

Theses of (PhD) dissertation

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**The nationality policy implications of the Russian invasions in 1914-1915**

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2016.



and in pictures) edited by Tivadar Landor. Among the modern Hungarian historians, Tibor Hajdú deals with the description of the military purposes of the Tsarist Russia with Hungary.

The military historical processing of the Russian invasions started partly in the period of the World War I and the years after that by comprehensive studies of military experts.

Pavel Miljukov (1859 – 1943) a Russian politician, historian and publicist in his book *Чего ждет Россия от войны* (What does Russia expect from the war?) published in 1915, writes about the territory claims of Russia. Miljukov thought there was no doubt that the Russian occupation of the territories of Northeast Hungary populated mainly by Rusyns was the beginning of the accession to Russia.

Mihail Boncs-Brujevics, a Russian military theoretician and major general, published his book *Через Карпаты в Венгрию зимою 1915 года* (Through the Carpathians to Hungary in the winter of 1915) in 1920, in which he analyses the Galician theatre operation in 1914-15 and also writes about the strategic evaluation of the intrusion of the Russian military leadership through the Carpathians.

Andrej Zajonckovszkij Medardovics<sup>1</sup> in his book *Подготовка России к мировой войне* (*The preparation of Russia for the war*) which was published in 1926, studied the military preparation of the Tsarist Empire preceding the war and here he describes the strategic task of the offensive through the Carpathians. In the third volume of the book written by the same author about the military events of the World War I, can be found a detailed map description of the Carpathian operations of the Russian south-western front in February, 1915, which helps the Reader in reconstructing the military events.<sup>2</sup>

However, the science of History still owes us an explanation and the exploration of the specificities of the opposing parties' ethnic policy towards the communities in the territory during the Russian invasion. Independently from the rich historiographical research on the period and the eastern front of the World War I, at the hundredth anniversary of the Carpathian Russian invasions, the complex processing of the events and national policy attractions connected to these invasions preserved the scientific topicality.

In my study, I describe the impact of the Russian military invasions – which happened through the Carpathians in 1914 and in 1915 – on the ethnic policy in the northeast counties of Hungary. In order to explore the question my goals are the following:

- to clarify the aims and motivations of the penetration of the tsarist troops through the Carpathians; for this purpose I will use the recollections of Alekszej Alekszejevics Bruszilov, a Russian imperial general and the findings of other military experts and military historians;
- to describe the elements of the Panslav propaganda which was being advertised among the population of the northeast counties of Hungary from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; a separate section will be devoted for the description of the North American Rusyn diaspora and to the concept of Pan Slavism;
- to describe the everyday life elements of the local population of Ung, Bereg and Máramaros counties – which mountainous parts became the scene of the open military opposition of the Austro-Hungarian and the Tsarist armies.
- to explore the Hungarian national policy regarding the Russian invasions. I will report on the standpoint of the Hungarian government concerning Panslavism after the schism lawsuit in Máramarossziget, in 1914 and the practical policies will also be analysed.

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<sup>1</sup> Andrej Medardovics Zajonckovszkij (Андрей Медардович Зайончковский, 1862–1926) – Russian general infantry, and later the professor of the military academy of the Red Army.

<sup>2</sup> Зайончковский А.: Мировая война 1914–1918. том. 3. Карты. Москва, Воениздат, 1939.

## II. Methodology and structure of the research

A variety of available historical resources were used in the dissertation: recollections, diaries, document collections. György Kozma – a non-local Hungarian officer, who fulfilled the position of the sub-notary in Bereg County in the period – discusses the evolving events in the territory from a special point of view in his recollection *Egy vármegye harca és haldoklása (The fight and dying of a county)* which was published in 1938, in Szentes. From the memoirs, the diary of Tivadar Lehoczky – a Transcarpathian historian who witnessed the events– was used, which is an unpublished work written in the last years of the author with the title *Világháborúnk (Our World War)* and can be found in the Transcarpathian Regional State Archives (TSRA) (Kárpátaljai Területi Állami Levéltár, KTÁL). The manuscript details the events of the World War from 28 June, 1914, until 31 October, 1915, throughout 947 pages. Due to his deteriorating health state and his death on 5 November, 1914, he couldn't finish the chronicle. The Ukrainian historiography did not interpret the manuscript realistically in the 1990s. Lehoczky, in his four volumes handwritten diary describes the events of the World War I he witnessed himself. However, he doesn't only describe the operations; more open-minded information is given for the interested historians and readers.

The aims and motivations of the invasions of the Russian troops to Hungary were outlined based on the recollections of the Russian General, Alekszej Alekszejevics Bruszilov.

Important additional information is provided for the exploration of the background events by the memoirs of Colonel Maximilian Ronge - the leader of the military intelligence of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy - which were published in Russian, in 1939 with the title *Hírszerzés és kémelhárítás (Intelligence and counter-espionage)*. For the reconstruction of the national political implications of the events, I found crucial additional information in the memoir of Ágoston Volosin, who, in the last phase of his career – which was rich in major sympathy shifts - became a Ukrainist politician from a Greek Catholic priest. The memoir was published in Ukrainian in 1959 in the USA *Спомини: релігійно-національна боротьба карпатських русинів-українців проти мадярського шовінізму*. I also used the recollections of Ágoston Stefán, a Ukranophil socio-political actor, which was published in 1973 in Toronto. According to him, the military actions of the Tsarist troops were propaganda, and had no military relevance or importance. “It was not in harmony with the common French-Russian military plan” – he claimed with no bases.

For the description of the opinion of the Hungarian political circles concerning the Russian invasions Albert Berzeviczy's (a representative of the National Labour Party) diary was used with the title *Az ország belepusztul ebbe a háborúba (The country will die in this war)*, published in 2014.

From the published document collections a great support was Gábor Kemény G.'s fundamental series: *Iratok a nemzetiségi kérdés történetéhez (Documents to the history of the nationality question)*.

From the group of archive resources I processed the primary documents related to the topic of the főispán and alispán of the a counties of Ung, Bereg, Máramaros and Ugocsa which were found in the Transcarpathian State Regional Archives (TSRA) and in the Hungarian State Archives (HAS). Besides this at the TSRA I also analysed the fonds that can be found in the documents of the Ministry of the Hungarian Royal Agriculture's Highland Branch and the Greek Catholic Episcopate of Munkács. Furthermore, in the HAS I investigated the documents of the Ministry of Presidency, the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, concerning the

four counties. In the HAS the document heritage of the Kozma family can be found, namely the correspondence between István Gulácsy, deputy sheriff of Bereg county and Ferenc Kozma (the father of György Kozma). analyses of this correspondence helped us very much to evaluate the national sentiment in the bereg region right before the Russian invasions. Besides, it also contained information on the economic situation of Bereg county and on the organisation of the highland action by the Hungarian government. In the fond of the Tisza-documents that can be found at the Synod Archive of the Hungarian Reformed Protestant Church, I found recourse documents about the politics of István with the Rusyns, and the governmental actions after the invasions.

The national (pro and contra government), local and international press documents also served as resources for the dissertation.

According to the census data of 1910 we prepared the ethnic and religious map of the territory of today's Transcarpathia. In further maps we presented the locations of the three Russian invasions. *In The importance of Russian invasions* figure we described military-strategic significance of the Tsarist invasion. In the same map we marked the eastern border of the Latin orthography and the Gregorian calendar.

The dissertation is structured according to the thematic organisational principle. It consists of six major structural elements. In the first chapter the historiographical background of the topic was reviewed. I dedicated the second chapter to the history of the period of the Dualism in Northeast Hungarian Highland, including Bereg, Máramaros, Ung, and Ugocsa counties; here the emergence of the concept of Transcarpathia was detailed as well as the social-economic situation of the Rusyns, their American emigration and the impact of national ideas on the Rusyn community. In the third chapter of the dissertation I describe the nationality policy of the dualist Hungarian governments, focusing on the general goals of the state national policy and the Hungarian state national policy goals regarding the Rusyns. In the fourth chapter of the work I study the spread of the Pan-Slav ideas in the counties of Northeast Hungary. Based on the Hungarian and international literature I analyse the historical development of the interpretation of the concept of Pan-Slavism; besides the spread of the Pan-Slav ideas in Northeast Hungary the measures taken by the Hungarian government in order to suppress Russophilism. Furthermore, I describe the opinion of the Galician and Russian press on the schism movement and the lawsuit of Máramaros. In the fifth chapter of the doctoral dissertation I examined the situation of the territory populated by Rusyns right before the World War I and in the initial stages. I also described the role of Northeast Hungary in the political and military goals of the Tsarist Empire, the atmosphere before the Russian military invasions in Bereg, Máramaros, Ung and Ugocsa counties, the event series of the migration flow caused by the Carpathian invasions of 1914-1915 and by the war, and the economic consequences of the battles. The last chapter of the dissertation discusses the reform efforts of the Hungarian government in Ruthenia during the World War. The tour of the prime-minister, István Tisza, in Northeast Hungary after the first Russian invasion is detailed because this visit has national political implications too. Furthermore, I explored the national political consequences of the Carpathian invasion of the Tsarist troops, the attempts to abolish the use of the Cyrillic alphabet and to change the calendar.

