

# An Attempt at Establishing a Hungarian Orthodox Bishopric in the Age of the political Dualism

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1. Introduction; 2. The Hungarian Orthodox Christians before the Dualism; 3. First appearance of the Hungarian Orthodoxy at governmental level; 4. The Greek Catholic Hungarians; 5. Schismatic movements and the Vatican action; 6. Governmental initiation of the establishment of a Hungarian Orthodox eparchy; 7. The issue of Hungarian Orthodox believers and the last ten years of Dualism; 8. Summary

## 1. Introduction

Although, the modern history of Christians of Eastern Rite in Hungary has been increasingly explored by Hungarian historiography, research and source examination have concerned mostly the movements of Greek Catholics of Hungarian mother tongue so far. Only sporadic attempts have been made in order to process the history of Orthodox Christians of Hungarian mother tongue. The history of the latter has not been studied in-depth beside the brief works of Ödön Füves, Gernot Seide, Alexandre Pál, Gabriel Patacsi, László Sasvári and Feriz Berki. In the recent years, only one scientific work which endeavoured to fill such gap was published by Krisztián Manzinger.<sup>1</sup> The importance of his study is articulating that partially parallel examination of the aspects of the Hungarian Orthodox Church

1 Manzinger, Krisztián: Az ortodox egyház a magyar nemzeti célok szolgálatában? [Orthodox Church at the service of Hungarian national objectives?] *Regio* 21 (2010:3): 149-179

and of Greek Catholics should be expedient. Due to its conciseness, the study fails to fulfil such requirement, but raising the question is appropriate. Unfortunately, it is expressed only in relation with the Romanians, insomuch that the Greek Catholic Church is featured as 'an institute that was established without Hungarian motivation, moreover, expressly against the Hungarians'.<sup>2</sup>

The subject of the present study is the issue of establishing a Hungarian Orthodox eparchy in the era of the Dualism, appearing at governmental level. It tangentially discusses the tensions between 'Hungarian nation' and 'Eastern Rite' regarding identity. However, in order to make the political dimension more comprehensible, the brief description of certain issues in the history of the Greek Catholics in Hungary cannot be omitted, e.g. the movements of Greek Catholics in Hungary or the Ruthenian schismatic movements. All these issues contributed to that the Hungarian Government dealt with the possibility of establishing a Hungarian Orthodox eparchy, though, only for a relatively short time on its merits.

- 2 'A more nuanced picture would be shown by the parallel processing of the Greek Catholic Church's history. Mostly because the Greek Catholic Church, which was established without Hungarian motivation, moreover, expressly against the Hungarians, beside contributing to the development and the progress of the modern Romanian national awareness, had sought the opportunity of the compromise and the emancipation of the Romanians within the Hungarian state for a long time. Moreover, it provided major successes to the Hungarian nation regarding assimilation in certain areas' – op. cit. 149. While Manzinger's words are right in many aspects, they ignore that achievement of assimilation can be mentioned rather in respect of the Greek Catholics with Ruthenian origins. Also, the movement of the Greek Catholics of Hungarian mother tongue came to life essentially within the organization of the Eparchy of Munkács.

## 2. The Hungarian Orthodox Christians before the Dualism

The relations between Hungary and the Christianity of Eastern Rite can be traced back to the foundation of Hungary. However, the believers of Hungarian mother tongue using eastern liturgy in the age of national awaking of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries cannot be considered as a continuation of the former relations.<sup>3</sup> The roots of Hungarians of the modern era who employed eastern liturgy (Greek Catholics and Orthodox Christians) can be found in two different areas. Part of them are the descendants of folks who moved to the Great Hungarian Plain due to the settlement of Hajdú cavalymen by István Bocskai,<sup>4</sup> and was later Hungaricised. The others are the Hungaricised descendants of Christian merchants from the Balkans, who settled in several waves in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>5</sup>

Beside the two largest Orthodox nationalities in Hungary which had separate autocephalous Church organizations since 1864-1868 (the Serbs and the Romanians), the 'Greek' nationality from the Balkans was represented in a larger number in Hungary. This group, which traditionally comprised of merchants, settled primarily at various commercial centres of Hungary.

The Greek merchants first settled in the early era of Ottoman rule in Hungary. The first larger colonies were founded in Brassó and Nagyszében. From the second part of the 17<sup>th</sup> century they appear in Borsod, Heves, Pest Counties, at the Kiskunság and the Nagykunság

- 3 See e.g. Berki, Feriz: *Liturgia, nyelv, nemzet* [Liturgy, language, nation]. In: Imrényi, Tibor (ed): *Magyarság és Ortodoxia. Ezer Esztendő* [The Hungarians and the Orthodoxy. Thousand years]. Unknown place of publication, 2000, 105-127; 107-108, István Pirigy: *A görögkatolikus magyarság története* [The history of the Greek Catholic Hungarians]. Budapest, 1991
- 4 Salacz, Gábor: *Egyház és állam Magyarországon a dualizmus korában* [Church and state in Hungary in the era of Dualism]. München, 1974, 149
- 5 Seide, Gernot: *Die ungarische orthodoxe Kirche* [The Hungarian Orthodox Church]. In: *Ungarische Jahrbuch*. Vol 4, Mainz, 1972, 101-114; 102

and later in Bács, Zemplén, Szabolcs, Bihar, Arad, Szatmár, Békés, Csanád and Csongrád Counties. Their golden age, which lasted until 1774, started in 1718 with the signature of the Treaty of Passarowitz, which guaranteed them favourable commercial terms.<sup>6</sup> They built their churches and set up several foundations in the last third of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Greeks did not settle in blocks but established strong communities in settlements and towns at larger distances from one other. This is well demonstrated by a list of settlements, which indicates where they had their own churches<sup>7</sup> and where the founding of Greek communities' schools gained permission from the Locotenential Council in 1795.<sup>8</sup> Regarding the ecclesiastical higher authority, following the arrangement of the hierarchical issues of all Orthodox parishes by Joseph II in 1784, they were drawn under the Patriarchy of Karlóca regarding spiritual and dogmatic matters (in spiritualis et pure dogmaticis), but their autonomy was otherwise maintained.<sup>9</sup>

- 6 Ács, Zoltán: *Nemzetiségek Magyarországon* [Nationalities in Hungary]. Budapest, 1984, 139-140
- 7 Sasvári, László: *A magyarországi görögök a XVIII-XIX. században* [The Greeks in Hungary in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries]. *Magyar Filozófiai Szemle* 21 (1977:3-4): 430-442; 430-431. At the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, they had their own schools in Pest, Vác, Nagyvárad, Balassagyarmat, Zimony, Karcag, Kecskemét, Léva, Miskolc, Békés, Ungvár, Szentes, Tokaj, Gyöngyös, Bihardiószeg, Nagykanizsa, Nagyszeben, Sopron, Nagyszombat, Hódmezővásárhely, Losonc, Nagykőrös. Moreover, Greeks and Serbs had significant mixed enclaves in Ráckeve, Újvidék, Eger, Komárom, Győr and Esztergom.
- 8 Sasvári mentions a list of 17 settlements but it is not complete. According to this list, the Locotenential Council gave permission to Greeks to have their own schools in Belényes, Békés, Eger, Gyöngyös, Győr, Gyula, Hódmezővásárhely, Kecskemét, Komárom, Miskolc, Nagyvárad, Oravica, Pest, Tokaj, Újvidék, Ungvár, Vác. See op.cit. Sasvári 434
- 9 Pál, Alexandre: *Les orthodoxes de Hongrie* [The Orthodox Christians of Hungary]. In: *Nouvelle Revue de Hongrie*. 1941 October, 216-225; 220, 222

At the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Orthodox Greek communities in Hungary had 26 churches, 8 chapels, 33 own parishes, 23 schools and 21 trading companies in total.<sup>10</sup> However, the number of these institutes reduced noticeably in the first third of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. On the one hand, it resulted from the spontaneous lingual assimilation, since a part of the second and the third generation of Greeks spoke only Hungarian, and, on the other hand, from the fact that after 1830 lot of them moved back to Greece which had won its independence.<sup>11</sup>

The use of Hungarian language by Greeks, who were small in number but had powerful and self-contained religious institutions, dates back to the last third of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The translations of their religious books in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries occurred almost at the same time as the liturgy translation activities of Greek Catholics who were becoming Hungaricised. The first well known Hungarian translation of Orthodox liturgy was published by Miklós Miskolczi in Pest, 1791. This work was the Hungarian translation of the Catechism of Metropolitan of Kiev, Peter Mogila from 1640. In the foreword of his translation, Miskolczi explained the necessity of the work. The new generations of Orthodox Christians understood their original mother tongue increasingly poorly, and most of them spoke only Hungarian. Similar reasons led Demeter Krapács, when he also published a liturgy translation at his own expense in Pest, 1795. This translation was published five more times later. The following significant liturgy translation belongs to Áron Georgievits who published a bilingual catechism, based on the Catechism of Karlóca of 1774, in Győr, 1801. One year later, the work titled 'Evangeliumok és Epistolák' [Gospels and Epistles] was printed in Vác, at the expense of Theodor Stéri-

10 Seide, op. cit. 103. Despite that Seide estimates a higher number of Greek ecclesiastic institutes, he omits to list them exhaustively. C.f. Sasvári op. cit. 430-431

11 Seide, op. cit. 106

ady merchant of Tata, primarily for the purpose of making worships accessible to people.<sup>12</sup> The last important liturgy translation of the age was prepared by János Popovics. Popovics started to translate liturgies during his service in the Nagykunság, since the believers understood almost nothing of the liturgies in original language. His work titled 'Orthodox hitvallók Imakönyve' [Prayer book of orthodox confessors] was published in Nagyvárad, 1861, and he prepared numerous unpublished liturgy translations subsequently.

For the Hungarian public, the issue of Orthodox Christians of Hungarian mother tongue with Greek origin and the foundation of a possibly independent hierarchy came up in 1868 for the first time, at the National Assembly's debate on the legislative proposal of the Serb and Romanian hierarchy's separation of 1864. Prior to the National Assembly's debate on the bill, the Parishes of Pest, Kecskemét and Szentes lodged a memorandum to the National Assembly. They protested against the bill which recognised only the Serb and Romanian Orthodox Christians, and basically declared that the protesters, who were 'born Hungarian' also belonged to these nationalities. In addition, it also was problematic that the bill ignored the autonomous parishes in relation with the Serb and Romanian hierarchy's separation, hence the parishes perceived threats to their self-managed assets. The memorandum also indicated that the above anxieties could not have been presented to the ecclesiastical congress of 1864, which discussed the separation of the Serb and the Romanian Orthodox Churches, since the protesters were not invited. It was also mentioned that the low number of their population cannot influence the decision on their request, since they are able to support their own schools and foundations, moreover, they could provide the financial bases for

12 This work was basically a collection of excerpts based on the Bible of Gáspár Károlyi (the final at that time) published by Ferenc Pethe in 1794. See János Bottyán: *A magyar Biblia évszázadai* [Centuries of the Hungarian Bible]. Budapest, 1982, 85

a separate hierarchy of Greek parishes, analogously to the Parish of Vienna.

