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International scientific conference: Churches and religious associations behind the „Iron Curtain” part one: 1945-1956, September 6-7, 2023, Warsaw

Institute of National Remembrance (Poland), Nation's Memory Institute (Slovakia), Committee of National Remembrance (Hungary) have the honour to invite you to an international conference Churches and religious associations behind the „Iron Curtain” part one: 1945-1956, September 6-7, 2023 Warsaw (Przystanek Historia IPN, ul. Marszałkowska 21/25)

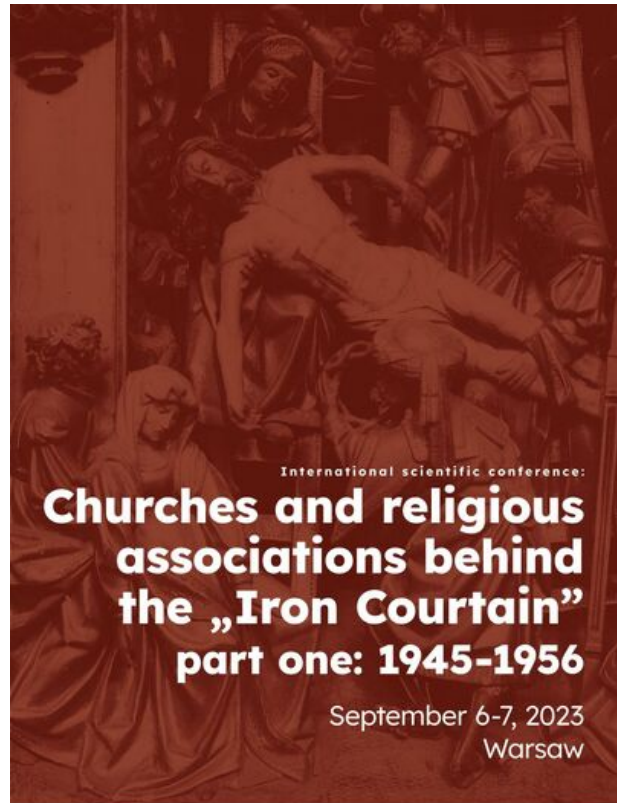
As a result of World War II in 1945, Europe was divided into two parts: the democratic West and East, the countries under the domination of the Soviet Union, or how it was assumed to be behind the "Iron curtain". Having seized power, the communists immediately began attacking churches and believers. The harshest harassment and persecution was primarily directed at the Catholic Church as the largest denomination in several countries of the Soviet bloc states. However, the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession, the Protestant Reformed Church, and several smaller churches and religious societies were also targeted. The driving force behind these attacks was the fundamental Marxist-Leninist view of religion as *'the opium of the people'*, and belief in God, an old-

fashioned relic.

The conference organizers decided to take a closer look at the broadly understood situation of Churches and religious associations in the European countries of the Eastern Bloc in 1945-1956. We will try to look for similarities and differences between their activities, religious policy of the authorities, and the situation of the followers of particular Churches. We are interested in how churches and religious associations found themselves in the realities of functioning in an extremely hostile political environment, in countries whose ideological assumption was to fight with every religion.

The topics of the papers may relate to the following issues:

- international context of churches and religious associations situation
- activities of the Holy See in the countries of the Eastern Bloc and its attitude to the Soviet Union.
- religious policy of the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc countries
- persecution against the church hierarchy and believers
- the internal situation of individual Churches and religious associations
- situation and attitudes of the church hierarchy
- position and attitudes of the clergy and the faithful
- position and attitude of individual Churches and religious associations to the activities of the churches and the anti-communist resistance
- important events in the internal life of the Churches



- relations between individual Churches and religious associations
- relations of emigration to Churches activities

Conference programme:

Day 1

September 6

Introduction: 10.00-10.20

- **Karol Nawrocki, PhD (President of Institute of National Remembrance, Poland)**
- **Réka Földváryné Kiss, PhD (Chairperson of the Committee of National Remembrance, Hungary)**
- **Mgr. Jerguš Sivoš, PhD (Chairperson of the Nation's Memory Institute in Bratislava)**

I Panel: 10.20-12.00

10.20-10.40

Miroslav Akmadža PhD (Croatian Institute of History, Zagreb), Josip Mihaljević PhD (Croatian Institute of History, Zagreb)

- The Position of the Catholic Church in Communist Croatia (1945-1952)

10.40-11.00

Aleksandar Životić, professor (Department of History of Yugoslavia Faculty of Philosophy, Belgrade University)

- USSR, Russian Orthodox Church and Soviet church influence in Yugoslavia (1944-1953)

11.00-11.20

Rafał Łatka associate profesor (Historical Research Office of the Institute of National Remembrance; University of Cardinal Stephan Wyszyński)

- Primates of Poland and the communist system in Poland (1945-1956)

11.20-11.40

Mirosław Szumiło, associate professor (Historical Research Office of the Institute of National Remembrance; University of Mari Curie-Skłodowska w Lublinie;)

