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**Proceedings of  
the 5<sup>th</sup> ACADEMOS Conference 2018**

**Development, Democracy and Society in  
the Contemporary World**

**Editor  
Andrei Taranu**

**(Bucharest, Romania, 14-17 June 2018)**





Faculty of Political Science  
National University of Political Studies and Public Administration

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International Political Science Conference

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Editor  
Andrei Taranu

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# The Catholic Church and Polish Democracy. The Attempt of Normative Discernment

MODRZEJEWSKI Arkadiusz<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Political Science, University of Gdansk (POLAND)  
Email: modrzejewski@ug.edu.pl

## Abstract

This paper is an attempt of normative assessment of the involvement of the Catholic Church in political life in Poland. Position of the Church in Polish society and also in the public sphere is strong and goes beyond the role of an equal partner of participant of the public discourse. In many aspects, the Church or rather some of its officials and organisations play the role of an informal decision-maker that can effectively enforce its visions and interests. However, a general assessment cannot be unequivocal.

*Keywords: Catholic Church, Poland, liberal political philosophy, Catholic social doctrine*

## Introduction

The paper is written from the normative position. That is why I will not avoid here moral assessments and evaluation from which empirical approaches in political theory keep distant.

It is not a historical piece of work; however, it concerns obviously some references to the newest history. Generally, writing this paper I refer to liberal intellectual tradition. John Rawls (1921-2002) being an outstanding representative of contemporary political liberalism became also responsible for a return of the normativism to the main stream of academic political discourse. His *A Theory of Justice* [1] published firstly in 1971 revived normativism as a full-fledge theoretical standpoint in a political analysis overcoming a methodological paradigm imposed by behaviorists who rather avoided formulating political and moral assessments [2].

What is a value of the normativism for this paper? If I limit my reflection to the description of the Polish political reality and the role of the Catholic Church<sup>1</sup> in Polish political life or if I even refer to the theoretical approaches concentrating on the state – religion relation, probably it would be still interesting or even inspiring. However, omission of the normative aspect, that is frequent practice among empirically oriented political scientists, would not only be an oversimplification of the reality but also it would not present a proper meaning of that relations from the point of view of modern liberal and democratic systems on which the Western world is based. And Polish people feel being the part of this world or at least, they aspire to be its part.

We cannot rightly explain the relation: *state – religion* or more precise relation: *liberal-democratic state – the Catholic Church* without any reference to the normative order established in the frame of a concrete normative political philosophy. In our case, obviously it is liberalism which is a doctrinal base for evolving a form of democracy called *liberal democracy*. Of course, liberal political philosophy is not a creator of the democracy or it does not monopolize this normative category and form of rule. But the democracy as an attribute of the Western world and the EU member states is a liberal one. However, we can meet its different

---

<sup>1</sup> Whenever I use the term *Church*, I mean the institutional Church represented by bishops, priests and monks. I do not use this term regard to the community of believers, and of course, I am also far from an ecclesiological understanding of the term as a *mystical body of Christ*.

conditions and also attempts to establish any form of national substitutions of it, as for example *sovereign democracy*. Despite this phenomenon, the liberal democracy is a normative scheme of political system of the West. So, we have to refer to the normative approach evaluating the state of democracy in the Western countries, and these ones when aspiring to be a part of the West. This normative standpoint shows us how liberal democracy should function, also in the state-religion aspect. Omitting this normative reference point makes any discussion dedicated to the state of democracy in any country losing the sense because the democracy examined using pure empirical methods without referring anyhow to the normative order can take different forms which are so unlike each other that the term *democracy* is becoming empty and researches dedicated to this topic are senseless. Briefly speaking, the democracy and also the liberal democracy, is meaningless if we do not refer to the principles and values decisive for fulfilling the democratic and liberal criteria of any political system. This reference makes us enabled (or disabled) to call this system as *democratic* and *liberal democratic*.

