

CSILLA FEDINEC

Attempts of self-determination by the Carpathian Rusyns in the 1860s

Abstract: In the 1860s, the Ruthenians also formulated their basic political demands, similar to the other nationalities in Hungary, although in a less visible way as far as “big politics” on international level is concerned. These political demands were much broader than the right to use the language granted in the Act XLIV of 1868 on National Equality. As such, they can be understood as characteristic manifestations of national self-determination. It is useful to organize these elements into a kind of catalog of problems, with the aim of assessing the legal norms that have been implemented on this basis, as opposed to earlier approaches that did not rely on such a comparison.

Keywords: Austro-Hungarian Compromise; Ruthenians or Carpathian Rusyns; language rights; parliamentary representation; autonomy

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Introduction

In the linguistically, culturally and denominationally diverse Kingdom of Hungary, Latin was the language of education and office until the first half of the 19th century. After a struggle lasting about half a century, Act II of 1844 made Hungarian the exclusive language, except for in Croatia, which was granted a six-year grace period. However, there was no mention of the other languages used in the country. Nor were there any references to nationalities in the laws of 1848. The issue of nationalities became prominent in Parliament from 1861, following the Serbian and Slovak movements and the October Diploma of 1860 of the Habsburg Emperor, which made it clear that Hungary too needed to institutionalize national equality (Nagy M. 2017: 139–157). In one of the accompanying documents of the October Diploma, the Habsburg Emperor stipulated Hungarian as the language of the Hungarian offices, but also declared that the municipalities could determine the language of their internal affairs and the language of instruction in schools and that citizens could address the state offices in their own language (Deák 2009: 77–78).

Hungarian politicians did not consider territorial (political) autonomy for minorities to be conceivable, but only the granting of basic linguistic and cultural rights within the framework of “a unified and indivisible Hungarian nation in accordance with the histo-

rical concept of the Hungarian state” (Vasas 2001: 99–128). The national minority representatives of the parliament proposed a list of “all peoples living in the country” and their definition as “nationalities with equal rights.” In contrast, Act XLIV of 1868 on National Equality codified the “indivisible, united Hungarian nation,” relying on individual rights instead of collective rights for nationalities (Szarka 2017: 1575).

The title of the Act XLIV of 1868 refers to national equality, but the law deals almost exclusively with language use: it states that the only official language is Hungarian, and regulates “the official use of the various languages in vogue in the country” (i.e., it defines nationalities primarily by their language, so it is in fact a language law; Andrassy 2017a: 4; Andrassy 2017b: 69–70; Nagy 2017: 71). Evans also concluded that the legislation narrowed the nationality question explicitly to the problem of language, but also pointed out that the introduction, which attempted to reconcile the many views, ended up being a “grammatical jungle,” which contributed to its later widespread misunderstanding (Evans 2006: 195). To quote the passage of law in question: “As all the citizens of Hungary, according to the principles of the Constitution, constitute one nation in political terms, the indivisible and united Hungarian nation, of which all citizens, of whatever nationality, are equal members; as this equality of rights can only be subject to special rules for the official use of the various languages in vogue in the country, and only to the extent that the unity of the country, the practical necessity of government and administration, and the accurate administration of justice require; the full equality of rights of the citizens of the country in all other respects remaining intact, the following rules for the official use of the various languages will serve as a standard [...].”¹ Within the political nation of Hungary, the Hungarian linguistic-cultural element has mostly prevailed (Evans 2017: 32), as a result of the political practice of Magyarization.

There is a rich literature on Hungarian nationality policy and the aspirations of individual ethnic groups in the period, including a relatively modest one on the Ruthenians (or Carpathian-Rusyns). In this paper, we will attempt to group together the claims made in connection with the Ruthenian nationalist movement in the period around the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867.

