

60 Years of African and Oriental Studies at the Polish Academy of Sciences. Memories and Remarks

Abstract

The year 2022 marked the 60th anniversary of the creation of Pracownia Zagadnień Społecznych i Kulturalnych Afryki Współczesnej [The Center for Studies on African Societies and Cultures], only the second academic institution in Poland and the first within the Polish Academy of Sciences devoted to research on the African continent. This jubilee is an excellent occasion to recall the history of this reputable and academically important institution. Hence the paper documents the evolution of the center, which was initially founded by Professor Józef Chałasiński, and a gradual widening of its geographic scope and transition to research within the field of wider Oriental Studies. It not only shows the various academic angles of the research conducted within the center and presents the biographies of some prominent staff members, but through a history of the institution it also gives a glimpse into academic studies on non-European countries in Poland at the various stages of the country's turbulent modern history. The paper refers to all the main turning points in the history of the institution. Starting from its establishment in 1962, it moves through the early years and then describes the transformation into the Center for Studies on Non-European Countries. It then describes the Center's present-day form, as in 2010 CSNEC was merged with the Research Centre for Mediterranean Archaeology and transformed into the Institute of Mediterranean and Oriental Cultures, Polish Academy of Sciences.

Keywords: Józef Chałasiński, African Studies, Oriental Studies, Cultural Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences, The Center for Studies on African Societies and Cultures, Center for Studies on Non-European Countries, ZKPPAN, Institute of Mediterranean and Oriental Cultures, IKSiO PAN.

Sixty years is an impressive anniversary for any institution, especially one whose creation was, quite surprisingly, closely linked to the turbulent events of Polish history and which in its formative years heavily relied on the position and scholarly reputation of its leader and creator – Professor Józef Chałasiński, a renowned sociologist and expert on the development of the Polish village, but also a respected theoretician and chronicler of the achievements of Polish sociology. He received his PhD in 1927 with the thesis *Wychowanie w domu obcym jako instytucja społeczna* [Upbringing in another's home as a social

institution] supervised by Florian Znaniecki, and in 1937 he was already working as a professor and director of the Chair of Sociology at the University of Warsaw.

In the surrealistic reality of a communist country, this scholar – with a very specific and localised background – became a harbinger of academic interest in African nations and the creator and long-time chairman of only the second institution in Poland dedicated to this type of research.¹ Pracownia Zagadnień Społecznych i Kulturalnych Afryki Współczesnej [The Center for Studies on African Societies and Cultures] was created in 1962 and Professor Chałasiński was its director until his retirement in 1974. The reference to the surrealistic system where freedom of speech is limited and where breaking of any social taboos can lead to serious consequences, was neither accidental or exaggerated. In 1957, Chałasiński published an article *Drogi i bezdroża socjalizmu w nauce polskiej* [The highways and byways of socialism in Polish Science], which became a turning point for the last stages of his academic career (Chałasiński, 1957, pp. 7–43) and which affected all his previous achievements. It was not a work which proposed some novel ideas that revolutionised sociology and put focus on African nations as a melting pot of societies. Ghana's independence in 1957 happened in the background, but the referred paper was not anyhow related to this fact. On the contrary, the above-mentioned turning point was the criticism of local Polish politics (both internal and external) which according to the author were stained by an ideology that steered the country away from the Christian values and severed the ties with the Western culture. The reason for this was a “devotion to Marxism and the cult of Stalin”. The year was 1957, we can write a thing like that today but in the middle of Stalinist and socialist transformation in Poland this would be a very bold statement similar to the declaration about contacting a contagious plague and apparently, it was still controversial enough even a few years after the death of Stalin. The statement was later repeated in the paper delivered to the 4th International Sociological Congress in Stresa (Italy) and published in London in the same year (Chałasiński, 1959, pp. 139–146). The result? Some recognition on the international level, but locally – criticism, ostracism, neglect of his scientific achievements and exclusion of Chałasiński's works from the University's curricula. His Center in the Polish Academy of Sciences was disbanded, he was excluded from any management positions in the Academy and removed as the editor-in chief of the journal “Kultura i Społeczeństwo” [*Culture and Society*], which he created. In 1962, he was expelled from the University of Łódź, where he had been teaching for many years and which he had helped to

¹ The first one was Katedra Semitystyki – the Chair of Semitic Studies (currently Chair of African Languages and Cultures) established in 1950 at the University of Warsaw.

create in the 1940s. However, due to Chałasiński's reputation, which remained relatively strong despite the criticism or because of his pro-governmental stance in the late 1940s and early 1950s,² or due to his role in saving Staszic Palace for the Polish Academy of Sciences in 1959 (Kłoskowska, 1992, p. 21), or maybe because of the cumulation of these factors, he was allowed to stay in academia.

The banishment was real, however, and even if it did not take the form of total oblivion in the abyss of unemployment, it had a mostly intellectual and somehow geographical nature. Chałasiński was allowed to stay in academic studies, but he was no longer allowed to diligently plow his field of the sociology of rural development in Poland. In turn, the merciful leaders granted him a possibility of moving his research interests far south from the chilling slopes of his native country to the sun-burned soil of the African continent. In other words, Chałasiński was forced to move towards the sociology of non-European countries with a main focus on Africa. Despite the circumstances, nobody can deny the fact that the 1960s were an African decade. With numerous countries gaining independence from the colonial powers and the huge potential of social changes within the new nations, Africa was certainly an interesting field for any ambitious scholar and it has remained as such until today. Chałasiński knew that and was already developing research interests in non-European countries, mostly the United States and North America, but he had some knowledge and works about the African continent and its state-making efforts.

The tradition

Bearing that in mind, we can assume that even if the initial change within the main field of work of the Director of the new institution was a forced one, the Center for Studies on African Societies and Cultures was simply needed in the Polish Academy of Sciences and its potential was fully explored. The main goal of this new unit was multidisciplinary research on African statehood and societies and was reflected in the choice of the academic staff gathered here during its formative years. Sociology was prevailing, of course, but research on cultures and politics was also present and the amalgamate of skills and competences resulted in the publication of many works which were,

² When he condemned the pre-war achievements of Polish sociology including his own works and the works of Florian Znaniecki – his teacher and long-time mentor. He was also expressing criticism towards pre-war social order in Poland, most likely as a result of personal opinions and not as a form of political support in the article called *Spoleczna genealogia inteligencji polskiej* [Social Genealogy of the Polish Intelligentsia] from 1946. For more detailed information see: Górlach, Krauz-Mozer, 2001.

back then, unique in Polish academic reality. Also, worth noting, is that even if the turbulent times of communist rule in Poland, works conducted in the new Center were free of any ideology which plagued and twisted scholarly circles in the countries of the socialist bloc. Africa was simply too far from Polish realities, affording the academic staff a freedom to express their own opinions and perform independent research within the spectrum and scope of the statutory research goals of the Center for Studies on African Societies and Cultures. They provided a good excuse to concentrate on work which despite obvious cultural differences gave the possibility to “legally” explore the similarities between African societies and the local, Polish situation. The research would then be some kind of a metaphor where the similarities were clearly visible. African countries gained their independence and freed themselves from the influence of the colonial powers whom for many years controlled the way how people think, what they are able to learn, how their international politics is conducted and so on. Poland at the same time was under the indirect control of its “most-friendly” neighbour and within the totalitarian system all the freedoms were limited, and all the above-mentioned ways of colonial control were enforced. Chałasiński’s struggle is just one of the examples, another one would be Andrzej Zajączkowski, whose work on the Polish nobility was situated so far from the ideologically approved image of this social group that it was not only rejected by academic circles but also led to the denial of Zajączkowski’s habilitation: *Główne elementy kultury szlacheckiej w Polsce. Ideologia a struktury społeczne* [Main elements of the noble culture in Poland. Ideology and social structure, 1961] and forced the aspiring scholar to change his field of interest and to become an expert in African studies, joining the team of the new research unit. These examples are just two of many (Podgórecki, 1995, p. 29). As a matter of fact, Zajączkowski not only became an Africanist, but he would also become a leading Polish specialist in the field and one of the future directors of the Center created by Chałasiński. He obtained the title of professor in 1978 being already an author of important publications about African religions, like the book *Pierwotne religie Czarnej Afryki* [Primary religions of Black Africa] published in 1965 about the role of social and historical factors in the development of the continent.³ As a matter of curiosity, he maintained his fondness for the now neglected past even within his new framework of research interest; a legend of the Center says that during his tenure as director he would always check the family and heraldic background of any new person employed by his institution. It was

³ For example, in the books such as *Niepodległość Konga a kolonializm belgijski. Zarys historyczno-socjologiczny* [Congoese Independence and Belgian Colonialism: A Historical and Sociological Outline, 1968] and *Muntu dzisiaj. Studium afrykanistyczne* [Muntu Today. An Africanist Study, 1970].

a reflection of his personal interest more than anything else, as there is no evidence which can show that the ancestral background of the hired person had anything to do with Zajączkowski's decisions during the staff selection process. He remained faithful to his passion and after the political transformation in Poland, in the last years of his academic career, he came back to the topics of nobility, which he explored in two books published in 1993. Just one year before his death.

Andrzej Zajączkowski was among the first employees of the new Center and his scholarly interests aligned with those of Professor Chałasiński, who initially surrounded himself with a group of sociologists and cultural anthropologists. Among them was Zajączkowski, but also Bogdan Moliński, Elżbieta Reklajtis, Teresa Pfabé,⁴ Zygmunt Komorowski,⁵ Małgorzata Szupejko, Andrzej Krasnowolski and Grzegorz Kaczyński. The socio-anthropological core team was expanded with the addition of specialists in literature studies, such as Wanda Leopold (who was hired in 1964), Halina Hanna Bobrowska and Krystyna Żytowiecka. The latter two shared interests in francophone writings, visible in early publications such as Krystyna Żytowiecka's work on the history of the French press (*Z historii prasy francuskiej* published in "Kultura i Społeczeństwo" in 1957), those interests later evolving into "ideologically neutral" studies on the literatures of the francophone Africa.

