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INTEGRISM TOWARDS CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND TEACHING OF THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

ABSTRACT

Intercultural education as a result of social changes has allowed expansion of dialogue boundaries. As a result, a new approach to religious education has been formed. First of all, it was the emergence of streams and processes affecting the perception, meaning and place of Christian religion in the contemporary world. This was connected with the Second Vatican Council and the effects of the decisions concerning religion. The new slogans propagated by a modernist environment such as religious freedom or ecumenism, led to the opposition in traditionalist circles. The most radical attitude was presented by The Saint Pius X Fraternity and its founder Marcel Lefebvre. All views, attitudes and actions directed towards the objection to modernist changes are called integrism, and its representatives are integrists.

Key words: religious education, Second Vatican Council, integrism, intercultural education, ecumenism, modernism, religious freedom, dialogue, Fraternity of Saint Pius X, pluralism

In order to understand the contemporary religious education and its integrity criticism, both on the school platform and in post-council contexts, we should first look at the views of integrists. It will be very important to show the changes which the II Vatican Council brought to the teachings of the Catholic Church. Thus, the article will crystallise the direction of religious education, with the problems that appeared in the context of the mentioned transformations.

Dilemmas of religious education and its message will be dealt with from the perspective of four areas, which in turn are the main points of the criticism of fundamentalists, namely: ecumenism, religious freedom, liberalism, modernism. It should be noted that I will mostly focus on the activity of the Society of Saint Pius X and its founder archbishop Marcel Lefebvre.

The whole area of the issues is connected with the pontificate of John XXIII and Paul VI and the II Vatican Council, as they led to the conflict between integrists and modernist church. However, the whole issue of the dispute shows that the II Vatican Council, which yielded to the followers of the modernist modifications to maintain its position in the modern society, led to the discontinuity of the Christian tradition. Therefore, integrism, which defends traditions, shows the direction of actions compatible with the unaltered teaching of the popes from before Second Vatican Council, thus leading to the aversion of modernist aversions. Consequently defending what is unchangeable, and maintaining the deposit of faith, it

is exposed to attacks by modern concepts of the pluralist and intercultural society, widely understood ecumenism and interreligious dialogue (of the representatives of various religions).

INTEGRISM

Jacek Bartyzel determines integrism (lat. *integer* – ‘intact, whole’), as: “an attitude opposite to relativisation of the Catholic tradition and adjustment of faith truths and the way of their teaching, recommended by modernist and progressive notions, to circumstances resulting from de-Christianisation of the contemporary world made by the democratic and liberal revolution; a set of views and actions of these Catholic environments, which follow the above belief and teaching of the popes, especially Blessed Pius IX and Saint Pius X, took, starting from the second half of the XIX c., the action to protect the integrity of the Catholic faith and the social reign of Christ the King” (Bartyzel, n.d.).

The historical account of integrism can be presented as maintaining the intact deposit of faith in the face of various (modernism, rationalism, Americanism) attempts to distort or the ambiguous re-interpretation, or a compromise with the ideology and practice of revolution. It is also connected with the defence of the Christian civilisation and rules of the Catholic country from anti-Catholic powers led by Freemasonry. It was shaped basing on the teachings of the Bl. Pius IX in encyclical *Quanta cura* with the list of (*Syllabus errorum*) the most serious errors of the modern civilisation (Bartyzel, n.d.).

While since the “time of Vaticanum II the term integrist is the most common invective at clergy and lay Catholics opposing the self-destruction of the Church, and especially the traditional liturgy, as well as the traditional catechism; it applies to all representatives of the Catholic traditionalism” (Bartyzel, n.d.).

In the further part of the definition of integrism, Jacek Bartyzel emphasises that in order to become an integrist you should: remain faithful to tomism in practising philosophy and moral teaching of the Church, oppose the mistakenly understood (as striving for, unspecified, “unity” of Christians in the earthly plane) ecumenism, remain faithful to the practice of apologising for the “sins of the Church” or “adapting” of the Church to democracy (Bartyzel, n.d.).

