

THE FEATURES OF THE RESUMPTION AND SET OF LITHUANIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE FIRST DECADE OF THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF INDEPENDENCE

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In the article the singularity chances of Catholic Church as the institute after the re-establishment of Independence are analyzed. Two influences of the Church, inside and outside growing, conditioned by the present economic, social and cultural transformations are researched. The topics of public globalization processes, born out of religious pluralism, to which we have to react, considering having concrete Churchy heritage of acting that was formed by historical experience and concrete circumstances are also analyzed. It is also spoken about the Catholic Church in terms of government and political life.

Keywords: Catholic Church, social role of Church, religious organizations, cultural and religious pluralism, anti-Church activities of State, Christian value, civic society.

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Introduction

The Catholic Church is still the meaningful spiritual and social force on the joint of 20th and 21st century. It is an important intermediary for succession identity and civilization contacts, whose positive influence manifests and goes on the social, economic and ethnic change. The unquestioned influence of the Church on Christian Lithuania and socio-cultural sameness for the dimension turned the integrity of sameness in the occupation years. Today it becomes an important force, which overcomes the social and spiritual heritage manifestation of the Soviet system, cherishing new forms of sociality, similarly making civil society like to go on subsidiary pushing and responsible groups of constellation.

On the other hand, it obviously looks that the transition from the previous social link to a civil society will not be easy. At first, we always look for the Church to take the role of moral protector in the face of crisis – to be the tonometer of public conscience, the protector of all disadvantaged; to take the function of public integrity, to form social organizations – i.e. take the role of building social life foundation for people. But often we forget that Christian bearing is an abstractive thing. For this existence some conditions and forces are necessary for the specific activity to be based on faith. And this activity exactly shows the real place and role of the Church in society.

The situation of the Catholic Church working as institute has changed during the last ten years. It seeks to return everything what was taken outlaw in Soviet years and what is necessary for its normal function today. Together it faced a new phenomenon which was conditioned by the processes of general conglobulation. Firstly, this is cultural and religious pluralism, which more and more becomes a reality in our society. It failed to learn to respect the religious feelings of all congregations or live near other people in society that had another world-view; and there are more of such. It is not easy and simple to form the spirit of hospitality in ourselves. However, it is necessary to try clearly realizing and naming not just our religious identity but also the place and the role of the Church as institute in a changing society of Lithuania. So, today the Catholic Church itself experiences a fair amount of inside and outside pressure, conditioned by the going economic, social and cultural transformation in society. These changes could be reacted by seeing what kind of concrete Church action heritage we have had and what kind of historical experience and concrete circumstances we have formed.

The purpose of this article is to discuss the features of the resumption and set of Lithuanian Catholic Church while the two decades of the re-establishment of Independence and show its attitude to the State and political life.

The renewal of the Catholic Church and the sources for growing tension after re-establishment the Independence of Lithuania

This is the formal renewal of Catholic Church in Lithuania which gained the success after 1988. During the decade of Independence Catholic Church as institute tried not just openly declare its interests and protect them, but also retrieve what is necessary for its normal function and what was outlaw forfeited from it in Soviet time. This renewal of Church ran in 2 ways (levels).

First. ***The refreshing work of Church institutions and organizations, which was prohibited in Soviet time.*** It was tried to refresh the Catholic Church institutions and other fields of actions, which were prohibited in Soviet time.

In this case, the Church like institution changed substantially at this period of time: the old problem of Church provinces control and its dividing lines was regularized; the 7th diocese which is so important for development of Šiauliai was established. The most important institutes are normally functioning (Confederacy of Bishops and its committee, Councils of Priests) and centers of education (seminaries (besides Kaunas, the new were established in Telšiai, Vilnius, Vilkaviškis), theologian and catechist training institutions).

Wise spiritual, organizational and intellectual Christian struggles were sought:

- 1) to rebuild the pre-Soviet work of structures and organizations;
- 2) to trig up a sacramental and community buildings and establish new centers;
- 3) to develop switched-on, i.e. postmodern, reference and secularized public needs, accordable to pastoral, evangel and educational systems.

