

2023

## Representation of Religious Minorities in Lithuanian Confessional Education

Iveta Klimavičiūtė

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/ree>



Part of the [Christianity Commons](#), [Education Commons](#), and the [Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Klimavičiūtė, Iveta (2023) "Representation of Religious Minorities in Lithuanian Confessional Education," *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe*: Vol. 43 : Iss. 2 , Article 6.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.55221/2693-2148.2408>

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/ree/vol43/iss2/6>

This Article, Exploration, or Report is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ George Fox University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ George Fox University. For more information, please contact [arolfe@georgefox.edu](mailto:arolfe@georgefox.edu).

# REPRESENTATION OF RELIGIOUS MINORITIES IN LITHUANIAN CONFESSIONAL EDUCATION

By Iveta Klimavičiūtė

**Iveta Klimavičiūtė** has master's degrees in Applied Sociology and holds a position of Junior research assistant in the 2020-2023 Research Council for Lithuania's research project "Minority Religions in Contemporary Lithuania."

## Abstract

This article analyzes the situation of religious minorities in a Christian dominated sociopolitical environment in Lithuania through the confessional religious education (RE) system. Representation of religious minorities based on confessional model thus raises questions on majority and minority religions' coexistence, whilst the latter neither legally, nor normatively experience such linkage with the State as majorified religion does. The empirical part of the study, based on content analysis of curricula and teaching aids, reveals that although tolerance of other religions is mentioned, there is also a visible hegemony of the Roman Catholic Church, and of Christianity in general. Non-traditional religious communities that are not recognized by the state are considered as belonging to the new religious movements, which are often associated with the words "dangerous," "destructive," etc. Thus, the study reveals legislation shortcomings of RE, dominance of the majority religion, Christian and Catholic normativity both within society as well as the curriculum and teaching aids, and close Church-State relations.

**Keywords:** Confessional religious education, Church-State relations, religious minorities, religious pluralism, religious hegemony.

## Introduction

Ongoing debates on the peculiarities of education and the intention to develop a comprehensively convenient educational system, is a fairly common phenomenon in contemporary societies. Despite disagreements and various, or even very divergent, notions on how to organize schooling systems, there is a consensus on an almost indisputable feature of education that it is one of the most important agents in society, which socializes individuals and, therefore, transmits not only theoretical knowledge but also social constructs, values, norms, etc.<sup>1</sup> Thus, education promoted by modern countries as elective or compulsory establishes its significant position as mediator between state and society. It complementarily reflects "that beyond a small

<sup>1</sup> James Beckford, *Social Theory and Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003); Aušra Fokienė, Vilija Grincevičienė, Iona Jonutyte, Audronė Juodaitytė, Birutė Obelenienė, Laima Sajienė, *Applied educational sociology. Educational book* (Kaunas: Vytautas Magnus university, 2008).

private education sector, the overwhelming majority of children who will be educated in 21st century, from any faith background including the whole range of ‘secular’ worldviews, will receive their education through a state-funded system.”<sup>2</sup> While the state basically goes hand-in-hand with regulation and determination of the education system, a consideration on religious education (RE) evolves in this scenario. There are remarkably diverse implications of RE throughout the world,<sup>3</sup> and it “has been and will continue to be shaped by a multiplicity of factors including the structure of the country’s educational system, its Church-State relations, its history, its politics,” etc.<sup>4</sup>

As RE is widely differentiated, some notions on its conceptualization reflect that, as a term, RE “includes all kinds of education into, about, and from religion—from confessional instruction within religious traditions to secular education programs about different religions at public educational institutions.”<sup>5</sup> Despite the diversification of RE in many countries, what is mainly discussed in the models can be distinguished as: “1) the confessional (and thus inevitably denominational) approach offering instruction *in* religion; and 2) the non-confessional ‘religious studies’ or ‘study of religions’ approach fostering knowledge *about* religions (plural).”<sup>6</sup> Models as such are not always tangible as distinct units and are likely to overlap, yet they are a tool for scholars to identify and put under common terms the situations of prevailing RE in various contexts. The latter so-called confessional model is also present in the Lithuanian educational system and focuses on the teaching of traditional, or the state-recognized religious community religion, without an attempt to analyze other faiths in detail.<sup>7</sup> Religious education was established in Lithuanian schools in 1991, and mainly consists of lessons based on Catholicism. The confessional RE model in Lithuania in the main context is where pupils acknowledge religions, both majority and minority ones. Thus, the question emerges how religious minorities (in this article they are perceived as all religious communities existing in Lithuania, except the majority Catholic community) are represented in this RE model as the main place for students to learn about other faiths. Therefore, this article is based on research conducted as an analysis of general

<sup>2</sup> Jenny Berglund, Yafa Shanneick, Brian Bocking (eds.), *Religious Education in a Global-Local World*, (Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, 2016), p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Jackson, Siebren Miedema, Wolfram Weisse, Jean Willaime (eds.), *Religion and Education in Europe: Developments, Contexts and Debates* (Münster: Waxmann, 2007); Wanda Alberts, “Didactics of the Study of Religions” in *The History of Religions and Religious Education*, 2/3 (55) (2008), pp. 300-334; Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Alberts, “Didactics of the Study of Religions”, p. 303 (see footnote 5)

<sup>6</sup> Berglund, Shanneick, and Bocking (eds.) *Religious Education in a Global-Local World*, p. 2. (See footnote 3)

<sup>7</sup> Milda Ališauskienė “Religious education in Lithuania“ in D. Davis, and E. Miroshnikova, (eds.) *The Routledge International Handbook of Religious Education* (New York: Routledge, 2013), pp. 212-216.

educational curricula and teaching aids in the Lithuanian educational system. Curricula and teaching aids, in a sense, convey the image and characteristics of both religion in the broad sense and of different religious communities, thus partially constructing the students' perceptions of them and reflecting Church-State relations through these constructs. Formally, the Law on Religious Communities of the Republic of Lithuania (1995)<sup>8</sup> emphasizes that "every person in the Republic of Lithuania shall have the right to freely choose any religion or belief, to change his or her choice and confess it with one another, privately or publicly, as well as to teach it." Though, when it comes to the education system, there is often not only a publicly advertised opportunity to choose a religion class for a particular denomination, but also a different practical situation prevailing in schools—when religion is often presented only on the basis of teaching lessons about the most widespread traditional religion. RE in Lithuania is cooperatively formulated by both state and certain traditional religious communities, so one can clearly recognize the position of majority confession. But, what is the status of religious minorities, who neither legally, nor normatively experience such linkage with the state? The coexistence of different religious communities is highly influenced by "the willingness of 'accepted' or 'recognized' religious groups to accept others as worthy partners or competitors in the public sphere."<sup>9</sup> How majority and minority religions interplay both in legislation and educational systems will be covered throughout this article.

