statuses of wildlife in two bordering countries are reflected in the locals' perception of wildlife. In the third case, the historical presence of wildlife in people's everyday lives in a borderland perpetuates the view of the state as a poor guardian of wildlife.

Kuč Katarina (S5, P20)

Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade, Serbia

**“THE ARTIST AS ETHNOGRAPHER”:
NADEŽDA PETROVIĆ AND CLARA SIPPRELL**

Starting from Hal Foster’s concept of the “artist as ethnographer,” this paper considers artistic practice as a form of ethnographic activity in the period preceding or parallel to the institutionalization of ethnology and anthropology. As case studies, the paper analyzes the paintings and photographs of Nadežda Petrović (1873–1915), as well as the photographic travel cycle of Clara Sipprell (1885–1975), created during her stays in Yugoslavia in 1924 and 1926. In the case of Nadežda Petrović, the interest in rural environments, the periphery, and the “folk” can be interpreted as a modernist reinterpretation of national identity, while Clara Sipprell’s oeuvre emerges from the position of a traveler and external observer. Her photographs of landscapes, coastal towns, and multiethnic communities participate in shaping the international visual representation of Yugoslavia and function as visual sources for understanding the region. The analysis of these two artists’ works focuses on the selection of motifs, the typologization of figures, and the relationship between aestheticization and documentary representation, starting from the assumption that their artistic practices produce an “effect of ethnographic authority.” The paper therefore seeks to examine the boundary between artistic expression and ethnographic record, and to consider the role of art as an active participant in constructing the social and cultural reality it represents.

Leković Suzana (S2, P8)

PhD Candidate, University of Belgrade, Serbia

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE STUDY OF THE
ACCULTURATION OF SCIENTIFIC MIGRANTS:
OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES IN THE PROCESS OF
ACCULTURATION DURING SCIENTIFIC-CULTURAL
TRANSFERS IN NON-ALIGNED YUGOSLAVIA

This paper addresses the issue of the stay of scientific migrants in non-aligned Yugoslavia during the 1960s and 1970s, who, thanks to Yugoslav state policies of granting scholarships to foreign students (particularly from Asian and African countries), secured places at Yugoslav universities. The central focus of the analysis is the possibility of achieving acculturation among foreign students in a new environment. Particular attention will be devoted to the obstacles that arose in this process, and the paper will provide a critical overview of the elements that obstructed the acculturation of others. Special emphasis will be placed on the issue of violence and ethnic discrimination. Guided by the ideas of the Non-Aligned Movement, the Yugoslav government, as one form of assistance to newly liberated countries in the early 1960s, offered planned cultural and educational cooperation, which these countries readily accepted due to the lack of highly educated personnel. Based on rich archival material, this paper will reconstruct and analyze the position of foreign students within the Yugoslav environment. By examining the experiences and personal perceptions of foreign students, I will attempt to gain insight into the broader picture of the civil society of the time and its readiness for cooperation with others. Consequently, the question arises as to whether Yugoslav civil society corresponded with the foreign policy practice of active peaceful coexistence and whether “comradely solidarity” extended to all levels of society. Due to large geographical distances and cultural, customary, and linguistic differences, misunderstandings, conflicts, and violence frequently occurred in relations between locals and foreigners, including discrimination by segments of the domestic population. Recorded incidents included fights, provocations, and inappropriate comments related to belonging to different ethnic groups. By analyzing the openness of civil society at the time, I will reconsider whether differences arising from cultural and identity factors created a sharp social distance between scientific migrants and the local population, thereby hindering the acculturation of foreigners into Yugoslav socialist society.

Lukić Krstanović Miroslava (S3, P12)

Institute of Ethnography SASA, Belgrade, Serbia

Stevanović Lada (S3, P12)

Institute of Ethnography SASA, Belgrade, Serbia

RESEARCH ON WOMEN AND GENDER: CONFRONTING EXPERIENCES FROM PERSONAL PERSPECTIVES

This presentation will take the form of a dialogue between two scholars reflecting on the positions of women and gender as themes in their research and interpretations within anthropology and ethnology. Drawing on their respective research experiences, the discussion will address a range of questions and dilemmas related to the study of these topics. Through a retrospective of their individual research trajectories, the authors will offer a comparative engagement with the challenges they have encountered. This includes a (self)critical reflection on their work on women and gender – both on the topics they have addressed and those they have not – with the aim of demonstrating how research processes unfold when viewed from a temporal distance. Key questions structuring the dialogue include: whether and in what ways issues of women and gender emerged in their research as primary or secondary analytical concerns; what proved inspiring during the research process; what constituted difficulties; and how their perspectives have changed over time. The discussion will also consider whether research on women and gender differs methodologically depending on the subject under study, as well as whether connections can be established across disciplinary fields and discourses in order to open new contextual perspectives. For example, how the anthropology of ancient worlds and the anthropology of spectacle might be brought into dialogue? The temporal and spatial frameworks of their research will provide a broader context for positioning the researchers and their contributions to the study of women, as shaped by scholars within Serbian ethnology and anthropology. Finally, the presentation will reflect on two significant collaborative initiatives (involving Lada Stevanović, Mladena Prelić, and Miroslava Lukić Krstanović) conducted within UNESCO programs in 2020 and 2022, focusing on the position of women scholars in society in Ser-

bia. These programs (conferences, edited volumes, and seminars) brought together numerous women scholars from diverse academic fields, demonstrating that diversity, heterogeneity, transdisciplinarity, and the legacies of individual disciplines can be continually re-examined and rearticulated.

Luleva Ana (S2, P5)

Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum BAS, Sofia, Bulgaria

Petrova Ivanka (S2, P5)

Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum BAS, Sofia, Bulgaria

THE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE INSTITUTE
OF ETHNOLOGY AND FOLKLORE STUDIES WITH
ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUM AT THE BULGARIAN
ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND THE INSTITUTE OF
ETHNOGRAPHY AT SASA – A QUARTER CENTURY
OF PARTNERSHIP AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF
ETHNOLOGY/ANTHROPOLOGY

At the end of the 1990s, scientific cooperation was initiated between the Institute of Ethnography at SASA and the Institute of Ethnography with Museum at BAS. This became possible thanks to the framework agreement concluded between the two academies for an equivalent non-currency exchange (ENE), which supports bilateral projects by financing short research visits for meetings and conference participation by teams from the partner countries.

From then until today, more than ten projects have been implemented without interruption, involving scholars from different generations. In this paper, we will present the results of our collaboration, expressed through the exchange of knowledge and ideas, and through joint field observations and publications, and we will demonstrate how these reflect the development of ethnology and anthropology in both countries.

Maksimović Ivan (S5, P19)

Ethnographic Museum in Belgrade, Serbia

THE SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE AND ROLE OF EUROPEAN ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUMS TODAY – OVERLAPS AND DIFFERENCES

Created within different modern societies and states, and accordingly as products of particular social and political frameworks, Europe's ethnographic museums encompass a wide spectrum of approaches, thematic orientations, and modes of operation. Their present form is likewise the result of more or less successful and more or less conscious adaptations to the social changes they have undergone. It seems that today the global museum community is engaged in debates largely stripped of local specificities, which is also the case with the question of the relevance of ethnographic museums in the current social moment. For decades, the museum community has been dominated by calls for openness and democratization, most often referring to a greater degree of involvement of local communities – especially young people – in museum programs. However, contemporary transformations of ethnographic museums do not take a single form, but rather result from successful or unsuccessful attempts to respond to local particularities and needs. This paper will analyze dominant trends in debates concerning the social relevance of European ethnographic museums and the activities undertaken to achieve such relevance, with reference to the broader social contexts in which these debates developed. The paper will examine how these trends are adopted in different museum institutions and what tendencies they produce, ranging from changes in collecting policies and long-term strategies to concrete projects in which museums invest. Particular focus will be placed on museums in the states of the former Yugoslavia and their specific relationship toward heritage in the aftermath of wars framed in media discourse and collective consciousness as ethnic conflicts, while simultaneously shaped by the ideological vacuum caused by the collapse of socialism.

Manos Ioannis (S2, P5)

University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki, Greece

RECONFIGURING REGIMES OF
ANTHROPOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE IN GREECE:
NEGOTIATING DISCIPLINARY FRAMEWORKS
BETWEEN REPRODUCTION
AND TRANSFORMATION

The contemporary polycentric expansion of anthropology is often interpreted as indicating the erosion of disciplinary hierarchies through the proliferation of knowledge-production centres. However, this paper contends that polycentricity involves not the erosion but the reconfiguration of epistemic hierarchies through emerging regimes of knowledge, legitimacy, and authority. This transformation reflects shifts in epistemologies, forms of legitimacy, and the discipline's social and political entanglements, rather than mere geographical or institutional diffusion. These uneven processes reshape, domestically, the reception and reinterpretation of Western canons, the operation of established academic fields as sites of translation and reproduction, and the constitution and contestation of epistemic authority under institutional and ideological pressures.

This paper examines how these dynamics manifest in Greece, particularly through teaching in area studies departments. Anthropology in Greece initially emerged as a site for British and American fieldwork during the 1950s and 1960s, and only became institutionalised in the 1980s and 1990s within frameworks shaped by essentialist national narratives, state-directed agendas, and instrumentalised knowledge production.

Within this context, teaching becomes a critical site for disciplinary articulation, where epistemic transformations are enacted and negotiated in everyday academic settings. This tension is particularly pronounced in area studies departments, where anthropology challenges the regional coherence assumed by other disciplines. Anthropology's emphasis on ambiguity and multiplicity positions the 'area' as an object of analytical negotiation rather than a fixed frame of reference. These interactions generate tensions regarding legitimate research, disciplinary authority, and the discipline's position within competing epistemological frameworks.

The paper argues that teaching in peripheral contexts demonstrates how Western disciplinary standards are both reproduced and transformed, revealing the persistence of epistemic hierarchies even as they are actively contested. This dynamic highlights the long-term consequences of anthropology's dual positioning between national and transnational standards, particularly in European and post-socialist contexts.

Marković Jelena (S2, P7)

Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research, Zagreb, Croatia

FOLKLORISTICS IN SEARCH OF ITS OWN NAME

The presentation will discuss the multiple origins and institutional frameworks of folkloristic research in Croatia, primarily at the Institute of Ethnology and Folkloristics in Zagreb. Since its foundation in 1948, the institute's researchers have been building and transforming the discipline itself, while the process of erosion of its symbolic capital, trendy relevance, and recognizability has been taking place in parallel. Today folkloristics has an atavistic overtone both within and outside the narrow and wider academic communities and especially outside them. However, its heritage, as well as its contemporary theoretical and methodological framework and epistemological innovations, shows the following. It is a dynamic, resilient, socially relevant, and sometimes subversive discipline that, despite the nomenclatural gap, manages to constantly integrate new perspectives such as cultural-historical, feminist, psychoanalytic, etc. and, as a result, to study complex social phenomena in a new light.

Apart from the discrepancy between the associations with its name and the research results it achieves, folkloristics today raises seemingly basic questions, even in the narrowest institutional and academic circles: What is folkloristics? What does it deal with? And what makes its approach different from other inter/trans/disciplinary approaches to cultural phenomena? In numerous institutional discussions, there has been no unambiguous and consensual answer to these questions. Being a folklorist today has become a question of (self) identification, which represents a starting point for considering the causes of the naming crisis on the one hand and the relevance of project, research, thematic, theoretical, and methodological approaches on the other. Special attention will be paid to contemporary research projects that thematize narratives of insecurity, fear, and social discomfort, showing how folkloristics today analyzes cultural responses to crises and transformations of everyday life. In these studies, folkloristics is most clearly positioned as a place of interpretation of contemporary narrative practices shaped by Homo narrans and not only as a space for archiving oral tradition.

Matić Miloš (S5, P19)

Ethnographic Museum, Belgrade, Serbia

CAN THE ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUM BE ANTHROPOLOGICAL?

Considering the decades-long activity of the Ethnographic Museum evokes the long-established sequence ethnography – ethnology – anthropology, understood as a gradation in the level of scientific understanding of culture. Interpretation of culture in the Ethnographic Museum has often been, and frequently still remains, trapped within ethnographic frameworks, or has been historical-descriptive in character in its effort to place traditional folk culture on a normative level – a culture which, due to structural changes in the social context, no longer exists, or whose certain aspects have been reinterpreted within contemporary society in the domain of cultural heritage. In some cases, the ethnographic approach is supplemented by formal analysis or various typologies, under the assumption that this is sufficient for it to be considered an ethnological interpretation of folk culture.

Starting from anthropological conceptions of researching material culture, as well as other aspects of culture such as economic behavior, kinship relations, housing culture, customary practices, etc., this presentation seeks to justify a comprehensive approach to culture within the museum context, which is conventionally directed toward the materiality of culture and still partly relies on remnants of the cultural-historical school. Relying further on newer understandings of cultural heritage based on anthropological interpretations of culture, and striving to justify a comprehensive approach to culture, the presentation attempts to explicate the concept of cultural values. This concept implies ideational concepts based on abstract thinking, which are semantically shaped and externalized through cultural practices, including their objectification in the items preserved in the collections of the Ethnographic Museum.

In addition to real cultural phenomena of long duration, the discussion also takes into account contemporary public constructs of cultural values. Through museum communication of cultural values to society, a broader articulation of the understanding of one's own culture becomes possible, and I argue that this represents one of the key directions for realizing the Ethnographic Museum as a social agent. The possibility also remains that the museum paradigm may offer a different, preferably innovative, consideration of culture within contemporary anthropology.