The search for academic freedom within the ideological neutrality was a turning point for many scholars who formed the backbone of the Center. We've already mentioned a few, including its director, but let's provide another quite detailed example of the highways and byways of academic studies in socialist Poland. The cause is right and so is the case as after the recent retirement of Elżbieta Reklajtis the only person from the first group of employees of the

⁴ We can find her publications both under the name of Teresa Pfabé and Teresa Pfabé-Kamal as in 1967 she married Safwat Kamal, an Egyptian scholar affiliated to the High Institute of Folk-Arts in Cairo. She was a well-travelled academic who spent three years during the scholarship in Sorbonne (between 1963 and 1966) and later permanently moved to Egypt. Throughout her life she maintained academic ties with Poland and the centre. After her death in 2007, her daughters – Hala, Magda and Ola Kamal - published a book on their mother's life and scholarly achievements. It was released in Polish in 2010 under the title *O początkach powieści egipskiej* [The Beginnings of the Egyptian Novel] by ASKON and includes some selected articles of Teresa Pfabé and the introduction from Professor Jerzy Zdanowski who was the director of the centre at this time. On a side note, we can mention the fact that the publishing house – ASKON - was established by Iwona Grabowska-Lipińska, a former employee of the Center.

⁵ Komorowski was the author of numerous publications on cultural transformation in Sub-Saharan Africa and education in selected West African countries. As historical trivia, we can mention the fact that his son, Bronisław, became a president of Poland, after the tragic death of President Lech Kaczyński in 2010, and then as an elected Head of State in the years 2010–2015.

Center who is still scholarly active⁶ is Małgorzata Szupejko. She is no longer with her first academic institution as she left the Polish Academy of Sciences in 2013, obtained her habilitation in 2015 and later worked at the University of Warsaw (within the Chair of African Languages and Cultures, Faculty of Oriental Studies). Similar to the careers of Chałasiński and Zajączkowski, she had to change her research interests and transform herself from a sociologist into an accomplished multidisciplinary expert in the field of African studies. The names of the two directors of the Center were invoked here on purpose as, quite symbolically, they both played a significant role in the early career of Małgorzata Szupejko. She was an MA student of Professor Chałasiński when she was working on a master's thesis about Polish theatre at the turn of 19th and 20th centuries.⁷ Her first paper: *Problemy osobowości i kultury w amerykańskim powieściopisarstwie XX w.* [The problems of identity and culture in American prose-writing of the 20th century] was published in "Kultura i Społeczeństwo" in 1970,⁸ already moved her area of studies from Poland and reflected both the young scholar's interests in culture and the area of expertise of her mentor – Professor Chałasiński – who was one of the co-authors and the originator of the paper's topic. With the perspective of time, we can assume that in the political reality of the 1970s this topic would also not guarantee enough freedom to conduct research not plagued by ideological pressure. As in the cases of Chałasiński, Zajączkowski and many others, the safe haven for Szupejko was Sub-Saharan Africa. Her PhD thesis was prepared under the supervision of professor Zajączkowski and publicly defended in 1994. The title of the thesis – *Przemiany społeczno-polityczne w Afryce pod wpływem kolonializmu* [Socio-political changes in Africa under the influence of colonialism] was a result of earlier developed research interests in the field. Back in 1975, "Przegląd Socjologiczny" published Szupejko's article on colonialism-related sociopolitical changes in the Kingdom of Buganda,⁹ a topic she would later expand not only in a PhD thesis but also in her book on Bugandan society. *Społeczeństwo Bugandy. Zmiana i rozwój* [The society of Buganda. Change and development] published in 1992, had a spark of novelty as it was carefully touching an understudied subject.¹⁰ In her later career she

⁶ Nowadays mostly as a member of Polish Africanist Society and paper presenting participant on seminars and conferences.

⁷ Between the January Uprising of 1863 and Polish independence in 1918, to be more specific. Full title in English: *Theatre as an institution of national culture. From the social issues of Warsaw theatrical life of the years 1863–1918.*

⁸ Under a name Małgorzata Majchrzak. The co-authors of this paper were Józef Chałasiński and Teresa Truszkowska.

⁹ Also published under the name Małgorzata Majchrzak.

¹⁰ However, scholarly qualities of the book were hindered by its cost-cutting feature – the pocket

pursued her interest in African identity and often combined this with literary workshops delivering valuable insights into the changes within the societies of African countries, with East Africa as a main, by not the only, region of interest. She was a head of the Polish Africanist Society for two terms between 2009 and 2015 and a chief-editor of the journal “Afryka” between 2015 and 2019. The early years of Szupejko’s career illustrate both the turbulence in the social sciences in communist Poland and the resilience of the “African field” under ideological pressure. As we noted in the case of Professor Zajączkowski, there were many similar examples of a change in research topics among scholars employed in the “Africanist Center” in the Polish Academy of Sciences.

The career presented here is an example of success forged from the transition and honestly speaking, Professor Chałasiński had a real foresight or at least a very good instinct while choosing his employers, as many of them made a significant contribution to the early development of African Studies in Poland.

Here, we can mention the achievements of Wanda Leopold, who worked in the Polish Academy of Sciences until her tragic death in 1977, a few days before her 57th birthday. Despite dying in her prime, she left an impressive publication record with around 130 works, including monographies, translations and scholarly articles. Although her early research interests oscillated around Polish literature (with a biography of Maria Konopnicka and articles about the works of Zofia Nałkowska, among published examples) she soon found her safe harbour on the warm coasts of Sub-Saharan Africa. Her PhD thesis – *Spoleczno-kulturalne przeobrażenia Afryki współczesnej w świetle narodzin i rozwoju powieściopisarstwa Nigerii* [Socio-cultural transformations of contemporary Africa in the light of the birth and development of Nigerian literature], was prepared under the supervision of Professor Chałasiński and publicly defended in 1968. It was not a sign of a radical and instant switch from a more familiar field, but a sign of the scholar’s growing interest in the culture of the continent often referred as the cradle of humanity. Shortly before that, she published a well-received paper about the language and literature of East Africa, but the most significant works of Wanda Leopold came a bit later. In the 1970s, she published her book *O literaturze Czarnej Afryki* [About the literature of Black Africa, 1973] – a compendium of the literature south of the Sahara. In 1974, together with Zbigniew Stolarek, she published an anthology of African poetry [*Antologia poezji afrykańskiej*] with examples ranging from Senegal and Nigeria to Kenya and Uganda. One of her last publications was actually one of the most important. *Eposy Czarnej Afryki* [Epics from Black

format, which makes the publication easy to transport but quite painful to read due to small print, low spacing and minimalist page-size.

Africa] published in 1977 (with Zbigniew Stolarek and Ewa Fisher who provided the translations of the original texts) introduced to the general public translations of two epic stories – Sundiata and Shaka Zulu – published together with a long critical commentary about the role of the epic in African societies. Seeing the impact of the works of Ruth Finnegan on scholarly discourse about African literature in general and the African epic in particular, we can only imagine the possible influence of Leopold's work if it had only been published in English instead of Polish. However, both the books – the anthology and the epic – were a complete novelty in Poland and the introduction of this unknown material to the scholarly discourse in the country can be seen as a testament of Wanda Leopold's contribution to African studies in this part of the world. A contribution that is universal and timeless. Literature itself does not age, it is a reflection of the times in which it is written. We can debate about any form of literary criticism, but the source material, translated as it is into a commonly understood language, still remains a useful source for any related research even almost 50 years after the death of Wanda Leopold.

We can say similar thing about the publications of two other PhD students of Professor Chałasiński – Halina Hanna Bobrowska and Teresa Pfabé-Kamal. Hanna Bobrowska was the one who introduced the works of Léopold Sédar Senghor and other philosophers from francophone Africa into Polish scholarly circles. Teresa Pfabé's early research interests include education in Nigeria and the literature of Sub-Saharan Africa, but she soon turned her attention to Egyptian literature, society and culture. Thanks to her efforts, the works of prominent intellectuals and writers from Egypt, such as Muhammad Husein Heikal, Taha Hussein or Tawfiq al-Hakim, were introduced to Polish academic discourse. We will just signal those achievements here instead of going too deep into the biographies of these scholars.

However tempting would it be for the author of memoirs, it is simply not possible to include detailed biograms of all the people who were employed over the years by a long-standing research institution. Quite often, their careers took some unexpected turns as some people moved away from scholarly activities and disappeared from the academic radar, while others moved to politics either on national/international stage (for example Jan Parys and Joanna Wronecka) or at the local level (just as Andrzej Krasnowolski). Finally, some of the scholars have successfully combined unusual careers alongside academic ones. Perhaps the best example of a rather unexpected career merging is Stanisław Tokarski. An orientalist and philosopher by trade, translator, populariser and leading Polish analyst of the works of Mircea Eliade, he is also the author of important publications on the influences of Indian philosophy and culture on the pop-culture and societies of the Western Hemisphere. His books from

1984: *Eliade i Orient* [Eliade and Orient] and *Orient i Kontrkultura* [Orient and Countercultures] are two examples of these research interests. Throughout his long career he has amassed an impressive academic portfolio, but apart of that, Tokarski is also an accomplished judoka. Not a person who practised judo in his spare time to stay in shape, but the actual holder of a 5th dan (master's degree) in judo and the winner of five gold medals (ten medals in total) in national judo championships in Poland in the 1960s and the winner of European Academic Judo Championships in 1964. During his early years as a scholar in the Polish Academy of Sciences he also worked as a stuntman and stunt coordinator in more than 60 Polish movies including local blockbusters such as *Noce i dnie*, *Ziemia obiecana*, *Polskie drogi* and *Kung Fu*. The latter is hardly surprising, given Tokarski's sporting background and academic career in the field of Oriental Studies. *Revenons à nos moutons*,¹¹ as the French say. With the above digressions we went too far in time and space, so let's get back to the formative years of the Chałasiński's Center as they could be defined by two characteristic elements.

The first were the close links with sociology, not exactly treated as a dominant research discipline but rather as a connecting point, which opened the door to the publication of the interdisciplinary works from the field of African Studies in the leading Polish sociological journals. The second was the willingness and the feeling of necessity among the academic staff to tackle Europocentric views about Africa in particular and the world's social history in general. This opinion was expressed by Chałasiński in his book *Kultura i Naród* [Culture and Nation] (Chałasiński, 1968), especially within the closing chapter of this work entitled *Dialog Afryki z Europą i zagadnienie narodów afrykańskich* [Dialogue between Africa and Europe and the question of the African nations]. This mutual understanding and change of perspective was important as, according to Chałasiński, "in the dialogue between Africa and Europe not only new Africa is changing but also old Europe is transforming" (Chałasiński, 1967, p. 12). The embodiment of this attitude is best visible in the aforementioned works of Wanda Leopold and Halina Hanna Bobrowska, who gave a direct and unfiltered voice to African oral literature (Leopold) and African philosophy (Bobrowska). From the perspective of time, we can say that this statement is as relevant today as it was in the late 1960s, and that if the world's superpowers, instead of patronising and exploiting former Western colonies, had kept this in mind during the formative years of African independence, the world we know today would most likely be a better place.

¹¹ "Let's get back to our rams."

As we can see, the new Center was not only concentrated on the new and important field of research but was also trying to promote a unique attitude towards it. The symbolic “melting pot” for ideas was a weekly seminar conducted by Chałasiński even after his retirement. It was open to scholars from other institutions in Poland and abroad, but obviously the main participants were members of the academic staff of the Center for Studies on African Societies and Cultures – people with various academic backgrounds ranging from sociology (including anthropology and ethnology) through history, religion and political studies up to Arabic studies, law and philosophy. The people whom Chałasiński defined as the “tribe of Africanists” (Chałasiński, 1976). History shows that the creation of an institution devoted to studies of the African continent within the Polish Academy of Sciences, despite of the circumstances leading to it, was somehow a visionary move. The process started in Ghana with the proclamation of independence from March 1957, set into motion a domino effect and over the subsequent decades almost all countries and territories moved towards self-governance from colonial rule, with either resistance or some levels of cooperation from the ex-colonisers. These processes, which led to social and cultural changes, were studied at the Center and the unique approach along with the quality of works resulted in the gradual “academic rehabilitation” of its leader, even if his works from the “African chapter” are often ignored by his biographers (Kulpińska, 1992, p. 101). In 1966 Chałasiński returned to the University and took the chair of the Department of the Sociology of Culture (Katedra Socjologii Kultury). In 1968 he was elected to the presidium of the Polish Academy of Sciences and between 1969–1971 he was a secretary of Department I (Wydział I), which nowadays includes humanities and related studies. In 1970, the University of Łódź, the same institution which had dismissed Chałasiński in 1962, awarded him the title of *doctor honoris causa*.

In 1974, upon the retirement of Chałasiński, Professor Anna Mrozek-Dumanowska was appointed as acting director of the Center and she remained at the post for one and a half years. She was one of the longest-standing staff members in all the iterations of the Center for Studies on African Societies and Cultures, staying until her retirement in 2020. She passed away in 2021 but surely fulfilled her duty as a scholar by not only supporting and advising the junior staff in their academic development,¹² but also by expanding her academic bibliography with publications on various non-European regions. Back in the 1970s, she was an editor of a book on religions in Africa entitled *Religie w procesie przemian w Afryce* [Religions in the process of change in

¹² Not as a supervisor of PhD theses but by organising methodological seminars for younger staff members and by providing advice during the preparation of their publications.

Africa, 1977].¹³ Later on, after years of work on various aspects of Islam and its influence on the political and cultural development of the Middle Eastern and African countries, Mrozek-Dumanowska turned to research on African branches of Christianity, the results of which were presented at the Academy's seminars and were included in her last book, published in 2014. It is also worth noting that even shortly before her retirement, she was still able to successfully operate within the grant system which redefined Polish academic culture in the early decades of the 21st century.

Perhaps the only person who exceeded Professor Mrozek-Dumanowska's length of tenure in the "Oriental Studies branch of Academy" was professor Elżbieta Reklajtis. Initially, a PhD student of Professor Chałasiński, she became a member of the academic staff of the Center in 1965 and remained among the ranks of the academic team through all the turbulences and transformations until her retirement from the Academy in the later part of the second decade of the 21st century. Throughout her career she cemented her legacy as a leading specialist on the culture and societies of the Maghreb countries. Starting her research interests with the topics of the development of Algerian nationality and statehood, she soon became interested in local culture, especially literature and theatre, as well as the wider scope of cultural and social transition in the region, as can be seen in the book *Maghreb współczesny. Z badań nad kontaktem i współrozwojem kultur* [The Modern Maghreb. From research on contact and co-development of cultures] published in 1976. Later, she turned her attention also to Lebanon and her research on the country's culture, society and political situation can be found in books such as *Liban* [Lebanon] from 1993 or *Liban. Między wojną a pokojem* [Lebanon. Between War and Peace] from 2003. In 2022, in recognition of her scholarly achievements, Professor Reklajtis was awarded the golden Gloria Artis Medal for Merit to Culture, the highest official form of acknowledgement in the cultural field in Poland. Although now formally retired, Professor Reklajtis is still keen to share her knowledge and experience with scholars and students alike.

As we have wandered a little too far into the future, let's return to the time shortly after the retirement of the founder of the African Studies unit within the Academy.

¹³ At this time, this subject in the Academy was mostly covered by other member of the Center's research team – Grzegorz Kaczyński. He explored it for example in his 1976 PhD thesis on religion and statehood in Zaire (now Democratic Republic of the Congo), which became the basis for the book *Bunt i religia w Afryce Czarnej* [Revolt and religion in Black Africa], published in 1979

The transition

The mid-1970s was a period of transformation for the Center for Studies on African Societies and Cultures, as the changes in the paradigms of global development justified further diversification of research and the inclusion of different geographic areas such as the Middle East, Asia and South America. To reflect those changes, in 1976 the Center for Studies on African Societies and Cultures evolved and was transformed into the Center for Studies on Non-European Countries – CSNEC¹⁴ (Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich¹⁵ – ZKP PAN). The first director was Edward Szymański,¹⁶ PhD at the time,¹⁷ who held the chair for five years between 1976–1980. On 1st January 1981 he was succeeded by the abovementioned professor Andrzej Zajączkowski who remained director until his retirement in 1992. He was followed by professor Stanisław Tokarski who was acting director during the *interregnum* period, and between 1993 and 2010 the position was held by Professor Jerzy Zdanowski – one of the leading Polish experts on international relations and the history of the Middle East. In time, he would become the longest serving director of the Centre for Studies on Non-European Countries, a record which to this day remains unmatched. Jerzy Zdanowski started his career as a student of the Department of Economics at the University of Warsaw. He obtained his doctorate in 1978 from the Institute of International Relations in Moscow and in the same year began work at the Polish Academy of Sciences. He habilitated in 1994 at the Institute of History, Polish Academy

¹⁴ Here's an interesting little factoid and as a matter of historical curiosity we should mention the fact that the Center functioned concurrently under two slightly different English names which used both, American and British, versions of transcription of the word "Center" ("Centre") and kept the rest intact. As a result of archive studies, personal memory and consultations with former staff we have decided to settle on the more commonly used version, which is included in the text. It was used on the CSNEC's website and in the majority of the administrative documents, business cards, etc. Another issue is the English name of the Center created by Chałasiński in the 1960s as it simply did not have an official English translation and was functioning internationally under various "customary" names.

¹⁵ The name has sometimes led to some curious mistakes in correspondence delivered to the Center. The most impressive derivations include Zarząd Krajów Pozaeuropejskich (Management of Non-European Countries) and Zakład Krajobrazów Pozaeuropejskich (The Centre for Non-European Landscapes). Despite the character of the institution, similar mistakes were quite common.

¹⁶ Not to be confused with Edward Szymański – the Polish poet and patron of at least 4 schools in the country, who was killed in Auschwitz in December 1943, and with Professor Edward Szymański, architect and expert in technical sciences, who died in 2018.

¹⁷ Despite not having a habilitation, he held the position of "docent" granted to him in March 1968. Shortly after leaving the Academy, he habilitated at the University of Łódź during the Martial Law period in Poland.

of Sciences, and became a full professor in 2003, in the same year when his book, *Historia Arabii Wschodniej od czasów najdawniejszych do końca XIII w.* [The history of Eastern Arabia. From the earliest times until the end of the 13th century], received an award in the field of Oriental Studies from the Department I of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Zdanowski's long career is marked by an impressive publication record with more than 120 articles and 20 monographies, including pioneering works on slavery and manumission in the Middle East (for example: *Speaking With Their Own Voices: The Stories of Slaves in the Persian Gulf in the 20th Century*, 2014), which contained the translations of the first-hand source material available in various archives of Europe and the Middle East. Proficient field researcher with specialisation in archive studies, he has also successfully completed numerous grant projects. Although he was a member of the Committee of Oriental Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences until 2023, Jerzy Zdanowski left the Polish Academy of Sciences in 2016 and currently works at Andrzej Frycz-Modrzewski Krakow University.

Attentive reader has probably noticed already that the academic profiles of the last two directors of the Center – Stanisław Tokarski and Jerzy Zdanowski – do not exactly match the profile of the institution originally created by Chałasiński in the 1960s. However, it corresponds very well with the expanded geographic scope proposed by the CSNEC. The scientific goal behind the creation of the new Center was to conduct interdisciplinary research on the so-called developing countries of Africa, Asia, South and Central America. As it was said above, the sociological profile which characterised the formative years of Chałasiński's Center was being gradually redefined even during his time, as the research interests of the academic staff were moving scholarly activities into other fields. The creation of CSNEC moved those paradigms even further. Initially, the studies carried out within the new institution oscillated around socio-cultural studies and literature, but with the expansion of the academic staff it became possible to cover also other areas of the development of non-European countries.

As the creation of the Africanist unit within the Polish Academy of Sciences was, apart from the unofficial reasons described above, a justifiable necessity which reflected and addressed the changes in global politics and economy, such was the decision to expand its research scope into other areas and further inclusion of a variety of topics and areas of scholarly interest. Apart from cultural studies, which remained the backbone of research, other areas include studies on religions, history, socio-economic aspects of development of the selected countries and political studies which, during the years of transformation in both non-European countries and in Poland itself gradually

gained more and more importance,¹⁸ We can mention the numerous coup d'états and civil wars which have plagued the African continent even many years after the independence. We can also mention Cold War-related tensions and power struggles, which defined the political scene of South America and other parts of the world, which remained spheres of influence of the global superpowers who were flexing their nuclear muscles since the end of the Second World War. These global factors made the Centre for Studies on Non-European Countries not only unique within the Academy, but also made its research goals indispensable. The evolution towards political and economic studies started during the tenure of Edward Szymański, who hired a group of politologists (such as Piotr Kownacki, Bożena Ewa Bekier, Beata Bereza and Máximo Lira – a Chilean scholar who later pursued a career in diplomacy and was appointed as an ambassador of Chile to the Republic of Poland in 1990),¹⁹ and continued even after Szymański left the Academy and the Center was operating under the leadership of Professor Zajączkowski (sociologist) and Professor Zdanowski (historian). Each of the directors tried to keep up with global paradigms, where politics and economics were always considered hot and important topics. These areas of study were gaining importance within the ranks of CSNEC, but never reached a level of total dominance in the research agenda, as the policy of successive directorships was based on the recruitment of scholars with diverse academic backgrounds and interests. In the early years of the new Center, the staff was joined by sinologists – Karin Tomala and Maria Roman Sławiński. Professor Tomala was a sinologist who got her PhD in political science in 1976, but throughout her career expanded her academic interests and became an expert in various aspects of Chinese society. Professor Sławiński was a “full term” sinologist, a graduate of the University of Beijing and the Institute of Oriental Studies²⁰ of the University of Warsaw, where he also obtained his PhD in 1964. He was one of the leading experts on Chinese culture and religion, but also an accomplished... painter, whose oil and watercolour works have been exhibited in Berlin, Lublin, Warsaw and other places.²¹ The widening of the geographic scope lead to

¹⁸ The diverse scope of research was visible in the composition of the research teams, for example in the years 1981-1992 there were five of them and they covered various disciplines: socio-anthropological studies, economic studies, political studies, inter-cultural communication and religious studies.

¹⁹ In 1994 he was awarded with the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland for his contribution to the development of the cooperation between Chile and Poland.

²⁰ The Institute of Oriental Studies for a long time was a part of the Department of Neophilology but is now an independent faculty within the University of Warsaw.

²¹ Both of them sadly died within a few months of each other in 2014 (in May and November respectively). They have left a significant impact on Polish sinology and their passing tore

the expansion to different global areas and the acquisition of specialists on India, such as Stanisław Tokarski, Surender Bhutani (who was operating as a free-lance researcher but contributed enormously to the Center's academic activities related to India and Arab countries) and the Middle East, such as Jerzy Zdanowski, Teresa Stajuda, Bogumiła Iwasiów-Pardus and Franciszek Bocheński. There were, of course, other scholars, such as Henryk Szlajfer who conducted research on the development of capitalism in Latin America and Jarosław Bratkiewicz²² who published a book about Western perceptions of the Orient and the development of socio-economical structures in Oriental countries. However, the history of the Center was long and quite turbulent, so it would not be possible to mention all the scholars who have contributed to the academic development of CSNEC and to the Oriental Studies in general.

As for African Studies, they remain one of the areas of interest within the research scope of the new institution, and the expansion of academic ranks in this area include the acquisition of real superstars in the field. The double meaning of the word "field" is actually very accurate as we are going to mention Augustyn Ponikiewski who joined the ranks of CSNEC in the early 1980s, after successful stays as an expert in Morocco and Laos. He came to the Academy with a wealth of experience in the field of agriculture and both practical and academic experience in Africa and Asia. His works on African topics and the books such as *Ludy gospodarki żarowej Azji Południowo-Wschodniej* [The slash-and-burn cultivation people of South-East Asia] published in 1985 were not only a result of a lifelong research of Professor Ponikiewski but also an indirect testament to the early academic interests of the founder of the Center – Professor Chałasiński. Another "heavyweight" acquisition was the transfer of Professor Tadeusz Dzierżykray-Rogalski, whom we will mention again very soon. As African studies remained within the scope of academic interests the influx of new scholars into the CSNEC was slow but steady. Apart of the professors mentioned above we can list, among others, also Elżbieta Promińska, Grzegorz Waliński and Robert Piętek. We can also mention the author of this article, as your humble chronicler joined the ranks of CSNEC in 2005, during the tenure of Professor Zdanowski and Malwina Bakalarska who joined in 2007.

a huge gap not only within research related to China within the Center but to Asian Studies in general. Professor Sławiński was a creator and head of the Centre for Studies on Modern Confucianism within CSNEC, and his death, the passing of Professor Tomala, and the death of Teresa Halik – an expert in Vietnamese studies and a specialist in the Vietnamese diaspora – just a year after, was significant blow to this area of studies within this institution.

²² Who later became Polish ambassador to Latvia (between 1997 and 2001).

However, the history of CSNEC has not been a bed of roses, as the Center was often facing financial difficulties and troubles with staffing (as a direct result) certainly limited the academic expansion of this institution. However, this has not affected the academic quality of the works of its employees. Looking at the list of publications, we can see that despite the limited staff, the Center maintained its strong publication record and covered many areas of the development of the regions included in its research scope. It also maintained close international ties with academic institutions and scholars from all continents and countries, as far as the UK, Italy and Sweden, but also Burkina Faso, Chad, Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, India, China and Cuba – to list just a few examples. This cooperation not only resulted in the exchange of journals and research materials and mutual exchange visits²³ of scholars but also in joint conferences, workshops and seminars.

One such case is the participation of the Center within the international project *Individual and Society in the Mediterranean Muslim World* which was founded by the European Science Foundation and coordinated by la Maison Méditerranéenne des Sciences de l'Homme in Aix-en-Provence and St Antony's College in Oxford. Throughout its duration (1996–1999), the project included the organisation of high-profile conferences in Granada, Istanbul, Marseille and other European leading research centres, which in turn resulted in the series of publications. The main contributors for the project from the side of CSNEC were Jerzy Zdanowski, Paulina Lewicka and Joanna Wronecka who, apart of the publishing activities, also participated in the conferences.

Another example is the Polish-Finnish research project *State and Everyday Life in Africa*, coordinated by the director of CSNEC – Professor Jerzy Zdanowski. The three-year project began in 1998 and its culminative point was an international conference held in Accra, Ghana, in 2001 with Robert Piątek and Małgorzata Szupejko as the representatives of the Center²⁴ and

²³ The first two parts were especially crucial as during the of the “Africanists Center” and in the early CSNEC era, that is prior to the political transformations in Poland after 1989, access to academic publications from Western countries for those from the Eastern Bloc was greatly limited. Thus, personal connections such as Prof. Zajączkowski's ties with French sociologists were crucial in obtaining Western publications and also opening possibilities for academic visits and scholarships in the renowned scholarly centres at the other side of the Iron Curtain. For example in the *École des hautes études en sciences sociales* in Paris which hosted many young scholars from CSNEC during Prof. Zajączkowski's tenure. However, the acceptance of the research visit by the host institution was often not enough to facilitate the visit itself as the government sometimes blocked the travel permits for an individual scholar who was (even baselessly) accused of any anti-governmental activity.

²⁴ The Polish delegation was very strong, with prominent experts on African studies among the members of the team. In addition to the representatives from CSNEC who were both PhD's at the time, among the participants were Professor Stanisław Piłaszewicz, Professor Jan Milewski and Professor Michał Tymowski.

Grzegorz Waliński, the Center's former employee, among the organisers. The conference under the theme *State Formation and Everyday Life in Africa* was held in November at the University of Ghana, Legon, and was organised in cooperation between this academic institution, the University of Helsinki (Finland) and the Polish National Commission for UNESCO. Grzegorz Waliński's role in the organisation committee should not be overlooked as at the time he was a member of the Polish delegation to UNESCO (a post he held between 1996 and 2001). He later became Polish Ambassador to Nigeria, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Cameroon and Equatorial Guinee in the years 2002–2008. An expert in African studies, especially on the pre-colonial history of the Zulu kingdom and political dynamics in West Africa, whose career was cut short by malaria. He died in 2021 at the age of 58.

Another form of formal international cooperation is the role of the Center for Studies on Non-European Countries within the international initiative of the African Borderlands Research Network (ABORNE), where CSNEC acted as the representative in Poland and Jerzy Zdanowski was coordinating the participation of Polish researchers in ABORNE activities between 2009–2013. The ABORNE project was founded by the European Science Foundation (ESF) as an umbrella for the organisation of workshops and seminars in Europe and Africa. One of the first global events was the conference *How Africa is Transforming Border Studies*, which took place at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 10–14 September 2009. The conference was followed by a short fieldwork trip (focused on the various aspects of migration and displacement) to the Bushbuckridge District on the Mozambiquan boorder. Poland was represented by Mariusz Kraśniewski from CSNEC and Krzysztof Trzcziński who was, at the time, part of the staff at the University of Warsaw's Department of Geography, but who later briefly joined the Polish Academy of Sciences and was working at the Institute of Mediterranean and Oriental Cultures for three years between 2014 and 2017.