As social structures, state schools are "designed to mirror the attitudes and ideals of the wider society in which they operate and serve."<sup>10</sup> In the review of a book by Arragon and Beaman Marian Souza, it concludes that these educational structures are likely to reveal as spheres "where the opinions and values of majority stakeholders, usually the state, claim precedence while the voices of religious minorities are neglected."<sup>11</sup> In this church-state interplay within RE, we must also take into account the particular political and social context which is largely determined by "external factors like national or international regulations, constitutions, school laws, etc."<sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Law on Religious Communities of the Republic of Lithuania (1995). Internet access: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.21783/SCDBicfusg>

<sup>9</sup> James Beckford, *Social Theory and Religion* (See footnote 1).

<sup>10</sup> Marian Souza, "Review of the book *Issues in Religion and Education: Whose Religion?* By L. Arragon, and L. Beaman, L. *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 32 (3), (2017), pp. 523-525.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Alberts, "Didactics of the Study of Religions," p. 316 (see footnote 5).

Hence, based on legislation and empirical content analysis, this article examines the expression of church-state relations within confessional RE and its role in minority religions' representation.

### **1.1. Religious Minorities in Lithuania—Peaceful Coexistence or Hegemonic Hierarchy?**

A contextual social, legislative, and normative environment is as much an important facilitator of the religious minorities position as RE is itself. We can acknowledge a vibrant interface between the context and RE, as the content of education greatly relies on contextual aspects in social, political, or other spheres. As institutes of state and religion interact, what is the position of religious minorities within this cohesion in a state of normative Catholicism<sup>13</sup> and the dominance of Christianity? Majority and minority religions' coexistence is notably marked by "political and power issues relating to which voices are foregrounded and which ones are backgrounded."<sup>14</sup> In this sense, sociopolitical singularities need to be considered when defining positions and construction of religious minorities through and within RE, which is not at all isolated from the contextual and jurisdictional realm.

While for a long time Lithuania has been a mono religious landscape and thrived on a Christian base and Catholic dominance,<sup>15</sup> recent changes shed a new light on Lithuania's religious side. The political liberation of Lithuania after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 affected the religious situation in the state. As individuals gained more rights and freedom, conditions were created for the formation and manifestation of religious diversity.<sup>16</sup> According to Beckford,<sup>17</sup> there are a few indicators of religious diversity in society where we can analyze the total number of religious communities and the number of individuals who identify themselves with those communities. According to the census data, the population of Lithuania in 2001 classified themselves as belonging to 28 different religious communities, while in 2011, the number increased to 58 religious communities.<sup>18</sup> According to the 2011 Census, Roman Catholics, who make up the largest proportion of believers (2,350,478 or 77.2%), are accompanied by non-

<sup>13</sup> Aušra Pažėraitė "The Catholic Majority" in the Context of Changing Religious Situation in Lithuania. Formulating the Concept of Religious Pragmatism." *Culture and Society. Journal of Social Research*, (Kaunas: Vytautas Magnus University, 5 (1), (2014), pp. 45-64.

<sup>14</sup> Arragon and Beaman (eds.), *Issues in Religion and Education. Whose Religion?*

<sup>15</sup> Pažėraitė, *op. cit.* See footnote 16.

<sup>16</sup> Milda Ališauskienė, Donatas Glodenis, *Challenges of religious diversity in Lithuania: the perspective of religious minorities*, (Vilnius: New Religions Research and Information Center, 2013).

<sup>17</sup> Beckford, *Social Theory and Religion* (See footnote 1)

<sup>18</sup> Statistics Lithuania. Internet access: <https://www.stat.gov.lt/web/lsd/>

traditional religions as well, such as the Baltic religion (5,118), Jehovah's Witnesses (2,927), The Word of Faith (995), the Krishna Consciousness Movement (344), and other religious communities. The existing religious diversity can be challenging as “interaction and communicating with those who do not belong to their own community and who do not share the same traditions is a major challenge.”<sup>19</sup> It raises questions on how the Roman Catholic majority affects minor religions in Lithuania.

After Lithuania regained its independence, another significant change was that more specific laws defining the position of religion began to emerge. It is important to note that it was at this time that religions began to be divided into “traditional” and “non-traditional.”

This is due to the fact that people's worldview has undergone an extremely rapid change due to the challenges of the time; in Lithuania, the discrimination of religion and the dictates of atheism transformed into the emergence and spread of new religious movements. [. . .] and [the] religious position in Lithuania began to formally approach religious pluralism.<sup>20</sup>

In this sense, according to Beckford,<sup>21</sup> social constructivism, through the term of religious pluralism, distinguishes which beliefs and religions are acceptable in a society and which are not, as well how religious diversity is recognized in the state, both statutorily and normatively. Currently, there are nine religious communities considered traditional in Lithuania, some non-traditional religious communities recognized by the state, and a considerable number of non-traditional and non-recognized religious communities. The issue of the recognition of religions is decided by the parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, and religious communities can only apply for recognition no less than 25 years after their registration in Lithuania. In the case of denial, they can only apply repeatedly 10 years after the date of refusal.<sup>22</sup> Although the model of church-state relations may be said to represent segregation, some aspects of it may become debatable. Thus, this “model of relationship influences public attitudes toward religious minorities as society accepts religious communities that are legitimate and recognized by the state. However, by excluding traditional religious communities, the latter may also receive greater moral and financial

<sup>19</sup> Friedrich Schweidzer, “Social constructionism and religious education: towards a new dialogue“, in A. Dejong, M., A., C., Hermans, Immink, J. Van Der Lans, (eds.) *Social constructionism and theology*, (2002), p. 176.

<sup>20</sup> Basia Nikiforova, “Religious pluralism: a crossing between cultural and legal discourse.” *Jurisprudence Research papers*, (Vilnius: Mykolas Romeris University, 9 (87), 2006), p. 40.

<sup>21</sup> Beckford, *Social Theory and Religion* (See footnote 1).

<sup>22</sup> Law on Religious Communities of the Republic of Lithuania (1995) (See footnote 11).

support from society and the state.”<sup>23</sup> The State can provide financial support for the education of teachers of traditional and state-recognized religious communities, their salaries, textbooks, etc.<sup>24</sup> According to the Law on Religious Communities of Lithuania (1995), one of the requirements for a religious community to be recognized by the state is the support from society, but “such an assertion of alleged support in society is a priori and not based solely on scientific, but generally on no empirical research.”<sup>25</sup> This then leads to critical questions regarding the possibilities and rights for various religious communities to be recognized by the state.

Coexistence of religious communities in Lithuania is defined as the stage “in which religious pluralism in society manifests itself as allowing religious minorities to operate as long as they do not bother or unduly interfere with the majority of the religious community and do not distinguish themselves by cultural norms.”<sup>26</sup> The Lithuanian model of religious pluralism, in regard to the legal and historical aspects of the state, reflects three ideas: “1) The Roman Catholic Church is the most important religious community in Lithuania; 2) The state is an active player in religious life and supports it; 3) The state, the Roman Catholic Church, and some traditional religious communities have an interest in maintaining the hierarchy of religious communities.”<sup>27</sup> With such attitudes and norms, these insights intrinsically reflect a problematic situation for religious minorities.

