

Andrzej Kopiczko

OLD CATHOLIC CHURCH IN EAST PRUSSIA (1871–1944)

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INSTITUT PÓŁNOCNY
IM. WOJCIECHA KĘTRZYŃSKIEGO

The origins of the Old Catholic Church¹ are closely connected with the announcement at the Vatican Council I (1869–1870) of the papal infallibility dogma in matters concerning faith and morality². Initially, it was rejected by the majority of the German episcopate, including the Warmian bishop Philipp Krementz and his successor Andreas Thiel. The situation changed after the acknowledgment of the findings of the conciliar fathers by the Conference of the Prussian Bishops, deliberating in August 1870 in Fulda, in which bishop Krementz participated as well. Since then he had become an ardent defender of the dogma. However, not all the clergymen and believers accepted those judgements³.

In Warmia the opposition centred around four clergymen, lecturers of the Braunsberg schools: Andreas Mentzel⁴ and Friedrich Michelis (professors of the

¹ A declaration of conflict between the Prussian state and the Catholic Church was being foreshadowed by the Germanization orders in the school system, issued by the overpresident Theodor von Schön. They aimed at instilling German culture among students. In the western part of Germany the first country in which the threat to the Church already beyond 1866 became real was the Grand Duchy of Baden, where it was intended to „honour fundamental concepts of Josephinism in new forms all over again”. – *Historia Kościoła*, t. 5 (1848 do czasów współczesnych), ed. by R. Aubert, Warszawa 1985, p. 68.

² W. Różyk, *Starokatolicki Kościół*, in: *Encyklopedia katolicka*, t. 18, Lublin 2013, colm. 849–851; J. Żurek, „Prawda” – organ prasowy starokatolików na Górnym Śląsku, *Śląskie Studia Historyczno-Teologiczne*, 2012, t. 45/2, p. 412.

³ A. Kopiczko, *Duchowieństwo katolickie diecezji warmińskiej w latach 1821–1945*, cz. 1: *Studium prozopograficzne*, Olsztyn 2004, p. 253.

⁴ Pr. Andreas Mentzel was born in Mehlsack on 25 November 1815. He graduated from the Theological Seminary in Braunsberg. He received holy orders in 1841. Then he was a vicar in Braunsberg. Later he continued

Lyceum Hosianum) as well as Edmund Treibel (lecturer at the Teacher's Seminary) and Paul Wollmann⁵ (teacher in a grammar school). A dispute with secular authority occurred, first of all, regarding Friedrich Michelis, born in 1815 in Münster in a religiously mixed household. He moved to Braunsberg in 1864. He became extraordinary professor on 11 April, and on 20 February 1869 ordinary professor at the Department of Philosophy at the Lyceum Hosianum. Owing to the rejection of the papal infallibility dogma and becoming involved with Old Catholicism on 20 August 1870 bishop Kremenz forbade him to perform clerical functions and disallowed students from attending his lectures. A different attitude was assumed by the Prussian state, which maintained that it was not obliged to revoke teachers' rights only because the Church deprived them of *missio canonica*⁶. The professors of the Lyceum Hosianum commented along the same lines. By the same token, a distinction was made between an official and a clergyman, which the Church refused to accept. Hence, the dispute pertained to the competence of the state and the Church with regard to teachers of religion. Admittedly, that issue was determined by the Prussian constitution of 1850, conferring powers on the Church to independently regulate the teaching of religion, yet the state authorities ceased to matter. However, bishop Kremenz did not yield and he sent letters concerning that issue both to the overpresident of Prussia as well as to the minister for religious affairs. Nevertheless, it did not help. Then the bishop organized a private tutelage of religion for students of the Teacher's Seminary and forbade them to attend the lectures conducted by Friedrich Michelis as well as those of Andreas Mentzel. He suspended them on 1 April 1871 and excluded them from the church communi-

philosophy and dogmatics studies in Breslau. In the years 1844–1846 he was a student of Preuck's foundation in Rome. Since the autumn of 1845 he worked as a subregent in the Seminary in Braunsberg, and since 1850 as a regent master and a lecturer of dogmatic as well as moral theology. He obtained a doctorate in theology at the university in Breslau in 1875. In the years 1863–1866 as well as 1870–1871 he was a rector at the Lyceum Hosianum. After converting to Old Catholicism he was suspended on 1 April 1871. On 1 October 1874 he was transferred to Bonn, where he became a professor of the Old Catholic theology, later he was also a dean of the local theological faculty. He died on 4 August 1886. „Gazeta Olsztyńska” (13 August 1886) informed about his death. – A. Kopiczko, *Duchowieństwo katolickie diecezji warmińskiej w latach 1821–1945*, cz. 2: *Słownik*, Olsztyn 2003, p. 184.

⁵ Pr. Peter Paul Wollmann was born on 29 June 1837 in Marienburg. He graduated from the Theological Seminary in Braunsberg. He received priestly orders in 1860. Then he worked as a vicar in Santoppen. Since 1861 he had studied in Breslau, Berlin and Munich. He was awarded the title of doctor of both laws in Breslau in 1863. Since 1864 he had been a vicar in Königsberg. He became a teacher of religion in a grammar school in Braunsberg in 1867. After the I Vatican Council he became involved in the current of Old Catholicism. He was suspended on 4 April 1871 and soon afterwards also excommunicated (4 July, but officially the excommunication was announced on 30 July); on 30 July 1871 he was removed from the office of a teacher of religion. On 1 April 1876 he was transferred to Cologne where he undertook a job in the grammar school named after Emperor William. Since then he had not fulfilled any clerical functions and was not connected with the Roman Catholic Church, or Old Catholicism for that matter. – A. Kopiczko, op. cit., p. 322.

⁶ J. Krzywda, E. Wilemska, *Misja kanoniczna*, in: *Encyklopedia katolicka*, t. 12, Lublin 2008, colm. 1217–1218.

ty⁷. Eventually both of them left Braunsberg and embarked on delivering lectures: Mentzel in Bonn, and Michelis in Freyburg⁸.

On 3 April 19 1871 bishop Kremenz deprived pr. Paul Wollmann of *missio canonica*⁹. This time the issue was more complicated. In grammar school religion belonged to the compulsory subjects, and the mark was entered onto the certificate. After the unsuccessful attempts at relieving Wollmann¹⁰ of duty the bishop disallowed the youth to attend the classes conducted by him. Thus, the students' parents became involved in the dispute, and on 19 August 1871 they even turned to the very emperor Wilhelm I with the request to entrust the teaching of religion with a Catholic teacher. Also the Conference of the Prussian Bishops in Fulda took the side of the youth, sending a petition to the government in this regard. When the latter did not yield, the youngsters began to resign from school. As early as in 1871 only 88 students out of 251 remained there¹¹.

In December 1871 439 family men from Braunsberg and the surrounding area submitted a petition concerning the teacher of religion to the parliament of the Reich. It was considered in March 1872, but as early as in February the minister of education Adalbert Falk¹² issued a statement that it was possible to exempt students from religion classes in higher schools. Owing to this the teaching of that subject

⁷ J. Obląg, *Kościół na Warmii w okresie „Kulturkampfu”*, Ateneum Kapłańskie, 1957, nr 2, p. 204. 22 October 1871. Bishop Kremenz in the letter to the Warmian Cathedral Chapter wrote that pr. Michelis had been excommunicated. – Archives of the Warmia Archdiocese (AAWO), AK I A 6. A range of information pertinent to pr. Michelis's suspension was published in „Pastoralblatt für die Diözese Ermland”, 1871, pp. 21–26, 41–42, 128.

⁸ The issue is also discussed by G. Dettmer in the book: *Die Ost- und Westpreussischen Verwaltungsbehörden im Kulturkampf* (Heidelberg 1958, p. 28), but it is treated as a dispute with a public servant, namely a professor of the Lyceum Hosianum, but it is worth remembering that the Lyceum professors were simultaneously priests, subordinated to the Warmian bishop as well as – most importantly – as Lyceum professors they made a special oath and a profession of the Catholic faith. This is where the essence of the dispute between bishop Kremenz and the minister of education Adalbert Falk lay in – to whom the Lyceum professors were substantially subordinated. The public authorities intended to settle the affair to their advantage, however, not by legal means, but by administrative – fiscal pressure or judicial harassment. – T. Grygier, *Niektóre problemy „Kulturkampfu” w Prusach Wschodnich*, *Komunikaty Mazursko-Warmińskie*, 1961, nr 1, p. 145. The origins of Old Catholicism in Warmia and the „Braunsberg riots” are analyzed by J. Jasiński in great detail in the article: *Początki ostrego konfliktu monarchii pruskiej z Kościołem katolickim a kwestia braniewskich starokatolików*, in: *Posłannictwo Biskupa Rzymu*, ed. by: J. Jezierski, Olsztyn 2002, pp. 241–265. cf J. Obląg, op. cit., pp. 204–210; *Aktenstücke die altkatholische Bewegung betreffend, mit einem Grundriss der Geschichte derselben*, hrsg. von E. Friedberg, Tübingen 1876, pp. 14–18.

⁹ The bishop also wanted the Prussian government to release him from the post, but the latter regarded that Wollmann was a civil servant. – J. Jasiński, op. cit., p. 253.

¹⁰ Just as in the case of the first two (that is Michelis and Mentzel) the college professors and the government authorities did not take bishop Kremenz's request into consideration and left Wollmann in the position of a lecturer.

¹¹ F. Dittrich, *Der Kulturkampf im Ermland*, Berlin 1913, p. 56; B.M. Rosenberg, *Das königliche und staatliche Gymnasium 1811–1933*, Zeitschrift für die Geschichte und Altertumskunde Ermlands, 1966, Bd. 30, p. 576; J. Jasiński, op. cit., p. 251.

¹² Adalbert Falk was born in 1827 in Mieczkowo in Lower Silesia as a son of an Evangelic pastor. In 1847 he started work in the Prussian state administration. In 1853 he took up the position of a prosecutor in Lyck, and in 1872 he became a Prussian minister of education. He was jointly responsible (apart from Otto von Bismarck) for the kulturkampf and the struggle with the Catholic Church. He died in Hamm in 1900. – https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adalbert_Falk (access on 6 December 2018).

in the Braunsberg grammar school – already within the framework of extra-curricular classes – was supported by the ordinary pr. Josef Krause. Although he did not have the nomination of the Prussian king, he could conduct lessons of religion, which – in turn – caused that only several youths attended the former priest Wollmann's (still working in the grammar school) classes. In 1876 Wollmann was transferred to a university in Cologne¹³.

The conflict in the grammar school also affected the church built in Braunsberg in 1865, where the adolescents were obliged to participate in the holy Mass. The church belonged to the school, and the religious services over the period considered were performed by pr. Wollmann. Bishop Krementz turned to the minister of education with the demand to recognize the bishop's rights with regard to the grammar school church. Nevertheless, he did not receive any answer; what is more, in February 1874 the church was passed on to the Old Catholics who had been making use of it for two years¹⁴. The fourth clergyman and simultaneously a lecturer of the Braunsberg schools, pr. Edmund Treibel, worked as a teacher of religion at the Teacher's Seminary¹⁵. Fortunately, the regulations of that school anticipated the presence of a Bishop's representative during the examination time. Making use of this right, bishop Krementz recommended that priests: Johannes Lingk and Franz Austen¹⁶ participate in them. However, the dispute between the secular authorities and the Church ceased only when the government recognized the Teacher's Seminary as an institution of higher education, and the latter – in the light of the already quoted regulations of the minister of education Adalbert Falk – was able – apart from the governmental teacher of religion to employ others – as long as there were volunteers to make use of their lessons. The bishop entrusted the curate of this institution with that task, pr. Josef Grunenberg and the prefect of the boarding school pr. Franz Hennig¹⁷. Thus, approximately 10 students attended Treibe's lesson. In 1876 he was transferred to Berlin and given the function of the general director of facilities for the deaf and dumb, but the Catholic priest received the official position of a teacher of religion at the Teacher's Seminary as late as in 1881¹⁸.

