

TRANSYLVANIAN CIVIC SUMPTUARY LAWS IN THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD: PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS*

MÁRIA PAKUCS-WILLCOCKS**

INTRODUCTION

A 1709 ordinance (*Policey-ordnung*) of the town fathers of Braşov (Kronstadt, Brassó) in Transylvania posited that a great number of laws was not beneficial to a polity, “whereas it would be desirable that one could stand always by the good old customs.”¹ In this particular piece of legislation, urban authorities aimed to regulate the sequence of events (time of day, number of participants) and the number of guests at weddings. The unusual rhetoric bemoaning the need for issuing laws repeatedly, exceptional as far as I can fathom from other Transylvanian regulations, captures one of the most salient features of sumptuary laws: they were passed frequently and generated in contemporaries and modern historians alike uncertainty over their relevance and efficiency.² Naturally, these preambles are formulaic and reliant on stock phrases,³ but they should not be dismissed without consideration as they offer useful hints for addressing the political and social context of a law. While I am planning a larger study on Transylvanian sumptuary laws in the early modern period, in this article I shall adopt a more narrow focus on seventeenth and eighteenth century sumptuary laws from Transylvanian Saxon towns, with an emphasis on the rhetoric of these juridical texts.

In the first part of the article I offer a general introduction into the history and typology of sumptuary laws in Transylvania between the sixteenth and the eighteenth

* Archival research and funding for the writing of this article was facilitated by the ERC-2014-CoG no. 646489 grant, *Luxury, Fashion and Social Status in Early Modern South-Eastern Europe (LuxFaSS)*, financed by the European Research Council and hosted by the New Europe College-Institute for Advanced Study, Bucharest. I am grateful to Wendy Bracewell, Giulia Calvi, Mihai Răzvan Ungureanu and all other participants at the Bucharest workshop in October 2017, who contributed with great comments and useful suggestions to this paper.

** “Nicolae Iorga” Institute of History, Bucharest; New Europe College, Bucharest; mpakucs@yahoo.com.

¹ See Appendix I for the archival and bibliographical references of all Transylvanian sumptuary laws.

² Sumptuary laws could also contradict one another, as stated by Gertraud Hampl-Kallbrunner, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Kleiderordnungen mit besonderer Berücksichtigung Österreichs*, Vienna, 1962: “Wenn man die Kleider- und Schmuckverordnungen aus der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts vergleicht, so findet man darinnen viele Wiederholungen und auch Widersprüche.”

³ Hilary Doda, *Saide Monstrous Hose’: Compliance, Transgression and English Sumptuary Law to 1533*, in “Textile History,” 45, 2014, no. 2, p. 177.

centuries, followed by a discussion of the main themes of luxury, excess, and social order. Ultimately, my conclusion is reliant on Alan Hunt's approach to sumptuary laws "in terms of 'project' and 'governance'."⁴ I strongly agree with Maria G. Muzzarelli's view that the political nature of the sumptuary laws can yield a better understanding of their purpose and functions in early modern societies.⁵ In my opinion, clothing and banqueting regulations reveal the ideology of power of the issuing authorities, their aspirations as governing bodies, and their understanding of political action.

Sumptuary laws have a long and rich scholarship that highlights the multifaceted approaches to analysing them, from a political, social, economic, or cultural perspective. Therefore, can there still be a purpose in approaching sumptuary laws? Is there room for innovative reflection on this topic? The recent work of Astrid Pajur on sumptuary laws from early modern Estonia with a fresh look at the topic,⁶ and the fact that Transylvanian clothing laws were hardly analysed by historians, endorse a positive answer to these questions.

Sumptuary legislation has been edited constantly since the late nineteenth century and has not lost its appeal for scholars, as shown by the very recent publication of the medieval sumptuary laws of the Emilia-Romagna and Umbria regions and the digital edition of the 1574 edict of Elizabeth I of England.⁷ Nevertheless, the ubiquity of sumptuary legislation,⁸ as well as its characteristic of being seemingly repetitive and unchanged over longer periods, dissuaded historians from considering it a substantial historical source. In my view, especially for polities where sumptuary legislation was a late development, such as Transylvania, clothing regulations have to be appraised and understood in relation to the entire legal and political context in which they appeared and were issued. Thus, sumptuary laws are good

⁴ Alan Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions. A History of Sumptuary Law*, London, 1996, p. 3.

⁵ Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli, *Reconciling the Privilege of the Few with the Common Good: Sumptuary Laws in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, in "Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies," 39, 2009, no. 3, p. 599.

⁶ Astrid Pajur, *The Fabric of a Corporate Society: Sumptuary Laws, Social Order and Propriety in Early Modern Tallinn*, in *A Taste for Luxury in Early Modern Europe. Display, Acquisition and Boundaries*, ed. by Johanna Ilmakunnas, Jon Stobart, London, 2017, pp. 21–38. See also the recent contributions on Spanish clothing regulations in the early modern period: Ruth de la Puerta, *Sumptuary Legislation and Restrictions on Luxury in Dress*, in *Spanish Fashion at the Courts of Early Modern Europe*, vol. I, ed. by José Luis Colomer, Amalia Descalzo, Madrid, 2014, pp. 209–232; Gabriel Guarino, *Spanish Fashions and Sumptuary Legislation in Habsburg Italy*, in *Spanish Fashion*, vol. I, pp. 233–250; Saúl Martínez Bermejo, *Beyond Luxury: Sumptuary Legislation in 17th Century Castille*, in *Making, Using and Resisting the Law in European History*, ed. by G. Lottes, E. Medijainen, J. Viðar Sigurðson, Pisa, 2008, pp. 93–108.

⁷ *La legislazione suntuaria, secoli XIII–XVI. Emilia-Romagna*, ed. by Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli, Rome, 2002; *La legislazione suntuaria, secoli XIII–XVI. Umbria*, ed. by M. Grazia Nico Ottaviani, Rome, 2005; <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/proclamation-against-excess-of-apparel-by-queen-elizabeth-i>, accessed on 4 April 2018.

⁸ Neithard Bulst, *Kleidung als sozialer Konfliktstoff: Probleme kleidungsgesetzlicher Normierung im sozialen Gefüge*, in "Saeculum," 44, 1993, p. 32, where he stated that "Kleidungsgesetze gehören zu den verbreitetsten Gesetztexten in Europa."

indicators of the official stance of local and central authorities on policy and administration, of the projections of social order and of social control. In German speaking territories, clothing regulations were a significant part of the *Policeywissenschaft*, of the early modern political theory of order established through specific norms.⁹ Beginning with the eighteenth century, clothing and sumptuary laws as *Policeyordnungen* were issued under this heading in Habsburg Transylvania as well (see Fig. 1).