Looking at the historical processes of change in Lithuania's religious field, since the 1980s Lithuania has reflected a pattern of hierarchical religious pluralism in which the Roman Catholic Church enjoyed a privileged position, as the majority of the population identified as Catholics and during the Soviet oppression it gained more power in the underground. Thus, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Catholic Church played an important role in public life.<sup>28</sup> Schröder<sup>29</sup> describes Lithuania's post-Soviet situation in regard to religion by using the concept of hegemony

<sup>23</sup> Ališauskienė, and Glodenis, *Challenges of religious diversity in Lithuania: the perspective of religious minorities*, p. 20 (See footnote 19).

<sup>24</sup> Ališauskienė, „Religious education in Lithuania“ (See footnote 10).

<sup>25</sup> Ališauskienė, Jurga Bučaitė – Vilkė, *Equal Opportunities for Religious Minorities in Lithuania: Problems and Recommendations*, (Vilnius: New Religions Research and Information Center, 2014), p. 20.

<sup>26</sup> Ališauskienė and Glodenis, *Challenges of religious diversity in Lithuania: the perspective of religious minorities*, p. 55 (See footnote 19).

<sup>27</sup> Ališauskienė, “What and where is religious pluralism in Lithuania?” In A. Bardon, M. Birnbaum, L. Lee, K. Stoeckl, (eds.) *Religious pluralism. A resource book*, (Florence: European University Institute, 2015), p. 34.

<sup>28</sup> Ališauskienė, “What and where is religious pluralism in Lithuania?” (See footnote 30).

<sup>29</sup> Ališauskienė, Ingo Schröder, *Religious Diversity in Post-Soviet Society. Ethnographies of Catholic Hegemony and the New Pluralism in Lithuania*, (UK: MPG Books group, 2012), pp. 17-35.

by philosopher Gramsci, which he says is most appropriate “in a situation where one dominant institution over time has established a culture of consensus marginalizing other institutions and cultural expressions.”<sup>30</sup> Pažėraitė notes that the hegemony of the Roman Catholic Church in Lithuania can be defined “not as the hegemony of the Catholic worldview in culture, but as the normality of belonging to the Catholic Church itself and gaining Catholic identity, allowing the vast majority of society to consider themselves as representatives of the ‘normal’ majority.”<sup>31</sup> In other words, the formal acceptance of the Catholic Church itself can be seen as a matter-of-course situation of religious choice, and Catholicism is accepted as a religious norm.<sup>32</sup> Ališauskienė and Glodenis indicate that “previous studies allow us to talk about the hegemony of Catholicism in Lithuanian society, where the concept of religion as a category is inseparable from the Roman Catholic Church, and such attitudes also partly imply ‘invisibility,’ intolerance, or even discrimination of other believers.”<sup>33</sup> Pažėraitė<sup>34</sup> also provides more detailed reasoning, stating that many discriminatory assessments arise when people choose a lifestyle or belief that does not conform to the norm and standard, and, in this case, when they choose a non-traditional religion.

Negative attitudes towards religious minorities are also often expressed through the label of a sect,<sup>35</sup> and “this label, which has an implied heretic meaning, clearly demonstrates a strong Catholic bias. Such [a] view results, to an extent simplified, to show that Lithuania was on the path to religious diversity but not to religious equality. [ . . . ] The religious field of Lithuania remains dominated by the Catholic Church as much as the public discourse on religion is still shaped by the hegemonic idiom of Catholicism.”<sup>36</sup> It is not surprising that in such a sociopolitical environment religious minority rights and manifestations of discrimination are being questioned and increasingly publicized, not only in the context of societal normativity but also in the legal environment.

## **1.2. Theoretical and Practical Reality of Religious Education in Lithuania**

Instead of acknowledging the increasing religious diversity after political liberation, it is

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., , p. 19 (See footnote 32).

<sup>31</sup> Pažėraitė “The Catholic Majority” (See footnote 16), p. 61.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.(See footnote 16).

<sup>33</sup> Ališauskienė, Glodenis, *Challenges of religious diversity in Lithuania*, p. 6, (See footnote 19).

<sup>34</sup> Pažėraitė “The Catholic Majority” (See footnote 16).

<sup>35</sup> Ališauskienė, Schröder, *Religious Diversity in Post-Soviet Society*. , (See footnote 32).

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., , p. 8, (See footnote 32).



greatly visible how, at the same time, the Roman Catholic Church began its self-empowerment after years of enforced Soviet atheism. One of the main aspects to consider is the renewed relationship between the Lithuanian State and the Holy See in 2000. A Concordat that was suspended during the time of Soviet occupation, re-emerged in signing three agreements with the Holy See.<sup>37</sup> Two of these are significant in the context of this article– “Agreement between the Holy See and the Republic of Lithuania concerning juridical aspects of the relations between the Catholic Church and the State,” which proposes that the Church and the State are neither subordinate nor separate, both autonomous in their respective spheres, but ‘co-operate in educational, cultural, family, social and, in particular, moral and human dignity matters in mutually appropriate ways.’”<sup>38</sup> Also, the “Agreement between the Holy See and the Republic of Lithuania on Cooperation in the Field of Education and Culture,” which “established the status of religious lessons and religion teachers in public schools,”<sup>39</sup> which has been in effect for a decade.<sup>40</sup> The latter agreement reflects important notions on church-state relations in the matter of education, as it states that Catholic religion teaching programs, textbooks and other means are arranged and confirmed under supervision of both the State and the Lithuanian Bishops’ Conference. Thus, it is ensured that the Catholic religion teaching content would comply with church-state relations and requirements. It is stated in the agreement, that “the cultural and historical heritage of the Catholic Church is an important part of the national heritage, and the Catholic Church and the Republic of Lithuania will continue to cooperate to preserve this heritage.”<sup>41</sup> The importance of spiritual heritage associated with Catholicism, e.g., is reflected in curricula mainly focusing on Christianity stating that students are introduced (both visually or practically visiting places) “with Lithuanian faith symbols and traditions, such as unique cross-making tradition and cross symbolism in Lithuania,”<sup>42</sup> complementing it in other statements of curriculum while introducing Christianity’s value and exclusivity.

<sup>37</sup> Vytautas Ališauskas (compiler), *History of Christianity in Lithuania*, (Vilnius: Aidai, 2006).

