

RELIGIOUS PLURALISM IN THE POST-SOCIALIST SOCIETIES OF EAST-CENTRAL EUROPE: THEORETICAL REFLECTIONS ON A LITHUANIAN RESEARCH PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

In this article I present the rudiments of a theoretical approach to the religious field in Lithuania. These reflections are part of an ongoing process of designing a research project on religious and moral pluralism. Religious pluralism is a fairly recent feature of East-Central European societies. When religion was suppressed by the socialist regimes after World War II, the church, especially the Catholic Church, became part of a polarized social experience built upon the dichotomy of the *state* versus the unified *nation*. In many countries the church established itself as the guardian of a national Christian tradition and claimed a moral monopoly on people's values. Appearing as gross oversimplifications, presented in the article theoretical reflections can serve as helpful stepping-stones in the process of combining theoretical models and grassroots ethnography.

KEY WORDS: socio-cultural anthropology, post-soviet societies, religious tolerance, religious pluralism, moral pluralism, approach to the religious field, religious capital.

ANOTACIJA

Straipsnyje pateikiamas teorinio požiūrio į religijos sritis posovietinėse visuomenėse užuomazgos, susikūrusios rengiant religinio ir moralinio pliuralizmo Lietuvoje tyrimo projektą. Lietuvos pavyzdys rodo, kad didžioji dalis posovietinių valstybių nenoriai priima įteisintą religinės tolerancijos ideologiją. Straipsnis pateikia pliuralizmo analizę „iš apačios“, siūlydamas socialinės srities, kur individų sprendimai paremti vertybiniu pliuralizmu ir asmenine religinio pliuralizmo samprata, tyrimo kelis teorinio modelio komponentus. Apžvelgiamos socialinės mokslinės priegios prie religinio pliuralizmo srities ir prie asmeninio pasirinkimo problemų apskritai. Aptariamas racionalus religinės teorijos pasirinkimas, religinio lauko koncepcija ir „dvasinio kapitalo“ sąvokos modifikacija.

PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: sociokultūrinė antropologija, posovietinės visuomenės, religinė tolerancija, religinis pliuralizmas, moralinis pliuralizmas, religinio lauko koncepcija, dvasinis kapitalas.

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In this article I will present the rudiments of a theoretical approach to the religious field in Lithuania. These reflections are part of an ongoing process of designing a research project on religious and moral pluralism. Religious pluralism is a fairly recent feature of East-Central European societies. Christian churches were key symbolic resources in the nation-building processes of the 19th and early 20th centuries. When religion was – more or less effectively – suppressed by the socialist regimes after World War II, the church, especially the Catholic Church, became part of a polarized social experience built upon the dichotomy of the *state* versus the unified *nation*. In many countries the church established itself as the guardian of a national Christian tradition and claimed a moral monopoly on people's values. This notion of a polarized social world disintegrated with the fall of socialism. People began to search for new moralities and meanings that were appropriate for their experience of rapid social change. The church lost its unique moral status and is now being called into question along with other social institutions. Many newly imported Western ideas were

not readily compatible with the Christian worldview, but most churches were ill prepared or even unwilling to enter into a dialogue with other faiths in the new pluralist public sphere. This has led to a shift in the churches' attention away from political issues to morality and family values. Only in some instances (most notably in Russia, cf. Knox 2005) has the dominant church been successful in cementing its position in society with the help of religious legislation that sanctions the national church's dominance.

