Între Blaj şi Roma: strategii concurente ale formării clericale în dieceza Făgăraşului sub păstorirea episcopului Petru Pavel Aron

Abstract:

In an accelerated bid for confessional formation, meant to combat the religious discord brought by the Orthodox polemists at the middle of the 18thcentury, the leaders of the Uniate Church in Transylvania combined instruments of persuasion and control. Among the latter, the attempts aimed at disciplining and professionalizing the clergy have formed the backbone of the ecclesiastical policies developed in the time of Bishop's Aron episcopate (1754-1764).At the core of this research lies the question of the priorities that dictated on the major educationaloptions made in that interval, with regard to the limited financial possibilities of the diocese to simultaneously foster both the seminary in Blaj and the three seats it held in the Urbanian College in Rome. Himself a former student of the Roman institution and a supporter of the idea of sending promising scholars to foreign universities, as evidenced by the case of Filotei László, Bishop Aron delayed for years the nomination of the three new alumni. This situation, which led to a prolonged conflict with the Congregation de Propaganda Fide that accused him of having personal grounds to avoid fulfilling his obligations, only ended in the autumn of 1761, when the young Basilian monks Alexie Mureşan, Sava Mâţ and Iacob Aron departed for Rome. The parallel efforts at establishing a diocesan seminary, prompted by the conflict between the bishop and some of his collaborators, as well as his renewed supplications for financial aid from the Congregation, help delineate the deeper reasons for Aron's actions. The analysis leads us to argue that the sacrificing of the Roman foundation was the price paid to ensure the progress of the schools in Blaj. In a time of crisis for his Church, the Greek Catholic bishop considered that channelling resources towards the formationof well-educated and devoted priests was far more urgent and useful than financing the training of the future élite of the diocese.

Keywords: *professionalization of the clergy, diocesan seminary, Urbanian College of Propaganda Fide, Transylvania, Greek Catholic Church.*