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Abstract

Polish studies and history of ideas

The present paper analyses the intersections between history of ideas and Polish studies as distinct academic fields with reference to the Italian context. Since history of ideas as an autonomous discipline had trouble making its way within Italian culture, not all the essays discussed here are necessarily to be understood as belonging to this discipline tout court (also by lack of open methodological declarations), but could be read from this perspective as well. In particular, as object of enquiry have been chosen such ideologies like Sarmatism and Messianism, which lie at the roots of Polish modern identity and belong to the most “Polish” among the ideas born in the Polish-Lithuanian commonwealth area. Italian exterior gaze can contribute to better understanding the complex reasons of present day.

Keywords: History of ideas, Polish studies, Sarmatism, Messianism, Polish identity.