- Creators and supervisors of anti-Church policy in communist Poland 1945-1956

11.40-12.00: discussion

12.00-12.20: coffee break

II Panel: 12.20-14.00

12.20-12.40

Māra Kiope, PhD (Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, University of Latvia)

- The Decade of Vatican Silence: Catholic Church in Latvia (1946-1956)

12.40-13.00

Gergely Isó, PhD-candidate (Office of the Committee of National Remembrance, Hungary)

- Resistance and Collaboration in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Hungary in the Rákosi-era (1948—1956)

13.00-13.20

Réka Földváryné Kiss, PhD (Chairperson of the Committee of National Remembrance, Hungary)

- *The Situation and Strategy of the Protestant Churches in Hungary in the 1950s.*

13.20-13.40

Kristina Burinskaitė PhD (Genocide and resistance research centre of Lithuania, Vilnius)

- KGB agent activity against Lithuanian Catholic Church. The case „students“

13.40-14.00: discussion

14.00-15.00: lunch break

III Panel: 15.00-16.20

15.00-15.20

Eva Vybíralová PhD (Institute for the Study of the Totalitarian Regimes in Prague)

- 'Extraordinary Faculties' as an Instrument of the Apostolic See to Deal with the Rise of Communism

15.20-15.40

Markéta Doležalová, PhD (Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes)

- Propaganda against Pope Pius XII as a part of anti-church politics in Czechoslovakia in the 1950s.

15.40-16.00

Dr phil. Beáta Katrebová Blehová (Nation's Memory Institute in Bratislava)

- Organizing the first centers of Slovak Catholics in exile in the context of the post-war pontificate of Pope Pius XII

16.00-16.20: discussion

18.30: dinner

**Day 2
September 7**

IV Panel: 10.00-11.20

10.00-10.20

František Neupauer, PhD (Nation's Memory Institute in Bratislava)

- Intervention of the communist regime against religious in Slovakia in 1950

10.20-10.40

Przemysław Pazik PhD (Warsaw University)

- Breaking the spirit. Oath of loyalty of the Polish Episcopate and the Completion of the Stalinist frame for Church-State relations

10.40-11.00

Bogusław Wójcik PhD (Historical Research Office of the Institute of National Remembrance, Branch: Rzeszów)

- The youth underground's organizations as an antidote to antireligious propaganda in Rzeszów Province in the first decade after World War II

11.00-11.20: discussion

11.20-11.40: coffee break

V Panel: 11.40-13.20

11.40-12.00

Florentina Budeancă PhD (National Council for the Study of the Securitate Archives in Bucharest)

- Bishop Márton Áron against the Romanian communist state. The toughest years (1948-1956)

12.00-12.20

Cosmin Budeancă PhD (The Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile, Romania)

- Sandor Imre – a roman catholic priest in Romanian communist jails

12.20-12.40

Dragoş Ursu, PhD ("1 Decembrie 1918" University of Alba Iulia; The National Museum of the Union in Alba Iulia)

- Biographies of Christian Resistance in Communist Romania. Priest Ioan Iovan and the Context of the Recalibration of Relations between the Romanian Communist Regime and the Romanian Orthodox Church

12.40-13.00

Ioana-Zoia Sandu (Ursu), PhD ("1 Decembrie 1918" University of Alba Iulia; The National Museum of the Union in Alba Iulia)

- Facing Communism through Faith: The Spiritual Searches of the "Burning Bush" Group (1945-1956)

13.00-13.20: discussion

13.20-13.40: lunch break

VI Panel: 13.40-15.00

13.40-14.00

Peter Borza, associate professor (Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice)

- Bishop Pavel Gojdič: Guardian of the religious values and rights of the Greek Catholic Church in Czechoslovakia after 1945

14.00-14.20

Solveiga Krumina-Konkova, PhD (Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, University of Latvia)

- Martyr for Faith - Bishop Kazimirs Dulbinskis

14.20-14.40

Stipe Kljaić, PhD (Croatian Institute of History)

- Apostolic nuncio John P. Hurley and the split between the Soviet Union and communist Yugoslavia

14.40-15.00

Mario Jareb, PhD (Croatian Institute of History)

- The Persecution and Staged Trial of Zagreb Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac in the Reports of US diplomats in Zagreb and Belgrade

15.00-15.30: discussion

Round table: Situation of Churches and religious associations behind the „Iron Curtain” in 1945-1956. Conference summary: 15.50-17.20

- Réka Földváryné Kiss, PhD (Chairperson of the Committee of National Remembrance, Hungary)
- Rafał Łatka associate professor (Historical Research Office of the Institute of National Remembrance; University of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński;)
- Dr phil. Beáta Katrebová Blehová (Nation's Memory Institute in Bratislava)

Chair: Peter Jasek PhD

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part one: 1945-1956, September 6-7, 2023, Warsaw – programme \(pdf, 35.19 KB\) 01.09.2023 10:42](#)