Earlier prohibited theological education was restored; monkhoods and congregations could already proceed their work. There were even 3 delegated bishops of Lithuania after 1990 year, the leaders of fighting group, which denied the chance of any collaboration in Soviet times and fought for the freedom of religion and human rights (Jonas Boruta, Sigitas Tamkevičius, Jonas Kauneckas). It evidences not just the support of Holy See for more injustice experienced by the Catholic Church of Lithuania, but the meaning of the Church for the formation of new history self-awareness. The grasp of historical oneness, particularly in proportion with totalitarianism, plays the main role to the stabilized, long-lived civil tune, as well as to the conditions of the maturity of democracy. So, it is natural that the voice of the Catholic Church here is very important.

Second. *The return to the international Christian organizations, in whose activity the Soviet Catholic Church was unable to participate freely like a whole-right and faithful partner.* On the one hand, the meaning of this Church return was an important social and political subject to Lithuania in communicating with Christian Europe on the growth of its role; on the other hand, there is the endorsement of devotion to Christian European traditions and together the preparation to open an action of the cumulative experience in secularization society. Last-mentioned level is the most complicated and the most important object; together it is generative and the most making troubles to the Church.

Today it is obvious that reserve is decreasing of the formal renewal of the Church (making the renovation of structure). We could clearly and really shape the Catholic Church as the institution of conditions and influence in society. They are determined and oddly framed by the growing inside and outside intensions of the growing sources that are connected with the mythology, born in the years of Sajūdis:

- 1) *the real forces of the Church and the overvalues of its influence and possibilities in society;*
- 2) *the incidence of indifference of the hostility moods to the Church, which is specific to the most part of Lithuania society, are not enough valued.*

First. *The real overrate of the power and influence of Church in society.* People who were involved into activity of Church in the years of *Sajūdis* believed in their possibilities. Also they believed into fundamental Church influence on society, to induce quickly not just its spiritual, but material side of good life too. Some of them imagined that they need the return the situation, which was in the fourth decade before Soviet Union had occupied Lithuania and absolutely disremembered that 50 years had changed not just the social structure of society, but the Church itself (not just conditions of the priests' arrangement, but also the orientation of self-expression of the part of congregations changed). However, formally the traditional engagement to Church in Lithuania, like in the most post-communistic countries, had survived.

And today in Lithuania, according to the data of sociological researches, we could see that 4 of 5 tell they are churchgoers, about 70 percents recognize themselves as Catholics, and the rating of confidence to Church is also one of the highest. It is not fair number in comparison with other countries. There are about 35–42 percent of people

who belong to other congregations (Rops 1998: 36). It must be mentioned that this number includes any identification with Christianity (maybe empty and declarative).

Meantime, sustaining the data of the mentioned researches for every fifth Lithuanian Catholic the God is somebody vague and “track”, and even 26 percent are cherishing the theo-central world-view, adequate to the confession of Nikea.

Just 4 of 5 Catholics generally believe in God (sic), and 15 percent are not sure whether Jesus had ever lived. Every fifth Lithuanian Catholic realizes Jesus just like idiosyncratic person, maybe harbinger. There are Catholics who believe in afterlife, in rise from the dead – 49 percent (Navickas 2002: 14). It appears that to the same part of citizens who class to the Church, believe in God as not the most meaningful “thing” but more as historical cultural heritage. Although until now serious comparative researches have not been done, we just could suppose that active congregations (the strong identification with Church, enough fixed participation in celebrations) percent is not high. In presumption of Arch. Tamkevičius, there are about 10 percent¹.

This is obvious that Christian voice in present Lithuania is not as strong as it could be. It is true that Christian voice is the only alternative to the moral values of distortion tendencies which we could notice in commercial media. But in general the Christian mind (it is obviously clear: without any researches) has low influence on public life, lower than it could have. Naturally, there is a question: where is the secret of Catholic weakness?

I dare to claim that it is connected with Catholic intelligentsia as some social group, which is nourishing religious values and standing on the clearly named positions, weakness. Later, some teachers of religion came to the side of Catholic intelligentsia from nostalgia or fashion – quondam atheists, members of science elite. In comparison with traditional, it is interwar Catholic intelligentsia, new Catholic intelligentsia (rather labelled itself to them), characterized in separate life styles, valuable codes and daily moral. The *ethos* of their Catholic intelligentsia (the understanding about the place and role of Catholic intelligentsia) is valid by the values of instrumental rationalism and hardly compatible with “altruistic-cultural” set-up of intelligentsia. There are the sociological characterization points, that are typical to Catholic and post-communistic intelligentsia.