<sup>38</sup> Agreement between the Holy See and the Republic of Lithuania concerning juridical aspects of the relations between the Catholic Church and the State (2000). Internet access:

<sup>39</sup> Agreement between the Holy See and the Republic of Lithuania on Co-operation in Education and Culture (2000). Internet access: [http://www.lcn.lt/b\\_dokumentai/kiti\\_dokumentai/AS-LR-sutartis-svietimas.html](http://www.lcn.lt/b_dokumentai/kiti_dokumentai/AS-LR-sutartis-svietimas.html)

<sup>40</sup> Ališauskas, *History of Christianity in Lithuania* (See footnote 40).

<sup>41</sup> Agreement between the Holy See and the Republic of Lithuania on Co-operation in Education and Culture (2000). (See footnote 42).

<sup>42</sup> Primary education curriculum (2008). Internet access: [https://www.smm.lt/web/lt/pedagogams/ugdymas/ugdymo\\_prog](https://www.smm.lt/web/lt/pedagogams/ugdymas/ugdymo_prog)

In the current context of public Lithuanian schools, students have compulsory moral education throughout their general education, and they can choose a subject—religion or ethics. According to data of the Lithuanian Catechetical Center<sup>43</sup> (2019), data was collected regarding the attendance of Catholic religion lessons in 2018. Approximately, 57.1% of pupils (of all classes) chose religion classes instead of ethics. The Law on Religious Communities of the Republic of Lithuania (1995) states that traditional and other state-recognized religious communities have the right to teach their religion in state educational institutions. However, looking at the amendment to the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania published in 2011, only the concept of traditional religious communities is stated without mentioning the rights of state-recognized religious communities, or those of the non-traditional and non-recognized religious communities. It is stated that the pupil “has the right to choose one of the subjects of compulsory moral education: religion of a traditional religious community or ethics.”<sup>44</sup> The religion program is developed by the respective traditional community, which is reviewed and approved by the management and the Minister of Education and Science. The school which cannot “provide the desired traditional religious community religion education, enrolls the student in a Sunday School for religious education or other group and acknowledges this education.”<sup>45</sup> Thus, only the traditional religious community and its participation in the educational system is mentioned. In schools, there is no legal possibility for a student to choose a non-traditional religious minority religion as a subject, which “concludes that members of non-traditional religious communities—parents of children—cannot choose their religion lessons in the state schools.”<sup>46</sup> Although the law states that a child may be credited with religious teaching in a Sunday or other religious teaching group, a broader analysis of these sections of the law again raises doubts about the rights of religious minorities.

According to a more detailed analysis of the Lithuanian Education Law (2011), in order for a religion program to be recognized by the institution which cannot provide religious education of the desired denomination, it turns out that “a religious education program can only be registered within a formal education institution. There is no set of requirements for religious education

<sup>43</sup> Lithuanian Catechetical Center, „Catholic Religion lessons attendance of year 2018-2019“ (2019). Internet access: <https://www.ltkc.lt/religinis-ugdymas/tikybos-lankomumo-statistika/179-kataliku-tikybos-pamoku-lankomumas-2018-2019-metai>

<sup>44</sup> Law of Education of the Republic of Lithuania (2011). Internet access: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.395105>

<sup>45</sup> Law of Education of the Republic of Lithuania (2011).

<sup>46</sup> Ališauskienė, Bučaitė-Vilkė, *Equal Opportunities for Religious Minorities in Lithuania: Problems and Recommendations*, p. 50 (See footnote 28).

programs in Sunday schools or other religious education programs. Thus, these conditions invalidate the child's right to religious instruction at the request of the parents, guardians, or the child himself."<sup>47</sup> Here the problem arises that non-formal religious programs cannot be credited by the school according to the law, whereby the members of non-traditional religious communities have to choose either to provide their children non-formal religious education but not get recognition for it, or to follow the rules of a chosen school and have the traditional religious community lessons.<sup>48</sup> The educational system does not provide opportunities for children to be educated in the principles of the religion they want, unless it is traditional or State-recognized (and, as we have seen, even recognized religious communities are sometimes overlooked as well). There are many loopholes in the educational laws of the Republic of Lithuania when it comes to RE, especially in the situation of religious minorities in its context. Such issues are becoming more and more relevant as cultural and religious diversity grows.

While researching possible manifestations of discrimination in mainstream schools, students were asked whether "school provides access to lessons on the faith of a traditional religious community (Catholic, Orthodox, Evangelical Lutheran, Judaic, Karaite, etc.)"<sup>49</sup> The results provide insight that not all students at school have the opportunity to choose their desired religion classes; 38.91% responded that there is no opportunity to take lessons from a traditional religious community or community they profess, and only 18.12% students stated that they were given the opportunity to choose religious classes of their own religious denomination."<sup>50</sup> Thus, it is questionable whether equal rights are created in schools for members of religious minorities, to choose the eligible RE.

## **Methodology**

The research is based on qualitative content analysis of general education, humanitarian, and social educational tools (textbooks and digital tools) that reflect religious constructs as the object of this study regards the situation of religious minorities in Lithuanian RE. A document analysis was also carried out, namely legislation, social and humanitarian curriculum of general

<sup>47</sup> Agnė Margevičiūtė, Birutė Pranevičienė, "The right to religious education in Lithuania", *Jurisprudence*, (Kaunas: Mykolas Romeris University, 19(2), 2012), p. 454.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania, *Possible manifestations of discrimination in general education schools. Research Report*, (Vilnius, 2009), p. 27.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

education (primary, basic and secondary) were analyzed as they are the ones covering subjects related to RE as a starting point for analyzing official educational content—specific textbooks for content analysis are selected based on curriculum analysis. Content units are selected based on chosen keywords and are formed into categories and subcategories. In this way, “the meanings hidden in the text and not always visible to the ‘naked eye’ are uncovered, which are usually taken over by the reader, either consciously or unconsciously. The analysis of the textbooks allows us to reveal the often-unintelligible meanings that remain in the minds of the pupils in any case and later structure their thoughts and actions.”<sup>51</sup> This study analyzed 22 textbooks, five general education curricula, and one digital learning tool.

## Findings

### 2.1. Constructing Religious Diversity and Tolerance Towards It

Representation of religious diversity in general education is manifested at several levels, such as familiarizing oneself with the statistical number of religions, encouraging the analysis, comparison and, in some cases, the evaluation of different religions. The analyzed content compares different religions, but the most common comparison or juxtaposition appears between the world religions and different branches of Christianity; or acknowledging differences within Christianity itself. The factor of cooperation between different Christian denominations is presented as an important endeavor of the Church and it is encouraged to pursue commonalities between different traditional religious communities. These religious communities are named after the religious composition of Lithuania, representing Lithuania as a Catholic state, and representing the data of the 2001 census in the textbooks: “About 80% of our country's population is Roman Catholic. Together with Italy, Poland, Spain and other countries, Lithuania is a very Catholic state.”<sup>52</sup>

Neither general education curricula nor teaching aids mention the concept of religious minorities (except in rare cases of history textbooks when discussing religious diversity in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania or other historical periods). Religious minorities are only introduced as

<sup>51</sup> Renata Geležinienė, Ingrida Urbelytė, Rasa Pocevičienė, Jonas Ruškus, *Curriculum as a prerequisite for social and educational participation of children with special needs: research data*, (Šiauliai: Šiauliai University, 2004), p. 8.