PREVIOUS SCHOLARSHIP

It is well known that sumptuary laws comprised a diverse legislation curbing excessive spending for various occasions of everyday life that lent themselves to the display of wealth and status (weddings, funerals), and yet there is definitely more interest in the rules imposed on fashion and clothes. The work of Alan Hunt, which is a solid analysis of the progress of sumptuary laws throughout history, takes a similar stance.¹⁰ More recently, Giorgio Riello and Beverly Lemire interpreted sumptuary laws exclusively as impositions on fashion and consumption of textiles.¹¹ While it is true that from the sixteenth century onward, in Western Europe sumptuary legislation focused more on dress and outward appearance, regulation on weddings and funerals continued to be issued in Eastern Central Europe into the early nineteenth century. In Transylvania, the last clothing regulation in Sibiu was issued in 1806.¹²

The study of Transylvanian sumptuary laws dates back to the nineteenth century, but it had stopped short of growing into an explored avenue of research. Oskar Meltzl's doctoral thesis from 1870 was the first survey of Transylvanian sumptuary laws, more precisely on the wedding and clothing laws of the Saxon towns, and its merit lies in the extensive publication of sumptuary laws.¹³ Recent scholarly interest in sumptuary laws in Transylvania is scarce, and the first contributions in the field are those of Horst Klusch, who was an ethnographer and analysed sumptuary laws as sources for establishing the traditions of the Transylvanian Saxons' folk costumes.¹⁴ Éva Deák, an ethnographer herself, has dealt with women and luxury in her continuing research interest in early modern Transylvanian fashion and court society.¹⁵ Gyöngy Kiss Kovács has written a short study on clothing laws

⁹ Anne-Kathrin Reich, *Kleidung als Spiegelbild sozialer Differenzierung. Städtische Kleiderordnungen vom 14. bis zum 17. Jahrhundert am Beispiel der Altstadt Hannover*, Hannover, 2005, pp. 68–69.

¹⁰ A. Hunt, *op. cit.*, p. XIV.

¹¹ Beverly Lemire, Giorgio Riello, *East and West: Textiles and Fashion in Early Modern Europe*, in "Journal of Social History," 41, 2008, no. 4, p. 890.

¹² Emil Sigerus, *Chronik der Stadt Hermannstadt*, Sibiu, 1930, p. 36; Julia Lehner, *Die Mode im alten Nürnberg*, Nuremberg, 1984, p. 7.

¹³ Oskar Meltzl, *Über Luxus und Luxusgesetze. Dissertation zur Erlangung des juristischen Doktorgrades*, Sibiu, 1870, pp. 23–29.

¹⁴ Horst Klusch, *Siebenbürgisch-sächsische Trachtenlandschaften*, Sibiu, 2002, pp. 22–34.

¹⁵ Éva Deák, *Viseletszabályok, társadalmi rend és a nemek szerepe a koraiújkor Erdélyben és Magyarországon. Nők a koraiújkor Magyarországon viseletszabályozásaiban*, in "Palimpszeszt," 21, 2003, online at http://magyar-irodalom.elte.hu/palimpszeszt/21_szam/12.html, accessed on 29 August 2017.

in the town of Cluj.¹⁶ Mária Lupescu-Makó from the Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj is currently working on material culture and fashion in the late Middle Ages and early modern period, using last wills and testaments as her primary sources.¹⁷ She also coordinated the M.A. thesis of Szidonia Brad on seventeenth century Transylvanian dress.¹⁸ The excellent study of Robert Born on early modern costume books discusses Transylvanian sumptuary laws and their attempt at social control.¹⁹ It is clear, however, that Transylvanian sumptuary laws have not attracted the attention they deserve from historians, and that they have been viewed strictly from the perspective of dress and social hierarchy. I argue that they represent more than an attempt at curbing luxury or consumption: this specific legislation has strong political and economic implications as well.²⁰

SOURCES

A small number of sumptuary laws of Transylvanian Saxon towns are published, some are known from secondary literature, but most of them are still in the archives. I have listed the Transylvanian sumptuary laws and their bibliographical or archival references in Appendix I.

The first known Transylvanian sumptuary laws date from the sixteenth century. Nearly all such laws and regulations were issued by the local governments of towns, mostly Saxon urban centres, making sumptuary legislation an “urban phenomenon,” similarly to Italy.²¹

A salient trait of Transylvanian sumptuary laws is their belatedness in comparison to Western Europe, which translates into an overall lag compared to the European trend. This observation is valid for all territories formally part of the medieval Hungarian Kingdom. Katalin Szende has discussed the absence of sumptuary

¹⁶ Gyöngy Kovács Kiss, *Adatok a viselet szabályozásáról a XVI.–XVII. századi Kolozsváron*, in *Kolozsvár 1000. éve*, ed. by Tibor Kálmán Dáné et al., Cluj, 2001, pp. 60–62.

¹⁷ Mária Lupescu Makó, *(Nu) haina îl face pe om. Îmbrăcămintea și purtătorul ei în Transilvania (secolele XVI–XVII)*, in *Avere, prestigiu și cultură materială în surse patrimoniale. Inventare de averi din secolele XVI–XIX*, ed. by Dan Dumitru Iacob, Iași, 2015, pp. 35–69.

¹⁸ Szidonia Brad, *Erdélyi ruházat: 1600–1660*, M.A. thesis, Cluj, Babeş-Bolyai University, 2014, https://www.academia.edu/8211221/Ruh%C3%A1zat_1600-1660, accessed on 29 August 2017.

¹⁹ Robert Born, *Mapping Transylvania as a Multiethnic and Multiconfessional Region in Costume Books (17th–19th Centuries)*, in *From Traditional Attire to Modern Dress. Modes of Identification, Modes of Recognition in the Balkans (XVIth–XXth Centuries)*, ed. by Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2011, pp. 52–82. Historical costume books from early modern Transylvania are well described in Cornel Irimie, Julius Bielz, *Unbekannte Quellen zur Geschichte der siebenbürgischen Volkstracht des 17.–19. Jahrhunderts*, in “Forschungen zur Volks- und Landeskunde,” 1, 1959, pp. 173–196.

²⁰ Franco Franceschi, *La normativa suntuaria nella storia economica*, in *Disciplinare il lusso. La legislazione suntuaria in Italia e Europa tra medioevo ed età moderna*, ed. by Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli, Antonella Campanini, Rome, 2003, pp. 163–178, arguing for a better correlation between sumptuary legislation and economic processes in history.