¹³ F. Dittrich, op. cit., pp. 56–59. The issue of the grammar school was also described on the pages of „Ermländische Volksblätter” (8 January, 5, 15, 22 February 1873). In 1876 the teaching of religion in the grammar school was taken over by Julius Marquardt, followed by Anton Matern. – cf. Dictionary; A. Kopiczko, *Duchowieństwo katolickie diecezji warmińskiej w latach 1821–1945*, cz. 1, p. 254.

¹⁴ S. Achremczyk, A. Szorc, *Braniewo*, Olsztyn 1995, p. 219; F. Buchholz, *Braunsberg im Wandel der Jahrhunderte*, Braunsberg 1934, p. 219; B.M. Rosenberg, op. cit., p. 576; F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 57. The foundation stone for that church was laid in December 1861, and it was consecrated on 8 October 1863. – *Ermländisches Kirchenblatt*, 1936, p. 778. At the beginning of 1874 the parents of the Catholic children submitted a petition to the minister of culture, concerning the return of the grammar school church. – *Ermländische Volksblätter*, 10, 13 March 1874.

¹⁵ He was suspended on 3 April 1871. – J. Obląk, op. cit., p. 205.

¹⁶ F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 78 et. seq.

¹⁷ *Ermländische Volksblätter*, 5 April 1873.

¹⁸ F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 85; S. Achremczyk, A. Szorc, op. cit., p. 220 (it pertains to Josef Krause).

Pr. Franciszek Dittrich referred to the dispute over the teachers of religion as the „Braunsberg riots” (Braunsberger Wirren). Yet, it did not end there. Almost simultaneously a total attack against the Catholic Church (Kulturkampf), its institutions and the clergy occurred. At first it was decided to deprive the resistant bishop of the income from the state treasury¹⁹. Then the dioceseans organized a fundraiser and passed on the money to the ordinary. The overpresident Carl von Horn²⁰ and the minister Adalbert Falk also attempted to get rid of the bishop from Warmia, but the latter had protectors in the courtly circles as well as with the monarch himself, thus, those plans failed²¹.

The „Braunsberg riots” touched upon not only the local schools (including the Theological Seminary)²², but they also contributed to the formation within the area of the Warmian diocese of a number of the Old Catholic communities, which were approved by the Prussian state. However, it turns out that the first (and the biggest) group of the Old Catholics organized itself in Königsberg. At the beginning the declaration of belonging was submitted by 405 men only, entitled to vote (stimmberchtigte)²³. The organizational meeting, presided over by pr. prof. Friedrich Michelis and pr. Paul Wollmann, took place on 3 October 1871²⁴. Their statements and articles were frequently printed on the pages of the local „Hartungsche Zeitung”²⁵. Probably as early as in March 1872 pr. Josef Grunert, working in Insterburg²⁶, informed bishop Philipp Kremetz that during the Easter celebration (31 March) in that locality, and on 1, 2 and 6 April he would celebrate masses in the centres for the needy in Tapiau²⁷ and the health care centre in

¹⁹ W 1872 a dispute of bishop Kremetz with the emperor Wilhelm I occurred in connection with the celebrations in Marienburg of the hundredth anniversary of the incorporation of Warmia and the Royal Prussia, in which the administrator of the diocese wanted to participate. However, the bishop emphasized his independence in matters of faith concerning state affairs, and the emperor demanded absolute obedience from him. Kremetz could not agree to it and he did not go to Marienburg. In retaliation the state stopped his endowment of 9 th. crowns. – J. Jasiński, *Świadomość narodowa na Warmii w XIX wieku. Narodziny i rozwój*, Olsztyn 1983, p. 228; F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 18et seq.

²⁰ https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karl_Wilhelm_von_Horn (access on 6 December 2018).

²¹ J. Jasiński, op. cit., p. 229; A. Kopiczko, *Duchowieństwo katolickie diecezji warmińskiej w latach 1821–1945*, cz. 1, p. 254.

²² An attack against the Braunsberg educational system is described in detail by Alojzy Szorc, cf. S. Achremczyk, A. Szorc, op. cit., pp. 218–222.

²³ AAWO, AB I J 10 (Infällibilitäts-Wirren in Königsberg); F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 113; J. Obląk, op. cit., p. 208. In the initial phase of Old Catholicism it might have amounted to 1,5 th. people within the entire diocese. – J. Jasiński, *Początki ostrego konfliktu monarchii pruskiej z Kościołem katolickim a kwestia braniewskich starokatolików*, p. 249.

²⁴ J. Obląk, *Sprawa polska ludności katolickiej na terenie diecezji warmińskiej w latach 1870–1914*, *Nasza Przeszość*, 1963, t. 18, p. 48; idem, *Kościół na Warmii w okresie „Kulturkampfu”*, p. 208.

²⁵ Ibidem, p. 208.

²⁶ On the pastoral facility in Insterburg, see also M. Jodkowski, *Katolicka parafia misyjna w Wystruci w okresie konfliktu wyznaniowego (1872–1887)*, *Studia Redomporystowskie*, 2016, nr 14, pp. 533–548.

²⁷ The national facility for the Needy and Reformatory School (Landarmen- und Corrigenden-Anstalt). – G. Jasiński, *Zakłady opiekuńcze i lecznicze w Karolewie (powiat kętrzyński) w latach 1882–1945*, *Komunikaty Mazursko-Warmińskie*, 2008, No 3, p. 251.

Allenberg²⁸ as well as in the Catholic garrison in Gumbinnen. The bishop passed on this piece of news on 1 April of the same year to the Warmian Cathedral Chapter²⁹. In April 1872 the Old Catholics demanded the possibility of being granted the shared use of the church in Königsberg as well as access to the liturgical paraments. It pertained to the church built in the years 1614–1616 for the Catholics living there³⁰. On 16 May 1872 they also informed the overpresident of East Prussia about it. Moreover, they wanted the parish priest of the Catholic church to register the children baptized by pr. Josef Grunert in the book of baptisms³¹. On 5 July, 18 and 23 September 1872 the Prussian government stated that those believers did not lawfully leave the Catholic Church, hence they had a right to such endorsements³².

Pr. Grunert stood at the head of the Catholic parish in Insterburg until 10 March 1872. Only then did the Warmian bishop Philipp Kremenz deprive him of the office. Then the former moved to Königsberg. In Insterburg his successor, the Catholic priest Bernhard Blaschy was nominated by the bishop³³.

The Old Catholics still strove for the exploitation of the Catholic church in Königsberg for a number of years, but the parish priest Julius Dinder³⁴ managed to defend the church. Also the believers of the Warmian diocese stood in opposition to Old Catholicism. „Erländische Volksblätter” on 6 March 1872 recorded: „At present it so happens that the good villagers request the holy Mass for the Holy Father. On special request a Passion service (consisting of a sermon, a solemn Mass and the kiss of the pax) is conducted before noon this year in some country church-

²⁸ A health care facility/centre for the mentally ill, operating since 1852 until 1940 was situated there – https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Provinzial_Heil-_und_Pflegeanstalt_Allenberg (access on 6 December 2018).

²⁹ AAWO, AK I A 6 (1 April 1872).

³⁰ E. Gigiliewicz, *Królewiec*, in: *Encyklopedia katolicka*, t. 9, Lublin 2002, colm. 1356–1358.

³¹ Pr. Josef Grunert was born in Braunsberg in 1843. He received priestly orders in 1865. Next he worked as a vicar in Gietrichswalde, Alt Wartenburg and Ramsau. On 20 August 1869 he was established curate in Insterburg, and on 10 Decemebr 1870 a local parish priest. He also fulfilled the function of a military priest for the Catholic soldiers in Insterburg, Wehlau, Gumbinnen and Friedland (since 29 October 1869). – A. Kopiczko, *Duchowieństwo katolickie diecezji warmińskiej w latach 1821–1945*, cz. 2, p. 91.

³² F. Dittrich, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

³³ Pr. Bernhard Blaschy was born at Dywity on 4 August 1838. He studied at the Theological Seminary in Braunsberg. He took holy orders in 1862. Later he worked as a vicar in Brąswald, since 1864 in Königsberg and since 1869 in Stary Targ. He became an administrator in 1869 and in 1870 a parish priest of the newly formed pastoral facility in Johannesburg. In 1872 he was transferred to the position of a curate in Insterburg, after pr. Josef Grunert had converted to the Old Catholic Church. On 13 April 1881 he was appointed garrison chaplain in Insterburg, Gumbinnen and Wehlau. Since 1895 he was a vice-dean of the Sambia administration, and since 1898 a parish priest in Bischofsburg. He died there on 18 March 1900. – A. Kopiczko, *Duchowieństwo katolickie diecezji warmińskiej w latach 1821–1945*, cz. 2, pp. 24–25.

³⁴ Pr. Julius Dinder was born in Rößel on 9 March 1830. He studied at the Theological Seminary in Braunsberg. He received priestly orders in 1856. Next he worked as as vicar in Bischofsburg. Since 4 May 1865 he was a parish priest in Grieslienen and a catechist in Hohenstein. In December 1868 he became a parish priest in Königsberg and simultaneously a military priest in Königsberg and Pillau. In 1883 he assumed the canonry of honour in Frauenburg. In 1886 was nominated archbishop of Gniezno and Poznań. He died suddenly on 30 May 1890 in Poznan. – A. Kopiczko, *Duchowieństwo katolickie diecezji warmińskiej w latach 1821–1945*, cz. 2, pp. 52–53.

es of our district on all Fridays of the Lent and the churches are almost as full as on Sundays. This is also a form of protest against the Old Catholics³⁵.

Also the teachers and clergymen, especially of Polish origin, delivered declarations of fidelity for the attention of the Warmian Bishop with regard to the Apostolic See³⁶. And so did, among others, the parents from the Allenstein district, who protested against forcing their sons to attend lectures of the Old Catholic religion in the Braunsberg grammar school. Among them there were: apothecary Josef Oster from Allenstein, Jakub Barczewski from Jommendorf (the father of pr. Walenty Barczewski), Mikołaj Liszewski from Gr. Kleeberg (the father of Jan Liszewski, the founder of „Gazeta Olsztyńska”), as well as Kusza from Jomendorf, Szymański and Fręszkowski from Gr. Kleeberg³⁷.

The Old Catholic priesthood in Königsberg was inaugurated during the Easter of 1873 in the Evangelical hospital church in the district of Löbenicht. It was also there that confirmation was administered on 3 June 1874 for the first time³⁸. Towards the end of February 1874 the Old Catholic bishop Josef Hubertus Reinkens³⁹ officially appointed priests Friedrich Michelis, Paul Wollmann and Josef Grunert priests of the Old Catholics in the Prussian province⁴⁰.

The situation was changed only by the law of the Prussian government of 4 July 1875, granting the Old Catholics the right to use the churches and the Catholic cemeteries as well as to share the church property. Yet, a misleading detail appeared in it, which said that they did not constitute independent organizational entities but a part of the Roman-Catholic parishes⁴¹. In practice admission of the Old Catholics to make use of the Catholic churches equalled the return of those buildings for their exclusive use⁴². It caused that they yet again demanded from

³⁵ Ermländische Volksblätter, 6 March 1872.

³⁶ Ibidem, 3 February 1872.

³⁷ J. Obłąk, op. cit., pp. 209–210; Ermländische Volksblätter, 29 May 1872; J. Jasiński, op. cit., p. 255.

³⁸ Thorner Presse, 27 May 1874; D. Klinger, *Gottes Häuser in Königsberg* – text published on the Internet page: http://www.alt-katholisch.de/fileadmin/red_ak/CH-Archiv/6-7-05.html (access on 8 December 2018); here stating that the confirmation took place on 5 July; H. Ney, *Gottes Häuser in Königsberg*, Bd. 1: *Kirchen, Kapellen und Synagogen bis 1945*, München 2015, p. 390 (after Klingere he also provides the date of 5 July).

