

The main aim of the project "Religions and their things. Comparative analysis of early medieval objects connected to religiosity discovered on the territory of Poland" is a trial of understanding early medieval religiosity viewed against the background of interdisciplinary analysis of archeological relics. Accomplishment of this particular problem comes to the conclusion that the analyzed objects should be interpreted as active elements of past cultural reality which were related directly to the number of religious and mythical meanings. Theoretical assumptions and research methods used in this paper assume the use of the results of the exploration within the broader materiality and image anthropology. They emphasize an active and causative nature of material culture products.

The source- analytical part of the project will deal with creating the catalogue set of early medieval archaeological relics discovered on the area of Poland in which we are able to notice some aspects of religiosity. The particular items include both objects associated with traditional pagan religion and objects associated with Christianity. An assumed fact is that there were not only relics connected with only one, specific religion but simultaneously there existed some relics which were able to change their functions and meanings within the changes occurring in the process of Christianization and which did not change their form itself. The paper will therefore discuss items connected not only to the native Slavic religiosity, but also relics connected with Germanic and Baltic beliefs which were discovered in Poland. These items often appear to be a proof of intercultural contacts, so they could change their function and significance due to the change of chronological and spatial context, while maintaining a religious connotation. The project involves the analysis of a very wide source material which includes anthropologist and zoomorphic imaginations, crosses, examples of kaptorga, masks, amulets, rattles, ornaments, bronze bowls, ceramic dishes, and other items of daily use or even weapons which by their unusual form and / or the context of discovery can be associated with the sphere of the early medieval sacrum.

That is the reason why the analysis has a strict comparative and interdisciplinary character, and for the creation of the interpretation this paper uses the sources and methods of history, cultural anthropology, religious studies, philosophy and cultural history. The project's aim is to show any signs of early medieval religious which can be seen in archaeological sources, dating from the great transformations of political ideologies associated with the introduction of Christianity. The result of the project will demonstrate the complexity of the issues of early medieval religiousness and will try to show syncretic and dynamic nature of this religiousness.