

**THE LEAGUE OF EXTRA AND ORDINARY GENTLEMEN.
WEALTH-WORTHY MEMBERS AND INTRICATELY
ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES
IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF KOLOZSVÁR/CLUJ
FROM 1890 TO 1918***

Szilárd Ferenczi**

Abstract: *In the dualist period, between 1867 and 1918 the once rather medium-sized and mediocre town of Kolozsvár/Cluj consistently transformed into a city of sixty thousand inhabitants, housing a politically active bourgeoisie, wealthy industrialists and bankers, a chunky society of craftsmen, traders and laborers, being one of the three university centers, having the second largest press industry and – by the time the first world war entered its final year – hosting the biggest movie studio in the country. Progress was slow in the beginning but speeded up around 1890 due to a nationwide economic consolidation, and continued to transform not only the city's urban aspect, but the attitude in which the local administration implemented modern urban policy concepts. The study at hand will make an attempt on presenting not the means by which this progress was possible, but rather under what authority, namely the city's leadership and management structure, employing on law decrees, on city regulations, on written documents issued by the administration and on the local press of the period.*

Keywords: local government, Virilism, elections, urban politics

Shortly after the 1867 Compromise between Austria and Hungary – the latter having conjugated Transylvania only a few months earlier – the freshly elected Hungarian parliament along with the newly appointed government began the excruciating work of reforming the country's administration – among many other express matters. The debates took three years, with heavy clashes between the favorers of municipalism and the devotees of centralism. The first laws which were to reshape Hungary's inner borders and administrative structure – and which were to last much in their original form late until 1945 – were passed in 1870, taking effect two years later.

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** PhD student, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca; szilard.ferenczi@gmail.com

The General Assembly

Next to the old and newly established counties, Statute nr. XLII of 1870 appointed the formerly free royal cities and some smaller towns – a total of 66 – the rank of counties, so they became municipalities,¹ which constituted in a wider cue of self-government and a say in state affairs. Kolozsvár/Cluj was among these towns, housing a civilian population of 26 362.² The law mandated – among other things – that in the case of municipalities the General Assembly was to hold no less than 48 and no more than 400 members, one member for 250 inhabitants.³ Accordingly the General Assembly of Kolozsvár was first gathered in a number of 100 in 1872, but that number quickly changed to 106 the year after, and by 1881 it rose to 112 in conformance to the by now 29 923 civilians living inside city limits.⁴ This number however wasn't raised further in spite the fact that the population reached roughly 60 000 by 1910.⁵

The legislative branch in the local government of Kolozsvár/Cluj, the General Assembly, was a body of 112 men, half of whom were the highest taxpayers in the city, the other half being elected according to parliamentary election rules for a six year mandate.⁶ Alongside the rich and the trusted, local political power consisted of a further number of 21 town officials, partly elected by the General Assembly for six years of office⁷ (the mayor, four councilors, the chief engineer, the chief treasurer, the chancery notary, the chief notary, three sub notaries, the solicitor, the public trustee) and partly appointed by the Lord Lieutenant for life⁸ (the chief of police – beginning with 1886 –, the chief doctor, the chief and sub controller, the archivist, two chancery lawyers).⁹ Evidently these men emerged from a diversity of backgrounds, social status and wealth, having accordingly a variety of interests.

¹ Magyar Törvénytár, 1870. évi XLII. törvénycikk *A köztörvényhatóságok rendezéséről*, § 1 and 88. at www.1000ev.hu accessed on April 7th 2016 (website and last access date are consistent throughout the paper for all following Magyar Törvénytár references, except footnote no. 13).

² *Sz. kir. Kolozsvár város törvényhatósági szabályrendelete. Az 1870-es évi XLII. országos törvénycikk alapján*, Kolozsvár, Gámán János nyomdája, 1873, p. 99.

³ Magyar Törvénytár, 1870. évi XLII. törvénycikk *A köztörvényhatóságok rendezéséről*, § 21.

⁴ *A Magyar Korona Országában az 1881. év elején végrehajtott népszámlálás eredményei*, I. kötet, Budapest, Athenaeum R. Társulat, 1882, p. 145.

