

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN NOVEMBER 1919 IN HISTORICAL MARAMUREȘ

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Motto:“Together we expect all officials to treat the people so that they could see and feel that they are under paternal and not foreign rule. Not everyone can have extensive legal knowledge, but they can have a sense of justice... This is the only way to build Greater Romania”¹.

Abstract. From the right bank of the Tisa River (today, Ukraine), with credentials, meaning with the right to vote on behalf of the population of the entire Historical Maramureș, five representatives were part of the delegation of Maramureș residents for the Great National Assembly from Alba-Iulia, December 1st, 1918: Ilie Filip, Mihai Dan, Ioan Bîlțiu-Dăncuș, Florentin Bîlțiu-Dăncuș and priest Ioan Doroș. The parliamentary elections of November 1919, organized throughout Greater Romania, determined the distribution of nine electoral constituencies in the former Maramureș county, corresponding to nine future deputies and, then, four electoral constituencies for future senators, surrounding the cities on both banks of the Tisa River. Maramureș was integrated into the new state of Greater Romania as it existed throughout the Middle Ages and the Modern Era as an administrative unit, established over time, in the natural citadel formed by the mountains and the Tisariver, creating its own metabolism of evolution. Both ethnic Ukrainians and some Hungarians embraced the idea of union with Romania primarily to protect themselves from the prospect of Bolshevization.

Keywords: Maramureș Voivodship (Historical), Kingdom of Romania, December 1st, 1918, parliamentary elections, Trianon Peace Treaty (June 4th, 1920)

As it is known, one of the truisms most often invoked by researchers is that history is the flame of the past in the hand of the present that illuminates the future. However, there are some exceptions.

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Since December 2nd, 1918 and until April 4th, 1920, the Governing Council of Sibiu carried out its activity as a temporary government for Transylvania. On January 25th, 1919, this legal forum decreed the administrative reorganization of the intra-Carpathian territories united with the Kingdom of Romania. Therefore, 23 counties are organized, each of them appointed with its own prefect. To those 23 prefects, three more will be added to the mayors of the cities of Cluj, Arad and Sibiu, considered as main cities.

Things seemed to follow their natural course here in Maramureș, in the entire Maramureș, that is, on both sides of the Tisa River. The installment of the first Romanian prefect, as a gesture of normalcy, in the person of Vasile Chiroiu, took place without any incidents, in Sighet, the county-seat. The long-awaited event is described in detail in the "Sfatul" newspaper, the official of the Maramureș County Romanian National Council: "In the evening of April 27th (1919-n.n.) at 8 p.m. Mr. Prefect named by the Governing Council, dr. Vasile Chiroiu, arrived accompanied by Dr. Teodor Mihali, prefect of Solnoc-Dobâca. Mr. General Olteanu, in the company of the president of the Romanian National Council-Dr. Vasile Kindriș were waiting for them at the station. On April 28th, at 11 a.m. the extraordinary meeting of the executive committee of the Council was convened in the Council Hall where all the Romanian prominent figures from Sighet and around gathered and where Mr. Prefect presented himself accompanied by Mr. Prefect Dr. T. Mihali. From here they all went together to the county house to take over the office.

The former commissioner Mr. Zombory declares that the presence of the new prefect means force majeure, to which he yields and hands over the office. After this, our tricolor flag is placed on the edifice of the county house, which means taking possession - and all the lords and peasants present gather in the Council room, where Mr. Dr. V. Kindriș opens the meeting. After that, Mr. Dr. T. Mihali emphasizes in beautiful terms the significance of the day and the important situation of Maramureș in Romania. Then, he reads the act of appointment of the prefect aloud, asking him to take the oath. Mr. prefect swears allegiance to His Majesty the King of Romania in a sonorous voice. Mr. prefect starts his speech addressed to those present emphasizing that he came as a sign of democracy and nationalism and asks for the help of the intelligentsia of Mar.[amureș]. to the great work that awaits us in the future"².

Also, this cardinal moment, of the fracturing of a world, of a history, even, is dryly, lapidary, recorded in an address of the Maramureș Financial Directorate, Accounting Service no. 536/1919³: "The takeover of the empire happened on May 1stBC." (1919 - n.n.)

At that historical moment, Maramureș County was organized into ten regions (six on the left bank of the Tisa and four on the right bank of this river). All these administrative structures were managed from Sighet, and to solve all the other (issues), the competent staff from the county also resorted to loans from Banca Albina in Sibiu; financial operations were also guaranteed by the Governing Council⁴.

The effective division of the entire Maramureș County into electoral constituencies is published with a view to the elections of the nine deputies in the Official Gazette no. 54 of the Governing Council, from September 13th, 1919. For the

elections of November 1919, the ten regions of the county were reconfigured into nine electoral constituencies, as follows:

"XIII.

Maramurăș County.

1. Constituency: Vișău.

It consists of the communes of the secretariats of Vișăul-de-sus, Vișăul-de-jos, Borșa, Moiseni and Leordina of Vișău region.