### **III. New findings**

In the researched territory, the spread of the great Russian Pan-Slav ideas started to intensify from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which let us suppose, that one of the strategic goals of the Tsarist Russian Empire

was to gain Galicia, the province of the Monarchy which was mainly populated by Ukrainians, furthermore, to gain the northeast counties of the Hungarian Kingdom, where the majority of the population was Rusyn.

In the years before the World War, the officers of Ung, Bereg, Máramaros és Ugocsa counties continuously and multiply reported on a Russophile sentiment to the government. In this period there was no government or administrative network built for the management of the nationality question. This implied that the members of the Highland Branch who operated the highland action and the members of the Royal Hungarian Cultural Engineering Office in Máramarossziget had to fulfil functions which otherwise was not their job: reporting on the Pan-Slav atmosphere to the government.

Not long after the beginning of the World War I, the officers of Ung County expressed their worries to the government of Budapest about the Pan-Slav and Russophile sentiment among the Rusyns in the territory. The different kinds of separatist ideas were not welcomed in the Hungarian state ideology, especially on the verge of world war.

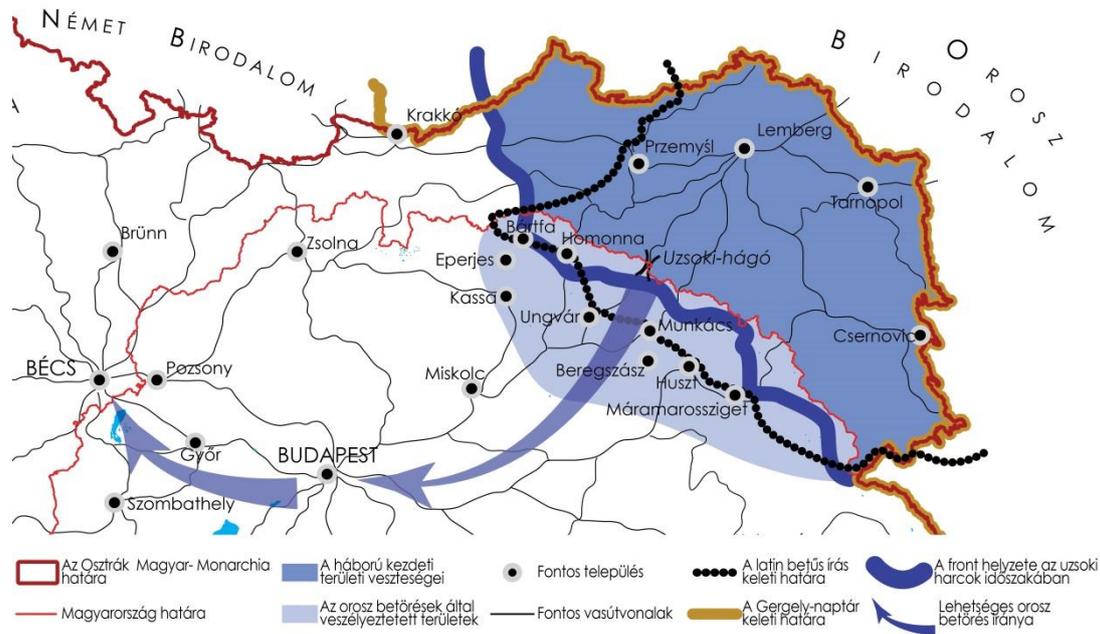
In the initial phase of the war, mainly in the period after the Russian invasion at the end of September, 1914, the area of Northeast Hungary became the focus of the Hungarian political life and the attention of the public opinion. This was the period when the political leaders considered it as a danger that the Tsarist troops could get all the way to Budapest. Since 1849 it has been the first threat of military invasion by Russia against Hungary, which threat primarily and directly endangered the eastern counties of the historical Highland territories of Hungary (Felvidék) – Bereg, Máramaros, Sáros, Ugocsa, Ung and Zemplén counties. The fact that the probability of a Russian invasion was considered at the state political level is shown in the diary of Albert Berzeviczy, an important politician of the National Labour Party. He recorded a case when he had a conversation with Samu Hazai<sup>3</sup>, the Hungarian defense minister before the Invasion at Uzso, asking him whether the Carpathian sierra will serve as a defence line in case of the intrusion of the Russian tsarist Army.

