



November 20, 2018

Dr Jarosław Gowin

Minister of Science and Higher Education

ul. Hoża 20

00-528 Warszawa

Dear Mr. Minister,

Section 38 (Social Anthropology and Comparative Study of Contemporary Societies) of the National Committee at the CNRS (National Center for Scientific Research), in France, expresses its deep concern following the decree passed by the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education on September 20, 2018, which effectively removes anthropology and ethnology from the list of recognized scientific disciplines and fields of study. Anthropology and ethnology will disappear under the new label, "Sciences of Culture and Religion", which has no equivalent anywhere else in the world.

A renowned Pole, Bronislaw Malinowski, was one of the founding fathers of modern anthropology. He founded ethnography, a method which durably anchored anthropology and ethnology in the empirical sciences. This method is now shared by anthropologists and ethnologists from all over the world, and more largely by other disciplines within the social sciences and humanities. Anthropology and ethnology constitute a firmly established discipline within the social sciences and humanities dedicated to the study of human societies. In a context where governments promote a society of knowledge, in a world whose diversity is a precondition for development as much as it is a challenge to be met, this discipline cannot disappear without entailing serious consequences.

The first consequence will be to deprive our Polish anthropologist colleagues of the recognition of their country without which they cannot develop strong scientific collaborations at an international level. Yet Polish teachers and researchers play an active role in international associations, such as the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (IUAES), the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA), the World Council of Anthropological Associations (WCAA), and the International Society for Ethnology and Folklore (SIEF). The second consequence will be to prevent academics from other countries from identifying the colleagues in Poland with whom to develop teaching, research and co-supervision activities.

We fear that the explicit deletion of ethnology and anthropology from the classification of scientific disciplines in Poland will have an impact on the functioning of international calls for proposals, such as those launched by the European Research Council, whose high quality is guaranteed by the possibility of using the best experts from all countries, including Poland. The "Sciences of Culture and Religion" label will neither meet the needs in terms of intellectual and scientific teaching, nor support international collaborations essential to bring about the society of knowledge that European countries encourage.

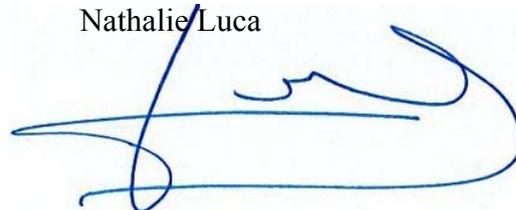
Section 38 (Social Anthropology and Comparative Study of Contemporary Societies) of the National Committee at the National Center for Scientific Research brings together renowned academics in anthropology. Aware of the history and the importance of this discipline in Europe and beyond, its members invite the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education to restore anthropology as an autonomous discipline in the classification of sciences in Poland. We hope this request will be heard.

Sincerely,

On behalf of the members of Section 38,

La Présidente de la section

Nathalie Luca



copy to:

- Mme Frédérique VIDAL, Ministre de l'Enseignement supérieur, de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
- M. Jean-Michel BLANQUER, Ministre de l'Éducation nationale et de la jeunesse
- M. Antoine PETIT, président-directeur général du CNRS
- M. François-Joseph RUGGIU, directeur scientifique de l'Institut national des sciences humaines et sociales
- M. Christophe PROCHASSON, président de l'Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales
- M. Jean-Michel VERDIER, président de l'Ecole pratique des hautes études
- M. Dejan DIMITRIJEVIC, président de la section 20 du Conseil national des universités
- M. Junji KOIZUMI, president of IUAES

- Mme Carmen Silvia DE MOARES RIAL, présidente du WCAA
- M. Jan SZMIDT, president of KRASP (Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland)
- Prof. Marcin PAŁYS, Rektor Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego
- Prof. Wojciech NOWAK, Rektor Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego
- Prof. Andrzej LESICKI, Rektor Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu
- Prof. Adam JEZERSKI, Rektor Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego