

Luiza Trybuś, Działalność społeczno-polityczna abp. Józefa Teodorowicza w latach 1902–1938

Summary

This study presents the political and social activities of the Archbishop of Lviv, Józef Teofil Teodorowicz. He managed the Lviv Armenian Catholic Archdiocese in the years 1902–1938. The presentation of the main topic began with an outline of the history of Armenians in Poland, including the history of the Archdiocese of Lviv and the biography of the Archbishop Teodorowicz.

The Armenian archbishop was a member of the Galician National Parliament (1902–1918), the Austrian House of Lords (1902–1918) and the Legislative Sejm of the Second Polish Republic (1919–1922). In 1922, he was elected senator, but resigned from this collegiate body due to the papal ban. This is why his parliamentary activity was characterized. As a parliamentarian, he spoke on matters important to the Church and society. In 1907 and 1913, he expressed a negative opinion about the reform of the electoral system, considering it detrimental to Polish interests. He spoke several times in the debate on changes in the system of teaching religion conducted in the National Sejm. In the House of Lords he clearly stated Polish nation rights of the self-determination in 1917. That speech caused various reactions in society. While sitting as a deputy in the Legislative Sejm (1919–1922), he spoke out about changes in the agricultural system and took part in the constitutional debate. At the Sejm forum, he raised the issue of relations between the state and the Church in independent Poland.

The Armenian hierarch was also involved in the process of rebuilding independent Poland. His attitude towards the Supreme National Committee and the Polish Legions was characterized. In December 1920, Archbishop Teodorowicz together with Bishop Adam Stefan Sapieha went to the Vatican to clear up the misunderstandings about the participation of the clergy in the plebiscite campaign before voting in Upper Silesia. He also referred to the issue of shaping the eastern border of the Republic of Poland, commenting on the Ukrainian-Polish war, the annexation of the Vilnius region and the Brest-Litovsk treaty.

According to Archbishop Teodorowicz, bishops should be the moral voice of society. For this reason, he became involved in defending ethical values in public life. He took a negative stance towards Józef Piłsudski and the May Coup d'état in 1926. Two years later,

he took part in the discussion on the creation of a joint bloc by Catholic parties in the parliamentary elections. In the 1930s, he referred to the proposed changes to the constitution, criminal and civil law. He unequivocally condemned the arrests of opposition politicians that took place in 1930. In 1937, he supported Archbishop Sapieha in the solution of the so-called the Wawel conflict, i.e. the dispute over the transfer of the body of Józef Piłsudski.

In the years 1899–1904, Archbishop Teodorowicz was one of the founders of two Lviv Catholic dailies, "Ruch Katolicki" and "Przedświt". After Poland regained independence, he was a member of the Press Commission of the Polish Episcopate (until 1930).

The Armenian hierarch was a well-known preacher and speaker, and in his homilies he referred to current events. Some of them have been published in print. The ones in which the hierarch raised political and social topics were discussed in this elaboration.

Archbishop Teodorowicz has repeatedly condemned socialist ideology and socialist propaganda in villages and cities. He also spoke negatively about Sanacja and Józef Piłsudski.

During World War I, he was active in the Prince-Bishop's Committee for Aid for Those Afflicted by the Disaster of War. He also supported the work of Armenian organizations: Józef Torosiewicz Scientific Department in Lviv, the Congregation of Landowners of Our Lady from Kochawina and the Archdiocesan Union of Armenians.

In 1902, Archbishop Teodorowicz, wanted to calm down the mood in Galicia caused by the agricultural strike. Then he published a brochure, in which he called for the cessation of the strike action and the revision of views on social relations in the villages. At the turn of 1905 and 1906, the Armenian archbishop was involved in calming down public moods after the publication of Pope Pius X's apostolic letter *Poloniae populum*. In 1936, together with Archbishop Twardowski he undertook a similar mission in the era of unrest caused by the economic crisis and the related increase in unemployment.

Archbishop Teodorowicz became involved in the defense of Polish children from the Prussian partition during the so-called school strike in 1906. He supported their efforts to cancel the regulation of the state authorities introducing the German language to religious education also in the first grades. He also raised the issue of upbringing children in his speeches and sermons. The Lenten sermons delivered by the Armenian hierarch in 1938 and broadcast by the Polish Radio resonated particularly well in society. In them, he unequivocally condemned one of the folk youth organizations, i.e. the Rural Youth Association "Wici".

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