There could be marked such sociological characteristic points of the Catholic intelligentsia as:

1. *Amorphous structure, including all society stratum and its members* (it is clearly non-existence of structure).
2. *Reluctance to be connected with concrete Christian organization and in that way to take the liability.* This informal membership lets to be ephemeral everywhere, with all and together with nobody.
3. *The liability of inside Christian organization and its operating agency, and the indetermination of their functions, telling about the inducement and sanction of*

¹ According to Tamkevičius, “Not much believe that there are 70 percent of Catholics in Lithuania. There are more Christians, but one thing is to be a Christian and another is to be an active Catholic. There are not 70 percent of real Catholics in present Lithuania, but maybe seven times less“ (Bažnyčia ir visuomenė ... 2000: 28).

the system without it, is not possible in the normal social system non-existence. Most of Catholic organizations do not have clear working plans, after entry they do not feel any need to deal with taken liabilities – “freedom not to do” acknowledged as personal “freedom without liability”.

4. *Aesthetically shown religiosity, evidenced by participation in organized actions (different events), the aim of which is to show the Catholic “doing” and influence, but not to certify the authentic faith.*
5. *Probably more suppositional and anticipant than developed and concerted completion of fundamental provisions of its confession and pursuance.*

Here mentioned values are more or less suitable to a wider circle of churchgoers, who are not characterized in deep activity. It is no wonder that until now we do not have enough active laymen’s (not the masters of Church) lead. Churchgoers are still waiting for the leadership of others; those who tell they are indefectible and those who tell how we must properly behave. It is awaited that somebody would decide instead of them. People do not have enough high requirements to participate in parish life. In individual scale of values such participation is found in the last place. People go to celebration and after they rush home (quasi “came” to “be marked“, that they were here). Really, this “mark” is very important: on the one hand, there is a requisition of belonging of the general Church; on the other hand, there is a conferment to the Church (the priest) of commission to deal with all community matters. Like staying near a Church and watching from the side what kind of challenges the world is taking. This social-psychological set was formed gradually. There were 2 circumstances which had influence:

On the one hand, there is an opinion on Church which was implanted in Soviet times, when priests tried to separate from churchgoers by restricting the participation in Church activity (the suppression to children to wait on Mass, to do the catechism of children and grown-up people), will not let priests visit the churchgoers at home and alike. The government was tolerating churchgoers, if they were not very active, or were visiting Mass just formally. For a long time it became a rule and standard. It stimulated particular spiritual laziness. In turn, it had influence over the development of religious formalism generally.

On the other hand, the mentioned social psychological set was influenced by the activity and self-denial of priests-fighters for the congregation rights. In these people the real Church, and together interest defender of every congregation, who felt the respect and was bending to fully trust, was felt. So, not every voice of community member, but the voice of the priest-fighter seemed important. But the time of priest-fighters has gone. In the development of democracy processes it became clear that we should defend our rights. At first this is obligation to every citizen as and to every Catholic (like the member of political community) – no one could do this better than a person oneself (There are too many servants of cult.)

Second. ***Not enough manifestation rating of the hostility among Church.*** Today Catholic Church feels such intensive pressure, conditioned by the changes of political, special, economical and cultural life that it had never felt before.

At first, it is connected with new religion movements and persuasions, which were propagating new unconventional forms of religion, its pushing into Lithuania (Peškaitis, Glodenis 2000). About 170 of them were counted. The aggression and making methods of activity of some persuasions still have not seen the right reply and well-timed reaction from Catholic Church. The situation is pressed up because the public offices that should react to such processes do not have clear and unambiguous point to the activity of persuasions. The enactment of the progressive law, which already had been taken in the West countries by fighting with the spread of persuasions (France), and other processes are stemmed by the interests of political groups in Lithuania. The implementation of lobby work of persuasions has influence on Parliament (Seimas) and government, too².

The bad tradition to degrade Church and its separate actors contribute to the development of Lithuanian's social, political mind, deform facts, that were formed in times when Church was kept as damaging ideology of a "work man". But this tradition is taking a new character: not ideological strange to "work men's interests" had changed, but in seeming unskilled to change Catholic Church, to react on time for challenges, finally reform, considering the needs of time (but exactly wishes of Church critics). The fact had dodge perverting, strain to elucidate Church activity and actions of its separate actors. They are taking help to hound the anti-Churchy mood, to "independent" press and "independent" smarty experts of Church matters.

