Clerul parohial unit în anii mişcării sofroniene. Probleme identitare

Abstract:

We focused on the study of the world of t Abstract he rural Romanian communities which were challenged between 1759-1762, during the riot led by monk Sofronie, to choose between orthodoxy and union. During those years of turmoil, confessional confrontations between spreaders of the orthodoxy and those of the union, in which simple believers were the target of contradictory identity confessional speeches, priests, as the most educated in that uneducated Romanian world, as spiritual teachers of the villagers would have had an important role in guiding them, and thus, finally, in defining them a confessional identity. I wished to render in this case study referring to the pro Orthodox movement of monk Sofronie in Dâbâca county the stimuli for identity definition of the parochial clergy in a moment of crisis, making use of the statistics and surveys conducted by county authorities and protopopes, in villages. How did react the Uniate priests to the riot led by the Orthodox monk Sofronie? What confessional identity options have they made and why? These are the questions for which I tried to find answers, a quite difficult step having in view the fact that in the absence of some direct explanations of those in question, remain to understand their behaviour only defectively exposed motivations, given by the laic or ecclesiastic census takers, susceptible of distortion, and contextual information, resulted also from statistics (referring to seniority of the priests on parishes, social status and standard of living). Uniate priests were contested by the laics who became non-Uniate and who considered them to be "excommunicated", "heretical", and "reprobate", those who defile believers during fasts, "Arians" or "idols" who poison parishioners with the holy Eucharist, "murderers" who infest them with the Catholic religion, "damned" and "hand and glove with pope". As such, they attempted to accommodate with the new situation: some committed apostasy temporarily, returning after a while (several months, in general) at the union, others remained Uniate throughout the riot, and others committed apostasy definitively, becoming, some of them, active spreaders of orthodoxy. Noticing the repeated slipping over from union to orthodoxy and vice versa throughout several years, we wondered what determined the priests to declare themselves Uniate in the end. So, we attempted to see whether the social status, circumstances, place and person that ordained them or taking and oath of loyalty towards the union mattered in the choice of the priests for union. Result of the investigation shows that situations were diverse: priests ordained by orthodox bishops and others ordained in the diocese by the Uniate bishops who left the Union declaring orthodox, wealthy priests who remained Uniate next to others poor. Motivations of the choice for union were thus different from case to case, concerned experiences and personal convictions of the priests. By what means would they have considered Uniate? Which were the defining elements of the assumed confessional identity? Sources, extremely poor, convinced me that for priests who declared Uniate before census takers and parishioners throughout the riot same as for those who, after a short period of apostasy, came back to the union, defining identity elements were loyalty towards the church they were part of and obedience towards its hierarch.

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