2. Constituency: Dragomirești.

Made of:

a) the communes of Dragomirești, Săcel, Săliște-de-sus, Cuhea, Jod, Rozavlia and Șieu secretariats of Valea region.

3. Constituency: Rahău.

Made of:

a) the communes of Tisa Valley and

b) communes of Crăciunelul-de-jos, Apșa-de-sus, (without Apșa-de-Mijloc) secretariats of Sighet region

4. Constituency: Sighet

Made of:

a) the city of Sighetul-Marmatiei and

b) communes of the secretariats of Handal, Saplonța, Apșa-de-jos, Slatina, Sărăsău and Apșa-de-Mijloc (without Apșa-de-sus) of Sighet region

5. Constituency: Bârsana

Made of:

a) communes of the secretariats of Bârsana, Călinești, Oncești of Sugătag region;

b) the communes of the secretariats of Glod, Strâmtura of Valea-Izei region and

c) the communes of Petrova and Poenele sub-munte secretariats of Vișău region.

6. Constituency: Sugătag

Made of:

a) communes of Ocna-Șugătag, Budești, Deșești, Hărnicești, Giulești and Berbești secretariats of Șugătag region and

b) the communes of Rona-de-sus secretariat of Sighet region

7. Constituency: Câmpu-lung

Made of:

a) the communes of Taras region and

b) the communes of Câmpul-lung secretariat of Sighet region.

8. Circumscription: Teceu

Made of:

a) the communes of Teceu area;

b) the communes of Colocari-de-jos (Kalocsa-Laz) secretariat of Volova (Ökörmezö) and

c) the communes of Drăgulești, Visk, Saldoboș, Berezna and Săliște-de-jos secretariats of Hust region.

9. Constituency: Hust.

Made of:

a) the communes of Hust area, except those belonging to Drăgulești, Visk, Saldoboș, Berezna and Săliște-de-jos secretariats;

b) the communes of Lipceni secretariat of Dolha region and

c) the communes of Seleușul-mare region (Nogyszölös) under the Romanian administration (Ugocea county)⁵.

In a brief analysis of the way of zoning the localities in the electoral constituencies, respectively the polling stations, we will notice that for the parliamentary elections of November 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1919, some constituencies include both localities on a bank of the Tisa and on the other. It should be noted that some settlements even embrace both banks of the river; voting will take place in the commune center. The most illustrative cases in this regard are those in Sighet, Câmpulung, Teceu, and there are some localities that belonged to Ugocea County in Hust. Also, a polling station was organized in Rahău (present-day Rahiv in Ukraine).

Following the election of November 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1919, the following were declared deputies:

Maramureș county

Electoral constituency

Elected deputies

Sighet	Dr. Vasile Lucaciu
Vișeu de Sus.....	Dr. Găvril Iuga
Dragomirești	Constantin Papuc
Rahău	Vasile Pop
Bârsana	Gheorghe Bilașco
Ocna Șugatag.....	Constantin Lucaci
Câmpulung.....	Iosif Pop
Teceu	Teodor Bokotei
Hust	Oreste Ilnitchi ⁶

The second round of the parliamentary elections in the same month of 1919, held on November 10th, 11th and 12th, respectively the one for the election of the Senate concerned only "the electoral body of all Romanian citizens (s.l.n.) aged 40 completed years" and provided for the election of a "senator from every 70,000 inhabitants and from every additional fraction above the 47,000 inhabitants"⁷

According to these criteria, the territory and population of Maramureș County were divided into four constituencies:

"XIII. Maramurăs County.

1. Constituency: Vișău

Made of:

a) the communes of Vișău, except the secretariats of Petrova and Poienile de sub munte, and

b) the communes of Dragomirești, Săcel, Sălește-de-sus, Cuhea, Jod, Rozavlia and Șieu secretariats of Valea-Izei.

2. Constituency: Sighet

Made of:

a) the city of Sighet;

b) the communes of Sighet area, except those belonging to the secretariats Crăciunelul-de-jos, Apșa-de-sus, (without Apșa de Mijloc) and Câmpul-lung;

c) the communes of Sugatag area

d) the communes of Glod and Strâmtura secretariats of Valea-Izei region and

e) the communes of Petrova and Poienile de sub munte secretariats

3. Constituency: Câmpul-lung.

Made of:

a) the communes of Valea-Tisa region;

b) the communes of Crăciunelul-de-jos, Apșa-de-sus, (without Apșa de Mijloc) and Câmpul-lung secretariats of Sighet region and

c) the communes of Taras area

4. Circumscription: Teceus.

Made of:

a) the communes of Teceu area;

b) the communes of Hust area;

c) communes of Colociari-de-jos secretariat, (Kalocsa-Laz) of Valova (Ökörmezö) area;

d) the communes of Lipceni secretariat of Dolha region and

e) the communes of Seleşul-mareregion (Nogyszölös), under the Romanian administration (Ugocea county)⁸.

