

State and Population

The Social and Socio-Professional Structure of Transylvania in the 18th Century

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TOWARDS THE middle of the 16th century (after 1541), the name *Transylvania* considerably altered its meaning, as the old voivodate, presently a principality, practically doubled its territory and population, coming to include, alongside the area enclosed by the Carpathian Mountains, the regions of Banat and Partium. It is true that between 1541 (the establishment of the principality) and 1688 (the beginning of Austrian rule) the territorial structure also suffered a number of changes and variations. Between 1699 and 1718, all of these territories came to be included in the Habsburg Empire, being internationally recognized as such (in certain treaties). Nevertheless, in the 18th century, this vast territory (approximately 100,000 km²) was home to four administrative entities that differed in terms of their legal status: the Principality (called Great Principality after 1765) of Transylvania, the Western Marches (Partium), Banat, and the Military Border. The Principality included 11 counties, the districts of Chioar and Făgăraș, 5 Szekler seats, 9 Saxon seats (*Fundus Regius*, Königsboden) and 11 free royal towns.¹ The Partium consisted of four counties, north of the lower Mureș Valley and northeast of the Someș Valley, and four free royal towns (all under Hungarian administration, within the structures of the Empire). Until 1778, Banat operated as province subordinated directly to Vienna, and then became an administrative unit of Hungary, but still in the framework of the Empire. The Military Border was established in Transylvania in 1764 (two Romanian and two Szekler regiments) and in Banat in 1766–1769 (a Romanian, a German, and a Serbian battalion). In 1785–1786, historical Transylvania had nearly 1.5 million inhabitants, Partium had a little over 700,000 (in 1787), Banat had more than 550,000 (in 1787) and—a bit later, in 1799—the Military Border was home to more than 250,000 people. All in all, around three million inhabitants on 100,000 km², the average population density being 30 inhabitants per km².²

In the present analysis of social structures, we shall mainly refer to the territory of historical Transylvania, to what the Austrian authorities referred to as the Principality (and later Great Principality) of Transylvania, but with frequent comparisons to the other aforementioned regions. The main legal document that regulated the administration of Habsburg Transylvania in the 18th century was Leopold's Diploma, issued in 1691.³ While confirming the old social-political realities described by the earlier juridical documents, the diploma consecrated the important role played by the Viennese Court in the governing and administration of Transylvania. The main groups mentioned in the diploma—three nations (Hungarian, Saxon, and Szekler) and four denominations (Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinist, and Unitarian)—were not defined essentially along social lines, but rather along political, ethnic (national) and religious ones. We see thus a preservation of the medieval legislation, rooted in the regulations issued by the Hungarian kings and, after 1541, by the princes and the Diet. Privileges were still granted to certain social and ethnic groups (nobles, clergy, Saxons, Szeklers, Armenians, Jews), to certain denominations, towns and trade guilds, and also present was a complex set of discriminatory measures, which made Transylvania a region *sui generis*. While in other parts of Europe—especially in the West—the legislative system was being streamlined and harmonized, Transylvania remained a country of Estates and corporations, or regions enjoying special status, of privileged ethnic groups, denominations, and towns, in sharp contrast to other comparable realities whose activity was hampered.⁴ The official (legal) tradition of Transylvania was based on the three political nations, which were increasingly defined along ethnic lines (Hungarians, Saxons, and Szeklers), as well as on the four accepted denominations. As a rule, these were the only structures that enjoyed representation in all central institutions of Transylvania: the imperial chancellery, the *Gubernium*, the Diet. For instance, in 1692, the *Gubernium* (the executive body) consisted of 12 counselors, four for each nation, and in 1709 it had 16 members, appointed from the ranks of the four accepted religions. While the Diet continued to operate and its membership essentially included the members of the three nations and four denominations, its activity was much diminished, limited, and ignored.⁵

Still, the presence of this strong local tradition and of such diverse ethnic and confessional structures raised insurmountable obstacles to the imperial attempts to integrate Transylvania and render it more homogeneous, in keeping with the structures of the Empire and with the imperatives of modernization.

GENERALLY SPEAKING, the various social groups (categories) in the province are best outlined by the fiscal data for the period between 1713–1727 and 1847. Thus, towards the middle of the interval in question, in the year 1776, the principality had 271,672 taxpaying families. Of these,

3.7% were nobles, 20.4% were yeomen, 44.6% were serfs, 20.6% were cottars, 4.5% were townsmen, 2.2% were miners (a category that also included rafters, gold panners, and salt miners), 2.9% belonged to smaller ethnic and religious groups (Anabaptists, Armenians, Bulgarians, Jews, Greeks, Gypsies), and 1.1% were vagrants. Between 1720 and 1787 the population of Transylvania increased on average by 0.5% every year, while in Banat, during the same period, the growth rate was 14 times higher, reaching 7.1%. The causes behind this huge discrepancy are rather complex, but it essentially had to do with the imperial demographic policy that led to a massive colonization in Banat, during the 18th century. The rural population represented the overwhelming majority and included about 90% of all inhabitants, while the urban settlements only represented 2.3% of the total number of localities.⁶

The available data indicates the clear preponderance of peasant categories (yeomen, serfs, and cottars), as in 1776 they amounted to nearly 86% of the total number of taxpaying families in Transylvania. During this period, the number of yeomen increased while that of serfs and cottars went down. Also, the number of noble families remained relatively constant. These changes and developments were influenced by a multitude of factors, such as the historical heritage, the demographic and taxation policies of the Court, the dominant economic trends (mercantilism in the shape of cameralism, physiocracy and early liberalism), the economic and social reforms, the social and national movements, etc.