Beyond their objections, they specified the manner how their interests should be considered. Accordingly, they would convene a congress with the participation of all concerned persons in Pest, in order to separate institutes, foundations and cash boxes of all parishes, under the presidency of a royal commissioner.<sup>13</sup> The memorandum names 18 settlements which cannot be drawn under either the Serb or the Romanian eparchy.<sup>14</sup>

Following the petition, József Eötvös, Minister of Religion and Public Education proposed an amendment for the National Assembly to complete the act with one Section, pursuant to which the exercise of the rights of believers being neither Serb nor Romanian would be maintained.<sup>15</sup> At the debate of the proposal for amendment on 9 May 1868,<sup>16</sup> all Representatives, regardless their nationalities, agreed with the posing of the question and basically with the proposal submitted by József Eötvös and later clarified by Lajos Vadnay, Pál Sommsich, Lajos Horváth and Károly Kerkapoly.<sup>17</sup> But Representative Pál Nyáry

13 The memorandum is delineated in the work of Berki, Feriz: *Magyarosodási tendenciák a hazai orthodox egyházban a XVIII. és XIX. század folyamán* [Tendencies of becoming Hungarianised in the Hungarian Orthodox Church in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries]. *Egyháztörténet* 1 (1958:4): 290-302; 299-300

14 The memorandum's authors attached also an annex in Latin, where the Greek parishes were listed by the Locotenential Council in 1795. The list completely matches with the list of the Locotenential Council regarding the schools, published by Sasvári. Thus, the lists are probably the same. See Berki, 1958, 299 and c.f. Sasvári op. cit. 434. The memorandum mentions also Karcag as concerned community.

15 Documents of the House of Representatives (hereinafter: KI)-1865-228 (1865-IV-194)

16 See the entire debate in Book of the House of Representatives (hereinafter: KN)-1865-227 (1868-VII-223-237)

17 Finally, the latter text was inserted into the act. See Article 9 in Act IX of 1868 in *Corpus Juris Hungarici* 1836-1868. Budapest, 1896. 378. c.f.: KI-1865-228

submitted another proposal for amendment which did not concern the existing ecclesiastical classification but, at the same time, it contained the method of a later separation with reference to Sections 3 and 8 which had already been accepted during the detailed debate. Essentially, he left open the possibility for the Greek communities to decide on the establishing of a hierarchy of their own in a separate congress.<sup>18</sup>

The basic difference was, that the proposal supported also by Eötvös intended to arrange the rights of the concerned parishes only on the basis of the status quo, thus the Representatives of nationalities also supported it, at the same time Nyáry, basically intended to declare the right to separation beside the right to self-government. The Hungarian Representatives were divided concerning the proposal of Nyáry,<sup>19</sup> while the Serb<sup>20</sup> and the Romanian<sup>21</sup> Representatives did not support it. It is intriguing that the aspect of nationalities was mentioned in the debate but it was not significant. In the opinion of Representatives opposing Nyáry's proposal for amendment, the version supported also by Eötvös provided appropriate safeguards for all who were concerned. However, the opposing ones also thought that the question of ecclesiastical separation is an issue of the Church, hence its settlement is not the Parliament's competence. Apart from the fact

(1865-IV-194)

18 KN-1865-227 (1868-VII-223)

19 During the debate, both the proposal for amendment of Nyáry and the proposal of Somssich and his companion were supported by about the half of the speaking Representatives. Döme Horváth, Lajos Simonyi, Sámuel Bónis, Boldizsár Halász, Miklós Bánó, János Pacsolay and Gergely Szákely spoke for Nyáry's proposal, while the other one was supported by Zsigmond Papp, László Bezerédy, József Székács, György Kurucz, Károly Szász and the Greek origin Henrik Stefanidesz.

20 Sándor Sztojaczkovics, Milos Dimitrievics, Szvetozár Miletics, György Joannovics

21 Vince Babes



that Nyáry intended to achieve the codification of conditions not existing in reality, the Greek townships had the opportunity, likewise the Romanian had in 1864.

3. First appearance of the Hungarian Orthodoxy at governmental level

After the parliamentary debate of Act IX of 1868, the issue of the Orthodox Hungarians or the use of Hungarian language in the Greek Eastern Church were seldom mentioned in the National Assembly.<sup>22</sup> On governmental level, it was not dealt with on the merits. Zsigmond Reiner presented the issue in the form of memorandum to Prime Ministers several times, to Miklós Bánffy in 1898 and to István Tisza in 1904<sup>23</sup> but with no substantive results. Among the documents of the Prime Ministry, only the memorandum from 1898 has evidence, which was transferred to the Ministry of Religion and Public Education (MRPE) due to the lack of competency.<sup>24</sup> So, it can be presumed that it has not been preserved.<sup>25</sup> In his cover letter addressed to Gyula Wlassics, Dezső Bánffy explained that Reiner's aim was to protect the Hungarian believers, living within the frames of the Serbian and the Romanian Orthodox Churches, from a possible

22 See delineating of them in Manzinger 164-166

23 Reiner, Zsigmond : A keleti vallású magyar nemzeti egyház szervezése. [Organizing the Hungarian national Church of Eastern religion.] Budapest, 1907, 3-4. Reiner's book from 1907 was the only, relatively comprehensive work in this era concerning such issue. Although he was the secretary of the Department II of the Prime Ministry when he wrote his book, it does not seem that he had substantive influence regarding the issue.

24 National Archives of Hungary, Natinal Archive (MNL OL) K 26 4190/1899. From Prime Minister Miklós Bánffy to Minister of Religion and Public Education Gyula Wlassics. Draft. 18 April 1899

25 During the revolutionary events in 1956, the building of the National Archive got a bomb hit, hence the files of the MRPE almost completely perished.

assimilation.<sup>26</sup> In its brief response, the Ministry suggested that the issue should be consulted with the concerned Serb and Romanian ecclesiastical leaders first, verbally if possible, since correspondence in writing would not be appropriate due to the sensitivity of the issue.<sup>27</sup>

Although the text of Reiner's memorandum is not known, it is apparent from the Pro Domo document of 12 June 1899 that the Prime Ministry had a poor opinion of it. The mentioned document is fragmentary, only the first page of the accompanying document remained, but even from that it can be concluded that the Office did not support Reiner's conception. It is expressly stated that the author '*confused*' Greek Orthodox believers for Greek Catholics '*or considered them identical*', since he defined all of them as ones of Eastern religion. Reiner ignored that the believers of the two Churches use totally different doctrines, so, they must not be confused. According to the Prime Ministry, the term 'Hungarian Eastern Church' could only be used regarding Greek Catholics, since the process of becoming Hungaricised is observable only in their case. On the other hand, in case of Greek Orthodox Christians, only compact Serb and Romanian blocks and, in some settlements (in Budapest, Miskolc and Tokaj), Greek enclaves could be found. It is also apparent from the document that the Bánffy Government essentially renounced Hungarian Greek Orthodox believers living in the Romanian eparchies. It is stated that the '*Hungarians becoming Vlachs, who joined the Eastern Church, cannot be saved by the Church for the Hungarians, since they started to become Vlach not because of their affection for the Church*'. On the contrary, in case of Greek Catholics '*the Church is the major obstacle of taking root of becoming Hungaricised, this folk insists on its Church...*'<sup>28</sup>

26 MNL OL K 26 4190/1899. From Prime Minister Miklós Bánffy to Minister of Religion and Public Education Gyula Wlassics. Draft. 18 April 1899

27 MNL OL K 26 7457/1899. From Minister of Religion and Public Education Gyula Wlassics to Prime Minister Dezső Bánffy. 31 May 1899

28 MNL OL K 26 7457/1899. Fragmentary draft, probably Pro Domo document. 12 June 1899

Subsequently, Reiner endeavoured to draw the attention of both the Governments of Kálmán Széll and of István Tisza to the issue of Orthodox Christians of Hungarian mother tongue.<sup>29</sup> However, the work of the Prime Ministry did not start on the basis of Reiner's memorandums, but due to the memorandum of November 1903 written by János Vályi, Greek Catholic Bishop of Eperjes, on the Hungarian liturgic language.<sup>30</sup> That properly highlights the motivation of governmental support to establishing a possible new Orthodox eparchy.

#### 4. The Greek Catholic Hungarians

Due to the fact that it was a memorandum on Greek Catholics which brought Hungarian Greek Orthodox Christians to the attention of the Government for the first time, it is necessary to delineate the difficulties of Greek Catholicism in Hungary at the turn of the century, and the preludes thereof.