²¹ Catherine Kovesi-Killerby, *Sumptuary Law in Italy, 1200–1500*, Oxford, 2002, p. 30.

legislation in medieval Hungarian towns and the two centuries delay compared to Western Europe in this respect. Following the ideas put forward by András Kubinyi, she argued that local councils in medieval Hungarian towns did not see the need for sumptuary legislation as long as excess in clothing did not lead to social conflict, and luxury did not disturb the harmony between the individual and society.²² This explanation alone probably is not sufficient to argue for the lack of sumptuary laws in the region but it established the reliable premise that this type of legislation is strongly related to the needs of the political authorities and their ideas of governance.²³

Transylvania is not unique in this respect: in smaller towns from the German territories sumptuary laws issued by the local councils appeared after 1560, similarly to Sibiu, and continued to be issued well into the eighteenth century, while the last sumptuary law in Nuremberg dates from 1693.²⁴ The Netherlands, however, did not issue nor need sumptuary legislation²⁵; Alan Hunt, referencing Simon Schama, mentions two such laws that were ‘substantial’ and date from the seventeenth century.²⁶

Whereas in the sixteenth century, during the transition to modernity, in Western Europe the interest for regulating wedding banquets and funeral attendance diminished and the focus of the legislation shifted towards dress and class identity,²⁷ the Transylvanian ruling elites were less concerned with the control of outward appearances and fashion at first. The sixteenth century sumptuary laws of the Saxon towns in Transylvania regulated wedding receptions, baptisms and funerals. They reflect the concern for proper conduct, for good morals and lack of excess of the political elites, a strive for order and discipline.²⁸ The sumptuary legislation of Transylvanian towns became more targeted and specific at the end of the seventeenth century, when the clothing laws were separated from wedding or funeral laws; the switch to German as official language better enabled this distinction. More precisely, *Kleiderordnungen* became autonomous laws, albeit occasionally issued together with the other types of sumptuary laws (wedding regulations – *Hochzeitslimitationen*, funeral regulations – *Leichenordnungen*).

²² Katalin Szende, *A luxusfogalma és a luxusigények kielégítése a középkorban*, in *Luxusiparok. Válogatás a IX. Kézművesipartörténeti Szimpózium (Veszprém, 1996. szeptember 27–28) előadásaiból*, ed. by Sándor Horváth, János Szulovszky, Budapest, Veszprém, 1997, pp. 17 and 23.

²³ This lag is evident in other aspects of literacy in the urban settings of medieval Hungary: Katalin Szende, *A magyar város írásbeliség kezdetei*, in *Arcana tabularii. Tanulmányok Solymosi László tiszteletére*, ed. by Attila Bárány, Gábor Dreska, Kornél Szovák, Budapest, Debrecen, 2014, pp. 436–438.

²⁴ J. Lehner, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

²⁵ Jan de Vries, *The Industrious Revolution. Consumer Behavior and the Household Economy, 1650 to Present*, Cambridge, 2008, p. 46, note 16.

²⁶ Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age*, New York, 1987, p. 182 and p. 634, note 113; Alan Hunt, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

²⁷ *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century: Debates, Desires, and Delectable Goods*, ed. by Maxine Berg, Elizabeth Eger, Basingstoke, 2003, p. 8.

²⁸ M. Pakucs-Willcocks, *Gute Ordnung und Disciplin: Patterns of Social Discipline in Sibiu (Hermannstadt) in the Sixteenth Century*, in “NEC Yearbook,” 2003–2004, pp. 173–206.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries, Transylvania was in turn an autonomous principality tributary to the Ottoman Empire (1541–1699), and then a province of the Habsburg monarchy under the name of Great Transylvania, administered by a centrally appointed governor.²⁹ Thus, at the turn of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, a dramatic shift in the statehood of Transylvania took place, with a direct effect on the sumptuary laws issued here, as I mentioned earlier.

The Diet of Transylvania passed clothing laws very rarely; the few ones that we know of were directed at particular social groups. Displaying the true national identities was at the heart of the only sumptuary law issued by the Diet of Transylvania in 1650: “All Jews and all Greeks should wear cloaks according to their sort, and if anyone of them should wear a Hungarian military cape, he will be fined 200 florins.”³⁰

Greeks and Jews in Transylvania of that the time were mostly merchants, coming from the Ottoman Empire, with very strict limitations to their trade; disguising their true ethnicity might have offered them more opportunities and leverage for doing business. On the same occasion, the Diet also passed a clothing regulation for peasants and servants, forbidding them to wear “cloth coats and trousers, boots, expensive hats, and linen shirts.”³¹

After 1711, when the Habsburg rule was fully established, the government of Transylvania issued territorial sumptuary laws for the province, on the model of the central *Policeyordnungen*.³² Such was the ordinance from 1743, “aimed at curbing excessive luxury,” copied into the town protocols of Cluj.³³ I shall not discuss them into more detail, as my analysis will focus on the sumptuary regulations issued locally by Transylvanian urban governments.

Transylvanian Saxon towns were small polities, based on simple political and juridical structures that remained unchanged since the Middle Ages. Their population was also small compared to other urban centres in other parts of the Habsburg empire.³⁴ The great census of 1784 offers reliable figures for the urban population

²⁹ See *History of Transylvania*, vol. II, ed. by László Makkai, Zoltán Szász, Budapest, 1988, <http://mek.oszk.hu/03400/03407/html/164.html>, accessed on 6 June 2017.

³⁰ *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, ed. by Sándor Szilágyi, vol. XI, Budapest, 1886, p. 78: “mind sidó mind görög tartson neme szerint valo köntöst; ha ki pedig magyar katona köntöst viselne, légyen kétszáz forint büntetésnek.”

³¹ Zsolt Trócsányi, *Törvényalkotás az Erdélyi Fejedelemségben*, Budapest, 2005, p. 56; *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, ed. by Sándor Szilágyi, vol. XI, Budapest, 1886, p. 72: “parasztember és béres szolgálja pedig hogy posztóruhát, nadrágot, csizmát, dupla és forintos süveget, gyoics inget viselni ne merészeljenek, országúl interdicáltuk.” For the specific clothes for peasants in Eastern Europe see Irena Turnau, *European Occupational Dress*, transl. by Izabela Szymańska, Warsaw, 1994, pp. 45–46.

³² G. Hampl-Kallbrunner, *op. cit.*, pp. 44–56.