REALIZING, AT the beginning of the 18th century, that the peasantry represented approximately 93% of the total population of Transylvania, the Imperial Court was forced to protect this category and thus ensure the necessary tax revenue, by turning all citizens into good taxpayers. But a good taxpayer could not and should not relinquish too much of his revenue to the nobles, could not afford to see his assigned plot getting smaller and smaller, and could not work far too many days on the land of his lord. One fundamental change was the transition from the (medieval) collective fiscal responsibility to the (modern) individual one, per head of family, and from the pre-determined taxation quotas—by nation and administrative unit—to taxable units (the bushel of grain). The Transylvanian Diet decided that serfs had to work for their lords a maximum number of 4 days a week with their hands and 3 days with their beasts. The cottars owed three days of labor every week, their status becoming similar to that of the serfs. Even so, peasants only had 15% of their annual labor time for themselves, spending four times as much time working for their lord. In order to increase the efficiency of peasant labor, the Imperial Court gradually reduced the number of holidays, from 73 in the 17th century to 45 after 1700 and to 30 in 1753.⁷ The urban regulation of 1747 canceled labor obligations during Sundays and holidays, but did not provide for any penalty in case of infringement. In 1769, a new ordinance called *Certa puncta* confirmed the earlier

provisions but sought to limit the abuses of the nobility. Nevertheless, the latter fiercely opposed the extension of public jurisdiction to urban relations, seeking to preserve the old medieval customs, whereby the lords could freely dictate labor obligations on their estates. In Hungary, and also in Partium (1767) and Banat (1780), the new regulations limited the obligations of bondsmen to one day a week with the beasts or two days a week in the case of manual labor.

Thus, in Transylvania the condition of the peasantry was worse than in the rest of the Empire, and the subsequent social unrest culminated in Horea's uprising of 1784–1785.⁸ Following this unprecedented revolt, the authorities effected the most important reform of the 18th century, namely the Patent of 22 August 1785 which abolished serfdom (or rather the dependent peasantry) and granted certain rights and liberties to peasants: the serf's right to leave the estate, to marry without permission, to learn certain crafts, to freely dispose of his assets, not to be driven away from his assigned plot and not to fulfill other tasks than the ones provided by law. These reforms were meant to end the system of medieval relations between nobles and serfs, to increase the fiscal and military potential of the peasantry, reduce social disparities, and consolidate the empire. The opposition to them was equally fierce, and the sovereign himself was forced to repeal many of their provisions (on 28 January 1790). Still, the reforms in question did alter the social structure of the country, even if they could not prevent the structural crisis that eventually triggered the Revolution of 1848–1849. The changes became manifest only after a long time. Thus, from 9.4% of the number of taxpayers at the beginning of the 18th century, the yeomanry increased to nearly 22% in 1791 and to more than 30% in 1847. At the same time, the percentage of bondsmen decreased from more than 56% (in 1713–1727) to approximately 40% (in 1847), a significant albeit unspectacular decrease. Similarly, the cottars decreased from 20% (1713–1727) to less than 14% (in 1847). Generally speaking, the percentage represented by taxpaying peasants remained the same (approximately 85%) during the century in question, but we do see an increase in the number of yeomen and small farmers, at the expense of the bondsmen and the cottars. Also, the nobility, whose numbers increased 3.3 times in the space of a century, accounted for the same percentage of the total population, ranging between 4.4% (at the beginning of the period) and 4% (at the end of the period). At any rate, with a nobility ratio of 4%, Transylvania was among the countries (provinces) “with a numerous nobility,” a situation inherited from the Late Middle Ages and amplified during the reign of 17th century princes.

The miners⁹ increased from 0.1% (in 1713–1727) to approximately 3.5% (in 1848), which may seem spectacular (an increase by a factor of 35!), although in absolute figures they were little more than 10,500 families. They mined salt, mercury, gold, silver, lead, iron, etc. in the traditional mining areas (Hunedo-

ara, the Western Carpathians, the Rodna Mountains, Maramureș), much more intensively starting with the second half of the 18th century, when Austria lost Silesia to Prussia. Geological surveys were conducted and mining maps were drawn, new extraction techniques were adopted, and several mining offices were established, as well as mining schools and courts of law, staffed by civil servants trained precisely in this field. Consequently, fiscal revenues from mining also saw a substantial increase.

The craftsmen or artisans¹⁰ practiced their trades according to each particular field, in rural households and especially in the towns. They were organized according to the old guild rules, based upon social solidarity and on the monopoly over production and sale. The trade guilds had a pyramid structure, from a social, ethnic, religious, and territorial point of view. Seeking to stimulate production and to efficiently collect taxes, the imperial authorities tried to limit the autonomy and the monopoly exercised by the trade guilds. However, the structure of the urban and semi-urban world had suffered a major change after the establishment and development of manufactories, in the second half of the 18th century. The most important manufactories were located on state-owned domains, but some operated on the lands of nobles. Transylvania's manufactories produced paper, gunpowder, glass, iron objects, cloth, muslin, leather items, building materials, alcohol, oil, beer, etc. These products were then traded, favoring the development of a merchant class. The highest percentage of craftsmen and merchants was to be found among the Saxons, chief among the Saxon areas being the district of Brașov, with a craftsmen/merchant for every 12 peasants (in 1846). Then came the seat of Sibiu (with a 1 to 17 ratio), the seats of Sighișoara and Rupea (1 to 24), the seat of Cincu (1 to 25), Mediaș (1 to 29) and so on and so forth until the seat of Nocrich (1 to 60). The Transylvanian average (also in the first half of the 19th century) was of one craftsman/merchant to 28 peasants or to approximately 37 inhabitants.

In the free royal towns (Alba Iulia, Bistrița, Brașov, Cluj, Mediaș, Sebeș, Sibiu, Sighișoara, and Târgu-Mureș) and in the two Armenian boroughs (Gherla and Dumbrăveni) of historical Transylvania, the population was fairly heterogeneous, but its status showed considerable differences. The *intra muros* area (the old medieval town, once walled) was restricted to the "citizens," to those who enjoyed economic, social, and judicial privileges, based upon certain monopolies. The discriminatory status was dictated by personal wealth and social position, but also by ethnic origin and religion. For instance, Romanians were not allowed to take up residence in the towns located on the territory of the counties because, as they were "schismatics," they could not build churches and would have been thus deprived of a religious life of their own. As a rule, in the Saxon cities the Romanians and the Hungarians were denied citizenship or

resident status, and therefore could not participate in the administration.¹¹ The most populated was the city of Braşov (23,000 inhabitants in 1838), followed by Cluj and Sibiu. In 1787, the urban population represented approximately 5% of the total, coming close to the average for Eastern and Southeastern Europe, but below the average percentage in the Empire (roughly 10–15%).

