

## **Producing medieval history within Roman Catholic and contemporary Pagan religious practices in Poland**

The project aims at ethnographic research on producing medieval history within religious practice. Fieldwork will be conducted in three regions of Poland: Małopolska (Lesser Poland), Wielkopolska (Great Poland) and Pomorze Zachodnie (Western Pomerania). The subject of the study will be Roman Catholic and contemporary Pagan celebrations and their role in interpreting the past. Recently scholars have devoted more and more attention to the process of democratization of history. However, despite increasing interest in history constructed outside academia and professional institutions the role of religion in the process has been understudied. The project's goal is to change this situation.

Reflection on the place of religion in social life has been dominated by secularization paradigm which ascribes religion less importance. Such a research approach has limited looking for new places in which religion is present. This project offers investigation on one of such places, namely producing history within religious practice. To achieve this goal it applies post-secular perspective enabling research on how secular and religious are defined and used in social practice, dependently on situation or needs. Moreover, such an approach opens a way for considerations on intertwining of these two notions and finally leads to undermining the dichotomy: secular – religious. Therefore the post-secular perspective encourages crafting new interpretive categories allowing for leaving the secularization paradigm. Empirical research on producing history within religious practice and on the role of this history in the public sphere offers possibility to develop new approach discerning the unrecognized places of religion in the social life.

The project focuses on production of medieval history, because various interpretations and understandings of this period allow for comparative research on conceptualization of this era within religious practice. Both Roman Catholics and contemporary Pagans identify with this epoch. For the first ones it represents origins of their faith in Polish territories, for the latter the end of historical religion to which they refer. In this case interpretation of religious practice stems from religious practice, but, importantly, permeates to the public sphere. This aspect of the democratization of history process has not been thoroughly studied yet.

One of the main outcomes of the project will be a development of a research approach enabling studies on how history is produced within religious practice. Simultaneously this concept will offer an answer to the insufficiencies of secularization paradigm in anthropology of religion which has limited discovering non obvious places religion takes in the society. The project realization will also bring a development of comparative perspective in research on religious practice. Further result will be a series of publications. Among them there will be monographic positions concerning practices of particular religion and ones including comparative perspective. Another group of texts will be devoted to the novel methodological approach.