³⁹ Josef Hubert Reinkens had worked earlier as a priest of the Breslau diocese. He was also a professor of the history of the Church at the University of Breslau. Due to the views preached he was excommunicated on 4 May 1872, and as early as in April 1873 he was elected the first bishop of the Old Catholic Church in Cologne. He received the consecrated dignity of the bishop's office on 11 August of the same year from the Jansenist bishop Hermanus Johannes Heykamp from Deventer. At the council convened in 1874 in Bonn new ecclesiastical order was assumed, in which fasting and auricular confession were rejected, and in subsequent years also the priestly celibacy and the Immaculate Conception dogma as well as the national language for the liturgy and the holy Communion under both species were introduced. – J. Mandziuk, *Historia Kościoła katolickiego na Śląsku. Czasy nowożytnie*, t. 3, cz. 2 (since 1845 until 1887), iss. 2, Warszawa 2013, p. 335.

⁴⁰ Ermländische Volksblätter, 27 February 1874.

⁴¹ One of the first Old Catholic burials at the Catholic cemetery in Königsberg took place as early as 17 October 1873. Then a carpenter apprentice Müller was buried, but not in the consecrated place. – Ermländische Volksblätter, 31 October 1873; J. Jasiński, op. cit., p. 263.

⁴² J. Obłąk, op. cit., p. 204; J. Mandziuk, op. cit., p. 335. The church law did not allow the shared use of the Catholic churches by heterodox communities.

the parish priest Julius Dinder the right to use the church, designating the hours for themselves since 8 a.m. until 10.30 and since 2 p.m. until 3 p.m on Sundays as well as since 9 a.m. until 10.30 on weekdays. They also wanted to repossess a number of church paraments. The parish priest protested against it, but the overpresident of Prussia and the minister for religious affairs regarded the claims of the Old Catholics as appropriate and threatened that if the Catholic parish did not make them voluntarily, it would be forced to do so⁴³. It is also hard to say how many worshippers the Old Catholic community amounted to at the time. „Deutscher Merkur” informed that during the course of the same year (1875) out of the 860 adult members of the Catholic parish in Königsberg 420 expressed protest to the overpresident against the provisions of the I Vatican Council and in this way they declared themselves as the Old Catholics, but these data were not precise⁴⁴. In the light of „Elenchus universi cleri nec non sororum piarum congregationum dioecesis warmiensis conscriptus sub finem novembris 1875” there were 1937 Catholic worshippers communing at Easter (adults) in Königsberg and 197 in Insterburg⁴⁵.

On 15 January 1876 the Old Catholic institution in Königsberg was officially recognized by the state⁴⁶. However, the parish priest Julius Dinder protested against it. 10 days later he sent his opinion to the overpresident Carl von Horn, but it was not taken into consideration⁴⁷. The Prussian government tried to prove that the number of the Old Catholics was high and similar to the staffing of the Roman Catholic community. In this way the former justified the need to share the church as well as the liturgical paraments. A similar position was presented by the bishop of the Old Catholics Josef Hubertus Reinkens. He proposed that the Old Catholics in Königsberg should be given the right to use the church on Sundays between 9 a.m. and 10.30 and 2 a.m.–3 a.m., and on weekdays between 9 a.m.–10.30 as well as the liturgical paraments at least for two clergymen⁴⁸.

On hearing these wishes, the parish priest Julius Dinder insisted on the verification of the data pertaining to the number of members of the Old Catholic community and still opposed all kinds of demands from the other party⁴⁹. He wanted the Prussian government to preserve at least the previous agenda of the communal

⁴³ AAWO, AK III 21 (Occupation der Römischkatholischen Kirche zu Königsberg durch die sog. Altkatholischen); J. Obłąk, op. cit., p. 208.

⁴⁴ D. Klinger, op.cit.; H. Ney, op. cit., p. 390.

⁴⁵ *Elenchus universi cleri nec non sororum piarum congregationum dioecesis warmiensis conscriptus sub finem novembris 1875*, Braunsberg 1876.

⁴⁶ D. Klinger, op. cit.; F. Gause, *Die Geschichte der Stadt Königsberg in Preussen*, t. 2, Köln 1986, p. 698; H. Ney, op. cit., p. 390.

⁴⁷ The overpresident's letter to government of 26 January 1876 to the government. – F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 115.

⁴⁸ F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 115. On 26 January 1876 a proposal emerged that they could use it on Sundays and holidays since 7 a.m. until 8 a.m. and since 9 a.m. until 10.30 and since 2 p.m. until 3 p.m., and weekdays for funerals, weddings etc. since 9 a.m. until 10.30. – AAWO, AB III K 22 (26 January 1876).

⁴⁹ AAWO, AB III K 22 (21 February 1876).

services, even though it protested against the equalization of rights of Catholics and Old Catholics. He also pointed out that the church in Königsberg enjoyed special privileges because it was built owing to the endeavours of the Polish king Sigismund III Wasa and it could be referred to as the courtly church (Hofkirche), and at present the government was obliged to build it and to maintain its clergymen⁵⁰. On 17 March 1876 he also gave a detailed arrangement of the Catholic Church services, which filled entire Sundays and weekdays (numerous holy Masses, vespers of the sermon etc.)⁵¹. Unfortunately, as a consequence of the order of the overpresident of 8 April 1876 the Old Catholics opted for the common use of the church every Sunday and each Holiday since 8 a.m. until 9 a.m. as well as since 4 p.m. until 6 p.m. and starting from the closest Easter at that, as well as being handed over a half of all the church equipment. The Prussian government threatened that if the church was not made available on the first day of Easter, it would be done with the help of the police⁵².

The parish priest Julius Dinder informed the Warmian bishop Philipp Kremenz about everything, but simultaneously strove to meet with the minister Adalbert Falk in order to discuss the existing situation. He also assured the administrator of the diocese that the parish community would celebrate Easter (Wir feiern noch Ostern) on 14 April. However, the minister rejected the appeal and the argumentation presented to him. He wrote that a part of the Catholics (in reality the Old Catholics) could not be excluded from the right to use the church. It was intended for the entire Catholic community, also including the Old Catholics who had the same right to make use of the church. They were also recognized by the overpresident. Moreover, he referred to the number of practitioners stating that according to officials it pertained to at least 300 „independent” (selbstständige) men. In the minister’s opinion it was not important if they, indeed, confirmed their belonging to Old Catholicism, it was sufficient to assign them to this community. Nevertheless, the problem consisted in the fact that many of them did not understand the term „Old Catholicism” and meant the hitherto Catholic Church. An example of such reasoning was cited by priest-vicar Jakob Unger in a letter to the bishop of 18 June 1876.⁵³

In this situation there remained nothing for the Catholic community but to leave its church and give it away to the Old Catholics. The common usage of the church with the sect as this was the way the new worshippers were referred to was

⁵⁰ F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 116; A letter to the government advisor Kross of 17 March 1876.

⁵¹ AAWO, AB III K 22 (17 March 1876).

⁵² Ibidem (8 April 1876); F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 116; A letter of the government to the parish priest of 10 April 1876.

⁵³ F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 118, fn. 7. Extensive correspondence concerning this subject between bishop Kremenz and the parish priest Dinder as well as the Prussian government in AAWO, AB III K 22.

simply beyond imagination. On the Saturday of 6 May 1876 the Catholics still gathered in large numbers at the May church service, and after its end the clergymen moved the Blessed Sacrament to the rectory. It took place amidst the weeping and sobbing of the worshippers, which even intensified during a short speech on the part of the parish priest. The processional transition was preceded by the common reciting of the „creed”. The singing – already at the rectory – was accompanied by the small American organ⁵⁴.

The next day (7 May; the third Sunday after Easter) approximately at 7 a.m. the Old Catholics were supposed to enter the church. At that time a police commander arrived and demanded from the parish priest Julius Dinder to hand over the key. Because the latter refused to do it, the commander took them by himself. As it turned out – despite many stimuli – only 70 people out of those who used to belong to the Catholic Church, and later converted to Old Catholicism gathered during the communal service. There were not many of the remaining ones, either, but it was stated in the „Hartungsche Zeitung” that the church was filled to the last place. At 4 p.m. the police commander came again in order to open the church for the Old Catholics and enable them to use it until 6 p.m. As it appeared, he was alone there⁵⁵.

Owing to the fact that the service was performed in the church by the Old Catholics in the House of God – within the meaning of canon law – it was profaned⁵⁶. The Catholics could only use the bells during funerals. Under such circumstances they had to arrange a courtesy room for themselves at the rectory. There was also an idea to build another facility in one of the city districts called Haberberge, but there was a shortage of financial means for it. Yet organizing public collections for this purpose was feared. It was due to the unfavourable attitude on the part of the overpresident, even though such an appeal was made on 14 May 1876⁵⁷. Ultimately, a decision was made to build a makeshift church (Notkirche) in the parish priest's garden. Funds were also lacking for that. In addition, the clergymen from the Königsberg parish lost their current income as a consequence of the directive of 22 April 1875. In order to remedy that bishop Philipp Krementz decreed a collect for the needy Catholics in Königsberg on the Sunday of 11 June 1876 in all the churches of the diocese. The generosity proved to be great, but the funds gathered were insufficient for the construction of a new church⁵⁸.

In subsequent years also the situation of the Old Catholics changed since their number diminished systematically. In August 1879, during the elections of

⁵⁴ F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 119; J. Oblak, op. cit., p. 208.

⁵⁵ F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 120.

⁵⁶ T. Zadykiewicz, *Profanacja*, in: *Encyklopedia katolicka*, t. 16, Lublin 2012, col. 441.

⁵⁷ F. Dittrich, op. cit., pp. 120–121; *Erländische Zeitung* 1876, No 120; 1877, No 7.

⁵⁸ F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 122.

the Parish Management Board, 467 votes were cast by the Roman Catholic believers and 127 by the Old Catholics. However, it was still a significant group. At that time 160 people took the holy Easter Communion, and every year between 6 to 8 children were baptized. In 1880 they were visited by the Old Catholic bishop Josef Hubert Reinkens, who administered confirmation to 27 people in person⁵⁹. In 1881 99 men took part in the general meeting of that community⁶⁰. Since 1878 until 1881 it was the former priest Sylwester Suszczynski who had helped in the ministry. He was the clergyman of the Gniezno archdiocese and since 15 May 1869 he held the office of a parish priest in Mogilno. On 9 July 1875 he left the facility and went to Königsberg. On 1 September in „Dziennik Poznański” (...) as well as „Posener Zeitung” (...) he published a statement that he was breaking off from the Roman faith and that he was joining the Old Catholics. On 13 September he concluded a legal marriage in Königsberg, and six days later he had a church wedding in an old Catholic church in Basel. However, he did not stay in the Old Catholic community long, either; in August 1881 he converted to Protestantism and was appointed clergyman in Stallupönen, and in 1883 in Rosinsko in Masuria. He died on 8 August 1883.⁶¹

The rector of the Roman-Catholic parish pr. Julius Dinder still believed that it would be possible to reverse the situation and regain the church. He also systematically raised the question concerning the small number of the followers of Old Catholicism. On 1 June 1880 he addressed a letter to the minister of culture Robert von Puttkamer⁶². He also kept reminding that the church in Königsberg enjoyed special rights owing to its predestination for the Catholics arriving in the city, both of Polish as well as Lithuanian nationality. He pointed out that with regard to the year 1876 the number of the Old Catholics diminished by 132. In the reply of 28 September 1880 the minister quoted the decision of his predecessor of 22 April and 17 May 1876 and confirmed the status quo⁶³.

The subsequent talks were initiated as late as in October 1883. At that time a representative of the government arrived in order to settle the church income. At the same time the Catholics conveyed a list on which 1100 „independent” (selbständige) men were enumerated, belonging to the Catholic Church, as well as a list of two years before from the Old Catholic bishop Reinkens, on which there were surnames of only 221 men. As it turned out, 27 men appeared in both juxtapositions. It

⁵⁹ D. Klinger, *op. cit.*; H. Ney, *op. cit.*, p. 391.

⁶⁰ In August 1879 during the elections of the Parish Management Board 467 Roman Catholic and 127 Old Catholic votes were cast.

⁶¹ <http://palukitv.pl/teksty/karty-historii/916-ojciec-swiety-rzucil-klatwe-na-mogilenskigo-probo-szcza.html> (access on 18 December 2018). In the article more about the attempt at keeping the parish in Mogilno by pr. Suszczyński after conversion to Old Catholicism, aided by the Prussian authorities.