Following the elections, the result of the vote designated the following four senators:

Maramureș county

Electoral constituency

Elected Senators

Sighet Ilarie Boroș

Vișeu de Sus..... Al. Cuza-Anderco

Câmpulung..... Dr. Victor Ioanes

TeceuDr. Iosef Pop senior⁹

This first large-scale national democratic exercise was also a demonstration of strength for the new state, the Kingdom of Greater Romania. He was also perceived as such by the ethnic Ukrainians from Maramureş, some of them taking an oath of allegiance to the Romanian state without any hesitation and with the joy of remaining integrated to a state with a monarchical regime, safe from the prospect of Bolshevization. This fact was reflected even in the Romanian Parliament, where the representative of Hust, Orestlniŭki, an ethnic Ruthenian, on December 13th, 1919, immediately after the signing of the peace treaty with Austria by the Kingdom of Romania (on December 10th, 1919), submitted the following declaration of loyalty: "We are entrusted by our Ruthenian electors to express the feelings of boundless gratitude and loyalty to His Majesty King Ferdinand (prolonged applause) and all the gratitude of the Governing Council for so correctly respecting the rights of minorities on the occasion of the elections (applause).

Since their existence, the Ruthenian people of Maramureş could freely express their will and choose their representatives for the first time in these elections (applause).

We truly confide that the Romanian Parliament will always respect democratic principles and bring good and useful laws for all citizens who arrive within the borders of Greater Romania (applause).

The Ruthenian people from the parts of Maramureş want and demand that all necessary measures be taken to be definitively annexed according to today's demarcation line, forever to Greater Romania (prolonged and repeated applause)"¹⁰.

As a result of the two treaties with Austria and against the will of the local population, as well as the leaders of the county, through Journal no. 863 of April 5th, 1920 of the Council of Ministers, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of War are authorized to organize the evacuation of the Romanian army and administration from the right side of the Tisa river. Consequently, on the night of July 20th/21st, 1920, the evacuation of the Romanian troops and, at the same time, of our administration from the right side of the Tisa was completed.

Firmly promised at one of the four tribunes where the Great Union was preached from Alba-Iulia, on December 1st, 1918, released with a gun and at the price of five sacrifices, who reached the two "national ethnic boundaries", respectively, the cities of Hust and Rahău, administered naturally and in its entirety, between December 1st, 1918 and July 20th, 1920, by the Romanian state, Maramureş on the right bank of the Tisa was left as an offering and ceded to Czechoslovakia at the table of peace negotiations. Therefore, out of a total of 10,354.9 km², 6,673.9 km², i.e. two-thirds with over 100 towns and over 100 mountains, were ceded to the newly formed state in the north of our country, Czechoslovakia, some of them belonging to the people from Maramureş on the left side of the Tisa River (Romania).

No less true is the fact that the territory we are referring to is called "Subcarpathian Ruthenia" or "Ruthenian territory" in some of the documents of the Paris Peace Conference (1919-1920), and certain Romanian political circles expressed the desire for reconciliation, to keep at least two of the six regions, and the Hust was considered "Ruthenian territory". However, the diplomatic Areopagus in Paris assigned to Czechoslovakia the entire territory on the right side of the Tisa River, as

stipulated in the Trianon Peace Treaty (June 4th, 1920), in section IV a, art. 48, regarding the “Czecho-Slovak State”: „Hungary recognizes, as the allied and associated Powers have already done, the full independence of the Czecho-Slovak State, which will also include the autonomous territory of the Ruthenians from the South of the Carpathians”¹¹.

As a bitter historical irony, let us also invoke the common-sense observation that the parliamentarians elected in the constituencies and localities on the right side of the Tisa river swore allegiance to the Kingdom of Romania that they participated in the drafting and voting of the first founding laws for the new state, without withdrawing their legitimacy even though the Areopagus from Paris made „the ground flee from under their feet”.

References

¹*Gazeta Oficială*, 54 (September 13, 1919), Sibiu: 407.

²*Sfatul*, II/17 (May 2, 1919): 1.

³Arhivele Naționale ale României, Fond Consiliul Dirigent, Dos. 36/1919, f. 13.

⁴Arhivele Naționale ale României, Fond Consiliul Dirigent, Dos. 36/1919, f. 44.

⁵*Gazeta Oficială*, 54 (September 13, 1919), Sibiu: 4 14.

⁶*Monitorul Oficial*, 171 (November 18, 1919): 9941.

⁷*Gazeta Oficială*, 54 (September 13, 1919), Sibiu: 407.

⁸*Gazeta Oficială*, 54 (September 13, 1919), Sibiu: 407.

⁹*Monitorul Oficial*, 172 (November 19, 1919): 9719.

¹⁰*Dezbatările Adunării Deputaților*, 12 (December 1919): 109, col. 2-3, apud. Țineghe, C., *Dezmembrarea Maramureșului istoric: decizii politice, reacții și consemnări în mărturii contemporane (1919-1923)* (București: Editura Centrul de Studii pentru Resurse Românești, 2009), 47.

¹¹*Tratat de pace între Puterile Aliate și Asociate și Ungaria. Protocol și declarațiuni. Din 4 iunie 1920 (Trianon)* (București: Imprimeria Statului, 1920), 14.