For the most part, by integrism I refer to the activity of the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Pius X and its founder, Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, who in “connection with the act of ordination issued against the will of the pope, on 1 July 1988 was excommunicated. The pope declared the consecration as the schismatic act, which makes the consecrators and ordained bishops fall into excommunication” (Karas, 2008, p. 15), however according to Archbishop M. Lefebvre “this was the only way out from the situation, when John Paul II and the contemporary Catholic hierarchy with all its power engaged in promoting the orientation of the Church as open to dialogue” (Karas, 2008, p. 18).

It should be noted that the choice of St. Pius X for the patron was not coincidental, because M. Lefebvre stressed out that his goal is to maintain non-reduced Catholic faith during the crisis, which he compared to modernisms of the

XX century, and which were denied by St. Pius X (Karas, 2008, p. 13). It is worth noting the changes in the Church which "strengthened by the liberal minority were introduced in the Roman Catholic Church" (Karas, 2008, p. 12). Above all, the emphasis was placed on: the idea of the French Revolution, which can be summarised in the slogan: "Freedom - Equality - Fraternity", the idea of human freedom without the reference to God which is expressed in the declaration about religious freedom, the idea of equality in relation to allowing collegiality (mass decision making) to monarchic structure of the society, fraternity, which became the foundation of ecumenism, understood as the union of religions in such Church, which is not the Roman Church, but the "coalition" of sovereign faiths (Karas, 2008, p. 12).

To fully present Archbishop Lefebvre's relation to the changes that were introduced on the II Vatican Council, it is worth quoting His statement in which he wrote that "with the whole heart and soul we are attached to the faith of the Catholic Rome, the guardian of Catholic faith necessary to maintain the tradition of faith, to the Eternal Rome, teacher of freedom and truth. While we reject and we have always rejected the loyalty to Rome of neo-modernist and neo-Protestant tendencies, which came to the fore on the II Vatican Council and in post-council reforms" (Maessen, 1997, p.127).

"I am accusing the Council!" - this is the way M. Lefebvre entitles his book, in which he states that "the spirit, which controlled the Council, and which inspired so many unclear, ambiguous, and even openly erroneous texts, had nothing to do with the Holy Spirit, it was rather the spirit of the modern world, the spirit of liberalism of Teilhard de Chardin, the spirit of modernism, opposing the Kingdom of our Lord, Jesus Christ" (Lefebvre, 2003, p. 18). As a result, M. Lefebvre declares that "in the present situation we have only one solution: we must reject these dangerous patterns and cling strongly to Tradition, that is the official Magisterium of two thousand years" (Lefebvre, 2003, p. 18).

Therefore, integrists indicating the teachings of the popes before the II Vatican Council refer to ecumenism, modernism, liberalism and religious freedom as factors that introduced unprecedented chaos to the Catholic religion.

INTEGRISM AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

The functioning of the pluralistic society in the religious context requires the establishment of the freedom of conscience and religion. However, traditionalists clearly state that we must be careful, so that the error of liberalism - an error which created the religion of freedom and whose poison we absorb unconsciously every day - does not creep into our souls. At the same time they add after Saint Augustine that "looking at everything, we end up tolerating everything, and tolerating everything we are ready to accept everything" (Roux, 2009, p. 22).

The criticism of integrists is presented in the council document *Dignitatis humanae*, which states that each person has the inherent right to freedom in the religious field, what according to integrists is in conflict with the teachings of the previous popes (Karas, 2008, p.79). This is based on, among others, the condemnation of the

religious freedom and rejecting the civil liberties expressed by the pope Leon XIII in his encyclical *Immortale Dei* (Karas, 2008, p.79).

Therefore, we must pay attention to several arguments presented by integrists in the matter of religious freedom:

No Catholic can in conscience protect the idea of freedom of religious cult, as according to Catholic rules the only justified religion is the religion revealed by God and to which he committed all people. That's why the human has a natural and God-given freedom only to accept only the true religion.