⁶² Earlier he had been the president of the Gumbinnen district. – https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_von_Puttkamer (access on 8 December 2018).

⁶³ F. Dittrich, *op. cit.*, pp. 123–124.

meant that 5/6 of the enumerated people constituted the Catholics and – according to them – the church property should be divided in this very way. However, ultimately no decisions were made. No agreement was reached during the talks of the representative of the Old Catholics, the counselor of the district court Schroetter and the counselor Hempel, either. The situation changed only when the president of the Prussian government Heinrich Konrad Studt entered into talks⁶⁴. He was the first to show benevolence to the Catholics and undertook action to bring the church back to them. In April 1886 he informed the parish priest Julius Dinder that there was hope and that the Old Catholics would leave the premises. However, they wanted to retain the possibility of using the bells during funerals and assure burials for themselves at the Catholic cemetery. Thus, he asked whether those points were acceptable. Pr. Dinder replied that the Catholics were above all, interested in obtaining exclusive rights for the church, but in order to give a definitive answer he would have to ask the ordinand about it⁶⁵. The Warmian bishop Andreas Thiel acknowledged that such a situation could be accepted by way of exception, even though in the case of burials it would be necessary to designate a special place⁶⁶. Indeed, the situation of the Catholics was dramatic. The makeshift chapel could not accommodate the believers arriving at the Holy Masses. It was mentioned in „Gazeta Olsztynska” at the beginning of May 1886: „As is well known the Catholic church in Königsberg is in the possession of the so-called Old Catholics. The Roman Catholic church service takes place in the barracks, built onto the parsonage. During Easter it appeared yet again that those premises were insufficient for the worshippers not being able to be accommodated during the mass, so many of them stayed in the garden adjacent to the parsonage. There is no Sunday during which people do not faint as a result of crowd and stuffiness. And nearby there stands a spacious church, torn away from the Catholics, all empty. When many gather, there may be even fifty people in the whole church. The mass usually takes place every second Sunday. It is said that soon the church will be given back to the Catholics. The parish priest Dinder hesitates whether to accept it in the present state, because owing to the negligence of many years, numerous renovations will be necessary. May our parish priest, before resettlement to Poznań, still live to see relationships that are better for his parish”⁶⁷.

This change of attitude on the part of the Old Catholics resulted from the new circumstances. Above all, on 28 May 1886 their main promoter prof. Friedrich Michelis died in Freyburg. A verification of the state’s policy with regard to

⁶⁴ https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heinrich_Konrad_Studt (access on 08 December 2018).

⁶⁵ AAWO, AB III K 22, Pr. J. Dinder’s letter to bishop dr Kremetz of 19 April 1886.

⁶⁶ Ibidem, Bishop Ph. Kremetz’s letter to J. Dinder of 28 April 1886.

⁶⁷ Gazeta Olsztynska, 7 May 1886.

the Catholic Church took place together with the departure from the kulturkampf. Priest Josef Grunert wrote about the Old Catholic parish on 13 June 1886 in a letter on the occasion of Pentecost. It is an important document for the familiarization with the history of this community in Königsberg and more extensively in East Prussia. We learn from it that prof. Friedrich Michelis was 71 years old at the moment of death. He was the one to initiate the publication of the Old Catholics' magazine „Catholic”. Pr. Grunert complained that the Old Catholics had been waiting for the allocation of a part of the property for 10 years, and now there were plans to take the church away from them. He also pointed out that during Easter the Communion was taken by less than 200 Old Catholics⁶⁸, and the children from almost 130 Protestant mixed marriages who had received baptism in the Old Catholic community, did not attend the religion lessons. It was added in the footnote that the community amounted to 223 adult men (450 souls). In spite of that, they felt threatened and they were concerned about the loss of the church. The absence of many during the liturgy was to be justified by the big distance from the church. On average 40 people took part in the communal services and that result was – as Grunert emphasized – better than in the Protestant churches⁶⁹. Even such words were spoken: „when the Roman churches are overflowing with the praying persons (unfortunately frequently mechanically only), the pews in the Old Catholic ones remain empty” (während die römischen Kirchen von «oft leider mechanischen» Betern brechen, stehen die Bänke der Altkatholischen nur zu leer). The number of the communing ones during Easter time amounted to less than 200 people⁷⁰.

Pr. Grunert devoted a great deal of attention to the St. Michael (Michelisstiftung) foundation, set up in order to support the community. He complained that when „the papists allot so much for their causes [...] only 60 [marks] was transferred to our treasury from our community”. He further informed that approximately 700 marks annually was collected in this way, and the state subsidized 1200 marks. The parish priest received 2000 marks, including 1400 in Königsberg, appr. 150 in Insterburg, 400 in Konitz, and from 60 do 80 in Braunsberg⁷¹. Within the framework of the St. Michael foundation 800 marks was gathered⁷². Pr. Grunert also mentioned the thoughtful policy on the part of minister Falk and the Prussian government (Wenn der Staat unter Falk uns rechtlich geschützt hat). However, he complained about the difficulties he encountered among the Protestant communi-

⁶⁸ J. Grunert counted 223 adult men (450 souls). – F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 128, ft. 18; AAWO, AB III K 22, Ein Pfingstbrief an alle Altkatholiken Ost- und Westpreußens of 13 June 1886.

⁶⁹ AAWO, AB III K 22, Ein Pfingstbrief an alle Altkatholiken Ost- und Westpreußens of 13 June 1886.

⁷⁰ F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 127; AAWO, AB III K 22, Ein Pfingstbrief an alle Altkatholiken Ost- und Westpreußens of 13 June 1886.

⁷¹ Ibidem.

⁷² AAWO, AB III K 22, Ein Pfingstbrief an alle Altkatholiken Ost- und Westpreußens of 13 June 1886.

ty. He also counted on receiving a vicar to help, who would be teaching at school. He signed the letter only as: J.[osef] Grunert, altkath.[olischer] Pfarrer, Königsberg, Kneiph. Hofgasse 10.

On the last page he gave the agenda of the Old Catholic communal services. In Königsberg the liturgy was performed every Sunday and Feast, apart from the last Sunday of the month because then it was conducted in Insterburg at 10 a.m. It was also there that since 1 October until Good Friday of the next year – an even-song with a sermon (instead of the one before noon) took place on designated Sundays at 6 p.m. Since 1 May until 1 September it started at 9 a.m., and during the remaining period at 9.30 a.m. In Konitz, apart from the second Feast of Christmas and Easter, from two to three communal services were performed, and their dates were given to every member of Old Catholicism after being reported with prof. dr. Praetorius. On the Monday of Pentecost there was always a religious service in Insterburg. During Easter time also general penitential and eucharistic church services were connected with the Mass, and the more solemn ones on Maundy Thursday at 9 a.m., on Easter Monday, the penitential day, Ascension Day and Pentecost Day at 6 a.m. and 9 a.m. the lessons before the 1st holy Communion began at the beginning of August, but the children who had a weak preparation or a Roman-Catholic or Protestant one prior to that, were obliged to undertake an in-depth course twice, lasting since Easter until Pentecost. Children aged 7–8 were admitted to the regular lessons of the Old Catholic religion, as long as they could read, and the instruction was to last until the final school leaving examinations. Those children were released from the religion lesson at school. Pr. Grunert also wrote that he was ready to go to the homes of the Old Catholics (Hausandachten) in order to administer baptism, wedding or to conduct a funeral. Moreover, he added that if a Catholic priest refused a place at the cemetery, it would be necessary to notify the police. In Königsberg the Old Catholics made use of the Catholic cemetery, but in the place specially designated for them. He assured that he conducted the holy Mass with a prayer and *free of charge* at that, for each deceased person. He made his „Old Catholic” library available to the believers. He also distributed the magazine „Altkatholischer Bote” for a quarterly fee amounting to 1 mark and 20 fenigs, and on the spot for 80 fenigs⁷³

The minister of culture Gustav von Gossler⁷⁴ undertook to solve the dispute over the church in Königsberg as late as in 1886. He was of the opinion that it should belong to those who formed a more numerous community. He proposed that the Catholics should rent an Evangelic hospital church in the district of Löbenicht,

⁷³ Ibid., Mitteilungen und Wünsche.

⁷⁴ https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gustav_von_Gossler (access on 08 December 2018).

and then the government might allocate for the Old Catholics. The parish management board of the Catholic community initially gave permission for it, but it turned to the government – as a patron of the Catholic church – to take over the lease costs because the parish could not afford it. On 27 October 1886 an agreement with the hospital management board was signed with the possibility of its cancellation within the period of four weeks. However, such a resolution of the case, evoked the minister von Goßler's doubts and he acknowledged that it did not solve the problem in the light of the law of 4 July 1875. On the other hand, the president of the Prussian government Conrad von Studt made a suggestion to the parish management board that it should accept the proposal of receipt of approximately 500 marks for the rental of the Evangelic hospital church as well as the annual payment of 600 marks or a lump sum of 1200 marks. In addition, he informed that during the management board meeting of 24 November the Old Catholic put forward a condition that they would take ownership of the used church equipment as well as they would be able to avail themselves of the place at the cemetery, and the bells during funerals⁷⁵.

Nevertheless, the management board of the Catholic church did not accept those proposals. Among the impossible conditions it enumerated: the requirement of annual compensation amounting to 600 marks, the clause of a four week's notice of the termination of lease clause, the transfer of the church equipment, the shared use of the bells and the cemetery. There was also a demand to present a list of the Old Catholics to be checked because already during the headcount on 20 June 1875 false information was given⁷⁶.

The talks concerning the recovery of the church were difficult. On 14 January 1887 „Gazeta Olsztyńska” informed: „The Old Catholics are somehow reluctant to return the Catholic church. They demand not only to be able to keep all the church equipment, but they also want 700 marks annually for the resignation from the church. However, it would be interesting to know in what way they justify this demand. There are so few Old Catholics in Königsberg that seldom do some 20 people come to church, and a half of them only do so out of the sheer curiosity to attend the communal services of Mr Klotz⁷⁷”.

In February 1887 the Catholic church management board together with a big number of the community members – altogether 275 people – asked the Chamber of Deputies (Haus der Abgeordneten) in a petition for help with regaining the

⁷⁵ A letter of 24 December 1886. *Gazeta Olsztyńska*, 1 October 1886 informed about the chances of regaining the church: „Owing to the endeavours of the former local parish, and now the Poznań archbishop, the local church was reportedly taken away from the «Old Catholics» and put into the service of the Roman Catholics”.

⁷⁶ F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 130, A letter to the president of the government of 12 January 1887.

⁷⁷ *Gazeta Olsztyńska*, 14 January 1887.

church. It was yet again passed on to the minister of culture to check whether, indeed, the number of the Old Catholics amounted to over 200 men, as it was announced in the minister's settling of the decree of 28 September 1880 following the request of 1 July. The overpresident V. Schliedkmann wrote to the church management board on 8 July 1887 that the list of members conveyed to the president of the government contained 230 surnames, but after being checked by the police it was reduced to 208⁷⁸.

