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TWO POST-CONCILIAR PROJECTS
OF THE REORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH STRUCTURES
IN POLAND IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 1960S

Key words: the Catholic Church, the Second Vatican Council, the Decree *Christus Dominus*, the Archdiocese Archive of Warsaw, the Polish church province, administrative divisions of the Catholic Church in Poland, the reorganization of church structures

A quarter of a century since the announcement of the Bull of Pope Saint John Paul II *Totus tuus Poloniae* of 25 March 1992 inspires to reflect on the changes of the Church structures in Poland in the 20th century. Particularly inspiring was the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), the documents of which recommended the adjusted renewal (*acomodata renovatio*) and the modernization (*aggiornamento*) of both the universal Church and particular Churches. Two post-conciliar projects of the reorganization of the Church structures are the example of theoretical solutions. The first of them – issued in 1967 – has the form of a study consisting of several dozens of pages. The second project – generated in 1970 – is a proposal consisting of two pages. They are preceded by a short outline of the post-war history of the units of the Church administration in Poland.

1. THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN POLAND
AFTER WWII (UNTIL THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL)

The Catholic Church in Poland after WWII had to face many organizational, or even existential, problems. The most sensitive issues, which required immediate actions, were: the replacement of losses of personnel among clergymen,¹ the reconstruction and restoration of destroyed churches and

¹ Assuming the quantity criteria as the basis – from among all Polish dioceses – the Chełmno Church suffered most. Owing to the extermination of the Polish clergy executed by the German occupying forces 309 priests died (44,33%) out of 697 priests employed in the Diocese of Chełmno in 1939. The next place in the statistics is occupied by the Archdiocese of Poznań – 218 priests were killed; next was the Diocese of Włocławek – 216 priests were killed;

chapels,² and the establishment of the new division of the Church structures.³ The last issue concerned both the regulation of the situation in the territories of the former Lviv and Vilnius archdioceses in the eastern borderlands and the establishment of the permanent church administration in the so called Regained Lands.⁴

At this point it should be reminded that the administrative division of the Catholic Church in Poland – except in the Regained Lands – was a consequence of the regulations of the Bull of Pope Pius XI *Vixdum Poloniae unitas* of 28 October 1925.⁵ Despite the fact that on 12 September 1945 the concordat was unilaterally renounced by the authorities of the Polish People's Republic, the pre-war administrative division of the Catholic Church continued to be

the Archdiocese of Gniezno – 139 priests were killed; the Diocese of Łódź – 132 priests; the Diocese of Płock – 110 priests. See: *Kościół katolicki w Polsce 1918–1990. Rocznik statystyczny*, ed. Lucjan ADAMCZUK, Witold ZDANIEWICZ, Warszawa 1991, p. 132.

² The biggest destructions were reported in the Diocese of Opole – 108 churches, the Archdiocese of Wrocław – 88 churches, the Archdiocese of Warsaw – 80 churches, the Diocese of Chełmno – 55 churches, the Diocese of Sandomierz – 53 churches, the Diocese of Szczecin-Kamieniec. See: *Kościół katolicki w Polsce 1918–1990. Rocznik statystyczny*, pp. 202–203.

³ See: Wojciech JAKUBOWSKI, Marek SOLARCZYK, *Rzymskokatolicka administracja kościelna na ziemiach polskich*, Warszawa 2007; Wojciech JAKUBOWSKI, Marek SOLARCZYK, *Organizacja Kościoła rzymskokatolickiego na ziemiach polskich od X do XXI wieku*, Warszawa–Olsztyn 2011; Ewa KLIMA, *Struktury Kościoła rzymskokatolickiego w Polsce*, Acta Universitatis Lodzensis. Folia Geographica Socio-Oeconomica, no. 11: 2011, pp. 45–77; Stanisław WILK, *Struktura administracyjna Kościoła w Polsce przed bullą „Totus Tuus Poloniae Populus”*, [in:] *Kościół w Polsce. Dzieje i kultura*, vol. 12, ed. Jan WALKUSZ, Lublin 2013, pp. 129–144.

⁴ See more in the recent publications: *Droga do stabilizacji polskiej administracji kościelnej na Ziemiach Zachodnich i Północnych po II wojnie światowej. W 40. rocznicę wydania konstytucji apostolskiej Pawła VI „Episcoporum Poloniae coetus”*, ed. Wojciech KUCHARSKI, Wrocław 2013; Robert ŻUREK, *Kościół rzymskokatolicki w Polsce wobec Ziem Zachodnich i Północnych 1945–1948*, Szczecin–Warszawa–Wrocław 2015; *Dzieje Kościoła katolickiego na Pomorzu Zachodnim*, vol. 1: 1945–1956, ed. Michał SIEDZIAKO, Zbigniew STANUCH, Grzegorz WEJMAN, Szczecin 2016.

⁵ This bull organized the Polish Catholic Church Province as follows: 1) The Province of Gniezno–Poznań (the Archdiocese of Gniezno, the Archdiocese of Poznań, the Diocese of Chełmno, the Diocese of Włocławek); 2) the Province of Warsaw (the Archdiocese of Warsaw, the Diocese of Płock, the Diocese of Sandomierz, the Diocese of Lublin, the Diocese of Podlasie, the Diocese of Łódź); 3) the Province of Cracow (the Archdiocese of Cracow, the Archdiocese of Tarnów, the Diocese of Kielce, the Diocese of Częstochowa, the Diocese of Silesia); 4) The Province of Lviv (the Archdiocese of Lviv, the Diocese of Przemyśl, the Diocese of Łuck [Lutsk]); 5) The Province of Vilnius (the Archdiocese of Vilnius, the Diocese of Łomża, the Diocese of Pińsk). Moreover, on 30 December 1925 Pope Pius XI set up the Diocese of Gdańsk (the area of the Free City of Gdańsk), which was directly dependent on the Holy See. See: *Bulla Vixdum Poloniae unitas. Reprodukcyjne stron oryginału bulli, tekst łaciński, tłumaczenie na język polski*, ed. Przemysław STANKO, Katowice 2015.

valid in Poland.⁶ Within the new boundaries of Poland, which were defined finally at the Potsdam Conference in the summer of 1945, the following were incorporated in their totality: 1) the Gniezno-Poznań Province⁷ (the Archdiocese of Gniezno, the Archdiocese of Poznań, the Diocese of Chełmno, the Diocese of Włocławek); 2) the Warsaw Province (the archdiocese of Warsaw, the Archdiocese of Płock, the Diocese of Sandomierz, the Diocese of Lublin, the Diocese of Siedlce, the Diocese of Łódź); 3) the Cracow Province (the Archdiocese of Cracow, the Diocese of Tarnów, the Diocese of Kielce, the Diocese of Częstochowa, the Diocese of Katowice). The following units were incorporated partly: 4) the Lviv Province (a minor part of the Archdiocese of Lviv, a significant part of the Diocese of Przemyśl); 5) the Vilnius Province (a small part of the Archdiocese of Vilnius, the whole Diocese of Łomża, a part of the Diocese of Pińsk).⁸

The apostolic administration was set up in Lubaczów for the fragment of the Archdiocese of Lviv, where the archdiocesan curia was established, while the theological seminary was opened in Kalwaria Zebrzydowska. The Metropolitan Archbishop of Lviv Eugeniusz Baziak administered in this way the archdiocese until his death in June 1962.⁹