Catholic cannot protect the freedom of religious cult to deny that the Catholic government has the right to limit the action of non-Catholic groups in order to protect Catholic citizens from spiritual threat (Davies, 2012a, p. 6-7).

Liberal Catholics had only one goal in front of their eyes: to come to terms with the modern world, to recognise the aspiration of the modern man. Thus, religious freedom is not considered in relation to God but to man (Lefebvre, 2003, p.40).

II Vatican Council goes beyond absurd in declaring the right of not affirming and not sticking to the Truth, it forces governments to resign from religious discrimination by establishing equal religion laws and false religions (Karas, 2008, p. 79).

The result of Pope Pius XII's teaching is that CC has as its foundation the truth revealed by God and the infallible faith. Consequently, the truth of God's revelation is the fundamental border of the freedom of thought and the freedom of conscience (Davies, 2012b, p. 11).

INTEGRISM AND ECUMENISM

Traditionalists completely reject all forms of inter-religious dialogue, ecumenism, which was initiated by decree *Unitatis redintegratio*. Integrists negatively relate to, among others, the words of John Paul II, who said: "we see clearer and we understand that our Churches are the sister Churches. The saying sister Churches is not only a salutation, but the basic category of the ecumenical ecclesiology. It is on it that the mutual relations between all Churches should base, also including the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church in Poland" (Górka, Napiórowski, 1995, p.243).

It is worth to present here several arguments made by the integrists critically referring to the discussed subject, namely:

Catholic traditionalists call for departure from ecumenism and returning to the traditional doctrine about the one true Church (Pylak, 1959, p. 182).

Leon XIII states that the "new right seeks to destroy all religions, especially the Catholic religion, which as the only one from them being real, cannot be treated as equal with others without the highest injustice" (Lefebvre, 2003, p. 83).

According to this concept of sister churches the thing that joins various Christian "Churches" is more important than what divides them (*From ecumenism to apostasy*, 2004). This claim is in a serious degree true in the sense that all the elements of Catholicism which are shared by the disconnected communities are references that could possibly serve as the base for discussion undertaken in order to bring them back to the flock of Christ (*From ecumenism to apostasy*, 2004). It was clearly said: "We reject [uniatism] as the method of searching for unity. (...) The

pastoral activity of the Catholic Church, both Latin and Eastern, no longer aims to move the faithful from one Church to another" (*Declaration of the Mixed Commission for Theological Catholic-Orthodox Dialogue of 23 June 1993, §§ 2 and 22*).

The ultimate goal of the ecumenical movement is the re-establishment of the full visibility of the unity of all baptised. The unity achieved this way will not be implemented by the ecumenism of return.

Ecumenism is not only based on heterodox theses, but also harmful for the soul in the sense that it diminishes the Catholic faith, whose profession is necessary for salvation, and deters from the Catholic Church, the only ark of salvation. The Church no longer works as the beacon of truth, which illuminates hearts and dispels confusion, and thus plunges humanity more into the mist of religious indifference, and soon in the darkness of the silent apostasy (*From ecumenism to apostasy, 2004*).

II Vatican Council states in the balanced terms the nature of enrichment as a result of dialogue – through such dialogue everyone obtains the closer cognition of truth of the doctrine and life of both Communities – ecumenical practice of the current pontificate distorts this statement, stretching it to enrich the faith.

This ecumenism not only destroys the Catholic faith but it also pushes the heretics, schismatics and unfaithful from the Church (*From ecumenism to apostasy, 2004*).

Error of religious indifference – the belief that for salvation suffices the profession of any religion – is the main error of our times (Vennari, 2012a, p. 14). Condemning indifference in the encyclical *Mirari Vos*, Gregory XVI taught the bishops to protect the entrusted people from this most pernicious error (Vennari, 2012a, p. 14).

"The current ecumenism results in the retention of the state and separation, serving more the refraining of people from joining the Church than leading them to it" (Hanahoe, 1962, p.121).