⁵ To be more exact 58 481 civilians and 2 327 military, see *A Magyar Szent Korona Országainak 1910. évi Népszámlálása. Első rész: A népesség fő adatai* (=Magyar Statisztikai Közlemények, Új sorozat, 42. kötet), Budapest, 1912, p. 422.

⁶ *Kolozsvár szab. kir. város törvényhatóságának szervezeti és ügyviteli szabályrendelete (az 1886 XXI. és XXII. törvény alapján)*, Kolozsvár, Ormós Ferenc nyomdája, 1888, p. 4.

⁷ polgármester, tanácsnok, főmérnök, főpénztárnok, árvaszéki jegyző, főjegyző, aljegyző, tisztii ügyész, közgyám

⁸ rendőrfőkapitány, főorvos, fő- és alszámvevő, levéltárnok, árvaszéki ülnök

⁹ Magyar Törvénytár, 1870. évi XLII. törvénycikk *A köztörvényhatóságok rendezéséről*, § 79 and 80.

Presided over by the Lord Lieutenant or – in case of obstacles – by the mayor, the General Assembly held regular meetings once a month and extraordinary gatherings on special occasions (such as national holidays, national grief related incidents and local incidents which required urgent resolve). Meetings during which the assembly dealt with budget estimates or debated public utility contracts usually lasted over several days.

A rather key figure in the municipal administration was the Lord Lieutenant.¹⁰ Appointed by the monarch at the recommendation of the government, he acted as its local executive agent, implementing legal regulations concerning self-government. Beside the General Assembly he also presided over the city's administrative committee, one of the two most important self-government authorities (the other being the city council lead by the mayor). The chairmen of other committees, panels and boards were either the mayor, or men appointed by the Lord Lieutenant, or men elected by the committees themselves.

Statute nr. XXI of 1886 overruled Statute nr. XLII of 1870, and left only 24 municipalities in the country – Kolozsvár/Cluj being one of them¹¹ – and strengthened the Lord Lieutenants' authority, who from now on was to hold a disciplinary board twice a year, punishing or firing those civil servants, clerks or bureaucrats who didn't do their job in a satisfactory manner, and was also to appoint from now on the chief of police, thus ceasing municipality's control over its police force.¹² The law also introduced the government's nullifying right to municipalities' objection to a controversial decree issued by the government, thus attenuating the prior existing political power of local authorities.¹³

The mayor,¹⁴ four councilors (deputy mayors), and the other senior officials were elected for a six year term by simple majority in the General Assembly. Statute I of 1883, the law on classification of civil servants required the office holder to be a legal or a political science graduate,¹⁵ therefore the position was rather administrative than political. The mayor served as head of the city council, which

¹⁰ Lord Lieutenants in Kolozsvár/Cluj between 1890 and 1918: count Ákos Bély (1888–1905), count László Teleki (1905–1906), count Miklós Bánffy (190–1910), count Kálmán Esterházy (1910–1913), count Ödön Bethlen (1913–1917), dr. József Papp (1917–1918).

¹¹ Magyar Törvénytár, 1886. évi XXI. törvénycikk *A törvényhatóságokról*, § 1.

¹² *Ibidem*, § 57.

¹³ *Ibidem*, § 10. See also Gábor Breinich, *A magyar városok szövetezése a dualizmus korában*, in „Tanulmányok Budapest múltjából”, XXV, 1996, p. 86.

¹⁴ Mayors of Kolozsvár/Cluj between 1890 and 1918: Géza Albach (1886–1898), Géza Szvacsina (1898–1913), Gusztáv Haller (1913–1919).

¹⁵ Magyar Törvénytár, 1883. évi I. törvénycikk *A köztisztviselők minősítéséről*, § 3. www.1000ev.hu accessed on October 25th 2016.

prepared and presented cases to the General Assembly, and was also responsible for financial and property management.¹⁶

The Virilists

An intriguing new aspect of the administration was the introduction of the heavily controversial phenomena of Virilism, according to which half the members of the General Assembly of counties, municipalities and parishes were non-elected and consisted of the highest taxpayers, whom succession was renewed at the end of each year.¹⁷ Under these regulations intellectuals (teachers and professors, members of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, magazine and newspaper editors, members of clergy, members of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, warranted scientists, lawyers, doctors, pharmacists, engineers, surgeons, miners, foresters and land-stewards) enjoyed a tax privilege, so the tax they paid was reckoned twofold. Taxes taken into calculation were the property tax (land or/and house) and the personal income tax.¹⁸