³³ Gy. Kovács Kiss, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

³⁴ Transylvanian towns remained ‘small’ in the eighteenth century: Gábor Sonkoly, *Erdély városai a XVIII–XIX. században*, Budapest, 2001, p. 159.

of Transylvania: Braşov had ca. 17,700 inhabitants, Sibiu had around 14,000 (from 5,500 at the beginning of the sixteenth century), and Bistriţa – 4,600.³⁵

Sibiu, as the capital of all the Saxons in Transylvania, had a more elaborate government, with a mayor (*Bürgermeister*), a royal judge, a county judge, a town administrator, and a 12-member town council. Other towns were run by a judge, an administrator and the council. Neighbourhoods as organised social structures comprising the heads of households in a street or square were also in charge with keeping order and informing the town councils of the goings-on.³⁶ For instance, in 1697, the city fathers of Sibiu instructed the heads of neighbourhoods to watch out for prostitutes, who were “not allowed to cover their heads with veils or white headscarves” but had to wear red cloth, to be “distinguished from the honourable lady’s wear.”³⁷

Sumptuary laws were communicated to the populace via various channels.³⁸ The Braşov 1652 wedding regulation had to be read to everyone from the pulpit; it is true that this one is the most “religious” sumptuary law, with strong Christian overtones.³⁹ The Saxon towns were close-knit communities with effective formal and informal social control, where transgressions were probably preempted rather than punished. Heads of neighbourhoods and guild masters were also instrumental in the communication of the sumptuary laws among the citizens. As the Mediaş clothing law of 1752 put it, “ignorance is not a defence, and no one shall excuse themselves with it” (*niemand mit der Unwissenheit entschuldige*).⁴⁰

EXCESS, PASSION, AND RUIN: THE IDEA OF LUXURY IN TRANSYLVANIAN SUMPTUARY LAWS⁴¹

The first sumptuary laws of the Transylvanian towns have a limited range of concerns, a fact reflected by their either very concise or inexistent preambles. The sumptuary laws of Bistriţa from the 1530s aimed to uproot the foolishness and excess of all kinds of festivities: “To avoid the wild frenzy (*ille furor corybanticus*) of the three-day weddings that have been the custom until now, one day of celebration should suffice.”⁴²

³⁵ *Az első magyarországi népszámlálás (1784–1787)*, ed. by Dezső Dányi, Zoltán Dávid, Budapest, 1960, p. 368.

³⁶ Sibiu statute of 1589: *Corpus statutorum Hungariae juriur municipalium*, vol. I, ed. by Sándor Kolozsvári, Kelemen Óvári, Budapest, 1881, p. 555.

³⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 578: “von dato bisz ins künftige alle, die alsz Huren ertapt und angegeben werden, zum Unterscheid der ehrlichen Weiber-Tracht, den Kopf mitt keinem Schliger, noch weiszen hautptuch bedecken, sondern rothe Tücher tragen.”

³⁸ Publication and publicity of sumptuary laws is addressed especially by German historians: e.g. A.-K. Reich, *op. cit.*, pp. 90–93.

³⁹ Archives of the Black Church in Braşov, Trausch Collection, IV F1 T9–101, p. 93.

⁴⁰ Sibiu National Archives, Brukenthal Collection, Q1–4, no. 123.

⁴¹ Christopher J. Berry, *The Idea of Luxury*, Cambridge, 1994 as a diachronic reflection on the definitions of luxury served as a reliable starting point.

⁴² O. Meltzl, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

The following extant sumptuary legislation, from Sibiu, is similarly unembellished with its motivation. Simply named “statutes,” i.e. decisions of the town council, the sumptuary laws of 1565 prescribed the number of guests at feasts of the neighbourhoods and meals offered by newly accepted guild masters. “Because there has been great excess and filth in the city during banquets and feasts (*grösser uberflus und unrath*) [...] the honourable and wise council has decided the following points [...]”⁴³

Regulation concerning dress and fashion in particular was first issued by Lutheran authorities for their clergy in the last quarter of the sixteenth century. Clothing regulations were created by the Lutheran Church of the Transylvanian Saxons for their priests. As early as 1574, the *Articuli de pastorum vita et moribus* stipulated in article VII: “The clothes of the priests should be decent and following our rules. They should shun luxury (*luxus*) in their clothes, which is desired from their wives as well, not to expose themselves to ridicule and shame because of such frippery. The habit of priests should not be dyed red. [...] Priests should not wear any rings on their fingers [...] Their wagons should not be covered with red cloth out of vanity; black should be used instead as a sign of humility.”⁴⁴

The synods of the Lutheran Church in Transylvania continued to issue similar regulations in the course of the following century.⁴⁵ Preaching was a powerful tool for social control: Damasus Dür, the priest of the village of Apold in the 1570s, spoke against luxury in clothes, expressed in velvet and sable hats: “one cannot tell people from one another because of the luxurious clothes (*prechtiger kleydung*), whether a man is an artisan or a merchant, whether a lady is a councillor’s wife or a shoemaker’s.”⁴⁶

The word “luxury” was first used in an urban setting in the sumptuary law of Cluj of 1593: “Seeing here in this town the luxury (*luxus*) in the clothes of men, but foremost of women and girls, the town fathers have judged that many people do not keep themselves according to their standing and worth (*rendihez és ertekekhez alkalmatlannak lenny*) [...] therefore they decided to reign this in. Anyone, or his

⁴³ zu urkunt in das stadbuch lassen einschreiben. *Die älteste Protokolle des Hermannstädter Rates und der sächsischen Nationsuniversität (1522–1565)*, ed. by M. Pakucs-Willcocks, Sibiu, Bonn, 2016, p. 259.

⁴⁴ *Urkundenbuch der Evangelischen Landeskirche A.B. in Siebenbürgen*, vol. 2, *Die Synodalverhandlungen der evangelischen Kirche A.B. in Siebenbürgen im Reformationsjahrhundert*, ed. by G.D. Teutsch, Hermannstadt, 1883, pp. 193–194; *Die evangelische Kirchenordnungen des XVI. Jahrhunderts. Vierundzwanzigster Band. Das Fürstentum Siebenbürgen. Das Rechtebiet und die Kirche der Siebenbürger Sachsen*, ed. by Martin Armgart, Tübingen, 2012, p. 383: “Vestitus sacerdotum sit decens et ordini nostri conveniens. Absit luxus in vestitu, quod etiam de uxoris ministrorum illorum dici volumus, ne se hac levitate indecenti arroganter scandalo et ludibrio exponant. Pepla non sint croco tinta (...) Ministri quoque a gestandis annullis in digitis omnino abstineant (...) Currus quoque tectos non ad superbiam exornatos panno rubeo circumvehant. Nigro colore potius utantur humilitatis signo.”

⁴⁵ Graeme Murdock, *Dressed to Repress? Protestant Clerical Dress and the Regulation of Morality in Early Modern Europe*, in “Fashion Theory,” 4, 2000, no. 2, pp. 179–200.

⁴⁶ Damasus Dür, *Predigten*, 1939, *apud* Ulrich Andreas Wien, *Raumzüge reformatorischer Predigt am Beispiel des Kleinpolder Pfarrers Damasus Dür*, in *Siebenbürgen – Pionierregion der Religionsfreiheit. Luther, Honterus und die Wirkungen der Reformation*, Sibiu, 2017, p. 76.

wife or child, seen wearing expensive clothes not matching his poverty [...] should be made to pay twice the tax he owes.”⁴⁷

Luxury as *Pracht* was associated with clothes, as in the 1693 Braşov *Polizeiordnung (Luxus oder Kleiderpracht)*; any other excessive display of wealth through conspicuous consumption was labelled as “folly” (*Thorheit*) and “pride” (*Stolz*). The city fathers also relied on the citizens’ good judgment to amend their ways, but had also instructed the hatmaker women to make the headgear of young girls following the allowed width and with the appropriate fabric. “None of them [young girls and maidens] should order a wider headgear or from a different fabric than it is allowed, namely the maidens of the first class above damask, those from the middle class above taffeta, and those from the third class above *bogasia* [cotton twill].”

