

Eötvös Loránd University Faculty of Humanities
Doctoral School of History
Dr. Gábor Erdődy DSc, University Full Professor

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Ernő Csekő

THE ELITE DURING THE DUALISM IN THE COUNTY OF TOLNA

Supervisor:

Dr. György Kövér DSc, University Full Professor

PhD Programme in Social and Economic History

Dr. György Kövér DSc, University Full Professor

Chair of the Committee:	Dr. Vera Bácskai DSc, professor emerita
Appointed opponents:	Dr. Károly Halmos PhD, University Associate Professor
	Dr. Zsuzsanna Gaál PhD
Members of the Committee:	Dr. Csaba Csapó PhD, University Associate Professor
	Dr. Judit Tóvári CSc, College Full Professor
	Dr. Gábor Erdődy DSc, University Full Professor (Alternate Member)
	Dr. Zoltán Tóth DSc, University Full Professor (Alternate Member)

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In our dissertation we will turn our attention to the "elite" of Tolna county during the dualism. We will determine a circle of the analysed individuals, which will be the committee of the local authority (the County Committee) from 1872 to 1918. According to the legal regulations of that time, this means partly the largest tax payers who are the so-called "*virilists*", and on the other hand all the *elected* members. Beyond the virilists and the occupation of the elected members, their social class, the distribution of their residence, and of its changing during time periods, the dedicated goal of this dissertation is to introduce the adjudgement-mechanism of the municipal committee including the inner confine within the elite of the county. In the third part of the dissertation we would like to emphasize the strength of the political institution of the elite's layer in connection with its government policy and its settlement developing.

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Up to that time, the structural ideological researches of the virilists during the dualism, were based on Károly Vörös' investigations from the 1970-s. Following Károly Vörös' researches of considerable importance in connection with Budapest, the methodics, developed by his own, helped to write up many towns, like Pécs (József Bérdi), Hódmezővásárhely (Gábor Gyáni) or Miskolc (Judit Tóvári). Beside his achievements and his follower's works, the possibilities were given to use a list of the registered virilists, moreover, they were able to indicate the elite's boundary lines in an economical point of view, which later had to be analysed. Afterwards, in the year 2002 Gyula Szakál's work in connection with the city of Győr was published, which was a slighter, but a more comprehensive and a better structured methodology of the earlier described registered list of the virilists – according to the topic – his calculations started on a base of smaller structures, personal life paths, and pointed as well as to mental, and towards to political directions.

In the field of analysing the elite during the dualism the newest methods of approach to that subject (Tibor Takács Nyíregyháza, and the monographies of András J. Horváth about Budapest) did not primary identify the elite from an economical point of view, and not according to their values and the changings of those during the time, and not only accordingly their economical and social progresses, but they also kept an eye on the devotion of all their work in the field of town management and development as a virilist. In accordance to this, not only the virilists were representing the elite, but also the municipal autonomic authority, who made decisions, carried out leading tasks and ruled the town as the elite class.

As seen above itemized, during the time these virilists' and the newer (municipal election) processes had been applied solely to towns or cities with a local autonomic authority (see the analyzed

work of Tibor Takács, András J. Horváth). To the best of our knowledge the results of extended studies in accordance to counties had been published only in one or two short discourses (see the studies of László Kosján about the elite of Nógrád county /1987/ or Péter Takács' study about the virilists of Szabolcs county /1990/).

Because there are only very few studies from the times of the dualism in connection with different countys, the principles of processing them are immature, therefore we do not have beaten tracks to follow, it is also possible, that we do not find the most acceptable way. On the other hand we got efficient help and also a solid base for our research from József Glósz' and Zsuzsanna Gaál's achievements, monographs and other studies about the nobility of the average propertied class of Tolna county. The works of Anna Cserna and Gyula Dobos about the average class families were also very useful. In several terms of our research the studies of Zoltán Tóth – about the social class of Szekszárd – were just indispensable. We got great assistance from the studies of Árpád Horváth while working out the administrative neo-absolutism part of this thesis in connection with the county, furthermore his exercitations about the municipal corporation and legal enforcements during the transitional period from 1965 to 1871 were a great help as well.