According to some Hungarian historiographers Virilism, this rather anti-democratic regulation, had in fact two hidden purposes: on one hand granted city hall access for the supposedly government friendly wealthy elements and upper middle class intellectuals, thus leaning power and influence over local governments in favor of the philo-Compromise liberal forces in a consistent manner, on the other hand guaranteed Hungarian supremacy in municipal leadership, preventing the accidental takeover of power by members of any nationality with higher numbers and more voters, especially in Transylvania and Northern Hungary.¹⁹ Nevertheless, Virilism had a well-defined aim also, namely to confer political power to independent decision making, impartial intellectuals who understood their times, so the financial interest-driven old- and new-moneymen should meet their liberal opposition. It wasn't the case nationwide, the high taxpayers' league in most of municipalities was in shortage of the intellectual element by high percentages, or if not, they had a unilateral representation of one or two branches (mostly lawyers, or mostly health providers, or mostly engineers, or two of these in approximately same numbers). For example, in the case of Marosvásárhely/Târgu Mureş, where there were 26 highest taxpayers entering City Hall in 1910, 18 of these were intellectuals with degrees, of whom the lawyers' number is highest: 5, second largest being the

¹⁶ *Kolozsvár szab. kir. város törvényhatóságának szervezeti és ügyviteli szabályrendelete (az 1886 XXI. és XXII. törvény alapján)*, Kolozsvár, Ormós Ferenc nyomdája, 1888, p. 58–72.

¹⁷ Magyar Törvénytár, 1870. évi XLII. törvénycikk *A köztörvényhatóságok rendezéséről*, § 19. and the 1871. évi XVIII. törvénycikk *A községek rendezéséről* § 34.

¹⁸ Magyar Törvénytár, 1870. évi XLII. törvénycikk *A köztörvényhatóságok rendezéséről*, § 23.

¹⁹ Béla Sarlós, *Közigazgatás és hatalompolitika a dualizmus rendszerében*, Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1976, p. 81–82.

health providers: 3. Or in case of Szatmárnémeti/Satu Mare, the highest taxpayers' number is 39, of which 27 intellectuals, among whom a staggering 18 are lawyers.²⁰

Kolozsvár/Cluj presented a countrywide unique picture in terms of virilism. Beginning with 1872 it hosted the second university in the country, along with some of the most important administrative offices of the region, which fact had a considerable effect upon the boost in population. University professors, lawyers, doctors, pharmacists settled, banks and other financial institutions were established, clinics, libraries, faculty buildings, research facilities, public buildings were a new necessity, so the number of architects rose too. If until 1890 the majority of the highest taxpayers in the General Assembly were essentially property-rich nobles, lawyers, factory owners, traders and hotel runners, by the turn of the century every other high taxpayer was a teacher or a state clerk (in office or retired). Inside the category the high percentage of wealthy lawyers was eclipsed by the rise in numbers of well-paid university professors, while the proportion of other intellectuals stayed very much the same, this being the sign of a highly differentiated and numerous intelligentsia in the city.²¹ Shortly before and during world war one the proportion of intellectuals among the highest taxpayers was around 70% (see tabling nr. 1).

The lists of highest taxpayers effective for the next year was drawn up at the end of every year by the Certifying Board elected by the General Assembly for a one year mandate, with a chairman appointed by the Lord Lieutenant.²² The lists then were posted on a panel for everyone to see, with a two week deadline for raising objections. Upon considering the eventual objections the Certifying Board rectified the order of succession, eliminated those who didn't accept the nomination or accepted prior elsewhere (at county level), then presented the finalized list to the General Assembly meeting, including it in the meeting records. Meeting records eventually ended up on microfilm and are kept at the Cluj county branch of the Romanian National Archives. Unfortunately there are some meeting records which are lacking entirely (1891, 1903, 1909, 1915 and 1916) and there are some meeting records which don't hold the list (1890).