More favourable was the fate of the petition to the Chamber of Deputies. While it was being discussed understanding was shown (with a few exceptions) for the difficult situation of the Catholics in Königsberg and hope was expressed that also the government would find a good solution. A speaker of the Centre Party, deputy dr Bernhard Würmeling, put the request to address it to the government, however, out of 23 votes he only received 11 and only 1 person rejected it. For that reason it did not have such authority. Yet, the very petition whether the government could deal with it, was supported unanimously. On 19 February 1888 in „Westfälischer Merkur” a piece of information appeared that the deputy of the of the Centre party Peter von Spahn sent a petition suggesting that the church in Königsberg should be returned to the exclusive disposal of the Catholics. Also the history of the community of the Old Catholics was briefly presented as well as it was reminded in the light of guidelines on the part of the nuncio from Munich of 24 March 1873 it was not acceptable for the communal services to be performed in the church used by the Old Catholics. The numerical data were cited and it resulted from them that according to the ministerial information 200 people admitted to being Old Catholics, out of which – based on the Roman-Catholic parish council – only 132 could be regarded as real members. From still other data it might result that there were 300 men, but it was not confirmed either before a notary or in any other way. Even more precious pieces of information come from the „third report of the Petitions Committee of the Chamber of Deputies” of 1888. It was stated in it that on the basis of the law of 4 July 1875 the hitherto Roman-Catholic church was given over to Old Catholics in Königsberg on 7 May 1876. The Catholics had to use the temporary chapel, which only had 275,4 m², and after deducting approximately 55 m² for the main altar, the pulpit, the organ and the confessionals, only approximately 220 m² of the space for the community remained which, together with the soldiers, amounted to approximately 7 thousand. In summer it was extremely hot there owing to the low roof and the weak ventilation. The worshippers filled the church on Sundays and feasts five times (that was the number of the holy Masses), hence frequent faintness and in wintertime snow got to the interior via

⁷⁸ F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 130 (also fn. 23).

various holes. At that time the parish church stood empty, and it was only visited by small groups of the Old Catholics. What is more, there was no service at least on one Sunday of each month because the Old Catholic clergyman went to some other localities. The Old Catholics were also returned the cemetery for common usage, and they selected the best places for burial. Thus, a question arose whether in general the law of 4 July 1875 could be applied with reference to that church. It was supposed to be intended for the Catholics already by the Prussian duke John Sigismund in November 1611 under the privileges of 12 and 29 May 1612. The Prussian government also allocated a flat for the priest and the servants as well as a dotation, and control was left to the Warmian bishop. It was confirmed during the Treaty of Wehlau-Bromberg of 19 September 1657. Thus, the church had a state patronage. Moreover, the Old Catholics do not respect the decisions of the Council of Trent, and their first clergyman (meaning pr. Grunert), who officiated until 25 November 1886, was married and that is why he did not celebrate the sacraments within the Catholic meaning. What is more, as his proclamation of 13 June 1886 indicated, he became a supporter of liberalism. The law of 4 July 1875 said that those communities were entitled to the shared use which maintained the Catholic character, even though they did not recognize the papal infallibility dogma. Also the issue concerning the number of the Old Catholics was touched upon, namely whether it was really „significant” in the meaning of the law of 4 July 1875. The former Catholic parish priest in Königsberg pr. Julius Dinder, asked for a list of the Old Catholics or at least their being checked by the Catholic parish council, but it was not taken into consideration. On 8 July 1887 the minister for spiritual, school and medical affairs informed the Catholic parish that the number of the adult Old Catholic men amounted to over 200 people, but he did not state when and how it was established. That number was also undermined, putting forward various arguments. It was stated that in 1870 the Catholic school amounted to 222, in 1876 – 236, and in 1888 to 374 students. The number of the Easter holy Communion in the Catholic community in 1886 increased to 2188, and in 1887 even to 2512, and the state of all the worshippers to over 5000 people. It was also necessary to add 23 officers and 1313 members of the garrison in Königsberg to that, who due to the lack of their own church were attended upon by the parish and participated in the religious services in the church. Also various analyses of that state of affairs and possible forms of solving the problem were enclosed in the report⁷⁹.

At the plenary session of 21 March 1888, after the statement of deputy Peter von Spahn, the minister for spiritual, school and medical matters declared that he understood the postulate of the Committee, but he did not recognize the moti-

⁷⁹ AAWO, AB III K 22 (19 February 1888)

vation given by Spahn. The minister saw two ways of solving the problem: either one community provides an indivisible building for the other by way of compensation (as was the case in Krefeld) or another building will be obtained and the bigger community will receive the bigger one, and the smaller – a smaller one (as in Wiesbaden). He was also ready to establish contact with the Warmian bishop so as to „separate” both communities⁸⁰.

That initiated new negotiations. The government proposed a solution for the period of 10 years and announced help regarding the rent. As for the bishop – a settlement for 2 years since he expected changes. Ultimately, it was agreed upon for the period of 7 years – until the end of 1895, among others for the reason that the hospital church was supposed to be used by the Old Catholics⁸¹.

On 21 February 1889 the overpresident of East Prussia Albrecht von Schlieckmann⁸² decided that since 1 April 1889 the Old Catholics would be entitled to have the shared use of the hospital church, but the Catholics could also make use of it pursuant to the agreement of 27/28 October 1886 as well as the supplements of 18 September and 23 October 1888; on the other hand, the Roman Catholics would be entitled to the exclusive use of the parish church⁸³. He also informed the Warmian bishop about it stating that a satisfactory solution was eventually found⁸⁴.

On the Sunday of 7 April 1889 a solemn transfer of the Blessed Sacrament from the current church to the proper one took place. Towards the end of the holy Mass „Te Deum” was solemnly performed. The bishop intended to take part in the last service in the temporary church, however, he did not come owing to the other obligations, but he did send his wishes and expressed joy as well as granted blessings⁸⁵. It was stated in „Gazeta Olsztyńska”: „On Sunday the first communal service in the local parish church took place, which so far had been in the possession of the Old Catholics. There was simply incredible crowd. At 10 a.m. a solemn procession to the beautifully decorated church took place. The celebratory holy Mass with the retinue was conducted by the parish priest Steffen, and the sermon was delivered by pr. director Zagermann”⁸⁶. During the negotiations of 18 August 1897 final settlement of the issue of endowment between the Catholics and the Old Catholics was

⁸⁰ F. Dittrich, op. cit., pp. 131–132.

⁸¹ Ibidem, p. 132.

⁸² Albrecht von Schlieckmann was born in 1835 in Magdeburg. He held various positions in the administration of East Prussia. In the years 1879–1881 he was the president of the Gumbinnen district, and since 1882 until his death the overpresident of the Province of East Prussia. He died in Königsberg in 1891. – https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albrecht_von_Schlieckmann (access on 08 December 2018).

⁸³ Ibidem, p. 133.

⁸⁴ Ibidem. That fact was also noted down by *Gazeta Olsztyńska* of 1 March 1889: „From 1 April the former Catholic church, until that time in the possession of the Old Catholics given back to the Catholics”

⁸⁵ A letter to the parish priest of 19 March 1889. – F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 134; J. Obłąk, op. cit., p. 208.

⁸⁶ *Gazeta Olsztyńska*, 12 April 1889.

found⁸⁷. On 20 and 21 September 1891, for the first time since regaining the church the Warmian bishop Andreas Thiel paid a visit to Königsberg, administering the sacrament of confirmation⁸⁸ in the middle of 1895, in the place where since May 1876 until 1 April 1889 the temporary chapel stood, in which masses for the Catholics were celebrated, a shrine with the figure of the Sacred Heart of Jesus was built, and the consecration took place on 17 September of the same year⁸⁹.

In December 1886 changes took place in the pastoral staffing of the Old Catholics. On 11 November pr. Grunert switched to the Evangelic Church and undertook work in Allenburg near Wehlau⁹⁰. His place was taken over by pr. Karl Josef Klotz, who in December that year arrived from Freyburg in Königsberg⁹¹. He tried to enliven religious life. Thus, he founded the Women's Association (Frauenverein) and a choir (Kirchengesangverein). He brought over 40 issues of the prayer book („Gatzenmeier'sches Gebetsbuch"). In 1887 8 children took the 1st holy Communion. On 19 June of the same year, also bishop Reinkens arrived in the parish and administered confirmation to 38 people (later on he also made his way to Insterburg and Konitz). Moreover, holy Masses for children were introduced. He also attempted to gain new members⁹². On 13 January 1888 it was reported in „Gazeta Olsztyńska": „Next to the entrance door of the local Catholic church, for some time used by the «Old Catholics», placards with the following content had been posted: «The Catholics wishing to join our commune please report for this purpose to our church administrator, parish priest Klotz, or to one of the signed members of supervision orally or in writing. The management board of the Old Catholic commune». Here follow signatures of about 15 people"⁹³. However, after two years of work pr. Klotz left Königsberg in October 1888⁹⁴. His successor became pr. Josef Dilger. He was born in 1837 in Falkau in Baden and took holy orders in the Roman

⁸⁷ F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 134. Since 11 February 1890 pr. Jan Nepomucen Szadowski became a parish priest in Königsberg. He renovated the returned parish church, destroyed by the Old Catholics, and built a rectory as well as the St. Adalbert church, an oratory in the district of Ponarth and laid the foundation stone for the Holy Family church in Oberhaberberg, and also built the Our Lady Star of the Sea church in Pillau. He brought sisters of Saint Elizabeth and Saint Catherine, opened an almshouse for the poor and an orphanage. He died on 10 August 1914. – A. Kopiczko, *Duchowieństwo katolickie diecezji warmińskiej w latach 1821–1945*, cz. 2, pp. 282–283.

⁸⁸ *Gazeta Olsztyńska*, 26 August 1891.

⁸⁹ *Gazeta Olsztyńska*, 28 September 1895.

⁹⁰ A. Kopiczko, *Duchowieństwo katolickie diecezji warmińskiej w latach 1821–1945*, cz. 2, p. 91.

⁹¹ On 24 December 1886 in *Gazeta Olsztyńska* it was stated: „The new old Catholic pastor had a speech in a public facility (casino) where approximately 70 people had gathered. It is not clear how many true Old Catholics there were" [sic!]. cf. H. Ney, op. cit., p. 392.

⁹² AAWO, AB III K 22 (27 May 1887); H. Ney, op. cit., p. 392.

⁹³ *Gazeta Olsztyńska*, 13 January 1888.

⁹⁴ D. Klinger, op. cit. It is worth mentioning that pr. Rudolf Steffen became a parish priest in Königsberg on 12 January 1887, and pr. Theodor Mathee became a vicar on 14 February of the same year. Both of them had huge problems with the Old Catholics. – A. Kopiczko, *Duchowieństwo katolickie diecezji warmińskiej w latach 1821–1945*, cz. 2, pp. 182, 274.

Catholic church in 1862. At Easter 1874 he converted to the Old Catholic Church, and at the beginning of 1888 he arrived in Königsberg, where he took pastoral care over the believers in the entire East and West Prussia. On request of the community he performed the communal services in the German language⁹⁵. In 1888 five baptisms and six funerals were recorded in Königsberg, however, one baptism and three funerals in the diaspora. He gave four hours of religion lessons to 24 pupils every week. Five children took the holy Communion. Every month he also performed a religious service in Insterburg and every quarter in Konitz. The number of adult men, belonging to the community had already amounted to 195. Those data had an influence on the fact that since 1 April 1889 the church yet again returned to the Catholics.

In 1889 also masses and religion lessons were added once again in Braunsberg (since 1894 – twice a month, and since 1899 once a month) and new ones also in 1889 in Lyck, since 1891 in Neustadt in Westpreussen (one holy Mass a year), since 1893 in Graudenz and since 1895 in Danzig. The worshippers did not bear the costs, and the commuting expenses were covered from the community treasure. In 1889 The Women's Association in Königsberg amounted to 26 members and „Preßverein” – 17. The newly founded a Church Building Society (Kirchenbauverein) assembled 45 people. In 1890 108 people took the Easter holy Communion (in Königsberg – 62, in Konitz – 20, in Insterburg – 12, in Braunsberg – 10 and Lyck – 4). On 1 June of the very same year bishop Reinkens administered confirmation in Königsberg to 12 people, and in Insterburg – to 5, including one older woman, however, in Konitz – to 3 people⁹⁶.

Despite the attempts at enlivening the religious life in the community the number of the worshippers decreased all the time⁹⁷. In 1891 approximately 290 (including 147 adult men and 47 women) belonged to it. A year later there were only 99 men. On average, 2 baptisms were administered yearly. The Ist holy Communion stopped taking place every single year, and their number varied between 1 and 8. 1–2 couples entered into matrimony, and there were 4–9 funerals. The number of the Easter holy Communion dropped to 63 in 1895, and the number of pupils taking religion lessons from 28 to 9⁹⁸. On 15 February 1896 „Gazeta Olsztyńska” informed that in the light of the last official list there were 150 thousand Pro-

⁹⁵ The information about his death, he died on 23 January 1903. – Indiana Tribune, 9 March 1903, p. 6. – <https://newspapers.library.in.gov/cgi-bin/indiana?a=d&d=IT19030309.1.6> (access on 08 December 2017). cf. H. Ney, op. cit., pp. 392–393.