The same situation occurred in the small area of the Archdiocese of Vilnius, for which the apostolic administration was set up in Białystok, where the Theological Department of Stefan Batory University was temporarily based. The archdiocesan curia and the theological seminary were also established in Białystok. The “Polish fragment” of the Archdiocese of Vilnius was administered by the Metropolitan Archbishop Romuald Jałbrzykowski.¹⁰

The last fragment belonged to the Diocese of Pińsk. Originally, the apostolic administration was set up in Drohiczyn; later the seat of the diocese was moved to Bielsk Podlaski, and in 1950 it was moved back to Drohiczyn, where the most important diocesan institutions were also set up.¹¹ The Diocese of Łuck [Lutsk] was the only diocese the whole area of which was situated in the

⁶ Barbara Fijałkowska, *Partia wobec religii i Kościoła w PRL*, vol. 1: 1944–1955, Olsztyn 1999, p. 24; Antoni DUDEK, Ryszard GRYZ, *Komuniści i Kościół w Polsce (1945–1989)*, Kraków 2003, pp. 14–15; Zygmunt ZIELIŃSKI, *Kościół w Polsce 1944–2007*, Poznań 2009, pp. 26–27.

⁷ The Union was dissolved on 4 March 1946.

⁸ Z. ZIELIŃSKI, op.cit., pp. 26–28.

⁹ Józef MANDZIUK, *Z dziejów archidiecezji lwowskiej*, Saeculum Christianum, vol. 2: 1995, no. 2, pp. 47–50.

¹⁰ See the materials from the scientific conference “Od «Vixdum Poloniae unitas» do «Totus Tuus Poloniae populus». Wileńska prowincja kościelna w latach 1925–1992”, Białystok, 18–21 October 2015, prepared for print by the Instytut Pamięci Narodowej (Institute of National Remembrance, IPN).

¹¹ Z. ZIELIŃSKI, op.cit., pp. 26–27.

Soviet territories lost by Poland. Yet, the diocesan curia operated somehow “in exile” in the buildings of the former Teutonic castle in Zamek Bierzgowski near Toruń until the death of the bishop of Lutsk Adolf Piotr Szelązek in February 1950.¹²

On 15 August 1945 Cardinal August Hlond – on the strength of extraordinary powers of attorney received from Pope Pius XII – set up five apostolic administrations in the Western Territories.¹³ In Gdańsk and Pelplin (the Diocese of Gdańsk and the Diocese of Chełmno) the apostolic administrator was Rev. Andrzej Wronka; in Olsztyn (the Polish part of the Diocese of Warmia [Ermland]) – Rev. Teodor Bensch; in Opole – Rev. Bolesław Kominek;¹⁴ in Wrocław – Rev. Karol Milik;¹⁵ in Gorzów Wielkopolski (the administrator of Kamień, Lubusz and the prelate of Piła) – Rev. Edmund Nowicki.¹⁶ Moreover, on the strength of the decrees of 10 September 1945, the Primate of Poland left the church jurisdiction over the Polish part of the Archdiocese of Olomouc to Rev. Bolesław Kominek, while the Polish part of the Archdiocese of Prague fell under the jurisdiction of Rev. Karol Milik.¹⁷

The important moment for the formation of post-war church structures in Poland – as indicated by Rev. Zygmunt Zieliński – occurred in 1950. On 6 July the governments of the Polish People’s Republic and the German Democratic Republic signed the boundary agreement, in which both states recognized the new Polish western boundary.¹⁸ In this way, the communist authorities felt secure enough to make daring decisions – also in reference to their biggest ideological enemy, which was the Catholic Church. Under the guise of the intention to remove the provisional solutions in the Church administration

¹² Mieczysław MALINOWSKI, Bogdan KOŁOSOK, *Zarys dziejów diecezji łuckiej oraz katedry św. Piotra i Pawła w Łucku*, Kalwaria Zebrzydowska 1993, pp. 60–61; *Ksiądz Biskup Adolf Piotr Szelązek. Człowiek, pasterz, założyciel. Materiały z sympozjum z okazji 50 rocznicy śmierci Założyciela Zgromadzenia Sióstr św. Teresy od Dzieciątka Jezus*, Toruń 1999; *Ks. Biskup Adolf Piotr Szelązek (1865–1950). Kapłan, biskup, wygnaniec*, ed. Beniamina KARWOWSKA, Waldemar ROZYNKOWSKI, Leszek ZYGNER, Podkowa Leśna 2010.

¹³ Z. ZIELIŃSKI, op.cit., pp. 40–42; P. ŻUREK, op.cit., pp. 156–157.

¹⁴ See: Andrzej HANICH, *Ksiądz infułat Bolesław Kominek, pierwszy administrator apostolski Śląska Opolskiego (1945–1951)*, Opole 2015 (2nd ed.).

¹⁵ Józef SWASTEK, *Działalność pastoralna księdza infułata dr. Karola Milika, administratora apostolskiego Dolnego Śląska (1945–1951)*, [in:] *Represje wobec Kościoła Katolickiego na Dolnym Śląsku i Opolszczyźnie, 1945–1989*, ed. Stanisław A. BOGACZEWICZ, Sylwia KRZYŻANOWSKA, Wrocław 2004, pp. 32–46.

¹⁶ See: Paweł SOCHA, *Ks. dr Edmund Nowicki jako twórca struktur organizacyjnych Kościoła gorzowskiego w latach 1945–1951*, [in:] *Władze wobec Kościołów i związków wyznaniowych na Środkowym Nadodrzu w latach 1945–1956*, ed. Elżbieta WOJCIESZYK, Poznań 2012, pp. 83–97.

¹⁷ A. DUDEK, R. GRYZ, op.cit., p. 32; P. ŻUREK, op.cit., p. 361.

¹⁸ Z. ZIELIŃSKI, op.cit., p. 77.

in the Western and Northern Territories, they removed from the office all the apostolic administrators and their vicars general.¹⁹ What is more, the state authorities forced the council of diocesan administrators to choose vicars capitular. The candidates were selected from among clergymen who supported the new social-political reality. Despite such a violent interference of political factors in the field of the Church authorities, Primate of Poland Stefan Wyszyński, wanting to avoid the possible division in the Church, granted his jurisdiction to vicars capitular chosen in this way. All of them were appointed his vicars general on 18 February 1951.²⁰ What is more, on 27 April 1951 Pope Pius XII, upon the request of Primate Stefan Wyszyński, appointed the dismissed apostolic administrators to be titular bishops.²¹ They were to replace vicars general as they did not have episcopal orders. The communist authorities blocked the titular bishops from taking over their positions. The Primate of Poland made the next step a year later, when on the strength of the powers of attorney granted to him by the Holy See, he nominated vicars general to be special delegates of the Primate of Poland with the powers of residential bishops in the so called Regained Lands.²²

It was not until the October thaw of 1956 that short-term changes took place. The heads of individual units of the church administration became bishops indicated earlier to the Holy See by Primate of Poland Stefan Wyszyński.²³ In the Diocese of Gdańsk the power was taken over by Bishop Edmund Nowicki,²⁴ as a bishop coadjutor *sedis datus*; in the Diocese of Warmia (Olsztyn) by Bishop Tomasz Wilczyński; in the Apostolic Administration of Opole Silesia by Bishop Franciszek Jop;²⁵ in the Apostolic Administration of Lower Silesia (Wrocław) by Bishop Bolesław Kominek; in the Apostolic Administration of Kamień, Lubusz and the Prelacy of Piła in Gorzów Wielkopolski it was taken over by Bishop Teodor Bensch. Those bishops continued to have the status of vicars general of the Primate of Poland, but on the strength of the

¹⁹ *Komunikat prasowy Rządu o likwidacji stanu tymczasowości w administracji kościelnej na Ziemiach Zachodnich*, Warszawa, 27 stycznia 1951 r., [in:] Peter RAINA, *Kościół w PRL. Kościół katolicki a państwo w świetle dokumentów 1945–1989*, vol. 1: *Lata 1945–1959*, Poznań 1994, pp. 283–284; A. DUDEK, R. GRYZ, op.cit., pp. 65–66; Z. ZIELIŃSKI, op.cit., p. 78; Jan ŻARYN, *Dzieje Kościoła katolickiego w Polsce (1944–1989)*, Warszawa 2003, pp. 122–123.