Existing lists contain the names of the highest taxpayers in descending order, their occupation or tax motive, their address, the tax amount, and finally the grounds for multiplying (in case of intellectuals). However precise these listings are, social structure-driven research is presented with a dilemma, namely the property owner's category, which wasn't an occupation, but in fact accounted for a process of enrichment. The listing favored the higher property tax over lower income tax, and

²⁰ *Magyarország városainak háztartása az 1910. évben* (=Magyar Statisztikai Közlemények, Új sorozat, 58. kötet), Budapest, 1916, p. 9.

²¹ Szilárd Ferenczi, *Adatok a kolozsvári virilizmus történetéből (1872–1917)*, in „Erdélyi Múzeum” LXXII, 2010, 1-2, p. 20–21.

²² *Kolozsvár szab. kir. város törvényhatóságának szervezeti és ügyviteli szabályrendelete (az 1886 XXI. és XXII. törvény alapján)*, Kolozsvár, Ormós Ferenc nyomdája, 1888, p. 38.

on social interconnections level conferred prestige capital. Property owners emerging in the 1890–1918 period could have come from any of the occupation categories, owning a private or tenement-house in the city built from accumulated wealth.

Tabling 1. Virilists of Kolozsvár/Cluj, 1890–1918 period, occupations

1890–1902											
Occupations	1890	1893	1894	1895	1896	1897	1898	1899	1900	1901	1902
writer, scientist, artist	1	2	2							1	
teacher, professor	4	3	5	7	4	6	4	7	9	11	10
clergy	1	3	3	2	3	3	3	4	3	2	2
lawyer	1	2	5	7	5	9	8	7	7	7	6
doctor, pharmacist	4	5	3	4	4	1	2	1	1	2	
engineer, architect	1	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	3
city clerk	1	1	1	1	4	2	2	1	1		
state official ²³	8	7	7	10	5	8	7	10	8	6	5
intellectuals, clerks	21	25	29	34	27	31	28	32	31	31	26
property owners	10	9	7	7	12	9	6	6	7	5	9
private enterprise	2	3	1	2	3	1	6	2	3	3	3
trade	11	8	9	5	7	3	4	5	5	8	9
crafts	5	6	6	4	5	6	5	5	4	4	5
hospitality (hotels, bars)	4	2	1	2		2	3	3	2	1	1
industry	2	2	2	1	2	4	2	2	2	2	2
bank and insurance	1	1	1	1			2	1	2	2	1
active economy actors	25	22	20	15	17	16	22	18	18	20	21
total	56	56	56	56	56	56	56	56	56	56	56

²³ Former and actual Members of Parliament, railway employees, tobacco industry employees, employees of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, employees of state finance, officials in the judiciary system, etc.

1903–1918												
Occupations	1903	1905	1906	1907	1908	1909	1911	1912	1913	1914	1915	1918
writer, scientist, artist												
teacher, professor	9	19	17	18	21	24	21	20	21	19	18	15
clergy	2	2	1	3	2	2	3	2	3	3	3	3
lawyer	5	3	2	2	2	3	3	5	5	5	5	2
doctor, pharmacist			2	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	5	4
engineer, architect	3		1	2	2	2	2	4	3	2	2	2
city clerk												
state official	5	7	8	8	9	7	5	6	5	4	5	8
intellectuals, clerks	24	31	31	37	39	41	37	40	40	37	38	34
property owners	14	17	16	8	7	8	4	6	6	8	5	5
private enterprise	2						2	1		1	2	
trade	10	5	5	6	3	3	5	3	5	4	4	8
crafts	3				2	1	3	1	2	1	2	3
hospitality (hotels, bars)	1		1		2	1	2	1	1			
industry	1	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	1	3	3	3
bank and insurance	1			2			1	2	1	2	2	3
active economy actors	18	8	9	11	10	7	15	10	10	11	13	17
total	56	56	56	56	56	56	56	56	56	56	56	56

Let's take for example the categories in 1905 (on the list from the end of the year 1904). One can instantly observe, that the property owners' category is highest in numbers of all years presented. One can also observe instantly, that some of the categories are lacking personnel entirely. If you turn to the actual list and compare it to others, you find the 17 men listed as property owners with following occupations: Gábor Nagy (former restaurant owner, hospitality), Miklós Trandafir (formerly state finance employee – state official), Lajos Rucska (unknown, always a property owner), Gergely Donogán (listed with economic school degree, twofold reckoned tax), Károly Reményik (architect), János Rucska (lawyer), Sámuel Tordai (bar-owner – hospitality), Dezső Ferenczy (listed with economic school degree, twofold reckoned tax), Lajos Szepessy (unknown, always a property owner), Bálint Betegh (listed with a pharmacist degree, twofold reckoned tax), László Kőváry (historian, statistician, bank manager, member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, twofold reckoned tax), János Rizó (listed with a pharmacist degree, twofold reckoned tax),