Presentation of the *state – the Catholic Church* relation in Poland in the normative context makes us also discern some paradox of the Polish system's transformation and Polish path to democracy. It enables us to observe a proper sense of the current political situation in Poland where an evolution of the political system in direction of so-called *illiberal democracy* could be noticed. The attitude of the Catholic hierarchy in this matter, however ambiguous, is essential and deserves also for evaluation from the both sides, i.e. from the aspect of the liberal theory as well as social Catholic doctrine as expressed in the official formula, so-called *Magisterium ecclesiae*, especially in the documents of the Second Vatican Council, Code of Canon Law and social and moral teachings of popes. So, this paper also refers to the normative system formed within the Catholic social philosophy. Due to that the attitude of Catholic clergy can be understood at least partially, and simultaneously evaluated not only based on the liberal criteria but also those formed by the Church tradition and law.

Naturally, rather limited form of this paper makes me only signalize the key issues, taking them into synthetic consideration and not making them a subject of detailed analysis.

### **Religion in the Liberal Political Philosophy and the Practice of the Liberal Democracy**

The attitude of the classic liberal political philosophy to the religion is not of an antagonistic character as it would seem to be. However, while the Western modern societies, which were forming the Catholic Church, treated liberalism as an ideological and political enemy, often condemning its principles – I mean especially pope Pius IX and his famous *Syllabus* – or representing at least sceptical position like Leo XIII, the successor of Pius IX [3], classic liberalism did not reveal anti-church or antireligious inclinations. Of course, the critics of religion and particularly of the Catholic Church appeared in liberal writings but these could not be considered a belligerent atheism. In fact, liberalism undermined an authoritarian status of the Catholic Church and papacy, proclaiming the ideas of tolerance and ideological pluralism and reducing their position to one equal subject of public debate. So, the position which liberalism designated to the religion alongside with different denominations refuted the myth of the Church as a depository of truth and not only religious truth but also moral, social and political one cultivated for centuries. Unwavering position of the Catholic Church and papacy as a universal religious, moral and political authority was constantly contravened during the Reformation. Relativization of the universal truth of the faith which the Catholic Church was the depository had its political aspect. It was a principle *cuius regio, eius religio* as a result of deal that was to give a permanent religious peace. However, that principle did not establish a tolerance but guaranteed a monopolization of religion by a particular depository, i.e. by a sovereign. Although, we can generally state that philosophy of liberalism was inscribed in tradition of the Reformation, but in this matter, it was in an opposition to the 17<sup>th</sup> compromise

settlement of religious conflicts, i.e. the principle *cuius regio, eius religio* [4]. But in fact, as John Stuart Mill convinced in his essay *On Liberty*, both standpoints – liberal and protestant ones – were relevant in a doctrinal aspect. Individual consciences became an ultimate and sole instance on the earth that decides on affirmation or rejection of any religion and ideology [5].

Liberalism, thanks to John Locke, formulated the principle of epistemological neutrality as a method of overcoming permanent religious, theological and ideological disputes. It means *de facto* a lack of existence of instance settling this kind of disputes. Politicization of those disputes motivated the religious communities, especially the Protestants, to search for allies among the secular rulers who got in return a religious sanction and guarantee of their rules. In fact, it led to subordination of religion to the politics, and negated a religious tolerance as an opposite to the reason of state.

It should be clearly stated that the liberal doctrine in its classic approach is not identical with negation of the religious truth but it means a lack of affirmation of the “earthly” judge who could determine this truth [6]. A will of preventing a religious conflict during the Reformation led to subordination of religion to the secular power – monarchs became heads of the local Churches in the protestant countries and in England – and religion gained the status of a national one.

This state formally still exists in some countries. However, the progressive retreat from this practice of existence of national Churches can be observed for example in Sweden in 2000 and in Norway in 2012 [7]. The Lutheran Church enjoys also status of national church in republican system of Island. The bishop of Reykjavik is its head instead of monarchs as in monarchies [8].

Although, the Scandinavian countries, and the United Kingdom even more, can be treated as implementation patterns of principles of political liberal philosophy under which the institutions of liberal democracy work efficiently, the status of national Church observed here, or as found in the case of Sweden and Norway, prove not to be based on liberal intellectual tradition. John Locke in his *Epistola de tolerantia (A Letter Concerning Toleration)*, undoubtedly representing a puritan mentality and endeavouring to save a pure faith, wished to prove that the path to this faith does not lead through the state’s coercion but through the love and charity:

*If the Gospel and the Apostles may be credited, no Man can be a Christian without Charity, and without that Faith which works, not by Force, but by Love* [9].