Official language

The legal regulation of language use has been common in Europe since the modern age. However, to this day there is no uniform definition of national, official or state language, the content of which is determined by the legislation of each state. Traditionally,

1 1868. évi XLIV. törvénycikk a nemzetiségi egyenjogúság tárgyában [<https://net.jogtar.hu/ezer-ev-torveny?docid=86800044.TV&searchUrl=/ezer-ev-torvenyei%3Fpagenum%3D28>].

the French Cardinal Richelieu is considered to be the first politician to have pursued a conscious language policy, consciously linking the existence of the state and the nation to a single national language (Szalayné Sándor 2009: 1343).

In the Habsburg Empire, the language issue began to be politicized from the end of the 18th century, before which linguistic diversity had not been a political difficulty. The members of the dynasty learned and spoke many languages, and St. Stephen's admonition that a country with one language and one custom was weak and fallible was a topos familiar to the Austrians (Evans 2006: 183). The rise of one living language above the others took place in the 18th century. In the competition between the different German language standards, the "correct" German language emerged, and Joseph II was the first of the monarchs to be taught it. This "correct" language was not, however, identical with the "German national language." Joseph II made German official in 1784, stressing that it was not for his own convenience, as he was quite fluent in Latin. However, he considered Hungarian to be underdeveloped and believed that it was spoken only by a minority (Evans 2006: 185–187). In response, the Hungarian nobility began its half-century-long struggle for the officialization of the Hungarian language, which was to be successful. At the same time, as Gyula Szekfű put it, the linguists, steeped in the ideas of the Enlightenment, had to realize that the boundaries of language and state did not yet coincide (Szekfű 1926: 23). Szekfű cited the example of Zólyom County, which in its appeal for the development of the Hungarian language, complained that nationalities were hindering the spread of the Hungarian language (i.e., "the patriotic wish of the greater part of the country"; Szekfű 1926: 34).

The use of official language in the post-1848–1849 period remains one of the most controversial issues in the Hungarian system of government. In the initial period, efforts were made to ensure that local offices used the mother tongue of the local population. However, instructions and intentions were not always sufficient: the official often gave priority to his own spoken language, and for certain languages there was no uniform language norm ("official language"), which was the case not only for Ruthenian, but also for Slovak and Romanian. At the same time, illiteracy was a problem among the population, as was the use of Cyrillic letters. From 1850 onwards, the language of the offices was again German, instead of Hungarian (Deák 2009: 37). This was the last attempt to govern the empire in one language. However, the exceptionally confrontational nature of the system soon became apparent (Evans 2006: 192).

The October Diploma of 1860 reorganized the use of languages in state offices, restoring the Hungarian official language. The emperor instructed the Hungarian Chancellor Count Antal Forgách to draft a law on the use of languages by non-Hungarian citizens, but the chancellor felt that where there was no complaint, no action was needed, and that there was no need for uniform regulation (Evans 2006: 86–87). The Act XLIV of 1868 on National Equality did not change the mainstream approach. Prime Minister of Hungary Baron Dezső Bánffy summed up the issue thusly: "If every-

one in the country will be able to speak Hungarian, as is everyone's duty under the law, there will be no need, from an equity point of view, to talk about the language use benefits granted to nationalities under the law in question" (Bánffy 1903: 33).

This was a departure from the practice of the Austrian Empire. The December Constitution in 1867, among other things, made Ruthenian the official language in Galicia, together with Polish, and in Bukovina, together with Romanian. The legislation legally enshrined the existing multilingual administrative practice. Its real novelty was the inclusion of a guarantee of legal redress: in the event of a nationality-linguistic violation of rights, recourse could be had to the courts. With the 1861 patent, representatives in the Imperial Council could speak in their mother tongue, although until 1917 only speeches in German were recorded in the minutes (Evans 2006: 194). From 1866, the national laws in Galicia were also published in German, Ruthenian, and Polish (Nagy 2019: 143–144).

The Austrian Empire was historically divided into provinces. The most autonomous, largest, and most populated of these was Galicia, with a predominantly Polish and Ruthenian-Ukrainian population, which from 1867 was effectively an autonomous province. After the turn of the century, Galicia's population exceeded eight million, while the center, Lviv, had a population of 200,000. In Galicia and Bukovina, which were part of the empire, the Russophile and Ukrainianophile tendencies competed with each other in the early 19th century. From the mid-1800s onwards, Vienna clearly supported the Ukrainian over the Russian among the competing linguistic and national trends.

The region later called Transcarpathia or Subcarpathia is much smaller in area, consisting of just villages and a few small towns, and has a much smaller population. The weakest lobbying was on the part of the Rusyns, although modern historiography describes the second half of the 19th century as a period of the Rusyn "awakening," "national rebirth" and "nation-building." The "people" spoke the local regional dialect, but the intelligentsia was trilingual: Russian, Ukrainian and Ruthenian consciousness struggled with each other. Even that particular local language was not uniform, with relatively significant differences between its dialects, and so the problem of the lack of a standard variety could not be solved by choosing a single dialect. Although many Slavic peoples in Europe and the monarchy were working to codify their own standard language varieties during the period, these examples did not have a decisive influence on the Ruthenians in Hungary (Cserniczkó and Fedinec 2018: 141–182).

During the era of the dualism, there were several attempts to replace the Cyrillic script with Latin script in the Ruthenian language (Cserniczkó 2013: 102–103). These attempts were unsuccessful, and beyond that period, apart from isolated attempts in Slovakia, the Cyrillic script was no longer questioned (Gustavsson 1998: 75–98). Despite the enthusiasm of the renowned Slavist Sándor Bonkáló in 1915 for the publication of a new type of textbook, which he personally approved and which was approved by the ministry, after the Greek Catholic Bishop of Eperje, István Novák István, ordered that the teaching of the Ruthenian mother tongue in his diocese should

be carried out from textbooks “based exclusively on the Latin alphabet and Hungarian phonetics,” the idea of Latinization merely added to the list of isolated attempts (Bonkáló 1916: 333).

Parliamentary representation

Three general elections were held in Hungary between 1848 and 1867, and 13 during the dualist period. The electoral system was determined by Act V of 1848 on the election of the delegates (representatives) to the national assembly on the basis on the principle of popular representation, by Act II of 1848 on the election of parliamentary deputies on the basis of representation of the people (Transylvanian Act), by Act XXXIII of 1874 on the amendment and supplementation of Act V of 1848 and Act II of 1848, and by Act XIV of 1913 on the election of the members of the Parliament. Act V of 1848 introduced a territorial electoral system in place of the previous system of envoys, with direct elections to the seats of deputies taking place in the center of the constituency. Elections were held in stages rather than on a single day. The post-Compromise elections were characterized by party participation. The parties were organized on the basis of their attitude to the Austro-Hungarian Compromise, and it was around this issue that the sharpest debates were held. Until 1919, less than 10% of the Hungarian population had the right to vote.

The purpose of the elections was to form the House of Representatives. The 1848 law provided for the formation of electoral districts, but in such a way that the “division of the country into electoral districts for the purpose of dispatch, and the jurisdictional territory and autonomy of counties, districts and free royal cities” did not cause any change (§ 4; i.e., the boundaries of the above administrative units were not crossed by the electoral districts). The House of Representatives, excluding Transylvania, consisted of 377 deputies, of which six were elected from the County of Maramarosh, four from the Counties of Ung and Bereg and two from the County of Ugocha. After the Austro-Hungarian Compromise, the constituencies were modified by the Act XLIII of 1868 on the Detailed Regulation of the Unification of Hungary and Transylvania, but these changes did not affect the northeastern part of the country, where the majority of the Ruthenian population lived. The “national question” was also raised during the preparation of the new electoral law, but the Act XXXIII of 1874 left the constituencies practically untouched, with two exceptions (Budapest and the Krajina), and subsequent changes were only a reaction to administrative changes. The northeastern part of the country was affected by the Act LXIII of 1881 on the adjustment of the boundaries of certain jurisdictions, when a settlement was annexed from Ung County to Zemplén County and from Bereg County to Ung County. The next electoral law, Act XIV of 1913, provided for the creation of a new law regulating constituencies, which was not adopted (Szabó 2002: 59–82).