The preambles of sumptuary laws grew more elaborate over time, dwelling more insistently on the ideas of luxury, excessive display and ruin, best captured by the clothing law of Mediaş of 1767. The introductory paragraph of this regulation showcases the entire range of concerns and concepts of morality, piety, misrepresentation of self, neglect of family duties, recklessness, wickedness, and contempt of one’s social and financial standing (based on the property tax). “We have to acknowledge with great displeasure and anxiety to what extent the arrogance and luxury in clothes, excess at weddings and other gathering, have become predominant in our town, and there is no end to these rampant vices that are in contempt of God and disregard the modesty and frugality of a true burgher. Thus people give a false appearance to others, displaying clothes bought with borrowed money [...], bringing misfortune upon their poor wife and children. They burry themselves in debt and are unable to pay their imperial-royal tax. In the end, there is no difference between the distinguished and the needy, the poor and the wealthy citizens. Therefore, prompted by the duties of our office, we are compelled to put an end to this evil, with the aim of upkeep of the tax based estates and of restoring the necessary order and frugality.”

This clothing regulation is in fact the only one from the series of Transylvanian sumptuary laws that stresses the relation between spending and livelihood, using it as a criterion for establishing the classes: to class III belonged “all good burghers who feed themselves with their own means and own their house,” whereas class II included the journeymen, apprentices and “burghers who feed themselves with borrowed money.”

Jan de Vries has put forward the dichotomy between “old” and “new” luxury that opposed the excessive display of wealth to more refined markers of status; it was a societal shift during the seventeenth century that came with the accessibility of foreign goods, prompting the wealthier classes to find new ways to distinguish themselves with different patterns of consumption.⁴⁸ The language of the Transylvanian

⁴⁷ Gy. Kovács Kiss, *op. cit.*, pp. 60–61 (Hungarian original).

⁴⁸ J. de Vries, *op. cit.*, p. 58; *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. by M. Berg, E. Eger, p. 9.

sumptuary laws remained tributary to the discourse of excess and ruin throughout the eighteenth century.

GENDER AND CLASS

These are the two poles that urban authorities of the eighteenth century used in order to structure the interdictions and limitations on clothes, on food and on the number of guests at social events. The bulk of the corpus of Transylvanian sumptuary laws was issued in the eighteenth century, under the influence of the Habsburg administration and legislation. All towns of the Transylvanian Saxons were provided with at least one clothing regulation in this period. The clothing laws differ from town to town in their concerns and approach, but they were all created around the idea of class and appropriate dress.

The first Austrian Patent which had created five classes or status groups, as Ulinka Rublack called them, of citizens dates from 1542,⁴⁹ while in Nuremberg four classes were organised for regulation purposes in 1583, but this type of legislation caught on in the following century, especially in smaller towns in the Holy Empire.⁵⁰

The Transylvanian Saxon local authorities projected their own ideas of an organised society. A first mention of classes appears in the Braşov sumptuary law of 1693, referring to three classes created by the clothing regulation of 1679, which I could not find to date. Later sumptuary laws, prescribing the forbidden or the allowed fabrics and materials for their clothes and accessories established five to nine classes of burghers as follows:

- Sibiu (1752) – 9 classes;
- Sighişoara (1755) – 5 classes (with several subdivisions), and the Wallachians as a separate category;
- Mediaş (1767) – 5 classes, numbered from the lower ranks upwards;
- Bistriţa (1780) – 5 classes.

From the preamble of the Mediaş sumptuary law (1767) we learn that the classes were established relatively to the tax paid by each inhabitant of the town. Councils of smaller places, such as Orăştie (1723), did not resort to classes and imposed the clothing law only according to gender. Notably, only one class of people had no restrictions for their costume or accessories: the highest officials of Sibiu, who were also the political leaders and head judges of all Saxons in Transylvania and thus enjoyed a privileged status. The 1752 *Kleiderordnung* of Sibiu relied on the common sense and better judgement (*Prudence und Überlegung*) of these two

⁴⁹ Ulinka Rublack, *Dressing Up. Culture Identity in Renaissance Europe*, Oxford, 2010, p. 267; Josef Kallbrunner, *Tracht und Sitte im merkantilistischen Polizeistaat*, in “Wiener Zeitschrift für Volkskunde,” XLIII, 1938, pp. 1–17.

⁵⁰ J. Lehner, *op. cit.*, pp. 17–19: the first divisions into classes in sumptuary laws in smaller German towns date from the seventeenth century.

high officials. The unstated idea was that they were to serve as models to their entire community. The clothing regulation of Sighișoara shows a similar stance towards the highest officials. On account of their public office, it was conceded that they had to distinguish themselves from the others in their clothes as well but without showing anything luxurious or obnoxious (*nichts üppiges oder ärgerliches*), while dressing according to their status (*wie es ihrem stande gemäsz komt*).⁵¹

The sumptuary law of Mediaș (1767) includes a wedding regulation as well, with differentiated provisions for each of the five classes regarding the food they were allowed to serve (what meats and how many dishes), the number of dancing couples and the permitted number of guests. For instance, the lowest class were prescribed only three “customary” meals: the usual roast, sweet bread and pie, and some fruit. The fifth class, which was the highest, were allowed an eight-course meal including the roast, but without the “expensive cakes with almonds, sugar etc. etc. any other similar sweets and confectionery.”

None of the sumptuary laws resort to the rhetoric of unruly women who devote themselves to lavish displays of colour or pricey fabrics, but they do expose the consequences of a reckless behaviour of men who drive their family to ruin (Mediaș 1767). Heads of households, men alone were held responsible and accountable for the welfare of their family; with their behaviour they set the example and model to follow. The gendered approach of the Saxon sumptuary laws is a straightforward division of provisions into male and female subjects. Sons and daughters were included in the class of the parent of corresponding gender.

Foreign novelties and adopting new fashions are not a shared concern of all the laws examined here. In 1650, the political and ecclesiastical authorities issued a sumptuary law in Mediaș, forbidding red and yellow boots for going to church and the new foreign long hair.⁵² The 1755 sumptuary law of Sighișoara ordered that new fashions generally were to be averted, while the expression “made to the latest fashion” (*nach der neuen mode gemacht*) is mentioned only once in the Bistrița sumptuary law (1780) for the fourth class. Generally, interdictions were imposed on garish new colours in fabrics and ribbons.