Locke finds an involvement of the secular rulers in the spiritual issues as a symptom of dangerous hypocrisy. Violence against persons who do not confirm a belief sanctioned by the state power is a result of hypocrisy. Usurping the right of settlement in religious issues by the secular power is oriented for an additional, religious legitimacy that is to guarantee a sacredness and divine sanction for this power. It is in a clear opposition to the liberal doctrine; and a liberal contractualism sets up a free and conscious decision of citizens in creating the political power.

But the power recalling the authority of religion puts itself above the will of citizens and is looking for its legitimization in a will of God. Even more, then this power is becoming irremovable. Locke was convinced that the aim of secular power is different than aim of religion. The first one is to guarantee good conditions of earthly life while the religion is expected to fulfil a soteriological mission. Thus, the secular power cannot enhance its competences on the issue of salvation of its citizens and generally on spiritual issues [4, p. 74].

*Now that the whole jurisdiction of the magistrate reaches only to these civil concerns, and that all civil power, right and dominion, is bounded and confined to the only care of promoting these things; and that it neither can nor ought in any manner to be extended to the salvation of souls, these following considerations seem unto me abundantly to demonstrate [...] Now that the whole jurisdiction of the magistrate reaches only to these civil concerns, and that all civil power, right and dominion, is bounded and confined to the only care of promoting*

*these things; and that it neither can nor ought in any manner to be extended to the salvation of souls, these following considerations seem unto me abundantly to demonstrate* [9, p. 7].

Hitherto the considerations and recalled argumentation by Locke are concerning rather a necessity to limit the competences of secular power in the religious and spiritual sphere.

However, they indirectly indicate understanding of religious issues as a private sphere that is merely a subject of evaluation of individual conscience [4, p. 78]. Human being is not born as a member of concrete denomination. Choosing the Church or religious community is an act of reason and free will of any person. Thus, any religion cannot postulate a right to be treated in a special way and using the secular power as an armed arm disciplining member of own community and real or potential heretics. As secular power cannot interfere in spiritual and ideological issues of their citizens (is the only exemption is when a religion or any religious community threatens the national security), such religion or the Church should be merely involved in spiritual affairs and realization of its most important target, i.e. salvation of their believers. The Church should not duplicate a secular power, making itself occupied with material and “earthly” problems. Issues as freedom, personal inviolability, and the right of property should be a domain of state [4, p. 79]. Separation of both functions, i.e. spiritual and secular, comprises a base for the principle of tolerance which leads to the permanent peace and thus mitigates any tensions arising from confessional and ideological cleavages in any society.

Thus, no ruler can claim the right to be a spiritual leader as well as the Church cannot instrumentally treat the public power because a care for salvation of believers stays its basic mission.

Representatives of the contemporary liberalism express themselves in a similar way. They do oppose the confusing secular and religious authority [10]. As John Rawls notices that

*The state can favour no particular religion and no penalties or disabilities may be attached to any religious affiliation or lack thereof. The notion of a confessional state is rejected. [...] the state upholds moral and religious liberty* [1, p. 186].

The sentence of above citation seems to be a basic premise for determination of the relation between state and religion in contemporary liberal democracies. Obviously, particular legal solutions of the relation are various in different countries; in political practice we can meet diverse models of presence of religion in public life: from the French model, so-called negative *laïcité* where religion and religious emblems is displaced from the public sphere, to the moderate German model, so-called coordinated separation setting up a mutual autonomy as well as cooperation on the line state – religious communities [11].