According to the law, a constituency shall elect one representative. The Explanatory Memorandum to the Act states that “I consider it a definite mistake to portray our non-Hungarian fellow citizens as opponents of Hungarianness.² Life and experience contradict this. There are also many constituencies today where there are hardly any native Hungarians among the voters, yet without any opposition from any nationality, strong supporters of Hungarian national policy win seats. But I would like to emphasize that any electoral reform that would entail the marginalization of the Hungarian element would be an unforgivable political mistake.”³

The boundaries of the constituencies are decided by the county assembly. An interesting case from 1861 is discussed by Ruszoly. The boundaries of the electoral constituencies of Bereg County were determined by the county assembly in such a way that their centers were to be located in the field towns with a Hungarian population, crossing ethnic boundaries (Ruszoly 1983: 131). According to contemporary reports, in the Felvidék district of Bereg County, the center of which was Nagyberég, the Hungarians and the “Hungarian-Russians” (Ruthenians) elected Lőrinc Buday as a representative by a joint vote. After the election, a group of “Hungarian-Russians” complained to Parliament about the election of a Hungarian representative in a district populated predominantly by non-Hungarians. Upon investigation, the complaint was rejected by the relevant department of the House of Representatives. According to the reasoning, there is no evidence that the final result does not correspond to the actual will of the electorate, and the appearance of any circumstances giving the election of representatives the appearance of a nationalist party struggle must be avoided (Ruszoly 1983: 131–131).

During the debate in the House of Representatives on April 30, 1861, István Demjén (Kaszony district of Bereg County) said that “[...] the complainants present the issue as if the wish of the thousands of Ruthenians of Bereg County to elect a Ruthenian deputy from one of their districts was a universal one, and as if this universal wish had been prevented by intrigue, intimidation and violence. However, we know the situation in Bereg County—thank God!—there is no ethnic friction at this time.”⁴ László Tisza (Tenke District of Bihar County) found it necessary to note that “here it was not

2 In Hungarian original: „Határozottan tévedésnek tartom, ha nem magyar anyanyelvű polgártársainkat ellenfelekként állítják szembe a magyarsággal...” Authors’ note: It is quite unusual to read first person singular in an explanatory memoranda of a law, as there is no specific author, nor can there be, and in all cases it expresses the unanimous opinion of the legislative body.

3 1913. évi XIV. törvénycikk indokolása az országgyűlési képviselők választásáról [https://net.jogtar.hu/ezer-ev-torveny?docid=91300014.TVI&searchUrl=/ezer-ev-torvenyei%3Fpagenum%3D46].

4 *Az 1861-ik év április 2-án Pesten egybegyűlt országgyűlés képviselőházának naplója*. Szerk. Hajnik Károly. I. Pest 1861, 70.

the Ruthenian nationality that took action against other nationalities; it was the raw masses who took action against their leaders, the intelligentsia.”⁵ At the same time, Sándor Seregélyi (Ökörmező district of Máramaros County) pointed out the problem of constituency boundaries: “in my opinion, the crime, the cause of the trouble, stems from the fact that Bereg County did not arrange and draw the boundaries of the constituencies in a fair way.” Such and similar reasons “awaken in some nationalities an acceptable demand for separate territory, separate autonomy.”⁶

József Bánó (Héthárs district of Sáros County) on April 30, 1861, said the following: “Concerning the national frictions concerning the Slavic and Ruthenian movements, which are also mentioned in the petition, and which I have heard about so far, I am obliged to declare that we, the representatives of the northern and northeastern counties, who also represent partly Ruthenian and partly Slavic-speaking people, are not aware of any such movement, except for this one case; and having read in the newspapers of Slavic and Ruthenian programmes, I must declare here that no one in this country is qualified to propose a programme but the Slavs and Ruthenians who are in this House.”⁷

The above comments foreshadowed another problem. Who can represent the nationalities? According to the cited House of Representatives debate elected representatives do not need to belong to a particular nationality, although there was a demand for them to do so. The 1861 manifesto of the Ruthenians of Maramures argued that the Act V of 1848 should be amended to take account of nationality proportions in the constituency system and to allow Ruthenian voters to choose a Ruthenian representative (Ruszoly 1977: 28–29).