As the I VC teaches, "even the pope cannot change the doctrine nor create the impression of supporting science contrary to what the Church has always taught, such as the new ecumenical spirit, being the fruit of the II VC" (Vennari, 2012b, p.8).

INTEGRISM AND MODERNISM

The completion of the analysis of traditionalist thought concentrated on religious education and most of all its message should be supplemented with the criticism of modernism. It is necessary, as before the provisions of the II VC to obtain the right, among others, to teaching religion, you had to take an anti-modernist oath, containing all errors of modernism.

Modernism should be understood as the "trend in Catholicism at the turn of the XIX and XX century which accented in religion the role of the inner experience of God, relativised the revelation and dogmas proclaimed by the Church; it called for the division of the secular science from faith and the country from the Church" (*Modernism, 2012*).

Modernism was condemned by pope Pius X in the encyclical *Pascendi*, which was "immediately attacked and accused by the most progressive elements of the Catholic world that it is a reaction text in a dramatic way holding the progress of Christian thought" (D'Amico, 2007). Also the words of pope Pius X are important,

where he stated that “the trap is even more deceptive as it was placed inside the Church. Strategy of modernists is to use the constant pressures, compromises, hesitation between orthodoxy and blatant heterodoxy – to push the Church for its good to the settlement with the contemporary world, as the progress of modernism depends on the ceasing of the clergy and the believers’ resistance to the growing influence of this world. It is therefore about overthrowing *Christianitas*” (D’Amico, 2007).

St. Pius X described modernism as the sewage of all heresies – a simple road to atheism: if someone realises the trouble of collecting all false statements against the faith and somehow squeezing their juices and blood – probably he could not do it better than modernists (D’Amico, 2007).

On the other hand, Archbishop Józef Teodorowicz determining the modernist system as dangerous says: “if I present this system to the believer, I will immediately get his reply: this system is taking away all my faith! As Fr. Teodorowicz states, “indeed it is; modernism changes the very term of the act of faith, modernism tells the practitioner and believer: you have been looking for the grace in the sacraments: from now on you should know these are only the symbols of your religious feeling; (...); you have seen Christ teaching and ordering in the Church – you should know that the Church is only the emanation of the historical evolution of the feelings of the believers, that the authority in the strict sense does not exist” (Teodorowicz, 1998).

It was in order to protect the Catholic religion from the disastrous effects of modernism that the anti-modernist oath was to serve, which was abolished in 1967 by the pope Paul VI. As far as the teaching go, we should quote *motu proprio* of Pius X, in which he stated:

If it turned out that the content of lectures is marred by modernism, the lecturer should be immediately fired.

All seminar lecturers are to take the anti-modernist oath signing it with their own surname.

Anyone who in any way turns out to be tainted by modernism, is to be denied the possibility of taking any functions in administration or teaching, while those who are already occupying such positions should be removed from them (Vennari, 2011, p. 6-7).

II VATICAN COUNCIL AND CONTEMPORARY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

II Vatican Council, the last one, so far, in the Catholic Church, was opened on 11 October 1962 by Blessed Pope John XXIII, and ended on 8 December 1965 by pope Paul VI. The topics discussed on the council concerned, among others, ecclesiological and liturgical matters, missionary activity and ecumenism, mass media, problem of religious freedom and the Catholic Church’s relation to Judaism and other non-Christian faiths.

Declaration of II VC about religious freedom (*Dignitatis Humanae*) notes that (*Documents of Second Vatican Council*):

- demand for freedom in the human society refers mostly to humanistic spiritual goods, most of all to the freedom to profess religion in the society;

