

ZGAE 63 (2019)

ARTICLES

Hans-Jürgen Bömelburg, Catholic devotional movements and the creation of heterodox churches in East Central Europe. The Mariavite Church in Poland before World War I

There has been a lot of research into the Mariavites in recent decades in Poland. This article presents various study papers relating to that topic and their results. The aim of the article is to analyze the discussed devotion movement against the background of social and mental changes in Central and Eastern Europe at the turn of the 19th and 20th century. The Mariavite movement is based on the revelation of Divine Mercy received by the Polish nun Feliksa Kozłowska (1862-1921), who after the revelations in 1893 undertook a mission to heal the Polish clergy. The Marian community initially operated within the Roman Catholic Church, preserving its customs and devotional practices. However, in 1906, after the excommunication imposed by Pope Pius X on the founder and priest Jan Maria Kowalski (1871-1942), it was excluded from it.

The Mariavite Church was involved in social care by setting up guards, schools, shelters and cheap kitchens. It was particularly popular in the region of Łódź, where poverty was exceptionally severe. Under pressure from the Mariavite Church, the Catholic Church also started to be more involved in social care. Moreover, the Mariavites provided more space for women's piety and thus responded to the needs of the time.

Andrzej Kopiczko, The Role of the German Clergy Remaining in the Diocese Warmia after the Second World War and their Fates

The situation of the Warmian priests ordained before 1945 was not easy under the new political conditions after the end of the war. The Polish state was eager to unite the nation. Therefore, there was no place for the non-Polish population. The main reason for the expulsion, including the local priests, was the responsibility of the Third Reich for the Second World War and the enormous destruction on the territory of the Polish state, as well as for the murder of many million people among the civilian population. In the first years after the end of the war it was difficult to imagine that both peoples could live together peacefully. This situation was viewed differently by the local society. The priests continued to enjoy a very great moral authority. In a sense, they were the cause that many locals wanted to stay in their homeland. They also filled the gap which was created by the lack of Polish-speaking priests for the immigrant population. They took on the role of mediators between the pre-1945 Warmia Church and the newly emerging Church in a changing political reality.

Grzegorz Jasiński, The Diocese of Masuria of the Evangelical Augsburg Church in the Years 1945-1960. National Consciousness and Problems of Language

The several thousand members of the community of Lutherans in Masuria and Warmia, who were under the care of the Polish Evangelical Augsburg Church after the Second World War, were characterized by German national convictions and a weak knowledge of the Polish language. From 1945 the state authorities required the Church to participate directly in the actions of polonization. An important group of clergy saw in the polonization of the Masurians the opportunity to make them an essential part of the Polish Protestant Church. However, it was quickly recognized that in reality the believers had a German national attitude. Therefore, in the following years, until the end of the great wave of emigration

(1959/1960), the clergy had to maneuver between their own Polish national convictions and the expectations of the faithful. For them, however, although realism and external pressure forced them to learn Polish as the predominant language of the nation or as the official *lingua franca*, the German language remained the *lingua sacra*. The churches were that part of the public space in which it was possible to preserve this language at least in part.

As the post-war situation consolidated, the pressure of the faithful, who demanded the German language for the pastoral service, intensified. In addition, the so-called Masurian Action of the Office for Confessional Affairs (1952-1954), for which one of the main objectives was the expulsion of the German language from the Church, led to a contrary result. With the improvement of the pastoral ministry, the employment of a larger number of clergy, including those from the local population, and the renewal of the parish network, the demands of the faithful on the Church increased. The church authorities in Allenstein and Warsaw were flooded with demands for the introduction of the German language. Finally, the clergy, torn between the demands of the faithful and the relentless attitude of the political authorities, began to demand that the state take full responsibility for the language issue in the Church.

