

# Editorial

## Ethnology without Borders (EWB), 2012–2021



This issue of the journal *Studia Ethnologica Pragensia* is dedicated to the papers presented at the 9th edition of the international student conference *Ethnology without Borders* (EWB), held in Prague in November 2021. The conference was organized by the ANTRE, the student association of ethnologists and cultural anthropologists at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University with support of Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University. The main topic of this edition of the conference was *Rethinking the global: Challenges in and beyond the field*; let me use this space at the outset to briefly introduce the history and purpose of this international event.

The history of the event dates back to 2011, when students from the Faculty of Ethnology and Educational Sciences in Cieszyn, University of Silesia in Katowice came up with an idea to organize an inter-university, nationwide conference of ethnology and cultural anthropology adepts. *During first preparatory meetings, Professor Zygmunt Kłodnicki — then director of the Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology at University of Silesia — encouraged us to invite our neighbours from the Czech Republic and Slovakia to take part in the event — recalls Karolina Kania, the initiator and co-organizer of the first edition of the EWB. — While looking for financial support, we found the offer of the International Visegrad Fund — it was a great pretext to invite also Hungarian students to participate in the EWB.* In April 2012, Cieszyn in Poland has become a meeting point for ethnologists and anthropologists from fifteen Central European universities. The first edition of the EWB was a huge success, as the following ones in all four Visegrad countries.

Here I attach the list<sup>1</sup> of previous editions and organisers:

### **EWB 2012, Cieszyn, Poland**

Karolina Kania (PhD)

Radosław Biel (MA)

Zdzisław Rabenda (BA)

Anna Wróbel (MA)

Elżbieta Konior (MA)

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1 I thank to Magdalena Górska, Karolina Kania and Patryk Switała for their help.



**PHOTO N. 1:** EWB organization team in Wrocław, Poland, 2018. Source: Tomasz Raczkowski

### **EWB 2013, Kraków, Poland**

Aleksandra Biela (BA)  
 Aleksandra Dudzińska (MA)  
 Agnieszka Marczak (MA)  
 Paulina Słota (MA)  
 Anna Szpiczyńska (MA)  
 Weronika Świsłocka (BA)

### **EWB 2014, Budapeszt, Hungary**

Máté Kiss (PhD candidate)  
 Grunzó Zsófia (MA)

### **EWB 2015, Warszawa, Poland**

Aleksandra Reczuch (PhD Candidate)  
 Marta Kluska (PhD Candidate)  
 Magdalena Góralaska (PhD Candidate)  
 Oskar Lubiński (PhD Candidate)  
 Patryk Zakrzewski (BA)  
 Anna Kuskowska (MA)  
 Agata Strzałkowska (MA)



**PHOTO N. 2:** One of contributions in Bratislava, Slovakia, 2017. Source: Michal Uhrin

Emilia Baradziej (MA)  
 Marta Sałyga (MA)  
 Olga Pawlik (PhD Candidate)  
 Sarian Jarosz (MA)  
 Julia Szawiel (MA)  
 Agnieszka Zarzyńska (MA)

**EWB 2016, Seged, Hungary**  
 Vivien Apjok (PhD)

**EWB 2017, Bratislava, Slovakia**  
 Michal Uhrin (PhD)

**EWB 2018, Wroclaw, Poland**  
 Patryk Wojciechowski (MA)  
 Alicja Zaremba (PhD Candiate)  
 Celina Strzelecka (PhD)  
 Tomasz Raczkowski (PhD Candiate)



**PHOTO N. 3:** Part of the program in Nitra, Slovakia, 2019. Source: Anet Vetráková

### **EWB 2019, Nitra, Slovakia**

Slavomíra Voľanská (MA)  
 Klaudia Ťapajnová (MA)  
 Viktória Čolláková (BA)  
 Veronika Dudášová (MA)  
 Lucia Fričová (BA)  
 Aneta Vetráková (BA)  
 Barbora Siváčková (PhD Candidate)  
 Viktória Čolláková (BA)

### **EWB 2021, Praha, Czechia**

Josef Kubát (BA)  
 Jan Haken (BA)  
 Leona Šeráková (student)