The Greek Catholics, who have significantly larger population than the Greek Orthodox Christians of Hungarian mother tongue, had a similar process of development to the Orthodox Christians. A need for the use of Hungarian language had already arisen during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, particularly among the believers of Hungarian mother tongue in the Greek Catholic Eparchy of Munkács,<sup>31</sup> and the first manuscripts of liturgy translation were prepared at the end of the century.<sup>32</sup> The

29 Reiner *ibid.*

30 Végheő, Tamás – Katkó, Márton Áron: *Források a magyar görögkatolikusok történetéhez* [Sources to the history of Hungarian Greek Catholics]. Volume 1 1778-1905. Nyíregyháza, 2014, 513-524 (hereinafter: Sources)

31 Sources 51, 52-54

32 Firstly, András Bacsinszky, later Bishop of Munkács, dealt with the translation of the Greek Catholic liturgy as a priest of Hajdúdorog. The first entire liturgy translation was prepared by Mihály Krucsay in 1793, and later György Kritsfalussy in 1795. The first printed hymnal in Hungarian, published in Nagyvárad, 1833, was translated by Demeter Kerekes. See Pirigyi, István: *A magyarországi*

issue of the use of language by Greek Catholics was brought before the Hungarian National Assembly first in 1843, at the debate of the introduction of Hungarian as official state language.<sup>33</sup> In 1848, József Eötvös, the Minister of Religion and Public Education also made a pledge to provide the press expenses of Hungarian liturgical books, but finally it was not fulfilled due to the revolutionary events.<sup>34</sup>

In the 1860s the Hungarian believers of Eparchy of Munkács, together with the Hungarians of other eparchies, attempted to achieve the introduction of Hungarian as liturgical language. In 1866, they submitted several petitions to secular and religious leaders in which they requested, basically emphasizing that they were Hungarian, to release them ‘as born and bred Hungarians from the hateful yoke of the Russian language’. They indicated also that they felt offended by the Hungarian public which considered them as foreign because of their religion.<sup>35</sup>

Finally in 1868, the Hungarian Greek Catholics gave structural frames to their efforts and, by that time, formulated their targets including the establishment of a separate eparchy, the introduction of Hungarian as liturgical language and the printing of Hungarian liturgical books at public expense.<sup>36</sup> Furthermore, new petitions and delegations were sent to the Bishop of Munkács,<sup>37</sup> the Archbishop of

görögkatolikusok története [The history of the Greek Catholics in Hungary].  
Vol II, Nyíregyháza, 1990, 83-85

33 Sources 64

34 Sources 66-67, also published in: Jenő Szabó: A görög-katolikus magyarság utolsó kálvária útja [The last Calvary path of the Greek Catholic Hungarians]. Budapest, 1913, 172

35 In total, the believers sent four petitions, one each to the Emperor, to the Primate of Esztergom, to the Supreme Chancellor and to the National Assembly. See Sources 27-30. It is worth comparing also with the application sent to the National Assembly in 1868, cited by Berki. See Berki 1958, 299-300

36 Pirigyi II, 90

37 Sources 105-107

Esztergom and the House of Representatives<sup>38</sup> but no reply arrived despite the positive receptions thereof. But the Primate of Esztergom formulated objections regarding this issue already in 1868.<sup>39</sup> János Simor rejected clustering in a separate eparchy due to nationality aspects, since maintaining eparchies of mixed mother tongues were much more in favour of the spread of Hungarian language as *lingua franca* than separating the believers along languages. It must be added that later the Hungarian Government also adopted this argument and did not support the establishment of a separate eparchy until 1910. In relation with the issue of liturgical language, the Primate also noted that the question of introduction thereof falls under the jurisdiction of the Holy See, but he himself would not support it, since later the Roman Catholics might make similar claims.<sup>40</sup>

Finally, the believers' efforts were not in vain, since 33 parishes of Hungarian mother tongue of the Eparchy of Munkács were organised into a single external episcopal vicarage by the Ruler's decision in 1873. However, this partial result was disappointing for the concerned believers.

Subsequently, Greek Catholic believers addressed a new petition with their previous demands to the Government in 1881, about which most Catholic prelates asked by the Government gave opinions similar to the prior objection of the Primate. Furthermore, Lajos Haynald, Archbishop of Kalocsa informed also the Holy See of the matter. He emphasized that the claim in the petition for the introduction of Hungarian liturgical language was against ecclesiastical law, and there was a risk that later, following the Greek Catholics' example, the Roman Catholics belonging to other nationalities might also make similar claims.<sup>41</sup>

38 Sources 109-110

39 Sources 117-120

40 Ibid.

41 About events of 1881 see Végheő, Tamás: *Kísérlet egy magyar görögkatoli-*

Finally, the first phase of the Hungarian believers' movement terminated in 1896. It became marked by the demonstrative presentation of Hungarian liturgy in the capital, at the occasion of the millennium on 27 June. The promotion of the event reached Rome, and also resonated in the National Assembly in Budapest. After hearing several concerned prelates, Rome prohibited Hungarian liturgy and ordered to destroy the prepared but not yet approbated Hungarian liturgical books with its decision of 2 September 1896. Answering a prior interpellation,<sup>42</sup> Prime Minister Miklós Bánffy declared, three days after the prohibitive decision but not yet aware of it, that a decision on the merits of the establishment of a new Greek Catholic eparchy can be delivered only after obtaining consent on Hungarian liturgy.<sup>43</sup>

Practically, September 1896 was the turning point, due to which the concerned decision makers had to express their standpoint, and tied their own hands at the same time. The Holy See unambiguously excluded the possibility of employing Hungarian liturgy, while the Hungarian Government, in essence, did the same regarding the establishment of a separate ecclesiastical organization. However, the Vatican's prohibitive decision highlighted the issue of the Hungarian

kus püspökség felállítására 1881-ben [Attempt to establish a Hungarian Greek Catholic eparchy in 1881]. In: Ádám Somorjai, István Zombori (ed): *Tanulmányok Várszegi Asztrik 70. születésnapjára* [Studies for the 70<sup>th</sup> birthday of Asztrik Várszegi]. Budapest, 2016, 315-325. It also has to be mentioned that Haynald's concerns was down-to-earth, hence, the Archdiocese of Zagreb had to cope with similar conditions, mainly regarding the Slavic liturgy introduced by Josip Strossmayer, Bishop of Diakóvár in 1882, to which the Government paid attention as well. See Kozári, Monika: *Tisza Kálmán és kormányzati rendszere* [Kálmán Tisza and his governmental structure]. Budapest 2003, 388. See also Andreas Gottsmann: *Rom und die nationalen Katholizismen in der Donaumonarchie* [Rome and the national Catholicism in the Austro-Hungarian Empire]. Vienna, 2010, 95-100

<sup>42</sup> Sources 194, 209

<sup>43</sup> Sources 240-242

Greek Catholics which, as a result, was willingly embraced by the Government, in case the issue was restricted to the question of liturgy. This led to the beginning of action regarding the issue both in Budapest and in Rome. Until 1898, two memoranda were submitted to Rome by the Government, and while the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith were examining the issue for a long time, the believers organized a pilgrimage to Rome on the occasion of the jubilee of 1900, where Pope Leo XIII received them. Although the parties, for obvious reasons, could not convince each other, an implied solution was achieved, primarily resulting from that the consequent prohibition of Hungarian liturgy seemed enforceable. According to this solution, the Holy See tolerated the already existing liturgical practice but did not allow the introduction of any further, and the Hungarian Government temporarily ceased forcing the issue.

##### 5. Schismatic movements and the Vatican action

In the era of Dualism, the other significant issue regarding the religion and nationality of Greek Catholics was the case of schismatic movements, strengthening at the turn of the century among the Ruthenians living in North-East Hungary, which was also seriously dealt with by the Hungarian Government.

For the peasant Ruthenian masses having settled down in the region from the 13<sup>th</sup> century in different waves, the Union of Ungvár of 1648 did not constitute any changes, as their Eastern liturgy and the language of their Church remained. However, the clergy became free from the obligations against the laird, so the union meant social rising for them. This latter also had material effect, since the Catholic priests were entitled to claim contributions of various titles under the name stole fee. Consequently, the new religion was more expen-

sive, on the whole, for the believers.<sup>44</sup> The believers' impoverishment was stimulated also by the lack of land caused by the confiscation of estates, which concerned also the lordship of Munkács, after the suppression of Rákóczi's War of Independence, and by tax burdens.<sup>45</sup> The burdens of usury appearing with the immigration of Jews from Galicia in the 1850s enhanced their misery.<sup>46</sup>

In case of the Ruthenians, the national awaking and the course of becoming a nation in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were inseparable from the Church, since the tiny fraction of intellectuals was represented basically by the clergy in their peasant community. The secular intellectuals of insignificant number did not represent a coherent stand view regarding the nationality, the Hungarophiles, the Russophiles and the Rusynophiles could also be found among them. Besides, the bilingualism was neither a feature of the Ruthenians of Subcarpathia, since only 5,5% of them spoke also Hungarian in 1900. So, becoming Hungaricised, as a basic element of social mobility, did not affect them significantly.<sup>47</sup>

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, about the four fifth of the Ruthenians lived from farming, so the wave of emigration to America beginning in the 1880s had an increased impact on them, especially after the turn of century. The people who got to the new world did not want to miss the pastoral care overseas, so their priests followed them.<sup>48</sup> But, the

44 Gönczi, Andrea: Ruszin skizmatikus mozgalom a XX. század elején [Rusyn schismatic movement at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century], Ungvár-Beregszász, 2008, 26

45 Bonkáló, Sándor : A rutének [The Ruthenians]. Budapest, 1996, 118

46 Gönczi 27

47 Botlik, József: Hármaskereszt alatt. Görög katolikusok Kárpátalján az ungvári uniótól napjainkig [Under the Triple Cross. Greek Catholics in Subcarpathia from the Union of Ungvár till the present day] (1646-1997). Budapest, 1997, 102-103

48 Mayer, Mária: Kárpátukrán (ruszin) politikai és társadalmi törekvések 1860-1910 [Carpatho Ukrainian (Rusyn) political and social efforts between 1860 and 1910]. Budapest, 1977, 176-177



Greek Catholic priests' integration into the American Catholic hierarchy led to several conflicts with the local Roman Catholic prelates mainly of Italian and Irish origin who did not want to accept the different discipline and practice of Greek Catholics. Therefore, several of the Greek Catholics coming from Hungary to America converted to the Orthodox religion, with vigorous Russian encouragement.<sup>49</sup> This was partly due to the intolerant attitude of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, and partly to the internal conflicts of the priests coming from the Eparchies of Munkács and Eperjes, and later due to the confrontation outbreaking with the Ruthenians from the Galician area of the Monarchy.<sup>50</sup>

As regards the Ruthenians of Subcarpathia, beside their outdated farming practices and the economic factors otherwise hindering the fight against poverty (for which the Government initiated the Highland's Program), the peasantry also had to pay 'the price of the religion'. For the priests, the Union meant gaining parochial lands and a salary from the state. Furthermore, they were entitled to levy more contributions from the believers of various titles under the name stole fee. This became necessary by the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, since, for example, the total value of the financial and in-kind benefits specified in the episcopal order of 1863 which defined the priestly salary in the Eparchy of Munkács, was 4,000 Hungarian Crowns on average by 1900, but it was greatly underestimated by the Hungarian administration, thus supplemented the salaries to the amount of 1,600 Hungarian Crowns including the congrua. So, the pastors often calculated to on high amount when converting the in-kind obligations of the Ruthenian peasants into pecuniary payment, and they attempted to take advantages also of the unregulated nature of stole fee.<sup>51</sup>

49 Mayer, 177-180.

50 Mayer, 184-204, Botlik, 146-161.

51 Gönczi, 26-27

The outdated farming usages, the poverty and the shortage of land regarding the peasantry, the unregulated nature of the priests' living conditions, and the ideas presented by the ones returning from America jointly led to the offset of schismatic movements in which all the particular religious and economic problems of the Ruthenians in Hungary became concentrated in a tangible manner.