This analysis of the general social and socio-professional categories at the level of the entire province has essentially a statistical and somewhat theoretical value, for several reasons. First of all, Transylvania did not operate as a single community or as a homogeneous entity, not even at the level of the ruling elites. The “three nations and four religions” that controlled the administration were separated along clear lines and followed precise but different rules, based on the medieval tradition.¹² Of course, amid such ethnic and religious diversity, the social and socio-professional structures of Transylvania varied from one group to another. The old “nation” of the Hungarian nobles had presently come to include all ethnic Hungarians. It included a numerous and proud nobility, a massive peasant majority, and also craftsmen, merchants, intellectuals, etc. As opposed to the medieval period, when (around the year 1350) all towns had been dominantly German, presently there existed a fairly significant Hungarian urban class (townsman and burghers), still inferior, however, to the Saxon one. The percentage of Saxon urban dwellers (craftsmen, merchants, intellectuals) was much higher than with any of the other ethnic groups. Generally speaking, the Szeklers were peasants and soldiers, with a modest medieval urban tradition (even in the 18th century, they only had one free royal town, Târgu-Mureş). Even if the Szeklers still proudly called themselves a nation and cherished their autonomy, from an ethnic point of view more and more of them merged with the Hungarian nation. The differences between these nations (privileged groups) are also present at religious level: the Saxons are Lutheran, because the “Sibiu religion” is also called “Saxon,” the Hungarians are largely Calvinist, because the “Cluj religion” is seen as belonging to the Hungarian nation, while the Szeklers show more denominational diversity, despite a strong penchant for Catholicism, considerably revived under the Habsburgs. The territory of Transylvania is itself ethnically divided, as the *Fundus Regius* is also known as the “Saxon Land,” the *Terra Siculorum* means the “Land of the Szeklers,” and the counties are increasingly seen as Hungarian. Of course, there are many contacts and overlaps between the social groups of the various nations, from the lower community levels to the level of the *Gubernium* itself, but the dividing lines between Estates (nations) are still quite manifest. The status of a Hungarian peasant differed from that of Saxon one, just like a Saxon patrician from Sibiu had a different mentality than a Hungarian town counselor from Alba Iulia.

THE SITUATION of the Romanians was rather special and unique, from several points of view.¹³ On the one hand, they represented the absolute majority of the population: according to imperial statistics and assessments, their share in the total population varied between 62% in 1690 to more than 60% in 1844 (during the interval in question, the Hungarians and the Szeklers taken together represented approximately 27%, and the Saxons more than 10%). In other words, nearly two thirds of Transylvania's inhabitants were Romanian. This is corroborated by denominational statistics, which indicate a total percentage of 62–65% Orthodox and Greek-Catholics between 1766 and 1844.¹⁴

Secondly, the Romanians were not part of the Estates system, meaning that they had no access to leadership positions in the country. The matter of this obvious discrimination against them was often raised during the 18th century. When the Romanians repeatedly petitioned the emperor demanding equal treatment for their clergy, nobility, and commoners, they basically complained about the discrimination against these social groups based on ethnic origin and religious denomination. The inferior status of the Romanians dated back to the Middle Ages and was mainly related to their denomination, which the authorities saw as “schismatic” and sought to eradicate as part of the general mission (undertaken by the apostolic Kingdom of Hungary) to fight the “heathen, the heretics, and the schismatics.” Gradually, religious discrimination increasingly turned into ethnic discrimination, as indicated by the rulings of the Diet beginning with the 16th century. For instance, the *Approbatæ Constitutiones Regni Transilvaniae et Partium Hungariae eidem annexarum* (a synthesis of the legislation passed by the Diet between 1540 and 1653)—a document that played the role of a constitution—stated that “in this country the Romanian people has not been recognized among the Estates or accepted religions” (part I, title 8), that “the Romanian nation has been tolerated in the country in the public interest” (part I, title 9) or, in even clearer terms, that “those belonging to the Romanian or Greek cult” are “tolerated for a while, for as long as the prince and the citizens see fit” (part I, title 1, article 3).¹⁵ In other words, the Romanians in Transylvania were not an Estate (a privileged group, such as the Hungarians, the Saxons, and the Szeklers), but rather a diffuse entity, useful in terms of the public interest, while their faith was not a “religion” but a “cult,” temporarily and conditionally accepted. Under these circumstances, the social structures developed by the Romanians were the farthest from the standards of a modern society, and their general education level was the lowest (in 1780–1790 they had approximately 300 schools, that is, three times fewer than those of the Hungarians and two times fewer than the Saxon ones). Of all ethnic groups in Transylvania, the Romanians

had the largest number of serfs and poor people, and the smallest number of townsmen (craftsmen, merchants) and intellectuals. The available data is quite illustrating in this respect, when it comes to both numbers and percentages. The name “Wallachian” had become synonymous with “peasant,” with “Eastern” (in the pejorative sense), with “destitute.”

Naturally, there were some exceptions, associated with the *Fundus Regius*, where despite the discriminatory status the cohabitation of Romanians and Saxons took interesting, contradictory and surprising forms. In official terms, the Saxon authorities did not consider the Romanians equal to the Saxons and did not allow them access to leadership positions. In practical terms, however, in daily life, many Romanians became successful in the economic, social, ecclesiastical, and cultural fields. A good example in this respect is the city of Braşov, home to three ethnic communities: Saxons, Hungarians, and Romanians.¹⁶ The Saxons controlled the Magistracy (the supreme city authority), which also had jurisdiction over the Romanians living in the Şchei district. In fact, from many points of view the Şchei district operated as a parallel and separate town. The Romanians in the Şchei called themselves “townsmen” and referred to the Saxons as “citizens”—after the City, the *intra muros* area where the Saxons lived—indicating the higher status of the latter, as legitimate inhabitants of the city.¹⁷ In the 18th century, the Romanian community of craftsmen and merchants in the Şchei district had become so powerful and prosperous that, for instance, in 1769 only 11 of the 132 great merchants of Braşov were still Saxon. The Şchei district was home to approximately 600 families of Romanian craftsmen who, while denied the privileges enjoyed by the trade guilds in the City, nevertheless accounted for half the total revenue obtained by the 1227 craftsmen of Braşov. Gradually, the Şchei merchants monopolized the city’s trade with the areas south of the Carpathians (approximately 80% of all trade), and in 1769 the 59 merchant companies in the Romanian town were also trading with Vienna, Graz, Trieste, etc. Under these circumstances, it was natural for the Romanians from Braşov to join the general protest movement of the Romanian nation and imperatively demand the elimination of the restrictive authority of the Magistracy.¹⁸

