This research project plans to explore the interaction and mutual influence of Christian religion, Celtic religious practices and the religion of Anglo-Saxon invaders on the territories of the British Isles, formerly part of the Roman Empire.

In particular, a researcher focused on exploring ways of synthesis of the various religious practices and the reflection of the process in the cultural and socio-economic life of the population of the British Isles on the border of antiquity and the Middle Ages.

As shown by latest research, in the world historical literature there is no coherent picture of the development of Dark Age Britain. The concepts put forward earlier, were unable to explain the peculiarities of the development of Britain in the indicated period and need revising. The gap between the science and the field archaeology has become particularly noticeable in recent years and caused an intense debate among archaeologists and historians.

It seems therefore very urgent to study all aspects of the history of Britain during the "dark ages". One of the most important is the study of the religious history of the region in the period of "dark ages". The researcher believes that the implementation of the project:

• will ensure understanding of the peculiarities of evolution of Christianity and pagan faiths in Dark Age Britain in V-VI centuries;
• will allow to create a well-balanced conception of the development of religious views in Dark Age Britain;
• will show ways in which a synthesis of pagan and Christian traditions and the creation of a special Celtic form of Christianity occurred;
• will trace the influence of the religious practice on the cultural, social and economic life of the population of the British Isles during the indicated period;
• will prove that the modern principles of tolerance in contemporary Western Civilization originated in the era of "the dark ages", thanks to the activity of Celtic missionaries throughout Europe.

The research project is a part of a broad scientific investigation dedicated to the study of the role of Christianity and paganism in the cultural development of the peoples of the British Isles during antiquity and the early Middle Ages (I-VIII century.). The topic has not been investigated yet and is not an object of study in the post-Soviet space at present.
The importance of the study is determined by the fact that in the modern world the problem of the peaceful coexistence of different ethnic groups and faiths is very grave. Religious and ethnic conflicts of XX – the beginning of the XXI century showed that their origins lay in the distant past.

Both in ancient times, and at the present stage of development – many regions appear to be peculiar "contact zones", where the interaction between different faiths and religions occurs. The British Isles is one example of such a "contact zone" where the different peoples and beliefs have generally peacefully coexisted for centuries.

An important aspect of the study is to trace the reasons and prerequisites of the formation of the tolerant attitude to the "others" in the British and European traditions, the transformation of the relations between different ethnic groups and religions from the term "stranger" to the notion of "other". In the given aspect, the experience of interaction and religious syncretism on the British Isles seems to be very important for a possible solution of the ethnic and religious conflicts in today's world.

**The concept of a research project.**

To counterbalance the prevailing view, according to which in post roman Britain in the basis of relations between different religions and faiths lay conflicts (between the Anglo-Saxon religion and Christianity, between Christianity and the Celtic religious practitioners; between the Roman Catholic and Celtic Church), the researcher affirms that relations in religious matters were built on the principles of mutual respect and understanding. Though in the history of Britain during the "dark ages" there were several "conflicts of interest", they did not lead to the denial of other religions and denominations, but stimulated dialogue and interplay between various religious systems.

In full, the problem has not been reflected in the scientific literature. Specialists mainly focused on the problems of ethnic and political history of the British Isles in the V-VI centuries, particularly on the history of Christianity, Celtic religious practices and Anglo-Saxon religion.