<sup>52</sup> Rytas Šalna, Edvardas Baleišis, Ričardas Baubinas, Vidmantas Daugirdas, *The Earth. Geography. Part 2. IX class*, (Vilnius: Briedis, 2012), p. 211. The original is not italicized. The author italicized these quotes in the article in order to distinguish content analysis quotes of textbooks from those of literature analysis quotes from other authors.

traditional religious communities, with only a handful of newly formed communities, so greater emphasis is placed on the religious diversity within Christianity itself. There is no broader analysis of non-traditional religious communities and those not recognized by the State. They are only brought up while talking about the new religiosity, which in all content, comes alongside a critical appraisal of new religious communities.

One important aspect for religious diversity is the emphasis on religious tolerance and respect for other faiths in mainstream curricula and methodological tools. They mention the need to respect people of other faiths, to tolerate different religions, and mark some legal acts on freedom of religion, such as the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania. Students are also encouraged to engage in tolerance through discussion and reflection, to discuss how religious tolerance can be assured, and to assess whether they themselves are tolerant: *“Thoughts that I can share: 1. Which religion and why it interested me? 2. How am I accepting the invitation to agree with people having different beliefs?”*<sup>53</sup>

In this way, interpretative, hermeneutic expressions of education are created where students are encouraged to explore and interpret social reality themselves. Though, some religions are labeled as tolerable, and excerpts from the content encouraging tolerance of different faiths at the same time consider their critical evaluation: *“1. To be tolerant of people of other faiths, but to be critical of the faith offered by the various religious communities spreading around the world.”*<sup>54</sup>

In this respect, some content units presuppose expression of religious pluralism as a type of tolerance, which, in the light of the aforementioned studies, is defined as allowing religious minorities to act as long as they do not disturb the common religious majority.<sup>55</sup> When some religions in the content are described as tolerable, in a sense, the acceptance of different religions in society is constructed by defining what is tolerable and why: *“What are Islam’s traditions and values, and why are they tolerable?”*<sup>56</sup>

This acceptance may take place within the framework of religious pluralism, but when it is a type of tolerance, religious communities outside the dominant religion face the challenges of

<sup>53</sup> Audra Jakušovienė, Rolandas Jakušovas, *Meetings. Catholic religion textbook. VII class*, (Vilnius: Katalikų pasaulio leidiniai, 2012), p. 22.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ališauskienė, Glodenis, *Challenges of religious diversity in Lithuania* (See footnote 19).

<sup>56</sup> Raisa Melnikova, Agnė Lastauskienė, *Searches for meaning and discoveries. Ethics. IX class*, (Vilnius: Tyto alba, 2010a), p. 141.

potentially distinguishing them as "alien." This then qualifies the problems of acceptance, as educational means are formed by both the state and the church in Lithuanian society. It reflects how religious diversity is constructed in this country. According to the content analysis, we may discern how Christianity is maintaining its dominance while having the power of deciding which religions are tolerable and which should be considered more carefully. Beckford's (2003) idea is echoing in this sense that it is important for religious diversity how the majority is accepting the minority and others "as worthy partners or competitors in the public sphere."<sup>57</sup> In this case, confessional RE is ensuring the dominance of Christianity as the base of examining the religious field and its diversification, while only Christian minorities are accepted as trustworthy—whereas other non-traditional religious communities are assessed critically. Shall we conclude that the majority is constructing its normativity and dominating position, while leaving the non-traditional minorities on the periphery? Thus, tolerance is officially expressed as applicable to any religion or belief, but mainstream curricula tend to encourage respect only for traditional religious communities or other major religions of the world and emphasize the need for a critical approach to other newly emerging religious communities and movements.

## **2.2."We Christians Form a Special Community—the Church." Constructing the Image of Christianity**

As it already becomes clear, the religion of Christianity is given a high priority in general education. Of course, the image of Christianity is often constructed from a historical perspective, either by discussing the origins, spreading, or theological aspects of the religion itself. One textbook points out that "*We Christians must not merely portray the history of the Church in an ideal way, silencing the painful and confusing events,*"<sup>58</sup> which also reveals in other methodological means the historical portrayal of Christianity is done by acknowledging unfavorable historical facts. However, there is much more content on the positive view of Christianity (although it is risky to generalize since standard history textbooks tend to be neutral towards Christianity, while textbooks of the Catholic religion idealize it). Interestingly, both the curriculum and some textbooks emphasize the value of Christianity and its distinctiveness from

<sup>57</sup> Beckford, *Social Theory and Religion*, p. 77, (See footnote 1)

<sup>58</sup> Aurimas Pautienius, *The path of God's nation. Catholic religion textbook. X class*, (Vilnius: Katalikų pasaulio leidiniai, 2003), p. 21.

other religions: “Christianity is the truest and safest way to meet God. [. . .] All other religions try to tell us, to explain the path to God, so we can easily deviate from it by seeking that path.”<sup>59</sup>

The value of Christianity is mentioned not only in the textbooks of the Catholic religion, but also in the curriculum of moral education. Based on the authors' ideas discussed beforehand,<sup>60</sup> some curricula and methodological tools confirm the hegemony, but it is also noticeable that hegemony does not necessarily exist only in relation to Catholicism—it is expressed more as a manifestation of Christianity as a majority religion, and as an incentive to identify with it. Also, some textbooks reveal a personalized presentation of Christianity, like speaking in the first person to reflect the hegemonic concept of Christianity, promoting the normality of Christian identity, and the image of a homogeneous Lithuanian society:<sup>61</sup> “We Christians believe . . .”<sup>62</sup>

The expressions “we” and “our” can construct students’ identification with the religion or its truths presented, thus, eliminating the impartial view of religion and creating the constructs “we” and “them” where religious diversity or other faiths are observed and valued immediately from the Christian position. The Christian perspective and attitude are also common starting points when it comes to upbringing values and appreciating other religions and beliefs: “. . . to become acquainted with the liturgical and social life of the Church, with the Christian view of other religions of the world.”<sup>63</sup>

Thus, the construction of Christianity’s image is discussed not only from a neutral, historical point of view, but also by highlighting the value of this religion, its distinctiveness from other religions, the importance of its values, and its compatibility with ethical principles. Of course, the Catholic faith is also sometimes referred to as “our faith” and presented as the most appropriate choice, which points to the representation of Roman Catholic hegemony as well: “Catholics. We are Catholics. The head of our Church is the Pope [. . .].”<sup>64</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Jakušovienė, Jakušovas, *Meetings. Catholic religion textbook. VII class*, p. 110, (See footnote 56).