Medin Dušan (S5, P18)

University of Donja Gorica, Podgorica, Montenegro

HERITAGE AS A HEATED POLITICAL FIELD: MONUMENTS, DISSONANT HERITAGE, AND CONTEMPORARY CULTURE OF PUBLIC MEMORY IN MONTENEGRO

This paper starts from the premise that cultural heritage is inherently political and conflictual, and that in post-socialist and post-Yugoslav societies it operates as a highly heated everyday political field. Within such a field, competing interpretations of the past are articulated, hierarchies of victimhood are constructed, and symbolic orders of legitimacy are established. In this context, the contemporary memorial landscape of Montenegro is analysed as a space for the production and regulation of dissonant heritage – those aspects of the past that destabilize dominant national narratives and raise questions of responsibility, guilt, and selective remembering, memory, and forgetting.

The paper focuses on contemporary practices of monument construction, commemorative initiatives, and institutional decisions concerning the memorialization of individuals and events from recent history, including the commemoration of war crimes committed during the 1990s in the territory of Montenegro or surrounding areas, by individuals from Montenegro, or in its name. Through an analysis of public discourse, the legal framework, and media representations, the study demonstrates how memorial interventions simultaneously produce and obscure political tensions, and how they contribute to the establishment of hierarchies and structures of political power.

Particular attention is paid to the relationship between state policies, local initiatives, religious communities, civil society, and transitional justice principles, with memorialization understood as an ongoing process of negotiation between expectations and actual possibilities. This highlights the ambivalent position of contemporary commemorative practices in Montenegro, which oscillate between symbolic rehabilitation, political instrumentalization, and attempts at critical engagement with the past. In these processes, unfortunately, sound scholarly argumentation, research-based approaches, and academic publishing are often lacking.

The presentation argues that the contemporary culture of public memory in Montenegro is not an expression of a consensual politics of memory, but rather a field of intense tension and fragmentation in which dissonant heritage is not overcome but continuously reproduced. This is observable almost on a daily basis in recent years.

Within this context, the question is also raised regarding the actual social role of the humanities, whose analytical potential is often marginalized in decision-making processes related to public memory in contemporary Montenegrin society.

Mengxia Shi (S4, P13)

PhD Candidate, University of Manchester, UK

**ASSEMBLING INTO BEING:
PARTICIPATORY PRACTICE-BASED RESEARCH
IN POST- INDUSTRIAL COMMUNITIES
IN SALFORD (UK) AND TAIYUAN (CHINA)**

This paper examines the social role of anthropological practice through a case-based analysis of participatory art projects situated in post-industrial contexts. It draws on an ongoing practice-based PhD project conducted between January and March 2026 at Ordsall, Salford (UK), alongside a forthcoming participatory art research phase planned for May–July 2026 in post-industrial communities in China.

The Ordsall project is developed through a series of open workshops and collective making sessions hosted at a local community art centre. Residents are invited to collaboratively produce modular wooden structures and shared spatial elements that respond to everyday use, local narratives, and informal social gathering. Rather than treating heritage as a fixed or institutionalised category, the project approaches memory and culture as lived practices that emerge through collective labour, storytelling, and repeated participation.

By focusing on how memory and place are activated outside formal heritage policies or museum settings, the paper contributes to discussions on heritage and culture as dynamic, processual, and socially embedded. It examines how participatory art practices can function as alternative sites for negotiating local histories and identities in neighbourhoods shaped by long-term deindustrialisation and social marginalisation.

The paper further reflects on the professional role of the practitioner working across anthropology, art, and public engagement. It considers how practice-based research operates within community organisations, cultural institutions, and interdisciplinary collaborations, where roles such as artist, researcher, facilitator, and educator often overlap. Attention is given to the ethical and practical responsibilities that emerge when research is embedded in public-facing activities rather than confined to academic settings.

The planned research in China extends these questions to a different institutional and cultural context, allowing for comparative

reflection on participatory practice, memory work, and professional responsibility. By foregrounding situated practice rather than abstract theory, the paper argues for understanding anthropology as a form of socially engaged practice that contributes to contemporary debates on heritage, culture, and the public role of researchers.

Menković Mirjana (S6, P23)

Retired Museum Advisor, Serbia

**HORSES AND MENTAL PUZZLES:
POSITIONING THE DISCIPLINE
THROUGH MUSEUM COLLECTIONS AND
RESEARCH ON DRESS CULTURE IN SERBIA
IN THE LATE 20TH AND EARLY 21ST CENTURY**

The collections of the Ethnographic Museum in Belgrade were formed even prior to their formal institutional classification, both as an expression of specific political and national aspirations in 19th-century Serbia and as a reflection of individual, often random and spontaneous understandings of these processes, manifested through donations and acquisitions. Museum collections gradually acquired their structure and context with the emergence of systematic geographical research and the establishment of ethnology as a scientific discipline. Development of these museum collections has followed the key themes of conducted field research, as well as transformations within the discipline itself – from its early beginnings to the present – adapted to the specific nature of museum and curatorial work. Using numerous collections of clothing items from the Ethnographic Museum in Belgrade as a case study, the author aims to re-examine curatorial practices that have shaped the development of museum collections and research topics, particularly in relation to the methodological frameworks employed and the emergence of new theoretical concepts. The modes of presenting museum objects serve as a key indicator of shifts in interpretation and of evolving understandings of the objects themselves, as well as of culture and research themes as shaped through the development of the discipline.

Mihaylova Yulina (S3, P11)

Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies and Ethnographic Museum BAS, Sofia, Bulgaria

PERSPECTIVES ON THE JEWISH PAST
THROUGH THE PRISM OF MUSEUM NARRATIVE
CONCERNING THE RESCUE OF BULGARIAN JEWS
DURING WORLD WAR II

As a highly prestigious accepted episode in modern Bulgarian history, the rescue of the Bulgarian Jews, constitutes a pivotal theme around which museum narrative of the Jewish past in Bulgaria is constituted. It reflects a broad spectrum of political and ideological interpretations, serving as an instrument for legitimizing specific political status quos. Gradually, the Rescue has evolved into a convenient instrument designed to generate symbolic capital and national glory, while certain historical episodes are either suppressed or overemphasized. Following Bulgaria's accession to the European Union, this framework became integrated into the discourse on Bulgarian European identity, serving as a prerequisite for its transformation into a unifying principle within Bulgarian society. However, intense polemics over the years have delineated two distinct debates: an internal Bulgarian debate, reflecting the perspective of the "rescuers," and an internal Jewish debate, which presents the viewpoint of the "rescued", touching on the issue of the lived experience and suffering. Against this backdrop, in recent decades we have witnessed numerous national and local museum projects where the Rescue – as a mode of articulating the narrative of Jewish presence in Bulgaria – is presented as a story of "centuries-old peaceful coexistence and tolerance." The ongoing controversies regarding the interpretation of historical facts raise the question of whether the theme of tolerance can generate a functional mechanism to transform this narrative into a site of shared memory (*lieu de mémoire*). With the shift in the museum paradigm after 1989, museums are expected to serve as mediators in understanding the "Other." Nevertheless, according to some specialists, many Bulgarian museum institutions continue to perpetuate the myth of a homogeneous Bulgarian nation, wherein various ethnic and minority groups coexist "seamlessly" within the narrative of the "unique Bulgarian ethnic model." In such depictions, the complexities of cultural influences, inter-communal relations, and historical points

of conflict are often omitted from presentation. In this context, analyzing the mechanisms for creating a museum environment capable of reproducing a narrative of “Otherness” is essential. By employing an anthropological approach – through cultural empowerment, first-person testimonies, and the inclusion of multiperspective historical viewpoints – museums can redefine their role as significant catalysts for social change.

Milanković Jelena (S5, P18)

University of Novi Sad, Serbia

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MONTENEGRIN FOLKLORE IN VOJVODINA: PRESERVATION, PRACTICE, AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

Folklore represents a key component of cultural identity, particularly within multiethnic regions where diverse traditions coexist and interact. The Montenegrin community in Vojvodina possesses a distinct ethnocultural heritage shaped by its historical migration patterns, social practices, and traditional forms of expression. This study explores the main elements of Montenegrin folklore in Vojvodina, focusing on traditional customs, festive rituals, costume, oral tradition, and characteristic cultural patterns that contribute to the continuity of collective identity.

The research examines the ways in which these folkloric elements are preserved, practiced, and transmitted across generations, as well as their visibility in contemporary cultural life. Special attention is devoted to the role of cultural associations, folklore ensembles, and community events in sustaining and revitalizing traditional practices. Through qualitative fieldwork, interviews, and descriptive and comparative analysis, the study identifies both stable and vulnerable aspects of cultural preservation within the community.

The findings highlight the importance of folklore as a factor of cultural sustainability, demonstrating that active participation in traditional practices strengthens both intra-community cohesion and broader intercultural dialogue. While certain elements of intangible heritage remain well preserved, others require additional support, creative presentation, and institutional recognition to ensure long-term visibility. By emphasizing the cultural contributions of Montenegrins to the ethnographic landscape of Vojvodina, the study underscores the broader significance of safeguarding minority heritage in maintaining regional cultural diversity.

Milanović Minić Nevena (S2, P8)

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NEGOTIATING ADOLESCENCE: GEN Z AND ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION PRACTICES

This paper approaches the phenomenon of Generation Z and its attitude towards the consumption of alcoholic beverages as a necessary form of leisure time as it was considered until then. In the scientific literature, Gen Z is described as specific in terms of the use of the Internet and social networks and political and environmental engagement. Furthermore, it's the first generation to break free from the (Western) cultural norm that associates drinking and intoxication with adulthood. The goal of the paper is to examine these assumptions in the local, Serbian context, as well as to provide insight into possible transformations of drinking practices and the ways in which adolescence is negotiated.

Milenković Miloš (S2, P6)

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TOWARDS A NEW CURRICULUM
IN ETHNOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY:
BETWEEN THE RENEWAL OF INTERPRETATIVE
SOVEREIGNTY AND THE WEAKENING OF GLOBAL
EVALUATION REGIMES

This paper starts from the premise that a study program is not merely a pedagogical structure, but an institutionalized articulation of a discipline's academic and social identity. The way we conceptualize the curriculum of ethnology and anthropology reveals how the discipline understands its own position in a world marked by populist resistance to science, technological transformations – including the development of artificial intelligence – and the polarization of public policies in the fields of science, education, and culture.

Rather than approaching curriculum redesign as a reactive adjustment to external evaluation criteria or inherited institutional patterns, this paper proposes that the curriculum be understood as a space for articulating the discipline's interpretative sovereignty – the right and capacity to independently define key research questions, theoretical and methodological frameworks, and social priorities. Particular attention is given to how a study program can simultaneously respond to the challenges of contemporary technologies, including the use and critical understanding of AI in research and teaching, while preserving the discipline as a space of reflexive and critical thinking.

Building on experiences from previous curriculum redesign processes, the paper analyzes possible curriculum models that integrate theoretical rigor, methodological innovation, and the study of the social dimensions of cultural heritage, among other elements. Special consideration is given to the international positioning of Serbian ethnology and anthropology – not as a permanently peripheral tradition, but as a potential contributor to shaping contemporary theoretical debates.

Milićević Jelena (S6, P22)

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PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND THE SOCIAL ROLE OF ETHNOLOGISTS-ANTHROPOLOGISTS' RESEARCH ON VILLAGE PATRON SAINT CELEBRATIONS AND SACRED TREES IN THE TERRITORY OF THE CITY OF ČAČAK

This paper is based on a two-year field study of ritual practices connected with village patron saint celebrations, as well as the recording and documentation of sacred trees (*zapisi*) in villages in the Čačak region.

The village patron saint celebration, revitalized in the early 1990s as a living customary practice, represents a field encompassing a large number of customs, elements, and entities that are exceptionally important and challenging for research. Monitoring these customs and comparing them with data on how village celebrations were observed before the Second World War constitutes a broad field for studying social, religious, and customary behavioral patterns significant for preserving and nurturing national and religious identity.

Particularly interesting are the participants' interpretations regarding why these practices are maintained and for what purposes. The connection with ancestors and with former traditions and world-views that existed in villages before the state's repressive attitude toward the full form of ritual processions presents a field in which the researcher (ethnologist-anthropologist) should not present themselves as an external detective, but rather as an equal participant in the communal village procession. Starting from personal research experience, the paper analyzes the professional challenges and ethical dilemmas faced by ethnologists/anthropologists in studying local religious practices that simultaneously function as forms of collective, religious, cultural, and national identity, as well as social cohesion.

Special attention is devoted to methodological aspects of field-work: above all, establishing trust with interlocutors, negotiating inclusion in the ritual space itself, and the relationship between researcher, local community, and the Serbian Orthodox Church.

Through reflection on the author's own field position, the paper points to the importance of engaged and responsible anthropological practice in local communities, as well as the extent to which the role of the ethnologist-anthropologist is significant and (un)accepted in village communities and local self-government.

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THE WATERMILL IN SENOKOS AS A MARKER OF LOCAL IDENTITY

"Let Us Not Grind Away the Past" is an interdisciplinary cultural heritage project implemented by an NGO, aimed at transforming archaeological, architectural, and ethnographic data into accessible cultural experiences within rural landscapes. The project focuses on the last preserved traditional watermill in the village of Senokos, located on Stara Planina, a tourist destination in southeastern Serbia. Although Stara Planina attracts hikers, nature enthusiasts, and ecotourists, the heritage of watermills – once a vital component of local livelihood and landscape management – remains largely invisible in contemporary tourist narratives and public discourse in general. The project includes documenting and interpreting the last remaining traditional watermill in the village of Senokos as a form of rapidly disappearing rural heritage, with the aim of preserving both its material and immaterial aspects while simultaneously raising awareness of the importance of cultural heritage. Special attention is dedicated to the role of interdisciplinary collaboration, digital tools, and storytelling in the process of transforming technical documentation into narratives accessible to a broader audience, in accordance with contemporary systems of protection, interpretation, and social activation of rural cultural heritage. In this paper, cultural heritage is understood as a dynamic cultural category closely intertwined with communities and their identities, which is why ethnological interviews constitute a significant part of the research. Ethnology, as a discipline interlinked to heritage studies, recognizes the importance of intangible cultural heritage, which had been neglected for decades, treating the watermill as a cultural asset through which the natural landscape was utilized for cultural purposes. Within this endeavor, one of the goals is to determine whether the craft neces-

sary for the construction and maintenance of watermills could be included on the list of intangible cultural heritage. By placing heritage studies within contemporary social, ecological, and economic contexts, the project demonstrates how an ethnological approach can encourage long-term cultural heritage management and further strengthen local identity.