There we must remember about the modernization of Church (on time) and there is the main range. To carry a Good News we could just consider time signs, speech of people and way. The Church was trying to act at such a way at all times. This is done now. How effectively it is being done depends on many factors. And first from separate members of Church (congregation laymen's and priests) spiritual and social engagement. So, the responsibility of Church activity and its results fall not only on priests, but on all Church members too. Even more – a part of responsibility falls on all society (in corpore) generally, because only of tolerance to its members belongs to Church „modernization“, real peace and sacramental space of creating chance in society. The inside growth of influence sources of Church:

First. *A deficit of adequate communication with up-to-date pheralistic suggestible tools of society.* Catholic Church took up traditional communication forms with congregations, which characterized undue respect to the person of priest and his authority (gain footing in society, but not served by doing concrete works). The anti-Church politics which was carried by Soviet government helped to save this form of communication, because the priest in eyes of people was like the defender of their interests. Times changed as well as the position of gover'nment to clergy. In turn, clergy felt ability to serve the respect in new condition.

For many congregations, particularly of younger generation, the old form of Church activity seems not strenuous and new. And those who are not open because

² Lithuania still does not have the department for the religion matters, contrary to post-communistic countries (for example, in Hungary, the Czech Republic).

Lithuanians are conservative and cautious with innovations, particularly in Church life. Here, we can remember that in the years of interwar suggestions to make new changes to Church life, that would be taken by new generation of Catholic intellectuals (Antanas Maceina, Povilas Jakas, Pranas Gaida-Gaidamavičius and others), were taken pretty suspiciously and warily, prompting not rush) (Pruskus 2001). Naturally, to make lodgement for innovations, to admit, time is necessary. All priests psychologically are not ready for that.

The monkhoods do not find their place in transformations of society presence, though later more monkhoods (men's and women's) were created, but they are plunged in their inside activity, poorly communicating and keeping relationship interplay. They are just searching for the ways and tools to communicate with pluralistic up-to-date society, to react to its needs by some tools of influence.

Second. *General and separate crossing of interests, solving Church matters.* Obviously, that government does not rush to return the realty to Catholic Church and monkhoods. It is true, not all realty is equally and vitally important to them and requested. The negotiation is under way between State and the leadership of Catholic Church. However, at first, it looks at general interest of Church; sometimes it must sacrifice needs of individual monkhoods. So, not always it succeeds to match the interests of all sides. Therefore, perforce influence grows and it does not consolidate Church's unity from inside, but destroys it.

Third. *Crossing of priests conservative and exponents of Church modernism.* We cannot skip some influences over elder generation of priests making mass and keeping strong traditions; and younger generation of priests who search for untraditional pastoral work forms and communicating with various groups of congregations (and particularly with youth), leaned to urge the Vatican's "meeting", approved Church reform action in Lithuania. Although this comparison bursts into top rarely, this is a new reality which demands the name of clearer positions and intellectually measured arrogance. Critics of Church are bended to prominence it, forgetting that the spirit of polemic was always alive in Church. It is alive in today's Lithuanian Catholic Church. It shows the vitality of Church and destroys the proportions of those critics who imagine Catholic often like such milk-and-water soldiers that go step by step where Church is tells to and has no rights for own opinion and authentic practice of evangelism, distinctive of its tools and ways for choice. This influence between old and young generations of priests is connected with the viewpoint of Christian understanding and a new look to Catholic Church. Modern tendencies and suspicions about innovations are dominating. It always was so. Catholics were not divided both interwar and today. This split was shown in 1936, when the *Rytas* (in English: *Morning*) had been closed by nationalists, *XX amžius* (in English: *20 century*) rallied around priest and laities, searching for Church ways to answer the new needs of society. In post-war years, Prelate Ladas Tulaba appealed Maceina against neither Vatican that was not sure about its relevance to be the leadership to atheistic organization (in Lithuanian: *ateitininkija*). When priest Antanas Saulaitis came to Lithuania, of all these talks and such unusual behavior with congregations was trying not to let him to the youth. Not to everybody the homily of priest Julius Sasnauskas is acceptable.

On other hand, going by intrude roods is always a risk to overrun the lines of admissibility. The wisdom of Church is to warn and show the awaiting dangers, not to provide. Probably, getting information and experience of West countries about the ways of acting would be less influenced in Catholic Church in Lithuania³.

The mentioned subjects and circumstances have direct influence on Catholic Church like institution and its set. It was first to the relation with the State and politics. On other hand, the Soviet Union was trying to limit actions of Catholic Church in very various ways. Naturally, when the Soviet regime had crashed and we retrieved Independence, the Catholic Church traded up pecking new circumstances.

