



18th Levantine Heritage Foundation Zoom lecture gathering with guest speaker Paulina Dominik
17 February 2022, 6pm (UK time)

Levantine-Polish Contacts in Late Ottoman Istanbul

Throughout the nineteenth century the Ottoman Empire was one of the chief destinations for the Polish political émigrés who following the final partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1795 fled to Istanbul in the hope of securing Ottoman support in their efforts to regain national independence. For four decades between the 1840s and the 1870s, the Ottoman capital became a key centre of their activities against Tsarist Russia. The Polish presence in the Ottoman Empire, however, was not limited to activities aimed at the restoration of an independent Poland. Rather, Polish émigrés were also involved in various enterprises connected to the nineteenth reforms of the Ottoman state and chief political figures of the Tanzimat Era welcomed their services. This presentation focuses on the relations between the Levantine community and the Polish newcomers into the late Ottoman capital and elucidates the reasons for mutual proximity. It explores the urban spaces shared by both communities and discusses how the Levantine community is depicted in the Polish ego-documents. It delves into the issue of intermarriages as well as the phenomenon of *Levantinization* of the descendants of Polish émigrés in the late Ottoman Empire. By focusing on several case studies, this paper sheds light on various dimensions of interactions between the Levantine community of Istanbul and the Polish political émigrés.

Booking essential: <https://paulina-dominik-presentation.eventbrite.co.uk>



Monsieur Angelo Roncalli visiting the Polish descendant village of Adampol / Polonezköy in the Anatolian hinterland of Istanbul, flanked by the local Catholics and the local chaplain the Salesian Antoni Wojdas, 1930s. Monsigneur Roncalli would later be praised for his work in assisting Jewish refugees going through Istanbul, and would be the popular Pope Jean XXIII.



I defended my PhD at the Graduate School of Global Intellectual History of the Freie- and Humboldt Universität in Berlin in May 2021. My PhD dissertation was a global biography of Seyfeddin Thadée Gasztowtt (1881 – 1936) - a French-Polish peripatetic transimperial activist, who sought to connect the Muslims of the Ottoman Empire and its former provinces in North Africa, and his Polish compatriots in favour of a common struggle against the Eurocentric imperialist global status quo.

I received my Bachelor of Arts from the University of Oxford, where I read Turkish and Persian. In 2013, I was awarded an MSt in Oriental Studies from the same institution. In 2013-2014, I was based at the Orient-Institut Istanbul where I held a fellowship and since have been contributing to the 'Istanbul Memories: Personal Narratives of the Late Ottoman Period' project.

I work at the intersection of global history and area studies. My research interests cover transregional connections between the Middle East and East-Central Europe, Polish political emigration in Europe and the Middle East, history of the Ottoman and post-Ottoman Mediterranean, Pan-Islamism and anti-imperialisms in the Muslim world as well as transimperial activism and cross-imperial flows of ideas in the Middle East and North Africa.

Please support these events by becoming a sponsor. We provide these talks for free to members as part of our mission to preserve and promote the research and public understanding of Levantine heritage. Sponsoring the talks helps cover the LHF's costs in arranging these talks in central London. For sponsorship packages, please contact chairman@levantineheritage.com. All sponsors will be recognised at events and on our website.