



Polish University Abroad

Since 1939

CALL FOR PAPERS

Polish University Abroad in London

in cooperation with

Social Sciences Department of Sol Plaatje University, South Africa

and

Polish Association of Siberian Deportees in Africa

12th Annual International April Conference

9th April 2022, London

“Through the Centuries.

Chronicles of Polish Presence on the African Continent”

Spatio-Temporal Characteristic of Polish Diaspora in Africa



CONFERENCE BACKGROUND:

The Polish University Abroad in London has since 2010 been organising the annual International April Conferences, in memory of the last Polish President in Exile, Ryszard Kaczorowski. The conferences aim to highlight the contributions of Poles to culture, art and science in the world. This year's conference, to be held on 9 April 2022, will explore the history of Polish presence on the African continent.

The process of formation of Polish communities around the world dates back to the 18th century. Poles left their country for many reasons, but the beginnings of Polish emigration were mainly associated with political and economic conditions in Poland.

The presence of compatriots on the African continent can be traced to the 15th and 16th centuries, when the first Polish presence was recorded in North Africa, and in the south of the continent from the 17th century, with the presence of Polish missionaries, travellers and sailors in the service of other nations. From the early 19th century, Polish scientists began to travel to the African continent to undertake research into the languages and cultures of the African indigenous people as well as conduct studies on the continent's topography. With the discovery of gold in the South African Transvaal, Polish settlement in the area began to develop. The 20th century filled the pages of Polish history in Africa very extensively - with Polish missionaries working in many African countries, as well as scientists, artists and journalists visiting selected places, becoming



part of the culture and history of the African societies. In 1912, I.J. Paderewski toured South Africa; and between 1931 and 1936, Polish journalist Kazimierz Nowak travelled alone across the African continent from north to south and back, covering some 40,000 km by bicycle, on foot, horseback, camel, dugout canoe and train, keeping valuable notes and documenting the culture and customs of African societies at the time.

The Second World War opened a new chapter in the history of Polish relations with, and migration to, Africa. From 1942, Polish refugees evacuated from the depths of the Soviet Union began arriving in Eastern and Southern Africa. The end of the War and the British withdrawal of recognition for the Polish government in exile on 5 July 1945 raised the question of the future of Poles in Africa. Disappointed by the results of the Yalta Conference, 80% of Polish citizens decided to remain in Africa or chose to continue their emigration to Western countries.

The following decades saw an increase in Polish contract workers, especially in West Africa, and the difficult 1980s contributed to another wave of emigration from Poland.

Today, decisions to emigrate, although no longer dictated by dramatic political events or harsh economic conditions, are taken by young people to discover and get to know the African continent – finding out that the culturally heterogenous and socially diverse continent has so much to offer and still remains mysterious to many Poles.

SCOPE OF CONFERENCE:



The scope of the conference covers the beginnings of the Polish diaspora settlement in African countries up to the twentieth century, with particular emphasis on the history of Poles evacuated to the east and south of Africa during World War II, and contemporary Polish-African cultural, social and religious contacts.

The conference is a unique opportunity to tell the sometimes complicated story of Polish connections with the African continent, against the background of important events in world history, interwoven with the social history of African countries, in order to make us aware of the very important role played by Africa in the modern world.

We invite representatives of the Polish communities, scientists, researchers, historians, cultural studies experts, sociologists, as well as journalists and philanthropists not associated with academia, to actively participate in the conference.

SUBMISSION OF ABSTRACTS:

We encourage you to submit abstracts of presentations, in the following thematic panels:

Historical: covering the first journeys and settlement of Poles in the African continent up to the 20th century and the events of World War II.

Scientific and cultural: covering the activities of Polish scientists in African universities, their contribution to the development of science and education in Africa, as well as literature and journalism.



Socio-economic: covering contemporary contacts of Poles with African countries: trade, investment, tourism, charitable organisations.

Scientific Committee of the Conference:

Prof. Paweł Boski, SWPS University, Warsaw (Poland)

Prof. Grażyna Czubińska, Polish University Abroad, London (UK)

Dr Teresa Folga-Naidoo, Polish University Abroad, London (UK)

Dr Jochen Lingelbach, University of Bayreuth, Bayreuth (Germany)

Dr Cobus Rademeyer, Sol Plaatje University, Kimberley (South Africa)

HONORARY MEMBERSHIP: Eugenia Maresch, London (UK)

Organising Committee of the Conference:

Dr Teresa Folga-Naidoo PUNO, London

Dr Anna Watoła PUNO, London

Roman Mazur MBA, PUNO, London

Stefan Szewczuk MA, PASD, South Africa



Hon. Sheka Tarawalie, PUNO, London

Ewa Łukaszewicz MSc, PUNO, London

Eric Tackie Tawiah Ankrah BA, PUNO, London

Wojciech Klas MA, PUNO, London

Calendar:

6 March 2022 - deadline for submission of application form with abstract

13 March 2022 - notification of acceptance of your application

20 March 2022 - announcement of the conference programme

27 March 2022 - publication of the book of abstracts

9 April 2022 - conference

Media partner: Londynek.net

Language of the Conference: English

Contact: april.conference@puno.ac.uk