⁹⁶ D. Klinger, op. cit.; H. Ney, op. cit., p. 393; Gazeta Olsztyńska, 30 May 1890.

⁹⁷ In Gazeta Olsztyńska on 7 February 1890 it was noted down that in Reszel „A higher teacher Edward Haub who used to belong to the «Old Catholics», reconciled with the Church before death and died fortified by the rites of the Holy Church”. On Edward Haub, see also R. Bölling, *Das Fotoalbum für Weierstraß*, Braunsweig-Wiesbaden 1994, p. 41.

⁹⁸ D. Klinger, op. cit.; H. Ney, op. cit., p. 394.

testants in Königsberg, 8317 Catholics, 220 Old Catholics, 4282 Jews and about 4,5 thousand Baptists as well as those belonging to the other denominational groups⁹⁹.

The neighbouring Old Catholic community was to be found as far as in Berlin, thus difficulties with leading the Königsberg one were emphasized. The funeral of trader Benno Forster in Königsberg was mentioned, reportedly attended by the Old Catholic parish priest all the way from Berlin, namely Anton Ledwina¹⁰⁰ because Dilger had been taking part in the synod of the Old Catholics¹⁰¹.

The successor of bishop Reinkers was bishop Theodor Weber¹⁰². He went on a two-week-long tour to East Prussia in the late summer of 1896. At that time he visited Königsberg, Insterburg, Braunsberg, Graudenz, Danzig and Konitz. Apart from the masses he delivered papers, took part in religion lessons and checked parish registers¹⁰³.

During the following year (1897) bishop Weber yet again visited the community and in Königsberg administered confirmation to 5 children¹⁰⁴. On 10 September of that year a general meeting of the Old Catholics took place in the police building, during which an agreement with the Roman Catholic community regarding the formation of the Old Catholic parish was reached¹⁰⁵ on 7 June 1898. Obtaining of a part of the Catholic cemetery was connected with it. During one of the community meetings in October pr. Josef Dilger appointed a parish priest as well as 12 people for the church board. In Braunsberg masses took place only once a week, and in Lyck they were abolished altogether. Now the new parish management board independently rented the Evangelic hospital church because the Roman Catholic parish no longer had to do it¹⁰⁶. However, the facility in Königsberg still lost its

⁹⁹ *Gazeta Olsztyńska*, 15 February 1896.

¹⁰⁰ On 27 November 1894 Anton Ledwina became the first rector of the Old Catholic parish in Berlin, but he had worked there already since 1 October 1890. – http://www.alt-katholisch.de/fileadmin/red_gemeinden/red_berlin/2010-08_GeBr.pdf (access on 08 December 2018).

¹⁰¹ D. Klinger, op. cit.

¹⁰² Theodor Hubert Weber was born on 28 January 1836. He studied in Bonn, Munich and Breslau. In 1858 he earned a degree of a doctor of philosophy in Bonn, in 1860 he received priestly orders in Breslau, and he habilitated himself in 1868. In the years 1872–1890 he was a lecturer at the university of Breslau. Next he was deprived of the chair for the opposition against the papal infallibility dogma, but he had sympathized with Old Catholicism already since the seventies. In 1895 he became an auxiliary bishop, and in 1896 the Head of the Old Catholic Church in Germany. – https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teodor_Weber (access on 08 December 2018).

¹⁰³ D. Klinger, op. cit. In *Gazeta Olsztyńska* of 29 August 1896 it was claimed: „The new Old Catholic bishop Weber intends to visit his sheep in East and West Prussia. He is arriving there on 29 August. As is well known the fold is decreasing all the time. However, it was reported on 9 September of the same year in „Gazeta”: „Braunsberg [Braniewo]. The Old Catholic bishop Weber from Bonn arrived here on 2 September from Königsberg. He performed a communal service in Lutherkapelle [the Lutherans' chapel], then delivered a sermon there, followed by a few religious dissenters as well. In the evening he had a religious lecture in a narrower circle. On Thursday he left for Graudenz, whence he made his way for Konitz and Danzig”.

¹⁰⁴ D. Klinger, op. cit..

¹⁰⁵ *Gazeta Olsztyńska*, 15 September 1897.

¹⁰⁶ D. Klinger, op. cit.; H. Ney, op. cit., p. 394.

followers. On 17 February 1898 it was noted down in „Gazeta Olsztyńska”: „In the local Old Catholic commune only one baptism and wedding took place. This year most probably even none of those will take place”¹⁰⁷. On the Sunday of 8 May 1898 the Old Catholic bishop Theodor Weber administered confirmation to five children in the Evangelic hospital church in Königsberg¹⁰⁸. On 17 August the following year he arrived in Königsberg again, and he visited Insterburg on the 21st of that month¹⁰⁹.

In the summer of 1901 the parish priest Josef Dilger became seriously ill. Owing to the operation the masses during the Holy Week and Easter in 1902 did not take place. In order to conduct one mass, the parish priest dr Herberz came from Breslau in April of the same year. In summer Dilger was substituted by the parish priest dr Walter Küppers from Heßloch. In August pr. Dilger still celebrated his 40-th anniversary of priesthood, but he died on 23 January 1903, and was buried five days later¹¹⁰.

On 22 March 1903 the adult men of the Königsberg community, after the mass presided over by the secretary of the railroad, unanimously appointed Bludau unanimously elected deputy dr Walter Küppers a new parish priest. Küppers was born on 5 July 1872 in Siegburg. He studied theology and philosophy in Berne in Switzerland. In 1895 he was ordained an Old Catholic priest.¹¹¹ The Evangelic hospital church could be rented until October 1902, later on the urban municipality took ownership of it. The religious services were transferred to the medieval church in the city centre on the Steindamm (Stone Embankment). The Old Catholics could make use of it on Sundays since 8 a.m. until 9 a.m. It was here that in September 1903 bishop Weber administered confirmation to 6 children¹¹². However, in subsequent years „Altkatholisches Volksblatt” remained silent about the community in Königsberg. In December 1907 a Christmas party with the pictures of the Holy Land took place there. In September 1908 the community was visited by bishop Josef Demmel¹¹³ and he administered confirmation to 5 people. He was there also

¹⁰⁷ Gazeta Olsztyńska, 17 February 1898.

¹⁰⁸ Gazeta Olsztyńska, 14 May 1898. Earlier, on 15 March 1898 „Gazeta” informed about a funeral in Braunsberg: „An Old Catholic prof. dr Otto was buried at the Catholic cemetery, which was conducted by the police because the parish priest could not agree to it voluntarily. The funeral procession was presided over by the «Old Catholic» pastor Dilger from Königsberg”.

¹⁰⁹ Gazeta Olsztyńska, 17 August 1899.

¹¹⁰ In Gazeta Olsztyńska (on 31 January 1903) it was stated: „The parish priest of the local Old Catholic commune Josef Dilger died on the 23rd of the same month after a long and severe suffering”. cf. D. Klinger, op. cit.; H. Ney, op. cit., p. 395.

¹¹¹ Because the local community was losing its worshippers after World War I, he converted to the Evangelic Church. He died in 1951. – https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walter_K%C3%BCppers (access on 08 December 2018)

¹¹² D. Klinger, op. cit..

¹¹³ Josef Demmel was born on 29 December 1846 in Regenstauf. In 1870 he joined the Benedictine Order in Munich, but after the Vatican Council he resigned from monastic life and took up theological studies in Bonn. He received priestly orders from the Old Catholic bishop Josef Hubert Reinkens on 6 April 1875. He worked as

next year, most probably in September¹¹⁴. In 1911 the infirm parish priest dr. Küppers was substituted for three months by the parish priest Wilhelm Rieg from Baden¹¹⁵.

In October 1925 rector Küppers left his community at that time still amounting to 40 people and became the Evangelic parish priest after 23 years. Then bishop Georg Moog¹¹⁶ asked the parish office in Berlin in the letter of 19 October 1925 for taking over the pastoral care over the community in Königsberg. „Under the terms of agreement of the church board the community in Königsberg will be taken care of”. Within the next years a mass was still conducted there annually, usually during the Christmas period. In 1927 temporary care was passed on to the parish priest Karl Bermer (1868–1955), but he also had to take care of the communities in Hamburg, Leipzig and Dresden. On 4 October 1935 he notified in writing the new parish priest in Berlin, dr Franz Bucht¹¹⁷ (1887–1978), all the way from Bonn: „there is no greater hope for Königsberg”. However, it was recorded in „Königsberger Adressbuch” in 1941 that he still performed religious services for the Old Catholics in the church suburbs of Stone Embankment (Steindamm)¹¹⁸.

Braunsberg

The next facility of the Old Catholics was situated in the town in which the first riots connected with the rejection of the papal infallibility dogma broke out, that is in Braunsberg. Leaving the school matters aside, it is worth mentioning that

a vicar in Passau as well as a parish priest in Erlangen and Bonn. In 1906 he became a bishop, and he received episcopal consecration from the archbishop from Utrecht. He died on 11 November 1913 in Godesberg. – https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josef_Demmel (access on 08 December 2018).

¹¹⁴ In „Gazeta Olsztynska” of 7 September 1909 it was stated that he hosted the Old Catholic bishop school inspector Seemann from Braunsberg. Johannes Seemann was born in Neumark in West Prussia, he attended grammar schools in Braunsberg, Rößel and Konitz, since 1874 he was a teacher in Braunsberg, since 1875 a school inspector for the Heilsberg county, and later for the Braunsberg one; he converted to Old Catholicism. – *Die Abiturienten des Braunsberger Gymnasiums von 1916 bis 1945*, hrsg. von E. Federau, Zeitschrift für die Geschichte und Altertumskunde Ermlands, 1990, Beiheft 8, p. 165.

¹¹⁵ D. Klinger, op. cit..

¹¹⁶ Georg Moog was born on 19 February 1863 in Bonn. Since 1881 he studied the Old Catholic theology in Bonn, and he took holy orders in 1884. He worked as a vicar in Cologne, since 1890 as a parish priest in Dortmund and since 1898 in Krefeld. In 1908 he became the Old Catholic auxiliary bishop, he received Episcopal consecration in 1912. After Josef Demmel's death in November 1913 he became his successor. He died on 28 December 1934. – https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georg_Moog (access on 08 December 2018).

¹¹⁷ J. Urbisch, *Die Geschichte der Alt-Katholischen Kirche in Mitteldeutschland*, Borsdorf 2012, p. 55et seq.; <https://d-nb.info/1031441018/04> (access on 08 December 2018).

¹¹⁸ D. Klinger, op. cit.; H. Ney, op. cit., pp. 395–396. The church in the suburbs of the Steindamm (Stone Embankment) was referred to as „Polish” because Polish Evangelics used to gather there. – [https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steindamm_\(Kr%C3%B3lewiec\)](https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steindamm_(Kr%C3%B3lewiec)) (access on 08 December 2018).

it amounted to no more than 50 people¹¹⁹. In 1874 the Old Catholics occupied – with the support of the Prussian authorities – the school church, but they returned it to the Catholic grammar school youth after two years¹²⁰. In 1876 they occupied the church in Neumark for a few years¹²¹. The information about it was given in the letter of the representatives of the Parish Council to Adalbert Falk of 14 November of the same year. They wrote in it that on 3 November the county office building allowed the Old Catholics to share the church on Sundays. The Catholics also pointed out to the fact that there could be about 20 Old Catholics in the town (according to the Prussian authorities – 40) in the town, and 9000 Catholics¹²². As it turned out that community did not play a significant role and was attended upon by the clergyman from Königsberg.

