

The objective of the research project is **to present the soteriological concept of the salvation of the world and the Polish nation – a concept which emerged in the interwar period in the esoteric milieu in Wisła (Cieszyn Silesia)**. The members of the milieu have come from various places in Poland, yet they have chosen Wisła as their home and place of activity. As they wished to share their vision of the world's salvation, they **published a lot of esoteric books and articles in which they have described their programme**. Not only did they try to encourage the readers to be more interested in the spiritual matter, but also they undertook many various social initiatives (like **The Brotherhood of National Rebirth**, founded by Józef Chobot (1875-1942)). What is especially important, in the groups soteriological programme **Poland was to play the crucial role as the Christ of Nations and the leader of establishing the Christian kingdom on Earth**.

After numerous archival research many source materials have been gathered, both **published** and previously **unpublished**. In the beginning, the esoteric milieu in Wisła will be presented: its history and characteristics. Basing on the source material the **ideological outline of the group** will be reconstructed, especially when it comes to the vision of the universe's structure and esoteric anthropology and eschatology. Further research will cover the idea of man's being released from "the fetters of matter", which lead to "existing in the spiritual realm". The members of the milieu have proposed various techniques to conquer one's limits and develop the spiritual aspect. The key would be the individualisation of faith and subjective experience. The soul of every being, while evolving, would pass through many incarnations, heading either "to light" or toward "thick matter", depending on soul's experience.

Reincarnation is the core of Wisła's philosophy, that is why a separate chapter will be devoted to it. People are thought to be not alone in this strive to achieve spiritual liberation – the "Liberators" are there to help them in the struggle with darkness and matter (identified with evil and the spiritual downfall of man). **The Liberators** can take the form of many being, like angels, theosophical Mahatmas or even the great spiritual teachers of humanity, such as Buddha or Moses. Yet the most important figure for this group is Jesus Christ himself – and his teaching were thought to be falsified, hence the members critique of the Bible and Church organisations. In publications edited by the Wisła's milieu text explaining the true meaning of Christ's message can be found.

The key part of the project is **the role of Poland in the great work of the world's salvation**. Accord to the ideology of the group, the harbinger of the **New Age** dawns in the works of the prophets (mainly, Andrzej Towiański) and messianic poets (Adam Mickiewicz, Juliusz Słowacki, Zygmunt Krasiński). It is them who have laid the foundation of the **esoteric Polish Messianism**, crucial part of the project. Poland as "the Christ of Nations" and the country's redemptive mission, "**the mystery of the Nation's resurrection**" would be the final part of the research project.

The Wisła group, united by the mission of preached the truth of humanity's salvation, possesses the characteristic of the **cultic milieu** – with the definition proposed in 1972 by Colin Campbell. In the interwar period the Wisła milieu was one of the most original and most influential milieus of this kind in Central and Eastern Europe and the study of its ideas will allow to cover blank sheets in knowledge considering the alternative forms of spirituality, it will also help to understand and esoteric currents of the interwar period and later – leading even to New Age.

The other reason for choosing this research topic is also the attempt to understand the philosophy and values professed by the group members, inspired not only by **Western esoteric tradition, Spiritism, Theosophy and occultism, but also by Polish Messianism**. This remarkably interesting collection of ideas, attitudes, and inspirations, creates a vivid picture, worthy to be studied.

For sharing the project's results as well – as for later comparative research – it is very important to share the research during international conferences, and in publications.