- everyone has the duty, and therefore also the right, to look for the truth in the religious field to get the right and true judgement of conscience by using the proper resources;
- the truth should be sought in the way consistent with the dignity of the human person and with its social nature, meaning the free examination using magisterium, meaning the teachings, exchange of thoughts and dialogue, where people teach each other the truth, which they found or think they found, to help each other in seeking the truth; as the truth was found, you should hold to it strongly with your personal conviction;
- religious communities also have the right for the civil power not to interfere with the legal resources or administrative activity in selecting, educating, appointing and moving their own religious ministers, in communicating with the authorities and religious communities located in other countries, in constructing religious buildings, as well as buying and using relevant goods;
- religious communities also have the right not to be disturbed in their public teaching and professing their faith by word and writing;
- given the particular situations of the nations, one religious community is granted the special civil position in the legal system of society, it is necessary that the right of all citizens and religious communities for freedom in the area of religion is recognized and respected;
- the law has the foundation in the social nature of man and in the very essence of religion; it grants people the right to use their own religious sense so that they could freely hold meetings and create associations in educational, cultural, charitable and social purposes.

Referring to religious freedom, II Vatican Council has consequently adopted the right attitude to non-Christian religions, namely (*Documents of Second Vatican Council*):

- it doesn't reject anything from what is true and saint in religions; with sincere reverence it refers to those ways of acting and living, to those orders and doctrines, which in many cases differ from the rules professed and taught by the Council, as they often reflect the ray of this Truth, which enlightens all men;
- it rejects all discrimination or harassment on the basis of race or skin colour, social origin or religion as strange to the Christ spirit;
- it recognises the spiritual heritage common to Christians and Jews, the present saint Council is trying to revive and recommend the mutual cognition and respect;
- the council calls all Muslims to remove the past from the memory, honestly work on mutual understanding and in the interest of the whole humanity mutually protect and develop social justice, moral goods, peace and freedom.

As a result, attitudes to religious freedom and relation to non-Christian religions imply a decree about ecumenism *Unitatis Redintegratio*, in which (*Documents of Second Vatican Council*):

- it seeks to restore the unity among all Christians;
- the believers of the Catholic Church should without doubt care in the ecumenical work for the separated brothers, praying for them, giving them information about the matters of the Church and should go out to meet them as first;
- the ecumenical movement is understood as activity and enterprise aiming at the unity of Christians, depending on various needs of the Church and conditions of the moment;
- in the process of achieving agreement, important and helpful are meetings with the participation of both parties to discuss the theological matters, where everyone acts as equal among others, as long as the members, remaining under the supervision of bishops, are real experts;
- in ecumenical dialogue Catholic theologians, who together with separated brothers devote themselves to the studies on God mysteries, and stick closely to the teaching of the Church, should follow the love for truth and be characterised by an attitude full of love and humility;
- thanks to cooperation, all believers in Christ can easily learn how to get to know each other, value higher and pave the way for the unity of Christians;

The Council with joy, next to other significant matters, reminds the fact that in the East there exist many particular, meaning local Churches, among which the leading place is taken by the patriarchal Churches, and a certain number vaunt their origin from the very Apostles; thus, in the Eastern Christians the longing desire is to the fore to maintain those close brotherly relations in the union of faith and love, which should reveal its existence in relations between the local Churches like between sisters.

The decrees of the II Vatican Council are the clear response to the new pluralising social reality. As a result, one of the features of the contemporary society in democratic countries, with highly developed economy, is pluralism, i.e. coexistence of the multitude of independent social beings: groups and co-communities, beliefs, behaviours, cultural phenomena. The broadly understood pluralism penetrates many areas of life – from the market, through politics, to the family and religion (Bagrowicz, 2002, p. 487).

Consequently, the program of religious education in the pluralist society should take into consideration not only the influence of pluralisation on the shape of religion, but also its broader consequences for the human life. Taming the otherness, openness to it and its understanding are becoming more and more important tasks of religious education (Bagrowicz, 2002, p. 488). Thus “the ordered vision of the goals of teaching and religious education is the base to form the rules of religious education, as well as points to the proper methods and educational means” (Bagrowicz, 2000, p. 210).

However, as it was mentioned before, “Churches devote more and more attention to the religious education, as well as to adaptation to the more complicated pluralist society” (Gęsiak, 2007, p. 143). As a result, the functioning of religious education in the pluralist society focuses on the issues concerning:

- the right to religious education as the part of common law to practice own religion – some of the rights of the groups, especially to religious practices,

are in the multicultural society protected as fundamental for life and its values (Gęsiak, 2007, p. 144-145).