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THE DEBATE BETWEEN
ŠPIRO KULIŠIĆ AND MILENKO S. FILIPOVIĆ
IN THE CONTEXT OF COMMUNIST ATTITUDES
TOWARD THE NATIONAL SITUATION IN YUGOSLAVIA

The conflict between Špiro Kulišić and Milenko Filipović, conducted through a total of four texts published in the Sarajevo journal *Pregled* during 1955–1956, is well known in the history of Serbian ethnology. Several authors have written about this dispute, identifying multiple levels on which the conflict unfolded. These include personal, scientific-theoretical, and political-ideological dimensions, which are intertwined and mutually explanatory. The stated thesis in question here is that these dimensions nevertheless do not exhaust the possibilities for interpreting the polemic between Kulišić and Filipović, and that an additional national dimension should be introduced into the political reading of the debate. The conflict between the two ethnologists will therefore be illuminated in the context of Yugoslav communist attitudes toward the Serbian people and the national situation in Yugoslavia. Within this framework, this historical episode in the development of Serbian ethnology acquires a new meaning.

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BETWEEN DOCUMENTATION AND EPISTEMOLOGY: DRAWING AS A MIRROR OF THE TRANSFORMATIONS OF ETHNOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY THROUGH TIME

In anthropology, drawing can have at least three different functions: it can serve for presenting and disseminating knowledge, as a form of field notes and illustration of findings during the research process, or as a cognitive or epistemological instrument within the research process itself. The aim of this paper is to present the different functions of drawings and their application in Serbian ethnology and anthropology. Starting from the assumption that the transformations of methodological practices reflect broader disciplinary changes, in this paper we will observe the drawing in a historical and methodological perspective, following its role in the global and domestic flows of science. First, we will present how visual materials were used as a teaching and research tool at the Department of Ethnology and Anthropology, Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade. Then, we will discuss the use of drawings as a means of documentation created during field research by those anthropologists who mastered and accepted field drawing as a part of scientific practice or professional draftsmen and watercolorists engaged in research teams. In the end, we will consider the methodological potential of drawings in contemporary ethnological and anthropological research. It seemed that the long history of drawing and sketching in anthropology disappeared with the advent of photography. However, these techniques are being revitalized today in the broader context of the 'return' to forgotten practices and the so-called 'slow methodology', the material turn, and the emergence of collaborative, participatory, and multimodal practices. Furthermore, a drawing can be an extremely useful tool when giving a (nonverbal) voice to others and involving interlocutors or groups who find it easier to share their views and observations in a nonverbal way – people who are formally illiterate, children, people with hearing or speech impairment or some kind of developmental difficulties, and in cases of researching topics that are difficult to verbalize due to their sensitivity or complexity.

Mladenović Ribić Nataša (S5, P18)

Ethnographic Museum in Belgrade, Serbia

THE UNESCO CONCEPT OF “LIVING HERITAGE”
AS A “RETURN TO THE ROOTS” OF THE DISCIPLINE:
THE APPLICATION OF ETHNOLOGY AND
ANTHROPOLOGY IN THE PRESERVATION
OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

With the ratification of the UNESCO Convention on the Preservation of Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2010 and the adoption of the Law on Cultural Heritage and the Law on Museum Activities (2021), the work on establishing a legislative framework for systematic preservation of “living heritage” in Serbia has been completed. Furthermore, the construction of a network of expert bodies and institutions responsible for the implementation of the 2003 Convention is underway. The establishment of the Center for the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Serbia at the Ethnographic Museum in Belgrade in 2012 created an institutional framework for the implementation of the Convention. Furthermore, the new legislation entrusted the Center with the tasks of the central institution for the preservation of the intangible cultural heritage. In parallel with these processes, which are primarily related to the area of cultural heritage protection, UNESCO’s concept of intangible cultural heritage drew attention to the role of ethnologists and anthropologists, that is, ethnology and anthropology as a social-humanistic science, in the qualitative study of social phenomena, such as customary practices, traditional crafts and food, oral traditions, and various social practices, from the foundation of this discipline to the present day. Namely, the study of contemporary manifestations of social phenomena whose continuity can be traced back several generations and which are part of the “living heritage” of local communities in Serbia poses to the researcher a number of questions, such as the construction of identity, gender roles, everyday life, religious and customary practices, entrepreneurship and business, and more. The goal of this presentation is to point out the benefits of the application of the 2003 Convention in the field of cultural heritage protection, the possibility of wider social recognition of ethnologists and anthropologists as experts in this topic, and also to draw attention to some of the challenges in the work on research, documentation, presentation, and education about the intangible cultural heritage in Serbia.

Mód László (S5, P17)

University of Szeged, Hungary

CHANGING RIVERSCAPES IN THE HUNGARIAN-SERBIAN BORDERLAND

Cities are often identified with their rivers, whose functions may have changed several times over the centuries. More and more European cities are trying to explore their rivers and riverbanks, which are integrated into urban developments in various ways. River Tisa was an essential natural resource (drinking water, transportation, fishing etc.) for the urban population, but in the 20th century its recreational role became dominant among the locals who would like to escape from the urban environment during summer time. Over the past decades it was transformed to a popular burial place and memoryscape as well. The presentation would like to report about an ongoing project focusing on the changing role of riverscapes. The collection of the material culture connected to the usage of the river is a significant element of the program.

Moroz Andrey B. (S6, P22)

National Research University Higher School of Economics,
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CULT SITES THROUGH TIME: HERITAGE, CONTINUITY, CONFLICTS

In today's multiethnic, multireligious, and multicultural society (which emerges even in villages with a homogeneous population), various forms of veneration of the same cult sites frequently arise, existing either in parallel or alternately. The reputation of a site as sacred fosters the emergence of new cults in accordance with the interests, preferences, beliefs, and traditions of different communities. The popularity of a site may be promoted by media publications, statements by tourist guides, informational signage, or even oral tradition. The confessional affiliation of a cult site loses its significance, while the pragmatic component comes to the fore: the expectation of wish fulfillment. For example, the holy spring of Saint George in Kolomenskoye Park in Moscow (formerly near the village of Dyakovo) has largely lost its significance due to the Soviet authorities' anti-religious campaigns, as well as the subsequent destruction of the village. Almost simultaneously, at the same location, in close proximity to the spring, a new neo-pagan cult of a stone emerged. In another case, Holy Lake (the official toponym) in the village of Kosino (part of Moscow since 1985), which between the 18th 20th centuries was venerated due to a legend about a church that sank beneath the water as a result of a Tatar invasion, has been incorporated into a post-Soviet pseudo-historical narrative about the founding of Moscow: allegedly, it was from this very place that the repentant robber Vukol came and settled at the site of the present-day Moscow Kremlin, becoming the first inhabitant of the area.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the Moscow authorities announced plans to build a mosque on the shore of the lake, which, on the one hand, provoked a religious conflict and, on the other, triggered a broader social confrontation. Situations repeatedly occur in which Orthodox cult sites become places of wish fulfillment for individuals with no connection to Christianity. Moreover, by analogy with religious sacred sites, non-religious cults are formed around objects that are not inherently sacred. Thus, one of the towers of the Novodevichy Convent in Moscow is venerated as the place of imprisonment

of Princess Sophia, who was never canonized as a saint. Under the influence of religiously neutral media communication in contemporary post-secular society, the production of the sacred follows already existing models, resulting in multilayered, multiconfessional cult sites, provoking contestation over them and contributing to the construction of their past.

Muršič Rajko (S1, P2)

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ENLIGHTENMENT ETHNOLOGY,
NATIONAL SCIENCE, AND
GLOBAL FUNDAMENTAL SCIENCE OF HUMANITY:
FROM DESCRIPTION OF PEOPLES
TO RADICAL ANTHROPOLOGY
IN THE 21ST CENTURY

In the first part of the presentation, the author will point out the roots of ethnology in the first half of the 18th century as a new science in describing peoples, which at the end of the same century got its name ethnology. At the end of the 18th century, with the first works on Slovenian folk culture (Linhart, Hacquet and Majar-Ziljski), ethnology in Slovene lands also began.

In the first decade of the 20th century, Niko Zupanič, under the name Niko Županič, after studying prehistory in Vienna, got a job at the Serbian Ethnographic Museum in Belgrade, where he worked as a curator and researcher. After returning to Slovenia, this anthropologist and ethnologist established the Institute of Ethnography within the National Museum (1921), the Slovenian Ethnographic Museum (1923), began publishing the magazine *Etnolog* (1926) and became the first professor at the Seminar for Ethnology with Ethnography at the University of Ljubljana (1940).

In the 1960s, with the research of the way of life (Kremenšek, Baš), Slovenian ethnology became a mature science with its own method, historical theoretical orientation and its own institutions and a place in cultural heritage practices. With the change of the name of the department to the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Slovenian ethnologists announced the transition of similar departments in Central and Eastern Europe and in German-speaking countries.

The development of that ethnology and anthropology was based on the appreciation of the achieved domestic development of the discipline, but in an international framework, especially through the organization of Mess (Mediterranean Ethnological Summer School) between 1994 and 2009.

After a brief presentation of the history of the discipline, the author will discuss ethnology, that is, anthropology today and in the future as a fundamental discipline that must undergo a radical critique of its national, colonial and class (liberal-petty-bourgeois) dimensions and find its place as a radical anti-nationalist, anti-colonial and anti-classism discipline, and finally get out of its savage slot.

Nedeljković Saša (S5, P17)

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A CONTRIBUTION TO THE EXOTICIZATION OF ETHNOLOGICAL/ANTHROPOLOGICAL RESEARCH IN SERBIA: DUCK FIGHTS IN NOVI PAZAR

In Novi Pazar, a centuries-old tradition of šatkarstvo – that is, the breeding of šatke (ducks) – has been maintained to the present day. This tradition also encompasses the organization of fights between male ducks, which approximately forty years ago developed into a regional event that brings together all breeders from the territory of Novi Pazar and its surrounding areas. Šatkarstvo has persisted despite profound social changes, modernization and urbanization, the reduction of natural resources, economic crisis, and pressure from religious officials who consider certain aspects of this tradition unacceptable.

To date, there has been no systematic anthropological study of animal fighting practices in Serbia, nor has there been a comprehensive and systematic examination of the culture and identity of the inhabitants of Novi Pazar. This phenomenon is of particular importance because it provides a lens through which to analyze the complex and dynamic relationships between so-called folk culture, on the one hand; forms of culture shaped by the influence of institutions of universal religion, on the other; and state laws and civic norms, on the third.

For these reasons, a systematic empirical study of šatkarstvo was initiated in 2024. Over the course of two years, the process of breeding šatke was observed, as well as the organization of breeders and the activities of their association. Preparations for competitions or duck fights were documented, and the events themselves were monitored. A large number of interviews were conducted with breeders or competitors, spectators, representatives of religious institutions, media representatives, and other relevant local social actors.

Nešković Marta (S6, P22)

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HERITAGE IN PRACTICE: BETWEEN CONTINUITY
AND CONTEMPORARY CHANGES
IN THE TRANSMISSION OF PHYSICAL SKILLS
IN CHINA AND THAILAND

The paper uses theoretical framework developed through research on traditional forms of knowledge transmission in Chinese physical practices and extends it with a comparative analysis of Thai boxing, or Muay Thai, in China and Thailand. The empirical approach consists of three interconnected ethnographic fields. The first includes a long-term study of Shaolin Kung Fu in a monastic context. The second refers to fieldwork in one of the clinical branches of Luo-style orthopedics in Beijing, a traditional Chinese manual therapy practice focused on the treatment of injuries and disorders of the musculoskeletal system. The third involves two years of participation and observation in a Muay Thai community in Beijing, complemented by a stay of several weeks in Bangkok. The analysis focuses on the mechanisms of skill acquisition: repetition, bodily correction, tactile focus, and the gradual formation of a body-based ability to recognize and respond in a specific situation. In all observed contexts, knowledge is not transmitted as abstract content but is formed through long-term bodily engagement and relational relationships of authority. At the same time, institutional frameworks significantly influence establishing legitimacy. Shaolin Kung Fu is practiced in numerous secular schools outside the monastery, but the monastery remains the central place for linear transmission of knowledge from teacher to student, with a clearly structured hierarchy and religious framework. The Luo style of orthopedics functions through a branched clinical tradition. Here, innovations are confirmed subsequently through therapeutic effectiveness in everyday practice. Muay Thai, in contrast, does not have a single central institutional source of authority but circulates through transnational professional networks, in which competitive results, the reputation of the trainer, and market visibility are key forms of symbolic capital. A comparative perspective shows that institutionalization and global mobility do not abolish linear transmission of knowledge but produce layered forms of learning

and different criteria of authenticity. Heritage is not maintained through static models of protection. Heritage is maintained through the ways in which actors within specific institutional frameworks reorganize the conditions of transmission while preserving body-based forms of learning where the relational and institutional preconditions are preserved.

