



International Society for Ethnology and Folklore
Société Internationale d'Ethnologie et de Folklore
Internationale Gesellschaft für Ethnologie und Folklore



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Dr Jarosław Gowin
Minister of Science and Higher Education
ul. Hoża 20
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Dear Mr. Deputy Prime Minister,

SIEF (Société Internationale d'Ethnologie et de Folklore/International Society of Ethnology and Folklore) wants to express its deepest concern about the situation of the discipline of ethnology in Poland. We are an international organization that has been facilitating and stimulating cooperation among scholars working within European Ethnology, Folklore Studies, Cultural Anthropology and adjoining fields for over half of a century. Also, we are an expert non-governmental organization accredited with the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Polish ethnologists and anthropologists have always played a significant role in our activities. We feel prompted to protest, having learned that, according to the new lists of academic disciplines issued by the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education, ethnology has been officially denied the status of academic discipline.

The discipline of ethnology has been an important part of European academic heritage, present in scientific research and university curricula for almost two centuries, both under its Continental name of ethnology, as well as under the name of cultural/social anthropology, used more often in the Anglo-Saxon academic tradition. From its early beginnings, Polish scholars have been contributing to the development of the discipline, with one of the founding fathers of its research methodology being a Pole, Bronisław Malinowski. Ethnology is an academic discipline fully recognized by OECD classification. It is internationally acknowledged as crucial in researching questions of the highest importance for contemporary and future societies in Europe and worldwide, such as identity, heritage, migration, sustainable cultural development on local levels, etc.

Therefore, we strongly appeal to reconsider your decision and to include ethnology in the official list of academic disciplines binding for scholars working in Polish academic institutions. Excluding the discipline and labelling it as 'Studies of Culture and Religion' would make the discipline unidentifiable and would hinder the appreciation of the work of Polish ethnologists and active international collaboration, also related to the Erasmus programme, which might lead to the isolation of the Polish scientific community.

We hope that our appeal will be heard and that ethnology again will be recognized as an academic discipline.

Sincerely,



Dr. Nevena Škrbić Alempijević
President of SIEF

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