Apart from international cooperation and the participation of the Center's academic staff in the symposiums organised abroad, CSNEC also organised its own events like, for example, three conferences on the Middle East (between 2012 and 2014). Their scale was obviously smaller but with the contribution of the scholars from academic institutions from European and Non-European countries, their scientific quality and achievements should not be overlooked. At the grassroots level the Center also maintained close ties with leading Polish academic institutions devoted to research on similar topics. This cooperation technically started during the time of Professor Chałasiński who, apart from his role as director of the Centre for Studies on African

Societies and Cultures, since 1966 was also a part of the academic staff of the Department of Sociology of the University of Warsaw. It continued during the time of Professor Zajączkowski, who, for many years, taught the sociology of Africa to students of the Chair of African Languages and Cultures²⁵ at Warsaw university. Close ties with this institution were maintained for many years. Here, the author can give a first-hand account as he was introduced to the academic profile and the library of CSNEC by Professor Stanisław Piłaszewicz who, during his many years of work at the University of Warsaw would bring his students to Staszic Palace in order to familiarise them with the Center's research in the field of African Studies. Professor Piłaszewicz – a prominent scholar and one of the world's leading specialists in Hausa literature, was not only head of the abovementioned Chair of African Languages and Cultures for more than 20 years (from 1988 to 2009), but was also a member of the Scientific Council of the Centre for Studies on Non-European Countries and, later, the Institute of Mediterranean and Oriental Cultures. The council is actually one of the best examples of cooperation between the centre and other academic institutions in Poland. Long-standing head of the Scientific Council was Professor Bogdan Składanek, an Iranist and Director of the Institute of Oriental Studies at the University of Warsaw (between 1986 to 1996). The current head of the Scientific Council is Professor Marek Mejor, an Indologist affiliated to the University of Warsaw but also Head of the Committee of Oriental Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences (until 2024) and former Head of the Polish Oriental Society. Among other members of the council we can mention Professor Jolanta Sierakowska-Dyndo – Director of the Institute of Oriental Studies at the University of Warsaw from 2002 and the first Dean of the Faculty of Oriental Studies after its creation in 2008. We can also mention Professor Janusz Danecki, former Director of the Chair of Arabic and Islamic Studies of the University of Warsaw. These are just a few examples and cooperation between Polish academic institutions reached far wider than the activities of the abovementioned Scientific Council, with scholarly connections with leading academic institutions and scholars from Warsaw, Lodz, Cracow and other places CSNEC always remained an important place on the Polish scientific map as far as African and Oriental studies are considered.

Obviously, international and local cooperation, although fruitful and beneficial to all concerned parties, was not the main purpose of the existence of the Center. The list of publications shows an impressive range of research subjects

²⁵ This is the current name of the same institution which was mentioned much earlier in the text, in footnote 2. Similarly to many academic institutions in Poland, it experienced some changes in nomenclature and affiliation within the structures of the university but maintained its scientific profile. To avoid confusion, the following section of the paper will refer to the current names of the academic institutions mentioned in the text.

and testifies to the willingness of the academic staff to explore the areas which were often ignored in wider academic circles or simply understudied in Poland. Works on the religions in Africa have been mentioned. Some other examples include the monographies exploring the links between Western subcultures and Oriental philosophy [*Orient i subkultura*; *Orient i kontrkultura* – both by Stanisław Tokarski], the first monograph in Central European literature on the history of Taiwan [*Historia Tajwanu* by Maria Roman Sławiński], the history of China [*Nowożytna historia Chin* by Roman Sławiński], the monograph on various aspects of Chinese development in the 21st century [*Chiny a procesy globalizacji w XXI w.*, by Karin Tomala] pioneering studies on the Vietnamese diaspora in Poland by Teresa Halik, the first monograph on the history of Eastern Arabia [*Historia Arabii Wschodniej* by Jerzy Zdanowski], Andrzej Krasnowolski's works on the role of Afro-Brazilians in the development of West African Societies (*Les Afro-Brésiliens dans les processus de changement de la Côte des Esclaves*) and Małgorzata Szupejko's comprehensive analysis of the problems of identity through the works of modern African writers (included in her book *Afrykańska tożsamość u progu XXI wieku. Anglojęzyczna literatura Czarnej Afryki i jej twórcy*), to mention just a few examples. The full list could be much longer as it is not possible to list here all the important and notable works. The impressive publication record of the Center for Studies on Non-European Countries includes dozens of monographies and several hundred articles, including author's own works on modern forms of slavery in Africa and the use of oral and written literary sources as material for research on history and social change.

The uniqueness of research conducted within the Center was not only its scope and the variety of subjects. The works published often relied on local sources and were based on materials written in Oriental languages, first-hand sources gathered during field research and original documents obtained during archive studies. The publications have often proposed a change of perspective from a Eurocentric point of view and given voice to local philosophers, theorists and scholars. The ideologists of Négritude,²⁶ the philosophers behind the Islamic fundamentalist movements and the Indian theorists of social dialogue were first introduced to the Polish literature through the materials published by the Center for Studies on Non-European Countries.

²⁶ It is somewhat of a simplification as technically Hanna Bobrowska, who had a leading role in the popularization of West African philosophy in Poland, published her article *Czarna Afryka w poszukiwaniu drogi przyszłości* (Black Africa in Search of Future Ways) in 1975, just before the transformation of the Center. However, the majority of her work on this topic was published by CSNEC.

As the scope of research widened, so did the number of research disciplines. Soon the field of sociology which was an initial area for publications in the Chałasiński's era became too thin for the growing number of subjects and research perspectives. In addition to monographs published by the Center in cooperation with external publishers,²⁷ articles were published in leading scientific journals in Poland and abroad. Also, to accommodate the research needs and to underline the importance of the international cooperation, the Center launched two peer-reviewed journals concentrated on interdisciplinary research and with a specified geographic range. Both are still being published today. The first issue of "Hemispheres. Studies on Cultures and Societies" was released in 1984 and the journal operates as an annual publication excluding a short period when it appeared as a quarterly. Its first editor-in-chief was Andrzej Zajączkowski (from 1984 to 1994), followed by Jerzy Zdanowski (from 1994 to 2016), Mahnaz Zahirinejad (2017–2021), and finally Michał Moch, who holds this position at the time of writing. *Acta Asiatica Varsoviensia* was first published in 1988 as the brainchild of Roman Sławiński. He was the editor-in chief until his death in 2014. He was then succeeded by Jerzy Zdanowski in 2015 then followed by Krzysztof Trzcziński (2016–2017) and Nicolas Levi (2018–2020). The current editor-in chief is Małgorzata Wielińska-Soltwedel. As a sign of modernity, both journals are now available online, but we can assume that the reader is well aware of this fact as this memoir is published in *Hemispheres*.

Above we have just a brief description of the activities of the Center for Studies on Non-European Countries – the institutional and intellectual successor of the Center started by Józef Chałasiński in 1962. However, even this short note offers a glimpse into the achievements of the academic staff and shows the importance of the institution for Oriental Studies in Poland also in a wider sense. That is especially if we combine it with the huge thematic library that includes more than 15,000 volumes from various fields.²⁸ It is a pretty impressive record for an institution which barely survived the times of system transformation in Poland and was almost completely disbanded in the early 1990s. Later events can be seen as a symbolic reference to the proverb about strength gained through hardship,²⁹ so despite the financial difficulties which plague academic studies (especially in the field of the humanities) in Poland up to this day, the Center for Studies on Non-European Countries not only remained on the academic map of Poland, but was a leading institution

²⁷ With the significant role of ASKON publishing house, which published not only monographs but also the first issues of CSNEC's journals.

²⁸ Including Chałasinski's works on rural development in Poland.

²⁹ "What does not kill us, makes us stronger".

concentrated on interdisciplinary research within widely considered Oriental Studies. It was like this until 2010, when the Center was... dissolved? No, it evolved again, showing resilience and devotion to the academic heritage of its founder.

The transformation

Due to the legal changes within the Polish Academy of Sciences, smaller research institutions such as Centres (Zakłady) became obsolete. To avoid liquidation, those smaller units had to either expand or join ranks with other small units in order to comply with the new staff regulations. Thus in 2010 the Institute of Mediterranean and Oriental Cultures – IMOC PAS (Instytut Kultur Śródziemnomorskich i Orientalnych PAN – IKŚiO PAN) was born as a merger of two reputable research centres within the Academy – the Research Centre for Mediterranean Archaeology (founded in 1956 by Professor Kazimierz Michałowski) and the Center for Studies on Non-European Countries. As the matter of fact, some cooperation between those institutions was taking place before, due to the proximity of research subjects and geographical interests. Professor Tadeusz Dzierżykray-Rogalski, whom we briefly mentioned a few pages earlier, came to CSNEC after a long and successful career at the Research Centre for Mediterranean Archaeology, where he was a long time deputy director (under Kazimierz Michałowski) and a director for one year. He was a medical practitioner and anthropologist with significant academic achievements both in medicine and in strictly academic areas. An expert in the analysis of human remains, he was instrumental in organising the so-called “Yotvingian Expedition” to the northern regions of Poland, the results of which had a significant impact on the understanding of the culture of the Baltic people (Strzałko, Drozdowski, 1998). However, soon afterwards he moved his research interests towards Africa, and the majority of his works relate to this continent, with his four-volume book *Publications of the Arabic-Polish Anthropological Expedition*³⁰ and the book *Sudan. Kraj i ludzie* [Sudan. State and People, 1991]³¹ as the two poles of his research interests. A full professor (since 1958), author of many academic publications, but also holder of many military decorations including the Silver Cross of the War Order of Virtuti Militari and the Warsaw Uprising Cross. With the perspective of time, we can say that the career of Dzierżykray-Rogalski in the Polish Academy of Sciences was a metaphoric bridge that connected two academic centres like a foretoken of change that happened many years after his death.

³⁰ Based on the results of two Polish-Egyptian expeditions between 1959–1962.

³¹ The book written together with his wife – Elżbieta Promińska.

Symbolism aside, the decision to unify these two institutions was both pragmatic and scientifically justified. Pragmatically it was quite obvious as both centres shared the same floor in Warsaw's Staszic Palace. The scientific factor was also clear, as they shared similar regional interests, although, for obvious reasons, the approach to research conducted within each of them was significantly different. However, despite the differences, the creation of IMOC PAS was an unique opportunity to extend the interdisciplinary character of studies on non-European cultures to another level. The excavations in the Middle East (especially in Egypt) and North Africa (especially in Sudan) created the possibilities for cooperation within different fields of study and to supplement the materials with variety of findings. This includes material culture but also cultural studies in general and obviously history. Those areas are currently being explored within the research curricula of the Institute while some, such as in-depth research into the material and social culture of the Hausa diaspora in Sudan, are at the planning phase.

The first director of the new institution was Professor Jerzy Zdanowski who was acting director between 2010 and 2011. Afterwards, Professor Karol Myśliwiec – former director of the Research Centre for Mediterranean Archaeology – was appointed as the director of the institute, while Professor Jerzy Zdanowski took up the post of deputy director. At the end of their tenure, they were succeeded by Dr. hab. Teodozja Rzeuska, Associate Professor at the IMOC PAS, who was the director from 2015 to 2023, together with Dr. Henryk Meyza and Dr. Jadwiga Iwaszczuk as deputy directors (each held the position for one term). Subsequently, the management positions passed to Dr. Jadwiga Iwaszczuk and Dr. Katarzyna Kapiec, who took the positions of director and deputy director, respectively. In 2024, the board was expanded with addition of Dr. Daria Dulok who became a deputy director of the Administrative Affairs and such is the current state of the administrative board at the time of writing.