Njaradi Dunja (S5, P20)

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Rašić Miloš (S5, P20)

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THE INVISIBLE WITHIN THE CANON: RESEARCHERS AND RESEARCH OF DANCE IN THE HISTORY OF SERBIAN ETHNOLOGY

This paper re-examines the ways in which canons are constituted and memory is produced within disciplinary histories, that is, how hierarchies of relevance are formed within the academic field through processes of canonization and disciplinary self-reflection. Proceeding from the premise that histories of scientific disciplines are not neutral reconstructions of the development of knowledge, but rather selective narratives that legitimize particular topics, approaches, and actors – while simultaneously producing their own regimes of visibility and oblivion – we analyze the double invisibility within the history of Serbian ethnology: that of dance researchers and of the anthropology of dance as a distinct field.

Through case studies of Slobodan Zečević, Olivera Mladenović, Dragoslav Antonijević, and Olivera Vasić, we demonstrate that the study of (traditional) dance has been continuously present in Serbian ethnology from the period following World War II to the present day, although its roots extend even earlier. These scholars were active within key institutions – research institutes, museums, university departments, and the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts – publishing monographs, conducting fieldwork, and institutionalizing the study of dance within academic curricula. In other words, the study of dance has been empirically productive and institutionally present, yet rarely integrated into the discipline's theoretical self-understanding, and has therefore failed to accrue full symbolic capital within dominant narratives of the development of Serbian ethnology.

The analysis points to several possible reasons for this canonical invisibility: the ambivalent status of dance between folkloristics and anthropology; the perception of this phenomenon as a “descriptive” or applied field; the dominance of other thematic complexes, such as religion, migration, and ethnicity; as well as the institutional dynamics of academic knowledge legitimation – processes through which certain topics are recognized as theoretically productive,

while others are relegated to the status of empirical material lacking conceptual weight.

Our aim, therefore, is not to rehabilitate individual biographies nor to establish a parallel canon, but rather to illuminate the mechanisms of canonization through which Serbian ethnology produces its own boundaries of relevance, center, and periphery – leaving the body and dance, despite their sustained research presence, at the margins of disciplinary history.

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MEDICAL DESERTS AS AN ETHNOGRAPHIC PROBLEM: MAPPING ACCESS TO REPRODUCTIVE HEALTHCARE IN RURAL SERBIA

The concept of “medical deserts” is most often identified through maps of the distribution of healthcare facilities and personnel (Brinzac et al., 2023; Mandić Rajčević & Šantrić Miličević, 2022), yet such representations frequently obscure what is crucial for anthropology: how a “desert” is produced in everyday life – through movement, waiting, interruptions in the chain of care, costs, logistics, and the uncertainty of encounters with institutions. In our research, we start from the premise that access to reproductive healthcare is not merely a matter of distance, but a relational and embodied trajectory marked by a series of obstacles that women navigate in specific times and spaces, relying on both formal procedures and informal networks.

The aim of this study is to describe and explain how women in rural areas of Serbia access examinations, treatments, referrals, and follow-up care, what obstacles they encounter, and what coping strategies they develop.

Our methodological contribution is developed through walk-along interviews, in which experiences of access are traced “on the move” and connected to actual routes, schedules, and points of delay (Evans & Jones, 2011), in dialogue with the broader field of mobile ethnographies (Pink, 2013; Spinney, 2015). The walk-along approach is complemented by participatory micro-mapping of time, costs, waiting, and interruptions, drawing on the tradition of participatory mapping (Chambers, 2006). We demonstrate how this approach enables an analysis of care infrastructures and the moral economies of “getting by,” while also producing sufficiently precise material for policy recommendations (applied anthropology) and for broader reflections on “deserts” in urban contexts – for example, where services are spatially close but practically inaccessible.

Parojčić Ognjen (S4, P16)

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ANTHROPOLOGY AND ADDICTION:
APPLICATION OF FIELD THEORY
AS A METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK
FOR TREATING THE PHENOMENON OF
ADDICTION IN SOCIOCULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Field theory represents a paradigmatic shift that emerged in the first half of the twentieth century, first in physics and later in the social sciences and humanities. In psychology, its most prominent representative is Kurt Lewin, who argued that field theory is not a theory in the classical sense, but primarily a useful methodological tool for understanding the dynamic relations between the individual and the environment. This perspective marks a departure from the “Cartesian” model of science, based on a strict division between subject and object, as well as between space and the entities within it, and introduces a relational and dynamic understanding of reality. The presentation draws on field theory as developed within Gestalt psychology, where behavior is understood as a function of the person and their environment, and on its further elaboration in sociology through the concept of the social field formulated by Pierre Bourdieu. Bourdieu conceptualizes the field as a structured space of relations in which actors occupy positions according to the distribution of different forms of capital. This approach enables an analysis that transcends individualistic and reductionist explanations by focusing on the interplay between structure and agency. The presentation applies this methodological framework to the phenomenon of addiction in sociocultural anthropology. It offers a brief overview of the historical development of the concept of addiction and dominant approaches within anthropology and related disciplines. By mapping key questions surrounding addiction as a disease, a social problem, and a culturally shaped experience, the paper establishes an analytical framework for understanding the field of addiction as a specific domain in which individuals, substances or behavioral patterns, social structures, and cultural meanings intersect. Addiction is thus interpreted not as an isolated individual disorder, but as a relational phenomenon constituted within a broader social and symbolic context.

Petrović Nebojša (S2, P8)

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**TAVERN NARRATION OF LATE SOCIALISM:
NERVOZNI POŠTAR AS A SOURCE FOR
ETHNOLOGY AND MEMORY STUDIES**

The presentation starts from the opus of the Sarajevo group *Nervozni poštari*, popular during the 1980s, which in its seemingly banal, yet in fact very perceptive lyrics celebrated the lives of ordinary people in the SFRY during that period. We examine what is gained, and what is methodologically risked, when ethnology and anthropology take popular songs as empirical material for studying late socialist everyday life. Song lyrics offer densely saturated micro-scenes of labor, neighborhood relations, gender roles, violence, alcohol, youthful aspirations, and failures through expressions of humor, self-irony, and tavern narration. Our key assumption is that these songs are not merely a reflection of social reality, but also a medium through which that reality is subsequently organized in memory: within them crystallize social representations and patterns of recognizing “our world,” shaping nostalgia, moral judgments, and the audience’s modes of self-understanding.

Rather than interpreting songs “one by one” (which would also be useful), the paper discusses disciplinary boundaries: where the analysis of popular culture ends and ethnologically and socio-psychologically relevant knowledge begins, and how such knowledge can be strengthened through interdisciplinary cooperation. Ethnological thick description (Geertz), which does not stop at describing what happened but also explains what it means to those participating in it, and the emic semantics of humor, that is, understanding from within, from the actors’ own perspective, are here supplemented by socio-psychological insights into collective memory, identification, and affect, resulting in greater explanatory power: not only what the songs depict, but also how and why they become, and remain to this day, a shared repertoire of memory. As a broader context, we will briefly refer to related cinematic expressions (e.g. *Ovo malo duše*, *Šest dana juna*, *Pismo-glava*) that depict the same social milieu of socialist everyday life, in order to show how songs and films together reinforce shared representations of the past that continue to

live in postsocialism through quotation, recognition, nostalgia, and everyday stories by which people explain their own experiences. In this intersection of sources and approaches, it becomes more visible how popular culture not only represents but also organizes social experience and memory.

Pjević Branko (S3, P10)

Penitentiary-Correctional Facility,
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APPLIED ETHNOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY IN SPECIAL CONDITIONS

In this paper I present personal experiences and knowledge (method and plan of work and design of the program concept) and ethnological-anthropological material applied and tested in practice through educational and therapeutic work in the penitentiary with male and female prisoners. The treatment of prisoners in penitentiary institutions includes the application of different measures of re-education, resocialization, and training. This is important for the development of their positive attitudes, including the awakening of noble thoughts and feelings to accept valid socio-legal norms and correct behavior in freedom. Thus, alongside penology, pedagogy, and psychology, ethnology and anthropology have made a significant contribution to the comprehensive work of the Treatment Service of the Correctional Facility. Also, I will refer to the role of experts in the work of cultural and folklore amateurism and tourism-economic and cultural-ecological events. I will pay special attention to and review (personal experiences and knowledge, active monitoring) the justification of investment and support from relevant ministries, donors, and co-financiers for some so-called "projects of importance," which present themselves as faithful guardians of cultural and natural national heritage. The results from the field show an entirely different picture! We can even conclude that they do more harm than good to our society overall. We cannot talk about the development of society as a whole, and therefore the protection and preservation of natural and cultural heritage, without the current political authorities. They have the means of power. Such is the state of affairs where I live and work, whose 'lethargic condition' can be felt and seen at every step. Directly and indirectly, they influence the abandonment of the established cultural pattern and work skills, based on membership in a political party, which allows "everyone suitable" to lead cultural policy. Such a situation significantly leads to the neglect and deterioration of the last remnants of memories of national culture.

Pumpalović Andela (S1, P3)

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**ANTHROPOLOGY OF EVERYDAY MORALITY:
GOSSIP AS AN ANALYTICAL CONCEPT
IN ANTHROPOLOGICAL
THEORY AND METHODOLOGY**

Research on gossip as an everyday conversational practice exists across social sciences and humanities, where anthropology is often implicitly considered especially competent for its study. In anthropology, gossip is most often discussed within folklore studies, together with jokes, humor, and other forms of oral expression, which has contributed to its reduction to a form of entertainment. Historically, gossip has been associated with women's practices and "primitive" communities, that is, with forms of speech opposing the ideal of rational and objective knowledge in modern science. I argue that the marginality of gossip in theoretical discussions is related to the epistemological valuation of everyday speech. The examination of the relationship between gossip and the ways ethnographic data are collected and shaped in anthropology show that in both cases, these are interpretive conversations about others that involve the construction and evaluation of meanings regarding actions, intentions, and world-views. While such conversations are recognized in anthropological methodology as fundamental to scientific knowledge production, gossip is often morally labeled as undesirable behavior in everyday life. Despite their differences, the epistemological proximity of these forms allows gossip to be treated as a heuristic concept for understanding how interpretive work on others' experiences is evaluated and classified, given the different authority attributed to them. Therefore, I propose the anthropology of morality as a framework for understanding knowledge produced through gossip. This practice shapes moral judgments, fosters intimacy and trust, and produces everyday, non-scientific knowledge about others that influences how we understand and evaluate others' behavior. In this sense, gossip is not only an object of analysis but also an interpretive lens for examining how moral knowledge is produced, circulated, and stabilized in social relations.

Radisavljević Katarina (S6, P23)

Museum of Vojvodina, Novi Sad, Serbia

Seč-Pinčir Ana (S6, P23)

Museum of Vojvodina Slovaks, Bački Petrovac, Serbia

**THE USE OF THE ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUM
COLLECTION FOR ANTHROPOLOGICAL PURPOSES:
SELF-IDENTIFICATION OF VOJVODINA SLOVAKS
ON THE EXAMPLE OF A MEN'S TRADITIONAL SHIRT**

We present the results of our 2019 research while working on the Collection of Folk Costumes of the Museum of Vojvodina Slovaks in Bački Petrovac. We analyze one example from the collection, namely, the Slovak men's shirt, from the perspective of an item of clothing that, for the community – the Vojvodina Slovaks – has a symbolic role in the ethnic identification of the group. We start from the idea that ethnographic museum collections contain information about the past and present of a group, which we can interpret using the anthropological theoretical and methodological apparatus. We will analyze a recognizable item of clothing of Vojvodina Slovaks – a men's shirt with multi-colored embroidery on the chest, which this community most often calls *vyšívana košela* or *košela s predkom*. We followed the emergence and changes in the way this item of clothing was perceived in different social, political, and cultural conditions that occurred during the existence of the Slovak ethnic community in Serbia. We will show how political elites in the Slovak homeland, during the second half of the 19th century, created the shirt for the purposes of visual identification to create ethnic and national integrity in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. We will also explore how “created” clothing tradition was transformed during the 20th century when a part of the Slovak community became a national minority within the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes/Yugoslavia. We will also discuss the ethnic self-perception of the Slovak community in Serbia in the 21st century. We start from the research of Sanja Zlatanović and Juraj Marušjak on the process of return migration of Vojvodina Slovaks. They have found their new life in this century in the Slovak Republic, the geographical and ethnic homeland from which their ancestors moved to Vojvodina more than 250 years ago. The men's traditional shirt becomes one of the defining visual symbols of the “Serbian” Slovaks in Slovakia, who are “very committed to nurtur-

ing their folk traditions” in their new-old homeland. We believe that the traditional shirt has traveled a kind of roundabout path from the Slovak national center in Martin in the 19th century to its survival in the clothing inventory of Vojvodina Slovaks during the 20th century and its new role in the visual identification of the “Serbian” Slovak community in the Slovak Republic. The men’s shirt, thus, currently represents for Vojvodina Slovaks one of the elements of their culture in Slovakia that helps to maintain their special identity in relation to the majority society in which they now live.

Radović Srđan (S1, P2)

Institute of Ethnography SASA, Belgrade, Serbia

TEACHING ETHNOLOGY AND ETHNOLOGICAL AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL CONTENT IN SCHOOLS IN SERBIA

Ethnology was once a teaching subject or component in schools in Serbia. Since 1931, it had been a separate teaching component with its designated teaching hours within the subject of geography in secondary schools, which was abolished after World War II. Ethnology would appear as a separate teaching subject from the mid-1970s for certain educational profiles in the system of secondary vocational (directed) education, while after 1990 it would only remain present in the curricula of some secondary art schools. After the school reform of 2003, ethnological and anthropological content became more prominent in elementary schools, primarily due to the introduction of the instructional goal of familiarizing pupils with basic terms of culture (within the compulsory subjects of the classroom teaching in the first two grades), and that of developing a relation with the cultural heritage (in the third and fourth grades). At the same time, a new optional learning subject called Folk tradition has been introduced in elementary schools (starting in the first grade), whose general educational aim was declared to be the revitalization of tradition, and its subject of study – traditional culture. School curricula in the 2010s have introduced additional ethnological and anthropological contents in elementary school education, also through a new optional subject called Everyday life in the past. This presentation would primarily analyze how the terms of culture, heritage, and tradition have been formulated in the elementary school curricula and programs after 2000, and how these concepts were translated and elaborated in the school-books for former (Folk tradition), and still present subjects of the first cycle of primary education (World around us, Nature and society).

Radulović Lidija B. (S4, P16)

University of Belgrade, Serbia

**LIVING WITH INEQUALITY AS A PERSON WITH
A DISABILITY: RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES OF
ANTHROPOLOGY IN SERBIA**

In contemporary anthropology, the issue of social inequality is one of the key analytical fields. Although the anthropology of inequality has not been singled out as a separate discipline in domestic ethnology and anthropology, individual studies touch on this thematic framework through issues of marginalization, social exclusion, and power in society. Inequality is a global phenomenon, but it is always concretely shaped in local social, cultural, and institutional contexts. Starting from that, this research examines how the perspectives of the anthropology of inequality can be applied to disability research in Serbia, with a special focus on actions “from below” through the daily practices, experiences, and strategies of the actors themselves. Theoretically, I rely on a cultural model that interprets disability as a socially and culturally constructed category of human difference. Therefore, the research is focused on the lived experience of people with disabilities in Serbia, support systems from family, institutions, and society, and the activism of people with disabilities themselves. Attention will also be paid to the ways in which social and institutional contexts shape the experience of disability through cultural norms, policies, and educational practices.

Rajković Ivan (S5, P17)

University of Belgrade, Serbia

BALKAN “MIXED-RACES”: THE LEGACY OF MODERNIZATION IN STARA PLANINA

What place does the anthropology of the Balkans occupy within contemporary environmental humanities? How do we understand the transformation of villages and peasants on the semi-periphery of the Anthropocene? In this presentation, I address these questions through a study of the elimination and preservation of the Pirot Pramenka, one of the so-called “autochthonous breeds” of sheep from Stara Planina that encapsulates the local history of modernization. During the nineteenth century, Serbia gained independence from the Ottoman Empire while simultaneously becoming an exporter of raw materials to Europe. In an effort to “improve” agriculture and ensure competitiveness on foreign food markets, livestock engineers focused on eradicating existing ecological traditions as outdated, “Oriental” mixtures of nature and culture. The devaluation of the “anachronistic” in favor of the “modern” unfolded through a simultaneous revaluation of generations and species, whereby certain nature–culture constellations were declared progressive, while others were positioned as stubborn remnants of the past. The devaluation of the “anachronistic” in favor of the “modern” unfolded through a simultaneous revaluation of generations and species, whereby certain nature–culture constellations were declared progressive, while others were positioned as stubborn remnants of the past. This kind of revolutionary ecology culminated in socialist Yugoslavia in the 1950s, when – following the eradication of goats as the “poor man’s mother” – local sheep flocks were crossbred with imported Merino stock, and the “death of old breeds” was proclaimed. As it turned out, this intervention produced a hybrid strain poorly adapted to extensive pastoralism, further accelerating the transformation of mountain peasants into urban workers.

After the collapse of the local dairy industry in the 1980s, the “Merino offspring” and “mixed cheese” became local metaphors for the peasant in transition – symbols of a domesticated “half-breed” caught in the dialectic between village and city. As part of global biodiversity conservation initiatives, and in alignment with broader

processes of production of meaning within re-traditionalist ecological movements, new agro-initiatives on Stara Planina today are turning toward the preservation of “old breeds”. At the same time, they critically reassess the legacy of modernization – including the predominantly hybrid livestock population and its aging owners.

Drawing on archival materials and ethnographic research collected over the past seven years, I demonstrate how the dichotomy of old–young is crucial for understanding anthropogenic processes in the modern Balkans, and serves as a guide for repositioning the region between the ecologies of the Global North and South.

Rasheva Iveta (S6, P21)

Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies
with Ethnographic Museum BAS, Sofia, Bulgaria

ON THE CONNECTION BETWEEN
THE SERBIAN AND BULGARIAN SONGS
ABOUT KOSARA AND VLADIMIR

The proposed report will be dedicated to the problem of the appearance of the Song about Teodora-Kosara and Ivan-Vladimir in Serbia and its transfer to Bulgaria. First of all, the religious texts about St. John-Vladimir with Elbasan motifs will be examined: among them are the Apostle Aprakos from the collection of St. Verkovich, Synaxar of St. John-Vladimir from the Greek Printing Service under the Venetian Service of 1690, Praise for St. John-Vladimir from the Greek Printing Service, Moskopol Service for John-Vladimir from 1741, Slavic Service for St. John-Vladimir from 1802 by Vikentii Rakich, Life of John-Vladimir in the Synaxar of St. N. Athos, Catholic Life of St. John-Vladimir by Ivan Martynov, Life of St. John-Vladimir by J. Snegar from 1870, etc.

Secondly, the historical texts about St. John-Vladimir will be examined: The Chronicle of Duklja, History of Dubrovnik by Giacomo di Pietro Lucari (1551–1615), The Kingdom of the Slavs by Mavro Orbini from 1601, A Pleasant Conversation about the Slavic People by Andrija Kačić-Miošić from 1756, History of Various Slavic Nations, Especially Bulgarian, Croatian and Serbian by Jovan Rajić from 1794/95.

It will be proven that two copies of the song by Andrija Kačić-Miošić passed to Bulgaria: one through the Elena copy of Dojno Grammatik of Paisius's History and one through Neofit Rilski. And I will support the thesis of D. Popović that sometimes "songs come from books, and not the other way around".

Repedžić Aleksandar (S4, P15)

PhD Candidate, University of Belgrade, Serbia

VLACHS THROUGH THE PRISM
OF ETHNOLOGY IN SERBIA,
THEN AND NOW

The work "Where Did the Romanians Disappear?" by Tihomir Đorđević represents a significant contribution to the study of ethnic and cultural processes in Serbia. In this paper I will address the issue of the disappearance of Romanian identity and its replacement by Vlach and Serbian identity among the population of northeastern Serbia. Starting from demographic sources, ethnographic data, and linguistic traces, in his travel notes Đorđević discusses the customs and mentality of the Romanian (Vlach) people in northeastern Serbia. The focus of this paper will be on the gradual changes in ethnic identity under the influence of political, social, and cultural circumstances.

How and why does identity change occur; what are the main influences, to what extent does identity differ today after 120 years, and what are the main characteristics of the Vlach ethnos? Do these differ from what Đorđević observed in his travel notes?

Special emphasis is placed on the phenomena of slavization and the integration of the Romanian population into the Serbian, that is, Vlach majority, with an analysis of the role of language, the influence of education, customs, and everyday life in identity shaping. In his work, Đorđević shows that during the first half of the twentieth century most of the population in the areas through which he traveled identified as Romanians, and he himself referred to them as such. Later, however, this ethnos was replaced by the name Vlach, and today, since the establishment of national councils, confusion has arisen among the population of northeastern Serbia, so that in censuses people identify in three different ways (Romanians, Vlachs, Serbs), even though all speak the Vlach language. The paper also highlights the complexity of Balkan ethnic relations and indicates that identities are changeable and subject to historical circumstances.

Through an interdisciplinary approach combining history, ethnology, and philology, this paper contributes to understanding demographic and cultural transformations in Serbia. Its analysis transcends

narrowly national frameworks and raises the broader question of the survival of minority communities in multiethnic environments. This work remains relevant for contemporary research on identity, assimilation, and cultural heritage, as it reminds us of the importance of preserving ethnic diversity and understanding the historical processes that shaped today's population structure.

Sibinović Ana (S5, P18)

Republic Institute for the Protection of Monuments
of Cultural Heritage Belgrade, Serbia

THE WORK METHODOLOGY OF
ETHNOLOGISTS/ANTHROPOLOGISTS
IN THE CONTEXT OF SAFEGUARDING IMMOVABLE
CULTURAL HERITAGE

This paper examines the relationship between theory and practice in the field of cultural heritage safeguarding in the territory of the City of Belgrade, with particular emphasis on the multidisciplinary approach required in the work of the Cultural Heritage Preservation Institute of Belgrade. It presents the history and development of the Institute, which has operated continuously since 1960. In accordance with the Law on Cultural Heritage, the domain of heritage safeguarding encompasses a wide range of activities, from the recognition, collection, documentation, and analysis of cultural heritage to the development of project documentation for interventions on immovable cultural properties, as well as the monitoring of the implementation of protection measures and the use of such properties.

Through selected examples of good practice in the preservation of vernacular architecture, as well as through an examination of the professional scope of ethnologists and anthropologists within the Institute, the paper seeks to clarify what constitutes a cultural property.

In everyday professional practice, particularly through the safeguarding of heritage, the preservation of authenticity and its values, conservation work points to a persistent lack of public awareness. Over decades of activity, the Institute has developed and maintained an active relationship with the public, making the presentation and popularization of heritage an essential segment of its work. Through professional journals, regional conferences, and recognizable educational programs for high school students, gymnasium pupils, and even preschool children, the Institute has identified as its target audience all those who participate in the process of heritage protection.

Simić Marina (S1, P3)

University of Belgrade, Serbia

DELEUZE, GUATTARI, AND ANTHROPOLOGY:
TOWARD VIVEIROS DE CASTRO'S POSTSTRUCTURAL
ANTHROPOLOGY

In this paper, I aim to present the relationship between anthropology and the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. First, I seek to point out the influence of anthropology on the work of these two authors, and then to demonstrate the ways in which their philosophy influenced anthropology. Deleuze and Guattari adopted various concepts from anthropology such as schismogenesis, rhizome, and plateau of intensity, as well as concepts related to kinship and exchange, descent, and marriage alliances. Furthermore, ideas of the fold, the Other, multiplicity, and affect, developed either by Deleuze himself or through the collaborative work of Deleuze and Guattari, have recently been employed by Viveiros de Castro and other anthropologists associated with the ontological turn in developing alternative anthropological theories. Focusing on Viveiros de Castro's attempt to correct Deleuze's and Guattari's correction of Lévi-Strauss's structuralism, as well as on his unsuccessful attempt to write a Deleuzian-inspired book entitled *Anti-Narcissus: Anthropology as a Minor Science* (which survives only as *Cannibal Metaphysics: For a Post-Structural Anthropology*), the paper explores the complex relationship between the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari and contemporary anthropology.

Slavcheva Mariya (S2, P8)

Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with
Ethnographic Museum BAS, Sofia, Bulgaria

**EPISTEMIC TRANSMISSION BEYOND THE UNIVERSITY:
YOUTH RESEARCH AND THE REPRODUCTION
OF ETHNOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE
IN A POST-SOCIALIST CONTEXT**

This paper examines how school-based ethnographic initiatives function as sites of epistemic transmission and disciplinary reproduction in a post-socialist context. Drawing on mentorship experience within a long-term folklore expedition in the village of Asparuhovo (Bulgaria), the study explores how ethnological methods circulate beyond the university and are reconfigured through youth research practices.

Over nearly two decades, the expedition has generated a substantial archive of ethnographic and historical materials documenting local cultural heritage. In 2025, a student-led project titled “Stories with a Map”, focused on systematizing, digitizing, and reinterpreting these materials, received First Prize at the Scientific Session of the Student Institute of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. This case provides an opportunity to analyze how disciplinary tools – field documentation, archiving, mapping, and narrative construction – are transmitted to and reshaped by young researchers operating within school and community settings.

Rather than framing such initiatives as outreach or educational enrichment alone, the paper conceptualizes them as community-based knowledge practices that actively participate in the reproduction of ethnology. Through mentorship, collaborative work, and digital mediation, students engage in structured forms of observation and interpretation that both inherit and subtly transform established documentary paradigms.

Situated within a post-socialist environment – where ethnology has historically maintained close ties to heritage institutions and national cultural frameworks – the case illuminates how disciplinary continuity depends on intergenerational negotiation. The paper argues that epistemic transmission is not a linear transfer of knowledge, but a dynamic process in which methods are adapted, simplified, questioned, and recontextualized across institutional and generational boundaries.

Srdić Srebro Anđa (S3, P12)

Université de Bordeaux, France

BETWEEN SERBIA AND FRANCE:
AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC REFLECTIONS ON LANGUAGE,
WRITING, AND DISCIPLINARY IDENTITY

This presentation starts from an autoethnographic reflection on a personal academic trajectory between two epistemological spaces – the post-socialist academic context of Serbia and the contemporary university environment in France – with the aim of examining how disciplinary identity is formed and transformed through experiences of transnational mobility. In this sense, mobility is viewed as a process in which research practices and professional habitus are continuously shaped and reshaped through encounters with different institutional and disciplinary traditions and demands.

Particular attention is devoted to the role of language in this process. Teaching and research work conducted in multiple languages, involving constant conceptual adaptation and code-switching, raises the question of the extent to which disciplinary knowledge and methodology remain marked by the context of their initial acquisition. This dynamic is particularly reflected in teaching practice, whose structure mirrors pedagogical patterns adopted during one's own education. Viewed through Wenger's concept of the "community of practice," these processes demonstrate how disciplinary knowledge is transmitted not only through content, but also through institutional and pedagogical practices that shape its interpretation.

The paper further addresses the problem of anthropological writing, particularly the question of whom the researcher addresses and how their positionality is shaped in relation to the language of writing and the intended readership. Drawing on Talal Asad's insight concerning the translation of cultural specificities into the conceptual frameworks of one's own academic worlds, the paper seeks to demonstrate how linguistic displacement becomes an integral part of the research process, while writing itself becomes a space of theoretical reflection.

Starting from the experience of "double positioning," the author points to the ways in which geographical and institutional dislocation reshape the modes through which disciplinary knowledge is formed, produced, and transmitted. This opens a broader discussion about contemporary transformations of anthropology and its role within transnational and interdisciplinary academic spaces.

