

## ABSTRACTS

### Tamás Dobszay: István Széchenyi's Participation in the National Assembly. Diet Itinerary

Széchenyi's wealth, aristocratic standing and connections with the court, as far-reaching as England, provided him with many avenues to implement his modernisation projects. As a hereditary peer and a member of the House of Lords in the Hungarian Assembly, he chose to use his opportunities and, unlike many of his fellow representatives, diligently attended the sessions unless he was otherwise engaged. The study examines the personal diary of the count, especially the references to his participation in the sessions term by term between 1825 and 1848, as well as the length of his stays at the diet and the reasons for occasional non-attendance. Széchenyi was absent for longer periods of time only at the 1830 and the 1832–36 diets, when he was called away from the assembly to manage important projects of public interest, including transportation development (steamboat transport, flood-relief works, bridge construction), societal and civil development and cultural projects. When he was in attendance at the diet, however, he was very eager to enter political disputes and policy debates and put forward a number of initiatives and proposals which advanced the modernisation of the diet. His political status was difficult to define within the framework of the traditional dualist separation of power and he strove to go beyond the restrictions of the long-standing binary of an absolutistic monarch versus estates in opposition.

Based on his assessment of the French Revolution and following his own elitist liberalism he rejected the idea of mass participation. At the same time, he also realised the new directions of progress and was willing to find his platform according to the criteria of modern parliamentary politics.

### Péter Dominkovits: From County Officials to Diet Representatives. Parallel Family Careers in Sopron County in the Early Modern Period

The two case studies – the Zeke family of Petőháza and the Nagy family of Felsőbük – both come from a long line of landholding nobility occupying official positions in Sopron county where they had originally arrived and settled following different migration patterns. The author uses their example to demonstrate the political foundations of county representation in the early modern period as well

as the next possible career phase besides the offices of national dignitaries, that of the protonotarius. As the relationship between the county nobility and peers gradually changed from *dominus-servitor* to a looser, less well-defined patron-client bond, learning and education as a means of social mobilisation and migration became the common social strategy behind these career paths.

### Gyula Csaba Horváth: The Kinship Network of the Hungarian Elite in Power between the End of the Eighteenth Century and the Hungarian Reform Era in the Early Nineteenth Century

The study examines the kinship network of the highest echelons of the Hungarian elite in the last two decades of the eighteenth century and in the Reform Era until the mid-nineteenth century, that is, the lay dignitaries of real national influence and power, including judges royal, chamberlains (*magister tavarnicorum*), court chancellors, and chief justices (*personalis regiae*). In order to generate comparable and analysable data, the author used a network analysis software to quantify the family relationships connecting the dignitaries of the period. The data was then analysed to reconstruct general tendencies and flag interesting and unusual individual cases.

The study differentiated between newcomers and those who came from the traditional stock of the powerful elite. It reveals that the elite in power had a tightly knit core whose members always came from the latter group. At the end of the eighteenth century, members of this core were somewhat more closely interrelated with one another than those in the Reform Era. In addition, the study also demonstrates that the number of newly established members of the elite was higher than that in the Reform Era.

About half of the newcomers at the end of the eighteenth century were closely related to one another but had loose ties with the aforementioned core group. It is thus justifiable to suggest that they used their family ties already in the process of their upward mobility. The family ties among themselves, however, were not sufficient to establish stronger bonds with the networks of the old elite, which meant that they were unable to integrate into the existing web of power in the long run. At the same time, the rest of the newcomers, both at the end of the eighteenth century and in the Reform Era, entertained closer ties only to the core group coming from the traditional stock. These relationships were often forged after the newcomers' arrival to the scene and they were only related to one another through their shared connections with the core group. From one generation to another, these individuals – those who rose to their elite positions without the help of family ties – were more successful in establishing strong bonds with members of the old elite and eventually managed to establish their families as integral parts of the traditional core.

## Péter Gerhard: Parliamentary Candidates of Budapest in the Early Dualist Era

The study analyses the social background of parliamentary candidates of Pest-Buda (and later, after 1873, Budapest) as well as their integration into the local and national political elite between the 1865 and the 1887 elections at the beginning of the Dualist Era in Hungary. The representatives and candidates under scrutiny are divided into two groups: members of the political elite on a national scale and public figures of local (district or municipal) significance. In this vein, the study examines whether candidates were able to achieve a political career on a national level regardless of their constituency affiliation, or did they remain anchored in the local community.

Based on the candidate profiles, the municipal elections in the early Dualist Era can be divided into two distinct phases. In 1865 and 1869 candidates are more commonly nominated according to the expectations of mainstream politics, that is, according to their stance on the 1867 Compromise. As the establishment began to stabilise, however, other factors emerged. It became increasingly customary, for example, that certain candidates were nominated because of their ability to articulate the interests either of a district or of a professional or economic group. At the same time, the cultural and educational expectations from the candidate remained constant and so did that of their declared loyalty to the interests of the Hungarian nation – be that their participation in the 1848 revolution or identifying with the Hungarian national agenda of the age – and the ability to speak Hungarian. Besides these criteria it was an asset if the candidate came from county nobility (thus indirectly from national politics) or from among Buda/Pest burghers of local prominence: this was the prerequisite of successful election results in nearly all cases. The highest chance to win, however, was in the hands of those pro-government candidates who were members of both the national and the local Budapest political elite, but at the same time did not fail to maintain a strong negotiating power and advocacy on the constituency level.