After October 1956, the Church, which saw that the stubborn adherence to the complete polonization of religious life was almost the cause of the hostility of the faithful, tried to loosen language policy. However, it met with resistance from the authorities, who banned the continuation of that line. The language question practically came to an end with the mass departures of the years 1956-1959, the pressure of the faithful became weaker, but was still noticeable in the 1960s.

Jarosław Kłaczko, The Evangelical Church in Pommerellen and the Kulmer Land in the years 1945–1956

With the outbreak of the Second World War, Protestantism in the countries of Poland for more than 50 years entered a completely changed totalitarian reality. In Pommerellen and the Kulmer Land there were few isolated groups of German or Polish speaking Protestants left, who lived in deep diasporas. The Poles tried to restore the Polish Protestant parishes, which had been dissolved by the Nazi authorities in 1939, and to take over the abandoned church buildings originally used by the Old Lutherans and the Unierte Evangelical Church. In most cases their efforts were unsuccessful because the Polish faithful were numerically weak and generally regarded as Germans. From the point of view of the Polish authorities, the Catholic Church, whose believers were all regarded as Poles, was a better guarantee for the polonisation of these areas. Therefore, in the vast majority of cases, the remaining Protestant buildings were handed over to the Catholic Church.

Evangelical parishes were established only in the rural areas, not a single parish was restored in the countryside. The cities where Protestant services were resumed were Bydgoszcz, Graudenz, Lautenburg, Thorn and Zoppot (formerly part of the Free City of Gdansk) with a branch church in Dirschau.

Especially after the war the national aspect and the aspect of suffering were emphasized, which is understandable in view of the living conditions and the personal experiences of a large part of the faithful. The emphasis on the Polish character was still determinant for the activities of the Protestant congregations in Pommerellen and Kulmerland in the following years. This also became one of the characteristics of their identity that shaped their further regular work. This meant that the ideology of „Polish Protestantism“, as it was cultivated in the interwar period, was still alive.

Igor Hałagida, The Ukrainians in Northern Poland 1947-1957. Integration instances and the role of the churches

After the definition of the post-war borders in Eastern Europe according to the Yalta agreements, approximately 630.000 – 700.000 Ukrainians remained in the territory of the so-called Lublin Poland. Between 450.000 and 520.000 people of Ukrainian nationality left the country in 1944-1946. In April 1947 the action of forced displacement of Ukrainians remaining on the territory of Poland began under the code name „Vistula“. Within a few months about 140.000 Ukrainians were transferred to the Polish western and northern regions, most of them to the northern wojewodships of Allenstein and Stettin. The main goal of the displacement of the settlers of the action „W“ was their assimilation in the new Polish environment. The Ukrainian population was subject to restrictions of various kinds, making any form of socio-cultural activity that had determined their lives so far impossible.

Religion played an essential role in the processes that were supposed to counteract disintegration and assimilation. If the institutional activity of the churches was restricted to the absolute minimum by the authorities, the way out often remained individual religious practice. It is estimated that two thirds of the Ukrainians who were repatriated were Greek Catholics and one third Orthodox. While the communist authorities allowed limited activity by the Orthodox Church, they vigorously fought against any activity by the Greek Catholic Church, which ceased to exist in Poland after 1947. In 1944-1946 over 100 priests who had escaped deportation to the USSR were placed under the protection of the Polish primate. They could serve in both rites in the Latin parishes. An exception was in Chrzanowo near Lyck the priest Mirosław Ripecki, who established a chapel in one of the rooms of an unused school building and already in 1947 celebrated the first divine service in the rite of the Eastern Church.

The lack of Greek Catholic worship services in the western and northern regions meant that the Ukrainian Catholics were faced with the dilemma of either going into the Roman-Catholic churches and thereby giving up their traditional Byzantine rites or to take part in Orthodox services thereby losing contact to Catholicism. In this situation a considerable, yet not clearly defined number of the Greek Catholic Ukrainians resigned completely from a regular attendance of services or only went to church on special festive days or family festivities. The middle of the fifties saw important changes in the social as well as the religious area.