Ivanov Nyikolaj Iudovics, the commander of the Russian south west front thought that the tsarist invasion should make a positive military and political impression on the northeast counties. The Russian military leadership did not report on any significant opposition from the side of the locals of the Hungarian counties – Bereg, Máramaros, Ung, Sáros, Zemplén – located northeast to the finish line which was outlined by the front commander.

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<sup>3</sup> Hazai Samu (till 1876 Kohn Sámuel; Rimaszombat, 1851.December 26. – Budapest, 1942. February 10.) official army officer, military general, 1910–1917 the Minister of Defense of the Hungarian Kingdom.

## Az orosz betörések jelentősége



### *The importance of Russian invasions*

After the first Carpathian invasion of the tsarist army, the Russian propaganda activity continued against the Austrian-Hungarian enemy, which directly affected the Slav population of the northeast counties of the country. At the beginning of the world war the Russian troops – who broke in through the Carpathian defiles – used a supportive tone and presented themselves as liberators. This is proved by the calls in this topic they addressed to the citizens of Hungary, amongst which the most agitating and provocative regarding the Hungarian nationality policy was published before the Russian invasions on 4 September, 1914, with the title *A magyar föld népeihez! (До народа угорско́й земли) (To the people of the Hungarian land)*, which had a sharp tone, indeed.

The most explicit actions against the Russophile agitation by the Hungarian government were the schism lawsuits against the Orthodox movement (schism movement). Besides this, the delivery right of Russophile newspapers was withdrawn in order to hinder the spread of Pan-Slav ideas in the territory of the Hungarian Kingdom.

While the initiated governmental program – the highland action – was exemplary and positively welcomed which aimed to economically support the poorest and, at the same time, the biggest nationality, the Rusyns and to boost their underdeveloped agriculture, it can also be evaluated as a well-planned nationality political step. The religion and national political actions during the mentioned lawsuits resulted in negative opinions in the given region, as well as in abroad.

The practice demonstrated by the judicial proceeding against political provocation did not prove to be successful, but on the contrary, it resulted in negative effects and fed the ideological propaganda against the Hungarian Kingdom.

The North American Rusyn diaspora had a significant influence on the national political circumstances of the northeast counties. The emigrated Hungarian Rusyns faced the Russian-Orthodox propaganda (supported by the Tsarist Empire and having a significant political weigh) for the first time in the New World. Those Rusyns who liked the idea of Orthodoxy started to advertise the Pan-Slav ideas when they returned to Hungary.

The schism lawsuits of Máramaros couldn't forestall the Pan-Slav and Russophile propaganda in the country, and in the northeast counties which were mostly affected by the problem

The Rusyns in the period investigated here sometimes got into the crosshair of the interaction of nationality ideas (which were often competing with each other) both in their homeland and in their communities beyond the ocean. The socio-political situation of Hungarian Rusyns was influenced by the following social ideological directions: Russophile, Ukranophile (local dialectal) and Hungarophile (magyarofil). The goal of the very opposite Russophile and Ukranophile directions was the same: to draw the Rusyns under their cultural and political leadership. In the period the Russophile trend seemed to be more threatening to the Hungarian nationality policy because the Russian Empire was behind it.

During the Russian invasions the Rusyns and the local Greek Catholic clergy was accused several times which discredited their patriotism and loyalty towards the state. It was very important for István Tisza to get all the sufficient information from the German army about the behaviour of the Greek Catholic clergy and the population. We can claim that the Rusyns did not join massively the Russian troops during the Russian invasions in 1914-1915, although we know cases when the local community showing their Russophile attitude were foraging together with the Russian soldiers. After the Russian invasions Tisza thought that the government should change the liberal nationality policy they had been doing.

Based on the (i) experience of the schism movement and the lawsuits of Máramaros, (ii) the observed events in the south Galician territories occupied by the Russian army and (iii) due to the financial gap that emerged from the state of war, the Hungarian government that already had to decrease the budget of the highland action (which aimed at economy development), took some further measures which influenced the cultural life in the field of nationality politics.

