

The Aster Revolution in Hungary, the Inner Frontiers, and the Old and New Elites in Transylvania

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Abstract

The end of the First World War brought great changes in the territory of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire. The disintegration of the Empire brought along radical social and political changes. This was especially true to the areas allocated to neighbouring countries after the end of the War. Communities living in these newly allocated areas and therefore in new states and altered circumstances had to reorganize themselves, while at the same time there was also a complete change of the elites in progress. Reorganization started already in the autumn of 1918. The lost war, the ongoing Aster Revolution, the soldiers returning home, the spontaneous popular movements, the difficulties in organizing public services, the increased crime rate created for the authorities situations they could not cope with. The new local national councils and militias attempted to deal as much as they could with the tasks the former authorities handled and to maintain public safety.

Yet, in Transylvania national councils and militias were formed according to each nationality and they also became the means for strengthening the national feeling. Romanians of Transylvania attempted to take over the power through the national councils. This activity was coordinated after December 1, 1918 by the High National Romanian Council, then the Romanian army occupied the Transylvanian territories and a complete change of elites took place. In this new situation Hungarians of Romania had to form a real community out of the "community by necessity" they had been, while the Saxons wished to save the age-old traditions of their autonomy. In the paper hereby I present the initiatives, techniques and conflicts of community building in the

critical period of the transition (1918-1919) in Transylvania.

Keywords: Transylvania, Aster Revolution, frontiers, elite change, community building, new ideas