

COSMIN POPA-GORJANU, *The regional identity and the Transylvanian nobility in the fourteenth century*

**Abstract:** This study examines the emergence and manifestations of the regional identity of the Transylvanian nobility between late thirteenth century and 1366. The investigation is a part of a wider comparative approach of the development of regions and regional identities in the European Middle Ages which focuses on the interplay between internal and external factors in the dynamic of regional developments. This study aimed to analyse the collective actions of the Transylvanian nobles as manifested in their interactions with the royal, voivodal and episcopal authorities between 1280s-1366. The community of Transylvanian nobles appeared first in the sources in the late 1280s as a legal estate participating in the congregations of Transylvania together with the Saxons, Szeklers, and Romanians. Starting from 1324, the Transylvanian nobles became an active social group, distinguished by their regional identity, who negotiated and obtained a number of eight privilegial charters or letters of agreement (1324, 1335, 1342, 1344, 1355, 1366). These collective privileges testify not only to the immediate concerns of the community of Transylvanian nobles, but at the same time they allow an assessment of their capacity of collective action and mobilization as a distinct group within the estate of *nobiles regni*. The main criterion of differentiation of the Transylvanian nobles from those of the kingdom was their separate regional identity, which was the basis of their common actions in negotiating and the defending the group's interests.

**Keywords:** regional identity, nobility, community, Transylvania, privilege.