²⁰ *List Prymasa S. Wyszyńskiego do Prezydenta B. Bieruta w sprawie organizacji kościelnej na Ziemiach Zachodnich*, [in:] P. RAINA, op.cit., pp. 284–285; Ewa K. CZACZKOWSKA, *Kardynał Wyszyński. Biografia*, Kraków 2013, pp. 146–147.

²¹ E. K. CZACZKOWSKA, op.cit., pp. 148–149.

²² Z. ZIELIŃSKI, op.cit., pp. 79–80.

²³ E. K. CZACZKOWSKA, op.cit., p. 275.

²⁴ See: Stanisław BOGDANOWICZ, *Edmund Nowicki – biskup gdański*, Gdańsk 1998.

²⁵ See: Andrzej SZYMAŃSKI, *Ks. bp dr Franciszek Jop – prawodawca i organizator diecezji opolskiej*, Opole 2007.

powers granted to them by Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński in the decrees of 1 and 10 December 1956 they enjoyed the powers of residential bishops.²⁶

This situation lasted also during the proceedings of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965). The only change that took place at that time was the acquisition by Bishop Edmund Nowicki the powers of residential bishop (no longer one the strength of the decree of the Primate of Poland) owing to the death of the bishop of Gdańsk Karol Maria Splett (5 March 1964).²⁷

2. THE PROJECT OF THE REORGANIZATION OF POLISH DIOCESES OF 1967

The Archdiocesan Archive of Warsaw (Archiwum Archidiecezjalne Warszawskie, AAW) includes the collection of the Secretariat of the Primate of Poland (Sekretariat Prymasa Polski, SPP), which is particularly valuable for any researcher of the history of the Catholic Church in Poland. It consists of archival materials from the heritage of subsequent Primate of Poland during their residence in Warsaw, including the documentation of the Main Polish Episcopate Commission (Komisja Główna Episkopatu Polski, KGEP) and documents from plenary sessions of the Polish Episcopal Conference (Konferencja Episkopatu Polski, KEP). In the materials concerning the sessions of the KGEP of 1967 we find the first project discussed in this paper.²⁸ It is a well preserved paper document consisting of 38 typed pages with a black font.

THE ORIGIN AND TIME OF ITS CREATION

Throughout the whole post-war period the question of regulating the organization of the church structures was one of the major problems of the Catholic Church in Poland. The Second Vatican Council provided recommendations connected with the adaptation of the organization of the Church structures to the requirements of the modern world. It was obvious for the participants of the Second Vatican Council that such fundamental issues as the bishop's office; the attitude of the bishop's office to the whole Church, in particular to the Pope; relations with their own particular Church and relations with other priests in the bishopric needed to be looked at from a new perspective.²⁹ It is natural that the dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen gentium* adopted

²⁶ A. DUDEK, R. GRZYB, op.cit., p. 111; Z. ZIELIŃSKI, op.cit., pp. 109–110.

²⁷ See: Stanisław BOGDANOWICZ, *Karol Maria Antoni Splett. Biskup gdański czasu wojny, więzień specjalny PRL*, Gdańsk 1996.

²⁸ Archiwum Archidiecezjalne Warszawskie [The Archdiocesan Archive of Warsaw] (further cit. AAW), Sekretariat Prymasa Polski [Secretariat of the Primate of Poland] (further cit. SPP), Protokoły Komisji Głównej Episkopatu Polski (further cit. Protokoły KGEP), entry no. II 4 22, fol. 34–71, Problem terytorialnej reorganizacji diecezji polskich.

²⁹ See: Gérard PHILIPS, *L'Église et son mystère au deuxième Concile du Vatican. Histoire, texte et commentaire de la Constitution Lumen Gentium*, vol. 1–2, Paris 1967–1968.

on 18 November 1964 gave new directions for the contemporary Catholic ecclesiology.³⁰ A kind of an apposition to *Lumen gentium* is the Decree *Christus Dominus* concerning pastoral responsibilities of bishops in the Church. The works on its final text lasted quite a long time. They finished during the fourth session of the Second Vatican Council. On 6 October 1965 the last vote on the whole text was carried out, and on 28 October 1956 the Decree *Christus Dominus* was adopted by the Council. There were 2319 votes for the decree, two votes against and one vote was invalid.³¹ It was in this document that the Second Vatican Council recommended the renewal of the Church structures. Two extensive points were devoted to this issue (22 and 23) in Chapter II titled *Bishops in relation to particular Churches – dioceses*. In point 22 it reads that the appropriate administrative division be carried out as soon as possible (through dividing, fragmentation or combining) so that bishops could fulfil their pastoral duties more effectively, which would bring benefits to both the clergy and believers. In turn, point 23 defined criteria to follow during the process of the new division.³²

Following the teachings of the Council – probably in the spring of 1966 – in the Polish episcopate there started preparatory works, the final outcome of which was to be the project of the reorganization of the Church in Poland. In the protocol from the session of the Main Polish Episcopate Commission (KGEP) of 8 March 1966 the following entry was included: “We must also think about the Commission for the revision of the borders of the dioceses upon the decree «De regime Episcoporum in Ecclesia»”.³³

The project – as it may be inferred from the correspondence – was probably created in the Wrocław environment. It might have been the effect of the work of the special team of scholars (demographers, urban planners, cartographers, economists and sociologists) acting upon the auspices of Archbishop Bolesław Kominek. Scientists of Wrocław had already supported their archbishop in academic matters, for example in the preparation of the project of the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the modern world *Gaudium et spes*³⁴, which was the fruit of the cooperation of the future cardinal with Rev. Prof. Eugeniusz Tomaszewski. It must be reminded that the Wrocław offi-

³⁰ Robert SKRZYPCZAK, *Konstytucja dogmatyczna o Kościele „Lumen gentium” – „zwornik Soboru”*, [in:] *„Radość i nadzieja, smutek i trwoga...” Sobór Watykański II z perspektywy półwiecza*, ed. Michał BIAŁKOWSKI, Toruń 2016, pp. 25–46.

³¹ Michał BIAŁKOWSKI, *Wokół Soboru Watykańskiego II. Studia i szkice*, Toruń 2016, p. 75.

³² Henryk MUSZYŃSKI, *Wprowadzenie do dekretu o pasterskich zadaniach biskupów w Kościele*, [in:] *Sobór Watykański II. Konstytucje, dekrety, deklaracje*, Poznań 2002, pp. 211–235.