### János Nagy: “Urg’d by his presence, ev’ry soul is warm’d.” Representatives from Buda at the Diet of 1741

Town representatives played a marginal role in the eighteenth-century history of Hungarian diets. Relevant literature usually notes both their limited leverage and their loyalty to the government in general. The present inquiry probes deeper by studying in detail the activities of the representatives of Buda at the 1741 assembly as recorded in the correspondence between the city council, the representatives themselves, and the town’s agents in Vienna, as well as the diet records kept by the representatives. The main research questions include the demands and

complaints put forward at the diet by the Buda representatives and how successful they were in resolving these during their stay in Pressburg/Pozsony (today Bratislava, Slovakia). Further, the author explores the various methods deployed to assert town interests and demonstrates the representatives' "lobbying" at the diet and beyond. The study reveals that by 1741 the city of Buda – despite the Ottoman rule and the devastation caused by the "Rákóczi uprising" – had fully regained its former privileges and power as (capital) city. The archival sources also shed light on the evolution of bills regarding free royal towns through a closer look at the motivation and political agenda of the towns in the assembly's decision making process. The examination of the decision making mechanism revealed that in the course of the diet proceedings, the representatives of Buda attained a leading position as one of the free royal towns and managed to close the gap with Pressburg and Pest.

### Richárd Sebök: Prosopography of Attending and Non-Attending *Protonotarii* at the National Assemblies Held between 1722 and 1792

An individual's participation in the national diet is generally viewed as an opportunity which gave a momentum to their political or professional career by allowing them to prove their skills, abilities and their loyalty to their sovereign. The study examines whether the *protonotarii* in attendance at the diets held between 1722 and 1792 had a steeper career curve than those who were not present at the assemblies in this period. The study concludes that the data about the career patterns of these officials do not support the prevailing view in scholarship: those *protonotarii* who did not participate in the diets often managed to attain higher positions than the ones in attendance. Their involvement had little or no impact on their career trajectories and thus participation in the national assembly cannot be viewed as a springboard for promotion, which suggests that most *protonotarii*'s advancement in the eighteenth century was determined by the organisational structure of the royal curia.

### Veronika Tóth-Barbalics: "Family Stance" or "Individual Sentiment and Will"? The Participation and Organisation of Aristocratic Families in the Parliament in the Age of Dualism

The study examines the participation level of hereditary peers in the upper house of the Hungarian parliament, based on invitations, attendance, interpellations, named ballots and candidacy. The analysis of the number of invitations shows

that, prior to the 1885 reform of the upper house, it was possible to form a number of populous family blocks within the membership. At the same time, most of the invited members were in non-attendance, so only a few families were represented by larger groups. After the reform in 1885, the reduction of the upper house significantly curtailed the number of families who were able to form powerful blocks in the upper house debates. The analysis of the interpellations revealed that the families represented by more members – invited and in attendance – had always been more active in parliamentary discussions. Besides family affiliation, the analysis of the level of activity must also take into consideration the individual characteristics of the members. For example, before 1885, two thirds of the most active hereditary peers were comites, and as such, they represented the government's side in debates. The reform of the upper house brought about a drastic drop in invitees from Transylvanian and indigena families, but this did not fundamentally change these families' level of activity in the upper house. The analysis of named ballots revealed that family-based political blocks were formed only temporarily, for example, in the 1883–84 and 1894–96 debates of ecclesiastic policy bills or in the 1885 debate about the upper house reform, and they were far from being completely homogeneous. The number and persons of the hereditary peers in the upper house were stable and remained so even after the reform. The families that retained their place in the upper house were not only wealthier but also more active in their mandate commitments. The tendencies observed in the party affiliation of descendants were connected with their families' religious affiliation and the location of their estates. Aristocrats who were members in both houses of the parliament were similarly active in debates. Aristocrats who were passive in both chambers probably assumed their mandate in the parliament in order to promote their career or enjoy some financial benefit.

### Orsolya Völgyesi: County Representatives at the Diet of 1832–36 in the Light of the Secret Service Reports

The study explores police profiles written about county representatives, a source type frequently found in the archives of the Secret Service of the National Assembly which operated in situ at the diets and was led by Leopold Ferstl. Following the adjournment of the assembly sessions, between 1825 and 1840, reports were generated about the participants of four diets. From 1830 onwards the descriptions were becoming increasingly standardised: the individual's age, marital status, position and religious affiliation were followed by his financial situation, intellectual capacity, qualifications, personal ambitions, and political stance.

These documents, written from a governmental perspective, may shed light on previously unexplored aspects in the study of the composition, political ori-

entation, and individual life strategies of county representatives. The present study focuses on the heroes of the government's narratives of the time, those country legates who stood by the government's policies and served the royal interests at the diet of 1832–36. They were selected as the subjects of the study because, while ample research has been conducted on the birth of the liberal opposition and its protagonists, the other side of the benches has attracted little scholarly interest to date. In order to see the full picture, however, it is essential to gain insight into the careers of those representatives who unequivocally sided the government's policies in the second half of the 1830s and chose to leave elected county office behind to serve as royal appointees even if they had formerly held opposing views. The first step in charting this process is to probe this unique source type for the trajectory and change of office of those county representatives – referred to as “well disposed” in the secret service documents of the 1832–36 diet – who subsequently attained high ranking positions in a very short time.