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Abstract of the doctoral dissertation

**THE RELATION OF THE STATE TO CATHOLIC MONASTIC ORDERS
IN THE WROCLAW VOIVODESHIP
IN THE YEARS 1945-1956**

The dissertation undertakes the subject of the relation of the State to Catholic monastic orders in the Wrocław voivodeship in the period between 1945 and 1956. The question of the functioning of monastic orders in this area and their relations with state authorities has not yet received a comprehensive scientific study. Although legal-historical studies have dealt with this problem in the context of the entire country or in the context of the State's relationship to a particular Order, such studies have never dealt with all Orders, both male and female, in the Wrocław Voivodeship.

The main goal of this doctoral dissertation was to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the legal instruments and state policies determining the attitude of the State towards the operations of monastic orders in the Wrocław Voivodeship after the end of World War II, at the time of the largest population migrations in the Recovered Lands.

Another purpose of the dissertation was to show the distribution of monastic orders in the Wrocław Voivodeship, to present the changes in their operations caused by evolving societal and political needs, but most importantly to demonstrate the interference of the communist government in their work, including attempts to neutralize their impact on society through a wide range of surveillance operations and the levying of rents, taxes and penalties in an attempt to seize both movable and immovable property and, as a consequence, to bring about the complete dissolution of monasteries in post-war Poland.

There are two hypotheses presented in the dissertation:

I. Denominational policy toward religious orders was a significant part of the state policy with regard to the Roman Catholic Church in Poland in the first decade after World War II.

II. To a greater extent than with regard to the Roman Catholic Church, the denominational policy toward religious orders in 1945-1956 was aimed at their complete eradication.

The dissertation uses archival documents - primarily from Lower Silesia, located in the Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance, both Wrocław and Warsaw branch. In addition, materials from the State Archives in Wrocław and Opole were used.

The structure of the dissertation was determined by the source material. Throughout the entire dissertation, archival sources, legal acts in force during the period under study, and scientific literature have been used to the fullest extent possible in order to study and describe the subject of the thesis. The chronological structure was followed in the various sections dealing with a particular problem. Ultimately, the structure of the dissertation has a topic-chronological layout. Such a solution has adequately shown the legal, political and social situation of monastic orders in the Wrocław Voivodeship, the activities of the state apparatus in relation to those Orders, as well as the response of the Orders to the actions of the authorities. The dissertation consists of an introduction, conclusion and four chapters.

Chapter One consists of four subchapters and covers the legal situation of the Catholic Church in the Recovered Lands after World War II.

Chapter Two is devoted to religious orders in the Wrocław province in the period leading up to World War II and in the first decade after its end. This chapter, like the previous one, is divided into four subchapters.

Chapter Three deals with the invigilation of the work of monasteries and members of monastic communities in the Wrocław province between 1945 and 1956. Due to the characteristics of the subject, it was divided into three subchapters.

Chapter Four was devoted to the secularization of monastery estates and other assets. The division into two subchapters was sufficient for this chapter.

The conclusion presents general and specific findings. All the issues presented have been analyzed primarily from a legal, but also from a historical and socio-political point of view. The analysis of archival material and legal acts of varying types, supported by scientific literature, made it possible to provide answers to the indicated research questions and to formulate a clear position on the hypotheses presented in the introduction.

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