Insterburg

Also the dispute over the chapel in Insterburg lasted very long. Pr. Grunert had worked there earlier as a missionary priest. In 1872 he converted to Old Catholicism and formed an Old Catholic association, recognized by the overpresident von Horn as an Old Catholic community. At its head stood Otto Surau and merchant Kerstein. However, initially the chapel still remained in the Catholics' hands. By the decree of the law of 4 July 1875 the Old Catholics were only granted on 22 January 1876 the right to share the house of prayer as well as the sacristy for religious services each fourth Sunday of the month, starting from 30 January. It was also assumed that if bishop Reinkens appointed a clergyman for this community, new regulations would ensue. The Insterburg county commissioner Konrad von Massow allocated the chapel for them, at first for the sake of masses during three Sundays: 13 February, 12 March and 9 April and forbade the new Catholic parish priest Bernhard Blaschy to take out the church equipment from the place of storage location under the penalty of 150 marks of fine¹²³.

The situation in Insterburg was specific because both the chapel as well as well as the land for its construction were financed through voluntary donations of the Warmian priests and worshippers¹²⁴ since the local community was poor and amounted to only 60 adult men, who lived in the Insterburg, Gumbinnen and

¹¹⁹ S. Achremczyk, A. Szorc, op. cit., p. 219; J. Obłąk, op. cit., p. 206 (reports 80 people); *Erländische Volksblätter*, 5 May 1874.

¹²⁰ *Erländische Volksblätter*, 19 May 1874; J. Obłąk, op. cit., p. 206.

¹²¹ S. Achremczyk, A. Szorc, op. cit., p. 219.

¹²² AAWO, AB III B 122 (14 November 1876).

¹²³ F. Dittrich, op. cit., pp. 135–136; *Erländische Zeitung*, 22 February 1876.

¹²⁴ 6 044 thalers and 12 grosh were collected for that purpose; until 1866 the community only had 98 thalers and 15 grosh. – F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 136.

Wehlau counties¹²⁵. Initially, the land was purchased in the name of the vicar from Königsberg pr. Eduard Herrmann, on the recommendation of the bishop attended upon the Catholics in the diaspora, among others in Insterburg, Labiau and Wehlau, and in 1866 the ownership was transferred to the Warmian bishop. Nothing changed in this matter after raising the facility to the rank of the missionary parish in 1871. Providing access to the building to the Old Catholics would have been possible if it were subject to the law of 4 July 1875. However, in Insterburg did the church property did not constitute the property of the community (*Gemeindevermögen*). It did not have any corporate rights. In addition, the church equipment comprised donations with the intention of serving the faithful Roman Catholic worshippers¹²⁶.

On learning about the situation in Insterburg, the donators began to demand the return of the equipment, in particular the parish priest Eduard Herrmann¹²⁷ from Bischofsburg and the parish priest Franz Burlinski¹²⁸ from Gr. Lemkendorf, formerly a curate in Insterburg. Those issues were raised by the bishop in the talk with the overpresident von Horn and he lodged a complaint to the minister of culture. Also the Catholics from Insterburg acted likewise on 3 February and they submitted 3 complaints to the overpresident von Horn about the violation of the bishop's rights. However, in this case the authorities referred to the fact that the Old Catholics constituted a part of the Catholic community, hence they were entitled to make use of the sacral building¹²⁹.

On 13 February 1876 it came to the acquisition of the chapel by the Old Catholics. That day early in the morning the community gathered in the chapel for the holy Mass. However, what was expected did take place. Namely, soon afterwards the county commissioner Konrad von Massow entered in the company of a police inspector, who came into the clergyman's room and demanded that the chapel door keys be handed over. Because the former did not consent, the door was opened by a locksmith. Outside about 50–60 Old Catholics had already been waiting, and among them also the Protestants involved, together with the former priest Josef Grunert, who soon afterwards performed a communal service. During that liturgy the policemen were keeping watch outside. It caused that the Catholics were forced to look for another place for the masses¹³⁰.

Also the bishop and the Catholics immediately undertook action in order to regain the occupied chapel. Even charging the Old Catholics financially was taken

¹²⁵ D. Klinger, op. cit.

¹²⁶ F. Dittrich, op. cit., pp. 136–137.

¹²⁷ A. Kopiczko, *Duchowieństwo katolickie diecezji warmińskiej w latach 1821–1945*, cz. 2, pp. 101–102.

¹²⁸ Ibidem, p. 44.

¹²⁹ Ibidem, pp. 137–138.

¹³⁰ Ibidem, pp. 138–139; J. Obląk, op. cit., pp. 207–208.

into consideration lest it would not be worth maintaining it. However, the bishop's applications of 16 November 1875 and 7 February 1876 with regard to the building were rejected by the county court. Also the appeal to the appellate court did not change anything. The overpresident considered that by forming a missionary parish the right to the land was transferred on from the bishop to the church management board¹³¹.

The standpoints of both parties differed. The plenipotentiary of the bishop became a litigation counsel Herzfeld, a really well known and influential man. He acknowledged that it was possible to invoke the exclusive right to the property. The problem remained whether the building could be treated as a church or not yet. If in the light of law it had already constituted a church, nothing could be done, making use of the regulations of 4 July 1875. It would be different if it were proved that the building was a private house of prayer, then the owner had a right to appeal but, he added: to whom – the police, the state?

In the meantime on 10 November 1875 the Old Catholic community was recognized by the overpresident as a church one, even though it did not receive the status of a legal person. Here doubts appeared as well. Thus, a decision was made to wait for the resolution of the minister of culture Adalbert Falk. On 2 March 1876 he issued a rescript in which he rejected the undermining of the overpresident's right to grant rights to the Old Catholics and acknowledged that the overpresident's decree of 10 November 1875 of the latter as the proper one. The court of appeal in Insterburg also confirmed the overpresident's decision. Hence, there were ideas about focusing on the path taking into consideration the reasoning that the house of prayer was private property. However, the general vicar of the Warmian diocese pr. Andreas Thiel was of the opinion that in the then situation there were no chances for a positive dispute settlement before the court¹³².

At that time – unfortunately – the claims on the part of the Old Catholics increased. On 12 April 1877 they demanded a permission to make the chapel available for five hours every other Sunday of the month. They also wanted to take over all of the liturgical furnishings because only one (set) was available. The president of the Prussian government also insisted that the Old Catholics should be returned the entire property since they had formed a new church management board out of their members. Pr. Bernhard Blaschy protested against it pointing out that the property belonged to the bishop, and the benefactors stipulated that they did not express agreement to convey the equipment to the Old Catholics. In the letter to the president of the government of 20 April 1877 he stressed that he must oppose

¹³¹ F. Dittrich, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

¹³² *Ibidem*, p. 143.

the officials in this matter¹³³ However, on 4 June 1877 the latter endeavoured to convince the Warmian bishop and pr. Blaschy that currently the entire property, also including the benefices, had already passed into the care of the new church management board, consisting of the Old Catholics. The bishop could not accept that and he wrote about it on 22 June of that year. The president of the government stated then (on 30 June) that if there was no agreement, he would be forced to do it under pressure. Pr Blaschy was granted the period of recognition of the new situation by 20 August under the penalty of 30 marks of fine (2 August 1877).

On 18 August 1877 pr. Blaschy submitted a complaint to the overpresident of the province von Horn and as a result of it the stand pertaining to 2 August 1877 was verified and the imposition of a fine was resigned from. However, the Catholic priest was to present bills for the church property. Yet, in 1879 the Old Catholics also demanded their own key to the church building. It also turned out that all the protests submitted to the overpresident and the minister of culture Robert von Puttkamer proved to be ineffective¹³⁴.

The situation of the Old Catholics in Insterburg kept deteriorating. In 1876 they were in the minority there, but with the passage of time their number diminished owing to the settlement of new Catholic families as well as the formation of a garrison in Insterburg and Gumbinnen. In 1879 there were 55 Catholics and 66 Old Catholics in Tapiau, but 41 Catholics in Allenberg and only 2 Old Catholics¹³⁵. In 1883 in Insterburg there were 82 Catholics (including soldiers), in the reformatory in Tapiau – 135 Catholic residents, and in the facility in Allenberg 48 patients, not counting the missionary districts situated a bit further from the Catholics living in dispersion¹³⁶. However, there were fewer and fewer Old Catholics. Some had already passed away, and others returned to the Roman Catholic Church. The parish priest of the Old Catholics Josef Grunert performed religious services on average for 15 people (including children). It caused that that the Catholics' hopes for regaining the church became even higher. Such an opinion was also shared by the Catholic pr. Blaschy. On 20 August 1883 he turned with the request for the annulment of the decision of 22 January and 13 July 1876 to the new overpresident of East Prussia Albrecht von Schlieckmann. Yet again he referred to the bishop's right to the property as well as the Old Catholics did not form a church community in the meaning of the law of 1875. However, on 22 November 1883 also Schlieckmann answered negatively, invoking the settlement of the minister of culture. He also indicated that at the beginning of 1883 the community of the Old Catholics amounted to 88 peo-

¹³³ Ibidem, pp. 144–145.

¹³⁴ Ibidem, p. 146.

¹³⁵ J. Obłąk, op. cit., p. 207.

¹³⁶ F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 147.

ple, including 29 adult men¹³⁷. On 22 February 1884 pr. Blaschy lodged an appeal to the minister of culture, and because he did not receive the answer, on 20 August 1884 he repeated the complaint and mentioned the case of the city of Burbach in West Germany, where the Old Catholics lost the right of property and the church. Because yet again there was no reply, on 23 January 1885 pr. Blaschy turned to the Chamber of Deputies, and he was supported by bishop Philipp Krementz. Also deputy of the Centre party Peter von Spahn became involved in the matter. The minister of culture Gustav von Goßlere¹³⁸ realized as well that the number of Catholics was higher and higher and that he could not use that argument any more. It caused that in November the overpresident of East Prussia von Schlieckmann told the Old Catholics to empty the chapel, and that they would receive another building free of charge. At the beginning it was a house for the Evangelic Confirmees. When that proposal was rejected by the Old Catholics, the county commissioner instructed to establish the number of Catholics once again and check if they needed bigger premises. Deputy von Spahn referred to the case once more on 9 March 1888 touching upon the problem of Königsberg and Insterburg, and pointed out that the Catholics must be treated in the same way. He also recollected the situation of 1876 when the Prussian government at the request for the permission to build the second Catholic church for 1000 Catholics replied that there was an insufficient number of worshippers, however, in Braunsberg he issued the decision for the shared use of the Catholic church for only 20 Old Catholics. Moreover, the deputy added that in Insterburg on average 15 people took part in the services for the Old Catholics, and the number of Catholics increased to 1100 believers. Under such circumstances during the sitting of 21 March 1888 Gustav von Goßler was reported to say in the Chamber of deputies „Ich will trennen, aber nicht verbinden” (I want to divide, not unite)¹³⁹.

Since then the Prussian government had been looking for a way to take away the chapel in Insterburg from the Old Catholics, but such a possibility was rejected by the Old Catholic Bishop Josef Hubertus Reinkens. Then pr. Blaschy once again turned to the overpresident of East Prussia. He was aided by the government lawyer Hahn (a devout Catholic), who suggested writing a letter and enclosing the signatures of the Catholic community members. Ultimately that solution was resigned from because on 7 December 1886 pr. Blaschy received a piece of information that under von Goßler's orders the Old Catholic bishop Reinkens changed his opinion and would return the chapel to the Catholics and the Old Catholics would be transferred to the designated house for the Evangelic confirmees. He did that under the

¹³⁷ Ibidem, p. 148.

¹³⁸ https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gustav_von_Gossler (access on 08 December 2018).

¹³⁹ F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 152.

influence of a warning that he would otherwise lose the state subsidy. However, owing to the activities of the provincial governor von Stockhausen in Gumbinnen the case was dragging yet again¹⁴⁰. As late as in July 1887 the Gumbinnen county commissioner Arthur Germershausen in person and on 16 August officially assured pr. Blaschy that on 1 November the chapel would be returned to the Catholics for their exclusive use, although without the church equipment. Thus, pr Blaschy and the Warmian bishop Krementz agreed to that¹⁴¹.

The Old Catholics left the chapel and returned the key to pr. Blaschy as early as on 27 October 1887. The removal took place on the Sunday of 30 October. On that occasion the religious service commenced in the temporary chapel, and it was after the sermon that the priest announced that the Catholics were returning to the former place and he moved the Blessed Sacrament. He celebrated the High Mass in the regained chapel and „Te Deum” was chanted. In this way after 12 years of difficult struggles and suffering the Catholics from Insterburg returned to their church¹⁴².