In the movements originating from the internal conflicts of certain settlements, the issue of the priests' unregulated salaries, the peasantry's greed for land, and other social problems could be found at the same time. However, the Hungarian authorities basically handled the issues of schismatic movements as mere administrative cases in 1901, and primarily wished to question the formal compliance of the conversion with Act XVIII of 1895. In the case of conversions in Iza at the beginning of 1903, the image of the political movement incited from outside and of the Pan Slavism appeared. In the case of conversion movements in Nagylucska starting in December 1903, resulting from the events of Iza, the appearance of the activity of the believers returning from the United States is observable. The Hungarian Government attempted to drive the cases, which were motivated mostly by social aspects but appeared as religious matters, to the field of politics.

Overall, due to the problems of Ruthenian Greek Catholics, to the unregulated liturgy of the believers of Hungarian mother tongue, and to a range of other ecclesiastical disputes with the Vatican,<sup>52</sup> the

52 See the documents of the Vatican action under MNL OL K 26 1904-XV-216 and largely in Sources 492-513, 524-534, 538-554. Regarding the Vatican action, the matter of the restitution of San Girolamo institute, supported also by Josip Strossmayer, occurred which would have been a seminary for South Slavic Catholics. The Hungarian Government, fearing the possible harmful effects to the nationalities, which would have strengthened partly the idea of Croatian nation, did not encourage it. The reason was the Government's attempt to avoid drawing all South Slavic Catholics of the Monarchy into one institution,

Hungarian Government recognised that the issues, which concerned the Catholic Church but also had nationality-related and political aspects, should be treated as a greater political issue in one package, and not one by one.

Basically, the Government intended to use, as legal basis, the repelling of schismatic movements and the related supports required in favour of the American Greek Catholics, in order to win the benignity of the Roman Curia regarding a range of disputed matters. Beside some personal and institutional matters, the issue of Hungarian liturgy appeared as a long-term strategic objective.

The frosty relationship between Hungary and the Vatican occurring from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Vatican decisions that Hungary objected in certain cases, and the reluctant Vatican behaviour led the Prime Ministry to the conclusion that they were 'facing a general inimical tendency instead of the favourable or unfavourable treatment of specific cases'.<sup>53</sup>

After consultation with the Common Foreign Minister, the Hungarian Government decided to start the Vatican action at a time when Pope Leo XIII was still alive. However, after the Pope's death and the election of Pope Pius X, the Government became more optimistic regarding the issue.

According to the concept of the government, firstly, they asked the prelates concerned by the schismatic movements and emigratory

but the Common Ministry of Foreign Affairs represented an altering stand view. The ongoing disciplinary proceedings in the case of Vasile Lucaci also was considered as to be settled, where the minimal goal was at least his 'forced retirement'. In addition, the Hungarian Government made attempts towards Archbishop of Eger József Samassa to become a cardinal. On the other hand, the Government wished, as early as in 1903, to reach the appointment as Bishop of Diakóvár of János Krapác, although Strossmayer passed away only two years later.

53 Sources 494

matters<sup>54</sup> to mention several benefits of the Hungarian Government in the Vatican. Thereby, the Holy See would take the initiative, quasi encouraging the government's further work and, at the same time, the prelates would initiate the proper arrangement of the matters important for the Government.

Primarily, the Hungarian Government expected substantive results from the actions of Gyula Firczák, the Bishop of Munkács who reported to Pope Pius X about the governmental support provided regarding the schismatic movements. The report was not only delivered in writing but was made verbally as well in 1904. In December, the Government decided to wait and see the response of the Holy See,<sup>55</sup> but finally the Vatican did not give a substantial answer, and the Government crisis of 1905 swept away all similar initiatives.

As regards the action of the concerned prelates, Tisza contacted Miklós Szécsen, ambassador of the Vatican at the beginning of 1904, and informed him of the plans of the Hungarian Government. After all, Tisza did not wait for the answer but wrote a letter again to Szécsen on 21 February 1904. Tisza apparently wished for an immediate solution to most of the problems instead of a complicated diplomatic manoeuvre lingering for years and demanding a huge financial investment.

54 The Government primarily asked Gyula Firczák, the Bishop of Munkács and János Vályi, the Bishop of Eperjes, both concerned with the emigration and the schismatic movements, as well as Pál Szmeccsányi, Roman Catholic Bishop of Nagyvárad as the caretaker of the issue of emigration, and finally János Szabó, Greek Catholic Bishop of Szamosújváros as the ordinary of Vasile Lucaciu, to turn to the Holy See in writing, after preliminary reconciliations.

55 MNL OL K 26 1904-XV-216-5676

## 6. Governmental initiation of the establishment of a Hungarian Orthodox eparchy

As it was mentioned above, the attention of the decision makers in the Government regarding the Orthodox Christians of Hungarian mother tongue was not raised by the applications of Zsigmond Reiner but by half of a paragraph in János Vályi's memorandum on the Hungarian Greek Catholics' liturgy from November 1903. Here, the Bishop endeavours to describe that *'in those days, the schismatics attempted, by Hungarian translations and envisaging the worships in Hungarian language, to hold the Greek Catholics of Hungarian mother tongue back from joining the holy Union. It is striking that no more attempts have been made to get them back since then; moreover, the schismatic bishops have not introduced the Hungarian liturgy even for their own believers of Hungarian mother tongue, though the number of such believers would give reason for it for the salvations of souls, according to the teaching of the Orthodox Church. As, according to the census in 1900, 31,803 of the believers of the Greek Orthodox Church are of Hungarian mother tongue and 162,966 more believers speak Hungarian and the considerable part of the latter number can be considered as ones of Hungarian mother tongue for the reasons explained above'*.<sup>56</sup>

The memorandum of János Vályi was prepared in order to introduce the Hungarian Greek Catholic liturgy and, in this aspect, it

56 Sources 224. It has to be added that Vályi's arguments were not entirely novel, since they were formulated also in the memorandum delivered to Pope Leo XIII According to this, the Orthodox Christians have already tried to convert Greek Catholic believers with Hungarian sermons, and the translation work of János Popovics in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century also resulted from this tendency. In order to retain their believers, the Bishops of Munkács finally had to allow the use of Hungarian language in the liturgies. See *A görög szertartású katolikus magyarok emlékirata XIII. Leó pápa Özszentségéhez* [Memoir of Catholic Hungarians with Greek liturgy to His Holiness the Pope Leo XIII]. Budapest, 1900 24-25. Published also in Sources 436

considers Hungarian Orthodoxy as a danger and not as a national movement to be supported. Vályi, the Bishop of Eperjes states that the spiritual needs of the believers were sacrificed for the expansion of nationalities by the impatience of nationalities existing in the Greek Orthodox Church from the 1850s. In the light of the schismatic movements, he considers possible that the principle of the impatient nationalities soon will be replaced by the principle of impatient Orthodoxy. Moreover, he can already see the signs envisaging that the Greek Catholic Hungarians with unsatisfied spiritual needs may get the opportunity to have their own liturgy within the Orthodox Church. The Holy Synod of Saint Petersburg have already permitted the use of Hungarian liturgy for Hungarian believers in the United States. The Bishop of Eperjes adds that there is a risk that if the Vatican renews its prohibitive order of 1896, the schism will begin gaining power also among the believers of Hungarian mother tongue, which may spread to the Romanian and Slavic regions. But if the Holy See's permission of Hungarian liturgy was achieved, then the Hungarian Orthodox Christians would probably join the union as well.

Vályi's above cited words caught the Prime Minister's attention but without taking the context or Vályi's worries into consideration. In the Prime Minister's view, the introduction of Hungarian liturgy by the Orthodoxy would not encounter difficulties according to Section 9 in Act IX of 1868.<sup>57</sup> However, prior to any measures, he requested the preparation of the necessary statistical summaries from the Hungarian Central Statistical Office. The Prime Minister expected answers to four pertaining questions from the Office: 1. what is the

57 *'The rights to the self-reliant disposal of the matters regarding the parishes and the schools, to the free use of the liturgical language and also to the management of the assets and foundations hitherto exercised by the Greek Orthodox believers being neither of Serb nor of Romanian mother tongue shall be allowed to exercise likewise hereafter'*. MNL OL K 26 1909-XLI-3665 (1903-XVa 5051). Underlines in the original

exact number of Greek Orthodox Christians of Hungarian mother tongue and of Hungarian speakers, 2. these believers' ratio between the Romanian and Serb ecclesiastical provinces, 3. what is the ratio (in percent) of Greek Orthodox Christians of Hungarian mother tongue and Greek Orthodox Christians who speak Hungarian to the number of all Greek Orthodox believers (indicating separately the ratio of those of Hungarian mother tongue and of those who speak Hungarian) in case of settlements where the number of them is at least fifty, 4. how their rate changed in the light of the previous census, since, *'the assimilating effect of the Church school with foreign language and the liturgical language in case of this folk can be asserted only'* on the basis of these data.<sup>58</sup>

However, the Prime Ministry, in its exposé of 1903<sup>59</sup> regarding the foundation of a new Greek Orthodox eparchy, mentioned the Greek Orthodox Hungarian liturgy. However, it was not connected to the issue of Greek Catholics at this time, the raising of the question remained within the frames of assimilation and re-assimilation of nationalities.

It has to be noted that while the Hungarian Central Statistical Office started preparing the required statistical summaries at the turning of 1903 and 1904, the Prime Minister gained information in February 1904 from further reports on schismatic movements. That provided opportunity to connect the issues of Greek Catholics, Hungarian Orthodox Christians and schismatic movements.