Stajić Mladen (S1, P4)

University of Belgrade, Serbia

THINKING LIKE A SWARM:
TRANSLATING SWARM INTELLIGENCE
INTO DIGITAL ANTHROPOLOGY

This presentation proposes a conceptual translation of swarm intelligence into the analytical vocabulary of social and cultural anthropology. Drawing on a case study based on a large-scale corpus of publicly available posts from a basketball supporters' subforum focused on transfer rumors, the research combines computational scraping, temporal analysis, and qualitative digital ethnography to examine how collective sense-making emerges from decentralized interactions among participants. The analysis reconstructs the life cycles of rumors, tracing how information diffuses, is contested, and stabilizes into provisional consensus. The results indicate that collective assessments often outperform individual claims in predicting transfer outcomes, not through hierarchical top-down coordination, but through distributed epistemic labor. Community members occupy recurring roles (e.g., initiators, validators, skeptics, amplifiers), while external links, reputational cues (track records, likes, citations), and patterns of repetition function as coordination signals analogous to stigmergic traces in swarm systems. Rather than treating online knowledge production as mere gossip or informational noise, the article conceptualizes it as a form of distributed cognition structured by affective attachments, moral evaluations, and reputational economies. Iterative confirmation, selective amplification, and patterned skepticism operate as coordination mechanisms that parallel symbolic pheromones in swarm systems, enabling convergence without centralized control. By foregrounding the limits and breakdowns of collective intelligence alongside its productive capacities, the article argues that emergent knowledge in fan communities is simultaneously epistemic and moral, as claims about transfers are inseparable from broader negotiations of identity, loyalty, and belonging. Methodologically, the article demonstrates how swarm intelligence can be translated into an interpretive framework for digital anthropology, bridging computational social science and ethnographic analysis.

Stjepanović Kornilova Milica (S4, P14)

PhD Candidate, University of Belgrade, Serbia

**METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES
IN THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDY OF
NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS:
FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE**

This paper examines the relationship between anthropology and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), within which two distinct approaches have developed. According to the first approach, anthropology theoretically studies NGOs and, in this context, analyses the meaning of the concept itself, the position of NGOs in society, their impact on culture, and the influence of culture on the functioning of civil society. The second anthropological approach has developed within applied anthropology, enabling anthropologists to be employed in the NGO sector and apply their knowledge within it, or to be temporarily engaged as experts. The paper raises the question of the significance and limitations of applied anthropology in the NGO sector, as well as whether anthropology can overcome the identified methodological problems. The analysis concludes that every anthropological study may find practical application, yet scholarly work within NGOs faces both technical and psychosocial constraints. Technical factors relate to limited time frames, the mismatch between academic research dynamics and project-based work, and constraints imposed by donor requirements. Psychosocial limitations concern the interaction between anthropologists and NGOs, in which discrepancies may arise between anthropological findings and organizational expectations, alongside moral-ethical pressures and political conditionalities. Nevertheless, the paper does not reject the possibility of applying anthropological knowledge; rather, it proposes the development of new strategies for disseminating independently produced anthropological results beyond academic frameworks.

Stojanović Đorđe (S1, P4)

Independent Research Associate, Belgrade, Serbia

**ETHNOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY
IN THE WORLD OF ALGORITHMS:
THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL POTENTIALS
OF THE DISCIPLINE ON THE “INVISIBLE” FIELD**

Algorithms, despite being “invisible,” have become one of the most striking features of the contemporary digital world. This raises the question of how ethnology and anthropology, which conduct most of their research on “physical,” “tangible” terrain, can approach this new “invisible” phenomenon that significantly shapes the contemporary media landscape. This issue was addressed by anthropologist Nick Seaver, who proposes three approaches: the algorithm in culture, the algorithm as culture, and the ethnographic methodological approach. The same author not only defines the theoretical and methodological anthropological approach to algorithms, but also emphasizes that anthropology has the potential to resolve terminological anxieties caused by the encounter between technical/computer sciences and social sciences and humanities when the term algorithm moves beyond the boundaries of the former. According to Seaver, anthropology as a discipline has repeatedly demonstrated its full potential throughout its history when encountering completely different and previously non-overlapping traditions of knowledge (Seaver 2017, 1–2). At the same time, ethnography has a long tradition of incorporating and integrating various methods into its approach, as well as the potential not only to perceive “invisible algorithms” as an everyday part of “tangible culture,” but also to understand the everyday practices that shape, maintain, and transform them, rather than viewing them as separate technical-technological phenomena. Therefore, anthropology can help us explore a whole range of topics such as the relationship between humans and computers, offline understandings and beliefs that guide and shape algorithmic operations and their local versions, as well as their positioning within socio-cultural contexts that are diverse and constantly changing (Seaver 2017, 6–7). This conference presentation will therefore focus precisely on the theoretical-methodological overview offered by Seaver and other authors who have concentrated in their work on the theoretical and methodological potential of anthropology to approach this new socio-cultural phenomenon.

Stojanović Marko (S5, P19)

Ethnographic Museum, Belgrade, Serbia

A DECADE IN THE MUSEUM:
ARE MUSEUM PROFESSIONALS EXCLUSIVELY
ETHNOGRAPHERS OR ALSO ANTHROPOLOGISTS?

During the first decade of the new millennium, the question was raised whether ethnographic museology exists and whether it is necessary within applied anthropology!? A range of responses followed, from theoretical and methodological considerations to those practically implemented in everyday work environment. Contemporary ethnographic museum practice suggests that the answer remains open and (once again) subject to debate. The Ethnographic Museum, in its former status as *arbiter elegantiae* for ethnographic museum practice, and particularly its, quite literally, *valeur* of exhibition communication over the past decade, has (become) an exceptional channel for examining whether ethnography – or ethnology/anthropology more broadly – within the contemporary museum environment constitutes a field for the interpretation of culture, rather than merely its representation. Communication with diverse target audiences reflects not only the professional and scholarly approaches of ethnologists and anthropologists, but also the influence of the “crosswinds” of the broader social environment and processes, as well as a specific form of museum (ethnographic) folklore, whose existence has already been acknowledged. This provides grounds for questioning whether museum curators are solely ethnographers or also anthropologists!? The space for such reconsideration is further opened by the very fact of the more than 125-year-long existence of the Ethnographic Museum. The core of the dilemma – whether the sole aim and outcome of the work of museum professionals who are also anthropologists is circumscribed within a full circle ranging from nineteenth- and twentieth-century museum practice to contemporary “market-oriented ethnography,” or whether anthropologically informed topics, alongside an ethnographic-museological approach and communication, represent a viable vision and mission for the Ethnographic Museum – remains a central issue.

Stojčeto vić Ivana (S5, P20)

University of Belgrade, Serbia

DOMESTIC ETHNOLOGICAL AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACHES TOWARDS VISUAL ARTS

This presentation aims to provide a retrospective view of the place of visual art as a subject of research among domestic ethnologists and later anthropologists – from the establishment of our discipline to the present day. Up to now, no distinct subdiscipline specialized in this field of study has developed within our discipline. Nevertheless, through sporadic and occasional individual efforts, certain conceptual and theoretical starting points have crystallized in this area (alongside numerous museum and similar collections of “ethno-artistic” objects). However, these approaches have not moved far beyond traditional ethnological methods of presenting and understanding artistic creativity. Theoretical considerations concerning the concept and characteristics of “folk art” have not been revised in domestic ethnology or anthropology since the 1980s, and it can even be said that they were not fully aligned with contemporary scholarly approaches even at that time, limiting scientific efforts primarily to the traditional method of (de)scribing material. It should nevertheless be noted that, on a general level, our discipline remains theoretically aligned with traditional anthropological currents of thought, according to which “art” is not separated from applied art, or from broader cultural and even folkloric practices. Visual expression here primarily serves ritual and symbolic functions. Viewed more narrowly, however, “art” in domestic ethnological research has mainly been represented as “folk,” as part of collective rather than individual creativity (while the village is considered the primary source of “folk art”). Such a, to put it mildly, limiting perspective – one based on concepts that urgently require revision in relation to contemporary living conditions – has probably had a decisive influence on the stagnation of anthropological research in the field of visual art in our region. With reference to some of the foundational questions posed by the “founding fathers” of the discipline (Boas, Lévi-Strauss, Geertz), through postmodern critique and up to the present day, my aim is ultimately to raise the question of how we, as anthropologists, can recognize the “art” we are called upon to study in today’s world.

Sysoeva Maria E. (S3, P11)

Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russia

‘REFLECTIONS OF THE UBYKH. WE EXIST’: STRATEGIES FOR CONSTRUCTING UBYKH IDENTITY

Ubykhs are a unique ethnic group that inhabited one of the regions of the Black Sea coast of the North-Western Caucasus before the tragic events of the Russian-Caucasian war. After leaving their native lands, the Ubykhs migrated to the lands of the Ottoman Empire. Today, Kavkazologists count considerable 15-20 thousand descendants of Ubykhs in Turkey alone. However, according to linguistic indicators, we are dealing with a disappeared or at best endangered ethnic group. Ubykhs received the status of an ‘extinct / rapidly becoming extinct’ people at the end of the XX century, after the death of Tefvik Esench, recognized as the best ubykh native speaker.

The experienced deportations and tragedies find expression in the multilevel identity of the modern Ubykh descendants in which the Ubykh self-presentation itself occupies a secondary place. Despite this circumstance, some Ubykh renaissance is still observed among both Turkish and Russian descendants. In Turkey, the process of revitalization received an initial impetus within the framework of the general revival of the Caucasian (Circassian) identity.

Alternative ways of expressing Ubykh identity, in which language ceases to occupy the dominant position, are noteworthy. Identity is also represented through the use of appropriate nicknames and hashtags, the search for family connections with representatives of Ubykh clans, and participation in thematic groups in social networks.

The report examines the following issues: The “new” cultural codes of representation of the Ubykh community, the relevance of the figure of Tefvik Esench, as well as the tacit opposition of cyberactivists and public figures who prefer “traditional” revitalization steps.

Šantek Goran-Pavel (S3, P9)

University of Zagreb, Croatia

ANTHROPOLOGY BETWEEN SCIENCE AND SOCIAL ACTION: CHOOSING THE DISCIPLINE'S FUTURE

This paper discusses a developing crossroad in contemporary anthropology, in which the discipline's increasing orientation toward engagement and activism has generated a growing tension between scientific inquiry and political commitment, leading to divergent paths of disciplinary development. These trends have significant implications for anthropology's scientific authority, conceptual coherence, and methodological rigor. Historically, the discipline established its disciplinary legitimacy through ethnographically immersive yet analytically detached research, grounded in methodological objectivity and conceptual caution, especially when addressing inherently unstable and contested concepts such as culture, values, and human rights. Such commitments enabled anthropology to interrogate normative claims critically while maintaining a clear distinction between scientific research and moral or political advocacy.

In recent decades, a growing emphasis on public relevance, ethical responsibility, and activist positioning has substantially reconfigured anthropological practice. Although this shift has increased the discipline's moral visibility and social engagement, it has also intensified concerns that strong activist commitments may erode analytical rigor, weaken conceptual foundations, and deteriorate methodological standards. At this juncture, there is a risk that normative positioning may precede empirical research rather than emerging analytically from it, which challenges anthropology's capacity to fully uphold scientific standards such as objectivity, consistency, and independence.

This paper situates this crossroad within broader disciplinary transformations, with a focus on practice-based approaches that aim to reconcile scientific rigor with social engagement. Drawing on case studies from empirical domains such as sport and human rights, the paper demonstrates how choices made at this disciplinary juncture affect the future perception of anthropology as a scientific discipline. The central argument is that the long-term scientific credibility of anthropology depends on its capacity to navigate

this critical juncture by maintaining its conceptual and methodological foundations and by explicitly defining the boundaries of social and political activism. Alternatively, it may no longer be necessary, as anthropology's ongoing shift toward social and political engagement may already have transformed the discipline into a form of social and political practice.

Šaponjić-Ašanin Snežana (S6, P22)

National Museum of Čačak, Serbia

“GOD APPEARS” – EPIPHANY IN CONTEMPORARY ANTHROPOLOGICAL PRACTICE

In Čačak, people have always swum in the Morava River on the day of celebrating the Christ's baptism. This custom was one of the most important customs in the annual cycle of customs in the city. In the morning, people gathered in the portico of the Church of the Holy Ascension, from where, after the festive liturgy and the blessing of the water, they moved in an organized manner towards the riverbank. It was a festive procession led by representatives of the city authorities, soldiers and officers, students, and citizens. The event was very well covered by the media at the time, and the winner, or the bearer of the Epiphany Cross, was talked about for almost the entire year. And the cross for which the healthy and brave boys competed was carved from ice.

After winning the cross, the winner returned to the city center with a song and a musical instrument, where hot brandy was brewed and the joy of all those present continued. Regardless of the cold, the people did not disperse for a long time. This common practice died down after World War II. Public expression of faith was prohibited. The old people of Čačak did not easily come to terms with this fact, so until the 1950s there were sporadic cases of swimming for the cross on Epiphany, but not in the organization of the church.

With the strengthening of national and religious awareness at the very turn of the two millennia, swimming for the Epiphany is once again taking place in Čačak. Organized by the National Museum and the Sports Center “Mladost” and under the auspices of the Diocese of Žižka and the City of Čačak, and following the trail of old records, documents, and living witnesses, the first renewed approach to the Epiphany Cross was held in 2005. And so for the next twenty-two years, the event became more and more organized and more and more massive. It is a living customary practice created on the foundations of folk tradition and customs but is a modernized and living cultural practice.