In 1865, Bereg County officially put on the agenda to change the constituencies at least enough to change their centers. Ruthenian clergymen and municipal judges, as well as several Ruthenian municipalities, requested this, but the committee meeting of October 5, chaired by Deputy Governor of the Archbishopric Sándor Buday, rejected this request. The rejection was made according to the reasoning that “the majority considered that the creation of constituencies and their centers was within the rights of the assembly, which had been dissolved [in 1848] and could no longer convene, but this current committee no longer has the power to deal with this issue” (Cited by Ruszoly 1999: 255).

5 *Az 1861-ik év április 2-án Pesten egybegyűlt országgyűlés képviselőházának naplója.* Szerk. Hajnik Károly. I. Pest 1861, 78.

6 *Az 1861-ik év április 2-án Pesten egybegyűlt országgyűlés képviselőházának naplója.* Szerk. Hajnik Károly. I. Pest 1861, 70.

7 *Az 1861-ik év április 2-án Pesten egybegyűlt országgyűlés képviselőházának naplója.* Szerk. Hajnik Károly. I. Pest 1861, 71.

Territorial autonomy

Adolf Dobriansky is one of the best-known Ruthenian politicians of the period. Two questions from the literature on Dobránszky are highlighted. The first is that in the 1850s–1860s several lists of informers were known in the Hungarian capital. One list from 1867 included his name. Subsequent research has proved that a well-known figure in the Ruthenian movement was the unpaid correspondent of the police director in Kassa in the 1850s (Deák 2006: 37). The second is that in 1861, when the case of Lőrinc Buday was discussed in the House of Representatives, complainants also objected to Dobriansky's mandate, and he failed to retain it. During the debate on April 30, which was similar to the Buday case, members who spoke emphasized that "Mr Dobránszky came in with the Russians in 1848 and acted as a commissioner for them [...] we know that he brought the Muscovites upon us [...] we can also see his behavior during the election (i.e., that he wanted to unite the Ruthenians against the Hungarians)"⁸ (See also Yekelchik 2007: 48). In fact, it was due to this that he lost the mandate that he had won in 1861, the certifying committee not recognizing his election.

The support of the Tsarist army, which crushed the Hungarian Civic Revolution and War of Independence, was true not only of Dobriansky, but also of another emblematic figure of the Russian national awakening, the author of the Russian national anthem, Alexander Dukhnovych, who wrote in his autobiography: "One thing in life has really given me joy, and that was in 1849, when I first saw the glorious Russian army. I cannot describe the feeling of joy I had when I saw the first Cossack on the streets of Eperjes [*in Slovak: Prešov*]. I danced and cried with joy [...]" (Dukhnovych 1967: 106–107; Magocsi 1975: 362). Magocsi emphasizes that both were residents of Prešov, not politically active in the territory of the later Transcarpathia (Magocsi 2010–2011: 169).

Dobránszky published the speech, which was omitted in 1861, in several languages. A summary of his demands is found in several places. Mayer, for example, quotes him as follows: "1. In the regions where the Ruthenian [Russian] people live, either alone or in a mixture with the Slovaks, Ruthenian or Slovak-Ruthenian, capitals should be established, and there all affairs should be conducted in Ruthenian. The Ruthenian or Ruthenian-Slovak capitals should form their own districts, with a Ruthenian court and higher educational institutions (law academy, gymnasium). The Ruthenian people should have access to education. 3. the Ruthenian [*Hungarian-Russian*] people should be able to hold a national assembly every year, where they can discuss the affairs of the people and elect their ecclesiastical and secular representatives. The goal is to establish a Ruthenian congregation and a Ruthenian bishopric in

8 Az 1861-ik év április 2-án Pesten egybegyűlt országgyűlés képviselőházának naplója. Szerk. Hajnik Károly. I. Pest 1861, 76.

