

Changes of confession within the nobility of Transylvania in the 18th century. Summary of the PhD thesis.

The present research is based on the data published so far in the various works of political, family and ecclesiastical history, as well as on the processing of documents in the personal, family and institutional funds kept in various archives. Based on the conclusions that resulted from the analysis and comparison of the data already published with those collected by me, the extent of the 18th century confession changes, the personal reasons underlying this phenomenon, and the political, religious and economic consequences of these. During the processing of the collected data, several portraits of personalities were outlined, these are presented in the paper in some studies. Of course, in their case, the emphasis was on changes of confession.

In the history of Transylvania, the 18th century is the period of slow transformation. This metamorphosis, as affirmed by the politician and historian Apor Peter, has influenced all the aspects and levels of the Transylvanian daily life, including both society, culture, religion, economy and politics.

Even though this transformation was largely peaceful and very slow, at the time we can distinguish four major stages, and these in turn can be divided into several smaller stages. The structure of the work follows these stages, presenting broadly the political, social and religious events within them.

The first stage, called the transition phase, begins with 1690 and ends with the peace signing of Satu-Mare (1711). In this first phase, three well-phased phases can be distinguished. The first begins with the entry of Transylvania under the Habsburg rule and continues until the end of the anti-Ottoman struggle (1699). Because of the uncertainty that reigned on the battlefields, Vienna's leadership still does not brutally interfere with the political, social and religious life of Transylvania, but decision making is left to Gubernium and diet. The Transylvanian society believes that everything will remain as in the past, changing only the master, and this, like the sultan, is somewhere far away and does not interfere with the interior affairs of the principality. Everyone, regardless of religion, believes in strict adherence to the laws. On a confessional level, this period is remarked by discussions around the publication of the Leopoldine Diploma and its subsequent annexes (ex. the Alvinczian Resolution).

The second phase of the first stage remains until the outbreak of the revolution led by Francis Rakoczi II, when the hostilities ceased and the international position of Transylvania was clarified. In the principality, it became an integral part of the Habsburg Empire, the central power already carries a much more energetic policy, mirrored by the repeated protests of the Protestant cults. The third phase is the phase of the revolution, when social and religious problems pass on a second plan, Transylvania being dominated by the noise of weapons. By rebuilding the principality (due to Rakoczi's inauguration as the prince), the Transylvanian society breaks into two opposing camps (one national and another Habsburg pro).

The signing of peace ends the destruction, but contrary to the clemency offered, the rupture in society will persist for many years. The next stage is marked by the reign of Charles VI. Politically, socially and confessively, it is a unitary period, not even the disenchantments caused by the signing of the "Pagmatica Sanctio" act will create a major rupture. This stage is characterized by the observance of the Transylvanian laws, but when the functions and titles

are granted, the King will no longer take into account the decisions of the Diet and will impose persons who have proven their unconditional support to the king and system. Now a new selection criterion will emerge: belonging to the Catholic faith.

The third major stage is the reign of Maria Theresa (1740-1780). This stage begins as a continuation of the previous era, but the first changes will be seen immediately after Parliament's acceptance of the Queen's reign and its crowning in 1742. Even if the state of mind and the Diet are still taken into account, the true decisions will be made at Aulice Chancellery. This slow transformation begins in the earlier stage, but only now it will come to fruition.

The year 1765 represents a turning point in the history of Transylvania. This year, both the Government and the Aulice Chancellery are called foreign speakers from outside Transylvania, speakers of German. At the same time, the appointments in positions depend entirely on the will of the queen and the imperial government. As from 1762 Parliament is no longer called, political, religious, and economic decisions are made without state consent. Religious life is characterized by a strong impetus of the Catholic Church and the increasingly stronger marginalization of the Unitarians. There is a new phenomenon at the social level: Due to the Court's recatholysis policy, more and more nobles go to Catholic religion and, as a reward, they will gain important positions in the administration. The promotion of converts begins in the previous stage but only in this period will it reach its peak.

The visit of Emperor Joseph II to Transylvania in 1773 represents another turning point in the history of Transylvania. The emperor will draw up a series of lists and characterizations of the principals, and on this basis he will make some very important decisions that will lead to a major change in the political and social life of Transylvania. Even though Aulica Chancellery will still remain in the hands of foreigners, and the Diet will not be summoned from now on, the Government will be called Transylvanian people. And on the occasion of the appointments to office, the confessional and social affiliation will not be taken into account, the only conditions of selection being skill, education and unconditional loyalty to the king and the empire.

The fourth stage is the beginning of the reign of Joseph II, dominated by the issue of the Edict of Tolerance and additional edicts. At this stage we no longer have to deal with conversions. Religious disputes are replaced by a new theme represented by national affirmation.

The next chapter is the actual research. The two subchapters present with great calculations, tables and diagrams the confessional transformations produced within the Transylvanian society and the causes and consequences of transformations. The data is based on the processing of information obtained from bibliography and personal research.

Several models of conversion have been outlined during the studies, these are presented in some in-depth studies. The studies are chronologically ordered, and each one is built around a remarkable person from the epoch.

Studies are followed by two very comprehensive and detailed lists. The first includes those people who have changed their faith and the second contains the names of the more important men who have remained faithful to the ancestral beliefs. The Convert List can bring in new light everything that has been believed so far about the causes and magnitude of recatolization, and it can also form a basis for new research.

The lists of county officials are a very important new chapter. Its importance is given by the

fact that until now there have been no works to present Transylvanian officials from the 18th century, and the works that deal with this case are incomplete and full of geese.

The next block of the thesis is made up of a database containing over 1500 personal data underlying research in the PhD thesis. Personal data has been gathered from various works devoted to nobility families, and on the basis of research carried out in various national and church archives. The lists contain the names, dates of birth, death and marriage of persons, religion, functions and rank held, as well as the names of the spouses and children.

I am of the opinion that a subject underlying the work can only be processed with the help of a very detailed research, and the thesis contains a very thorough bibliography. In it, the books, magazines, and archive sources were grouped into distinct categories.

For a better understanding of proplemacy, the work is complemented by a series of annexes that provide a more accurate view of the mentalities in Transylvania in the 18th century.