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We were going into details about the circle of people from the beginning of the mentioned time period, the following decades had been analyzed more summarized, instead of focusing on the tendencies, and we would keep (also) the people in the foreground. We did this considering the historical importance of the first municipal committee. In connection with this we also entered into the details of founding a county council and its arrangements. At this point we prepared a detailful summary (revenue office lists, the summary of the names involved in the financial board of directors, community and revenue office certificates, the registered lists or draft lists of the virilists, etc.) and criticized the sources. For another thing we would like to approach the manifold progress of the register's arranging – making way for different steps – with different examples, as well as we wish to demonstrate the most common mistakes at the filed protests and their compilation. After all this, in this chapter we would like to discuss in details, how large that particular circle of citizens is, who – according to their paid tax in connection with their values and income – should have been mentioned in the register of the virilists, but for some reason they never get mentioned, neither they could take advantage of their virilist rights. During the examination of the virilists – in another way: during the examination of the social and economical elite, according to the virilists register – we have tried to figure out literally one-by-one, who those persons were, who – for whatever reason – did not join the county's virilist membership, and why they were not listed there. With this efforts we could serve with a comprehensive and a more real insight about the fact, how large the number of those persons are, and how much taxes they have paid, who did not get listed in the virilists register.

The reason for their absence can be classified into four main groups – these groups are approximately reflecting also the different social classes –, where the separate description and analysis of the tax payers concurred in a very remarkable result. From the aspect of the paid tax, these were potential virilists, but they were not listed in the virilists register. The number of the registered virilists was 220 persons, although the unlisted virilists were half of them (110 persons). By the year 1872 in the register of the ordinary virilists 220 persons were listed and the other 110 unlisted virilists – the additional double tax of the white-collar workers already deducted – was altogether 114 984 Hungarian Forints, where the above mentioned, unlisted virilists paid 66 711 Hungarian Forints in all, this amount was 58% of the listed 220 virilists.

As a result of the above said, the raw value of the virilists register and all the listed elite's economical adequacy's limits, we have to emphasize even more facts, than just drawing a conclusion. The most important section of the four groups – which are the double tax paying white-collar workers; the lone mothers; those, who are not encouraged by the county's committee; and the a large acred men of high-wealth, the so called aristocrats – are the last mentioned, economically strong, high worth individuals, and large acred men, who's absence could have been of major importance, the more so, since because these facts were not only valid for the year 1872. The absence of the large acred men – one person could be a virilist only in one municipal authority – caused, that they, and they family members had a less important role in the county's public and political life during the dualism. For this reason the leading of the county, the determination of the operative political line, forming the ethos of the public life, it did not became only the privilege of the average propertied class, but it stays unchanged and even more untroubled according to the previous decades. From a third point of view the large landowners were not represented directly at the county's general assembly, instead, we can mention only a figurative sense in connection with the tenants, who of course ambitiously tried to represent their own interests above all.

In connection with the elected municipal committee members, the election of the municipal committee members back in November 1871, we wrote about the main data and the participation rate of the 42 districts, 3 sub-districts, furthermore we also mentioned its process, and above all, we noticed the deficiencies as well as the offences.

In the first place of the second and third part of this dissertation, we analysed the constitution of the first municipal committee members from the year 1872, where we also made a comparison between the occupational and social division, and the permanent committee of the local authority of the time period between 1867 and 1871, where we have discovered among others, that the high representation rate of 32% - which surpasses the participating rate within the county's population by far – the municipal committee in the district of Dunaföldvár stayed on a constant level. In this case the high participating rate of the virilists of the district played a significant role. The main reason beside the fact, that two of the four country towns were settled in this county (Dunaföldvár and Paks) was that the average class families – and primarily the better situated once – were living in this district.

