

Hungarian Elites in the Romanian Parliament during the Interwar Period

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Keywords: *Hungarian elites, Parliament elites, cultural elites, Hungarian Party¹, Hungarian People's Community*

Abstract: *The study of the Hungarian political elites in Romania during the interwar period still remains an area still opened to research. Even on behalf of Romanian historiography, several studies only superficially discuss the Hungarian political elites in Romania, but these are presented very stereotypically, as petrified relics of feudal society. The current thesis, according to which the elite of the Hungarian Party was made up only of barons and counts, and that it was not at all representative for the Romanian Hungarians, not supporting their interests, has become embedded in Romanian historiography and journalism as far back as during the interwar period, and was further emphasized later during the communist period. In spite of the fact that the greater part of the Romanian Hungarian parliamentary elite was comprised of barons and counts, the image is not so unitary as shown by Romanian historiography. The formation of regional political clusters may be observed, with the orientations inside the Hungarian Party (conservative rightist, reformist leftist), the differences between the political views of the old monarchy political group and the youth, the differences between the political strategies of the two orientations, and the differences in respect to the attitude toward Romanian political parties. Such differences occasionally lead to separations from the Hungarian Party (Bernády György, Kós Károly), but these did not threaten the party's position on the political stage. At the same time, Hungarian historiography also didn't strive to complete the picture as when it refers to the interwar period Hungarian political elite in Romania, it almost exclusively refers only to the elites of the Magyar Union and the Hungarian Party. It does not acknowledge, or does not want to acknowledge the individuals who have managed to get into the Parliament in Bucharest with the occasion of the 1919 elections. I hope I have managed to answer some questions, but I am aware of the fact that there are still many other questions waiting to be answered.*

The research of the Hungarian political elites of Romania during the interwar period has been approached by contemporary analyses (Mikó Imre, Ligeti Ernő, Grandpierre Emil, Jakabffy Elemér, Bernády György, Paál Árpád) and journalistic writings, as well as several articles and studies (Bárdi Nándor, György Béla, K. Lengyel Zsolt, Horváth Sz. Ferenc), but in spite of all this, it is a subject which still holds surprises and remains opened to research. This is true especially for the Hungarian elites in the Romanian Parliament during the interwar period. On behalf of Romanian historiography, several articles and studies discuss only superficially the Hungarian parliamentary elites in Romania, but because of the lack of research, these are presented in a very stereotypical way, as remnants of a petrified feudal society (see Ioan Scurtu, Gheorghe Iancu, Virgil

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¹ There is no commonly accepted English name for the Országos Magyar Párt. Bárdi Nándor calls it the National Hungarian Party, while Egrý Gábor calls it the Hungarian Party in Romania but none of them covers the actual meaning of the original name. As such I will use the term "Hungarian Party".