

The main purpose of the project presented for realization in the grant shall be the study of Polish-British relations from the visit of Lord Halifax in Nazi Germany in November 1937 – which initiated the so-called active phase of appeasement policy – to the internationalization of the Polish-German conflict on 3 September 1939 when Great Britain and France joined the war. Although this topic has been the subject of historical research before, mostly in terms of the fact-oriented description of mutual relations, it has not yet been fully clarified what were detailed mechanisms for determining policies by both decision-making centres to their partners. One of those partners was a western empire with global commitments; the other was a state with limited potential yet aspiring to the role of a leader in East-Central Europe. The objective of this project is also a widening of the perspective on mutual perception and expectations of Great Britain and Poland in the period of time delineated above.

A method, implemented in this project, will constitute detailed and regular comparison of documents produced by both Polish and British officials, as much as the condition of documents, both archived and published, might allow. An important supplementation of these documents will be provided by reports, journals, letters, memoirs and diaries of the participants in these events, while obviously following the methodological rule of giving primacy to documents which are not made *ex post*.

The main objective of this project is to enable a new understanding of the mechanisms of foreign politics in late 1930s. This topic undoubtedly has also a universal aspect – it is not limited only to the Warsaw-London relations, or even the genesis of the Second World War. It has also, or above all, a more general dimension: a discussion of the role an East-Central country, relatively limited in terms of its potential, played in the politics of a large empire. We take great care for the project not to automatically involve a polonocentric perspective. The research project will therefore serve to better understand various narrations concerning the origins of the Second World War.