### **Relation state – the Church in the light of *Magisterium ecclesiae***

This context requires to briefly provide how the official social doctrine of the Catholic Church expressed in the form of *Magisterium* of the Church perceives relation between the state and the Church and how the idea of secular state is treated. Various theological conceptions are not going to be referred here, the papers are rather focus here only on the standpoint of the institutional Church. The fact that the standpoint of the Catholic Church regarding the relation between the Church and state evolved fundamentally should be remarked here. Until the Second Vatican Council, the teaching of Pope Leo XIII, who is often found – in my opinion incorrectly – as a modernist, took effect. He rejected the idea of the separation of the Church and state as well as religious neutrality of the state [12].

The essential change in discernment of the *state – Church* relation occurred in the Catholic Church during the Second Vatican Council. The Church recalling the principle of the religious freedom, resigned from the postulate of Catholic character of state<sup>2</sup> [12, p. 58]. In the Pastoral

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<sup>2</sup> Declaration on Religious Freedom *Dignitatis Humanae* on the Right of the Person and of Communities to Social and Civil Freedom in Matters Religious Promulgated by His Holiness Pope Paul VI on December 7, 1965,

Constitution *Gaudium et spes* dedicated to the role of the Church in the contemporary world, the Council participants expressed it directly saying: *The Church and the political community in their own fields are autonomous and independent from each other*<sup>3</sup>. They reminded that the proper mission of the Church according to the spirit of the Gospel is of religious character. It is not political and social or economic mission<sup>3 (no. 42)</sup>. That is why the clergies should be moderate in their engagement in political affairs, avoiding any direct involvement. It should be rather a domain of laics<sup>4</sup>. The Canon Law does not prohibit a political engagement of priests and monks but only *to assume public offices which entail a participation in the exercise of civil power*<sup>5</sup>. Because of the fact that a proper mission of the Church is a preaching of the Gospel and its peaceful message, *Codex iuris canonici* prohibits them *an active part in political parties and in governing labor unions*. However, this prohibition can be suspended by the proper Church authorities *if the protection of the rights of the Church or the promotion of the common good requires it*<sup>5 (can. 287, § 1 and 2)</sup>.

A reference to the political philosophy of liberalism could be found here, however not expressed directly. The Church did not manage to be cut off from politics in a radical way. It continues its social teaching mission. Various documents dedicated to social, economic and political issues, especially papal encyclical letters as well as pastoral letters of episcopates represent an important voice of the Church in the political discourse. The universal Church as well as local Churches has their right to express their own opinions in the public space. So, the moderation in political engagement does not mean ignorance in this matter. It is absolutely understandable because of the character of the mission of the Church that concerns not only soteriological issues but also social ones, rather widely understood. In my opinion, no postulates proving any return to the idea of *Catholic state* could be found in modern official documents of the Catholic Church. This kind of “state” was obviously in opposition to the pluralist society.

But the Church distances from this category. Briefly speaking, the Church with its social teaching penetrates into the public sphere, however lacking any self - identification, at least in a declarative dimension, with an active participation in the politics, separating a sphere of *sacrum* – religious activity from the sphere *profanum*, where the political activity is performed.

However, the Church encourages the believers to their active participation in political life of their country, and to implement Christian values and principles in the public spheres. The Church sees the engagement of the laity as a moral obligation of Christians – citizens<sup>6</sup>.

Restraint in political activity should be characteristic only for the institutional Church, i.e. its hierarchy and clergy.

### **Political Engagement of the Catholic Clergy in Poland – Attempt of Assessment**

Many examples of the public activity of the Catholic Church in Poland could be evaluated from the liberal normative political theory point of view. Due to the scope of this paper, only three issues are referred here as (1) political engagement of clerics and their support for concrete political parties and politicians; (2) participation in the public discourse; (3) sacralisation of the Polish public life.

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[http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_decl\\_19651207\\_dignitatis-humanae\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651207_dignitatis-humanae_en.html) [2018-03-28].

<sup>3</sup> Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et spes* Promulgated by His Holiness Pope Paul VI on December 7, 1965, pp. 76, <https://tinyurl.com/34xrhq> [2018-03-28].

<sup>4</sup> Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Pentium* Solemnly Promulgated by His Holiness Pope Paul VI on November 21, 1964, <https://tinyurl.com/3wxff> [2018-02-28].

<sup>5</sup> *Codex iuris canonici* (*Code of Canon Law*), can. 285, § 3, <https://tinyurl.com/3o2py> [2018-03-28].

