

## THE RHYTHMS OF LIVES. THE EVERYDAYNESS OF THE RURAL PARISHES' PARSONS IN THE POLISH-LITHUANIAN COMMONWEALTH IN THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

The aim of the project is to investigate the everyday lives of parsons of rural parishes in the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth during the age of enlightenment. The diversity of activities and experiences in the following days of week and parts of the year will be analyzed. That included pastoral ministry and liturgy, self-education and spiritual practices, management of parish benefices, churches' maintenance and artistic foundations, career development, family relations, participation in the local social life, leisure and entertainment.

The topic was chosen due to the role parsons played in the society of the Commonwealth and dynamic cultural changes in the age of enlightenment. Parish clergy was a group which consisted of peasants, townsmen and nobility including young magnates at the beginning of their church careers. The research will give an answer to the question If having common ecclesiastical status allowed to establish inter-estate social relations?

The income of parsons was mostly derived from parish folwarks, serfdom-based agricultural enterprises. As a result, among priests there were former peasants owning their own serfs. Regardless of social origins clergy had significant power over parishioners. On the other hand, parsons were subject to the jurisdiction of bishops and deans. They were also under influence of villages' owners, who due to the law of patronage, appointed them as parsons. The research will throw a new light on complicated power relations.

Parsons were obliged to perform pastoral duties. However, if their income was high enough they could employ vicars to help. In some cases, they completely took over responsibilities of their employers. Regardless of their priestly work, parsons supervised folwarks, and often fought in courts for rights to land and income from tithes. Thus, the research will show the place of *sacrum* and *profanum* was the lives of parish clergy.

In the late XVIII century Polish and Lithuanian bishops, continued reforms of the council of Trent, but in the enlightened form. They tried to convince parsons to alter their everyday lives. Some forced priests to participate in the collective spiritual retreats and deanery congregations. Others encouraged clergy to engage in the public matters. The research will demonstrate how privacy and social roles of parsons changed in the age of enlightenment.

In the period many priests argued with antireligious and anticlerical propositions. At the same time, they were influenced by Catholic enlightenment and enlightened Catholicism. The research will allow checking how grand ideological conflicts affected the everydayness of people who was the object and the subject of the dispute.

The influence of natural and religious calendars on human activities and experiences is a universally important problem. The example of Catholic priests whose one of the professional tasks was to conduct rituals which gave meaning to time passing may be especially informative. Finally, investigating parish clergy everyday life is important itself since the task of anthropological history is to understand other people in their individual and cultural specificity.

Materials from five sample dioceses allowing comparisons will be analyzed. These will be Latin dioceses of Kraków, Płock, Vilnius and Chełm and Unite diocese of Chełm. Firstly, queries will be carried in the state, diocesan and parish archives as well as libraries. Different type of historical sources will be searched, such as personal documents and belles-lettres, visitations, spiritual retreats and deanery congregations' protocols, episcopal courts records and parish documents.

The collected materials will be analysed in order to determine how parsons spent their time. Then they will be interpreted to understand the experiences and activities of the priests and to answer the abovementioned questions. In the end, a comparison will be made, to examine the impact of social origin, parish profitability, parishioners' ethnicity and subordination to specific bishops on the life of parsons.