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Abstract

Title: „Ut ab omnibus omnia deleantur hominibus facinora”. Penance Practices of the Irish and British Church based on Penitential Books (5th-8th Century)

This doctoral dissertation has been prepared as a cycle of published scholarly articles that cohesively present the penance practices of the Irish and British Church based on a detailed analysis of penitential books (*libri poenitentiales*) from the 5th to the 8th century. The work begins with an introductory self-review, which outlines the research topic, describes the sources utilized, and summarizes the main findings of the conducted studies.

The primary aim of the dissertation is to highlight penance practices propagated by Irish-Scottish monks and described in Irish and British penitential books as a pathway for the faithful to achieve personal Christian holiness. The author conducted a comprehensive analysis of penitential texts, examining their spiritual, theological, and social significance. The research approach combines historical-critical, hermeneutical, and comparative methods, enabling an in-depth understanding of the role of these sources in the life of the ancient and early medieval Church.

The cycle of articles, comprising seven publications, is logically divided into three parts. In the first part (articles 1 and 2), the author presents Irish-Scottish monks as the creators of penitential books and promoters of individual confession. The second part (articles 3, 4, and 5) describes selected penance practices related to various aspects of Christian life, exemplified by issues of military service, family life, and reverence for the Eucharist. In the final part of the cycle (articles 6 and 7), the author explores the spiritual dimension of penance practices, depicting sin as a „disease of the soul” and conversion as a pathway to „spiritual health”.

The penitential books of the British Isles played a crucial role in the development of individual and repeatable penance practices. Irish-Scottish monks, through the promotion of penitentials, introduced a new form of spirituality that influenced moral norms and ecclesiastical discipline in continental Europe. The dissertation highlights the uniqueness and significance of the Irish-Scottish tradition as a phenomenon in the history of the Western Church.

Keywords: antiquity, Celtic Christianity, Irish-Scottish monks, penance, penitential books, personal holiness

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