After the first postsocialist years that saw a massive increase in the identification with the Christian faith, a much more complex mosaic of beliefs and attitudes in the religious field has now emerged. Anthropology has only recently begun to direct its attention to the subject of religion in postsocialism. Sociological surveys have made numerous efforts to categorize religious identifications in the new pluralist environment. Detlef Pollack, for example, identifies four general tendencies as typical for the religious situation in postsocialist societies: the individualization of belief, a personal variation in the attachment to church organizations, a tendency toward an impersonal affiliation with the church, and the rise of beliefs in occult/esoteric ideas and practices (Pollack 1998: 36-37). In general Pollack observes a decrease in trust in the church and a weakening of the link between religiosity and church membership and simultaneously, an increase in the social relevance of new or 'alternative' religions (for other survey data, see Pollack 2003; Ramet 1998; Tomka 1998, 2002). A highly detailed ideal-typology of positions toward the church has been developed by Eileen Barker (1997) who distinguishes among 'continuing attenders' (i.e., people who attended church even during socialist times); 'traditionalists' (i.e., people who identify with the church as part of the nation's cultural heritage); 'atheists'; 'pending-tray' (i.e., people who regard religion as a luxury for which they have no time at present); 'revivalists' (i.e., people who are motivated by a general interest in religion, but not in one specific church); 'belongers-not-believers' (i.e., people who have supported the church due to its opposition to socialism or do so today as the 'right' place to meet the 'right' people); 'religious seekers' (i.e., people who are dissatisfied with the dominant church and seek for answers in alternative religions); 'New Age seekers' (i.e., people of the same disposition focused specifically on the quest for personal spiritual enlightenment); and 'consumerists' (i.e., people who seek to advance their careers through church affiliation). As this typology shows, there are people who do not consider religion a relevant part of their lives and source of moral attitudes. These individuals may attend church on special occasions, more for reason of social conformity than faith, but otherwise embrace a secular lifestyle. Among this group are likely to belong, broadly speaking, the better educated, urban, well-to-do upper and middle classes rather than the rural underclass (cf. Gaertner et al. 2003). Such people may still seek recourse to the booming quasi-religious sector of occult and magical services that has been described in detail for Russia by Galina Lindquist (2000a, 2000b, 2001, 2002).

Such questions about individual religious identification do not contradict the immense public relevance of religion – most particularly the dominant national churches – as a powerful resource of in- and exclusion, of nation building, and state legitimization. In many postsocialist countries ideas of nationalism are closely tied to the dominant church, a situation which accords to this church a political role in the public sphere that is likely to exceed its relevance in everyday life. On the other hand, a trend toward public civil religion can also be observed (cf. Casanova 1994). Religion may be mobilized in defence of traditional lifeworlds against state and market penetration by questioning the claims of state and market to function without regard to extrinsic moral norms.

Thus, one of the key questions in the analysis of religion in postsocialist countries concerns this relation between public and private, between state and civil notions of religion.

So how is anthropology supposed to engage with postsocialist religious pluralism as a subject of ethnographic enquiry? Any anthropological analysis must take the term's dual meaning into account. While on the one hand, religious pluralism simply describes the coexistence of a plurality of religions in a given society, it also refers to an attitude that considers all religions to some extent as equal and as potential options for selection. Such an ideology of religious pluralism is likely to be promoted by policymakers influenced by 'Western' ideas of democratic society but is just as likely to be rejected by conservative institutions such as the church. As one of the key concepts of Western liberal democracy, religious pluralism implies a political ideology of tolerance.

A brief glance at the Lithuanian situation shows that the legal construction of religions is rather far removed from this pluralistic ideal. Freedom of thought, conscience, and religion has been laid down in the Lithuanian Constitution. Nevertheless, religious freedom has been constrained in practice by other legislation. In 1995 the 'Law on Religious Communities and Associations of the Republic of Lithuania' was passed which has been amended in a more restrictive manner in 2002. While recognizing no state religion, it established a four-tier system of recognition of religious communities (traditional, state-recognized, registered, unregistered). Nine religions are defined as 'traditional', because they are considered part of the historical, intellectual, and social heritage of Lithuania: the Roman Catholic Church, the Russian Orthodox Church, Old Believers, the Lutheran Church, the Evangelical Reformed Church, Sunni Islam, Judaism, the Greek Catholic Church, and Karaism. Their status has been declared irrevocable by later court rulings. Both 'traditional' and 'state-recognized' religious communities are eligible for receiving state subsidies, are exempt from certain dues and taxes and can register marriages. Only 'traditional' communities receive state subsidies on a regular basis, have the right to teach religion in state schools and are allowed to buy (rather than lease) land to build churches. In order to achieve state-recognition, religious communities have to be registered for 25 years and then submit an application that includes a statement on their teachings and aims. These are reviewed by the Ministry of Justice as to their consistency with human rights, freedom, and public order. Only one community, the Baptist Church, has so far been successful in achieving state recognition. The application process of the Pagan religious community of *Ramuva* has been suspended in 2002 following objections by the Catholic Church. The granting of legal status as registered religious communities must also be approved by the Ministry of Justice. Only two applications were ever turned down, both in 1995, that of the Osho Ojas Meditation Centre and that of a small non-*Ramuva* Pagan group.