³³ AAW, SPP, Protokoły KGEP, entry no. II 4 21, fol. 38, Protokół Komisji Głównej, Warszawa, 8 III 1966 r.

³⁴ The account of Rev. Prof. Józef Krucina, May 2017.

cial supervised the works of the Pastoral Commission of the Polish Episcopate from the end of the 1950s,³⁵ and from the mid-1960s – after the establishment of the Commission of the Lay Apostolate – he ran the Commission of General Pastoral Ministry.³⁶ Being the head of the commission allowed him to establish broad contacts and to carry out numerous consultations.³⁷ Undoubtedly, the “hidden” aim of the project was to regulate the Church administration in the Western and Northern Territories. As a result, a study was prepared which embraced the whole territory of the Polish People’s Republic. The application of the most recent statistical data significantly increased the substantive value of the work.

Probably the work on the project became more intensified in the summer of 1967, when four apostolic administrators were nominated *ad nutum Sanctae Sedis* for Wrocław, Gorzów Wielkopolski, Opole and Olsztyn.³⁸ Using a number of statistical publications issued in 1967 as the basis for the preparation of the project allows us to establish that the source was created in the second half 1967. The document must have been finished at the beginning of 1967 if in the letter of 10 November 1967 Archbishop Bolesław Kominek asked the Primate of Poland to include the issue of the project in the agenda for the session of the Main Polish Episcopate Commission.³⁹ It is significant that at the session of this collegiate body on 22 November 1967 the project was presented by Archbishop Bolesław Kominek. The handwritten remarks provided by Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński allow us to conclude that the project was not approved of by the members of the Main Commission. The Primate of Poland recorded: “The M[ain] C[ommission] maintains that the project is too distant from the historical bishops’ capital cities and that it does not take into account geog[r]aphical and communication conditions”, and on the margin “invalid, to be placed in the archive”.⁴⁰

³⁵ AAW, SPP, Protokoły KEP, entry no. II 4 190, fol. 203, Protokół 61. Konferencji Plenarnej Episkopatu Polski, Warszawa, 22 VI 1960 r.

³⁶ The account of Rev. Prof. Józef Krucina, May 2017.

³⁷ In 1970 among the members of the Commission of the General Clergy there were many ordinaries: Cardinal Karol Wojtyła, Bishop Franciszek Jop, Bishop Wilhelm Pluta, Bishop Jerzy Ablewicz, Bishop Stefan Bareła, Bishop Ignacy Tokarczuk, Bishop Herbert Bednorz, Bishop Józef Rozwadowski, Bishop Jan Mazur. See: AAW, SPP, Protokoły KEP, entry no. II 4 246, fol. 33, Organa Konferencji Episkopatu Polski, stan na dzień 16 I 1970 r. Komisja Episkopatu do spraw Duszpasterstwa Ogólnego.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, entry no. II 4 232, fol. 56–57, Protokół 103. Konferencji Plenarnej Episkopatu Polski, Warszawa, 15–16 VI 1967 r.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, entry no. II 4 22, fol. 33, Pismo arcybiskupa Bolesław Kominka do kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego, Wrocław, 10 XI 1967 r.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

THE INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF THE PROJECT

In the structure of the project the following parts may be identified: "The problem of the territorial reorganization of Polish dioceses"; "The basic assumptions of the project"; the suggestions of the Church division in the territory of seventeen voivodeships (this part does not hold any formal title); "The list of voivodeships and dioceses"; "The reorganization of Church provinces"; "The list of dioceses according to the number of inhabitants"; "The sources and studies used in the project". The core of the project constitutes the third part – the suggestions of the Church division in the territory of seventeen voivodeships.⁴¹ The suggestions are based on the analysis of the demographic-statistical data from the seventeen voivodeships, which were presented in the alphabetical order. Each analysis consists of the description of the structure of a given voivodeship including the description of the population, the tendencies in the town-planning and spatial development along with the directions of its further development. Next, the division of a voivodeship into a number of archdioceses and diocese was suggested with corresponding counties.

For bibliographical reasons, the author of this article gave the project the working title "The problem of the territorial reorganization of Polish dioceses", which is the copy of the title of the first part of the project and the first phrase appearing in this document. This title shall be used in citations and in the literature of the subject matter.⁴²

THE MAIN ASSUMPTIONS OF THE PROJECT

What were the radical assumptions of the project of the reorganization of Polish dioceses discussed at the sessions of the Main Polish Episcopate Commission in the late autumn of 1967? The fundamental assumptions of the project make it clear that we deal with a totally new administrative division of the Catholic Church, which breaks away not only with the existing structure, but also, in the case of several dioceses, with their centuries-old history. What is the most shocking is that the foundation of the territorial reorganization of the dioceses was the existing administrative division of the state. Supposedly, the division of the Church structures, existing in Poland after 1945, except in the so called Regained Lands, corresponded with the administrative division of the Second Polish Republic (in particular until the changes carried out on 30 September 1938). In the meantime, the communist authorities in the years 1945–1957 carried out several major and a few dozens of minor modifica-

⁴¹ Ibid., fol. 37–64, Problem terytorialnej reorganizacji diecezji polskich.

⁴² See: Michał BIAŁKOWSKI, *Początki odnowy posoborowej w Kościele katolickim w Polsce (do 1972 r.). Zarys wybranych problemów*, [in:] *Czas próby. Kościół katolicki w okresie PRL*, ed. Wojciech POLAK, Arkadiusz CZWOŁEK, Sylwia GALIJ-SKARBIŃSKA, Toruń 2017, pp. 215–245.

tions in the administrative division of Poland. It is possible to indicate a few well-grounded stages of the changes. Still, the starting point was the restoration of the pre-war administrative division. The first corrections were made from August 1944 to June 1945; the next two major modifications took place on 28 June 1950 and on 1 January 1957. In the meantime several dozens of smaller changes concerning the boundaries of the counties were introduced.⁴³ The division of the state administration by no means overlapped with the division of the Church structures. Let us illustrate this with a few examples. In the 1960 in the territory of Bydgoszcz Voivodeship there were smaller or bigger parts of as many as four different Church structures: the Archbishopric of Gniezno, the Diocese of Chełmno, the Diocese of Płock and the Diocese of Włocławek. At the same time the Diocese of Chełmno was extended in the territory of three voivodeships – of Gdańsk, Bydgoszcz and Olsztyn. The Diocese of Włocławek was also situated within the boundaries of three voivodeships: Bydgoszcz, Łódź and Poznań.

That is why the aim was to find solutions which would make it possible to adjust the new system to the existing conditions. In the post-conciliar project it was recommended that the boundaries of a diocese should overlap with the boundaries of the voivodeships, or the boundaries of several dioceses were marked out within one voivodeship. It was established that the maximum number of the inhabitants of a given dioceses should be the number of ca. 1 000 000 of people,⁴⁴ which was determined by rational factors resulting from political realism. The authors of the project believed that the network of roads, bus and railway communication were fundamental to ensure the effective pastoral activity. Moreover, it was underlined that the most proper was the situation in which one diocese was situated in the area of only one administrative unit.⁴⁵ In practice, it was to lead to the situation in which a bishop ordinary in his relations with the state authorities had to contact only one voivode or one secretary of the Voivodeship Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party (KW PZPR). Taking into consideration the negative experiences of the Catholic Church in the Polish People's Republic, it was to facilitate and modernize the mechanisms of the administration of a diocese, with particular emphasis on the acceleration of the decisive processes within the bishop ordinary's personnel policy. The choice of a city to become the seat of a diocese was not to

⁴³ Tomasz DZIŃKI, *Podziały administracyjne Polski w latach 1944–1998. Z badań nad ustrojem ziem polskich XIX i XX w.*, Studia Gdańskie. Wizje i rzeczywistość, vol. 10: 2013, pp. 433–443.