In fact, during the 18th century, the entire Romanian community in Transylvania, inspired by the ideas of European contractualism and Enlightenment, conducted a struggle for national emancipation at several levels (religious, political, social-economic, cultural). The culminating point was the *Supplex Libellus Valachorum*, a great memorandum submitted to the Court in Vienna in 1791. The document demanded the extension “of human rights, and of the rights of a civil society” to all members of the community. In fact—according to the authors of the petition—this would have been the highest goal and the best intention of the emperor in the governance of his empire.¹⁹ Towards the end of

the 18th century, directly or indirectly, the belief appeared that the continuing backwardness of the marginalized Romanians (who, as we have seen, accounted for nearly two thirds of the country's population) was responsible for the general backwardness of the whole of Transylvania. More and more people began to realize that the preservation of this situation was not in the best interest of the empire. Transylvanians realized this best of all during the reign of co-regent and Emperor Joseph II, with his novel ideas ("All for the people, but nothing by the people," the sovereign as a servant of the state, the maximum usefulness for the state of the working masses), with his audiences, with his repeated visits to the various provinces (three to Banat and also three to Transylvania), but especially with his sweeping reforms. The fact that he was deliberately not crowned as king of Hungary was interpreted in various fashions and according to specific interests, and his reforms were received by his subjects with hope and sympathy, or with fear and hostility, depending to one's social, ethnic, confessional, economic, or privileged status. At any rate, the removal of censorship from under the authority of the high clergy, the dissolution of a number of monastic orders and the reorganization of others, the edict of tolerance, the appointment to public office according to qualification and not on the basis of one's religion or ethnic origin, the limitations to guild monopolies, the new administrative organization, the separation between administration and justice, the limitation of the nobles' prerogatives, the equal legal status, the elimination of the medieval political and ethnic autonomies, the introduction of German as the official language, the modernization and generalization of education (for children between 7 and 13 years of age), the intervention in the relations between nobles and peasants, the taxation of the nobility, the abolition of serfdom (of personal bondage) and of manorial monopolies, the publication of some dispositions of the Court in the languages of the people, the provision of peasant freedoms, the redefinition of relations between masters and servants, the improved condition of the Gypsies, of beggars etc. were all meant to effect profound changes in Transylvanian society. The emperor did not seek to structurally eliminate the existing relations, but rather to reform them, in keeping with the demands of enlightened despotism and for the better functioning of the state. Still, the emperor's intentions were interpreted otherwise, sometimes dramatically so. The privileged groups in Transylvania, especially the Hungarian nobles, generally saw them as hostile actions intended to eliminate the old political nations or accepted religions, namely, those who had controlled the country for centuries and who represented roughly one third of its population. On the contrary, all Romanian categories—peasants, nobles, townsmen, intellectuals, clergymen, etc.—believed that these reforms were meant to grant them equal status. The hostility of those in power eventually forced the emperor to repeal these reforms, while on his death bed

(in 1790). However, their memory and even some of their consequences lingered on. The Romanians were profoundly impressed by the ideas, the attitude, and the actions of the emperor. Nearly all of the reforms directed against the medieval privileges and customs included provisions which, once implemented, would have granted Romanians equal status. Most Romanians saw such equality as a special favor, owed exclusively to the kind sovereign, who allegedly felt particular sympathy towards their oppressed nation. Thus, during the reign of Emperor Joseph II and after his death, the myth of the good sovereign developed with unprecedented intensity.²⁰

Of course, if we look at the actual content of his reforms, we clearly see that, if implemented, they would have substantially altered the socio-economic and professional structure of Transylvania, first and foremost by making society more modern and homogeneous. The failure to implement these reforms meant that, at least for a few more decades, Transylvania preserved its relatively rigid structures, its anachronistic autonomies, its territorial division based on ethno-political criteria, its centuries-old privileges, dictated by obsolete realities. The power remained in the hands of the same institutions and groups, and the vast majority of the people were denied access to public office, being discriminated against for reasons pertaining to ethnicity or religious denomination. All of these would have a significant negative impact upon the functioning of the country and of its social groups, causing new upheavals in the 19th and 20th centuries. □

Notes

1. The most recent historical synthesis devoted to 18th century Transylvania is Ioan-Aurel Pop, Thomas Năgler, András Magyari (coord.), *Istoria Transilvaniei*, vol. III, Cluj-Napoca, 2008, p. 15-309. For the better understanding of the text, see Annexes from the end of the article.
2. Ladislau Gyémánt, "Habitat și evoluție demografică," in I.-A. Pop, Th. Năgler, A. Magyari (coord.), *Istoria Transilvaniei*, vol. III, p. 47-70.
3. David Prodan, *Supplex Libellus Valachorum or the Political Struggle of the Romanians in Transylvania during the 18th Century*, Bucharest, 1971, p. 113-116; A. Magyari, "Ocuparea militară a Transilvaniei la sfârșitul secolului al XVII-lea," in I.-A. Pop, Th. Năgler, A. Magyari (coord.), *Istoria Transilvaniei*, vol. II, Cluj-Napoca, 2007, p. 350-365.
4. Anton Dörner, "Statutul juridic al Transilvaniei," in I.-A. Pop, Th. Năgler, A. Magyari (coord.), *Istoria Transilvaniei*, vol. III, p. 16-18.
5. Idem, "Instituții centrale și locale," in I.-A. Pop, Th. Năgler, A. Magyari (coord.), *Istoria Transilvaniei*, vol. III, p. 31-36.
6. L. Gyémánt, "Habitat și evoluție demografică," p. 47-70.