<sup>6</sup> John Paul II. (1987). Encyclical *Sollicitudo rei socialis*, no. 44, [http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_30121987\\_sollicitudo-rei-socialis.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_30121987_sollicitudo-rei-socialis.html) [2018-03-28].

While beginning the following considerations regarding the political engagement of the Church hierarchy and clergy in Poland, an attention should be paid on to the two issues. Firstly, the current activity of the Catholic clergy in a political sphere stays misunderstood unless the role of the Catholic Church in Polish society in the past is explained, especially during the communism. Secondly, it needs to be realised that the Catholic Church in Poland is not a monolith entity. But its depiction in mass media and in common imagination as a traditionalist and conservative organization should be seen as a result of activity made by specific Catholic circles which are currently the most recognizable. This depiction is oversimplified because in the Polish Church also other more liberal stream could be found. In my considerations, I refer to a traditionalist part of the Polish Catholicism because of its political engagement and clear political orientation. Here, an attention should be only paid on the fact that the Catholic Church in Poland shows different shapes. But the goal of this paper requires to choose the most emblematic one for purposes of the reflection given here, so I decided to concentrate on the traditionalist wing of the Polish Catholicism.

It is a common conviction that the Catholic Church played a very important role in the process of democratization in Poland. In the period of communism, the Church was a particular space of freedom and development of civic society. Under the auspices of the Church, some press titles independent from the communist authorities were founded, e.g. *Tygodnik Powszechny* or monthly *Znak*. Also, Catholic publishing houses need to be mentioned together with the clubs of Catholic intelligentsia or committees of aids for oppressed persons as well as Catholic universities, with the greatest Catholic University seated in Lublin. Generally speaking, the Catholic clergy provided a moral and material support for society and also for Polish oppositionists [13]. At least two of the following reasons are those enabling these conditions, specific for communist regimes, of the first one was based on the mass scale and vitality of the Catholic Church in Poland. Communist authorities felt to respect such strong adversary. Secondly, Polish communist regime was relatively mild. Of course, there were some victims of the regime in Poland, especially in a Stalinist period (1948-1956) when the repressions were of a public character – imprisonment of the Polish primate Stefan Wyszyński should be mentioned here. But considering the background of other communist systems in the Eastern bloc, the Polish communism proved to be, in fact, a quite moderate form of totalitarian regime. The communists wished to gain Polish Catholics and even clergy for cooperation. That is why many priests, also prominent hierarchs and professors of Catholic universities were involved in cooperation with communist secret police. Undoubtedly, it is still a dark and embarrassing page of the history of the Catholic Church in Poland [14]. We can find scholars who underline ambivalent attitude of the Church towards the communist authorities. In these interpretations, the Church was a victim and opponent of communism from the one hand as well as a beneficiary, especially in the last decades of communist regime, from other hand [15].

But we cannot cross out merits of the Catholic Church in a process of creating a relatively comfortable existence of civic society and in support of oppositional activity, even if the scale of cooperation of clerics with communist regimes as well as its secret services is taken into account.

And these issues which undoubtedly represent a contribution of the Catholic Church in the democratization process in Poland, after 1989 it became, in opinions of some clerics and right-wing politicians, a sufficient justification for political, social and economic claims of the Church. During the period of system transformation, the Church permanently has increased its position, it effectively lobbied for many profitable legal, social and economic solutions as for example public financing of Catholic universities. But generally, it fulfils standards of a democratic state – the Church plays the role of an interest group [16]. However, it obviously can be a subject of justified doubts of ethical nature. But an interference of a part of Polish Catholic hierarchy and clergy in election campaigns comprises much more serious problem. I

mean primarily support for right-wing parties by the clerics, currently mainly for party called *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość* [Law and Justice]. Their support to these parties is often evident.

Clerics display themselves as members of honorary committees to support for right-wing politicians, using the church pulpits as a place for proclaiming their political propaganda and conducting electoral campaigns. Finally, they engage in the mass media defined as Catholic to promote concrete political parties and politicians. I mean here mostly all “media empire” of rev. Tadeusz Rydzyk, the member of Congregation of the most Holy Redeemer, founder of *Radio Maryja*, newspaper *Nasz Dziennik*, Television *Trwam* as well as a private college teaching among the other future journalists.

