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Summary of doctoral dissertation entitled:

**THE STATE AS AN ANONYMOUS INSTITUTIONAL PERPETRATOR
OF POLITICAL KILLINGS ON THE EXAMPLE OF SELECTED
TOTALITARIAN REGIMES IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE**

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This PhD dissertation consists of four chapters, within which the various elements of knowledge accumulated to date and the results of the author's current research on the subject matter are recounted. The research methodology used in this thesis is based on qualitative methods. In the course of conducting preliminary research and then composing the dissertation, the author uses source analysis, the comparative method and subject analyses.

The dissertation describes the phenomenon of coups d'état (political coups) and political assassinations by authoritarian or totalitarian state authorities as a permanent feature of non-democratic governments as a tool for maintaining power. The dissertation analyses the various means used by regimes – authoritative changes to the law, the creation of mechanisms to combat political opponents and competitors from one's own political camp and their violent extermination, but also the arousal and exploitation of emotions of a negative nature, by (and towards) politicians competing for influence in the social space. The dissertation also points out that political violence is a formula found in all political systems, but its greatest intensity can be observed in totalitarian regimes such as fascism, Nazism, communism, as well as in the activities of authoritarian governments. The dissertation also seeks to expand scholarly knowledge of the mechanisms used by regimes to commit and legitimise political assassinations and murders. Much attention has therefore been paid to the perpetrators or groups of perpetrators and to the person of the victim or groups of victims of such crimes, with the consequence also of analysing the broad spectrum of motives of political criminals who commit their crimes. To this end, not only a scientific political science perspective has been adopted, but also a legal, psychological and sociological one.

The choice of countries situated in Central and Eastern Europe as the research field was determined by the socio-political events unfolding there, which reverberated both in the camp of the socialist states and in the western countries. These processes also included political murders and so-called judicial crimes, involving the murder of both political

opponents and one's own party comrades. In the countries selected for analysis, there were particularly bloody settlements with political opponents, especially during the period of consolidation of power of the new non-democratic regime. Their victims were mainly opponents from other political parties, and in subsequent years, after the opposition had been liquidated or marginalised, there were also intra-party purges. These acts were often of an eminently criminal nature, ending in the total extermination of those who constituted the internal opposition. The initial aim of the author of this dissertation was to obtain general information on the functioning of the communist or quasi-communist system on the territory of the so-called “people's democracy” countries in order to then make an in-depth analysis of the triad of selected countries – Czechoslovakia, Romania and Hungary.

It was the ambition of the author of this dissertation to make this study as scientifically interdisciplinary as possible, by citing issues described in publications from the fields of psychology, sociology and law – also in order to find and prove the existence of an analogy between the pathology of the psyche of the individual political killer (human being) and the peculiar perversions of the nature of states governed by totalitarian regimes, states imbued with the sinister pathology of these regimes. This is really significant from a cognitive point of view, as also nowadays – just across Poland's eastern border – we are dealing with two regimes (in Belarus, ruled by Alexander Lukashenko, and in Russia, where Vladimir Putin is in power), in which, although democracy is maintained, the patterns of criminal activities, which are the main focus of this thesis' research, are still alive and well.

In the course of his research, the author reached several conclusions. It was established beyond reasonable doubt that the socio-political oppressiveness of totalitarian regimes is constantly accompanied by an atmosphere conducive to the commission of politically motivated institutional crime and what's more – the political violence that characterises totalitarianism is not only directed by the rulers towards the ruled, but is also often used within the groups exercising regime power. Additionally – the media propaganda supporting any non-democratic regime is a tool for manipulating public sentiment, leading to acceptance of the actions and decisions of the authorities, which cannot be achieved without such support.

Keywords: political murder, totalitarian regimes, Central and Eastern Europe, authoritarian state