A schism spreading in the Eparchy of Munkács, more precisely, an innocuous piece of a report regarding the events of Nagylucska<sup>60</sup> led the question into this direction. József Kazy, the head of the Highland's Program regional office notes regarding the events that 'the con-

58 MNL OL K 26 1909-XLI-3665 (1903-XVa 5051) Prime Minister István Tisza to Gyula Vargha Director of Statistical Office. 12 December 1903

59 MNL OL K 26 1909-XLI-3665 (1903-XVa-5051). Budapest, 12 December 1903

60 See more Gönczi 62-74

version to Greek Orthodox religion emerged also in Bereg County, namely in Nagylucska and Bereg-Rákos, the two most populated and most wealthy settlements, where most people were of Hungarian mother tongue'.<sup>61</sup> Tisza's attention was caught by this information and, concurrently with his letter to Szécsen on 21 February 1904, he asked the főispán (county governor) of Bereg County to confirm this data. He also connected the issue with the Hungarian liturgy: 'it is characteristic that the Greek Orthodox religion seems to spread among [the] people of Hungarian mother tongue, wherefore we should consider the question whether the refusal or the obstruction of the Hungarian liturgy is the reason of this movement'.<sup>62</sup>

According to the census in 1900, the population of Nagylucska lying in Munkács District of Bereg County was 4,366, which meant 3,952 persons of Ruthenian, 214 persons of Hungarian mother tongue and 1,363 Hungarian speaking persons. The religious distribution turned out as follows: 4,038 Greek Catholic and 97 Roman Catholic persons were living in the settlement, beside them only Jews mainly of German mother tongue were represented in significant number.<sup>63</sup> From the total population of 2,441 in Beregrákos belonging to Latorca District, 1,462 persons were Hungarian and 890 were Ruthenian, the number of those who spoke Hungarian was 1,854. Regarding the religious distribution, the settlement had 909 Greek Catholic, 1,319

61 MNL OL K 26 1910-XXV-1574 (1904-XIV-236-802). From József Kazy to Béla Tallián Minister of Agriculture. 4 February 1904

62 MNL OL K 26 1910-XXV-1574 (1904-XIV-236-802). Draft official letter of István Tisza to Viktor Hagara, főispán of Bereg County. Budapest 21 February 1904 (signed on 22 February)

63 Magyar Statisztikai Közlemények. New serial volume 1. A Magyar Szent Korona Országainak 1900. évi népszámlálása. I. rész. A Népesség általános leírása Községenkint. [Population census of the lands of the Holy Crown of Hungary in 1900. Part I. General description of the population per townships] Budapest, 1902, 214-215. (hereinafter: MSK)



Lutheran and 34 Roman Catholic believers.<sup>64</sup> This indicates that the Greek Catholic population of the concerned settlements was mostly Ruthenian and only a small group declared itself as Hungarian but it is also true that as much as one third of the Greek Catholics spoke Hungarian as well. This latter fact is important also because such groups were considered more as Hungarians by the state.

Almost one month before receiving the report of Kazy, Tisza informed in detail Miklós Szécsen, the ambassador to the Holy See of initiating the Vatican action in which he paid particular attention to the issue of the Hungarian liturgy, and explained the several material efforts done for the Greek Catholics along with the expected results. But, due to the report of Kazy, he did not wait for the ambassador's response but sent a second semi-official letter to Szécsen on 21 February. In this letter, he explained the escalation of the schismatic movements, enclosing the regarding documents of the competent administrative authorities and of Gyula Firczák. Subsequently, Tisza wrote about the financial matters in a sharp tone, and made it clear that in return he expects concessions from the Vatican: 'However, transaction requiring such a huge financial sacrifice could only be undertaken, under the given circumstances and also considering the state's financial conditions, by the Hungarian Royal Government, if the Vatican also grants concessions in issues important from national aspects and imparted to you in my previous letter.'<sup>65</sup> Later, he outlined a result of the issue which has not been formulated either prior or later: 'Finally, for possible use, I intend to impart that for the state, the cooperation

<sup>64</sup> MSK volume 1, 212-213

<sup>65</sup> Tisza made it clear not only to Szécsen but also to other government politicians that in return for the financial support for the Eparchy of Munkács, he wished to reach results basically regarding the issue of the Hungarian liturgy. See MNL OL K 26 1910-XXV-1574 (1904-XIV-236-1225) From István Tisza to Albert Berzeviczy Minister of Religion and Public Education, Budapest, 31 March 1904

with the Curia is not the exclusive way of declining the problems in Upper Hungary but a[n other] way of cure also exists. The Greek Orthodox Bishop of Buda, Lucián Bogdanovics [Greek Orthodox Serb Bishop of Buda] is absolutely correct and trustworthy from patriotic aspects, who could be convinced to pursue solidly Hungarian Greek Orthodox church politics and to handle the movements of conversions harmful for the state in a patriotic manner. If the Vatican, with its dismissive stand view, forced the Hungarian Royal Government to use this solution, and to remove its protective hands from the matter of the Union, that, in the present circumstances, would mean the collapse of the Greek Catholic Church in Upper Hungary. In fact, in such circumstances, it was fateful blindness, if the Curia rejected the offer of the Hungarian Royal Government and exposed the issue of the Union for unpredictable eventualities.<sup>66</sup>

The two quoted documents, one sent to the főispán of Bereg County and one to the ambassador of the Vatican, were dated on the same day (21 February 1904) which leads to the consequences that it was the first time when a Prime Minister connected the matter of the Hungarian liturgy and the schismatic movements, and saw the possibility of gaining greater political benefits with the issue of Orthodox Hungarians. With reference to the plans in 1903-1904, a second Pro Domo document from 1907 regarding the Hungarian Greek Orthodox Church organization, noted that 'then, at the establishment of the Hungarian Greek Orthodox Church, the prime aim in mind was that if the Greek Orthodox Christians of Hungarian mother tongue obtained a proper organization due to the foundation of an eparchy, they, due to their Hungarian liturgical language, would be fascinating for the Greek Catholics of Hungarian mother tongue, and the latter ones supposedly were ready to join the Hungarian Greek Orthodox Church in large numbers, for the Hungarian liturgical lan-

<sup>66</sup> Sources 547-548.

guage. In case of such plentiful conversions, the Curia must give up the previous rejecting behaviour and, in order to keep the Greek Orthodox Hungarians under its control, would allow or would tolerate the Hungarian liturgy about which it is worried at the moment'.<sup>67</sup>

Tisza did not mention to Szécsen the issue of the Orthodox Hungarians specifically, only another element, namely the participation of Bogdanovics. However, the thoughts not spoken out by the Prime Minister is also interesting. It was evident that in case of the 'patriotic' participation of Bogdanovics, for the proper handling of conversions, the creation of local institutions would be required namely the establishment of a new Hungarian Orthodox eparchy, the social basis of which partly seemed to be existing in Nagylucska and Beregrákos.

From the Government's point of view, all matters around the Greek Catholic Church, which essentially constituted an enormous set of problems, could have been settled almost instantly. The introduction of Hungarian liturgy as one of the most important conceptual goals of the Government, would have been resolved without any further significant financial sacrifices to the Ruthenian eparchies. As a result, it would have not been necessary to rely on the benignity of the Vatican and, due to the character of the Orthodox Church, the Government could have intervened in the internal affairs of the Church.

Szécsen responded to Tisza's letter almost by return of post, and for his part, he warned not to threat the Vatican with the support of schismatic movements. He fully doubted that if the Government followed that path, the movement of conversions could have been kept under control and handled in a patriotic manner.<sup>68</sup>

67 MNL OL K 26 1909-XLI-3665 (1906-XIV-6292). Pro domo document, Budapest, 22 January 1907

68 Sources: 236

Any reference to that what finally happened to the concept delineated by Tisza cannot be found. Most probably, that must have been a mere inflammation. On the one hand, the concept was not feasible according to Miklós Szécsen. On the other hand, the főispán of Bereg County, in his respond received on 1 May, explicitly stated that the schismatic movement in Bereg County 'is not at all connected with the issue of the refusal or the obstruction of the Hungarian liturgy, it emerged not among Hungarians but the Greek Catholics of Ruthenian mother tongue where this issue has no relevance pro or contra'.<sup>69</sup>

Following the correspondence between István Tisza and Miklós Szécsen, the Statistical Office sent the required statistical summaries to the Prime Ministry on 7 July 1904. That contained the data of 683 settlements with at least 50 inhabitants who spoke Hungarian, in different breakdowns, on about 77 pages.<sup>70</sup> The Statistical Office explicitly states that the Act IX of 1868 on the organization of the Greek Orthodox Church placed the Orthodox Churches on the basis of nationality, and the Section 9 of the Act guaranteed autonomy for the believers of other (i.e. not Serb or Romanian) mother tongue. It is clear from the Act and the other related regulations that only the believers of the certain nationalities can be considered as the member of the Serb or the Romanian Greek Orthodox Churches. On the contrary, the survey of the Statistical Office showed 31,833 Greek Orthodox believers of Hungarian mother tongue in the Romanian and

69 MNL OL K 26 1910-XXV-1574 (1904-XIV-236-2130). From Viktor Hagara the főispán of Bereg County to Prime Minister István Tisza. Beregszász, 1 May 1904

70 The accompanying study pertaining to the statement was published also by Gábor Kemény G. See Kemény G., Gábor: Iratok a nemzetiségi kérdés történetéhez Magyarországon a dualizmus korában IV. kötet [Documents to the history of the issue of nationalities in Hungary in the era of Dualism. Vol IV] 1903-1906. Budapest, 1966, 334-339. Kemény G. indicates an incorrect archive reference code to the source.

Serb eparchies. Beside them, also 16,710 Roma and 6,850 believers of other nationalities were living in this area. These conditions were assessed as contrary to the existing laws by the Office. Out of the 108 settlements<sup>71</sup> where at least 50 believers were of Hungarian mother tongue or Hungarian-speaking and such believers also had absolute majority, Hungarian liturgical language was exclusively used in 15 settlements, and it was used with Romanian language by turns in two further settlements.<sup>72</sup>

Overall, believers who spoke Hungarian had the absolute majority in 91 settlements where Hungarian liturgical language was not used, and countless settlements existed without the employment of Hungarian liturgical language where the rate of the Hungarian speakers was between 20-50%. Furthermore, the Statistical Office emphasized in particular that 'the 31,833 Greek Orthodox Christians of Hungarian mother tongue showed at the census is soundly below the actual data, since the census commissioners, misled by the false seal of the Romanian national Church, often registered the Hungarians of Greek Orthodox religion as Vlachs or Romanians, moreover, the Greek Orthodox Hungarian people, misled by their priests and teachers saturated with the theory of Daco-Roman continuity and spiritually infected, declared themselves as Vlachs many times'.<sup>73</sup>

71 Alsóboldogasszonyfalva, Alsócsernáton, Békéscsaba, Bölön, Hódmezővásárhely, Kecskemét, Kökös, Lisznyó, Mikóújfalú, Miskolc, Nagyajta, Nagygalambfalva, Sepsiszentgyörgy, Szentés, Vargyas.

72 Romanian was used as a subsidiary language in Aldoboly, and in Uzon the masses were celebrated also in Hungarian and Romanian.