But even in the face of the evident examples of active political involvement of the part of Polish clergy, the issue is not obvious and cannot be unequivocally evaluated on the base of either liberal political philosophy or the Catholic doctrine. Clerics as citizens are granted rights to express their political opinions and ideologies. However, similarly as representatives of some other professions, e.g. judges, policemen, professional soldiers, they are expected to be non-partisan showing their apolitical character when conducting their religious duties. The priest, naturally, can have their private political opinion but as a private person; when being a representative of the Church they cannot or at least are required not to disclose their private political opinions and ideologies publicly. And as a priest is not a priest in “opening” hours only but permanently, then recommendation of avoiding them from any active involvement in political affairs should obligate priests permanently as well. Moreover, a temple as the place devoted to God is not a proper place for any political agitation. Although, clerics do not break a canon prohibition of accepting the secular offices or membership in political organizations – simply no evidence is proved confirming the fact that they do it – but we observe that the principle of separation of both orders, i.e. religious and secular ones, is violated. Some clerics – and it is quite large number, however not exactly quantified, of course – postulate the right to engage not only in religious affairs but also using religious authority they want to subordinate themselves to the political sphere. This tendency reveals also on local level and maybe even more than on the national one. Support of the clergy given in the democratic system, so in the conditions which are not an efficient justification for the protection of rights of the Church or protection of the common good, to politicians of concrete political faction should be recognized as an attempt of subordination, at least intentionally, of secular affairs to spiritual power. In this way, the principle of secular state as well as principle of tolerance and autonomy of the state towards the religion has been broken. Taking into account opportunistic attitudes of Polish political decision-makers towards the Church, I defined this tendency in functional aspect as a withdrawal – from the idea and practice of the secular state few years ago [17]. This attitude can provoke tensions in social relations and in fact does so. Believers of other religions or denominations, non-believers as well as members of the Catholic Church not approving the political involvement of their Church, express their objections to influence of the Church in Polish politics and its attempts to impose legal regulations according to their own standpoint.

The most current emblematic demonstration of opposition to the Church hierarchy is a *black protest* of Polish women against tightening the anti-abortion law.

I have to note here also very unlucky activity of a part of the Polish clergy. In the aforementioned political involvement of a part of the Catholic Church in Poland. The promotion of nationalism has been inscribed. We could observe how Polish churches became a place of manifestations of nationalists. It would be enough to mention here two events, i.e. presence of nationalist youth in the national sanctuary *Jasna Góra* during liturgy organized specially for this group or participation of nationalists with their emblems in the cathedral church in Białystok. Xenophobic, nationalist and anti-Semitic motives could be also observed in statements or preaches of some clerics. These opinions are also expressed in so-called Catholic media [18]. It obviously can lead to strengthening a myth of “Pole – Catholic” that is quite



popular in the Polish society. But not only in the Polish one, could similar attitudes be seen also in neighbouring Slovakia [19]. This myth is based on two premises: (1) ethnic understanding of the category of “nation”; (2) organic combination of ethnic nation and religion. It is obvious that both of them violate one of basic principles of democratic society defined by Robert Dahl as *an inclusive citizenship* [20]. It is not hard to image a potential situation that person excluded from the ethnically understood nation loses own political rights what is in contrary to the liberal political philosophy as well as to the Catholic social doctrine.

A different topic is a right to speak in public space, especially in case of important social, political and moral issues, as also addressed to the institutional Church. If looking at this topic from the Locke’s political philosophy expressed in his *Letter Concerning Toleration*, then also this activity can raise doubts because Locke defined and limited the aim of the religion to soteriological mission<sup>7</sup>. However, if wider context of liberal democracy and its principle of pluralism are taken into account, then any other state institution cannot forbid the Church represented by hierarchy and clergy to express its standpoint in the public space and to be a subject of public discourse. The freedom of speech is addressed also to the Church as an institution. The role of the Church in this aspect was defined by one Polish priest and professor of political science at the Catholic university who states:

*The Church has not got any public and legal official authority but its arguments weigh as much as they weigh in the public discussion. That is why important is not their Christian origin but a political and ethical power of persuasion. [...] bishops and priests [...] have got a right as other citizens to be engaged in politics in each of its dimensions* [11, p. 223-225].