During the world war, two decisions were made by the government which goal was to suppress the ideology of Russophilism: the writing system reform which targeted the abolition of the Cyrillic letter and the calendar unification. These reforms were the direct consequences of the Russian invasions. The idea of these innovations was not new, they have been worded decades before the war, but the plan of their practical application was scheduled because of the threat of the direct war events.

Béla Jankovich, the Hungarian minister of culture – considering the fact that the Rusyn community in the diocese of Eperjes lived territorially and linguistically separated from the Ruthenian people of othe regions – did not want to join the planned actions of the dioceses of Eperjes and Munkács. Even being aware of the fact that the merging of the two actions could result in a reasonable financial saving, the Hungarian government was ready to provide the bishop of Eperjes with the necessary financial support for the execution of the separate action. The implementation of these innovations had different efficiency in the areas of the Greek Catholic Diocese of Eperjes and Munkács. Istvan Novák, the bishop of Eperjes was more opened to the implementation of the above mentioned reformed compared to Antal Papp, the bishop of Munkács.

With the continuation of the war events and after the Russian invasions, Ukranophilism had a more public articulation in the central Hungarian press by the initiative of the representative of the Ukranophile trend, Hiador Sztipszky, a bibliographer, ethnographer and literature historian. Despite the fact that this trend propagated separatist ideas to the Slav population of the northeast part of the country and had territory demands towards Hungary, in Budapest, in 1916, the *Ukrania* newspaper was first published as a counter pole to the Russophile propaganda.

The emerging historical picture shows that the Hungarian state national policy in the period had no complex concept regarding the comprehensive handling of the nationality problems of the investigated territory. During the time of war, the Hungarian government always chose the most obvious and simplest sometimes contradictory solutions to react to the challenges in the area of current nationality political problems.

#### **IV. A témában végzett publikációs tevékenység és konferencia-előadás**

##### **Tanulmányok:**

1. Агнеш Тутушка. Наслідки впливу ідей панславізму в комітатах Північно-Східної Угорщини на початку XX століття (A pánszláv eszmék hatásainak következményei Északkelet — Magyarország vármegyéiben a 20. század elején). In: Наукові записки. Богословсько-історичного наукового-дослідного центру імені Архимендрита Василя (Проніні). Всеукраїнське державне видавництво «Карпати» 2014. 294–303 pp.
2. Tutuskó Ágnes. Mazurok Oleg. Szabó Oreszt könyve a magyar oroszokról. Oleg Mazurok. Oreszt Szabov ta joho kniha pro uhorszkih rusziniv. In: Kisebbségkutatás. 22. évf. 2013. évi 1. szám.
3. Tutuskó Ágnes. Az 1914-es kárpátaljai orosz betörés Lehoczky Tivadar „A világháborúnk” című kézírata alapján. In: Hatos Pál (szerk.). PhD-Konferencia 2013: Balassi Intézet. Konferencia helye, ideje: Debrecen, Magyarország, 2013.02.08 Debrecen: Balassi Intézet Márton Áron Szakkollégium, 2013. pp. 524-530. (ISBN:978-615-5389-09-2)
4. Тутушка Агнеш. Вплив російських військових наступів 1914 року у Карпатах на політику щодо національностей в північно-східних комітатах Угорського Королівства. In: «Науковий вісник Ужгородського університету. Серія: Історія». - 2013. - Вип. 1. - С. 84-91.
5. Tutuskó Ágnes. A kárpátaljai rutén nép reagálása az 1914-1915. évi orosz betörésekre. In: Pro Minoritate 2012. nyár. pp. 33-47.

##### **Conference presentations:**

1. The consequences of the impacts of the Pan-Slav ideas in the counties of northeast Hungary in the beginning of the 20th century. Az 1913–1914. évi második máramarosszigeti per 100. évfordulója alkalmából rendezett nemzetközi tudományos konferencia. Ungvár, 2014. február 8–9.
2. Carpathian Russian invasions 1914/1915. Front és hátország a Nagy Háborúban. Szeged, a Szegedi Akadémiai Bizottság Székháza, 2015. november 26.
3. The nationality political implications of the Russian invasions in 1914-1915. Az első világháború a Kárpátokban. Eperjes, 2016. április 14–15.