73 MNL OL K 26 1909-XLI-3665 (1904-XIV-3290). It has to be briefly mentioned that considering the ones of Hungarian mother tongue and the ones who spoke Hungarian uniformly as 'Hungarians' has also taken place in case of the Greek Catholics. Concurrently with the preparation of the report on the Hungarian Orthodox Christians, the Office prepared a similar report regarding the Hungarian Greek Catholics, in which the relevancy of the question was formulated slightly more accurately: 'if we wish to consider the question

Overall, the Statistical Office ascertained that if the provisions of Act IX of 1868 guaranteed ecclesiastical institutes for the Serb and Romanian Orthodox Churches on the basis of nationality, then the Hungarian Orthodox Christians are also entitled to such guarantee. It could preclude the endeavours to Romanianization and Slavization of said Churches, moreover 'it would be the most efficient remedy against anti-national endeavours and [...] it would promote becoming Hungaricised [...], and would have an enormous magnetism to the Hungarian speaker Greek Orthodox Christians of foreign mother tongue the part of whom surely did not declare themselves as Hungarian due to the influence of foreign-minded ecclesiastical authority and anti-Hungarian pastors'.

Subsequently, the Statistical Office turned to financial and administrative issues. It wished to resolve the financial impacts of establishing the eparchy by consuming the assets of depopulating, yet Hungaricised vicarages of Macedonian-Greek origin. As regards the

properly, we have to count the most of the Greek Catholics, qualified as ones of foreign mother tongue who although speak Hungarian, to the ones of Hungarian mother tongue. Indeed, it is well-known that, as it was recognised also in the memorandum of the Greek Catholic Bishop of Eperjes in 1903, some of the Greek Catholic people, due to their religion, declare themselves as Slavic or Vlach even if their mother tongues and origin are Hungarian; and they do so, all the more, because the ecclesiastic supremacy and the instigators of nationalities affect them straight into this direction in certain areas. It is the census of 1900 that precisely provides evident proofs that major part of the Greek Catholics who speak Hungarian but recorded as of foreign nationality, are Hungarians indeed. According to the census, we have a lot of townships where no or few ones of Hungarian mother tongue live among the Greek Catholic inhabitants but all or almost all of the Greek Catholics speak Hungarian, which is obviously possible only if the Greek Catholics of Hungarian mother tongue were intentionally or by mistake (misled by their 'Vlach' or 'Russian' religion) registered as Vlachs or Ruthenians, in the course of the census'. MNL OL K 26 1907-XXV-1910 (5074/1904). From Gyula Vargha to István Tisza. Budapest, 20 October 1904, See Sources 565

maintainance of the eparchy, the Office trusted the financial support of wealthier Greek Orthodox vicarages, like the Greek Parishes of Brassó or Budapest.

Based on the statistical summaries, three towns were named as possible seats of the eparchy: Budapest, Hódmezővásárhely and Sepsiszentgyörgy. The Office indicated that even though the most compact block of Greek Orthodox believers of Hungarian mother tongue was in Sepsi District, due to its unfavourable geographical location one of the other two towns should be chosen as seat, and two vicariates should be drawn under its jurisdiction.

Finally, the Statistical Office remarks that ‘solely mother tongue is an insufficient criterion when determining which parishes should fall under the jurisdiction of a planned Hungarian Greek Orthodox eparchy, since it is not rare that a census commissioner working in rural areas of nationalities, as I ventured to mention above, deliberately registers Hungarian Greek Orthodox believers as Serbs or Vlachs (as he confuses religion with nationality), and indeed there are thousands whose mother tongue is Hungarian among the 112,043 people shown as Greek Orthodox Vlachs who speak Hungarian and the 52,916 people shown as Greek Orthodox Serbs who speak Hungarian. Thus, depth inquiry of such issue should precede the determination of which parishes should be drawn under the jurisdiction of the Hungarian Greek Orthodox bishop.’

Based on the summaries of the Statistical Office, the Prime Ministry delivered requests to the heads of all concerned municipalities of Hungary<sup>74</sup> and of the Banat,<sup>75</sup> and of municipalities under the ju-

74 Counties Békés és Bihar belonging to the Eparchy of Arad, and Counties Szatmár és Szilágy belonging to the Metropolitanate of Nagyszeben.

75 Csanád, Csongrád, Arad, Krassó-Szörény, Temes, Torontál Counties, and Hódmezővásárhely, Arad, Debrecen and Temesvár towns belonging to the Eparchy of Arad.

jurisdiction of the Archeparchies of Nagyszeben<sup>76</sup> and Karlóca.<sup>77</sup> The requests included indications of the ecclesiastical higher authorities and were broken down partly by ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and partly by geographical units.<sup>78</sup>

In its official letter addressed to the főispáns of Hungary and Transylvania, the Prime Ministry delineated that, prior to the commencement of Church organization, it should be assessed ‘which parishes will be willing to join the planned Greek Orthodox Church movement with patriotic orientation.’ The official letter briefly described the key findings of the Statistical Office regarding nationalities. Namely, that in 91 out of the concerned 108 parishes of Hungarian majority, Hungarian language is not involved in worships at all. Consequently, the Romanian Greek Orthodox Church does not observe its obligations deriving from religious ethics, since the spiritual needs of believers are not satisfied in their mother tongue. So, it seems that the Romanian Orthodox Church misuses the rights deriving from its autonomy in order that Hungarian believers become similar to Romanians. The best means of preventing this is the establishment of a separate eparchy, which bears an autonomy resembling that of Romanians or Serbs. The initial steps towards such achievement were taken by the Statistical Office, but those are insufficient on their own for taking an in-depth action. Thus, ‘quasi reviewing the accuracy of census data for the purposes of our objective is imperative, as well as obtaining information on the patriotism and political sensitivity of folks concerned by the action in question.’

76 Háromszék, Kis-Küküllő, Maros-Torda, Nagy-Küküllő, Szolnok-Doboka, Torda-Aranyos, Udvarhelyszék, Szeben, Fogaras, Brassó, Alsó-Fehér, Hunyad and Beszterce-Naszód Counties, and Marosvásárhely.

77 The főispáns of Baranya, Fehér, Tolna, Bács-Bodrog, Pest-Pilis-Solt-Kiskun and Borsod Counties, and the heads of Pécs, Székesfehérvár, Újvidék, Baja, Szabadka Zombor, Kecskemét, Pancsova and Versec towns.

78 MNL OL K 26 1909-XLI-3665 (1904-XIV-3290). Pál Petri's drafts of official letters to the concerned főispáns, 1 August 1904.



Subsequently, the Prime Ministry asked three duly explained questions from the főispáns regarding the concerned parishes, in order to gather information on the extent of support that the Greek Orthodox population of the area would grant for the establishment of an Orthodox eparchy of Hungarian mother tongue. The first question aimed at ‘the patriotism and political sensitivity of the Greek Orthodox population of Hungarian mother tongue.’ The purpose of the Prime Ministry was to obtain information primarily on the relation between national and religious identity. According to the explanation attached to the question, patriotism had been strongly developed among Hungarians. However, it seemed uncertain whether Greek Orthodox Hungarians would put ‘conventional religious ties above national aspects’ due to the activities of some Romanian teachers and priests. The Prime Ministry’s second question sought information on the accuracy of census data mentioned also by the Statistical Office. The question asked ‘whether Greek Orthodox people of Hungarian mother tongue were incorrectly shown as ones who merely speak Hungarian’. The Prime Ministry claimed to have met cases where Greek Catholic Hungarians declared themselves as Romanians or census commissioners registered them as Romanians. Thus, by analogy, ‘it is likely that among Greek Orthodox believers shown as Vlachs, there are many individuals of Hungarian sentiment who hold their Hungarian identity’. If such hypothesis was confirmed, even partial repetition of the census might have become necessary. The final question aimed at the ‘patriotism and political sensitivity of Vlachs who speak Hungarian’. This question cannot be handled as part of defensive policy regarding nationalities but reveals the potential attempt of assimilation. In the view of the Prime Ministry, key opponents to the Hungarian state idea were exactly among Romanians who speak Hungarian as well. However, thanks to the additional absorbing effect of Hungarian language and culture, ‘among Romanians who speak Hungarian but have not declared themselves as Hungarian yet, there may be

several who, out of conviction or otherwise, would join the planned action or provide external support’.

In the case of the Serbian Metropolitanate of Karlóca, the Prime Ministry did not highlight the protection of the Hungarian folk, due to the acknowledgement of its non-Hungarian origin. Here, the issue was ‘finally consolidating the patriotism of Hungaricised believers of the Greek Orthodox Church’, emphasising that the Serbian Church attempted to prevent just that by means of its autonomy. Thus, here the Prime Ministry wished to examine the degree of assimilation of the folks with non-Hungarian origin in the Metropolitanate, asking whether it is possible that ‘even though declaring themselves as Hungarians, these Greek Orthodox people would not join a Greek Orthodox Church movement with patriotic orientation, because of their adherence to their Serbian Church or other reasons’. Two further questions were asked on the data collections of the census among the Greek Orthodox people of Hungarian mother tongue in Karlóca. The Prime Ministry wished to see if any of those were inaccurate regarding nationality due to the individuals’ adherence to religion or due to deliberate mistake of commissioners. These two questions were nearly identical to the ones asked in the Romanian Eparchy. The last question aimed at the political behaviour and patriotism of Serbs who speak Hungarian. The Prime Ministry emphasised that the tendency for assimilation of the Serb in Hungary is relatively stronger than that of the Romanian, thus it is right to expect that the case of establishing a Hungarian eparchy would gain support from many believers of the Metropolitanate of Karlóca.

The Prime Ministry asked nearly all of the aforesaid questions from főispáns of the Banat, with a view to the fact that its population comprised of mixed, Romanian and Serb nationalities. Here, both ‘strengthening the patriotism of the Serbian Church’s believers of Hungarian mother tongue’ and ‘preventing the aggressive endeavours of the Romanian Church’ were deemed necessary.

Unfortunately, none of the concerned főispáns' answers can be found among the documents of the Prime Ministry. However, the aforesaid questions most likely could not have been answered in the form they were put forward. The degree and intensity of patriotism, or the level of assimilation are undefinable. It is also difficult to answer questions aiming at possible decisions regarding the establishment of a new eparchy. It is hard to assess the opinion of a community comprising of persons with dual identity regarding religion and nationality. That may differ completely from settlement to settlement, or even person to person. In addition, the Prime Ministry's questions missed two key members of the communities: the priest and the teacher.

The Prime Ministry might have recognised all that. It sent a new set of questions to all who were concerned as soon as on 25 August 1904.<sup>79</sup> Out of the questions asked earlier, only the one aiming at the validity of the data collected by the Statistical Office was included in the new inquiry, along with four further questions. These aimed at the language used in liturgy, sermons, hymns, at the 'official' languages of communities, at 'how patriotic the priests' were and whether they spoke Hungarian, at the conditions of Greek Orthodox Church schools and at their language of instruction, and finally, at the mother tongue of the teachers concerned and whether they spoke Hungarian and 'how patriotic they were'.