The set of Catholic church over state and political life

Before the birth of Sąjūdis and shortly after it the Church was understood like one of the most important and meaningful power of society to the character's of opposition of Soviet regime.

Sąjūdis was blessed by the leadership of Church; the representatives of clergy were the members of Sąjūdis board (Vaclovas Aliulis) and in its groups in districts. There were people who were involved in anti-communistic activity in at eighty's and they strongly stood to defend the rights of congregations. It should be noted that after 1988 they quickly worked on a political level, but not in Church leads. Some of them were elected to Seimas (Alfonas Svarinskas)⁴. This situation was stimulating some people to overrate the meaning of Church in today's society, prompting to refresh Church political power, to second and some separate its members, as well as political ambitions evidenced between priests. It neither was denied to take influence over politics and events in society.

These tests at first were connected with efforts to form a historical sameness of perception, particularly in the aspect of relation with totalitarianism. But society was not supporting these efforts. It was conditioned, on the one hand, that such efforts were formed by KGB in Soviet times, meaning the efforts of active Catholics (particularly of priests) like aggressive and intractable people, image, and on the other hand, unavailability to participate in political life in new circumstances, considering the changed needs of society and trying to satisfy them by adequate and active tools (Streikus 1998: 59–61).

The going development of democratic institutes and new political organization were built, in to which a lot of significant Catholic actors dispersed. The Church was slowly losing its standing on political level. Just thanks to moral authority and sharpness of the Catholic church hierarchy (Cardinal Vincentas Sladkevičius), it succeeded to reduce ambitions between the part of revote clergy that participated in political

³ Catholic Church at all times had the manifestation of independent mind and opinion (let us remember that the priest Jakas was rating Catholic Church over Lithuanian Polishing process critically). They always reaped the unequivocal reaction from the leadership of Church to such applications.

⁴ Priests like laity had rights to participate in politics, but according to 139 article of *Corporis Juris Canonici*, they had to get the admission from authority.

activity and return the Churchy effect. It was assumed that the political responsibility must be given to laity, because substantially this is their civil responsibility and their matter to make decisions. So, the past decade was marked by 3 facts.

First of all, the Catholic Church principally spoke about approbation of democratic political rights, as it nearly does not matter that this nearly declarative acceptance of democracy outlined its principles, particularly freedom and tolerance, the perception in stratum of congregation. It could be a shortened vision of “Christian State” in Catholic environment today, which would have castes and at some point authoritarian; it is like peculiar consolidation that maybe alternative today or having more social problems, democracy of Lithuania.

Some of the Catholics are playing with ideas about democracy which would be “limited” by Christian provisions. That, naturally, is not suitable to Church representatives (board), whose pro-democratic orientation in politics is evident.

However, it is evident that in the perspective of globalization and euro-integration conditioned ethical principles and social vision are weakened by the universal endorsement of the missed national self-fertilization structure. It is clear that the democratic political right, despite of her limitations, is a rather confidential tool to stand bond from Church as institution activity. That turn is not a trouble to Church in characterizing relationship with State, clearly and in details names its interests, the range of collaboration and forms, seeking the liability performance of both sides. Simultaneously, Catholic Church could not and have not been removed from the integration into European Union; conversely, by keeping links with Churches of European States, it could really serve to this process.

Secondly, Church was searching for the ways and tools to reveal its relationship with political parties. At first with LKDP that has one-hundred-year traditions (established in 1904 by the initiatives of Professor Adomas Dambrauskas-Jakštis, Maironis and Pranciškus Būčys in Petrapilis spiritual Academy). It is true that this party received recognition and support from Church in elections to Seimas – thus, in the inter-war years (LKDP was ruling Lithuania 1920–1926 years), and after the establishment of Independence (1992, 1996, 2000). But this relationship of Church with party both then and today was not so simple⁵.