Antal Vikol (unknown, always a property owner), Lajos Góth, dr. (gynecologist), Sándor Babos (watchmaker, jeweller – crafts), Mihály Salamon (unknown, always a property owner), Kálmán Mattai (glove manufacturer – industry).²⁴ The property owner's category of 1905 is in fact a compound of men originating mostly in occupational categories (of whom 9 intellectuals, and 4 active economical actors), and just 4 who couldn't be linked to other categories. On headcount reorganization, from a total of 56 high taxpayers we have now 40 intellectuals (71,4%), 4 property owners (7,1%) and 12 active economic actors (24,4%).

The Representatives

The other half of the general assembly, 56 in numbers, was elected according to parliamentary election rules for a six year mandate, beginning its course in 1872 in a peculiar but nonetheless democratic manner. To ensure personnel change, half of the first elected shift (1/4 of the entire General Assembly) stepped down by coin toss after three years in 1875, and new elections were held, but with the former staff re-electable. After another three years it was time for the remaining half to step down, but again, they were re-electable too. Every mandate lasted six years, but after three years the other half of representative body was up for reelection. When somebody died or stepped down, his mandate was renewed in the first following election, even if it wasn't its time, and it was specified during the campaign, that it is a shorter mandate.

Between 1888 and 1918 the town held ten such elections, each time in four electoral districts, and each time renewing the classical 28 mandates (7 in each district) plus those free due to death or resignation. According to law each of the four electoral districts had to consist of no less than 200 and no more than 600 electors.²⁵ Having had a boost in population (from roughly 30 000 in 1881 to almost 60 000 in 1910) these numbers were quickly overrun by the electorate of Kolozsvár, and by 1910 and by law the city had earned the right to assert not 112 members in the General Assembly, but 240. However, a curious thing happened. Their continuous plea towards the Ministry of Internal Affairs for changing the headcount of the General Assembly, and reorganize the districts was first declined in 1892 (their recommendation was 140 men in the General Assembly and 5 electoral districts),²⁶ then in 1902²⁷ (8 electoral districts) and finally in 1912²⁸ (General Assembly: 240,

²⁴ Romanian National Archives, Cluj county branch, Collection: *Cluj-Napoca Mayor's Office, General Assembly meeting records*, microfilm no. 14-1-85-179, December 20th 1904.

²⁵ Magyar Törvénytár, 1886. évi XXI. törvénycikk *A törvényhatóságokról*, § 25.

²⁶ Romanian National Archives, Cluj county branch, Collection: *Cluj-Napoca Mayor's Office, General Assembly meeting records*, microfilm no. 14-1-85-173, May 27th 1892.

²⁷ Idem, microfilm no. 14-1-85-178, December 25th 1902.

²⁸ Idem, microfilm no. 14-1-85-184, January 22nd 1912.

electoral districts: 10, with slightly less than 600 voters each), so they had no choice but to continue in these boundaries up until 1918.

Statute nr. XXI of 1886 decreed the electable's (fit for public office) profile in counties and municipalities as follows: literacy-proven 24 year old Hungarian citizen male, under no guardianship, who for at least two years lived and paid taxes in the municipality, held financial or intellectual essentials which made him eligible to vote in the parliamentary electoral system and wasn't under penal or bankruptcy investigation.²⁹ Renewing the voting rights bill of 1848, Statute nr. XXXIII of 1874 decreed the profile of the elector, somewhat similarly to the aforementioned: 20 year old Hungarian citizen male, under no guardianship, who held financial or intellectual essentials which made him eligible to vote in the parliamentary electoral system, or had a right to vote on the old law (possessed voting rights between 1848 and 1872).³⁰ The law also specified the amount of property and income census which made the electorate eligible, and conferred automatic voting rights to intellectuals (much in the same manner as in case of intellectuals with twofold reckoned taxes among virilists).