The clothing law of 1696 of Sibiu opened a new rhetoric of merit and respect, of social status and right pairing of materials and colours: the cloth of Sibiu could not be matched with a sable hat, yellow tall boots, thin headscarf, thin batiste apron, expensive lace and red shoes etc. Patricians whose forefathers had served the city were allowed sable hats and four horses for their carriages, English cloth and blue silk. Commoners had to be content with sable tails for their hat brims, local cloth and linen, without expensive jewellery. This particular law also prescribed what women should wear indoors: the wives of prominent citizens could wear dyed serge (*perpet*) aprons in their home around the cooking stove, but commoners’ wives

⁵¹ *Corpus statutorum*, vol. I, p. 626.

⁵² O. Meltzl, *op. cit.*, p. 25 states that the long hair mentioned in this sumptuary law refers to wigs, that had just come into fashion; I am not fully convinced that this is the case.

only plain linen aprons.⁵³ In this *Kleiderordnung*, certain topics of Austrian *Policeyordnungen* can be recognised such as: the idea of merit and that of serving the public good.

Several markers for status and social identity occur in all Transylvanian clothing laws.⁵⁴ Luxury tended to be associated with the expensive and rare, but in my opinion the layering in classes of allowed or forbidden clothes in the Transylvanian *Kleiderordnungen* created several degrees of luxury, with varied levels of approved spending and display.

For the upper classes full sable hats, wide sable brims and trims, velvet and heavy silk fabrics, and lace were the items most commonly forbidden. Fox fur was allowed, but the better parts of the fur were not for the lower classes, who could only wear fox tail and claws as collars for their coats. Foreign cloth was for the affluent, local Transylvanian cloth and linen for the working classes, who were also allowed *bogasia* and other cheap cotton textiles. Girdles were made of silk with various fastenings and tassels; silk, gold and silver thread were permitted for the higher echelons of the urban communities. The ribbons and bands that Saxon women wore attached to their headgear had to be modest, not garish or too wide. High-heeled shoes and tall boots had just come into fashion and only the higher classes were allowed to have them.

SOCIAL CONTROL, NATION BUILDING AND *GUTE POLICEY*

In Sibiu, the capital city of the Transylvanian Saxons, the first sumptuary laws issued locally were a wedding regulation (1547) and a town statute on banquets and on setting the pay for day-labourers and domestics (1565). These most probably emulate the regulations issued for the Austrian lands during the same period.⁵⁵ The early sumptuary laws were called simply “statutes,” similarly to other pieces of legislation (decrees) passed by town authorities. Even the sumptuary law of 1652 from Braşov was still named “articles,” but the one from 1693 was already issued as a *Polizeyordnung* – an ordinance for policing good behaviour. Seen as a measure to curb excess, this was a programmatic document of the town authorities to set an example and veer the community away from luxury. This particular sumptuary law came four years after a great fire destroyed most of the city, and the restoration of proper Christian morals and modesty were immediate remedies to appease God. The town authorities, the *Obrigkeit*, “fatherly” admonish citizens to take the law in earnest and that “everyone remain within their bounds” (*daß ein jeder in seinen Schranken verbleibe*). In 1754, the city fathers of Braşov argued for the “beneficial

⁵³ A. N., *Zur Volkskunde. Aus den Protokollen des Hermannstädter Kapitels*, in “Korrespondenzblatt des Vereins für siebenbürgische Landeskunde,” 31, 1908, nos. 3–5, p. 73.

⁵⁴ For the role of clothing as marker of social status see Martin Dinges, *Von der “Lesbarkeit der Welt” zum universalisierten Wandel durch individuelle Strategien. Die soziale Funktion der Kleidung in der höfischen Gesellschaft*, in “Saeculum,” 44, 1993, no. 1, p. 91.

⁵⁵ *Quellenkunde der Habsburger Monarchie*, ed. by Josef Pauser, Vienna, 2004, p. 223.

and salubrious regulations” entailed by the police ordinances of the town. Further, this ordinance was issued in anticipation of the annual fair: the regulation warned the “beloved citizenry” to avoid buying any merchandise that would serve luxury and opulence. Among these unwanted products, officials listed fabrics with velvet, gold or silver, fox fur, and generally any goods produced abroad.

Overall, the eighteenth century Transylvanian clothing laws aim mostly at establishing and maintaining a social and political order based on the professional and social status of each inhabitant of the town. While they addressed the universal issue of luxury as irrational spending, some sumptuary laws responded to actual situations and were informed by recent events. The fact that they reacted to certain perceived urgencies shows that they were a strong instrument in exercising power and governing. Moreover, the variations in their style and elegance of writing reveal the strife for originality, as town notaries showed off their rhetorical skills in composing the texts of the laws.⁵⁶

I have mentioned that the eighteenth century sumptuary laws issued in Transylvanian Saxon towns were inspired by the *Policeyordnungen* of the Austrian Empire, however they were not simple imitations of these. Examining the clothing laws of Sibiu from the seventeenth century and those of the eighteenth century, the shift in the concept of the regulations is evident: the vague social distinction of the first clothing law of Sibiu from 1696 was replaced by the fine layering of the town burghers into nine classes. Thus, the local lawmakers adapted the templates to their needs and visions. The townsfolk of Mediaş and Bistriţa were both separated into five classes, but the councillors of Mediaş decided to count the classes from bottom up, therefore soldiers, gate keepers, bakers and journeymen were included in the first class. In Sighişoara there were practically eight classes, since the second and third of the five Latin ‘classes’ contained several sub-classes, numbered in German! Furthermore, the first class of the *tertia classis* were allowed the same clothes and accessories as the third class of the *secunda classis* – the distinction between them was merely clerical and hierarchical.

Arranging and defining the classes for the purposes of the clothing laws was done by combining the social status (patricians, noblemen), the professional status (notary, physician, learned people, artisans, servants) and the political status (members of the small council, members of the greater council) of the citizens. Each sumptuary law grouped citizens according to different criteria, just as the professional and social categories varied from town to town. The stance of the regulations shifted from listing the forbidden fabrics, materials or accessories to naming the allowed ones. In the Sibiu clothing law of 1755, the four upper classes were provided with the inventory of the items that they were not permitted to

⁵⁶ It is known that town notaries were instrumental in devising the official discourse of power in town chancelleries. For Transylvania see Ágnes Flóra, *Laborem circumspicenti domini notarii. Town Notaries in Early Modern Transylvania*, in *Writing and the Administration of Medieval Towns. Medieval Urban Literacy*, ed. by Marco Mostert, Anna Adamska, vol. I. Turnhout, 2014, pp. 313–335.

display, while the lowest five classes received detailed lists of full clothing (from head to toe) that they could wear. The most populous social groups (artisans, servants, maids, day-labourers, etc.) were excluded from using foreign fabrics and were encouraged to resort to local cloth and linen for their garments. This was a very clear mercantilist measure applied in small, making sure that local textile industries were not in want of customers.⁵⁷

The issue of donated, inherited or hand-me-down clothes is not addressed in any of the clothing regulations examined, whereas second-hand clothes were a significant part of personal wardrobes.⁵⁸ The *Kleiderordnung* of Orăștie (1723) urged townfolk to remove from their homes the forbidden items once the law was issued: *soll ein jeder der was dergleichen in seinem Hause hat, von dem Tag der Publicirung dieselben [Kleiderordnung] abschaffen*.