The failure of Christian democratic party in last elections, inside scraps, absence of united provisions defending Church matters, frictions between various groups of

⁵ While being in Christian Democratic Party, concerns for the discrimination of high level officers of corruption – members of LKDP – brought a shadow on Church that was supporting this party openly. It was conditioned by inside wrangles in a party, provoked the separation by the group of “young Christian Democrats”, the leader of which was Pranas Dielininkaitis. This thing forced Church to stay away from any parties at all. By the same token the contemporary Holy Father Pius XI was prompting Churches to have no track of political engagement. It was confirmed in Concordat provisions, which were signed by Vatican and other countries (also and with Lithuania, in 1927). When Soviet Union occupied Lithuania, the Concordat lost its power. Church did not feel to be pledged on this view and to re-establish Lithuania and its government. This moral support to Christian Democrats (and even open instigation in Churches to vote for members of this party) seemed natural and without questions. Still today in some countryside districts to be “good and moral” Catholic means be together and a member of LKDP, or at least vote for this party on the election to Seimas or municipality.

interests inside party and at last desolation – “*modern Christian Democrats*” (rather distant from Church) parts, separation from LKDP, sweep Church to keep more reasonable position and warily rate the orientation of Christian Democratic position declaration parties. It is no wonder their Christian identity in those parties was not in a fit state to name clearer. All of them declared to be Christian Democratic; but not quite doing concrete works. Sometimes by some actions they are opposite to it.

It must be mentioned, that majority of parties are not clearly enough named their positions to Church matters, did not have intellectually argumentum position, their actions are often determined by the conjectured enumeration today. So, it is no wonder that Arch. Tamkevičius painlessly induced to say that “concrete parties today are clearly going against Church” (Bažnyčia ir visuomenė ... 2000: 29).

In such a situation greeted voices tell that Church must equally take all political powers without differentiating. As congregations are in all parties. Besides, there are some past substantial dissident Catholics that were involved into other political organization, but not into the traditional Catholic party. Theoretically it is understood but practically it is hard to implement. Church in the last decade created its opinion about today’s Lithuanian parties, which, clearly enough, mentioned their position. Church is open to any party which respects its rights. Naturally, that relationship is good – matured from both sides. Then, complete party in Church relationship with all parties of today conditions are hardly imagined.

On the other hand, there is psychological moment. Such situation to some Catholics would not be understood and would make many troubles and be rather problematical. It is hardly habituated to the idea that they could be of other political parties, which have not exactly named their position of Christian orientation, members or, that could support such parties. Until now Church has not made any changes in such socio-psychological provisions, but it shows patent efforts to this side of acting. Only time will show the real value of these exertions.

Third, it is a visibly positive thing that Catholic Church in Lithuanian is not inclined to associate itself with national idea and with nationalism. By this way Lithuanian Church is more resistant than some Churches of East European countries (for example, Slovakia). It had deep traditions, reaching pre-war times, when Catholic Church and its intellectuals (Mečislovas Reinyš, Stasys Šalkauskis) made their plain against racist politic of Nazi to national (especially Jewry) point. The voice of Catholic Church was powerful⁶.

Positively, that this experience and concrete initiatives shown by Catholic Church (The Acts of Apology of Catholic Church of Lithuania for done mistakes in the past;

⁶ In the nationalist-operated Lithuania there was no genocide that tried to assimilate nationals. The largest of them – Jewish (250 000 people, it is 8 percent of all country residents) community was taking cultural autonomy and was clearly satisfying religious, educational and cultural needs (Prunskis 1999). During the war, the leadership of Church (arch. Vincentas Brizgys) tried to temper the conditions of Jewry’s, appealing to German occupation authority, but it was not considering (Lennzenweger, Stochmeier *et al.* 1997: 149–158). Much bigger meaning was of the personal exertions of priests saving Jewries (There is nominal 2300 person register in the national Vilnius Gaon’s Jewish Museum of Vilnius in archives of lifeguards. There are 136 priests) (Prunskis 1999: 271–293).

Organization of conferences about questions of genocide and others) importantly promoted by rehabilitation of the relationship between Lithuanians and Jews; despite all influences, which were tried to escalate by some groups (in Lithuania and abroad) in the last decade, seeking one day political, as well as often egoistic (and material) aims.

The tension reduction between Lithuanians and nationals living in country was influenced by incoming more intensive provisions of ecumenical relationship between Catholic Church and Protestants, Orthodoxy and even community of old believers. Operative, creative reaction to events reduced jealousy, depending, and incredulity atmosphere.

Though, it seems, relationship between Catholic Church and country government is better, there are problems to be solved. In comparison there are a lot of problems with legal state of Church and its relationship with State.

It is true, that in the Constitution of Lithuania there are acts of separation, equal rights and freedom incorporated; these are accepted laws protecting free religious living.