<sup>60</sup> Pažėraitė “‘The Catholic Majority’ in the Context of Changing Religious Situation in Lithuania. Formulating the Concept of Religious Pragmatism,” (See footnote 16); Ališauskienė, Schröder, *Religious Diversity in Post-Soviet Society*, (See footnote 32).

<sup>61</sup> Rasa Erentaitė, Jolanta Reingardė, Nida Vasiliauskaitė, *Tolerance and multicultural education in general education schools* (Vilnius, Kaunas: Sorre, 2010); Pažėraitė “‘The Catholic Majority’ in the Context of Changing Religious Situation in Lithuania.” (See footnote 16).

<sup>62</sup> Jakušovienė, Jakušovas, *Meetings. Catholic religion textbook. VII class*, p. 42, (See footnote 56).

<sup>63</sup> Basic Education Curriculum: Moral Education - General Provisions, Orthodox religion (2008).

<sup>64</sup> Genovaitė Dobikaltienė, Jurgita Vaitkutė, *Joy to believe. Catholic religion textbook. V class*, (Vilnius: Katalikų pasaulio leidiniai, 2013), p. 64.

Once again, identification with one specific religious community and homogeneity is manifested. The Catholic Church is appraised as a “*trustworthy base of a democratic State, as it has long lasting tradition, more than other movements care about social issues, is based on the principles of justice, close love, and respect for man.*”<sup>65</sup> It is clearly visible how Catholicism is celebrated, and even associated with the politics as one of the bases for society: “*The clergy are not directly involved in the activities of political parties, but only for the sake of legal and moral guidance, and secular Catholics must be guided by Christian principles when engaging in politics.*”<sup>66</sup>

Yet, religion is seen as an important actor in the functioning of the state, it highlights the importance of Christian values and claims its close relations to the state. No such connection and importance of other religious minorities are mentioned, thus the dominant position in the state-religion interplay is seen as belonging to Catholicism, and more broadly to Christianity.

Most of the value of Christianity is found only in textbooks of the Catholic religion, which are devoted to confessional RE. However, the value and idealization of Christianity is still an important factor in relation to religious diversity and religious minorities when, in this case only, one religious stream is “exalted.” Language and its products, such as stories, texts, etc., are one way of constructing social reality. In the case of emphasizing the value of Christianity, a homogeneous representation of the Lithuanian religious field is created, where the word “we” is identified with Christians or Catholics. The ongoing appraisal of Catholicism and Christianity creates a marginalized position in RE for other religious minorities.

### **2.3. A Critical Look at New Religiosity and Emerging Religious Communities**

The new religious movements (NRMs) in Lithuania belong to religious minorities, and their representation in mainstream education may influence students’ attitudes towards emerging new religious communities. First and foremost, in the selected curriculum there is a rather differentiated presentation of the concept of NRMs. In one of the textbooks, the definitions of these movements are given, relating them to the term of sect: “*New Religious Movements (sects). The word sect itself is generally understood to be an offshoot of a particular religion, a branch of the Church, and usually evokes negative thoughts. Later, especially after the Second World War, sects*

<sup>65</sup> Pautienius, *The path of God’s nation. Catholic religion textbook. X class*, p. 185 (See footnote 31).

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 111 (See footnote 31).



also began to be understood as the types of certain religious organizations that are dangerous to society.”<sup>67</sup>

Elsewhere, one can also find a distinction between NRMs and sects, stating that only some NRMs have sectarian features or defining concepts distinctively for both NRMs and sects, while looking for their commonalities and differences: “*Some NRMs have sectarian features and can be dangerous . . .*”<sup>68</sup>

It is stated that NRMs also exist in various forms, but mostly all these forms are generalized and fall under the general concept of critical attitude towards NRMs: “*The New Religious Movements encompass a wide variety of groups, from the spiritual and self-denominational groups of the New Age Movement to exclusive sects such as the International Community of Krishna Consciousness.*”<sup>69</sup> In this case, the International Krishna Community (which has 344 followers in Lithuania<sup>70</sup>) is even mentioned as an exclusive sect. Bearing in mind that in the chosen teaching aids, a sect is often defined as a destructive community that includes traits such as recruiting, engaging members, etc.. Comparing Krishna’s fellowship to a sect can create an extremely negative construct of it.

In some textbooks, it is noted that NRMs in Lithuania exist as well, however, it is not overlooked to emphasize the importance of the critical evaluation and questioning of their activities. NRMs in some cases are compared with movements of the Catholic Church and the Christian environment, but it can be seen that in these comparisons, the NRMs also fall under the category of sects. They are more often described in negative terms, mentioning that many NRMs filter out information to followers, aggressively recruit new members, have lack of willingness to work with Christianity, and can be dangerous: “*What is the difference between NRM and traditional Church movements, and how dangerous are they?*”<sup>71</sup>

It is stated in Catholic religious textbooks, that after the Second Vatican Council, “*recognizing the positive values of other religions in the world has opened the door to dialogue with them and the development of missions.*”<sup>72</sup> Though they remark, that: “*Precisely in Christian*

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 232 (See footnote 31).

<sup>68</sup> Diana Anskiniene, Sigute Peleckaitė, *I am called... Catholic religion textbook IX class*, (Vilnius: Katalikų pasaulio leidiniai, 2012), p. 91.

<sup>69</sup> Raisa Melnikova, Agnė Lastauskienė, *Searches for meaning and discoveries. Ethics. X class*, (Vilnius: Tyto alba, 2010b), p. 132.

<sup>70</sup> Statistics Lithuania. Internet access: <https://www.stat.gov.lt/web/lzd/>

<sup>71</sup> Aurimas Pautienius, *The path of God’s nation. Catholic religion textbook. X class*, p.232 (See footnote 31).

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p. 213 (See footnote 31).

*environment, NRMs are reluctant to communicate in the ecumenical movement, and they tend to rely not only on St. Scripture but as well on other scriptures, which often leads to ignorance of traditions of the Church.”*<sup>73</sup>

So, basically the Church is open for communication with other faiths, but the importance to rely on principles of the Church remains as an important criterion for others to be accepted. Also, as mentioned above, NRMs tend to be treated to the critical assessment perspective, which is highlighted in curricula as one of the competences of pupils in general education: “*Critically evaluate the new religiosity.*”<sup>74</sup>

The analyzed curricula mention the importance of tolerance for all religions, but the NRMs are analyzed from a Christian standpoint, and the juxtapositions between NRMs and sects that have been discussed above produce negative evaluations. This, again, brings us back to the insight on the dominance of Christianity when other faiths are viewed from this particular religion: “*As students become acquainted with the new religiosity, they analyze manifestations of a different spirituality from a Christian point of view.*”<sup>75</sup>

It is important to analyze the construction of NRMs’ image and evaluation because some of the existing religious minorities in Lithuania are specifically identified as new religious movements. The general education curriculum presents some challenges to the evaluation of NRMs, as mentioned above. NRMs are often compared to sectarian constructs, and when separated, NRMs are still defined quite negatively (member engagement and recruitment, fanatical ideas, filtering information for members). All mainstream curricula and methodological tools emphasize critical assessment of NRM, with some highlighting that they may also be dangerous. Although some variety of NRMs is presented in Lithuania, examples or traits of NRM faiths are not more clearly named.