The clothing regulations relaxed the rules for feast days and for certain festivities; Neithard Bulst stated that such occasions served as a release for the citizens,⁵⁹ a safety valve for averting conflict and discontent. Compliance was probably attained not without transgressions, but neither of these aspects is of primary interest here. In fact, we have hardly any information to date on how sumptuary laws were received and observed. One exceptional instance, noted by Silvia Popa, is found in the diary of Thomas Tartler, parish priest in Brașov, who mentioned in his diary the reaction of the city folk to the sumptuary laws.⁶⁰ He wrote that: “On 2 March [1732] a new clothing law was read out, but the only outcome was that no one followed it.”⁶¹

The eighteenth century Transylvanian clothing laws helped shape the national identity of the Transylvanian Saxons through costume. Officially created and sanctioned national costumes are not a local innovation: King Gustav III of Sweden established in 1778 the “national Swedish dress,”⁶² but it was aimed at the courtiers and had mercantilist undertones, with the purpose of encouraging the local cloth production.⁶³ The Bistrița and Orăștie *Kleiderordnungen* mention German and Hungarian costume separately from the Saxon costume. Under German clothes one meant the Austrian court fashion that had gained rapid ground in Transylvania after

⁵⁷ C. Berry, *op. cit.*, p. 79 on economic reasons for clothing laws in medieval England. Also Hermann Freudenberger, *Fashion, Sumptuary Laws, and Business*, in “Business History Review,” 37, 1963, pp. 46–48.

⁵⁸ The practice of bequeathing clothes is well-documented by early modern Transylvanian testaments and executors’ account books.

⁵⁹ N. Bulst, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

⁶⁰ Silvia Popa, *Vestimentația brașovenilor vechi și noi. Despre modul de reprezentare a senatorilor brașoveni în secolul al XVIII-lea prin prisma vestimentației*, in *Portretele patriatului săsesc din Brașov. Un capitol de artă transilvană – Bildnisse sächsischer Patriziat aus Kronstadt. Ein Kapitel siebenbürgischer Kunst*, Brașov, 2013, p. 46.

⁶¹ *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Brassó*, Brașov, 1918, p. 132: “Den 2. März wurde die neue Kleider-Ordnung verlesen, allein der Ausgang hats gewiesen, dass sich Niemand daran gekehret.”

⁶² Johanna Ilmakunnas, Jon Stobart, *Display, Acquisition and Boundaries of Luxury and Taste*, in *A Taste for Luxury*, ed. by Johanna Ilmakunnas, Jon Stobart, p. 10.

⁶³ H. Freudenberger, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

1700 and was adopted by wealthy patricians.⁶⁴ The colonisation of German-speaking protestants from the Hereditary Lands of the Habsburg Monarchy in the eighteenth century, the *Landler*, who could have introduced new styles of clothing, did not leave traces in the sumptuary laws of the Transylvanian Saxons.⁶⁵

PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

Transylvanian sumptuary laws of the early modern period held the same concerns and representations for social order and propriety as their European counterparts. In this paper I discussed the changes to sumptuary legislation issued in the Saxon towns of Transylvania from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. I have treated this legislation as a group, although variation existed and regulations from different towns did not copy one another. My main argument and conclusion is that sumptuary legislation, in its delayed form compared to the Western European trend, was an expression of good governance, of the relationship between town councils and their subjects, of the concern and care that authorities showed for the citizens.

The eighteenth century sumptuary legislation concerning clothing adapted Austrian patents and *Policeyordnungen* more closely, by dividing the town inhabitants into classes and prescribing the allowed and forbidden fabrics and accessories suitable for each class. Luxury in clothing (*Pracht*) was not a central concern of the Transylvanian legislation, which emphasised more the imperative for reigning in excessive spending and the necessity for individuals to dress according to their standing. As Neithard Bulst suggested, town councils as legitimate authorities relied on the acceptance of their representations and norms among their governed subjects, acceptance of the assigned place in the community.⁶⁶ My main aim was to examine the projections of an orderly society through the control of clothing and through social restraint, the norms meant to shape the visible and recognisable society, with hardly any personal choice in self-fashioning and self-presentation.⁶⁷ I have deliberately not addressed the question of acceptance and enforcement. At this stage of my research, my concern was more for what the sumptuary laws stood for, their projections of concern for the common good, their aspirations for order and peace.

Further analysis should examine more closely the dynamic between territorial sumptuary legislation and urban clothing laws, in a manner similar to Ulinka Rublack's approach to this question.⁶⁸ Civic legislation from other towns in early modern

⁶⁴ S. Popa, *op. cit.*, p. 49–51.

⁶⁵ Irmgard Sedler, *Die Landler in Siebenbürgen. Gruppenidentität im Spiegel der Kleidung von der Mitte des 18. bis zum Endes des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Marburg, 2004, pp. 62–63, where the author points out that the *Landler* generally did not leave a lasting impression on the written testimonies of their contemporaries in Transylvania and, more specifically, Sibiu.

⁶⁶ N. Bulst, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

⁶⁷ Giulia Calvi, *Le leggi suntuarie e la storia sociale*, in *Disciplinare il lusso. La legislazione suntuaria in Italia e in Europa*, ed. by Maria Giuseppina Muzzareli, Antonella Campanini, p. 216.

⁶⁸ U. Rublack, *op. cit.*, p. 267.

Transylvania should be uncovered in the archives, or perhaps attempts at legislating consumption included in more general pieces of legislation in polities with less complex systems of governance and administration. This, in turn, could probably answer the crucial question of why sumptuary legislation appeared and thrived exclusively in the Saxon towns of Transylvania.

