

Summary of the doctoral thesis

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Title: **Establishment, structure and activities of the Committee for Polish Children in the USSR (1943-1946)**

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The aim of the study was to present the establishment, structure and multidirectional activities of the Committee for Polish Children in the USSR in the years of (1943-1946). The organisational matters, the selection of personnel, and the mechanisms of this Committee, functioning within the Russian Ministry of Education, have been so far very little known. And yet the role of this institution turned out to be fundamental in ensuring the possibility of education in the mother tongue of the children of Polish exiles deep inside the territory of the USSR. The undertaken research topic, covering the history of the Committee as a whole, required a detailed search and thorough analysis of Russian documents in particular. The forced stay of Polish children in a foreign country resulted in the system of educational and welfare institutions created for them by the Committee being modelled on the organisational model of the USSR and financed by that country's budget. The author's task was to compile a monograph showing the entire history, achievements and role of the Committee, which, as an administrative structure of the Soviet authorities, became a kind of Ministry of Education for Polish children and the institutions organised for them. It supervised and systematically inspected all institutions for Polish children in the hinterland of the USSR. Indeed, on its initiative, crèches, kindergartens, orphanages, Polish groups at existing Soviet institutions (primary, incomplete secondary and secondary) and classes at Soviet schools were opened, as well as non-school children's institutions.

Thanks to the Committee's efforts, vocational training for adolescents was also launched in the existing network of local vocational schools (crafts, railways and vocational training) under the system of the Board of General Labour Reserve of the USSR, as well as the teaching of adult Poles and the organisation of cultural and educational work for them in institutions under the competent educational authorities. In addition, the Committee was involved in publishing textbooks, children's literature and teaching aids in Polish, the content of which had to take into account the political conditions of the time. In addition, it took care of the purchase of methodological aids, magazines and the stocking of Polish libraries. He prepared Polish teachers, educators and managers of institutions for Polish children for work.

Extracurricular Establishments, i.e. matters relating to the vocational training of adolescents, extracurricular activities for children and young people, the organisation of further education and competence courses for Polish teachers and the Committee's personnel policy. The functioning of the Publishing Department is presented in Chapter Six. Financial issues, budgeting and record-keeping matters are included in Chapter Seven (Planning and Finance Department). Issues relating to the repatriation of orphanages and the departure of successive transports from the USSR to Poland are included in chapter eight. Each of the chapters is complemented by statistical tables (45). The dissertation also includes unique illustrative material (64 photographs) and appendixes in two parts. The first includes statistical tables (25). This is the most complete list in Polish literature of institutions for Polish children in the hinterland of the USSR from 1943 to 1946 and a balance sheet of the achievements of the Committee's three-year activity. The second part presents, for the first time, scans of archival personal questionnaires of 20 staff members and a short biography of the deputy president of the presented institution, prepared by the author. This included people who played a significant role in Polish political, party and educational life after the end of the Second World War. The appendices are also supplemented by a weekly timetable of school hours for Polish children in the school year 1945/1946 and Guidelines for the kindergarten timetable taken from the "Handbook for educators and kindergartens", supplemented by data on mixed group work.

Keywords: Committee for Polish Children in the USSR, The Second World War, Children of Polish deportees in the USSR, Polish educational institutions and educational institutions in the USSR

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