Therefore the developing survey point was disproportionate during the examined time period, because of the high participating rate of the virilists from the average class families. The main tendencies between the virilist and the elected committee members during the dualism had been processed in a different way, where we went further into this, on a level of smaller geological units in separate chapters. In this manner - according to the virilists - we examined thoroughly those virilists, who had the highest participating rate and lived at the county town Szekszárd, during this time, while we also examined the elected members focusing on a smaller territory, namely on Sárköz.

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In the third part we studied the border line in connection with the municipal tasks of the county's elite according to their daily activities. In one respect we focused on the fact, how, and within what kind of frames and barriers the goals of the reform era in connection with the citizens got realized in the county of Tolna during the dualism. On the other hand we investigated in this dissertation of overriding importance the municipal committee and what functions the legislative authorities had to carry out beside their municipal tasks, and what kind of social, political values they have presented during the analysed time period.

After the declaration and codification of the most important human rights in the year 1848, not only the parliament was laid onto a citizen's base, but also the infiltration of the citizen's representation at the county's organisation got under way. With the "Hungarian War of Independence" the independent Hungarian State was falling, and while the Neo-Absolutism government went headway, this progress certainly broke off, but it got an immemorial form with a view to the law 1870:XLII associating to the local and municipal authorities. All this was a very important change, because the legislation did not represent the principles of the citizens, furthermore, they kept it within serious limits. These were introduced detailfully in this dissertation by giving examples in connection with Tolna county. Beside of the different principles of the virilism, which coincided with the citizen's principles, and their distorting influences, we also wrote about the limitation factors within the municipal elections. We also mentioned the low number of the elective franchise, because of the high residential qualification (barely 25% of the grown-up men), the assignment the districts, about the distortions because of the lack of the appropriate distribution of the mandates, about the fact, that during the few elections hold each third year, only half of the six-year-mandates were occupied. The success of the citizen's representation was very weak; this was clearly visible by the low participation during the years 1877 to 1898. Also solutions with a technically lower character had an influence on the representation of the citizens' success, like the postponed elections of the chosen members. Thus, during the constitutional crisis between 1905 and 1906 the united opposition of Tolna county won in January of the year 1905 to no purpose, as most of the county committee members still took their bearings to the liberal party, most of all, because half of the chosen members, those once, who had

been municipally elected during the most successful year of the activity of the liberal party, in the year 1901.¹

In the second part of that chapter we went into the composition of the municipal committee, moreover in part II., in comparison with the chapter's appropriate part (II.C), this time we analysed the municipal committee with regard to the municipal autonomic authority, together with the virilists and the elected members. The three largest group of occupational classes (each with over 110 members), to say the landowners, the intellectual and the farm labourers of the year 1872, kept their eminent position, but also very important and different tendencies took place during the decades within their representation in the committee. Forming a contrary parabolic pattern up to the middle of the 1880's, the number of the intellectuals raised to 185 persons (in the first place because of the larger number of the elected communal notaries and the civil servants of the county), while the number of the farm labourers decreased below 80 persons. Up to the end of the century, or rather at the beginning of the following century, their number raised again above 100 persons, this can be attributed to the social tensions and to the farm workers movement (in the year 1915 they were 121 farm labourers). The number of the intellectuals decreased to 148 persons. The number of landowners however decreased in a linear to 59 persons, so the inverse of this progress was the increase of the tenant-farmers with undiminished energy (from 13 to 44 persons), due to their upsurgence within the virilists. The above details are describing the agricultural character in an excellent way, since the number of craftsman, manufacturers, so as merchants – also related to catering trade and their representatives – were showing a stagnating number, the number of the previously said, showed 10-20 persons, where in the latter case there were 30-40 persons. While the tenant-farmers and the landowners got into the county committee based on the virilism, the farm labourers gained admittance as a result of an election.