⁴⁴ AAW, SPP, Protokoły KGEP, entry no. II 4 22, fol. 36, Problem terytorialnej reorganizacji diecezji polskich.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

be exclusively geographical, but it was determined mostly by demographic and economic factors.

SUGGESTED INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS OF THE PROJECT

The project consists of very detailed and exact demographic data, including the list of counties being part of individual archdioceses and dioceses. What is also interesting are the analyses of individual voivodeships and proposals of archdioceses and dioceses. The document assumed that the territory of Poland should be divided into seven Church provinces⁴⁶:

- The Province of Gdańsk (the Archdiocese of Gdańsk, the Diocese of Koźalin, the Diocese of Olsztyn, the Diocese of Szczecin);
- The Province of Gniezno (the Archdiocese of Gniezno, the Diocese of Bydgoszcz = Chełmno, the Diocese of Kalisz, the Diocese of Poznań, the Diocese of Włocławek);
- The Province of Katowice (the Archdiocese of Katowice, the Archdiocese of Częstochowa, the Diocese of Gliwice);
- The Province of Cracow (the Archdiocese of the City of Cracow, the Diocese of Jaworzno, the Diocese of Kielce, the Diocese of Radom = Sandomierz, the Diocese of Tarnów);
- The Province of Lublin (the Archdiocese of Lublin, the Diocese of Białystok, the Diocese of Przemyśl, the Diocese of Rzeszów, the Diocese of Zamść-Chełm);
- The Province of Warsaw (the Archdiocese of the City of Warsaw, the diocese of the City of Łódź, the diocese of Piotrków Trybunalski, the Diocese of Płock (Warsaw-West), the Diocese of Siedlce (Warsaw-East));
- The Province of Wrocław (the Archdiocese of Wrocław, the Diocese of Gorzów Wielkopolski, the Diocese of Legnica, the Diocese of Opole).

Prior to the thorough analysis of the project of 1967, it must underlined that apart from “revolutionary” methodological assumptions it includes a few interesting suggestions:

1. The abolition of the archbishopric in Poznań and the erection of archiepiscopal capitals in Gdańsk, Katowice and Lublin. The Province of Lublin was to be an exceptional geographical creation – it was to embrace the whole strip of the eastern wall – from Białystok in the north down to Rzeszów and Przemyśl in the south.

2. The liquidation of the relics of the Province of Lviv and the Province of Vilnius – formally existing within the boundaries of Poland, which meant the final break with the historical ties of the Church in Poland with the territory of the Eastern Borderlands.

⁴⁶ Ibid., fol. 64–67, Problem terytorialnej reorganizacji diecezji polskich.

3. The “liquidation” of the Diocese of Chełmno (or at least the radical change of its boundaries and changing the capital city from Pelplin to Bydgoszcz or Toruń⁴⁷); the abolition of the Diocese of Łomża; the abolition of the apostolic administration in Drohiczyn⁴⁸, the abolition of the apostolic administration in Lubaczów (it was to be replaced by a new diocese – the Diocese of Zamość = Chełm),⁴⁹ the changing of the capital city from Sandomierz to Radom.

4. The creation of as many as four municipal dioceses territorially reduced the area of the city itself: the Diocese of the City of Poznań (603 300 inhabitants),⁵⁰ the Archdiocese of the City of Cracow (from 705 900 to 932 900 inhabitants – depending on the variant),⁵¹ the Diocese of the City of Łódź (985 300 inhabitants)⁵², the Archdiocese of the City of Warsaw (1 736 600 inhabitants).⁵³ Curiously enough, Wrocław was omitted here. The Archdiocese of Wrocław was to embrace the City of Wrocław and seventeen adjacent counties inhabited in total by 1 396 600 people.

5. The creation of new dioceses: of Gliwice, Jaworzno, Kalisz, Koszalin, Legnica, Piotrków Trybunalski, Szczecin, Zamość-Chełm and possibly of Bydgoszcz (or of Chełmno).

6. Despite the proposal of the liquidation of several bishops’ capitals, in very small centres (Drohiczyn, Lubaczów, Pelplin, Sandomierz) it was hard to eliminate completely the problem of significant differences in the number of people living in individual bishops’ capitals. Apart from four dioceses/archdioceses of the big cities mentioned above, the biggest capitals of the dioceses/archdioceses, which would not have the status of a separate unit of the church administration, were: Wrocław (481 000 inhabitants), Gdańsk (324 000 inhabitants), Szczecin (317 700 inhabitants) and Katowice (286 000 inhabitants). The smallest centres, which were to become capitals of the dioceses would be: Zamość (30 800 inhabitants) or Chełm (34 900 inhabitants), Siedlce (35 800 inhabitants), Gniezno (47 700 inhabitants) and Przemyśl (50 400 inhabitants).

The project of November 1967 was quite complex: it converted the structure of the majority of the provinces; to a large extent it decreased the disproportions between individual dioceses; it aimed at the complex regulation of the Polish church administration in the so called Regained Lands; it solved the

⁴⁷ Ibid., fol. 39, Problem terytorialnej reorganizacji diecezji polskich.

⁴⁸ Ibid., fol. 37, Problem terytorialnej reorganizacji diecezji polskich.

⁴⁹ Ibid., fol. 50, Problem terytorialnej reorganizacji diecezji polskich.

⁵⁰ Ibid., fol. 54, Problem terytorialnej reorganizacji diecezji polskich.

⁵¹ Ibid., fol. 47, Problem terytorialnej reorganizacji diecezji polskich.

⁵² Ibid., fol. 51, Problem terytorialnej reorganizacji diecezji polskich.

⁵³ Ibid., fol. 58, Problem terytorialnej reorganizacji diecezji polskich.

issue of the apostolic administrations of the Archdioceses of Lviv and Vilnius, the capitals of which were situated in the territory of the Soviet Union.

At the end of the session of the Main Polish Episcopate Commission, the Wrocław hierarch recapitulated the work on the project. In the protocols it says: "Archbishop Kominek is giving a speech, in which he himself admits that the problem is very immature and not well thought out, which means that further work should be carried out on the proposals. We mean only to signal the problem of the administrative division of dioceses in Poland. In the discussion it was underlined that the Western Territories should be dealt with first, and next followed by Central Poland. The fundamental mistake of the project is that we break away with the old locations, tradition and ready-made facilities. Transferring the capitals becomes almost impossible in the current economic situation. Some ideas v[ery] risky".⁵⁴

The objective reasons such as breaking away with the historic seats of capitals, a lack of the international recognition of the Regained Lands' belonging to Poland, the foreseen protests of the state authorities and financial difficulties caused that the document was not included in the agenda of the plenary session of the Main Polish Episcopate Commission, and further work was stopped.

Table 1. The Polish Church province according to the number of inhabitants and the surface area in the project of 1967.