Maramures. 4. The Ruthenian people should have representatives Vienna. In Buda there should be a Ruthenian church not only for the army but also for the civilian population. 5. the Ruthenian people should be free to turn to the whole world for help, and to resettle freely from the kingdom in question, should the Hungarian rulers again come to rule this land, from which God save us" (Cited by Mayer 1974: 1146–1147).

Although, as mentioned above, Chancellor Forgách did not go through with the drafting of the law on the use of languages by nationalities, he did set up a committee on the issue, of which Dobriansky was a member (Csernus-Lukács 2017: 189–200). Dobránszky initiated several actions to gain support for his autonomy plan, but he was essentially left alone (Deák 2018: 174–175). Albert Berzeviczy, President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, in his work summarizing the history of the Horthy era, said that, in contrast to the loyal Ruthenians, he was the politician "whose mandate as a deputy had to be annulled because of his unbridled national agitation. He began to act as a councillor to the Buda governorate, and used his official position to encourage the Ruthenians in the northeast to assert their national distinctiveness by publishing a circular in a newspaper" (Berzeviczy 1933: 409). This is a very accurate formulation, given that even at the turn of the century, the Hungarian political elite was not prepared to recognize the Ruthenians as a separate nationality (Deák 2018: 175).

Dobriansky ran with the same programme in the 1865 election, also in Sáros County. His victory in the Makovica district was again contested. The protesters also brought up the above document as evidence against his patriotism. However, the vindication committee considered that the charges were not serious and that he could retain his mandate (Mayer 1974: 1149). In 1868, the nationality representatives tabled their own proposal in the debate on the Act XLIV of 1868 on National Equality, which included a demand for territorial autonomy, language and education. The proposal was signed by 16 Romanians, seven Serbs and one "Russian" (Ruthenian) deputy, Dobriansky (G. Kemény 1952: 5–8).

More than 50 people spoke in the general debate, but a number of them declined to speak, giving in to pressure from the "pro-Hungarian" majority, which felt that "the whole debate was not the success it had hoped for" (Schlett 2002: 60). Dobriansky, "the most unpopular member of the House of Representatives," who "had not yet forgotten the Austrian deployment of the intervention troops of the Czar" (Kemény G. 1950: 1341), stressed in his long speech that the nationalities with the Hungarians constituted "political nation" and that the text of the law on nationalities was in fact limited to the use of language: "Apart from the details, which may be amended during the detailed negotiations, the majority proposal does not differ from the minority proposal in that it does not accept the carving out of jurisdictional territories, the territorial domination of languages, and the proportional distribution of offices and dignities among the nations, but in that it seeks to solve the nationality question on the basis of individual freedom. By silently disregarding the actual and legal existence of the nations of the

country, it seeks to substantially restrict individual freedom in the use of language, and thus lays the foundation for the tendency that has become more and more prevalent in recent times, which, by outright denying the existence of non-Hungarian nations, not only recognizes the Hungarian nation alone, but also seeks to replace it as the alleged political nation of the country, and thus as the political factor of the state. I consider this procedure to be contrary to the previous procedure of this House and of the legislature, not only dangerous for the state, but also unworthy of positive law and even incompatible with our millennial Constitution itself.”⁹

In the rest of the speech, he explains in a historical discussion that “the six nations (Hungarian, Romanian, Serbian, Slovak, Ruthenian, German) living together in our country in masses [...] partly formed independent states on the territory of present-day Hungary before the arrival of the Hungarians, partly settled here later under certain conditions, partly acquired it together with the Hungarian nation, and all of them jointly defended our common homeland with their fights and their wealth for almost a millennium. It turns out that these nations, as legal persons with equal rights, originally possessed separate national self-government, and even separate territories, and were in general secured for nationalities by such institutions or patent instruments, which, having the nature of treaties, cannot be altered by unilateral or majoritarian means, much less abolished, and that this condition is not only not positively opposed by our domestic laws, but is regarded as flowing from one of the directives of our constitution [the Tripartitum].”¹⁰ Since the majority proposal does not take all this into account, it “involves the spiritual death of non-Hungarian nations.” The greatest danger of the central proposal is that it weakens the love for the common homeland. Dobriansky sums up thusly: “As for the future Magyarization of non-Hungarian nations, I do not deny the possibility of this for the fragments that are scattered in the regions inhabited en masse by the Hungarian nation, especially if the Hungarian nation, as we wish, were not the oppressor of the other nations, but the leader, and thus could enjoy the blessings of peace and concord, but the Magyarization of the millions and millions of non-Hungarian nations, in view not only of the essential circumstance that these nations constitute the majority of the population of the state, but also of our geographical situation, I consider absolutely impossible [...].”¹¹

