

Project *Novomuchenichestvo – the Orthodox Interpretation of the experience of Soviet Repressions*, sponsored by the Polish National Science Centre, no N116 696040, duration: 2011-2016.

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Project description:

This project assumes the description of the genealogy of the Orthodox discourse of new martyrdom and the characteristics of its significant elements. In particular, the project aims to define the mechanisms that can change the perception of the past. The project also intends to analyse the cultural and social meanings imparted on the current “memorial sites” of the new martyrdom, such as holidays, significant biographies of new saints and, above all, the sites of the cults of the new martyrs (Butovo, Yekaterinburg, Katyn). These places are of particular interest because by turning the new martyrdom into an important component of its contemporary identity, the Orthodox church wishes to have a monopoly on imparting meaning to burial sites, which may become a potential source of national conflicts. Since the new martyrdom in Russia has a broad reach and impact that is unprecedented in other Eastern European countries, such an analysis provides a clearer picture of the problem of imparting religious dimension to the 20th-century experience of communism. Therefore, the project constitutes an important contribution to studies on the role of history and the function of memory in post-socialist countries.