7. Plus, of course, all Sundays in the year.
8. See D. Prodan, *Răscoala lui Horea*, revised edition, vol. I-II, Bucharest, 1984.
9. Ioan Lumperdean, Rudolf Gräf, Thomas Nägler, "Economie și structuri sociale," in I.-A. Pop, Th. Nägler, A. Magyari (coord.), *Istoria Transilvaniei*, vol. III, p. 80.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 81-86.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 87.
12. D. Prodan, *Supplex Libellus Valachorum*, p. 62-112.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 73-81.
14. L. Gyémánt, "Habitat și evoluție demografică," p. 65-67, tables 4 and 6.
15. *Constituțiile Aprobate ale Transilvaniei (1653)*, translated with an introductory study and notes by Alexandru Herlea, Valeriu Șotropa, Romul Pop, Iuliu Nasta, Ioan N. Floca, edited with a preface by Liviu Marcu, Cluj-Napoca, 1997, p. 48, 58-59.
16. See Aurel Răduțiu, L. Gyémánt, *Supplex Libellus Valachorum în variantele românești de la Șchei*, Cluj-Napoca, 1975, p. 11-39.
17. I.-A. Pop, *Contribuții la istoria culturii românești (cronicile brașovene din secolele XVII-XVIII)*, Cluj-Napoca, 2003, p. 25-78..
18. A. Răduțiu, L. Gyémánt, *Supplex Libellus Valachorum*, p. 13.
19. D. Prodan, *Supplex Libellus Valachorum*, p. 10.
20. The myth of the good sovereign was revived among the Romanians (and continued to develop, with certain fluctuations) right after the beginning of Austrian rule and of the religious union with the Church of Rome. No other sovereign had promised the Romanians a return to equality with the other nations the way Leopold did in the two diplomas of the union (1699, 1701). Also, none of the earlier sovereigns had paid more attention to the Romanians or said truer words about them than Joseph II: "These poor Romanian subjects, who are undoubtedly the oldest and most numerous inhabitants of Transylvania, are so tormented and persecuted by all, Hungarians or Saxons alike, that—if you examine their condition—you realize that they fully deserve your sympathy and wonder how come they have not all run away. I am not surprised to see that their lands are not properly tilled; how could they be, when they are never certain of their property rights and have to work day in and day out on the land of their lord? Under such circumstances, how could they industriously devote themselves to the cultivation of their own plots? Otherwise, the [Romanian] nation shows great spirit; their unfortunate condition is purely the outcome of their misfortune, and they must turn mainly to animal husbandry, for that would make relocation easier in times of great trouble" (I. Lupaș, *Împăratul Iosif al II-lea și răscoala țărănilor din Transilvania*, Bucharest, 1935, p. 8). For the feelings of Emperor Joseph II towards Romanians and towards the country's inhabitants in general, see also Ileana Bozac, Teodor Pavel, *Călătoria împăratului Iosif al II-lea în Transilvania la 1773/ Die Reise Kaiser Josephus II. durch Siebenbürgen im Jahre 1773*, vol./ Band I, second edition/ Zweite Ausgabe, Cluj-Napoca/ Klausenburg, 2007, passim.

Abstract

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Towards the middle of the 16th century (after 1541), the name Transylvania considerably altered its meaning, as the old voivodate, presently a principality, practically doubled its territory and population, coming to include, alongside the area enclosed by the Carpathian Mountains, the region of Banat and Partium. It is true that between 1541 (the establishment of the principality) and 1688 (the beginning of Austrian rule) the territorial structure also suffered a number of changes and variations. Between 1699 and 1718, all of these territories came to be included in the Habsburg Empire, being internationally recognized as such (in certain treaties). Nevertheless, in the 18th century, this vast territory (approximately 100,000 km²) was home to four administrative entities that differed in terms of their legal status: the Principality (called Great Principality after 1765) of Transylvania, the Western Marches (Partium), Banat, and the Military Border. The Principality included 11 counties, the districts of Chioar and Făgăraș, 5 Szekler seats, 9 Saxon seats (Fundus Regius, Königsboden) and 11 free royal towns. The Partium consisted of four counties, north of the lower Mureș Valley and northeast of the Someș Valley, and four free royal towns (all under Hungarian administration, within the structures of the Empire). Until 1778, Banat operated as province subordinated directly to Vienna, and then became an administrative unit of Hungary, but still in the framework of the Empire. The Military Border was established in Transylvania in 1764 (two Romanian and two Szekler regiments) and in Banat in 1766–1769 (a Romanian, a German, and a Serbian battalion). In 1785–1786, historical Transylvania had nearly 1.5 million inhabitants, Partium had a little over 700,000 (in 1787), Banat had more than 550,000 (in 1787) and—a bit later, in 1799—the Military Border was home to more than 250,000 people. All in all, around three million inhabitants on 100,000 km², the average population density being 30 inhabitants per km².

