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### **Maximilian Sdralek's Wroclaw school of Church history**

Doctoral dissertation in the field of Church history,  
written under the supervision of Fr. Dr. Habil. Andrzej Uciecha, Prof. of the University of  
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#### **Summary**

The Diocese of Katowice was founded in 1925. Previously, the area included in it belonged to the Diocese of Wroclaw. Accordingly, candidates for the priesthood who came from and worked in Upper Silesia studied theology at the University of Wroclaw. This was the path taken by Fr. Maksymilian Sdralek. He was born in 1855 in Woszczyce, near Orzesze, in Upper Silesia. He first studied and then was a lecturer in Breslau. From there he was appointed professor of church history at the Academy in Münster. However, after 12 years he returned to Silesia. There he was a lecturer, dean of the Faculty of Catholic Theology and rector of the University.

In Wroclaw, Sdralek had many students. They were enthralled by his lectures on church history, and many of them participated in the seminary exercises he conducted. Many also wrote their doctoral theses with him. Several of them became world-renowned Church historians. These include: Joseph Wittig, Franz Xaver Seppelt, Felix Haase and Berthold Altaner. They are much more popular than their teacher. In the literature one can find the statement that they belonged to the Wroclaw school of Church history.

The aim of the work was to examine whether the Church historians of the early 20th century, gathered around Maximilian Sdralek, can be categorized as a historical school. How was this school founded? What are the characteristics of this school? Who belongs to it?

To answer the above questions, research was conducted. The work primarily used the archival resources of the University of Wroclaw and the University of Münster. At both universities Sdralek lectured, taught scientific seminars and promoted doctorates. It examined what lectures he taught, what topics he discussed, what the topics of his students' theses were and what he emphasized in the dissertations they wrote. The scientific activities of Sdralek's students were also analyzed and compared with the scientific activities of their master.

The first chapter of the work presents Sdrlek's biography and the publications he wrote. The second chapter describes all of Sdrlek's teaching activities, both in Wroclaw and Münster. The doctorates he promoted are also indicated. The third chapter shows the scholarly output of the Breslau school of church history, the characteristics of this school and its main representatives. It is also justified why it is possible to speak of a scientific school with regard to the aforementioned Church historians.