Church is supported by government financially as well. Every year from the budget of government all main confessions get financial support. The largest part of it goes to the Catholic community because it has the biggest number of members. (For example, in 2005 from 3.2 million Lt committed to the traditional religious communities support, about 2.1 million Lt went to the Catholic Church). Some resources go and to the keeping of Church buildings. It is allowed to take some perk of due to Church.

About 200 building were returned to Church per decade, which earlier were taken from congregation, monkhoods and separate diaciers. Accredited 1995 and 1997 redone the law of religious communities of the Republic of Lithuania, in accordance with it was settled the registration conditions of Churches and religious communities⁷.

The principle of subsidiary ration could be founded in the accession of Family law (1996), where the traditional facultative wedding form has been legitimated. It means that marriage registration in Church has juridical efficiency. In a public point view a lot of meaning was given to the contracts between Catholic Church and government of soul management in jails, correctionals, hospitals and army (2000).

⁷ With this law, all religious communities are divided into "traditional" and "untraditional". There are 9 spiritual and social heritage parts that make religious communities: Latin ceremony catholic (units), Evangelic Lutherans, Orthodoxes, Promors, Jew, Moslem, Karaites. Untraditional religious communities are characterized as: "Other (untraditional) religious communities may be seen by the government as historical, spiritual and social part of heritage, if they are maintained by society and their training and ceremony does not contradict to law and honour. The recognition of government means that the state keeps spiritual, cultural and social heritage of religious communities (...) Religious communities could apply for the recognition of state, longing no less than 25 years after its first registration in Lithuania. If the application was not satisfied, repeatedly it can be appealed after 10 years after satisfied day (...). Religious communities could be registered, if they united more than 15 members of adult, citizens of Lithuania. Religious communities could be registered if they unite no less than 2 religious communities (Lietuvos Respublikos religinių bendruomenių ir bendrijų įstatymas, 1995 m. spalio 4 d. Valstybės žinios, 1995, No. 89, p. 3–4). Besides, the registrations of religious communities are rather liberal in comparison to other post-communistic countries; in Czechia the community could be registered if it united 25 members.

There were diplomatic relationship with Vatican refreshed, but the contract with Concordat, which would clearly characterize and open the liabilities of Lithuania government to Church is still not signed, though it would name and set the lines of acting and responsibility of the same Catholic Church.

There must be a deal about some questions of property. Obviously, the return of earlier forfeit property to Church in hard times will cause a lot of passion and would be valued equally. At all times and in all countries the government decided to return forfeit property to Church. On the other side, this return would create other new complicated problems to the same Church. Firstly, the financial ones. It will rise (and now are rising) the potential problem of returned property (buildings, collections of art) of right retention, protection and reclamation by purposes.

Possibly we could think that most people in country live poorer, it will decline the material support of churchgoers to Church. In such way, Church would become a problem and to itself, and to the government, which will not watch to such situation vacantly. It is probable because the Church is percept like a part of civic society. Obviously, that in such a way the situation will influence the place and status of Church in a civic society.

Conclusions

1. The fluctuation of actions of the he Catholic Church as institute in Lithuania in latter decennary was conditioned by two main factors. On the one hand, there is the heritage of implemented anti-Church politics in Soviet time that acquired a careful point to innovations, transferring the initiative of congregations to priests. On the other hand, passing from earlier social connection to civil public, in which Catholic Church faced new challenges and searched for adequate return of going business transformations.
2. After the re-establishment of Independence, the present formal renewal of Catholic Church, while returning the forbidden spheres and tools of acting, highlighted new sources of growth tensions (inside and outside) to Catholic Church as institute. From the outside, it connected with myths born and dead on the years of Sąjūdis – the real power of Church and its influence on society, overestimation of chances and not enough rating of manifestation feeling to Church. Inside – the lack of adequate communication with today's pluralistic society by tools of influence. The general and separate (group) interest failure, solving Church matters as the intersection of conservative priests and exponents of modern Church. The mentioned sources of tension highlighted the real situation of Church and its power in society and politics.
3. Even before the rise of Sąjūdis and shortly after it Catholic Church was perceived as the most important apposite to Soviet regime and as a meaningful public power. This situation stimulated a part of congregations to grow up to the political power of Church, by baking the active priests, involved into anti-communistic activity in eighties, aspirations and ambition. But it was not heard by a

wider part of society. The leadership of Catholic Church (Cardinal Sladkevičius) succeeded to cross the open politically engaged spurt and protect the provision that political responsibility must be taken to bands of laity, because this is their civil duty and a matter of decision.