The religious diversity on this issue in Lithuania is fairly well summarized and reflected in the task table presented in one of the textbooks. It lists various religious communities and movements to be classified into a particular category of religions, which are divided into the following: “*Lithuanian traditional religions; Renewal movements of the Catholic Church; New*

<sup>73</sup> Pautienius, *The path of God's nation*. (See footnote 75).

<sup>74</sup> Basic Education Curriculum: Moral Education (2008); Secondary Education Curriculum: Moral Education (2011).

<sup>75</sup> Basic Education Curriculum: Moral Education - Catholic Religion (2008).

*Religious Movements and Sects.*”<sup>76</sup> As seen, new religious movements and sects immediately fall into the same category. For non-traditional religious minorities that are not a part of Christianity or the Catholic Church, only the NRMs and the sect category remain. Given the definitions and critical views of NRMs and sects in textbooks, there is a challenge of discrimination against religious minorities as attributed to the category of NRMs and sects, and they might gain a negative assessment approach.

Of course, it is not just a matter of criticizing general curriculum material for constructing a negative image of NRMs (and thus some religious minorities), since there are indeed destructive and dangerous movements in the religious field—which is why it is important to develop a critical attitude. Critical approaches to NRMs can help to distinguish truly destructive movements and raise students’ awareness of joining unfamiliar religious communities. Though, in terms of content analysis of selected textbooks, NRMs appear to be somewhat generalized in comparison to the sect concept, and it is not analyzed in more detail which particular movements have destructive features and which do not. The words ‘dangerous,’ ‘doubtful,’ ‘recruiting,’ and ‘engaging’ used alongside definitions of NRMs create a feeling of distrust in these movements, so it is important to distinguish religious movements that are not dangerous or to deliberately use these adjectives. It creates the perception that only traditional religions or the Catholic Church movements can be trusted, and all newly emerging non-traditional religious communities deserve critical scrutiny.

As for the empirical part of this article, it poses some challenges and limitations because only official content (content that is officially presented in curricula, textbooks, and other teaching<sup>77</sup>) was analyzed. This research does not include unofficially distributed information for students—in other words, hidden and non-existent content is not reviewed and there are difficulties in approaching it because hidden content may convey things that are not formally specified in programs or requirements, and non-existent content may impart some subjects as irrelevant and, thus, are not discussed.<sup>78</sup> In order to provide a more veridical overview of Lithuanian RE, more extensive research should be carried out, including other research methods, as well as trying to get beyond the formal content and tools.

<sup>76</sup> Anskiniene, Peleckaitė, *I am called... Catholic religion textbook IX class*, p. 90 (See footnote 72).

<sup>77</sup> Erentaitė, Reingardė, Vasiliauskaitė, *Tolerance and multicultural education in general education schools* (See footnote 65).

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*,

## Discussion

The laws and conducted research discussed in this article reveal a construct of Lithuania as a Christian state, with an emphasis on Catholicism, which, as a normative choice, it creates marginalization and potential discrimination against other religious minorities. Such normativity is also reflected in RE as securing the rights for Catholic religious teaching, but not defining or enabling other religions to provide the desired religious teaching for their children. Lithuanian confessional RE assess other religions from a Christian standpoint and the curriculum reveals both Christianity and Catholicism's hegemony and identification as "our" religion, thus constructing a homogeneous picture of society and teaching students *into* religion. Since RE content is shaped both by the church and the state, it very clearly reflects their close relationship, which leaves other religious minorities on the periphery. The religious majority holds its dominant position, its value, exclusivity, etc., in confessional RE, whereas other religious communities are not recognized as equivalent (except for traditional religious communities). This points to analysis referencing to Beckford's idea (2003) that the majority does not seek to recognize religious minorities as full and equal religions by giving them a fair place in the public sphere. Thus, while there is an emphasis on tolerance based on human rights, church, and state laws; the content of RE is, nevertheless, the hegemonic domination of Christianity and the normativity of Catholicism, where NRMs are viewed as dangerous sects and religious minorities (which do not have the same position in the state and education as those of the majority). This is important in the context of increasing religious diversity where RE is constructed concurrently between the state and one major denomination, and as seen in the content analysis, the confessional RE is not conducive to both the legal position of other religious minorities and their constructs within education.

## Conclusion

1. Lithuanian RE is highly influenced by the sociopolitical context and jurisdictional realm, which reflects religious pluralism that reveals how religious minorities and non-traditional communities are allowed to operate, as long as they do not bother the religious majority or significantly distinguish themselves culturally. The Lithuanian legislative system influences public attitudes toward religious minorities as society accepts religious

communities that are legitimate and recognized by the State. The state has close relations to the Roman Catholic Church, thus in this sense, religious hegemony also unfolds not only as the dominance of a Catholic worldview in culture, but as the normality of belonging to the Catholic Church and gaining Catholic identity. This context shapes a marginalized position of religious minorities, which is also reflected in the confessional RE as the religious field of Lithuania remains dominated by the Catholic Church—as much as the public discourse on religion is still shaped by the hegemonic idiom of Catholicism.

2. RE textbooks and other means are arranged and confirmed under surveillance of both the state and the Lithuanian Catholic Bishops' Conference. Thus, it is ensured that the content of Catholic religious teaching would comply with church-state relations and requirements which might be viewed as Christianity's and Catholicism's dominance over religious minorities, as confessional RE assesses other religions through a lens of one main confession, namely Christianity and Catholicism. Lithuanian RE does not provide equal rights for religious minorities to educate their children on the principles of the religion which they may want, unless it is traditional or state-recognized.
3. According to the empirical research, there is a tendency to discover commonalities between traditional religions of Christian origin, and to compare other world religions with Christianity, while other non-traditional religious communities in Lithuania are more often associated with new religiosity, which is critically appraised throughout the whole content. Although tolerance for other religions and beliefs is often mentioned in the analysis, it can be said that religious pluralism has emerged as a type of tolerance that promotes tolerance to different religions, but not their inclusion or participation in society with the same rights and recognition as the dominant religion. Religious communities outside the dominant religion face the challenges of potentially regarding them as "alien." It is clear how Christianity maintains its dominance while having the power of deciding which religions are tolerable and which should be considered more carefully.
4. Some curricula and methodological tools confirm the predominance of hegemony, but it is also noticeable that hegemony does not necessarily exist only in relation to Catholicism; it

is expressed more as a manifestation of Christianity as a majority religion, and as an incentive to identify with it—stating that “we” are Christians and, thus, promoting a homogenous image of Lithuanian society. Christianity is constructed by valuing this religion, its distinctiveness from other religions, and its compatibility with ethical principles. The Catholic faith is also sometimes referred to as “our faith,” and it is even celebrated and associated with politics as one of the bases for a society. Religion is seen as an important actor in the state’s functioning. The importance of Christian values is highlighted and claims of its close relations to the State are emphasized. No such connection and importance of other religious minorities is mentioned. Thus, the dominant position in the state-religion interplay is seen as belonging to Catholicism, and more broadly to Christianity.