- religious education in the multicultural society, which should meet the challenges:
- considering the influence of social pluralism on the shape of religion in the given place,
- consequence, which the pluralism has on the human life (Gęsiak, 2007, p. 145).
- the type of schools functioning in multicultural societies in the religious context – common schools reflect the state of social sensitivity, especially concerning the social oppositions and distributed preferences; however, they should not be an arena of emerging conflicts and religious tensions (Gęsiak, 2007, p. 145).
- axiology of education – universal or religious values – religious schools can encourage more to the established forms of civic responsibilities, they cannot be the place of ideological ambiguity due to their religious identity; like any institution, also school must meet some standard requirements; it must also have certain elements characteristic only to itself; various schools must individually influence the students, what often means their different reference to the represented religious communities (Gęsiak, 2007, p. 145-146).

What is also important is the analysis of the rules of the intercultural education with the system of values, which is inextricably connected with them. In the multi-culture, ideals and values close to some religion can cause serious troubles for followers of other religions. It is not easy to learn about these issues at school, which does not give priority to any religion, where there is no leading religion model, where you cannot share the view that one religion is more important, better or more complete than the other.

However, following Aniela Róžańska, education is a string of relations between people and their world, a constant process of exchange of values between the participating subjects. Therefore, Buberowska presence of a man in the being of another man is the inter-confessional, pro-ecumenical education, which cannot only have the cognitive dimension, involving the transfer of knowledge about various Churches, of the faith and religious groups – to which it was often narrowed. It is important to gain the axiological, personal dimension participating in the religiously different reality, and to carry a different hierarchy of values. Such education will not be a threat of the believers' identity, what some are afraid of, but this identity will be confirmed, strengthened, verified (Gęsiak, 2007, p. 198).

Inter-confessional and pro-ecumenical aspirations of contemporary religious education, indicated by A. Róžańska, lead to the determined goal, namely – adaptation to life in a pluralist culture and being equipped with the skill to conduct dialogue and negotiations in the situation of conflicts of values and moral choices (Róžańska, 2008, p. 198).

Also, what should be stressed, such targeted education shapes the attitudes of the young generation, which are not prejudiced against others, representing different religious traditions, beliefs or attitudes, but are the bases of accepting religious otherness, attitudes enabling intercultural dialogue, and even fruitful cooperation. At the same time, what is also important is giving help to the students

in their personal search for meaning, values and goal of life – without indicating one, undisputed and orthodox solution (Rozanska, 2008, p. 198-199).

The functioning of the pluralist and intercultural society in the context of religious education on particular levels of teaching can be put into specific methodology-teaching assumptions of the intercultural religious education.

Preliminary religious education of the child includes religious education in the family environment and in the nursery. It is conditioned with the religiousness of the parents and their attitudes towards religion.

During religious education at the level of primary school we should observe the symbolic-religious education, the students' opportunity to express themselves towards religious experiences, such as: holidays, traditions, participation in religious practices; moreover, understanding of religious symbols and other elements of cult, cognition of basic religious texts, works of art inspired by religion.

Religious education in secondary school includes structures of codes of orientation, reading signs and existential values proposed by religious traditions (decoding religious symbols, ethic symbols and ways of behaving, religious language, rituals), as well as reflections on the issue of ecumenism and interreligious dialogue.

During religious education in high school beyond the scopes included before, the new task is the comparative and historical-critical analysis of religious messages as keys to read and understand culture, exploring potential sources of meaning and creating religious identity (Rozanska, 2008, p. 200-201).