4. The set of the Catholic Church to government per latter decade was marked by 3 substantial things. Firstly, Catholic Church principally spoke about improvement in democratic political course, although it does not matter whether such declarative acceptation outlined the principles of democracy, especially of freedom and tolerance equal perception in the stratus of congregation. Secondly, the Church was searching for the tools and ways to open its relationship with political parties. And, first of all, with LKDP. But these relationships both interwar and today, were not simple. Church tried to take the temperate position to the point of political parties, because until now they are not clearly told about its ideological identity, do not have enough sharp position to Church. Their sets are often conditioned by the day-to-day conjectured calculation. Church is open to the parties that respect its rights. Naturally, those relationships are good-natured from both sides. So, complete parity in Church's relationships with all parties in today's conditions are hardly imaginable.

Thirdly, it is a visibly positive thing that Catholic Church in Lithuania is not inclined to asociate itself with national idea and with nationalism. In this way Lithuanian Church is more resistant than some Churches of East European countries (for example, Slovakia). It had deep traditions, reaching pre-war times when Catholic Church and its intellectuals (Reinys, Šalkauskis) made their plan against racialist politic of Nazi to national (especially Jewry) point. The voice of Catholic Church was powerful.

The reduction of the tension between Lithuanians and nationals living in country was influenced by incoming more intensive provisions of ecumenical, feeding relationship between Catholic Church and Protestants, Orthodoxy and even community of old believers. Operative, creative reaction to the events reduced jealousy, belonging, and incredulity atmosphere.

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KATALIKŲ BAŽNYČIOS ATNAUJINIMO YPATUMAI IR BŪKLĖ PIRMUOJU NEPRIKLAUSOMYBĖS DEŠIMTMEČIU LIETUVOJE (ATKŪRUS LIETUVOS NEPRIKLAUSOMYBĘ)

Valdas Pruskus

Santrauka

Straipsnyje analizuojami Katalikų Bažnyčios atnaujinimo ypatumai ir augimo įtampos šaltiniai (atkūrus Lietuvos nepriklausomybę) pirmuoju nepriklausomybės dešimtmečiu Lietuvoje (1990–2001). Nagrinėjamos Bažnyčios vidaus ir išorės permainos, nulemtos visuomenės ekonominių, socialinių ir kultūrinių pokyčių, visuotinės globalizacijos procesų pagimdyto religinio pliuralizmo, į kurį tenka reaguoti atsižvelgiant į turimą bažnytinės veiklos paveldą, suformuotą istorinės patirties ir konkrečių aplinkybių. Aptariama Katalikų Bažnyčios būklė valstybės ir politinio gyvenimo atžvilgiu. Parodoma, kad šią padėtį ženklino trys esminės nuostatos. Pirma, Katalikų Bažnyčia išreiškė principinę poziciją už demokratinę politinę tvarką, nors tai toli gražu neturi reikšti, kad šis kone deklaratyvus demokratijos priėmimas nusako tikinčiųjų suvokiamus demokratijos principus, ypač laisvės ir tolerancijos. Antra, Bažnyčia ieškojo būdų ir priemonių atskleisti savo santykius su politinėmis partijomis, pirmiausia LKDP, turinčia šimtametę tradiciją (įkurta 1904 m.). Tačiau nesutarimai tarp įvairių interesų grupių partijos viduje ir galiausiai skaidymasis – „moderniųjų krikdemų“ (gerokai nutolusių nuo Bažnyčios) sparno atsiskyrimas nuo LKDP – privertė Bažnyčią užimti nuosaikesnę poziciją ir atsargiau vertinti krikščionišką demokratinę orientaciją deklaruojančias partijas, tuo labiau išskirti vienintelę, prioritetinę. Trečia, Bažnyčia Lietuvoje nebuvo linkusi sieti savęs su nacionaline idėja ir nacionalizmu. Tokia pozicija prisidėjo mažinant įtampą tarp lietuvių ir šalyje gyvenančių tautinių mažumų, stiprinant ryšius su protestantų, ortodoksų ir sentikių bendruomenėmis. Nors, atrodo, Katalikų Bažnyčios santykiai su valstybe gerėja, tačiau tebelieka ir spęstinių dalykų.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: katalikų bažnyčia, socialinis bažnyčios vaidmuo, religinės organizacijos, kultūrinis ir religinis pliuralizmas, krikščioniškos vertybės, pilietinė visuomenė.

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