In the following I will now focus on the analysis of pluralism 'from below'. Anthropology's focus on ethnographic field studies of situated cultural practice is well suited to analyze the contexts where individuals' decisions are based on a plurality of values. By focusing on local micro-perspectives, ethnographic research can also aptly explore the question how – or if – political readings of pluralism really impact individual's perceptions.

A condition of religious plurality is most immediately addressed by the rational choice theory of religion. This version of sociological rational choice theory, which has been propagated in particular by economist Laurence R. Iannaccone and sociologists like Roger Finke and Rodney Stark (see Starke 1999, Stark and Finke 2000 for its most recent comprehensive presentations), treats religious beliefs as the result of instrumentally-rational selection on a market of religious 'firms' where supply generates demand. Critics (cf. Jerolmack & Porpora 2004) have argued that the notion of

psychological egoism at the base of the rational choice theory of religion completely excludes not only the realm of experience, but also other forms of rationality such as epistemic and normative rationality. Moreover, even if the metaphor of the market may be appropriate for a social situation like that in East-Central Europe (the rational choice model has been applied – with little more than common-sense findings – to the religious field of East-Central Europe by Froese 2001 and Froese & Pfaff 2001), the rational choice model fails to take into account the specifics of any country's socio-historical background. Despite such reservations, rational choice theory's merit lays in the fact that it specifically addresses religious pluralism as a condition where individuals exercise some kind of rationality in the selection of their religious affiliations.

A more nuanced approach to religious pluralism is Pierre Bourdieu's concept of the 'religious field' as the space where religious identities are developed and articulated. Bourdieu defines a field as 'a network, or configuration, of objective relations between positions' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1991: 97). He describes it as a circumscribed social space organized around a specific form of capital, or in other words, as the social setting of the habitus (the following section is based on Bourdieu 1990, 2000; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992; on Bourdieu's approach to religion, see also Rey 2004, Swartz 1997). The religious field is thus an arena of struggle over the production, accumulation, and control of the legitimate forms of religious capital. The most important elements of religious capital are the 'goods of salvation', especially the sacraments and the officially recognized membership in a religious community that are regarded as requisite of salvation. Competition within a field constitutes a series of confrontational juxtapositions of opposing classes, dominant versus subordinate religions, different religious specialists, religious specialists versus the laity and, most important, the Church versus the heresiarch. Class is the chief determinant of agents' religious habitus, or their expectations of religion. Thus religion can serve both as a source of the legitimization of domination for the powerful and as a way for the underclass to give meaning to their situation. Under certain conditions, however, religion may also trigger social change. As in other social fields, there is a dialectical relationship between the religious field and the religious habitus: the field, i.e., the material structures of existence, structures the habitus, and the habitus contributes to the reproduction of the field as a meaningful social world.

A third variant of approaches to the matter of religious choice has recently been proposed by Bradford Verter and Hugh B. Urban (Urban 2003, Verter 2003). Due to their dissatisfaction with Bourdieu's focus on the institutional aspect of the religious field, they suggest to focus on 'spiritual capital', i.e., all kinds of spiritual knowledge, competencies, and preferences as valuable assets in the economy of cultural goods. While not necessarily expressed through social transaction on a grand scale, spiritual capital can prove a valuable asset for social and economic advancement. Unlike rational choice theory with its focus on supply, such approaches, while still economical, view the process of religious identification more as a matter of demand. They focus their attention on two crucial dynamics of the religious field: first, that it is being shaped by conflict, not only among various competing denominations, classes, or groups, but also among individuals that may repeatedly recalculate their positions in a network of social relations; second, that there is no universally accepted form of spiritual capital in this field. Religious norms and practices vary in different subcultural fields, and particular attention should be paid to these microprocesses of production and reproduction under specific social conditions.