9 *Az 1865-dik évi december 10-dikére hirdetett országgyűlés képviselőházának naplója.* Szerk. Greguss Ágost. IX. Pest 1868, 45.

10 *Az 1865-dik évi december 10-dikére hirdetett országgyűlés képviselőházának naplója.* Szerk. Greguss Ágost. IX. Pest 1868, 50.

11 *Az 1865-dik évi december 10-dikére hirdetett országgyűlés képviselőházának naplója.* Szerk. Greguss Ágost. IX. Pest 1868, 50.

Summary

The main objection of the nationalities to the Act XLIV of 1868 on National Equality was that it offered too little for their liking, but after its introduction the main concern became to enforce it, as politics became less and less responsive to it as time went on. It is clear from the above that, although the Ruthenian national awakening has traditionally been regarded in the literature as a late and less specific event, it is worth taking a broader view of the issue, without disputing the fact itself. The lateness and lower visibility of the event was linked to the fact that it was a much smaller community than the other nationalities concerned, with a much smaller intellectual community. The contemporary House of Representatives' diaries show that, in relation to the Ruthenians (Rusyns), the speakers were talking about religion and language, not ethnicity. The political realization of ethnicity easily led to accusations of pan-Slavic incitement.

If we take stock of the demands of the Ruthenian community in the period, we can identify the following issues: language use (in offices, education), parliamentary representation (whether anyone or a representative of the nationality is entitled to represent that nationality), and ensuring the conditions for access to parliament (the creation of a national electoral district and the realistic possibility for representatives of nationalities within the district to exercise the right to vote), as well as the idea of territorial autonomy. In this respect, they are not far behind the much more numerous and prominent Romanians, Slovaks, Serbs and Croats. The 1918 People's Law No. X, which created Ruzka Krajina at the end of the period, was intended by the legislator to grant the Ruthenians living there "full self-determination" in certain areas. In reality, however, this did not mean "full" self-determination (Tóth 2014: 56; Tóth 2018) even in circumstances when this legislation had almost only theoretical significance.

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AUTHORS OF THE ISSUE

Eged, Alice: Historian. Associate professor, Reformed Theological University, Debrecen, Hungary (eged.alice@drhe.hu)

Fedinec, Csilla: Historian, editor, senior research fellow. HUN-REN Centre for Social Sciences, Budapest, Hungary. ORCID 0000-0002-9156-9002 (fedinec.csilla@tk.hun-ren.hu)

Gaučík, Štefan: Historian. Institute of History Slovak Academy of Sciences, Department of the History of the 19th Century, Bratislava, Slovakia (stefan.gaucik@savba.sk)

Hollósi, Gábor: Historian. Senior research fellow at the VERITAS Research Institute for History and Archives, Budapest, Hungary (gabor.hollosi@veritas.gov.hu)

Lampl, Zsuzsanna: Sociologist, publicist, writer. Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Slovakia; Forum Minority Research Institute, Slovakia (moki.lampl@gmail.com)

Öllös, László: Political scientist, philosopher. Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Slovakia; President of the Forum Minority Research Institute, Slovakia (laszloollos57@gmail.com)

Szarka, László: Historian. Faculty of Education of University of J. Selye Komarno, Slovakia (laszloszarka@gmail.com)

Terbócs, Attila: Ethnographer. Budapest, Hungary (pasztilla01@gmail.com)