Name of the Church unit	Number of inhabitants	Surface area in km ²
The Province of Katowice	3 888 500	13 658
The Province of Gdańsk	3 961 000	62 625
The Province of Wrocław	4 338 000	43 066
The Province of Gniezno	4 441 000	47 741
The Province of Cracow	4 577 000	35 049
The Province of Lublin	4 684 900	65 138
The Province of Warsaw	5 920 600	44 447

Source: AAW, SPP, Protokoły KGEP, entry no. II 4 22, fol. 70, Problem terytorialnej reorganizacji diecezji polskich.

3. THE CONCEPT OF THE POLISH CHURCH PROVINCE IN THE PROJECT OF 1970

The work on the territorial reorganization of the Polish dioceses recommenced in 1970. In June 1970 there appeared a project of the partial regulation of the Church structures – this time it was reduced to the apostolic adminis-

⁵⁴ Ibid., fol. 77, Protokół Komisji Głównej, Warszawa, 22 XI 1967 r.

tration in Gorzów Wielkopolski. Bishop Wilhelm Pluta⁵⁵ put forward a motion that it should be divided into three dioceses. Pope Paul VI accepted this proposal in November 1970. Finally, the proposal concerning the division was implemented in Montini's bull *Episcoporum Poloniae coetus*⁵⁶ two years later.

In the meantime, the outline of the reform concerning the territory of the whole country was prepared. Such an outline – this time quite small, consisting of two pages and very economical in words – may be found in the working materials of the 121st Plenary Conference of the Polish Episcopate, which took place in Warsaw on 3–4 September 1970.⁵⁷ It may be assumed that the project was created probably in mid-1970. The document has the meaningful title: “The project of the new Church administration in Poland synchronized with the planned civil administration”.⁵⁸ Although in the project itself there is no direct reference to the teachings of the Second Vatican Council – without any doubt it may be stated that this proposal was an attempt to adapt the Council's recommendations to the Polish reality. The authors of the project adopted the assumptions which resembled the proposals included in the document of 1967:

“1. The synchronization of the historical regional status and the present administrative divisions of the Church in Poland with the needs of the clergymen nowadays.

2. The implementation of the new division with the minimal administrative-economic changes (the buildings of the Curia and the Theological Seminaries).

3. The location of the seat of the Province in the most important city centres (taking into account the number of the population and the intellectual potential); the seats of dioceses should be situated in big cities.

4. The Province should be adjusted to the ethnic, historical, cultural and social community of a given region.

5. The diocese should constitute a big, but manageable administrative unit (the liquidation of huge dioceses, the avoidance of creating very small dioceses).

⁵⁵ See: *Życie i posługa pasterska biskupa Wilhelma Pluty*, ed. Ryszard TOMCZAK, Andrzej OCZACHOWSKI, Gorzów Wielkopolski 2011.

⁵⁶ AAW, SPP, Protokoły KGEP, entry no. II 4 25, fol. 75, Protokół Komisji Głównej, Warszawa, 16 VI 1970 r.; fol. 104–105, Protokół Komisji Głównej, Warszawa, 24 XI 1970 r.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, entry no. II 4 250, fol. 22–47, Protokół 121. Konferencji Plenarnej Episkopatu Polski, Warszawa, 3–4 IX 1970 r.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, fol. 19–20, Projekt nowej administracji kościelnej w Polsce zsynchronizowany z planowaną administracją cywilną.

6. The capital of the diocese should be situated centrally in the most important transportation hubs to make the communication between the bishop and his diocese easier.

7. THE POLISH CHURCH PROVINCE consists of 7 archdioceses and 38 dioceses.⁵⁹ Its Patriarch is PRIMATE and THE HEAD OF THE POLISH EPISCOPATE, who is at the same time the Metropolitan of Masovia and the Archbishop of Warsaw and Gniezno.⁶⁰

The project consists of a very general map and a list of provinces along with their dioceses. The list is titled: "Polish Church Province" and it starts with the information: "Capital – Warsaw + granted by the Primacy of Gniezno". This detail is very important if we underline the fact the above mentioned list fails to include the Archbishopric of Gniezno and the Diocese of Gniezno; it becomes clear the project of 1970 could even imply the abolition of the Archbishopric of Gniezno and the establishment of the purely symbolic titular capital of the Primate. The comparison of the map with the list allows us to conclude that the project includes some differences concerning the belonging of the dioceses which were part of the Province of Masovia, the Province of the Borderlands and the Province of Kuyavia-Sieradz (the map should be treated as option A, while the list as option B). According to the division scheme marked in the map the following administrative units of the Church were planned to be set up⁶¹:

- The Province of Greater Poland (the Archdiocese of the City of Poznań, the Diocese of Bydgoszcz, the Diocese of Gorzów Wielkopolski, the Diocese of Piła, the Diocese of Greater Poland (with the capital in Poznań), the diocese of Zielona Góra);
- The Province of Lesser Poland (the Archdiocese of the City of Cracow, the Diocese of Kielce, the Diocese of Lesser Poland (Cracow), the Diocese of Sandomierz (with the capital in Tarnobrzeg), the Diocese of Tarnów);⁶²
- The province of Masovia (the Archdiocese of the City of Warsaw, the Diocese of Łomża (Łomża), the Diocese of Masovia (Warsaw), the Diocese of Płock, the diocese of Radom (Radom));

⁵⁹ From the list and the map enclosed to the project we know that the erection of seven provinces was planned; they were to consist of seven archdioceses and thirty-one suffragan dioceses-in total 38 Church administrative units.

⁶⁰ AAW, SPP, Protokoły KEP, entry no. II 4 250, fol. 19, Projekt nowej administracji kościelnej w Polsce zsynchronizowany z planowaną administracją cywilną.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² In the second version presented in the list the Diocese of Kielce was moved to the Province of Kuyavia-Sieradz; it was replaced by the Diocese of Rzeszów excluded from the Province of the Borderlands.

Table 2. The division of the Polish Church province according to the post-conciliar projects of 1967 and 1970.