All relations which occur in the pluralist society with the assumptions of religious education in the religiously diversified world may be summarised in the following features:

- it recognises the phenomenon of religion as controversial, hence religious rights may be the subject of the intellectual discussion,
- it allows the open discussion on matters which students are deeply interested in,
- it gives an individual the right of their own thoughts and decisions in religion,
- it enables direct experiencing of religiously "different", so it prepares the student for life in the multicultural society,
- it prepares to the positive reception of other faiths,
- it gives all faiths a chance,
- it confirms freedom and religious equality,
- it is a constructive, pedagogical response to the challenges of the present (Rozanska, 2008, p. 201).

Religious education in the pluralist society must tackle an exceptional task and lead to the widely understood dialogue. Through such oriented actions it fully shows the essence of religious education and the role of the Church in it. While "it is at school where the whole process of religious education takes place, as well as connected problems in the context of pluralism" (Kostorz, 2000, p. 228-229).

However, when the diversity of religious forms cannot be derived from the religious knowledge transmitted by the Church, it is communication that becomes

the modern society's only available means to form pluralism, as well as the starting point which keeps individuals and the society together (Ziebertz, 2001, p. 51).

CONCLUSION

So in which direction should the contemporary religious education turn, when on one hand we are dealing with the modernism of the II Vatican Council, and on the other – with the traditionalist teaching of the Society of St. Pius X? Zygmunt Bielawski in the manual of religious pedagogy writes that the task of a religion teacher, who most often is a religious teacher, is mostly to straighten all falsehoods concerning the Church, most spread among the youth. As a result, religious education is devoid of authenticity, especially when “the contemporary world is in the stage of interregnum of values. Today, in the first place, these are not authorities and tradition that affects the shaping of the values” (Bagrowicz, 2000, p. 221-222).

According to the teaching of the pope, the school should most of all take the Catholic form, because according to the decisions of popes Pius IX and Leon XIII: “it is forbidden for Catholic children to attend anti-Catholic schools, neutral or mixed, i.e. available for Catholics and non-Catholics, without any difference, and only in some circumstances of time and place” (Cogiel, 2007, p. 75).

There is also the matter of the pluralising reality. As it results from the teaching of integrists, “the Church treats pluralism as something transient and seeks, with the available pastoral means, to convert non-Catholics and to build the Catholic country. And the freedom of pastoral activity of the Church in countries, where the Catholic Church is the minority – has a goal to Christianise the private and public life” (Kowalski, 2011, p. 14).

The Church must constantly face new challenges, as on one hand, “pluralist democracy and cultural climate of postmodernism forces the Church to redefine its social role and to create a new, totally different strategy, and on the other, postmodernist accenting of the diversification causes that there are no privileged points of view, there are no universally accepted rules, there are no stable criteria, enabling the choice of proper options from many possible ones” (Horowski, 2007, p. 169).

As a result of this aspiration of intercultural religious education in the matter of religious freedom of dialogue, ecumenism, they are not allowed according to traditionalists. The integrists' complete rejection of the teachings of the II Vatican Council, and what follows, contemporary aspirations of religious education is a barrier behind which there is no possibility of agreement.

Integrism rejects the equality of beliefs, the egalitarianism, the positive perception of other beliefs. They are not considered in the matter of enrichment of the Christian religion, because according to integrists only in the Catholic Church you can be saved, and the true unification and return to the Christ Church should take place there.

It is also important to recognise the freedom of conscience by liberals, according to whom “the individual has the right to think and believe in what they want, even in the field of religion and morality, to publically express their own opinions

and to convince others to accept them through the spoken, written word or in any other way" (Davies, 2012a, p. 9).

It should be noted that contemporary religious education is worth analysing not only on the plane of the pluralism of the society, but also in the matters of giving contents, as the Holy See is constantly conducting discussions with the Brotherhood of St. Pius X about reconciliation. Still, it is not known which direction should contemporary religious education take, whether this should be the modernist or ecumenical trend, or the traditionalist one and professing the rules of the return to the Christ Church. It needs to be noted that pope Paul VI said that the self-destruction of the Church is taking place, John Paul II mentioned the silent apostasy, while pope Benedict XVI compared the Church to the sinking ship (Stehlin, 2009).

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