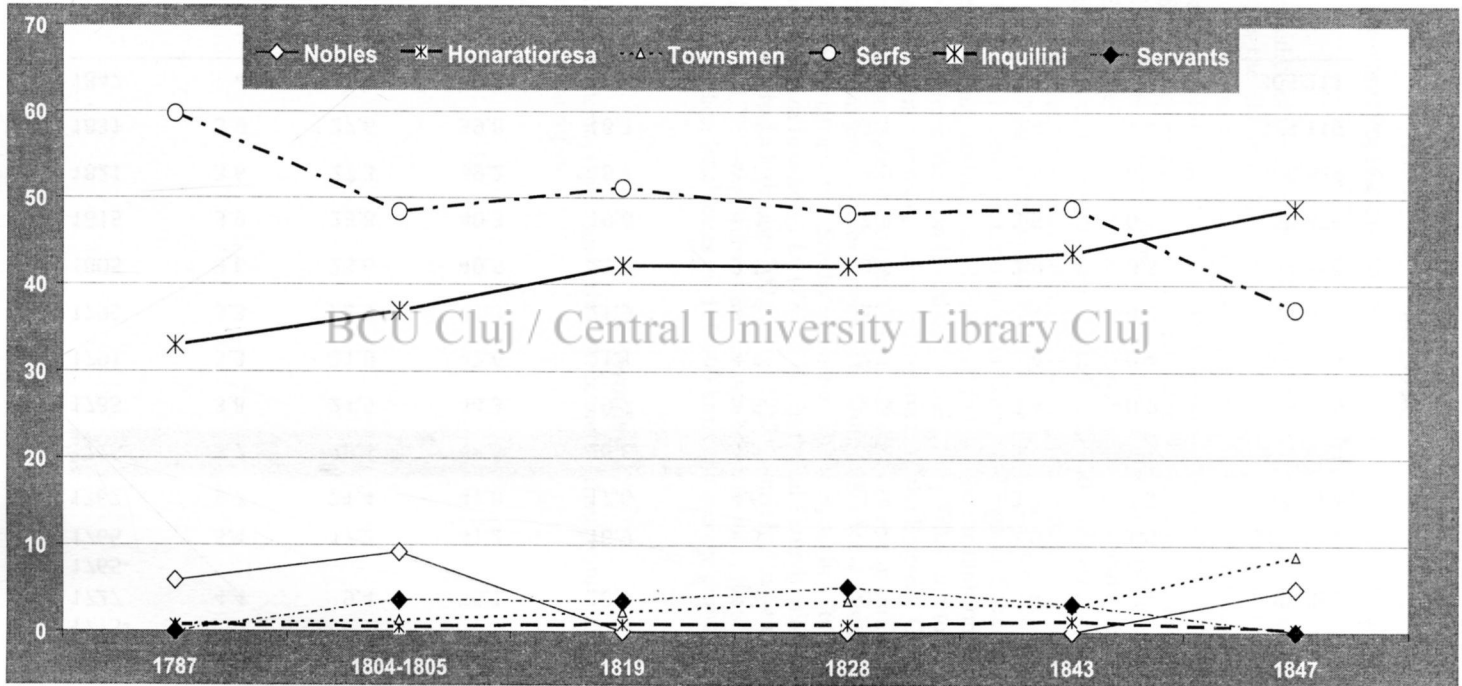
Keywords

Habsburg Empire, demographic and ethnic structure of Transylvania, Enlightenment, majority and minority, political rights

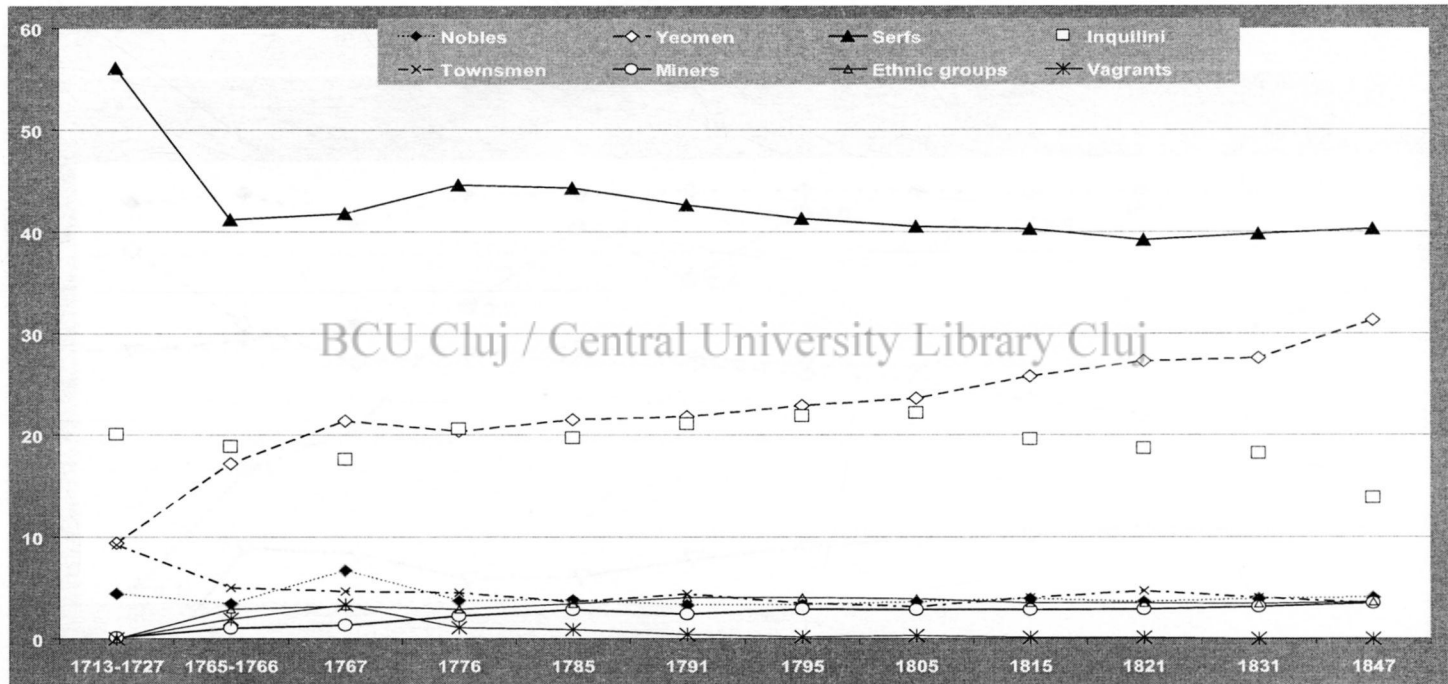
TABLE 1. THE NUMERICAL EVOLUTION OF TAXPAYER FAMILIES IN HISTORICAL TRANSYLVANIA
 BASED ON SOCIAL-FISCAL CATEGORIES IN 1713-1847