In the beginning the intellectual's distribution was almost equal (59-55), but with time they were elected too. The reason for this was the growing proportion of a particular group, whose income and wealth was not enough to become a virilist. These were the: communal and rural district leaders, teachers, agricultural officials of the age who were representing a group of intellectuals and under-stewards. Also another group of intellectuals, namely the civil servants, and a group of people with higher status, like magistrates and county clerks got elected too. On the contrary, there was a group of intellectuals, who didn't need to get elected due to their wealth, income, or because of their liberal intellectual professions, often with his own clients (like lawyers, medical doctors, engineers) – also pharmacists.

Back to the success of representing the public, after all there was a historical step in comparison with the county before 1848: from that point, in the life and guidance to the county also the earlier excluded citizens, countrymen, or even the Swabians and Jewish people had the same right to interventions as the earlier privileged nobility. According to the number of the civilian population

¹ Evidently, during the municipal elections at the end of the year 1904 only half of the mandates were occupied.

the Hungarian Jewry was represented in a high proportion, who though never won any representation in the commission board, founded in 1861 – which was in function between the years 1867 to 1871 –, their number in the county committee was between 50-80 during the analysed time period. It is of overriding importance, that beside all these facts the guidance of the county remained in the hands of the average class families, this was because of high number of magistrates – about fifty people – and country clerks, who represented 30% of the members.

We were examining the most important and operative type council-boards of the county committee (constant board, centre board, confirmative board, constant reviewer board, administrative commission) in an extensive part of a dedicated chapter in this dissertation. For the whole time period it can be clearly said, that the members of these boards were constantly decreasing. Their number and their percentage according to the virilist members was decreasing significantly, over time this showed further decrease. After examining the composition of the constant board and the centre board in details, we can ascertain that, the occupation of these boards had significantly contributed the leading position of the new social classes during the dualism, according to the times before 1848; another important factor was that the county committee kept it under its control. Beside them only the intellectuals of the nobility got room. It can be confirmed, that after time their importance and influence was growing. The three-year election of the boards showed a very small fluctuation and a high stability, beside this, the membership of one person in two or more boards caused a high composedness and a considerably reduction.

At the same part, but in a separate chapter of this dissertation we were investigating the political compartmentalisation of the municipal government and the municipal parties. Until the fusion of the parties, in the beginning of the era, the power relation between the governing party and the opposition was balanced. With the new governing party of the year 1875, also in the county of Tolna the overwhelming governing majority evolved. Moreover, the limited success of the public's representation, the composition of county committees during the dualism couldn't be changed even with the election of the representatives, so the liberal party's power relation, neither during the election of representatives in the year 1896 has changed. This – in some cases - threatened with the dissolution of the liberal opposite of the county committee, these facts were seen also at the county assemblies, when such rumours about the "conciliation system" came up.

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In the fourth part of the dissertation we tried to focus on the election of representatives during the dualism, and on the candidates, or rather on the elected representatives in accordance to the role of the county's elite in the political life. First, we introduced the two main partyisms, their characteristics and divergences with some examples, later – in a separate chapter – we shed light upon the behaviour of the electorates during the dualism, and here we also show both the regional differences and characteristics.

Henceforth – in another chapter – we examined the candidates and the elected representatives. Beside the empathy to the different parties we also studied the distribution of their social status, their occupation and their residence in details. Even by examining the behaviour of the electorates, it was clearly visible, that the election of 1884 was of high significance, as it showed us at the first time the different political value relation between the district council of Pincehely and Szakcs, in relation to four other district councils of the county. Because of the exacerbated anti-Semite movement, led by Győző Istóczy, the dominant liberal party lost its interest in the county, this at the same time made the average propertied class of the county underprivileged. Although before this, between 1869 and 1881, on five elections in six district councils, from thirty representatives twenty-three times a liberal member was elected (in twenty times they elected county members of the average propertied class /Dóry, Perczel, Szeniczey, Vizsolyi, Simontsits/).