This year, the 10th-anniversary — edition of EWB will take place again on Cieszyn, Poland, from 18th to 20th November 2022. The main topic is *Europe at risk? How can young scientists face the threats of the modern world*. For more information you can follow the official EWB Facebook page<sup>2</sup>, or you can send an e-mail to the organisers<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/EthnologyWithoutBorders> (link active to 31. 7. 2022)

<sup>3</sup> [zjazd.etno@gmail.com](mailto:zjazd.etno@gmail.com)



**PHOTO N. 4:** The final part of the programme on the roof of the church in Prague, 2021. Source: Josef Kubát

Ten years and so many organisers, contributors and guests were involved in the community of the EWB. What are they thinking about it now? I was asking them in three ways: sharing a form on an official EWB Facebook page, sending a form by shared list of e-mail contacts and I also tried to address all previous organisers personally. Some of them are not part of the student community now so it was not able to find them all, but I can present the most common answers resulted from the form.

Michal Uhrin (M.U.) from<sup>4</sup> Bratislava recalls his organizational experience as follows: *The themes discussed at the conferences and accompanying events are always related to the current social problems or discussions within the scientific community of ethnologists and anthropologists.* Some EWBs like this in Bratislava (2017) reacted to the political situation in all V4 countries (but not only V4) and negative attitudes toward minorities (religious, ethnic, national etc). Other EWBs reacted to ecological problems, phenomena of globalization, postcolonialism, cultural heritage and traditions in anthropological and ethnological perspectives, including theoretical and methodological problems connected with applied and engaged research or with digitalization and critical retrospectivity of emotions.

Although EWB is aimed at students, there are also academics among the guests. Some of them, like Professor Waldemar Kuligowski (Poznań) sees the main essence of the EWB in: *Integration and new acquaintances. Finding out how ethnology is cultivated in neighbours. Discussions and talks.* Everybody agrees with the thesis that the EWB

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4 In all cases it means home university.





**PHOTO N. 5:** EWB in April 2012, Cieszyn in Poland, which has become a meeting point for ethnologists and anthropologists from fifteen Central European universities. The first edition of the EWB was a huge success, as the following ones in all four Visegrad countries. Source: Karolina Kania

brings young anthropologists together — this is the main goal of the event. Making science communities: friendship, recognition of differences, traveling, joking but also: *Discovering common issues and theoretical, methodological and ethical problems of ethnographic research* (M.U.). Partnerships between students are not the only ones which are strengthening, also partnerships between universities are strengthening this way.

The EWB is not only papers, but also parties, workshops, round tables, screening of movies, discussions, good food and presents. After all, the organisers experience a feeling of success and gaining self-confidence to other projects. As Radoslaw Biel from Cieszyn describes it: *Learning the ability to create large events and initiatives. The style of work in the project that we experienced certainly had an impact on our further professional career: scientific, freelance, NGO or commercial career.*

The reason why the EWB is held only in V4 region is: *Inclusivity, in terms of affordability, but also being located mostly in the Central Eastern Europe, which makes it attractive to students from the region, who often do not have institutional support to attend conferences* (Magdalena Górska from Warszawa).

So, I think and I am not alone, that the EWB is a reasonable project with future and clear acquisitions for all their participants. I asked Patryk Switała from Cieszyn, who attended all editions of *Ethnology without Borders*, recalls his experience: *When I visited the first edition, where I was volunteering, I realised that this is something exactly*

*for me. So many interesting topics, presentations, workshops... and people. Above all people, fantastic people. I am still in touch with some of them who I met for the first time in 2012 and became friends. Till the end of my first studying at university in 2015 it was obvious I'll take part in every edition. I took part again and again and finally I became the only one who took part in every edition. I like the official part, when we very seriously talk about our research, but even more afterparties, when not the beer is most important, but private talk about our field research and the research backstage.*

*"I think that as important as scientific conference is everything that happens in between and on the "backstage" — during workshops, discussions, parties held till early morning. We dare to share — our time, our experience, to discuss even sensitive topics and I think that's the biggest value of those gatherings" — emphasizes Karolina Kania, the founder of the EWB idea.*

I hope that this issue of *Studia Ethnologica Pragensia* will convince you about the meaningfulness of the EWB project and if you are not already with us, let you or your students join us after reading articles included in this issue. Also I want to thank our Institute for supporting us and for the possibility to try to organize this conference from the beginning to the end including publication of the results in the form of this issue of our journal.

*Josef Kubát*