| Years | Social-fiscal categories | | | | | | | | Total |
|-------------|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|---------------|------------|----------------------|
| | Nobles | Yeomen | Serfs | Inquilini | Townsmen | Miners | Ethnic groups | Vagrants | |
| 1713-1727 | 4.4 | 9.4 | 56.1 | 20.1 | 9.2 | 0.1 | – | – | 83,892 |
| 1765-1766 | 3.4 | 17.2 | 41.2 | 18.9 | 5 | 1 | 2.9 | 1.9 | 264,715 ^f |
| 1767 | 6.7 | 21.4 | 41.8 | 17.6 | 4.6 | 1.3 | 3.2 | 3.3 | 258,359 ^g |
| 1776 | 3.7 | 20.4 | 44.6 | 20.6 | 4.5 | 2.2 | 2.9 | 1.1 | 271,672 |
| 1785 | 3.8 | 21.5 | 44.3 | 19.7 | 3.6 | 2.8 | 3.4 | 0.9 | 298,746 |
| 1791 | 3.3 | 21.8 | 42.6 | 21.1 | 4.4 | 2.4 | 4 | 0.4 | 302,433 |
| 1795 | 3.3 | 22.9 | 41.3 | 21.9 | 3.5 | 2.9 | 4 | 0.2 | 310,659 |
| 1805 | 3.6 | 23.6 | 40.5 | 22.2 | 3.1 | 2.8 | 3.9 | 0.3 | 344,860 |
| 1815 | 3.9 | 25.8 | 40.3 | 19.6 | 4 | 2.8 | 3.5 | 0.1 | 322,475 |
| 1821 | 3.6 | 27.3 | 39.2 | 18.7 | 4.7 | 2.9 | 3.5 | 0.1 | 300,624 |
| 1831 | 3.9 | 27.6 | 39.8 | 18.2 | 4 | 3.1 | 3.4 | – | 325,115 |
| 1847 | 4 | 31.3 | 40.3 | 13.8 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.6 | – | 305,211 |

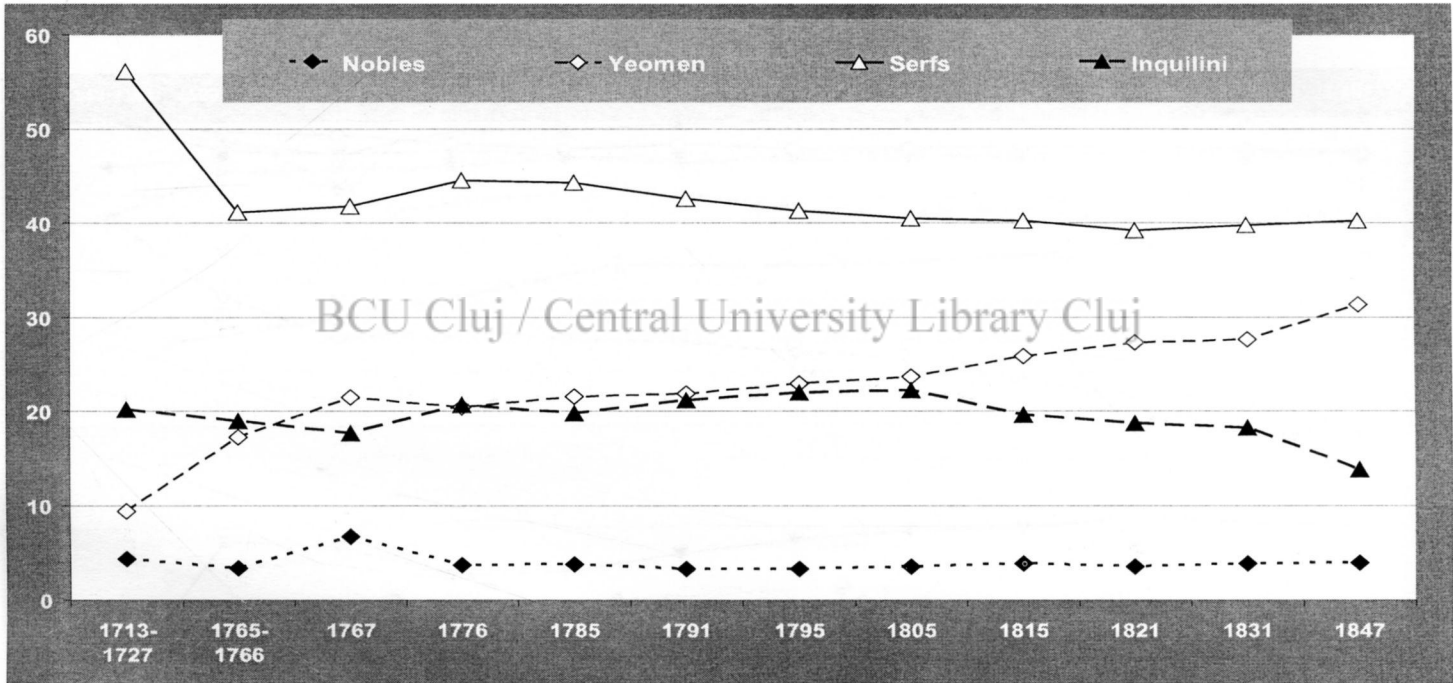
GRAPH 1. THE EVOLUTION OF THE POPULATION BASED ON THE NUMBER OF MALE TAXPAYERS
IN PARTIUM ȘI BANAT IN 1787-1847



GRAPH 2. THE NUMERICAL EVOLUTION OF THE TAXPAYER FAMILIES IN HISTORICAL TRANSYLVANIA
 BASED ON SOCIAL-FISCAL CATEGORIES IN 1713-1847



GRAPH 3. PEASANT CATEGORIES (YEOMEN, SERFS, AND INQUILINI)