Related to the same time period, the independence party's candidates (or the former members of the far left wing) came from the circle of the county's average propertied class, of course they had a rather less financial strength and they had less influence (Szluhák, Forster Benő). Beside them more and more noble intellectuals came into sight, like magistrates, or other worker from the administrative sector, but the most of them were lawyers. In connection with the elections of the year 1884 and the new censorship, as from 1887 a high stabilization was visible the within the representatives of the County of Tolna. In practice, four, later five of the the six district councils of the county was ruled by the same person for a long time and during many cycles (in the particular case of László Rátkay it was four out of five or six cycles). There was only one person from the average propertied class, namely Dezső Perczel, who later got the Minister of the Interior. Beside the landowner István Szluha we can also talk about dr. Ernő Kammerer historian and museologist, as well as Vilmos Boda and László Rátkay lawyer. In connection with the long-term stabilization of the representatives of Tolna county, the number of the candidates outside the county suddenly raised. This can be explained with two facts: One of them is, that in the districts with stable mandates, the potentates were not participate in, so they hoped more success apart from the county. Another group of the mandates belonged to the People's Party, the so called "Néppárt". Because of the church-political debates and jurisdictions, this part got further than the usual remuneration based election model. Therefore three of the five nominated candidates of the Néppárt were delegated to the county by the highly honoured central administration office.

Of course these persons had no real connection to the county of Tolna, and – except of one or two candidates – they had no real chance at the elections. The only person who had success, was Győző Pichler, the personal secretary of Ferenc Kossuth, who won the election in 1896 and in 1901 in the district of Kölesd.

The elected representatives and the candidates, who lost the election in the first decades of the dualism, were without exception almost all members of the county's elite (both municipal and

committee members). With the withdrawal of the average propertied class and/or families from the elections during the 1800's, the parliamentary representatives came mostly from the intellectual class. On the other hand dr. Ernő Kammerer, László Rátkay, Vilmos Boda and those average propertied persons, who had a respective position in the past, were nevertheless their social status, also members of the tighter political and operative guidance of county committee, principally they got members of the constant board and the centre board. This is also true in the case of Rátkay and Boda, both of them were members of the opposite independence "Kossuth"-party.

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In the last part of our topic we are introducing the position and the developing work of the elite in connection with the county town Szekszárd, as well as through the institution of the communal virilism. It can be said, that before 1905, 20 virilists were acting on behalf of the representation of large villages – with the difference of one or two persons – among the 30-40 largest tax payers of Szekszárd. In the year 1905 the only 35-40 persons out of 68 virilists took part in the towns much larger representation committee.

The predominant part of the local virilists raised from the town-based classes (intellectuals, civil servants, merchants, craftsmanship and entrepreneurs). In the contemporary structure of the society, the large number of the farming community played a significant role during the developments in the dualism. Due to many impedimental factors, in connection with the town's development, the virilists had less financial power according to many Transdanubian towns, so the development in the life of the town was rather moderate, but the official title "town with properly arranged local council" was due to the virilists. And this is not only because of the local taxes – speaking of the largest tax payers –, but also because of the shares of the whole town. After all, they played a significant role the municipal council, they had a better influence among the elected members, so as their social position was very important, they could form the town's political life in a much effective way, therefore they also played a significant role in the urbanization.

Practically, we can clearly say, that the virilists were of great importance in the life of the town also from other aspects – as a result of being a county town –, integrated with the civil servants, they became the pillars of the towns organisation. Since for the wide number of the farm labourer class, in their culture, and together with the manufacturer's class, they had no real, essential needs – furthermore, for some of them the achievements of the urbanization was a kind of "burden".

Therefore even the protection of the town's title, its organisation and operation was a great achievement, and all this was only possible due to the highest tax payers, with the guidance and active collaboration of the virilists.

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