As for Oriental Studies within the new Institution, they have settled well enough. With numerous finished grant projects including ones by Jerzy Zdanowski, Anna Mrozek-Dumanowska, Malwina Bakalarska, Mariusz Kraśniewski, Sabina Brakonieczka, Bogumiła Hall, Michał Moch, Krzysztof Gutowski, Patrycja Kozieł and Natalia Bahlawan; international conferences, seminars and workshops; a variety of subjects and significant publication record containing monographs and articles.

Perhaps the most significant achievement in the context of international events was the series of five conferences on the Middle East organised between 2013 and 2018, which were coordinated mainly by Mahnaz Zahirinejad³²

³² At the time (2015–2020), she was a head of, now defunct, Center of Middle Eastern Studies within the Department of Islamic Civilization at the Institute.

and Agata Wójcik. With the participation of scholars from leading academic institutions from the USA, Turkey, Greece, France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Romania, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Israel, Pakistan, Poland and other countries, the conferences provided a platform for scholarly discourse conducted above the political strife which influences international relations within the region. On the local level, the institute launched a series of open lectures with the cooperation of the Committee of Oriental Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences. The one-year project, which started in 2016, was founded by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education³³ and provided an opportunity to introduce to the general public the results of research conducted by specialists in the field of African and Oriental studies from leading Polish academic institutions. In the background, the Institute cultivated the idea of the “internal-but-open” seminar, which was first launched by Professor Chałasiński and then continued during the times of CSNEC. Initially, just as in the times of the Center, the seminars took place every Tuesday and apart from discussions on current research problems by the staff of the institute, it often provided a floor for scholars from other institutions to present the results of their academic interests. The seminar, which was suspended due to pandemic restrictions, was relaunched in a new, hybrid form in 2024.

From the publication department, notable books include studies on: the institution of slavery in the Arabian Peninsula [*Slavery and Manumission. British Policy in the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf in the First Half of the 20th Century* by Jerzy Zdanowski], Iran’s place in the politics and economics of Asia and the Middle East (*Iran’s Strategy in Energy Relations with China and India (1979–2010)* by Mahnaz Zahirinejad), the oral literature and modern Hausa music from Nigeria, Niger and Ghana (*In Da Haus. A Story of Hiphop and Oral Literature in Hausa Society* by Mariusz Kraśniewski), on the political system of North Korea (*Korea Północna. Zarys ewolucji systemu politycznego* by Nicolas Levy), on the monuments and memorial sites and their role in international relations with the USA from the perspective of Japan by Olga Barbasiewicz (*Pomniki i miejsca pamięci w relacjach międzynarodowych. Wpływ pamięci na stosunki japońsko-amerykańskie z perspektywy Japonii*), on authoritarianism and economic liberalisation in Egypt by Michał Lipa (*Autorytaryzm i liberalizacja gospodarcza w Egipcie*), on Shiite political mobilization in Lebanon in the years 1960-1982 by Rachela Tonta (*Czynniki mobilizacji politycznej szyitów w Libanie w latach 1960–1982*), on the social movements and the political system of Lebanon after 1990 by Natalia Bahlwan (*Nowe ruchy społeczne wobec systemu politycznego*

³³ Within the funding stream “Activities for the Promotion of Science” [Działaność upowszechniająca naukę – DUN]

w Libanie po 1990 roku), on the regional development in Indonesia by Michał Sęk (*Archipelag nierówności. Rozwój regionalny w Indonezji*) and many others, including a comprehensive analysis of the religions and the process of globalisation (*Religia a globalizacja*, by Anna Mrozek-Dumanowska), a study of the modern history of India by Stanisław Tokarski and Surender Bhutani (*Indie w XXI wieku*, published in 2014 and again in a second edition in 2017). The Institute maintained the international contacts of its predecessors, including relations with leading academic institutions in Nigeria, India and China, as well as European research centres in the UK, Germany and Italy.³⁴

The end of the second decade of the 21st century was marked by a gradual shift in the research profile of the Institute. With Poland's newly imposed strict policy towards disciplinary purity of academic activities, the Oriental part of the Institute moved towards cultural studies as a main discipline. Interdisciplinary research was simply no longer an option as staff requirements for research disciplines were too high to be handled by an institution with limited founding. African Studies remained mostly unaffected by these changes as the research profile was already focused on the processes of transition which affect cultures and societies in Sub-Saharan Africa.

We started this paper with reference to the African studies within the Polish Academy of Sciences as it was the root and the backbone of the further activities in the field of widely considered Oriental Studies and let us end it with the reference of the current condition of this area of research within IMOC PAS.

In March 2020, the Division for Research on Sub-Saharan Africa (Pracownia Badań nad Afryką Subsaharyjską) was created within the Institute of Mediterranean and Oriental Cultures and became one of the two academic pillars of the existing Department of Modern Asian and African Cultures,³⁵

³⁴ The list of the scholars who joined the Center or, later, the Institute for a research visit or were shortly affiliated there through the academic exchange programme is long and still growing. Among the professors of international repute who do not need further introduction we can mention Abdalla Uba Adamu, Sergio Baldi, Milos Mendel, Harry T. Norris, Evariste Poda and Holger Weis. To list just a few examples.

³⁵ Currently, the African and Oriental studies are conducted mostly in two departments within the structures of the Institute of Mediterranean and Oriental Cultures. Those are: the Department of Islamic Civilization (with Michał Moch, Associate Professor of the IMOC PAS, as Head of Department) and the Department of Modern Cultures of Asia and Africa (with Dr. Małgorzata Wielińska-Soltwedel as Head of Department). Due to the academic profile of the Institute, some related research is also conducted by the more strictly archaeological units, mostly within the Department of Nubiology (with Prof. Bogdan Żurawski as the Head of the Department). The information about the current structure of the IMOC PAS and the research activities of all the departments and their particular divisions can be found on the Institute's website: <http://www.iksiopan.pl/index.php/en/structure/departments>

the other one being Section for the Study of Countries along the Silk Road (Pracownia Kultur Szlaku Jedwabnego) led by the head of the Department – Dr. Małgorzata Wielińska-Soltwedel. Dr. Mariusz Kraśniewski was appointed as the head of the Division and despite limited staffing, the new research unit is trying to continue work started in the early 1960s and follows the ideas important to Professor Chałasiński and his team within the “Africanist Centre” created in the early 1960s. These include a new approach towards research, ambitious scholarly goals and, above all, emphasis on the non-European perspective of research and ideas. Valuable works by Dr. Patrycja Koziół on the elements of feminism in the writings of Hausa female authors and the Brazilian diaspora in Nigeria are just two examples, while the former took the form of a monograph in 2024 and the latter was a subject of a grant project (within the *Miniatura* programme), which was finished in the same year. We can also mention here Kraśniewski’s works on West African popular culture, oral literature and education.

Operating with limited funds and in the Covid and early post-Covid reality the Division organised an international seminar on modern Hausa poetry and an international conference – *Culture in the Times of Plague. Coronavirus’ impact on the cultural development in Sub-Saharan Africa*, which was held (online) in Warsaw on 8 September, 2021 with participants from Europe and African countries such as Nigeria, Kenya and Zimbabwe. The staff also prepared a special issue of the *Hemispheres* journal which put emphasis on African culture and cultural studies and commemorated the creation of the new unit (*Hemispheres. Studies on Cultures and Societies*, No. 36, 2021). The Division has limited staff, but with the participation of its scholars in the conferences held in Poland and abroad (for example in Italy, Uganda, UK and USA), guest lectures (Poland, Italy), media participation (in Poland, Germany and Nigeria) and an emphasis on field research, the future is there, but as usual, it is an open book.

With this statement we’ve reached the end of our memoir, but we still hope that many more pages on this topic will be written in the future, as African and Oriental studies will persist within the Polish Academy of Sciences just as they have for the past 60 years. We’ve tried to chronicle the history of all the iterations of professor Chałasiński’s Center and through the academic works and achievements of its employers we’ve tried to show the research that was, and still is, conducted within this institution. However, we are well aware that each written account will have some flaws as long as it is, even partially, based on human memory. And even if memory serves right and is supported by the reliable sources it is simply not possible to record all the events and mention all the people who contributed towards the history

of a long-lasting and reputable institution. Sixty years is a long time and a short article is not enough to cover all the details. Maybe one day, a book will be written and it will explain all the twists and turns and provide extensive biographies of all the people involved. Who knows, maybe it will even record some of the dramas within this institution over the years? As for us, we will end our role here but before the author's voice fades into references and appendixes, let's give respect to the ones who, for all those years worked, behind the lines marked by the academic publications. Whatever we say about the research achievements of the staff, none of it would be possible without the contribution of the administrative personnel which provided the background for a safe and efficient work environment. People like Mrs Renata Dobrzyńska, long-standing secretary of CSNEC, who at some point was also an "acting librarian" due to the shortage of staffing related to the low funding of the institution.

The history of the Center was written by all the people who ever worked there.

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³⁶ The author was a part of academic staff in the later years of the Center for Studies on Non-European Countries and is currently the only remaining member of CSNEC staff in the Institute of Mediterranean and Oriental Cultures. As most of the members of the academic staff are now retired or deceased, this paper is based on archive research, personal memory and communication with the available members of the team. The author would like to express his gratitude especially to Małgorzata Szupejko and Andrzej Krasnowolski, for their valuable remarks about the history of the Center and for the selection of photos included in the paper. We would like to thank also Jerzy Zdanowski for his remarks and suggestions on various stages of paper preparation and for the list of CSNEC publications. As the author was not present during the formative years of the Center for Studies on African Societies and Cultures [Pracownia Zagadnień Społecznych i Kulturalnych Afryki Współczesnej] the bulk of information about this time comes from the article by Grzegorz Kaczyński: *Seminarium afrykanistyczne Józefa Chałasińskiego. Fakty i refleksje* [The African Studies Seminar of Józef Chałasiński: Facts and Reflections] (Kaczyński, 2013, pp. 156–177). Grzegorz Kaczyński was a participant of the sociologic seminars led by professor Józef Chałasiński and became a member of the academic staff of the Center. The author met Grzegorz Kaczyński several times after his departure from the Polish Academy of Sciences when Kaczyński was already working in Italy where he remained until his death in 2018.

