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Priest Stanisław Roehle's collection of postcards as a source of knowledge about the culture of correspondence in the first half of the 20th century

Summary

The main aim of my doctoral thesis was to analyse the content of the correspondence and iconographic motifs of postcards from the collection of priest Stanisław Roehle, which were a source of knowledge about the culture of correspondence in the first half of the 20th century. The collection allows us to trace the multiple functions of a postcard at the beginning of the previous century and its importance as a historical source today.

The collection consists of 191 postcards, including sightseeing, patriotic, photographic and occasional postcards, and others classified as varia. The research design involves the following steps: (a) quantitative characteristics of the collection; (b) description of the presented objects; (c) creating a typology characterising the collection in terms of iconography, language, content, customs and chronology; d) establishing the biographical data of Father Roehle.

The first chapter, *The History of a Postcard*, explains and presents the concept and the history of the card, as well as the phenomenon of collecting. The purpose of the next chapter, *Collection of postcards of Fr. Stanisław Roehle*, was to discuss the visual side of the postcard collection. In addition, the profile of the priest was presented, and then the postcards were divided into thematic groups. The third chapter, *Correspondence on postcards*, focuses on the content of postcards as a source of information. The correspondence recorded on them was analysed, on the basis of which, attempts were made to trace the life and activities of Father Roehle and those people who were associated with him.

The author attempts to show that postcards are something more than a way of transmitting correspondence from a distance. They are not only means of communication, but they also meet aesthetic and cognitive needs. They are a medium of information exchange, as well as exchange of thoughts and feelings; moreover, they enable to preserve memories about places, people and past times. Therefore, on the one hand, the postcard is a record of fleeting experiences, moments and tourist memories, and on the other – a source of material culture of the past.