Provinces and dioceses according to the project of 1967	option A (map)	Option B (list)
<p>1.0. the Province of Gdańsk</p> <p>1.1. the Archdiocese of Gdańsk</p> <p>1.2. the Diocese of Koszalin</p> <p>1.3. the Diocese of Olsztyn</p> <p>1.4. the Diocese of Szczecin</p>	<p>1.0. The Sea Province</p> <p>1.1. the Archdiocese of the City of Gdańsk</p> <p>1.2. the Diocese of Chełmno (Gdynia)</p> <p>1.3. the Diocese of Masuria (Olsztyn)</p> <p>1.4. the Diocese of Szczecin</p> <p>1.5. the Diocese of Stargard</p> <p>1.6. The Pomeranian Diocese (Koszalin)</p>	<p>1.0. The Sea Province</p> <p>1.1. the Archdiocese of the City of Gdańsk</p> <p>1.2. the Diocese of Chełmno (Gdynia)</p> <p>1.3. the Diocese of Masuria (Olsztyn)</p> <p>1.4. the Diocese of Szczecin</p> <p>1.5. the Diocese of Stargard</p> <p>1.6. the Pomeranian Diocese (Koszalin)</p>
<p>2.0. The Province of Gniezno</p> <p>2.1. the Archdiocese of Gniezno</p> <p>2.2. the Diocese of Bydgoszcz (Chełmo)</p> <p>2.3. the Diocese of Kalisz</p> <p>2.4. the Diocese of the City of Poznań</p> <p>2.5. the Diocese of Włocławek</p>	<p>2.0. The Province of Greater Poland</p> <p>2.1. the Archdiocese of the City of Poznań</p> <p>2.2. the Diocese of Bydgoszcz</p> <p>2.3. the Diocese of Gorzów Wielkopolski</p> <p>2.4. the Diocese of Piła</p> <p>2.5. the Diocese of Greater Poland (Poznań)</p> <p>2.6. the Diocese of Zielona Góra</p>	<p>2.0. The Province of Greater Poland</p> <p>2.1. the Archdiocese of the City of Poznań</p> <p>2.2. the Diocese of Bydgoszcz</p> <p>2.3. the Diocese of Gorzów Wielkopolski</p> <p>2.4. the Diocese of Piła</p> <p>2.5. the Diocese of Greater Poland (Poznań)</p> <p>2.6. the Diocese of Zielona Góra</p>
<p>3.0. The Province of Wrocław</p> <p>3.1. the Archdiocese of Wrocław</p> <p>3.2. the Diocese of Gorzów</p> <p>3.3. the Diocese of Legnica</p> <p>3.4. the Diocese of Opole</p>	<p>3.0. The Silesian Province</p> <p>3.1. the Archdiocese of the City of Wrocław</p> <p>3.2. the Diocese of Częstochowa</p> <p>3.3. the Diocese of Lower Silesia (Wrocław)</p> <p>3.4. the Diocese of Upper Silesia (Sosnowiec)</p> <p>3.5. the Diocese of Katowice</p> <p>3.6. the Diocese of Opole</p>	<p>3.0. The Silesian Province</p> <p>3.1. the Archdiocese of the City of Wrocław</p> <p>3.2. the Diocese of Częstochowa</p> <p>3.3. the Diocese of Lower Silesia (Wrocław)</p> <p>3.4. the Diocese of Upper Silesia (Sosnowiec)</p> <p>3.5. the Diocese of Katowice</p> <p>3.6. the Diocese of Opole</p>
<p>4.0. The Province of Katowice</p> <p>4.1. the Archdiocese of Katowice</p> <p>4.2. the Diocese of Częstochowa</p> <p>4.3. the Diocese of Gliwice</p>		

<p>5.0. The Province of Cracow 5.1. the Archdiocese of the City of Cracow 5.2. the Diocese of Jaworzno 5.3. the Diocese of Kielce 5.4. the Diocese of Radom (Sandomierz) 5.5. the Diocese of Tarnów</p> <p>6.0. The Province of Lublin 6.1. the Archdiocese of Lublin 6.2. the Diocese of Białystok 6.3. the Diocese of Przemyśl 6.4. the Diocese of Rzeszów 6.5. the Diocese of Zamość (Chełm)</p> <p>7.0. The Province of Masovia 7.1. the Archdiocese of the City of Warsaw 7.2. the Diocese of the City of Łódź 7.3. the Diocese of Piotrków Trybunalski 7.4. the Diocese of Płock (Warsaw-West) 7.5. the Diocese of Siedlce (Warszawa-East)</p>	<p>4.0. The Province of Lesser Poland 4.1. the Archdiocese of the City of Cracow 4.2. the Diocese of Kielce 4.3. the Diocese of Lesser Poland (Kraków) 4.4. the Diocese of Sandomierz (Tarnobrzeg) 4.5. the Diocese of Tarnów</p> <p>5.0. The Province of the Borderlands 5.1. the Archdiocese of Lublin 5.2. the Diocese of Białystok 5.3. the Diocese of Podlasie (Siedlce) 5.4. the Diocese of Rzeszów 5.5. the Diocese of Suwałki 5.6. the Diocese of Zamość</p> <p>6.0. The Province of Masovia 6.1. the Archdiocese of the City of Warsaw 6.2. the Diocese of Łomża (Łomża) 6.3. the Diocese of Masovia (Warsaw) 6.4. the Diocese of Płock 6.5. the Diocese of Radom (Radom)</p> <p>7.0. The Province of Kuyavia-Sieradz 7.1. the Archdiocese of the City of Łódź 7.2. the Diocese of Kalisz 7.3. the Diocese of Łódź 7.4. the Diocese of Toruń-Włocławek (Toruń)</p>	<p>4.0. The Province of Lesser Poland 4.1. the Archdiocese of the City of Cracow 4.2. the Diocese of Lesser Poland (Kraków) 4.3. the Diocese of Rzeszów 4.4. the Diocese of Sandomierz (Tarnobrzeg) 4.5. the Diocese of Tarnów</p> <p>5.0. The Province of the Borderlands 5.1. the Archdiocese of Lublin 5.2. the Diocese of Augustów 5.3. the Diocese of Białystok 5.4. the Diocese of Podlasie (Siedlce) 5.5. the Diocese of Zamość</p> <p>6.0. The Province of Masovia 6.1. the Archdiocese of the City of Warsaw 6.2. the Diocese of Łomża (Łomża) 6.3. the Diocese of Masovia (Warszawa) 6.4. the Diocese of Płock 6.5. the Diocese of Radom (Radom)</p> <p>7.0. The Province of Kuyavia-Sieradz 7.1. the Archdiocese of the City of Łódź 7.2. the Diocese of Kalisz 7.3. the Diocese of Łódź 7.4. the Diocese of Kielce 7.5. the Diocese of Toruń-Włocławek (Toruń)</p>
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Source: the author's own compilation on the basis of the collected source material.

- The Sea Province (the Archdiocese of the City of Gdańsk, the Diocese of Chełmno (the capital city – Gdynia), the Diocese of Masuria (the capital city – Olsztyn), the Diocese of Szczecin, the Diocese of Stargard (the capital city Stargard Szczeciński), the Pomeranian Diocese (the capital city – Koszalin));
- The Province of the Borderlands (the Archdiocese of Lublin, the Diocese of Białystok, the Diocese of Podlasie (Siedlce), the Diocese of Rzeszów, the Diocese of Suwałki, the Diocese of Zamość).⁶³
- The Province of Kuyavia-Sieradz (the Archdiocese of the City of Łódź, the diocese of Kalisz, the Diocese of Łódź (the capital city – Łódź), the Diocese of Toruń-Włocławek (the capital city – Toruń)).⁶⁴
- The Silesian Province (the Archdiocese of the City of Wrocław, the Diocese of Lower Silesia (the capital city Wrocław), the Diocese of Opole (the capital city – Opole), the Diocese of Częstochowa, the Diocese of Katowice (the capital city – Katowice) and the towns: Bytom, Chorzów, Gliwice, Ruda Śląska, Zabrze), the Diocese of Upper Silesia (the capital city – Sosnowiec)).

It should be underlined that in the project of 1970 – unlike the project of 1967 – the nomenclature of the provinces comes from the names of historical-geographical regions, not from the names of the capital cities – the seats of the metropolitan. Moreover, all the capital cities of the provinces, archdioceses and dioceses were precisely defined. In the case of the Diocese of Katowice the document even provides the detailed list of towns belonging to it. At the same time, the document implied the liquidation of several archdioceses and dioceses, which not infrequently had a very long tradition – such as the Archdioceses of Włocławek (1148), Przemyśl (1375), Sandomierz (1818) and Płock (1824).