GRAPH 4. MINERS

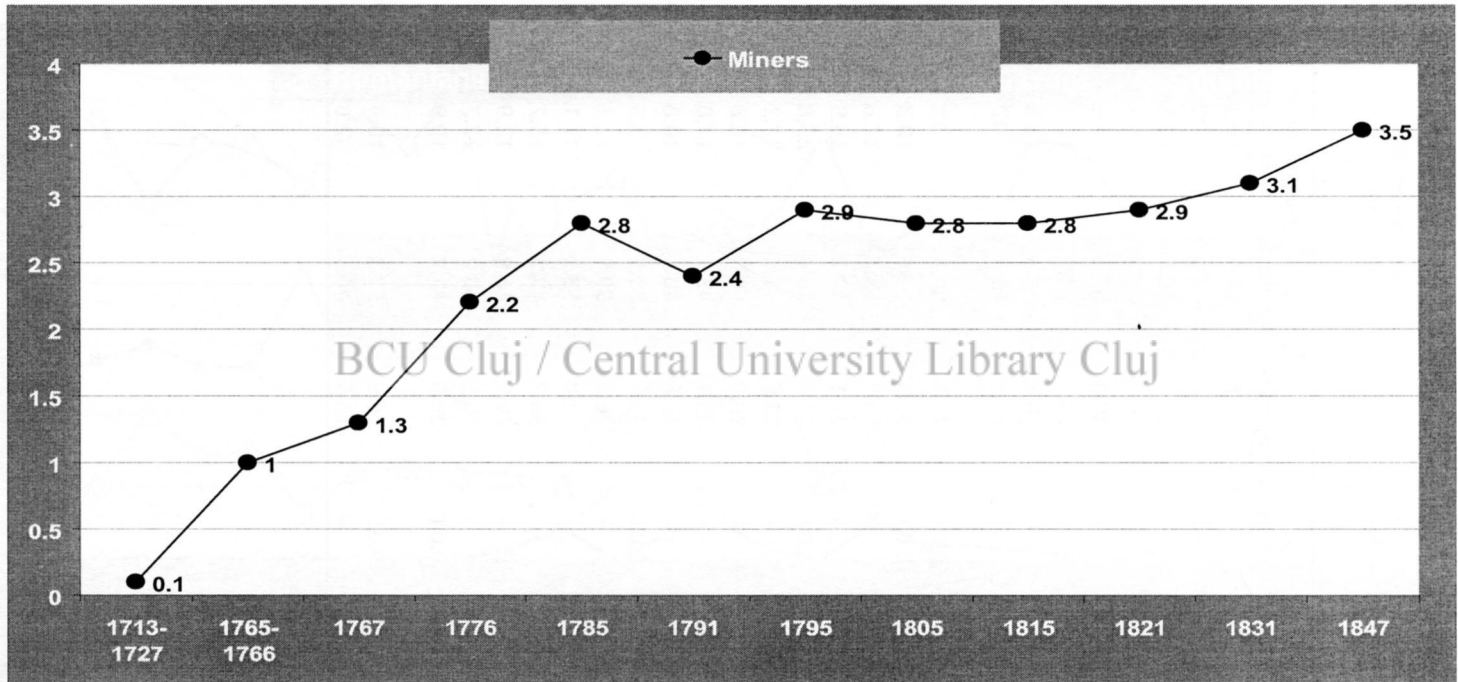


TABLE 2. THE EVOLUTION OF THE POPULATION ON ETHNIC GROUPS
IN HISTORICAL TRANSYLVANIA IN 1690–1847

| Years | Armenians | Jews | Greeks | Hungarians | Romanians | Transylvanian Saxons | Russians | Gypsies |
|-------|-----------|------|--------|------------|-------------|-------------------------|----------|---------|
| 1690 | – | – | – | 27.8 | 61.9 | 10.3 | – | – |
| 1700 | – | – | – | 30 | 50 | 20 | – | – |
| 1730 | – | – | – | 26.9 | 58.6 | 14.5 | – | – |
| 1750 | – | – | – | 26.9 | 58 | 15.1 | – | – |
| 1766 | – | – | – | 40.8 | 52.6 | 6.6 | – | – |
| 1773 | – | – | – | 24.2 | 63.5 | 12.3 | – | – |
| 1781 | – | – | – | 28.9 | 58.3 | 12.8 | – | – |
| 1786 | – | – | – | 21.6 | 66.4 | 12 | – | – |
| 1786- | | | | | | | | |
| 1787 | 0.08 | 0.17 | 0.03 | 49.7 | 30.5 | 12 | 0.46 | 0.74 |
| 1794 | 0.06 | 0.1 | 0.03 | 35.2 | 50 | 10.3 | 0.01 | 4.3 |
| 1800 | – | – | – | 18.7 | 53.7 | 27.6 | – | – |
| 1818 | 0.32 | 0.16 | – | 27.1 | 42.2 | 26.9 | – | 3.3 |
| 1826 | 0.34 | 0.12 | 0.02 | 22.4 | 46.4 | 25.8 | 0.48 | 4.4 |
| 1828 | 0.27 | 0.07 | – | 23.6 | 47.6 | 27.2 | 0.13 | 1.1 |
| 1832 | – | – | – | 28.9 | 60.3 | 10.8 | – | – |
| 1833 | 0.38 | 0.12 | – | 33.1 | 43.3 | 17.8 | – | 5.3 |
| 1834 | 0.25 | 0.1 | – | 22.8 | 48.3 | 26.8 | – | 1.8 |
| 1838 | 0.21 | 0.13 | 0.01 | 34.6 | 39.9 | 23.9 | – | 1.8 |
| 1839 | 0.38 | 0.08 | – | 26.5 | 59.9 | 12.1 | 0.01 | 1.02 |
| 1841 | 0.51 | 0.17 | – | 30 | 58.2 | 11.1 | – | – |
| 1842 | 0.36 | – | – | 36.7 | 47.2 | 15.7 | – | – |
| 1843 | 0.42 | 0.26 | – | 26.9 | 56.9 | 12.9 | – | 2.6 |
| 1844 | 0.43 | 0.15 | – | 10.5 | 60.2 | 27.7 | – | 0.94 |
| 1846 | 0.4 | 0.08 | 0.04 | 29.9 | 47.7 | 19.9 | – | 1.99 |
| 1846- | | | | | | | | |
| 1851 | 0.44 | 0.73 | 0.02 | 26.9 | 57.3 | 10.4 | 0.09 | 4.2 |
| 1847 | 0,37 | 0.18 | – | 18.6 | 46.5 | 32.6 | – | 1.72 |

GRAPH 5. THE EVOLUTION OF THE POPULATION ON ETHNIC GROUPS
IN HISTORICAL TRANSYLVANIA IN 1690–1847