Tomašević Milan (S2, P7)

Institute of Ethnography SASA, Belgrade, Serbia

ETHNOASTRONOMY AS A THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGE IN SERBIAN ETHNOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

This paper examines ethnoastronomy as a specific field of inquiry that, within Serbian ethnology and anthropology, continuously problematizes the boundaries of the discipline, its theoretical perspectives, and its methodological frameworks. Starting from the question of how knowledge of the sky, celestial bodies, and the cosmic order is conceptualized in folk culture, the paper analyzes the ways in which ethnoastronomy has historically operated at the intersection of empirical ethnographic description, symbolic interpretation, and interdisciplinary collaboration with astronomy.

A review of the discipline's history shows that early records and ethnographic materials from the nineteenth century provided a rich yet theoretically underexamined body of data. Mythological and religious interpretations of the cosmos and traditional knowledge about it, among early Serbian ethnologists, opened space for symbolic and comparative readings, but often remained within the bounds of speculative reconstruction. The first attempt at a methodological systematization of ethnoastronomy can be found in the works of Nenad Đ. Janković, where a balance is established between astronomical knowledge and ethnographic material. Contemporary contributions further problematize ethnoastronomy as a form of cultural knowledge, highlighting its narrative, symbolic, and epistemological dimensions.

The paper argues that ethnoastronomy constitutes a productive "boundary field" that reveals methodological tensions between positivist-oriented research practices and culturally interpretative analytical frameworks, as well as between different modalities of scientific rationality. In this sense, ethnoastronomy is conceptualized as a productive analytical framework for re-examining contemporary theoretical challenges in anthropology, particularly those related to epistemological pluralism and interdisciplinarity.

Trajanovski Viktor (S3, P10)

Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, North Macedonia

Marić Simon (S3, P10)

Independent Researcher, Belgrade, Serbia

**A VISUAL TREASURY: THE HISTORY
AND CONTEMPORANEITY OF ETHNOGRAPHIC
DOCUMENTARY FILM IN MACEDONIA**

This paper will explore key works and authors who have employed ethnographic film to research and present diverse facets of Macedonian folk culture. Focusing on the films of Vera Kličkova, Blagoja Drnkov, Elizabeta Koneska, Vladimir Bocev, and contemporary visual anthropologists, a wider audience will be introduced to these important cultural practices. These ethnographic films will also facilitate discussions on various themes, such as traditional wedding customs in Mariovo, shared sanctuaries, dervish rituals, and other similar topics.

Trifunović Vesna (S4, P16)

Institute of Ethnography SASA, Belgrade, Serbia

ANTHROPOLOGICAL ENGAGEMENT IN RESEARCH ON VACCINATION COMMUNICATION IN SERBIA: EXPERIENCE AND RESULTS

Between 2011 and 2016, Serbia recorded a declining trend in coverage with the MMR vaccine, with a particularly low percentage of vaccinated children in Belgrade. In this context, the period from 2017 to 2019 saw a measles outbreak, with 6,000 recorded cases, including 15 fatalities. As one of the responses to this situation, the Institute of Public Health of Serbia “Dr Milan Jovanović Batut” launched the project Tailoring Immunization Programmes – TIP, supported by the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe, with the aim of identifying and understanding the factors associated with insufficient acceptance of vaccination. Among other aspects, the project focused on communication between healthcare professionals and parents regarding vaccination. In this regard, anthropological research and qualitative methodology were recognized as particularly relevant for understanding the experiences, practices, and skills of healthcare workers in communicating with parents holding diverse attitudes toward childhood vaccination. In addition to presenting the results of this research, this paper also reflects on the author’s experience of engagement and work on the project, with the aim of offering broader insights into the opportunities and challenges involved in applying an anthropological approach in research relevant to the contemporary local context.

Useini Rini (S4, P13)

Institute for Spiritual and Cultural Heritage of Albanians,
Skopje, North Macedonia

**ETHNOLOGICAL PROJECTS AS
BRIDGING MECHANISMS BETWEEN ETHNOLOGISTS,
THE STATE, AND THE PEOPLE
(NORTH MACEDONIA CASE)**

This paper examines ethnological projects in North Macedonia as structured and functional mechanisms of mediation between ethnologists, state institutions, and local communities, positioning them as collaborative frameworks that extend beyond the boundaries of purely academic research. With the institutionalization of ethnology as a professional discipline, its development – particularly the trajectory of ethnographic museums – became closely linked to transformations within civil society and broader shifts in the public sphere. In the European context, civil society and civic culture have historically been deeply interconnected. Conceived as the “realm of associations” – that is, non-coercive organizations situated between the family and the state-civil society in nineteenth-century Europe, as noted by James Sheehan, largely emerged from and was embedded within European civic culture. At the same time, ethnologists cannot operate solely within institutional or bureaucratic frameworks; their work necessarily requires direct engagement with the people, both as sources of empirical data and as audiences to whom knowledge must be communicated and returned. From this perspective, the ethnological project functions not only as a tool for the collection, documentation, and interpretation of material and intangible cultural heritage, but also as a space of dialogue, negotiation, and interaction among diverse social actors.

The ethnologist thus emerges not merely as a researcher, but as a cultural mediator who constructs communicative bridges between scientific knowledge, state cultural policies, and the lived experiences of local communities. The paper further analyzes the role of the state in shaping ethnological projects through cultural policies, funding schemes, and institutional frameworks, which significantly influence research agendas, thematic priorities, and the production of scientific knowledge, as well as the selection of heritage elements deemed worthy of preservation and promotion. Simultaneously, the active role of

local communities is emphasized, as they are not passive objects of study but key bearers of collective memory, cultural practices, and identities that ethnological projects seek to document and interpret. The inclusion of community members through interviews, fieldwork, and the co-creation of narratives transforms ethnological projects into collaborative and inclusive processes. Through a theoretical and analytical approach, this paper argues that ethnological projects function as platforms of communication and interaction where scientific interests, state heritage strategies, and the cultural needs of the people converge. As such, these projects contribute to the strengthening of cultural identity, the institutionalization of collective memory, and the development of sustainable cultural policies. Ultimately, they represent a crucial factor in fostering a dynamic and productive relationship between ethnology as a scientific discipline, the state as the guarantor of cultural heritage, and the people as its primary subjects and bearers.

Vasileva-Grueva Petya (S6, P21)

Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Sofia, Bulgaria

Yordanova Kremena (S6, P21)

Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Sofia, Bulgaria

Kotseva Violeta (S6, P21)

Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Sofia, Bulgaria

CULTURAL PRACTICES FOR
HERITAGE TRANSMISSION BASED
ON THE EXAMPLE OF SEVERAL VILLAGES ALONG
THE MESTA RIVER VALLEY,
SOUTHWESTERN BULGARIA

The results of field research conducted under a large national research project will be presented. Along the Mesta River Valley in Southwestern Bulgaria, there are villages with a mixed ethnic and religious character – Bulgarian Muslims, Bulgarian Christians, Turks and Roma. This makes the region interesting for research, especially in the field of intangible cultural and historical heritage. The topic of the presentation is the processes of building a unified vision of heritage shared by all bearers. In this context, the role of returning migrants is also important, as the region is experiencing intensive migration processes. And they undoubtedly influence the understanding and assessment of cultural heritage.

The research was conducted using the methods of ethnology and cultural anthropology, conducting structured and semi-structured interviews, but also using interdisciplinary methodology from the fields of history, demography and statistics.

Vlahović Ljubica (S2, P6)

Museum of Yugoslavia, Belgrade, Serbia

120 YEARS LATER:
ON THE POSSIBLE FUTURES OF
ETHNOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY IN SERBIA

Despite its enviably long institutional tradition, anthropology in Serbia today occupies a marginal position in the public sphere. It is not uncommon for colleagues from related disciplines to not have a clear idea of what anthropologists do, while the presence of ethnologist-anthropologists in the media and public debates is minimal. I start from the thesis that this position is not exclusively a consequence of external structural circumstances but also of the way in which the discipline is institutionally reproduced and positioned. Study programs are primarily focused on the reproduction of academic staff, although the number of positions in academia is limited, and most graduate students build their professional paths outside the university. At the same time, ethnologists and anthropologists and their discipline are almost completely absent from primary and secondary education, although numerous topics that are essentially anthropological are covered within subjects such as geopolitics, world religions, civic education, or media and culture. This situation affects a kind of invisibility of the discipline and limited recognition of ethnologist-anthropologists as a relevant expert voice. A chronic indicator of this marginalization is the small number of interested candidates in entrance exams, which points to the lack of a strategy of public visibility and promotion of the department, both in Belgrade and especially in other cities. In this context, the paper considers the possibilities of developing the discipline through inclusion in educational institutions, the media space, and cultural programs, as well as the need to introduce elective courses that would prepare students for work in teaching, heritage protection institutions, and other sectors. The aim of the paper is not to normatively determine the future of the discipline, but rather to analytically examine its possible development and social relevance in the contemporary context.

Vučić Lea (S4, P14)

Museum of Ponišavlje, Pirot, Serbia

BETWEEN SILENCE AND MEMORY:
“MAY DAY” FACTORY IN PIROT AND
THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF POST-SOCIALISM
“AT HOME”

This paper examines post-socialist transformation through the ethnography of the “May Day” factory in Pirot, a textile enterprise that employed around six thousand workers at its peak and which closed in bankruptcy in 2015. Drawing on debates about the epistemological status of research at home in post-socialist countries, the paper questions the methodological position of researchers within the community being researched. Through a combination of archival work, in-depth interviews, and sensory ethnography, it documents the ways in which the experience of industrial work is inscribed in the bodies, memories, and everyday practices of those who lived through the period of deindustrialization. Drawing on the theoretical framework of post-socialist studies, I argue that former workers do not live in the past but in a specific temporal regime where different temporalities coexist in constant tension. The paper introduces the notion of ethnography of latency to describe a specific form of sociality that survives the collapse of institutions as a latent but persistent form of solidarity. It exists as a latent resource of informal networks. Special attention is paid to the bodily dimension of industrial memory and the aesthetic aspects of factory space as indicators of a specific socialist relationship to the dignity of work. The paper opens up space for critical reflection on what is lost through deindustrialization and how ethnography can document what institutional archives cannot.

Vučinić Nešković Vesna (S3, P9)

University of Belgrade, Serbia

IS APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY POSSIBLE
IN NEOLIBERAL POSTSOCIALISM?
REFLECTIONS FROM URBAN ANTHROPOLOGY

The paper deliberates on whether it is realistic to argue that Applied Anthropology is possible in the former socialist countries of Southeastern and Central Eastern Europe, that is, within the system of neoliberal postsocialism. I will begin by offering working definitions of applied anthropology and contrasting national contexts in which Applied Anthropology exists as an institutionalized practice with those in which it does not.

I will then examine how the polycrisis of the past fifteen years has shaped both my conceptualization and the methodological implementation of the Urban Anthropology course, directing it toward the study of acute urban crises. By analyzing how residents in Serbia responded to forced resettlement due to large infrastructure projects, extensive floods, the Balkan migration wave from the Middle East, and COVID-19, I interrogate the possibility of Applied Anthropology becoming recognized as a legitimate institutional practice and a resource for policymaking.

Vukotić Sara (S6, P22)

Institute of Slovenian Ethnology, Ljubljana, Slovenia

WHERE IS HOME WHEN RITUAL TRAVELS?
SLAVA AMONG SERBS IN NOVA GORICA
AND THE PLACE OF ANTHROPOLOGY TODAY

Slava is most often understood as a distinctly Serbian cultural and religious practice, closely tied to Orthodox Christianity and commonly framed as a stable marker of national and confessional identity within Serbia. Yet far less attention has been paid to what happens to this ritual in contexts of migration: whether it is maintained, transformed, or reimagined, and how it functions when removed from its presumed “home.”

This paper draws on ethnographic research conducted among members of the Serbian community in Nova Gorica, a predominantly Catholic, multicultural border town in western Slovenia. Based on interviews, participant observation, and elements of autoethnography, the study explores how slava is practiced in a transnational context and how it mediates relationships to space and belonging. Analytically, the paper distinguishes three interconnected situations: the practice of slava “here” in the migration setting, slava “there” in the homeland, and slava “here and there” as a ritual anchor of a bifocal identity.

Drawing on the conceptual distinction between space and place (Low 2016; Low 2022), the paper argues that slava operates as a dynamic cultural practice through which participants actively produce meaning, negotiate belonging, and (re)construct heritage in everyday life. The research was conducted in 2024, in the period immediately preceding the launch of the European Capital of Culture programme in Nova Gorica and Gorizia in 2025, when preparations and public discourse around the idea of a “borderless” space were already highly visible. While the project foregrounded the symbolic unification of primarily Slovenian and Italian communities, other cultural groups living in this multicultural environment remained largely unaddressed. By focusing on slava among Serbs in Nova Gorica, a community not previously studied anthropologically in Slovenia, the paper addresses both a social and an academic gap, and reflects on the role of contemporary anthropology in making minority experiences visible through ethnographic research.

Xiaomin Zhang (S1, P1)

Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Beijing, China

LEGACY, INNOVATION, AND DIALOGUE:
THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INSTITUTE OF
ETHNOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY, CHINESE ACADEMY
OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, AND THE PRACTICE OF THE
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
ANTHROPOLOGY AND ETHNOLOGY

This abstract introduces the developmental trajectory, academic contributions, and the flagship English-language journal of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology (IEA), Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, since its establishment in 1958. The Institute's evolution can be charted across three pivotal phases: The Foundation and Exploration Period (1958–1978), centered on the monumental tasks of ethnic identification and socio-historical surveys of ethnic minority groups, which laid a solid empirical and disciplinary foundation for ethnic studies in China. The Restoration and Systematic Development Period (1978–2012) saw the comprehensive revival and expansion of the discipline under reform and opening-up, with diversified research fields and methodologies forming a complete academic system. The New Era of Transformation and Innovation (2012–present) focuses on disciplinary adjustment and the construction of theoretical autonomy. Its current core research directions include: 1) expanding the scope of ethnological research from traditional minority regions to Han areas, cross-border ethnic groups, and overseas ethnography; 2) building a distinctive Chinese ethnological knowledge system with autonomous intellectual frameworks; and 3) deepening historical research through the perspective of the “Chinese National Community” and engaging in dialogue with Western academic paradigms.

The Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology has evolved from its initial mission of supporting China's ethnic identification and regional autonomy policies to becoming a comprehensive research institution that balances theoretical innovation with practical policy applications.

The IEA boasts a strong publishing tradition, hosting three core Chinese journals: *Ethno-National Studies* (1958), *Journal of World Peoples Studies* (1958), and *Minority Languages of China* (1979). To foster deeper international scholarly dialogue, the Institute launched the peer-reviewed English journal *International Journal of Anthropol-*

ogy and Ethnology in 2017. The journal aims to serve as a premier platform for global scholars to exchange ideas on cutting-edge issues in anthropology, ethnology, and related fields, particularly encouraging in-depth research on China, Asia, and Global South societies. Over several years of development, IJAE has been indexed in several major international databases, including Scopus, and has attracted submissions from dozens of countries and regions worldwide, establishing a steadily growing international academic influence.

For over six decades, the Institute has remained a leading national institution for ethnology and anthropology research in China. Its work has not only profoundly influenced China's ethnic policies and social practices but has also, through rigorous fieldwork, theoretical innovation, and active international publishing, provided the global academic community with unique Chinese perspectives and scholarly case studies.

Yancheva Yana (S3, P11)

Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with the Ethnographic Museum BAS, Sofia, Bulgaria

RESEARCHES ON CHILDHOOD AND PIONEER ORGANIZATIONS IN THE PERIOD OF SOCIALISM

My work is focused on comparative research of various texts that explore how socialist regimes in the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Romania, Poland and Czechoslovakia ideologically constructed childhood and the image of the 'socialist children' to serve political ends. Ideological perception, pedagogical practices, organizational structures and rituals were transferred from the USSR to the satellite socialist states in order to provide resources for educating the 'new socialist man'. Children were portrayed not as innocent individuals but as miniature and militarized citizens, molded to embody and propagate socialist ideals such as loyalty, discipline, and patriotism. The research offers a comparative view how both in literature and visual culture, Soviet, Yugoslavian, Bulgarian or children from other socialist countries were idealized as obedient revolutionaries, with their bodies controlled and choreographed to symbolize ideological alignment. In many socialist countries the Pioneer Organizations used military-style uniforms, ceremonies, and structured activities to cultivate socialist identity and a collective spirit. Other researches focus on embedding Soviet and socialist loyalty through rituals, propaganda, and visual symbols, shaping children into political agents from a young age. The socialist child, as constructed in the totalitarian contexts, was a disciplined, obedient, and ideologically shaped being, with their body treated as a tool for political and moral normalization. Under socialist totalitarian regimes, the child was conceptualized primarily as an object of state control and ideological formation and a passive recipient of ideology. The socialist child was considered a 'deficient being' – a future adult in need of correction and guidance. This reflected a hierarchical view where adults held absolute authority and children had little agency. The figure of the child was also represented in cultural discourses: in state-sanctioned culture and pedagogy, children were often romanticized as the future of the nation but simultaneously subjected to rigid developmental and moral expectations.

Yang Jingyao (S3, P10)

PhD Candidate, University of Manchester, UK

TRANSFORMATIONS IN
CHINESE ETHNOGRAPHIC FILMS:
PARADIGMATIC SHIFTS, MARGINAL STRATEGIES
AND ENTANGLED NEGOTIATIONS

This paper reflects on the transformation of ethnology into anthropology in China through the historical trajectory of ethnographic filmmaking. By situating the Chinese case within broader post-socialist disciplinary developments, it examines how visual practices register institutional, epistemological, and political shifts in the discipline. From state-led Ethno-Documentary films of the 1950s-60s, to the transitional period of disciplinary introduction after the Reform era, and finally to the reflexive consolidation of visual anthropology since the 2000s, Chinese ethnographic filmmaking offers a distinctive vantage point from which to reconsider the changing position of ethnology and anthropology.

This paper approaches ethnographic films as sites where disciplinary authority is negotiated. Across different historical moments, filmmakers have operated between national political agendas and emerging international academic standards, navigating evolving regimes of ethnic governance, technological transformations, and academic professionalisation. This complex positioning – between state agenda and transnational scholarly norms – has shaped what counts as ethnographic knowledge, who is authorised to produce it, and how visual methods are justified.

The analytical key to this study is the Chinese term *zhi*, originally referring to official local chronicles and later adopted to translate “ethnography”, while also denoting personal aspiration. This layered concept illuminates how Chinese ethnographic filmmaking developed at the intersection of archival state traditions and imported anthropological paradigms, while remaining driven by filmmakers’ ethical commitments and scholarly ambitions.

By analysing paradigm shifts across three historical phases – state-led archiving, mass media-mediated transition, and reflexive academic consolidation – the paper argues that Chinese ethnographic filmmaking provides a revealing case for understanding disciplinary transformation under a comparatively distinctive post-socialist context shaped with Chinese characteristics, contributing to broader reflections on the contemporary horizons of ethnology and anthropology beyond European contexts.

Yao Peng (S5, P17)

PhD Candidate, University of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing, China

A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE ON AGRICULTURAL CULTURAL HERITAGE: FROM HERITAGE SITES TO HERITAGE EMPOWERMENT

Current research on Agricultural Cultural Heritage (ACH) has yielded fruitful results at both theoretical and practical levels, yet it faces the dilemma of lacking theoretical consensus in the context of multidisciplinary integration: that is, how to shift the focus of conservation and utilization research from the static ontology of “heritage sites” to the dynamic structure and function of “heritage” as a whole.

Based on the Neoclassical Structure-Function Theory, this paper analyzes the origin, development, and “tradition-modernity” transformation process of Deqing Pearl Heritage in eastern China. The study finds that ACH has a unique ontological structure, and can independently generate new structures and functions during the transformation of external institutional contexts. ACH can be defined as structural heritage with endogeneity and structuro-functional attributes, consisting of three interrelated dimensions: material structure, institutional structure, and customary structure. It achieves heritage empowerment for local communities in the process of independently attracting and allocating development resources.

The preliminary application of Neoclassical Structure-Function Theory in this study not only provides a new perspective for current heritage research, but also theoretically explains the specific practice and underlying logic of ACH empowerment.

Zarić Tamara (S4, P13)

PhD Candidate, University of Belgrade, Serbia

**BETWEEN STATE REGULATION AND EXPERIENCE:
TOWARDS NEW APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGY IN
KINSHIP STUDIES**

Although the study of kinship through formal analyses of its terminology and marriage rules has not disappeared from academic interest, contemporary studies are more focused on understanding kinship as a social relation that is shaped and produced in interaction with other spheres of social life (such as politics, economy, religion, and science). This presentation aims to highlight one such possible approach to studying kinship, with particular emphasis on the interconnection between research of state regulation and experience. Today, there is growing body of literature pointing to the significant influence of the state on the production and construction of kinship relations. This implies that the state defines which kinship ties are recognized by society, as well as defines mutual rights, obligations, and expected behaviour among the kin. On the other hand, theorists often emphasize the importance of researching “lived experience” in order to understand how people perceive and practice kinship, or, in other words, how they accept, reject, or negotiate with the social changes that affect kinship relations. However, this does not mean that these two approaches, which involve different types and methods of analysis, represent studies of different aspects of kinship. On the contrary, both approaches focus on different dimensions of the same phenomenon. Therefore, the idea of this presentation is to show how to study both the normative framework prescribed by the state and the level of people’s experience, with the aim of reflecting on how they influence each other and then jointly affect kinship relations. The presentation will outline a methodological framework developed through the planning of research on kinship-related phenomena in Serbia, and which focuses on the analysis of state regulations (laws, public policies, and related documents) and semi-structured interviews. By combining these approaches and methods, the goal is to provide a deeper understanding of how normative and experiential dimensions of kinship mutually influence and shape contemporary kinship relations, practices, and representations. Kinship eludes complete understating if viewed solely through normative frameworks, just as it does if reduced only to the realm of everyday experience.

Zdravković Nina (S4, P14)

PhD Candidate, University of Belgrade, Serbia

RESEARCH ON ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE WITHIN A SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTION: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

This presentation is part of the research results on the transformation of the organizational culture of the Archaeological Institute during the third decade of the twenty-first century. The focus was on the perception of hierarchy, institutional and unwritten rules, and mutual relations, as well as the position of the institute in the contemporary scientific and political context. The topic is significant because it reveals the internal dynamics of an academic institution, which shape everyday interactions and professional practices and often remain invisible to the outside observer.

The research was conducted using an anthropological approach of participatory observation, supplemented by in-depth interviews with some employees. This combination of methods allowed detailed insight into how scientists construct their experiences, as well as the identification of patterns in speech and behavior, including unwritten norms that determine what can and cannot be openly spoken. Initial results indicate that institutional hierarchy and expectations of loyalty shape employees' narratives and influence the way they interpret and present their experiences. The analysis shows how rules and norms are reflected in daily work, cooperation, decision-making, and professional communication.

The presentation emphasizes the importance of critical understanding of internal rules and unwritten norms in scientific institutions and communities, because such understanding can contribute to better reflection and self-observation by employees but also encourage organizational changes "from above." The presented results provide a basis for further research into institutional dynamics and can be useful both to researchers and employees who want to better understand and critically reflect on internal processes.

Zhang Jijiao (S1, P1)

Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing, China

THE FIFTH TRADITION
IN WORLD ANTHROPOLOGY AND ETHNOLOGY:
CHINESE ANTHROPOLOGY AND ETHNOLOGY

This presentation argues that the academic tradition of Chinese anthropology and ethnology mainly consists of four parts: Western anthropological theories, classical Marxist ethnology, Soviet ethnology, and Chinese local empirical studies, in order to clarify Chinese anthropology and ethnology in the world academic circles and its characteristics. The authors believe that, by virtue of its diverse academic traditions, Chinese anthropology and ethnology has established an anthropological and ethnological system with its own features. After the four major research paradigms of the United Kingdom, the United States, the European continent, and the Soviet Union, Chinese anthropology and ethnology constitutes the world's fifth major anthropological academic tradition, and launched a dialogue with the international academic community, thus gradually proposing innovative anthropological and ethnological theories and methods with Chinese characteristics. As the fifth tradition of anthropology and ethnology in the world, Chinese anthropology and ethnology is the result of several generations of scholars exploring new theories and new methods. It takes Marxism and the thought of socialism with Chinese characteristics as its guiding principles, the people as the center, and is fully integrated with the socialist modernization construction. In addition, it also combines historical documents and ethnological research, which has a profound historical origin.

Zhou Zixiang (S1, P1)

PhD Candidate, University of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences,
Beijing, China

**DECOLONIZING KNOWLEDGE:
ANTHROPOLOGICAL DISCIPLINARY TRANSFORMATION
IN CHINA AND THE GLOBAL SOUTH**

This presentation examines the decolonization of knowledge as a long-term disciplinary transformation in anthropology, with a particular focus on China in comparative dialogue with key regions of the Global South (Latin America, Africa, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and parts of West/Central Asia). Building on debates on the coloniality of power, epistemic violence, world anthropologies, and postimperialism, I argue that “decolonizing anthropology” should be understood not only as a critique of colonial-era epistemologies, but also as an institutional and geopolitical struggle over academic legitimacy, publishing infrastructures, and the distribution of theoretical authority. The paper proposes an analytical triad – dcolonial formation, anti-colonial reorientation, and decolonial reconstruction – to map how anthropological traditions in the Global South have moved from imperial knowledge projects toward locally grounded and politically engaged research agendas, while still confronting asymmetries in language regimes, indexing systems (e.g., SSCI), and citation hierarchies.

China is discussed as a distinct yet illuminating case. Shaped by semi-colonial experiences, socialist state-building, and post-1978 internationalization, Chinese anthropology/ethnology has navigated a persistent “dual positioning” between national expectations and global academic standards. Through a comparative lens, the paper highlights both convergences (e.g., indigenization, collaborative methodologies, epistemic sovereignty) and divergences (e.g., post-socialist institutional logics, state-academy relations, and different trajectories of theoretical canon formation) between China and other Global South settings. The conclusion outlines practical implications for a more plural and equitable anthropology, including multilingual knowledge circuits, reformed evaluation criteria, and South-South intellectual collaboration.

Zlatović Anja (S1, P4)

University of Belgrade

IS THE FUTURE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE 'GREEN'? – EXPLORING THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AMONG YOUNG, GREEN ACTIVISTS

The paper examines the use of artificial intelligence technologies by youth green activists and young politicians in Europe, as well as their knowledge of environmental impacts and whether this knowledge affects their potential use of artificial intelligence (AI). With the development of AI and digital technologies, there are more and more papers on the topic of moral, environmental, and development issues. It is clear that the entire field of artificial intelligence is heavily dependent on neo-colonial practices and has a significant impact on the environment, particularly in terms of resource extraction and the carbon footprint associated with data centers and AI training processes. However, this piece of information does not seem popularized, and it does not affect the growing use of AI among young people. Bearing this in mind, through in-depth interviews and active participation, the paper investigates and analyzes the attitudes of young people who work directly on the topics of social and environmental justice. The starting point is that while AI is beginning to be a topic of discussion in policy circles, it is still not central compared to the various security and climate crises. Moreover, the availability of AI technologies forces even those who should care about these issues to continue to put them aside. This topic is important to understand what young people who are concerned about the environment know about the development of AI technologies and whether their policies and practices related to it are in line with their common values.

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