Having sketched a possible avenue toward an analytical model of religious pluralism, in the second part of the article I will proceed to outline two components of religious identity in a plural-

ist field that can be regarded as key factors in the selection process. Danièle Hervieu-Léger (1998, 2000) describes religion as ‘the form of believing whose distinguishing mark is to appeal to the legitimizing authority of tradition’ (2000: 83). Built upon the normativity of such collective memory, a group’s definition then constitutes a ‘lineage of belief’ (2000: 125), a religious identification built upon a specific definition of boundaries, shared moral values, shared symbolism and religious practice, and emotional identification (1998: 218-222). Such a view of religion as social memory links the analysis of religious identity to the wider social-scientific debate over ‘tradition’ (Boyer 1990, Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983, Keesing 1996, Shils 1981). Just like tradition, religion would signify something that has neither simply been reproduced in identical form since time immemorial nor something completely invented, but rather, a way of interpreting the present through making reference to the past.

From this perspective, then, religious identity is moored in a social memory that is constantly being re-elaborated in order to remain meaningful in the present. It is transmitted in a ‘chain of memory’ through which a religious community reproduces itself over time. However, in late modernity this does no longer happen almost automatically, as it were, in the course of the socialization process, but is always to some extent a matter of perceiving one option as more authentic than others. First and foremost it is a collective endeavour, the production of an individual’s relationship with a lineage of belief, in other words, with the collective representation of continuity. This identification process involves, in Hervieu-Léger’s words, more than belief, namely, ‘the whole substance of believing: the practices, the lived sense of belonging, the ways of conceiving the world and of taking part actively in the different spheres of action that constitute it’ (1998:218). More specifically, Hervieu-Léger suggests considering ‘trajectories of identification’ with a specific faith as consisting of the free combination of four key dimensions (1998: 219-220):

- the communal dimension (defining the boundary of the religious group);
- the ethical dimension (acceptance of values attached to the religious message);
- the cultural dimension (the ideas, symbols and practices of a religious tradition, ranging from doctrines and rituals to everyday habits and aesthetics);
- the emotional dimension (the emotional experience associated with faith).

In previous times the acceptance of these dimensions of religious identification meant belonging to an organization (a church) that established itself as guarantor of the tradition. In late modernity, this institutional link of religious identification has become weakened. Tensions among the different dimensions have gained in importance. In particular the emotional dimension is nowadays being privileged by many believers, regardless to whether it is linked to an organizational structure or even to a community at all.

Under such conditions, when the regulatory capacity of institutions is likely to be challenged, each dimension becomes more autonomous and thus may itself become the axis of religious identification, creating its own dynamic and logic in conjunction with another dimension. To illustrate this, Hervieu-Léger has distinguished among six types of modern trajectories of Catholic identity that she calls ‘emotional’ (the emotional-communal axis), ‘patrimonial’ (the cultural-communal axis), ‘humanitarian’ (the emotional-ethical axis), ‘political’ (the communal-ethical axis), ‘humanist’ (the cultural-ethical axis), and ‘aesthetic’ (the cultural-emotional axis) (1998: 224-226). Reminiscent of Bourdieu’s theory, Hervieu-Léger’s approach illustrates how religious identification in modernity can be analyzed as a dynamic process. It evolves through the transmission of a religious

habitus, which, due to its moorings in social memory, is generally more likely to be confirmed than to be rejected by the religious individual.

In many cases individuals do relinquish their religious identifications in order to select new ones, however, and the existence of a marketplace of religions in late modernity cannot be denied. This fact leads us to the second component of religious identity, that of truth and trust. In his analysis of religious pluralism in the highly dynamic religious field of Zambia, Thomas G. Kirsch concludes that believers do not seek for ‘conclusive certainty in an unconditioned truth with the assistance of perpetually legitimate religious institutions or practitioners’ (2005: 700). Still these individuals, many of whom belong to a succession of different churches, are not shopping around in random fashion, but are searching for both truth in their belief and truthfulness in the church and its practitioners. In this search for truth, occasional changes in one’s religious identification are considered inevitable, because religious truth is considered not to reside permanently in any one religious institution due to the evanescent nature of the spirits. In choosing their religious identifications, Kirsch notes that people ‘engaged in an incessant quest for religious truth and effectiveness in a highly dynamic socioreligious setting in which truth and effectiveness represented fluid momentums’ (2005: 707). While the specific explanation of the volatility of truth reflects a local cultural model, this description of a situation of religious pluralism can be generalized beyond southern Africa.