There is no further information on the afterlife of the aforesaid official letters among the Prime Ministry's documents. Moreover, the issue was withdrawn from the agenda in the late spring of 1905. The pertaining document-management notes preserved an instruction of Kunó Klebelsberg ordering on 13 May 1905 that no further action

79 MNL OL K 26 1909-XLI-3665 (1904-XIV-3290). Pál Petri's drafts of official letter to the concerned főispáns. 25 August 1904. Beside the aforesaid főispáns, these were delivered to the főispáns of Tolna and Kolozs Counties, of Kolozsvár town with municipal rights, of Szeged town with municipal rights and to the Mayor of Budapest Capital.

shall be taken for the time being, despite the efforts for preparation. Such instruction must have been given with regard to the political situation, most likely to the Government crisis.

7. The issue of Hungarian Orthodox believers and the last ten years of Dualism

Following the fall of the liberal Government in 1905, even though the issue concerning Orthodox Hungarians was not withdrawn from the agenda, there was a detectable change in the Government's approach. Tisza attempted to be an initiator, focusing on an ambitious plan concerning Orthodox Hungarians. However, that was merely a short-lived attempt. The following governments practiced a more contemplative approach. Typically, the issue gained attention when specific cases of parishes reached governmental level. Although these were individual cases, settling them provided opportunity for the Government to examine all administrative, public and ecclesiastical law aspects of the possible establishment of a Hungarian Orthodox eparchy.

The first such case was the dispute regarding the ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the Hungarian Greek Orthodox Parish of Hódmezővásárhely in December 1906. The dispute started between the Romanian Orthodox Eparchy of Arad and the Serb Orthodox Eparchy of Temesvár on the jurisdiction over the Parish of Hódmezővásárhely in 1906. The Parish did not recognise the jurisdiction of either eparchies. The Parish claimed that, according to Article 9 in Act IX of 1868, it qualified as a neither Serb nor Romanian parish with maintained former independence. That entitled it, as before, to independent parish administration and school affairs, free use of Hungarian liturgical language and management of assets belonging to the Parish and to its foundation. The Parish indicated that they had also lodged a submission to MRPE and asked the Prime Ministry to put in a good word to the competent Minister so as not to designate either of the above eparchy to exercise the jurisdiction. Based also on

the data of the prior census, the believers requested the Prime Ministry to submit a legislative proposal to the National Assembly on the establishment of a separate Hungarian Orthodox ecclesiastical province or at least an eparchy, and declare the jurisdiction thereof over the Parish of Hódmezővásárhely. Furthermore, the Parish asked its self-governmental rights to be maintained until the establishment of the new eparchy, which rights would still cover the election of priest who would gain confirmation from the Metropolitan of Karlóca.<sup>80</sup>

A confidential official letter was sent by the Prime Ministry to MRPE relatively soon afterwards, in January of 1907, in order to uphold the autonomy of the Orthodox Parish of Hódmezővásárhely. It emphasized the edge of the case regarding nationalities, indicating that the nationalities of Hungary attempt to assimilate, with the help of their Church organisation, the Hungarian believers under their competence. Thus, the Government must endeavour to exclude Hungarians from such detrimental influence of the Churches of nationalities wherever possible. The official letter highlighted that organising the Hungarian Greek Orthodox Church could only be successful if, at initiating the movement, strong parishes existed with Hungarian liturgical language, which could resist Serb and Romanian pressure, and could gather around itself other believers of Hungarian mother tongue from their close surroundings and the 'Churches with mixed language in part'. The Prime Ministry found the Parish of Hódmezővásárhely capable to perform such tasks, and therefore found upholding its autonomy and excluding it from the jurisdiction of both Temesvár and Arad appropriate. In order to achieve that, the Metropolitan of Karlóca would continue to execute the confirmation of the independently elected priests of Hódmezővásárhely.<sup>81</sup>

80 MNL OL K 26 1909-XLI-3665 (1906-XIV-6292). Application of the Hódmezővásárhely believers to Prime Minister Géza Fejérváry. Sealed: 28 December 1906.

81 MNL OL K 26 1909-XLI-3665 (1906-XIV-6292). The Prime Ministry's confi-

The Prime Ministry determined its objectives of principle regarding Greek Orthodox Hungarians in a Pro Domo document,<sup>82</sup> prepared along with the aforesaid official letter which also reflected the objectives. The Pro Domo document stated that Orthodox believers had the right to an eparchy of their own beside the Serbian and Romanian Church organisation, just as other Greek Orthodox Churches organised on the basis of nationality, based on the principle of reciprocity. Out of the concerned believers 31,833 were of Hungarian mother tongue and 162,966 were Hungarian-speaking. However, the Prime Ministry did not treat the arrangement of the conditions of Greek Orthodox Hungarians as an isolated issue but wished to strengthen the national identity of Hungarians living on language borders.<sup>83</sup> Statistical summaries prepared concerning the conditions

dential draft to Albert Apponyi, Minister of Religion and Public Education. 22 January 1907 (signed on 16 February 1907)

82 MNL OL K 26 1909-XLI-3665 (1906-XIV-6292). Pro Domo document of the Prime Ministry. 22 January 1907. The document was also published by Kemény G., with incorrect archive reference code and date. See Kemény G. Vol IV, 340

83 The so-called language border action is another intriguing, yet unprocessed endeavour of the Hungarian Government regarding nationalities after the turn of the century. Its primary objective was to strengthen, by means of state support, Hungarian ethnic groups living in areas of mixed nationalities next to homogenous Hungarian ethnic blocks, in order to promote further Hungaricising or the path of being Hungaricised. However, beside lengthy and thorough statistical analyses, no effective measures were taken. The Statistical Office began the data collection at the request of Prime Minister Károly Khuen-Héderváry back in 1903, but the report providing the basis of the methodology of the action was submitted to the Prime Ministry by Gyula Vargha, the Statistical Office's head only in July 1905. The extremely thorough proposals, broken down by counties and by settlements, were completed only by 1909. These proposals drew conclusions from the statistical summaries pertaining to nationalities and religion of three earlier censuses (1880, 1890, 1900), paying special attention to and mostly providing recommendations regarding educational conditions of townships.

The issue of Hungarians of Eastern Rite was just a small piece in that complex

of other nationalities in Hungary, drew the consequence that ‘whatsoever power gained over Hungarians by nationalities is used to repress people of Hungarian mother tongue’. Thus, the Hungarian Government wished, wherever possible, to exclude the ones concerned from the detrimental ecclesiastical and secular influence, by introducing Hungarian liturgical language in case of Greek Orthodox Hungarians, and by establishing their separate Church organisation.<sup>84</sup>

survey, which did not mention Greek Orthodox Hungarians but Greek Catholics only, on whom Vargha remarks: ‘*their inhabitation is not directly on the language border, [...]but the inhabitants of Hungarian mother tongue use Greek liturgy which poses a constant threat of falling under Vlach influence.*’

Another interesting point of the action is that it didn’t only focus on the borders of Hungarian language, but also targeted the strengthening of certain nationalities which were deemed friendly, since, according to Vargha’s opinion, ‘*in the long term, the presence of Hungarians becoming exclusive in Hungary is a utopian concept*’. Here Vargha implied the strengthening of Ruthenian areas adjacent to areas of Romanian nationality. On the one hand, that reveals the intention of providing a role to Greek Catholic Church in such matter. On the other hand, it fits into the concept that Government did not wish to establish an eparchy to Greek Catholic believers of Hungarian mother tongue due to the intention of strengthening the Ruthenian nationality.

Currently there is only one study that processes the language border action, from the aspect of cartography: Róbert Keményfi: *Nemzetiségi térképek, mint a hatalmi beszédmód formái* [Maps of nationalities as manners of communicating power]. Parts I and II In.: *Tér és társadalom* 2011 (1) 64-80 and 2011 (2) 69-87. Abridged version of Vargha’s letter is published in: Keményfi Part I, 74-80. See the documents of the action under MNL OL K 26 1909-XXV-181

84 It is transparent that, by 1906-1907, the Coalition Government separated the issues of Greek Catholic and Greek Orthodox Churches. The aforementioned Pro Domo document said that in 1903 ‘then, at the establishment of the Hungarian Greek Orthodox Church, the prime aim in mind was that if the Greek Orthodox Christians of Hungarian mother tongue obtained a proper organization due to the foundation of an eparchy, they, due to their Hungarian liturgical language, would be fascinating for the Greek Catholics of Hungarian mother tongue, and the latter ones supposedly were ready to join the Hungarian Greek Orthodox Church in large numbers, for the Hungarian

The MRPE's decree rendered on 20 March 1907, sent also to the Prime Ministry, classified the Parish of Hódmezővásárhely as neither Serb nor Romanian parish of Greek foundation. Albert Apponyi, in agreement with the Ministry of Justice, concluded that the settlement of the issue falls out of the court's competence and falls under the Government's, thus the Government's decision was deemed as final. As stated in the reasoning, determining the legal status of an eparchy should be based on the ecclesiastical status gained at its foundation instead of its geographical location. In Apponyi's opinion, two conditions found by the prior surveys of Albert Kállay<sup>85</sup> were verified. First,

liturgical language. In case of such plentiful conversions, the Curia must give up the previous rejecting behaviour and, in order to keep the Greek Orthodox Hungarians under its control, would allow or would tolerate the Hungarian liturgy about which it is worried at the moment'.

- 85 Főispán Albert Kállay was appointed as Government Commissioner after the death of Koszta Davidovics, the local Greek Orthodox priest in 1895, in order that he would settle the disputes between believers and the Serb Bishop of Temesvár. The Bishop wished to draw the Parish under his jurisdiction and to appoint a Serb priest, but the believers, particularly superintendent Gyula Konstantin, indicated that they would only accept a Greek priest. At his survey, Kállay found that the members of the Parish are of Hungarian mother tongue and Hungarian language is used at sermons. Peculiarly, the matter of the dispute was whether the members of the Parish wanted to belong to the Romanian Eparchy of Arad or the Serb Eparchy of Temesvár. The főispán remarked, that it would be best to draw the Parish under the jurisdiction of a Hungarian higher authority (Kállay's words are cited by: Reiner 62-63). Unfortunately, the remaining specific data on Kállay's survey is of small quantity, but the MRPE, in its document cited above, refers to decision No. 18.994/1896 rendered by Gyula Wlassics, which is deemed as incorrect by Apponyi. In the decision, Wlassics based the question of jurisdiction on the 'geographical' aspect instead of the foundation of the parish. He deemed the episcopal jurisdiction as fact, thus interpreted the case of the Hódmezővásárhely Parish as a question of repositioning. Apponyi did not share such view at all. See MNL OL K 26 1909-XLI-3665 (1907-XIV-1715). Decree of the Ministry of Religion and Public Education No. 110.209/906. 20 March 1907



that the Parish of Hódmezővásárhely had Greek character since it had been founded. Second, that the Greek Orthodox Bishop of Arad had never exercised jurisdiction over the parish.