5. In methodological tools of general education, NRMs are often compared to the sect construct, and in the case of distinctions from it, NRMs are still defined rather negatively (involving and recruiting members, fanatical ideas, filtering information to members, etc.). All analyzed curricula and teaching materials assess NRMs critically. Though the Church presents itself as open for communication with other faiths, the importance to rely on principles of the Church remains an important criterion for others in order to be accepted. While some diversity of NRMs is presented in Lithuania, examples or traits of NRM faiths are not more widely discussed. More often, different beliefs are generalized and labeled under the NRMs category, which are linked to sects through the lens of dangers, doubts, attractiveness, inclusion, and others.

### **Sources of Content Analysis**

Anskinienė Diana, Peleckaitė Sigutė (2012). *I am called... Catholic religion textbook IX class*. Vilnius: Katalikų pasaulio leidiniai.

Basic education curriculum: moral education (2008). Internet access: [https://www.smm.lt/web/lt/pedagogams/ugdymas/ugdymo\\_prog](https://www.smm.lt/web/lt/pedagogams/ugdymas/ugdymo_prog).

Basic education curriculum: social education (2008). Internet access: [https://www.smm.lt/web/lt/pedagogams/ugdymas/ugdymo\\_prog](https://www.smm.lt/web/lt/pedagogams/ugdymas/ugdymo_prog).

Boguševičius Domas, Navickas Virginijus (2014). *History textbook 11 class (III gymnasium class)*. Kaunas: Ugda.

Dobikaltienė Genovaitė, Vaitkutė Jurgita (2013). *Joy to believe. Catholic religion textbook. V class*. Vilnius: Katalikų pasaulio leidiniai.

Jakušovienė Audra, Jakušovas Rolandas (2012). *Meetings. Catholic religion textbook. VII class*. Vilnius: Katalikų pasaulio leidiniai/

Kapleris Ignas, Laužikas Rimvydas, Meištas Antanas, Mickevičius Karolis, Žolynas Mindaugas (2015a). *Time. History textbook. Part 2. XI class*. Vilnius: Briedis.

Kapleris Ignas, Laužikas Rimvydas, Meištas Antanas, Mickevičius Karolis, Žolynas Mindaugas (2015b). *Time. History textbook. Part 1. XII class*. Vilnius: Briedis.

Kapleris Ignas, Laužikas Rimvydas, Meištas Antanas, Mickevičius Karolis, Žolynas Mindaugas (2015c). *Time. History textbook. Part 2. XII class*. Vilnius: Briedis.

Kapleris Ignas, Laužikas Rimvydas, Meištas Antanas, Mickevičius Karolis, Žolynas Mindaugas (2014). *Time. History textbook. Part 1. XI class*. Vilnius: Briedis.

Krankalytė Lolita (2012). *I want to be your friend. Catholic religion textbook. VIII class*. Vilnius: Katalikų pasaulio leidiniai.

Laužikas Rimvydas, Mickevičius Karolis, Tamkutonytė-Mikailienė Živilė (2008a). *The way. Lithuania's history textbook. Part 1. V class*. Vilnius: Briedis.

Laužikas Rimvydas, Mickevičius Karolis, Tamkutonytė-Mikailienė Živilė (2008b). *The way. Lithuania's history textbook. Part 2. V class*. Vilnius: Briedis.

Melnikova Raisa, Lastauskienė Agnė (2010a). *Searches for meaning and discoveries. Ethics. IX class*. Vilnius: Tyto alba.

Melnikova Raisa, Lastauskienė Agnė (2010b). *Searches for meaning and discoveries. Ethics. X class*. Vilnius: Tyto alba.

Navickas Virginijus, Svarauskas Artūras (2015). *History textbook, 12 (IV gymnasium) class Advanced and general course*. Kaunas: Ugda.

Mickevičius Karolis, Šalna Rytas, Meištas Antanas, Laužikas Rimvydas, Kapleris Ignas (2009a). *Steps. History textbook. Part 1. VI class*. Vilnius: Briedis.

Mickevičius Karolis, Šalna Rytas, Meištas Antanas, Laužikas Rimvydas, Kapleris Ignas (2009b). *Steps. History textbook. Part 2. VI class*. Vilnius: Briedis.

Pautienius Aurimas (2003). *The path of God's nation. Catholic religion textbook. X class.* Vilnius: Katalikų pasaulio leidiniai.

Petrauskis Kęstutis, Litvinaitė Jūratė, Vilkelienė Kristina (2015). *History, VI kl.* Kaunas: Šviesa.

Petreikis Darius, Litvinaitė Jūratė, Meškuotis Faustas, Ramoškaitė-Stongvilienė Rūta, Bitautas Algis, Stankutė Simona, (2014). *History, V kl.* Kaunas: Šviesa.

Primary education curriculum (2008). Internet access: [https://www.smm.lt/web/lt/pedagogams/ugdymas/ugdymo\\_prog](https://www.smm.lt/web/lt/pedagogams/ugdymas/ugdymo_prog).

Education Development Center (2014). „Digital learning tool “Moral Education“ “ Internes access: [http://smp2014do.ugdome.lt/smp\\_dorinis2/lt/](http://smp2014do.ugdome.lt/smp_dorinis2/lt/).

Secondary education curriculum: moral education (2011 and 2016 amendment). Internet access: [https://www.smm.lt/web/lt/pedagogams/ugdymas/ugdymo\\_prog](https://www.smm.lt/web/lt/pedagogams/ugdymas/ugdymo_prog).

Secondary education curriculum: social education (2011). Internet access: [https://www.smm.lt/web/lt/pedagogams/ugdymas/ugdymo\\_prog](https://www.smm.lt/web/lt/pedagogams/ugdymas/ugdymo_prog).

Šalna Rytas, Mačiulytė Jurgita, Padriežas Valentinas, Pakamorienė Angelė, Sapožnikovas Georgijus, Tuskenienė Vilhelmina, Žolynas Mindaugas (2014). *The Earth. Geography. X class.* Vilnius: Briedis.

Šalna Rytas, Baleišis Edvardas, Baubinas Ričardas, Daugirdas Vidmantas (2012a). *The Earth. Geography. Part 1. IX class.* Vilnius: Briedis.

Šalna Rytas, Baleišis Edvardas, Baubinas Ričardas, Daugirdas Vidmantas , 2012b. *The Earth. Geography. Part 2. IX class.* Vilnius: Briedis.