So I suggest that the two crucial elements that people seek in pluralist religious fields, because they can no longer be taken for granted in late-modern social environments, are truth (i.e., the close fit of a religious faith with the individual’s experience of her/his lifeworld) and trust in the institutions and practitioners of a religion. If these conditions are no longer met, people tend to become disaffected with a religious community and start looking for new sources of truth and trust.

When observing transforming societies like Lithuania, it would be grossly negligent not to take the specific impact of this transformation process on any kind of people’s experiences and perceptions of social reality into account. For this reason, I suggest to add another aspect to the analysis of religious identification in postsocialist societies by focusing on the individual’s position in transforming social space as a factor that is likely to influence their religious identity. In their analysis of globalization, Michael Burawoy and his collaborators (Burawoy et al. 2000) have distinguished among three different positions vis-à-vis the transformation process. In the first instance, globalization is experienced as an external force impinging on people’s local lifeworlds and changing their lives in ways over which they have no control and which are generally considered to be negative. People are left with no choice but to adapt or to resist. In the second instance, people experience processes of transnationalization and the deterritorialization of the nation state as also offering opportunities to improve their lives and better represent their interests. Finally, there are people that actively engage in defining and contesting discourses of globalization. Their agenda is much less localist or defensive but rather shaped by their own views of globalization and how it can be influenced in their favour. Such different positions can also be found with regard to the postsocialist transformation process.

In conclusion, I want to summarize the key elements of a theoretical approach to postsocialist religious pluralism that has been outlined above with reference to the situation in Lithuania. The existence of religious plurality is a prerequisite but no sufficient explanation of religious pluralism. As Lithuanian data show, nowadays there evidently exists a marketplace of religions, but this does not automatically mean that people are actively engaged in shopping on this market. The 2001 cen-

sus showed that 79% of the population identify themselves as Catholic, a percentage that has even increased under pluralist conditions. Both economic and social memory approaches offer an explanation this situation. A religious habitus as deeply entrenched in people's everyday lifeworlds and in the ideology of the nation building project as is the identification with the Catholic Church in Lithuania, is not likely to exhibit drastic short-term changes. For the same reason, the Catholic Church remains the main source of spiritual capital in Lithuanian society, by offering individuals the affiliation with the dominant actor in the religious field.

While such models can account for people's social ties to the church, the relevance of Catholic belief and Catholic values vis-à-vis others as part of individual moralities is much more difficult to assess. As many sociological surveys indicate an increasing superficiality of Catholic belief in Lithuanian society, it seems that an immediate connection between church affiliation and faith cannot be drawn. It could be assumed that Lithuanian society is en route to a form of pluralism described by Kirsch, where individuals' loyalty to one religion is no longer based on expectations of long-term certainty. The same process is also reflected in the structure of the Catholic Church itself which seems to move toward fragmentation along the same lines as sketched by Hervieu-Leger for western Catholicism.

On the other hand, it can be argued with equal – or even greater – plausibility that the public dominance of the Catholic Church is likely to continue due to its close ties to state and nation, but that individual moralities will be influenced by an increasing plurality of values emanating from processes of desacralization of everyday lifeworlds and from the impact of the global availability of religious messages and images. Such processes involve the eroding of faith in the church without undermining its social relevance to the same degree. The selection of moral values will be influenced by their ability to convey truth, while the choice of religious social environments reflects their ability to communicate trust.