Traditionally the elections in Kolozsvár/Cluj were held in the same buildings over the years, and there was one in every district. In the first, voters gathered at the Redout on Belmonostor/Unió street (today the Transylvanian Museum of Ethnography on Memorandumului street), in the second at the Evangelical-Lutheran school on Belmagyar/Kossuth Lajos street (1989 December 21st Boulevard), in the third at the City Hall on Belközép/Deák Ferenc street (Eroilor Boulevard) and in the fourth at a building which doesn't exist anymore, the City Fencing Club on the Eastern corner of Széchenyi (Mihai Viteazul) Square. Local election rules and procedures are a puzzle of information gathered from several accounts on the course of the elections over many years in the local press. Elections were usually held on a Sunday, from 9 o'clock in the morning until 4 in the afternoon, or if the voters were too many, sometimes deep in the evening hours. Votes were cast in secret, the ballots put in a sealed envelope and thrown in the box, a process supervised by an electoral panel, in which each party delegated one or more members. Voters could choose either to select an entire party list, or vote for individuals from as many lists they saw fit (by underlining or encircling the names, or the other way around, by striking through or erasing names), furthermore, it was also perfectly legal to cast an entirely handwritten ballot with names of their own choosing. If the selected or compiled list of individuals on the ballot was higher than mandates in the district, the ballot was nullified. A valid ballot could contain an equal or lesser number of individuals than mandates, even with just one name. Individual, non-affiliated candidates were many,

²⁹ Magyar Törvénytár, 1886. évi XXI. törvénycikk *A törvényhatóságokról*, § 24.

³⁰ Magyar Törvénytár, 1874. évi XXXIII. törvénycikk *Az 1848:V. törvénycikk és az erdélyi II. törvénycikk módosításáról és kiegészítéséről*, § 1 and 2.

but with little chances of winning. Parties usually nominated the same amount of candidates as many mandates were available, even the districts themselves had lists, set up in principle by non-affiliated members of the society over many nightly gatherings, even by holding a narrow bounded primary election before announcing the final lists, usually within the week prior to election date. All lists were handed over to the voters at registration, or on voting site.³¹

Up until the elections of 1894 there were only two political forces in the city: the local affiliation to the parliamentary majority-holder Liberal Party and those of the ever-oppositional Party for Independence. Accordingly, the elections passed off in relative silence, with prior pacts and agreements between these two, on several occasions running the same candidates, mostly holders of former mandates (virilist or elected), stepping up on the ever-winning political capital of public trust. But beginning with 1894 almost every election brought a new contender force, even if it was one that didn't hold a chance in changing the paradigm. First, in opposition to the highest political capital-holder Liberal Party some members from the Party for Independence established the Party of Citizens, but their electorate consisted of the same voters that voted traditionally for its big sister.³² Also in 1894 the numerous Israelite community in the fourth district – after a failed attempt to run their candidate on the Liberal Party list – boycotted the elections by not voting on anybody else but their candidate (who thus entered City Hall with a three year mandate).³³

In 1897 it was the Syndicate of Artisans and the mailmen who stepped forward in an organized matter and tried to enter a small amount of candidates, but failed.³⁴ 1901 was the year in which no other organization took a swing at the elections, but after a week some of the disillusioned members of society formed an affiliate to the Democratic Party first organized by Vilmos Vázsonyi in Budapest.³⁵ Although a great political power in the capital, its branches throughout the country did nothing more than vegetate.³⁶ But three years later the elections saw a smaller storm in terms of new party candidates. The Kossuth Party entered in coalition with the Ugron Party (both Party for Independence-affiliates, with countrywide support), the New Party (organized by Baron Dezső Bánffy) entered elections also, and it was time for the

³¹ „Kolozsvár”, V, 1891, December 24th; Idem, December 26th; „Ellenzék”, XIV, 1894, December 24th; „Kolozsvár”, VIII, 1894, December 31st; Idem, XI, 1897, December 22nd; „Ujság”, III, 1903. December 30th; „Magyar Polgár”, XXVI, 1903. December 28th; „Ellenzék”, XXIX, 1909, December 6th; „Ujság”, IX, 1909, December 7th; „Kolozsvári Hírlap”, XIV, 1913, January 9th.