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Appendix 1

The list of publications

The following section includes the list of publications released over the years by all the iterations of the Center that was started by Professor Chałasiński in 1962. It contains only the monographs, as if we had wanted to include also journal articles and conference papers we would have needed a full issue of *Hemispheres* and even that probably won't have been enough. We have done our best to make the list complete although we accept the possibility that some older books have been omitted by accident. However, some of the records were omitted on purpose as this catalogue does not include publications not relevant to the academic profile of the institution which were published by research staff during their employment in the Polish Academy of Sciences. Among those books are Professor Chałasiński's works on the working class and the social development of rural areas of Poland and Professor Zajączkowski's books on the Polish nobility. It excludes also the volumes which were self-published by members of the staff, released under different affiliations or are not purely academic by definition, such as textbooks for language learning (for example Vietnamese or Chinese).

1963		
Andrzej Zajączkowski	<i>Aszanti – kraj Złotego Tronu</i> [Ashanti – the Land of the Golden Stool]	Książka i Wiedza, Warszawa, pp. 210
1964		
Andrzej Zajączkowski	<i>Wybrane zagadnienia z socjologii Afryki</i> [Selected Aspects of the Sociology of Africa]	Studium Afrykanistyczne UW, Warszawa 1964, pp. 145
1965		
Józef Chałasiński, Krystyna Chałasińska	<i>Bliżej Afryki</i> [Closer to Africa]	Instytut Wydawniczy Pax, Warszawa 1965, pp. 543
Andrzej Zajączkowski	<i>Pierwotne religie Czarnej Afryki</i> [Primary Religions of Black Africa]	Książka i Wiedza, Warszawa 1965, pp. 225
Andrzej Zajączkowski	<i>Plemię, rasa, socjalizm</i> [Tribe, Race, Socialism]	PW „Wiedza Powszechna”, Warszawa 1965, pp. 230

1966		
Bogdan Moliński	<i>Historia, osobowość, sztuka. Refleksje nad antropologią kultury</i> [History, Personality, Art. Reflections on Cultural Anthropology]	Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 1966, pp. 255
1967		
Edward Szymański, Lech Ratajski	<i>Kongo Kinszasa</i> [Congo Kinshasa]	Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 1967, pp. 195
Anna Mrozek	<i>Koran a kultura arabska</i> [Quran and Arabic Culture]	Książka i Wiedza, Warszawa 1967, pp. 298
Anna Mrozek	<i>Średniowieczna filozofia arabska</i> [Medieval Arabic Philosophy]	PWN, Warszawa 1967, pp. 246
1968		
Józef Chałasiński	<i>Kultura i naród</i> [Culture and Nation]	Książka i Wiedza, Warszawa 1968, pp. 616
Andrzej Zajączkowski	<i>Niepodległość Konga a kolonializm belgijski. Zarys historyczno-socjologiczny</i> [Congolesse Independence and Belgian Colonialism: A Historical and Sociological Outline]	PWN, Warszawa 1968, pp. 317
Elżbieta Podhorska-Reklajtis	<i>Rozwój szkolnictwa w Algierii</i> [Development of Education in Algeria]	PWN, Warszawa 1968
1970		
Andrzej Zajączkowski	<i>Muntu dzisiaj. Studium Afrykanistyczne</i> [Muntu Today. An Africanist Study]	PIW, Warszawa 1970, pp. 180
1971		
Elżbieta Podhorska-Reklajtis	<i>Być narodem. Problemy kultury współczesnej Algierii</i> [To Be a Nation. Cultural Problems of the Modern-Day Algeria]	PWN, Warszawa 1971, pp. 313

Karin Tomala	<i>Ośrodki badawcze i naukowe w RFN na temat Chin</i> [Research and Scientific Centres in FRG on China]	PISM, Warszawa 1971
Karin Tomala	<i>RFN wobec Chin Ludowych</i> [FRG Towards People Republic of China]	PISM, Warszawa 1971
Edward Szymański	<i>Tunezja</i> [Tunisia]	PWN, Warszawa 1971, pp. 187
1972		
Elżbieta Promińska	<i>Investigations on the Population of Muslim Alexandria. Anthropological-Demographic Study</i>	PWN, Varsovie 1972, pp. 124
1973		
Anna Mrozek	<i>Islam a naród w Afryce. Somalia, Sudan, Libia</i> [Islam and Nation in Africa. Somalia, Sudan, Libya]	PWN, Warszawa 1973, pp. 260
Andrzej Zajączkowski (ed.)	<i>Obrazy świata białych</i> [Images of the White People's World]	PIW, Warszawa 1973, pp. 292
Wanda Leopold	<i>O literaturze Czarnej Afryki</i> [About the Literature of Black Africa]	PIW, Warszawa 1973, pp. 194
1974		
Franciszek Bocheński	<i>500 zagadek ze świata arabskiego</i> [500 Riddles from the Arab World]	Wiedza Powszechna, Warszawa 1974, pp. 233
Andrzej Zajączkowski	<i>Religia a struktura społeczna w Afryce</i> [Religion an Social Structure in Africa]	Studium Afrykanistyczne UW, Warszawa 1974, pp. 88
Wanda Leopold, Zbigniew Stolarek	<i>Antologia poezji afrykańskiej</i> [Anthology of African Poetry]	Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, Warszawa 1974, pp. 338
1975		
Maria Roman Sławiński	<i>La Societe des Piques Rouges et le mouvement paysan en Chine en 1926–1927</i>	Rozprawy habilitacyjne UW (UW. Nr 82), Warszawa 1975, pp. 201

1976		
Józef Chałasiński (ed.)	<i>Afryka naszych czasów. Problemy integracji państwowej, narodowej i panafrykańskiej</i> [Africa of Our Times: The Problems of State, National and Pan-African Integration]	Pracownia Zagadnień Społecznych i Kulturalnych Afryki Współczesnej PAN & Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich & Wydawnictwo PAN, Warszawa 1976, pp. 359
Elżbieta Podhorska-Reklajtis	<i>Maghreb współczesny. Z badań nad kontaktem i współrozwojem kultur</i> [Modern Maghreb. From the Research on Contact and Co-Development of Cultures]	PWN, Warszawa 1976, pp. 383
Augustyn Ponikiewski	<i>Problemy rozwojowe produkcji rolnej Maroka na tle warunków przyrodniczych i struktur agrarnych</i> [Development Problems of Agricultural Production in Morocco in the Context of Natural Conditions and Agrarian Structures]	Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 1976, pp. 297
1977		
Anna Mrozek-Dumanowska (ed.)	<i>Religie w procesie przemian w Afryce</i> [Religions in the Process of Change in Africa]	Pracownia Zagadnień Społecznych i Kulturalnych Afryki Współczesnej PAN & Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich Wydawnictwo PAN, Warszawa 1977 pp. 235
Wanda Leopold	<i>Eposy Czarnej Afryki</i> [Epics of Black Africa]	Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, Warszawa 1977, pp. 298

1978		
Edward Szymański	<i>Étude sur la formation des états maghrébins</i>	Pracownia Zagadnień Społecznych i Kulturalnych Afryki Współczesnej PAN, Varsovie 1978, pp. 267
Edward Szymański (ed.)	<i>Tradycja i współczesność w Azji, Afryce i Ameryce Łacińskiej</i> [Tradition and Modernity in Asia, Africa and Latin America]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich Wydawnictwo PAN, Warszawa 1978, pp. 387
1979		
Grzegorz J. Kaczyński	<i>Bunt i religia w Afryce Czarnej</i> [Revolt and Religion in Black Africa]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich & Wydawnictwo PAN, Warszawa 1979, pp. 301
1982		
Andrzej Zajączkowski	<i>Dimension culturelle du développement</i>	Centre d'Études sur les Pays hors-Européens, Varsovie 1982, pp. 108
1983		
Jan Parys	<i>Ghana. Problemy rozwoju społecznego</i> [Ghana. The Problems of Social Development]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich & Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Wrocław 1983, pp. 142

Piotr Kownacki	<i>Sojusz dla postępu. Taktyka polityczna czy program rozwoju gospodarczego? Synteza polityki USA wobec krajów Ameryki Łacińskiej 1961–1974</i> [Alliance for Progress: Political Tactics or Economic Development Program? A Synthesis of U.S. Policy Toward Latin American Countries, 1961–1974]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich & Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Wrocław 1983, pp. 164
1984		
Stanisław Tokarski	<i>Eliade i Orient</i> [Eliade and Orient]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Ossolineum, Wrocław 1984, pp. 179
Teresa Stajuda	<i>U źródeł egipskiego nacjonalizmu. Egipskie ruchy polityczne 1882–1914</i> [At the Origins of the Egyptian Nationalism: Egyptian Political Movements 1882–1914]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich & Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Wrocław 1984, pp. 119
Elżbieta Reklajtis (ed.)	<i>Spoleczne i kulturowe uwarunkowania procesów ludnościowych w wybranych krajach pozaeuropejskich</i> [Social and Cultural Determinants of Population Processes in Selected Non-European Countries]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Zakład Narodowy Imienia Ossolińskich & Wydawnictwo PAN, Warszawa 1984, pp. 173
1985		
Henryk Szlajfer	<i>Modernizacja zależności. Kapitalizm i rozwój w Ameryce Łacińskiej</i> [Modernisation of Dependency. Capitalism and Development in Latin America]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Wrocław 1985, pp. 249