Religious identifications can also be assumed to reflect class positions vis-à-vis the transformation process. Those people who experience themselves as being exposed to exogenous forces beyond their control are most likely to reaffirm their Catholic faith as a source of stability and trustworthiness in turbulent times and as a conservative force to be mobilized in defence of their everyday lifeworlds. People experiencing translocal connectedness as the key element of transformation will probably be more open to religious influences from various sources, which may still include the Catholic faith, while the elite of transformation winners will rather focus on material values and only maintain a more or less strategic relationship with the church.

Even if appearing as gross oversimplifications, the above theoretical reflections can serve as helpful stepping-stones in the process of combining theoretical models and grassroots ethnography. At a stage when the anthropology of postsocialism can finally resort to a fairly broad range of ethnographic data but remains seriously undertheorized, rigid theorizing is evidently needed in the constitution of a reliable analytical framework.

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RELIGINIS PLIURALIZMAS POSOCIALISTINĖSE RYTŲ IR VIDURIO EUROPOS VISUOMENĖSE: TEORINIAI LIETUVOS TYRIMO PROJEKTO APMĀSTYMAI

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Santrauka

Šiame straipsnyje pateikiamos teorinio požiūrio į religijos sritis posovietinėse visuomenėse užuomazgos, susikūrusios planuojant religinio ir moralinio pliuralizmo Lietuvoje tyrimo projektą. Religijos reikšmė gerokai išaugo daugiausia posovietinių visuomenių kovos už nepriklausomybę metais ir tuojau po jos atkūrimo, tačiau tai beveik išimtinai pasakytina apie didžiąsias bažnytines konfesijas, glaudžiai susijusias su valstybe ir nacionaline idėja. Daugybės kitų konfesijų, atsiradusių šiandieninėje religinėje rinkoje, socialinis poveikis ne toks išpūdingas, ir jį įvertinti daug sunkiau. Nemaža posovietinių valstybių, kaip rodo Lietuvos pavyzdys, nenoriai priima įteisintą religinės tolerancijos ideologiją, pagal kurią visos religijos yra lygios.

Tačiau užuot akcentavęs šį aspektą, straipsnis pateikia pliuralizmo analizę „iš apačios“, siūlydamas socialinės srities, kur individų sprendimai paremti vertybiniu pliuralizmu ir asmenine religinio pliuralizmo samprata, tyrimo kelis teorinio modelio komponentus. Pirmame tyrimo etape apžvelgiamos socialinės mokslinės priegios prie religinio pliuralizmo srities ir prie asmeninio pasirinkimo problemų apskritai. Aptariamas racionalus religinės teorijos pasirinkimas, Bourdieu religinio lauko koncepcija ir tos teorijos modifikacija, pasiūlyta Bradfordo Verterio, įvedusio „dvasinio kapitalo“ sąvoką. Taip atsirado analitinis įrankis, leidžiantis analizuoti religinės identifikacijos pasirinkimo procesus.

Antrajame etape identifikuojami du esminiai šio pasirinkimo proceso komponentai:

1. Religinės identifikacijos socialinės atminties aspektas, aptartas Daniele Hervieu-Leger, kuris apibrėžiamas kaip specifinė ribų, moralinių vertybių, religinių simbolių ir religinės praktikos definicija bei emocinė identifikacija. Ji vystosi tikėjimo trajektorijomis per laiko erdvę ir turi būti nuolat plėtojama, kad išliktų prasminga dabarčiai. Net jei vėlyvajame modernizme tokia identifikacija darosi vis sunkiau apčiuopiama ir fragmentinė, ji lieka išsisknijusi socialinėje atmintyje ir vis dar tebėra veikiau pripažįstama negu atmetama.
2. Tiesos ieškojimas (kai religinis tikėjimas reprezentuoja individo gyvenimišką patirtį) ir pasitikėjimo siekimas (tikėjimas religinių institucijų ir jų tarnautojų teisėtumu ir patikimumu). Manoma, kad žmonės atsitraukia nuo religinės bendruomenės, jei ji nustoja tenkinti jų tiesos ir pasitikėjimo lūkesčius.