A problem appears then when the clerics claim a special right that gives them extraordinary position or even domination in the public discourse; then the Church or its clergy and organizations become not an ordinary participant of the public debate but informal decision-maker which is able to impose the shape of law, the character of social and political relations or norms of social attitudes. The observation of the Polish public life confirms existence of these tendencies among bishops and priests. They often play not only the role of participant of the public discourse but also of the power exerting the pressure on the government or parliament. A restrictive anti-abortion law could be mentioned in this context as well as the current attempts of making this law stricter, insinuations to prohibit *in vitro* method– in this case some clerics threatened members of the parliament with their excommunication or insinuations not to ratify the *Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence*. The Church proves having also influence on the shape of curriculums at schools or mass media system that is based on Christian values [17, p. 152]. In my opinion, the borderline of the freedom of activity for the Church has been over- crossed many times; clergy has become a privileged participant of the public debate and political life. In the functional aspect, it obviously violates the principle of secular state and state autonomy. The result of this practice is seen in discrimination of those persons and organizations that do not share the Catholic ideology or simply disagree with an inference of clergy to the secular affairs. Moreover, the past insistence of the Catholic hierarchy on the form of the Constitution should be recognized as a symptom of discrimination of non-Catholics which has also appeared in the newest political history of Poland. The main postulate concerned a preamble and inscribed there a formula of so-called *Invocatio Dei*. During the debates, other postulates of the Church appeared in debate then, for example the constitutional prohibition of abortion or recognition of supremacy of natural law. And although some scholars close to the conservative circles underline that postulates of the Church hierarchs do not negate the secular character of state and do not violate the democratic order [22], it is not hard to predict that these constitutional regulations would

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<sup>7</sup> Liberalizing Spanish philosopher Miguel de Unamuno (1864-1936) expressed it pointedly: [God] revealed that his good tidings had nothing with socio-economic or national questions, as little with democracy or international demagogy as with nationalism [21].

contribute to evident discrimination of non-Catholics. And honestly, we have to state that some Polish representatives of the Church, as Bishop Tadeusz Pieronek, have already paid attention on this problem, too [23].

The sacralisation of the Polish public space is the next issue that raises controversies. This phenomenon brings presence of the religious symbols in the state and self-government offices, at public schools and universities as well as presence of representatives of the Church and the Catholic liturgy during national ceremonies or building of religious monuments outside of sacral space. It causes the situation when non-believers or believers of other religions and denominations and non-denominational persons can feel excluded from the national community. It can strengthen conviction that Poland is a confessional state where the Catholic Church and its hierarchy has been given a dominating position in the public life. But we have to honestly state that politicians are a source of initiatives of sacralisation of the public life.

They very often treat the Church and religion instrumentally to use them for the political aims. So, they are directly responsible for this situation [22, p. 30]. Thanks to that they count on votes of traditional electorate for which the cleric is an authority and not only in religious affairs but also in secular ones. This attitude testifies on authoritarian inclination so strongly deep-rooted in the Polish society, or at least in some of its part: these people do not make a choice or vote referring to own reasons, on their personal recognition of reality and critical assessment of reality, they rather vote and decide basing their voices on the trust to an authority that is to indicate them the way to support their choice. And the local priest is often such an authority. These attitudes do not favour liberal democracy and its development.

## Conclusions

This paper is to only signalise some issues pertain to relation between the state and the Church in Poland. The general assessment of the participation of the Catholic hierarchy and clergy in the Polish public and political life was more important for me than a description of the concrete situations. Regarding this assessment, we can say that it is not unequivocal, especially in the situation when we speak about the Church as a whole. I rather wanted to avoid this kind of assessment. However, pointing at such attitudes revealed by the Polish Catholic clergy as a direct engagement in electoral campaigns, treating of the Church teaching as an overriding institution in the public discourse, alliance with nationalist groups or sacralisation of the public space, the paper was to convince that they are in opposition to the political philosophy of liberalism and also can be contrary to official doctrine of the Catholic Church.

Observers of the situation do not have to be a follower of an idea to reduce the social function of the Church to the soteriological mission only, to admit that the principle of ideological neutrality of the state can be threaten considering such strong position of the Catholic hierarchy in the public and political lives. The Catholic Church in Poland or in fact some of its fractions and organizations (as aforementioned *Radio Maryja*) do not represent an equal partner of widely understood public discourse. The Church seems to be a dominating side, monopolizing the “truth”, which can effectively impose its own visions as a legal, social and economic regulations and solutions. Especially, the current Polish authorities concentrated around *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość* and its leader Jarosław Kaczyński adulate clergy realizing social, economic and cultural ideas of representatives of the Church.

The key question appears here. Does the Republic of Poland still fulfil the criteria of the secular state? Followers of the Catholic and national right-wing allergically react to the term of the *secular state*, seeing the institutional Church as a subject of attacks from the left-wing and liberal groups. While their extreme adversaries see the threat for the secularity of the state in each public speech of the Catholic hierarchs or priest. Surely, this popular assessment depends on ideology or specific social and political sensibility. But on the ground of the liberal political

philosophy, a complex answer must be given. So, from the constitutional aspect, the Republic of Poland is still the secular state. However, we have to see also the functional aspect. And here, the secularity of the state can be threatened, and with secularity also the liberal principles, i.e. pluralism and tolerance.

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# Cooperative Security in a Changing World. A Theoretical Approach

**MOISE Octavia<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> SNSPA (ROMANIA)

Email: moiseoctavia@yahoo.com

## Abstract

Recent evolutions of security challenge the ability of great actors to respond but also the explanatory capacity of theories. The diversification of threats and conflicts in an era in which the cooperative approach seemed to be the norm questions the capacity of cooperative security as a theoretical approach to explain and foresee, and as a strategic concept to produce effective results. Cooperative security appeared as a policy concept of the North Atlantic Alliance and as an attempt of various scholars to theorise it in order to sustain a cooperative approach of security encompassing the Euro Atlantic Community but also Asia (Mihalka) and Russia (R. Cohen). Recent events in the Middle East, North Africa and Eastern Europe indicate that this goal is far and difficult to be reached. In the light of the abovementioned facts, the purpose of this paper is to expose a concept from the policy area (cooperative security) to academic criteria in order to see if it is and if it works as an effective security concept, following the attempt of O. Waever and using the specifications of D. Baldwin.

Therefore, the research question tries to find out “what are the circumstances in which the cooperative security can work as an effective security concept”. The hypothesis of this article states that “cooperative security can be an effective security concept if it states what is security and how can security be achieved”. The methodology employs qualitative analysis, the comparative method, more for finding relationships between variables based on different cases than for measuring them, and also a normative approach, as it aims at indicating how security should be achieved. The objectives of this essay are to operationalize cooperative security, to discover whether it is an effective security concept and how should the concept be applied and improved in order to function effectively.

Concerning the structure of the paper, in the first chapter I will explain through a literature review what is a security concept and what is cooperative security. The second chapter, the methodological one will operationalize the concept and establish the dimensions/specifications.

Moreover, I will select the criteria to proceed with the comparative study. In the third chapter I will provide the comparative study and present the results of the research. The grid analysis of the comparative study will be represented by the questions of D. Baldwin on what a security theory is. The first subject of the comparison will be represented by the responses offered by theoretical approaches, the second one by NATO’s strategic documents, and the third one by NATO’s concrete measures. Therefore, in the first part I will approach cooperative security as a concept, trying to see if it is an effective security concept, stating what security is and how it can be achieved. Second, I will approach cooperative security strategically, questioning what is to be achieved by launching this concept, through NATO strategic documents. Third, I will approach the practical translation into measures of the concept, analyzing NATO’s actions systemically.

*Keywords: cooperative security, security theory, NATO*