

The main objective of the research undertaken in the project will be a comprehensive analysis of the problem of conflicts over forest and land common rights and common lands in Western Galicia in the second half of the 19th century. By means of innovative interdisciplinary research methods, the project introduces a completely new knowledge and fills a niche in historical research. The project is focused primarily on the subject of forest and land common rights, understood as the special relationship between landowners and peasants/townspeople. Until 1848, under their rights, serfs could collect firewood, construction timber, forest litter, fruit and flowers from the court forests, graze cattle on pastures, meadows, wastelands and forests, fish in rivers and lakes, give water to cattle, and dig up raw materials and minerals from the ground. In the Austrian Partition, common rights were commonly named as *serwituty*, *szlżebności*, *wolnice* or *Servituten*.

Forest and land common rights and common lands generated serious conflicts in Galicia in the 19th century, in particular, on the social and economic level. The implementation of the research presented in the project will make it possible to assess the impact of the conflicts on shaping the economic conditions of life and the basis for the existence of peasants and townspeople, their everyday life as well as the difficult social relations, especially between the village and the manor. The project also draws attention to the role of the Austrian authorities in the emergence and escalation of conflicts. In-depth research will explain the reasons for the administration's actions undertaken according to the motto *divide et impera*, for its reluctance to improve the relations between the nobility and the peasants and its legislative sluggishness. The emergence of mass conflicts clearly had an impact also on economic change. Detailed research will make it possible to address the issue of the division of common lands (which is the subject of conflicts), the consolidation of fragmented lands and the abolition of common rights. The research will also focus on natural vegetation and the negative impact of common rights and common lands on plant ecosystems. The lands were often in disarray due to: the depletion of forest resources by collecting, felling, and undercutting tree branches; the destruction of young trees by cattle grazing; and litter raking, which lead to the drying and sterilizing of the soil. In addition, the degradation of forest culture and vegetation resulted from the unregulated exploration of natural resources, from theft, and from the devastation and destruction of property during various conflicts.

The main part of the research will be based on the extremely rich and previously unexplored archival sources from the Central State Historical Archives of Ukraine in Lviv. The project consists in an innovative combination and application of classic and modern research methods and tools. The use of techniques typical of historical research will be combined with the modern use of the cartographic method and the geographical information system (GIS). In addition, the results of the analysis of historical sources, field studies, the data of the State Forests (Forest Data Bank) will be integrated and shown spatially in general and detailed interactive maps. The project also includes innovative historical and botanical research to demonstrate how vegetation and the occurrence of specific plant species was influenced by the conflicts related to historical common rights and common lands.