Augustyn Ponikiewski	<i>Ludy gospodarki żarowej w Azji Południowo-wschodniej</i> [The Slash-and-Burn Cultivation People of South-East Asia]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich & Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Wrocław 1985, pp. 222
Andrzej Zajączkowski, Pierre Piganion and Giuseppe Richeri	<i>Essais sur le développement culturel</i>	Institut Culturel Africain, Dakar 1985, pp. 162
1986		
Jerzy Zdanowski	<i>Bracia Muzułmanie i inni</i> [Muslim Brotherhood and Others]	Wydawnictwo Glob, Szczecin 1986, pp. 212
1987		
Henryk Szlajfer (ed.)	<i>Essays on Economic Nationalism in East-Central Europe and South America 1918–1939</i>	Center for Studies on Non-European Countries PAN, Warsaw 1987, pp. 272
Elżbieta Reklajtis	<i>Z problemów integracji i emancypacji kulturowej w Afryce</i> [On the Problems of Integration and Cultural Emancipation in Africa]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich & Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Wrocław 1987, pp. 54
Andrzej Krasnowolski	<i>Les Afro-Brésiliens dans les processus de changement de la Côte des Esclaves</i>	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich & Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Wrocław 1987, pp. 197

Karin Tomala	<i>Emigracja chińska w krajach Azji Południowo-wschodniej. Problemy asymilacji</i> [Chinese Emigration in South-East Asian Countries. Problems of Assimilation]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich & Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Wrocław 1987, pp. 422
Stanisław Tokarski	<i>Jogini i wspólnoty. Nowoczesna recepcja hinduizmu</i> [Yogin and Communities. Modern Reception of Hinduism]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich & Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Wrocław 1987, pp. 283
Anna Mrozek-Dumanowska (ed.)	<i>Twórcy Trzeciego Świata</i> [The Creators of the Third World]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich & Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Wrocław 1987, pp. 123
1988		
Andrzej Zajączkowski (ed.)	<i>Czas w kulturze</i> [Time in Culture]	PIW, Warszawa 1988, pp. 407
1989		
Jarosław Bratkiewicz	<i>Teoria przedkapitalistycznej formacji społecznej w kulturach orientalnych</i> [Theory of Pre-Capitalist Social Formation in Oriental Cultures]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Wrocław 1989, pp. 252

Iwona Grabowska-Lipińska	<i>Stosunki polityczne między Chińską Republiką Ludową a Wietnamem i Kampuczą w latach 1949–1976</i> [Political Relations Between the People's Republic of China and Vietnam and Kampuchea, 1949–1976]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Wrocław 1989, pp. 214
Grzegorz Kończyk, Jerzy Zdanowski	<i>Zarys historii i przemian społeczno-ekonomicznych Kuwejtu</i> [An Outline of the History and Socio-economic Changes of Kuwait]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich & Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Wrocław 1989, pp. 144
1990		
Jerzy Zdanowski	<i>Czynniki integracji społecznej Kuwejtu w okresie przednaftowym</i> [The Factors of Social Integration in Kuwait in the Pre-Oil Period]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN, Warszawa 1990, pp. 63
1991		
Anna Mrozek-Dumanowska	<i>Islam a Zachód</i> [Islam and the West]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN, Warszawa 1991, pp. 222
Anna Mrozek-Dumanowska, Teresa Stajuda	<i>Kształtowanie się nowoczesnej państwowości egipskiej</i> [The Formation of Modern Egyptian Statehood]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN, Warszawa 1991, pp. 85
Tadeusz Dzierżykray-Rogański, Elżbieta Promińska	<i>Sudan. Kraj i ludzie</i> [Sudan. State and People]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Wydawnictwo Semper, Warszawa 1991, pp. 133
Bogusława Iwasiów-Pardus, Grzegorz Kończyk, Jerzy Zdanowski	<i>Problemy Bliskiego i Środkowego Wschodu w polityce zagranicznej republikańskiego Iraku (1958-1980)</i> [Problems of the Near and Middle East in the Foreign Policy of Republican Iraq (1958–1980)]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN, Warszawa 1991, pp. 78

Jerzy Zdanowski	<i>Początki państwowości Kuwejtu 1896-1904</i> [The Beginnings of Kuwait's Statehood 1896–1904]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Semper, Warszawa 1991, pp. 128
1992		
Małgorzata Szupejko	<i>Spółeczeństwo Bugandy. Zmiana i rozwój</i> [The Society of Buganda. Change and Development]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Wydawnictwo Semper, Warszawa 1992, pp. 116
1993		
Stanisław Tokarski	<i>Wędrowka bogów. Religie pozaeuropejskie w konfrontacjach kulturowych</i> [Gods' Journey: Non-European Religions in Cultural Confrontations]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper, Warszawa 1993, pp. 122
Andrzej Zajączkowski	<i>Rzecz o socjologii</i> [A Thing About Sociology]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper, Warszawa 1993, pp. 135
Elżbieta Reklajtis	<i>Liban. Korzenie i przyszłość pluralizmu kultury</i> [Lebanon. Roots and the Future of Cultural Pluralism]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper, Warszawa 1993, pp. 106
Karin Tomala	<i>Das Chinesische Selbstverständnis und die Frage der Menschenrechte</i>	Zentrum für Aussereuropäische Länder PAN & Wydawnictwo Semper, Warszawa 1993, pp. 151
Jerzy Zdanowski	<i>Emiraty wahhabickie. Z dziejów Arabii w latach 1745–1932</i> [Wahhabi Emirates. From the History of Arabia in the Years 1745–1932]	Wydawnictwo Semper, Warszawa 1993, pp. 282

Andrzej Zajączkowski	<i>Elity urodzenia</i> [Elites of Birth]	Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper, Warszawa 1993, pp. 96
Jerzy Zdanowski	<i>Arabia w opisach europejskich podróżników i badaczy XVIII-XX wieku</i> [Arabia in the Accounts of European Travellers and Scholars of the 18 th -20 th Century]	Wydawnictwo Semper, Warszawa 1993, pp. 152
1994		
Anna Mrozek-Dumanowska	<i>Między ascetyzmem a reformacją. Islam w Libii</i> [Between Ascetism and Reformation. Islam in Libya]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper, Warszawa 1994, pp. 80
Grzegorz J. Kaczyński	<i>Czarny chrystianizm. Ze studiów nad ruchami afrochrześcijańskimi</i> [On the Black Christianity. From the Studies on Afro-Christian Movements]	Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 1994, pp. 274
1995		
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Elżbieta Reklajtis (ed.)	<i>Materiały i studia Zakładu Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN Nr 1. Państwo, gospodarka, zmiana w Afryce</i> [Materials and Studies of CSNEC, No. 1: State, Economy, Change in Africa]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper, Warszawa 1995, pp. 73
Anna Mrozek-Dumanowska (ed.)	<i>W poszukiwaniu prawdziwej wiary. Współczesne ruchy odnowy religijnej w krajach pozaeuropejskich</i> [In Search of True Faith: Contemporary Revival Movements in Non-European Countries]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper, Warszawa 1995, pp. 114

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Karin Tomala	<i>Zhongguo „Reich Der Mitte”. China Auf Dem Steinigen Weg in Die Welt</i>	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN, Warszawa 2000, pp. 146
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Stanisław Tokarski	<i>Szkola Chicago. Spór o dialog międzykulturowy</i> [Chicago School. Dispute About Inter-Continental Dialogue]	Zakład Krajów Pozaeuropejskich PAN & Wydawnictwo Naukowe ASKON Sp. z o.o., Warszawa 2001, pp. 240
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Karolina Nabożna	<i>Postawy wobec Hitlera i Trzeciej Rzeszy w wybranych państwach arabskich</i> [Attitudes towards Hitler and the Third Reich in Selected Arab Countries]	IKŚiO PAN, Warszawa 2021, pp. 221
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Karol Myśliwiec	<i>Egipt za piramidami, czyli szeroki margines archeologii</i> [Egypt Behind the Pyramids, the Wide Margin of Archeology]	IKŚiO PAN, Warszawa 2023, pp. 170

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Patrycja Kozieł	<i>Feminizm afrykański. Kobiety i kobiecość w twórczości pisarek hausańskich z Nigerii</i> [African Feminism. Women and Womanhood in the Works of Nigerian Female Writers]	IKŚiO PAN, Warszawa 2024, pp. 268

Appendix 2,³⁷ Photographs

Photo 1. Prof. Józef Chałasiński, Director of the Center for Studies on African Societies and Cultures from 1962 to 1974.

³⁷ Photographs come from the private collection of Małgorzata Szupejko and Andrzej Krasnowolski. The only exceptions are photo no. 8 which comes from the archive of IMOC PAS and photo no. 10 which was provided by Jerzy Zdanowski. As a disclaimer – we have decided to put the academic titles only in the descriptions of the individual photos. Including the recent titles at the photographs which refer to the particular time and space would be ahistorical and the mention of the titles which were adequate at the time would create unnecessary confusion.



Photo 2. From left to right: Józef Chałasiński, Halina Hanna Bobrowska, Rita Piana (Grzegorz Kaczyński's wife) and Grzegorz Kaczyński on the day of the public defense of the PhD theses of Bobrowska and Kaczyński at the University of Warsaw, 1976.



Photo 3. Józef Chałasiński among academics.



Photo 4. All the work and no play... Celebration of Prof. Chałasiński's name day at the Center for Studies on African Societies and Cultures' library in 1969 (those bookshelves are still there!). On the left side of the picture: Małgorzata Szupejko; Józef Chałasiński is standing in the centre, next to him, on the left is Jadwiga Komorowska. On the right side of the photo – Zygmunt Komorowski and Halina Bobrowska.



Photo 5. Dr. Wanda Leopold. Photo from the 1970s.



Photo 6. Prof. Andrzej Zajączkowski, Director of the Center for Studies on Non-European Countries (CSNEC) between 1981 and 1992.



Photo 7. CSNEC seminar, early 1990. In the upper row: Karin Tomala, Stanisław Tokarski (Director of CSNEC in 1992), Tadeusz Dzierżykraj-Rogański. Partially visible – Professor Andrzej Zajączkowski.



Photo 8. Prof. Anna Mrozek-Dumanowska, Director of the Center for Studies on African Societies and Cultures between 1974 and 1976.



Photo 9. Conference, Accra 2001. Employees of CSNEC – Grzegorz Waliński and Robert Piętek are standing in the middle. Photo by Małgorzata Szupejko.



Photo 10. Prof. Jerzy Zdanowski, Director of CSNEC between 1994 and 2010, and Director of IMOC PAS between 2010 and 2011.