



Collective Letter Against the Eradication of Polish Anthropology

written by Allegra
January, 2019



Allegra Lab asks its readers to please consider giving their signatures to a collective letter we have drafted to the Minister of Science and Higher Education in Poland, Dr. Jarosław Gowin. In doing so, we join the recent [outcry](#) over a new decree that effectively removes anthropology/ethnology as an independent academic discipline from the Polish academic landscape. For already published



reactions, please see [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

PLEASE SIGN OUR COLLECTIVE LETTER BY ADDING YOUR NAME IN THE COMMENT FUNCTION BELOW THIS POST!

UPDATE: On 31 January, a first batch of 550 signatures was sent to the Minister. We will continue updating the Minister with each new 500 signatures - please help!

Dr. Jarosław Gowin,

Minister of Science and Higher Education

ul Hoża 20

00-529 Warszawa

Poland

Dear Minister,

We are writing to you to express our concern with your decree from 20 September 2018 “On the branches of science, scientific disciplines, and artistic disciplines”, merging the discipline of Socio-Cultural Anthropology (Ethnology) with a conglomerate discipline called “Cultural and Religious Studies”. For anthropologists, this means that the unique knowledge, the distinctive insights gained by the ethnographic approach, and the respective regional expertise of our colleagues in Poland will de facto become invisible.

We fear that the change will impede international academic collaboration, making it more difficult for anthropologists in other countries to identify their Polish counterparts. Funding institutions might impose restrictions on collaborating with



experts outside of the internationally recognizable field of anthropology. Anthropology PhD students in Poland might have problems locating external supervisors, let alone secure funding possibilities. ERASMUS cooperation might be more difficult to realise as it is not clear what role anthropology and ethnology are going to play within the new “Cultural and Religious Studies.”

The Inter-Congress of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Societies – the world’s largest anthropological association – will take place in Poland in August this year. This fact testifies to the prominence of Polish anthropology in the international academic arena – a prominence that we fear is now threatened. Indeed, Polish anthropology has been salient on the international agenda ever since Bronisław Malinowski’s foundational work on the Trobriand Islands. We trust that you share our conviction that this Polish intellectual heritage should be cherished and given utmost visibility. We urge you to restore Anthropology/Ethnology as an independent discipline.

Yours sincerely,

Prof. Dr. Judith Beyer (Allegra Laboratory; University of Konstanz, Germany)

Dr Miia Halme-Tuomisaari (Allegra Laboratory; University of Helsinki, Finland)

Dr Julie Billaud (Allegra Laboratory; University of Sussex, UK)

Dr Jon Schubert (Allegra Laboratory; Brunel University London, UK)

Dr Agathe Mora (Allegra Laboratory; LSE, UK)

Dr Felix Girke (Allegra Laboratory; University of Konstanz, Germany)

Prof. Dr. Michał Buchowski (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poland)

Dr Elżbieta M. Goździak (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poland)



Dr Mateusz Laszczkowski (University of Warsaw, Poland)

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Thanks, Allies!

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