Galiausiai priklausymas socialiniam sluoksniui posovietinės transformacijos patirtyje išskyla kaip dar vienas esminis elementas religinės identifikacijos procese. Religija aiškiai atspindi atskirus požiūrius vieno visuomenės sluoksnio, kuris patiria transformaciją kaip išorinę jėgą, nepasiduodančią kontrolei, ir kito sluoksnio, kuris sugeba suvokti pranašumus, siūlomus socialinių pasaulių ir diskursų translokacijos, gyvenimuose.

Šios bendro pobūdžio teorinės pastabos leidžia pasiūlyti išankstinę hipotezę apie situaciją Lietuvoje. Religijų gausa yra būtina sąlyga, bet jokia būdu ne pakankamas pagrindas religiniam pliuralizmui atsirasti. Kaip rodo Lietuvos atvejo duomenys, šalyje aiškiai egzistuoja religijų rinka, bet

rinkos buvimas dar nereiškia savaiminio pirkėjų antplūdžio. 2001 metų gyventojų surašymas parodė, kad 71% gyventojų laiko save katalikais, ir šis procentas pliuralizmo sąlygomis netgi išaugo. Tiek ekonominės, tiek socialinės atminties fenomenai paaiškina šią situaciją. Religija, taip giliai įsišaknijusi kasdieniame žmonių gyvenime ir nacijos kūrimosi ideologijoje, Lietuvoje tapatinama su Katalikų bažnyčia, ir dėl to greitos ir drastiškos permainos čia mažai tikėtinos. Dėl tos pačios priežasties Katalikų bažnyčia lieka svarbiausiu Lietuvos visuomenės dvasinio kapitalo šaltiniu, siūlydama individams susitapatinimą su svarbiausiu veikėju religinio gyvenimo scenoje.

Jei tokie modeliai gali paaiškinti žmonių socialinius ryšius su Bažnyčia, tai katalikiškojo tikėjimo ir katalikiškųjų vertybių aktualumas kaip individualios moralės dalis kitų religijų kontekste sunkiai pasiduoda tokiam vertinimui. Kadangi nemaža sociologinių tyrimų įrodo katalikiškojo tikėjimo paviršutiniškumą Lietuvos visuomenėje, atrodytų, kad negalima įrodyti tiesioginio ryšio tarp priklausymo Bažnyčiai ir tikėjimo. Galima būtų daryti prielaidą, kad Lietuvos visuomenė yra pakeičiama į pliuralizmą, kur individo lojalumas vienai religijai nebegrindžiamas ilgalaikės garantijos lūkesčiais. Antra vertus, lygiai taip pat tikėtina, kad viešas Katalikų bažnyčios dominavimas ir toliau tęsis dėl jos glaudžių ryšių su valstybe ir nacija, tačiau individo moralę veiks augantis vertybių pliuralizmas, kylantis iš kasdienio gyvenimo desakralizacijos bei globalios religinės informacijos ir įvaizdžių prieinamumo. Tarp tokių procesų yra ir tikėjimo pačioje Bažnyčioje erozija, nors ji ir nepakerta religijos socialinio aktualumo šaknų tolygiu mastu. Moralinių vertybių pasirinkimą veiks jų sugebėjimas atskleisti tiesą, o religinės socialinės aplinkos pasirinkimas atspindės jos sugebėjimą įkvėpti pasitikėjimą.

Taip pat darytina prielaida, kad religinė identifikacija atspindi individų socialinę padėtį transformacijos procese. Žmonės, kurie jaučiasi neapsaugoti nuo išorės jėgų, nepasiduodančių jų kontrolei, greičiau linkę patvirtinti savo katalikiškąjį tikėjimą kaip stabilumo ir patikimumo šaltinį neramiais laikais ir kaip konservatyvią jėgą, mobilizuotiną jų kasdienio gyvenimo gynybai. Žmonės, patiriantys translokacinį ryšį kaip esminį transformacijos elementą, tikriausiai bus atviresni religinėms įtakoms iš įvairių šaltinių, tarp kurių gali būti ir katalikų tikėjimas, o tuo tarpu transformacijos nugalėtojų elitas veikiau sutelks dėmesį materialinėms vertybėms ir palaikys tik daugiau ar mažiau strateginius santykius su Bažnyčia.

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