Theoretically, the project of 1970 constituted a contribution to the regulation of the Church structures in Poland, but it bears comparison to the solutions adopted by the state authorities during the administrative reform of 1 June 1975. The capital cities of the voivodeships became the cities proposed in the project of 1970: Bydgoszcz, Gorzów Wielkopolski, Kalisz, Koszalin, Legnica, Piła, Radom, Rzeszów, Suwałki, Tarnobrzeg, Toruń, Zamość, Zielona Góra. It may not be excluded that the episcopate planned to implement the reorganization after the conclusion of the diplomatic talks between Warsaw and Bonn, which eventually led to the agreement about the normalization

⁶³ In the second version presented in the list the Diocese of Suwałki was replaced by the Diocese of Augustów, and the Diocese of Rzeszów was moved to the Province of Lesser Poland.

⁶⁴ In the second version presented in the list the Province includes also the Diocese of Kielce, which was excluded from the Province of Lesser Poland.

of the relations between the Polish People's Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany signed in December 1970.

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Despite the fact that the post-conciliar projects of the reorganization of the Church structures in Poland never went beyond the theoretical divagations limited to the narrow group of the hierarchs of the Polish Episcopate, they demonstrate the Church's openness and vitality. The study works undertaken by the Church show that the Polish hierarchs did not hesitate to face the most difficult challenges despite very limited possibilities and a complicated international situation. In this dimension, the proposals of the reform of the Church structures allow us to update the evaluation of the pace of introducing the post-conciliar changes and the reception of the teachings of the second Vatican Council in Poland.

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TWO POST-COUNCIL PROJECTS
FOR THE REORGANIZATION OF CHURCH STRUCTURES IN POLAND
IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 1960S

Summary

Key words: the Catholic Church, the Second Vatican Council, the Decree *Christus Dominus*, the Archdiocese Archive of Warsaw, the Polish church province, administrative divisions of the Catholic Church in Poland, the reorganization of church structures

The geopolitical situation of Poland after the end of WWII had a major influence on the situation of the Catholic Church, particularly its administrative structures. The new shape of the borders entailed the loss of a significant part of the Lviv and Vilnius archbishoprics. On the other hand, the incorporation of the eastern provinces of Germany – the Western and Northern Territories – involved the construction of new church structures. Polish bishops headed by Primate August Hlond, and later Stefan

Wyszyński, embarked on the long-term endeavour to regulate the canonic status of the Church in the so called Recovered Territories. However, the complicated legal-international situation was becoming even more complex owing to frequent interference from the communist authorities. It was not until the October breakthrough of 1956 that a state of relative stability began in the Western and Northern territories for the church structures. Upon the post-council restoration of the Church – directly after the closure of the Second Vatican Council – the church structures began to be reorganized in Poland. Two projects were run, encompassing the complex proposals regarding the whole territory of the Polish People's Republic. The first project constituted the comprehensive study of 1967, which was probably generated by the Wrocław entourage under the auspices of Archbishop Bolesław Kominek. The document stipulated that the borders of the dioceses should be adjusted to the current administrative division of the state. Seven provinces were to be established: the provinces of Gdańsk, Gniezno, Katowice, Cracow, Lublin, Warsaw and Wrocław. The 1967 project broke away from the former administrative divisions of the Catholic Church in Poland. Nevertheless, such revolutionary solutions were rejected by the members of the Main Council of the Polish Episcopate headed by Primate Stefan Wyszyński. Three years later in 1970, a new project was designed. This also stipulated the creation of seven provinces, the names of which were taken from geographical regions. Like the former one, this project also did not go beyond preliminary preparations owing to the radical solutions it proposed (e.g. the liquidation of the archbishopric of Gniezno) and the current international situation – the unsettled question of the Polish western frontier. Both documents allow us to appreciate the significant extent of the Church's involvement in the process of the post-council reorganization of administrative structures in Poland.

ZWEI NACHKONZILIARE PROJEKTE ZUR NEUORGANISATION
DER KIRCHLICHEN STRUKTUREN IN POLEN AUS DER ZWEITEN HÄLFTE
DER SECHZIGER JAHRE DES 20. JAHRHUNDERTS

Zusammenfassung

Schlüsselwörter: Katholische Kirche, Zweites Vatikanisches Konzil, Dekret Christus Dominus, Erzbischöfliches Archiv in Warschau, polnische Kirchenprovinz, Verwaltungseinteilung der katholischen Kirche in Polen, Neuorganisation kirchlicher Strukturen

Die geopolitische Situation Polens nach dem Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs hatte enormen Einfluss auf die Lage der katholischen Kirche, vor allem auf ihre administrativen Strukturen. Der neue Verlauf der Grenzen führte zum Verlust eines großen Teils des Gebiets der Erzbistümer Lemberg und Wilna. Andererseits ermöglichte der Anschluss der deutschen Ostprovinzen – der West- und Nordgebiete – den Beginn von Bemühungen um den Aufbau neuer Kirchenstrukturen. Die polnischen Bischöfe mit Primas August Hlond und dann mit Stefan Wyszyński an der Spitze begannen

mit jahrelangen Bemühungen, die den kirchenrechtlichen Status der Kirche in den sog. Wiedergewonnenen Gebieten regeln sollten. Doch die komplizierte rechtliche Lage zwischen den Nationen wurde vielfach durch Eingriffe der kommunistischen Staatsmacht erschwert. Erst der Durchbruch im Oktober 1956 brachte einen Zustand relativer Stabilisierung der kirchlichen Strukturen in den West- und Nordgebieten. Im Zug der nachkonziliaren Erneuerung der Kirche wurden unmittelbar nach dem Ende der Beratungen des Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzils Arbeiten aufgenommen, die der Neuorganisation der kirchlichen Strukturen in Polen dienten. Es entstanden zwei Projekte mit komplexen Vorschlägen, die das ganze Gebiet Volkspolens betrafen. Beim ersten Projekt handelte es sich um eine ausführliche Vorlage aus dem Jahr 1967, die höchstwahrscheinlich im Breslauer Umfeld unter dem Patronat von Erzbischof Bolesław Kominek entstand. Das Dokument sah die Anpassung der Bistumsgrenzen an die bestehende Verwaltungseinteilung des Staates vor. Es sollten sieben Kirchenprovinzen errichtet werden: Danzig, Gnesen, Kattowitz, Krakau, Lublin, Warschau und Breslau. Das Projekt von 1967 brach erkennbar mit der bisherigen Verwaltungseinteilung der katholischen Kirche in Polen. Der revolutionäre Charakter der vorgeschlagenen Veränderungen führte zur Ablehnung des Projekts durch die Mitglieder des Obersten Rats der polnischen Bischöfe mit Kardinal Stefan Wyszyński an der Spitze. Drei Jahre später, 1970, entstand ein weiteres Projekt. Das Dokument, genauer gesagt die kleine Skizze sah ebenfalls die Entstehung von sieben Provinzen vor, deren Namen sich auf die Namen von geografischen Regionen bezogen. Auch dieses Projekt gelangte sowohl wegen der in ihm enthaltenen radikalen Lösungen (u. a. die Aufhebung der Kirchenprovinz Gnesen) als auch wegen der damaligen internationalen Situation – der ungeklärten Frage der polnischen Westgrenze – nicht über das Stadium eines ersten Entwurfs hinaus. Jedoch erlauben beide Dokumente einen Einblick in das große Engagement der Kirche in Polen im Prozess der nachkonziliaren Neuorganisation von Verwaltungsstrukturen.

TNT

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