PECULIARITIES OF ELECTORAL ACTIVITIES IN THE OLT COUNTRY SINCE THE MIDDLE AGES

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ABSTRACT

After an older documentation, which led to the sketching of electoral developments for (more than) seven centuries, we have delved deeper into the issue, at the level of local elections. Thus, starting from the medieval era – more precisely, from the 15th century – we have information, it is true, incomplete, regarding the designation of local leaders. Thus, based on both documents and statistical and fiscal records, we can cover this interval (more precisely, the 14th-18th centuries) with information regarding, on the one hand, the elected local leaders (judges, the ancestors of today's mayors), and on the other – the total number of inhabitants with the right to vote (which amounted to, from a few dozen to a few hundred citizens, only male). The first information dates back to 1471, when the first leader in a village of the Olt Country is mentioned. Although we have information for the following period as well, we have stopped, for now, at the mid-18th century. Thus, the analyzed period covers approximately four centuries. On the other hand, if we refer to voters with the right to vote, the information covers a shorter period: only the 17th-18th centuries. Statistical and fiscal records, primarily (the urbaria carried out by the princely administration of Transylvania in the 17th century and the Austrian conscription in the first part of the following century) provide us with information related to the total number of those who could vote (and also be elected). The information does not cover, however, all the settlements of the Olt Country (about two-thirds of them, more precisely, 59 out of approximately 90, and, at the level of current administrative units, 20 out of 27).

Keywords: Local elections, Olt Country, Middle Ages

INTRODUCTION

The Olt Country – also called the Făgăraș Country since the 14th century – is located in central Romania, in the southern part of Transylvania.[1] Research into the various aspects – historical, economic, political-administrative, cultural – related to the Olt Country received considerable help with the publication, in 1970-1976, by David Prodan, of *the Urbaria of the Făgăraș Country*[2], containing detailed information for several dozen villages in the area, covering a large part of the 17th century. A few decades earlier, in 1935, *Ștefan Meteș included, in his work Economic situation of the Romanians from Făgăraș Country*[3], the Habsburg conscription from 1721-1722, also with significant details related to its localities. Starting from this information, after an initial documentation, which brought to light, also from an electoral point of view, the number of voters with noble rank (boyars) who had the right to vote and to be elected to *Scaunul de Judecată=the Judgement Seat*, also called *Scaunul Superior al*

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