APPENDIX I

Sumptuary Laws of Transylvanian Saxon Towns Examined in the Present Study

Town	Year	Archival/Bibliographical reference
Bistrița (Bistritz)	1532	Oskar Meltzl, <i>Über Luxus und Luxusgesetze. Dissertation zur Erlangung des juristischen Doktorgrades</i> , Sibiu, 1870, pp. 23–29.
	1533	<i>Ibidem.</i>
	1637	Otto Dahinten, <i>Geschichte der Stadt Bistritz in Siebenbürgen</i> , Cologne, 1988, p. 456.
	1640	<i>Ibidem.</i>
	1714	<i>Ibidem</i> , pp. 457–460.
	1726	<i>Ibidem</i> , p. 462.
	1780	<i>Ibidem</i> , pp. 460–461. Library of the Romanian Academy, Documente istorice, MDCCXXXVII*.
Brașov (Kronstadt)	1652	Archives of the Black Church in Brașov, Joseph Trausch manuscripts collection, IV F1 T9–101, pp. 93–96.
	1677	<i>Ibidem</i> , pp. 97–103.
	1693	<i>Ibidem</i> , pp. 105–112.
	1697	<i>Ibidem</i> , pp. 113–115.
	1709	<i>Ibidem</i> , pp. 121–125.
	1732	<i>Ibidem</i> , pp. 131–141.
	1736	National Archives of Brașov, Actele magistratului, I 84, no. 548.
Mediaș (Mediasch)	1650	O. Meltzl, <i>op. cit.</i> , pp. 24–25, note 3.
	1767	National Archives of Sibiu (NAS), Brukenthal Collection, Q1–4, no. 123.
Orăștie (Broos)	1723	<i>Corpus statutorum Hungariae jurium municipalium</i> , vol. I, ed. by Sándor Kolozsvári, Kelemen Óvári, Budapest, 1881, pp. 611–613.
Sibiu (Hermannstadt)	1547	Lost, summary in <i>Hermannstadt und Siebenbürgen. Die Protokolle des Hermannstädter Rates und der Sächsischen Nationsuniversität, 1391–1705</i> , ed. by Käthe Hientz, Bernhard Heigl, Thomas Sindilariu, Sibiu, 2007, p. 87.
	1565	Latest edition: <i>zu urkundt in das stadbuch lassen einschreiben. Die älteste Protokolle von Hermannstadt und der Sächsischen Nationsuniversität (1522–1565)</i> , ed. by Mária Pakucs-Willcocks, Sibiu, 2016, pp. 259–260.

* Thanks are due to dr. Elena Bedreag of the “Nicolae Iorga” Institute of History, who found this document in the Library of the Romanian Academy and generously passed on the reference.

	1574	Lost, summary in <i>Hermannstadt und Siebenbürgen</i> , p. 87.
	1650	O. Meltzl, <i>op. cit.</i> , p. 25.
	1685	NAS, Medieval Documents, U VI 1555 (wedding regulation).
	1689	A.N., <i>Kleiderordnung</i> , in “Korrespondenzblatt des Vereins für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde,” 31, 1908, nos. 5–6, pp. 73–75.
	1696	NAS, Medieval Documents, U VI 1977 (wedding and funeral regulation).
	1700	G.J. Haner, <i>Hochzeitgesetze für Hermannstadt aus dem J. 1700</i> , in “Transsilvania. Beiblatt zum Siebenbürger Bote,” 7, 24 December 1846, no. 102, pp. 465–467.
	1752	<i>Corpus statutorum</i> , vol. I, pp. 616–626.
	1760	Fr. Schuler von Libloy, <i>Materialen zur Siebenbürgische Rechtsgeschichte</i> , Sibiu, 1862, pp. 149–158.
Sighișoara (Schässburg)	1755	<i>Corpus statutorum</i> , vol. I, pp. 626–629.

APPENDIX II

Division in Classes of the Town Inhabitants and Regulation of Clothing in the Sumptuary Law of Bistrița, 1780**

I st Class	
Town judge, judges, town council, notary, public office holders, nobility	Forbidden: M: furs and coats made of velvet, of gold or silver fabric, or sable F: Any fabric or velvet with gold or silver stitching, sable or other fur lining below the breast, silk petticoats with gallons or lace
II nd Class	
Vice-notary, speaker, clerks, archivist, town doctor, four senior members of the centumvirate	Forbidden: (and everything on the previous class) M: lynx, sable or any expensive fur lining, damask, silk lining, gold and silver pieces on waistcoats and sable trim on the skincoats F: Gold and silver caps, lace (point d’Espagne) on the waistcoats, silk petticoats, sable trim on coats except for collars
III rd Class	
Members of the centumvirate, merchants, pharmacist, surgeons, town organist, clock maker, painter	Forbidden: M: lynx, sable and fox as trim, gold and silver braids or laces on the girdle, any gold or silver lace, waistcoats of heavy silk fabric, hats with sable brims F: all gold and silver or napkins from Milan, muslin or taffeta sleeves and aprons, gold and silver lace and collars, winter hide coats with fox brims, silk summer hats, <i>carton</i> , sable trims on caftans, hats or other items of clothing, gold and silver braids, lace on Hungarian braids, silk stockings, German shoes with Saxon costume and silk (shoes) with German costume

** I followed the order of classes and genders in the original law.

M = articles referring to male clothing; F = articles concerning female clothing.

IV th Class	
Burghers not members of the centumvirate, apprentices	<p>Forbidden:</p> <p>M: all fine broad hats, made of French cloth, winter hats with silk or velvet brims, all silk trimmings, all fur brim except for fox back and lamb skin, all fine English, French, Dutch cloth for cloaks, waistcoats, trousers or on other items, gold and silver laces, canes, all kinds of headdress with the German, Saxon or Hungarian costume, all silk, high-heeled shoes, no boots with the Saxon costume</p> <p>F: silk gowns, petticoats of <i>carton</i>, batiste aprons and shirts, silk collars, velvet winter hats, waistcoats made of silk with stitching, except for taffeta and <i>creditor</i> shoes (high heeled boots are allowed), <i>portfir</i> braids, <i>portfir</i> in Hungarian and German braids, lynx, marten or silken <i>Stutze</i>, made after the latest fashion</p>
V th Class	
Burghers who work as journeymen with other guild masters	<p>Forbidden:</p> <p>M: all foreign cloth, all sorts of trim except for lamb skin, silk laces, silk or velvet girdles, marten winter hats</p> <p>F: white bonnets, all silk napkins, fine aprons, <i>carton</i>, black gowns of any fabric, silk waistcoat, all trims (except for fox back and dewlap, lamb skin), all <i>portfir</i> braids, all silk fabric except for taffeta in the German and Hungarian braids, all sorts of high heeled shoes or boots.</p>

TRANSYLVANIAN CIVIC SUMPTUARY LAWS IN THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD: PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

Abstract

This article examines the Transylvanian sumptuary laws of the early modern period, in a first analysis with a historical emphasis on this particular legislation. Sumptuary legislation appeared in the sixteenth century in the urban centres of the Transylvanian Saxons. Beginning with the eighteenth century, the Habsburg administration issued territorial clothing laws for the entire province, while urban councils of the Saxon towns also continued issuing their own sumptuary legislation, which were inspired by the *Policeyordnungen* of the Austrian Empire, without being simple imitations of these. As a preliminary study, I highlighted the main concerns of sumptuary laws, their emphasis on social order and restraint, on the division of urban communities into professional and social groups, and on the notion of luxury.

Keywords: sumptuary laws; Saxons; Transylvanian towns; luxury; social order; governance



Figure 1. Sumptuary Law from Mediaș, 1767 (source: Sibiu National Archives, Brukenthal Collection, Q1-4, no. 123).