

Abstract

This dissertation is based on the postsecularisation thesis which highlights the increasing role of religion nowadays. In the postmodern society, religion is understood not only as an objective truth, but also as the individual experience of a person. In relation to societal changes, a new paradigm has appeared – the new geographies of religion – which incorporates the individuality of a person into the discussion about religion in space.

The study of religion as an individual experience could be significantly enhanced by feminist approaches which enable the inclusion of personal experiences. Therefore, the thesis contributes to the current direction of the geographies of religion connecting these with feminist approaches. The contribution of feminist approaches is assessed from the theoretical and empirical point of view. Feminist approaches develop themes of hierarchy, everydayness, emotionality, and embodiment, and thus contribute to the research on religion in a postsecular context. The empirical goal of the thesis is to consider the creation of sacred place and how religion frames the everyday experience of women. The thesis seeks to enrich Czech cultural geography with religious experience as another element forming space. The methodological framework uses the potential of a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, plus a participative approach that enables the problematic to be approached from a general point of view as well as from the perspective of individual experiences of participating women, thus enabling extensive and intensive research.

The dissertation has two parts. The first part is a theoretical and methodological discussion in which the development of understanding of religion in postmodern society is presented, the current research in the geographies of religion worldwide and in a Czech context is discussed, and new themes which feminist approaches bring to the geographies of religion are defined and discussed. A discussion of appropriate methodological approaches follows, together with an introduction of the applied methodological framework. In the second part, the general background is documented in five selected studies. The studies contribute theoretically and empirically to the problematic with an analysis of experiencing religion and spirituality at a macro regional, local, and personal level. The papers mainly focus on features of religion in two areas: gender hierarchy in society, and the spatial relationship between the sacred and secular. The emphasis is put on lived and experienced religion of participating women.

In conclusion the thesis discovers that religion importantly contributes to the creation of women's everyday experience. Women themselves transform space through their embodied and emotional transcendence. The sacred places are thus present in space with secular characteristics as well. Lived and everyday religion is a very diverse phenomenon which forms space regardless of the division of the sacred and secular.

Key words: religion, spirituality, feminist approaches, geographies of religion, postsecularisation, sacred place, everydayness, women