Elbing

Attempts at introducing Old Catholicism in Elbing were connected with the activity of the local municipality and the Protestants entered its premises. When there was a vacancy for a Catholic teacher's position in 1871, the approval of a new one was made conditional on rejecting papal infallibility by him. In this way Catholic candidates did not have any chances, and the job went to the Old Catholic Kusch¹⁴³. In spring 1872 the municipal authorities also shoved the Catholic clergy away from the teaching of religion at schools and appointed 8 secular teachers, 5 of which were Old Catholics¹⁴⁴. Similar difficulties lasted until 1880, but they did not gain support among the population. In spite of that the vicar from Elbing, pr. Josef Bedenck was filed lawsuit in 1872. He fought Old Catholicism in his sermons. However, on 15 April of the same year the county court issued a judgement purifying the allegations¹⁴⁵.

¹⁴⁰ Among others Blaschy wrote about it to the bishop on 16 and 18 December 1886. – F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 153.

¹⁴¹ Ibidem, pp. 153–154 (a letter to the bishop of 13 July 1887).

¹⁴² Ibidem, pp. 154–155. The dispute over the chapel is also described by M. Jodkowski, op. cit., pp. 536–542.

¹⁴³ Ermländische Volksblätter, 13, 27 October 1874; J. Obłąk, op. cit., pp. 206–207; AAWO, AB I J 9 (Infallibilitäts-Wirren in Elbing), p. 1–7; W. Zawadzki, *Życie religijne w Elblągu w latach 1850–1918*, in: *Historia Elbląga*, t. 3, pt. 2, ed. by A. Groth, Gdańsk 2001, p. 217.

¹⁴⁴ AAWO, AB I J 9 (Infallibilitäts-Wirren in Elbing), p. 11–19; W. Zawadzki, op. cit., pp. 217–218.

¹⁴⁵ J. Obłąk op. cit., p. 207; AAWO, AB I J 9 (Infallibilitäts-Wirren in Elbing), pp. 46–61; W. Zawadzki, op. cit., pp. 220–221.

The army and other health care facilities

When on 10 March 1872 Grunert lawfully left the Church it was believed that the posts for the Catholic soldiers connected with Insterburg in Insterburg, Wehlau, Gumbinnen and Friedland, as well as in the facility for the needy in Tappiau and the health care facility for the mentally ill in Allenberg would be taken over by the successor of pr. Blaschy. Yet, that did not happen, and the Prussian administration supported Grunert. Bishop Kremetz protested against it, sending letters to all kinds of officials, excluding the garrison priest bishop Franz Adolf Namszanowski¹⁴⁶. Except for the latter they all responded negatively. Thus, Grunert under the care of the government could continue catering to those posts under the care of the government. The bishop tried to inform about it, but to no avail because the authorities prevented it from him. Hence, he recommended pr. Blaschy to visit those places in person and contact the Catholics. The priest was kindly received, but he did not receive the permission to perform communal services. The head of the garrison in Wehlau explained that the soldiers could be privately notified about the situation, but he would inform his supervisors about it and ask about their standpoint¹⁴⁷.

The bishop also informed the minister Adalbert Falk about the situation, but unsuccessfully. Only the minister for internal affairs replied on 15 July 1872 that he did not see any possibility of depriving Grunert of the right to provide pastoral care. Therefore, when the Bishop's endeavours proved to be ineffective, on 26 March 1873 he sent a letter in Latin to the Warmian clergymen, in which he stated that Grunert was in excommunication and it was necessary to inform the worshippers that they could not receive sacraments from him. However, it caused that the bishop was accused of propagating false information. He also stood trial and was summoned before the court in Braunsberg on 15 September 1873¹⁴⁸. The bishop then pointed out that Grunert had fundamentally never been a parish priest and that he resigned from the parish in Insterburg, and the institutions in question subordinate to it. Despite the fact that the bishop was sentenced to a fine of 200 thalers. However, he lodged an appeal. The issue dragged on until 18 March 1875 when

¹⁴⁶ On June 1873 bishop Franz Namszanowski was decommissioned for fighting Old Catholicism, and somewhat earlier, on 15 March 1873, the Catholic military ministry and the position of a field priest were liquidated. They were brought back as late as on 1 November 1888; the new bishop with the title of a field priest became the subsequent parish priest of the St. Hedwig church in Berlin, Jan Assmann. – E.R. Huber, W. Huber, *Staat und Kirche im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert. Dokumente zur Geschichte des deutschen Staatskirchenrechts*, Bd. 2, Berlin 1976, pp. 504–516; H. J. Brandt, P. Häger, *Biographisches Lexikon der Katholischen Militärseelsorge Deutschlands 1848–1945*, Paderborn 2002, p. XLV; A. Kopiczko, *Duchowieństwo katolickie diecezji warmińskiej w latach 1821–1945*, cz. 1, p. 193; idem., *Duchowieństwo katolickie diecezji warmińskiej w latach 1821–1945*, cz. 2, p. 192.

¹⁴⁷ F. Dittrich, op. cit., pp. 156–157; Pr. Blaschy's information of April and May 1872.

¹⁴⁸ Ibidem, p. 179; Aktenstücke die altkatholische Bewegung betreffend, pp. 16–17 (the text of the excommunication in the German language).

the bishop was released from punishment¹⁴⁹. As late as in December 1880 a Land Parliament Member dr August Kolberg raised that issue during the session and then the minister von Puttkamer stated that there were no Old Catholics among the soldiers in Friedland and Insterburg and Grunert should not visit those localities. In Insterburg the Catholic clergymen took over the care of the soldiers and it was to be sanctioned by the minister of war¹⁵⁰.

The issue of care over the residents of the county facility for the needy (Lan-darmenhausen) in Tapiau and the health care facility for the mentally ill in Allenberg lasted longer. Since the beginning of 1872 the Old Catholic parish priest Grunert officially provided care there. After many protests the provincial council instructed that also a Catholic clergyman could perform pastoral service. However, it was intended to determine the number of the Old Catholics and Catholics after the speech of pr. dr. August Kolberg of 11 January 1879¹⁵¹. It was stated then that in Tapiau 22 residents from the facility for the needy and 44 from the correctional facility declared themselves as Old Catholics as well as 7 charges and 48 as Catholics. In Allenberg there were 41 infirm of the Catholic faith, 1 old Catholic and 1 Old Catholic among the warders. In the entire East Prussia only 1100 out of 300 000 Catholics declared themselves as Old Catholics¹⁵².

The situation was explained by certain examples. An illegitimate son of a Catholic mother from Guttstadt was sent to Tapiau to acquire education and even though he should be raised in his mother's faith, the excommunicated pr. Grunert brought him into the Old Catholics. After the protest of the Guttstadt Municipal Council the director of the facility announced that in the meaning of the state the Old Catholics are a recognized Catholic denomination¹⁵³. It explained that, basically, everyone in those centres was treated as an Old Catholic¹⁵⁴. As late as since 1 May 1880 in both facilities only Roman Catholic masses were conducted and by the parish priest Blaschy from Insterburg at that¹⁵⁵.

Under the ordinance of the minister of war of 13 April 1881 the parish priest Blaschy was also recognized as a priest for the garrisons in Gumbinnen, Insterburg and Wehlau, and the parish priest Julius Dinder from Königsberg for the garrison in Friedland. The former priest Grunert was deprived of his functions¹⁵⁶.

¹⁴⁹ Ibidem, pp. 181–182.

¹⁵⁰ Ibidem, p. 158; *Ermländische Zeitung*, 1873, No 75, 76.

¹⁵¹ F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 159; *Ermländische Zeitung*, 1879, No 18.

¹⁵² F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 159; *Ermländische Zeitung*, 1879, No 22.

¹⁵³ F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 159; *Ermländische Zeitung*, 1880, No 58.

¹⁵⁴ *Ermländische Zeitung*, 1880, No 15.

¹⁵⁵ F. Dittrich, op. cit., p. 160.

¹⁵⁶ Ibidem; *Ermländische Zeitung*, 1881, No 48; J. Oblak, op. cit., p. 208.

The history of the Old Catholic community in East Prussia after the cessation of the kulturkampf is little known. We do not have the appropriate source materials and studies at our disposal, either. In the article an attempt was made at presenting the fate of the particular facilities, paying special attention to the disputes over sacral buildings and pastoral service. In addition, also the clergymen who had undertaken work among the Old Catholics in East Prussia since 1872 were presented.

Andrzej Kopiczko, *Kościół starokatolicki w Prusach Wschodnich (1871–1944)*

Streszczenie

Geneza starokatolicyzmu jest ściśle związana z ogłoszeniem na Soborze Watykańskim I dogmatu o nieomyślności papieża w sprawach wiary i moralności. Sprzeciw wobec tych postanowień wyraziło wielu duchownych niemieckich, w tym kilku z diecezji warmińskiej, obejmującej swym zasięgiem terytorium Prus Wschodnich. Początkowo opozycja skupiła się wokół czterech duchownych, wykładawców szkół braniewskich: Andreasa Mentzla, Friedricha Michelisa, Edmunda Treibela i Paula Wollmanna. W krótkim czasie doszło też do utworzenia kilku wspólnot starokatolickich, którym sprzyjało państwo pruskie. Pierwsza i największa grupa zorganizowała się w Królewcu, a następnie w Wystruci, gdzie przystąpił do niej ks. Josef Grunert. W obu miejscowościach udało się im także przejąć na cele własnego kultu świątynie katolickie, co doprowadziło do wieloletnich sporów.

W artykule – oprócz przedstawienia dziejów tych placówek i powstałych na tym tle sporów – zaprezentowano także kolejnych duszpasterzy starokatolickich, porządek nabożeństw, wizytacje biskupów połączone z bierzmowaniem, postawę rządu pruskiego oraz stopniowe zmniejszanie się liczby wiernych aż prawie całkowity zanik starokatolicyzmu w Prusach Wschodnich w latach trzydziestych XX wieku.

Tłumaczenie *Andrzej Kopiczko*

Andrzej Kopiczko, *Altkatholische Kirche in Ostpreußen (1871–1944)*

Zusammenfassung

Die Entstehung des Altkatholizismus steht in engem Zusammenhang mit der Ankündigung eines Dogmas über die Unfehlbarkeit der Päpste in Glaubens- und Moralfragen beim Ersten Vatikanischen Konzil. Gegen diese Bestimmungen haben viele deutsche Geistliche, darunter auch einige aus der Diözese Ermland, die in territorialer Hinsicht das Gebiet von Ostpreußen umfasste, Widerspruch geäußert. Die Opposition versammelte sich zunächst um die vier Priester aus den Braunsberger Schulen: Andreas Mentzel, Friedrich Michelis, Edmund Treibel und Paul Wollmann. In kurzer Zeit entstanden auch mehrere altkatholische Gemeinden, die vom preußischen Staat begünstigt wurden. Die erste und größte Gruppe wurde in Königsberg und dann in Insterburg organisiert, der Priester Josef Grunert beigetreten ist. An beiden Orten konnten sie auch katholische Gotteshäuser für ihren eigenen Kult übernehmen, was zu jahrelangen Streitigkeiten führte.

Neben der Darstellung der Geschichte dieser Einrichtungen und der daraus resultierenden Streitigkeiten wurden in dem Artikel Versuche dargestellt, den Altkatholizismus an anderen Orten einzuführen, aber auch die weiteren Priester, die Gottesdienstordnung, die mit der Konfirmation verbundenen Bischofsbesuche, die Haltung der preußischen Regierung sowie der allmähliche Rückgang der Anzahl der Gläubigen bis hin zum fast vollständigen Verschwinden des Altkatholizismus in Ostpreußen in den 30er Jahren des 20. Jahrhunderts präsentiert

Übersetzt von *Andrzej Kopiczko*

Ks. Prof. dr hab. Andrzej Kopiczko
Institute of History and International Relations
Faculty of Humanities
University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn
andrzejkopiczko@wp.pl

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