³² „Kolozsvár”, VIII, 1894, December 28th.

³³ Idem, December 31st.

³⁴ „Ellenzék”, XVIII, 1897, December 30th.

³⁵ „Magyar Polgár”, XXIV, 1901, January 14th.

³⁶ András Sipos, *Várospolitikai és városigazgatás Budapesten 1890–1914*, Budapest, Budapest Főváros Levéltára, 1996, p. 58.

“socialists” (small bourgeoisie) to try out their candidates, but with no chance whatsoever.³⁷

The years 1905–1906 brought a political crisis upon the country; the Liberal Party lost the elections to the Party for Independence and its affiliates, so the local small bourgeoisie saw an opportunity to gain seats in City Hall. The Liberal party was practically finished, and the Party for Independence couldn't channel its forces, so 11 “new men”, farmers, craftsmen and traders entered City Hall in the third and fourth district.³⁸ Three years later, in the 1909 elections, the districts' decided to nominate in high numbers candidates from the small bourgeoisie, and deliberately left out three of the most prominent names in city politics: István Kecskeméthy, Sándor Tutsek – both Members of Parliament in Party Justh (philo-independence) colors and István Apáthy, a scientist and university professor of zoology, the most influential voice in the local branch of the Party for Independence. The first two lost the election, Apáthy won on Party for Independence list,³⁹ but this year's elections clearly stated that a change is coming. By the 1913 elections the Party for Independence's former power was reinstated nationwide, its only forceful opponents locally could have been the candidates of the Traders' Hall or of the Liberal Party's successor, the National Labor Party, but their opposition didn't consist, so the Party for Independence candidates won City Hall in sweeping majority.⁴⁰ In 1915, it was time for only refilling the numbers (elections were put off after the war nationwide by law⁴¹) of those deceased and resigned, so this year's elections for 7 mandates were won by those 7 candidates (five from the Party for Independence and two from the National Labor Party) who ran in Party colors.⁴²

If before the political crises of the year 1905–1906 the local elections in Kolozsvár/Cluj were a soft battleground for the Liberal Party and the Party for Independence, with candidates arising mostly from the upper middle class, beginning with 1906 there was a slight change in favor of the lower middle class members, the Social Democrats, mostly farmers, craftsmen and merchants (see tabling nr. 2).

³⁷ „Ujság”, III, 1903, December 29th.

³⁸ „Előre”, I, 1907, January 1st.

³⁹ „Ujság”, IX, 1909, December 7th.

⁴⁰ Idem, XIII, 1913, January 7th.

⁴¹ Magyar Törvénytár, 1915. évi VI. törvénycikk *A törvényhatósági választói jogról*, § 2.

⁴² „Ujság”, XV, 1915, December 19th.

Tabling nr. 2. Elected representatives of Kolozsvár/Cluj, 1888–1918 period, occupations

Occupations	1888	1891	1894	1897	1900 /01	1903	1906	1909	1912 /13	1915
writer, scientist, artist			2	1	3	1	1	1		
teacher, professor	6	4	5	3	5	4	3	1	5	1
clergy	2	1	1	2			1	1	1	
lawyer	6	4	5	8	3	8	1	3	1	1
doctor, pharmacist		5	2	1		1	1	3	2	
engineer, architect	1	5	3	1	3	2	2	2	2	
private sector clerk			1				1			
city clerk	2							1		
state official	4	2	2	1	4	3	2	1	1	1
intellectuals, clerks	21	21	21	17	18	19	12	12	12	3
farmer	2	3	1	2	4	4	4	3	8	1
trade			2		1	3	6	4	4	1
craft	4	5	4	5	1	3	3	4	4	2
hospitality (hotel, bar)	1	1		1				1		
industry		1	1	2	1			1	1	
bank, insurance			1		3		3	2	2	
active economy actors	7	10	9	10	10	10	16	16	19	4
total	28	31	29	28	28	29	28	28	31	7

From 1906 onwards the high taxpayers found themselves in the same league with more radical and politically inexperienced low class representatives. This fragile but constant power shift could have secured for a political equilibrium in the general assembly, but failed due to its low percentage, however it indicates a modernization of the political process which was specific for the entire country.