The foundation which served as the base of the parish's good financial situation had been started by a Greek married couple, János Szilárdy and Mária Lottó, particularly to the benefit of the 'Greek' parish. The members of the 'presbyterial organisation' were the descendants of the founders of Macedonian-Greek origin, and only few believers of Romanian or Serb origin. Furthermore, the fact that believers of the Parish did not understand any of the liturgical languages (Greek, Old Slavonic, Romanian) would not alter the national character the parish gained when it had been founded, which applied also to the parishes of Brassó or Ungvár. However, the Eparchy of Arad had not exercised jurisdiction over the Parish since its foundation in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Only the priest sent from Arad, at the believers' request, linked Hódmezővásárhely to the Eparchy, but the Bishop had never interfered with the Parish's issues of ecclesiastical government. The episcopal delegate appointed for further negotiations could not verify that the bishop had ever interfered with internal government of the Parish. Furthermore, Arad's standpoint, according to which the Bishop of Temesvár attempted to perform a violent interven-

It may be worth mentioning the brief memoir of a participant in the survey of Kállay. According to Tihamér Szathmáry, clerk of Hódmezővásárhely, a rivalry began between Serb and Romanian clergy after Davidovics's death, over which could draw the local parish under its jurisdiction. The MRPE did not wish to bear any conflicts regarding the matter, that is why Kállay was appointed as Government Commissioner in charge of investigating the case. Kállay merely took a brief visit in the school of the Parish, after which he asked Szathmáry to prepare the minutes of the investigation within one hour. Szathmáry presented the minutes '*much earlier than the set time*'. If we accept the memoir as genuine, then we have a reason to think that the minutes had been complete before the survey. See Szathmáry, Tihamér: *Történetek a Hód-tava partjáról* [Stories from the Hód-lake shore]. Hódmezővásárhely, 1929, 81-82

tion in the peacefully exercised jurisdiction of Arad, lacked legal basis also because people of Hódmezővásárhely had always requested their priest from a suffragan eparchy of Karlóca. That was Arad, until 1864, and Temesvár after the separation of the Romanian and Serbian ecclesiastical provinces. The legal effect of such separation did not apply to Hódmezővásárhely, since it was an autonomous parish. Thus, the 'pure spirituali et in dogmaticis' jurisdiction of Karlóca was maintained, along with the parish's self-government and right to independent priest election. Finally, the MRPE's decree stated that other parishes of Hungary in similar situations should prepare their own statutes and submit those to the Ministry, as long as their 'legal relationships gain final regulation'. The MRPE applied the same obligation to the Parish of Hódmezővásárhely, ordering it to clarify its precise conditions pursuant to ecclesiastical law in the statutes.<sup>86</sup>

Not only Hungaricised Greek Orthodox believers would have favoured the establishment of a Greek Orthodox eparchy. Some Greek Catholic believers also deemed it as an opportunity to be released from their ecclesiastical higher authority inconvenient in respect of nationality and continue their religious lives in the framework of an autonomous eparchy. Representatives László Óváry and József Üveges submitted a petition on the application for separation lodged by Szatmárnémeti Greek Catholic believers of Hungarian mother tongue to Gyula Justh, Speaker of the House of Representatives. The National Assembly discussed the proposal in its 19 March 1907 sitting,<sup>87</sup> following the 22 February 1907 meeting of the Application Committee, and forwarded it to MRPE after Dezső Nagy's speech.<sup>88</sup> The believers

86 MNL OL K 26 1909-XLI-3665 (1907-XIV-1715). Decree of the Ministry of Religion and Public Education No. 110.209/906. 20 March 1907

87 KI-1906-415 (1907-XII-123)

88 In his speech, Dezső Nagy mentioned only the necessity of organising a Greek Orthodox Church. He highlighted that, since Act IX of 1868 basically granted rights similar to national rights regarding religion to Romanians and Serbs,

of Szatmárnémeti disputed that the bishop of Szamosújvár, János Szabó reassigned the local vicar, Lajos Papp in October 1903, who had served there since 1895. 16 foes of Papp accused him of embezzlement and incitement. The applicants highlighted that Papp preached in Hungarian,<sup>89</sup> and used only Hungarian language both in school and

it is necessary to ‘*paralyze their anti-national impact properly*’. In that context, Nagy mentioned several times the oft-cited Article 9 of the aforesaid Act, and also Article 1 in Act XXV of 1881, regarding the establishment of a new eparchy. Pursuant to that, a dispute over material or ecclesiastical issues between believers of ‘one or different’ mother tongues shall be settled by civil court, in case the concerned parties cannot agree, by the extension of Article 8 to the believers set forth in Article 9. Minister Albert Apponyi indicated in his answer that such issue had already been brought up by Dezső Bánffy in the House of Representatives at the discussion of the 1907 budget. The competent Ministry then began preparations of the work. Bánffy’s speech was held on aiding certain Churches. See KN-1906-92 (1906/1907-V-418-419)

Regarding Dezső Nagy’s speech, it is important that neither him nor the draftsman of the Application Committee, János Zakariás were aware of the religious conditions of Szatmárnémeti. (According to Szamosújvár Schematism of 1906, 2,465 Greek Catholic and only 13 Orthodox believers belonged to the parish.) Since the essence of the case was basically the failure of satisfying the spiritual needs of a Greek Catholic community of Hungarian mother tongue, it is hard to explain why the disputes over liturgical language, which had been on since 1896, and the behaviour of the Romanian Greek Catholic clergy on that issue were not mentioned. See Schematismus Venerabilis Cleri Dioecesis Szamosujváriensis Gaeci Ritus Catholicirum Pro Anno A Christo Nato 1906. Szamosujvárini, 1906. 203

The introduction provided by draftsman János Zakariás reveals complete incompetence. He mentioned that pastor Lajos Papp led the Greek Orthodox believers in a ‘*patriotic direction*’, and stated that Papp was reassigned by the Greek Orthodox Archbishop. In the following, Zakariás said that the believers ‘*abandoned the Greek Catholic Church and affiliated with the Greek Orthodox Church, asking the House of Representatives to support their endeavour to establish a Hungarian Greek Orthodox vicarage in Szatmár*’.

89 According to all schematisms, the worships were held in mixed language, both in Hungarian and in Romanian. See Schematismus Venerabilis Cleri Dioe-

in church. The priest was not only popular among the believers, but he was also respected in town and was a member of the municipal committee. Since relations were not the best with his successor, Gyula Hubán, the believers visited bishop Szabó several times and tried to persuade him to reinstate Lajos Papp. Their arguments included the believers' conversion in case the bishop decided otherwise, so that they could elect their own patriotic priest.

Subsequently, a conversion movement was initiated by circa 1,200 people.<sup>90</sup> They held a meeting on the subject in the presence of the chief constable of Szatmár and the investigating judge, thereupon they turned to the Archbishop of Nagyszeben with their request. Beyond the spiritual aspect of the conversions, the believers applied for the intercession of the Government in order to settle the arising material issues, primarily the building of a new church and the designation

cesis Szamosújváriensis Gaeci Ritus Catholicorum Pro Anno A Christo Nato 1900. Szamosújvárini, 1900. 224 and Schematismus Venerabilis Cleri Dioecesis Szamosújváriensis Gaeci Ritus Catholicorum Pro Anno A Christo Nato 1903. Szamosújvárini, 1903. 204

<sup>90</sup> As to data published here, the conversion concerned about half of the vicarages in Szatmár. However, the major differences, which show after compiling the data of census and of the pertaining schematisms, are problematic. The census of 1900 shows 4,898 Greek Catholic inhabitants in Szatmárnémeti. (See MSK vol. I, 320-321.) On the other hand, even at adding up the data of all vicarages pertaining nearly to the same date, the number is much lower. 2,419 believers belonged to the Romanian Vicarage in Szatmár (See Schem Szamosújváriensis 1900. 224), 654 believers belonged to the Ruthenian Parsonage under the <sup>Eparchy</sup> of Munkács (See Schematismus Cleri Graeci Ritus Catholicorum Dioecesis Munkácsensis Ad Annum Domini 1899. Ungvárini, 1899. 105), while 506 believers belonged to Szatmárhegy, which had been part of Szatmárnémeti at the time, under Résztelek, filia of <sup>Eparchy</sup> of Nagyvárad (See Schematismus Historicus Venerabilis Cleri Dioecesis Magno-Varadinensis Graeci Ritus Catholicorum Pro Anno Jubilari 1900. Magno-Varadini, 1900. 247-248). The total number of 3,579 believers shown in the schematisms differs considerably from the census data.

of its plot, and also the remuneration of the new priest. Finally, the believers stated that they would remain Hungarian and hope that they would soon double in number, and ‘an enormous Hungarian Greek Orthodox Church will be established in Szatmár, where God would not be praised in Vlach as in the Greek Catholic Church, but in Hungarian’.<sup>91</sup>

On 25 January 1908, the Application Committee of the National Assembly discussed the application, which included the petitions<sup>92</sup> of 48 counties<sup>93</sup> and 14 municipalities,<sup>94</sup> regarding the organisation of an separate Hungarian Greek Orthodox Church, and submitted it to the House of Representatives with an affirmative vote.<sup>95</sup> On 19 February 1908, the National Assembly voted in favour<sup>96</sup> of delegating the application to the Prime Ministry, after which the Application Committee delivered it to MRPE as ‘prime obligation of national self-defence’.<sup>97</sup> The Prime Ministry began the legal settlement of Hungarian Greek Orthodox believers’ conditions only in 1909. It was clarified in the

91 MNL OL K 26 1909-XLI-3665 (1907-XLI-2057). Petition of László Óváry and József Üveges to Gyula Justh, Speaker of the House of Representatives. 18 October 1906

92 See all petitions MNL OL K 26 1909-XLI-3665 (1908-XLI-990)

93 Heves, Csongrád, Somogy, Moson, Tolna, Torda-Aranyos, Esztergom, Zala, Nyitra, Borsod, Temes, Bács-Bodrog, Szatmár, Vas, Szepes, Liptó, Pozsony, Szilágy, Ugocsa, Bihar, Udvarhely, Ung, Pest-Pilis-Solt-Kiskun, Baranya, Háromszék, Békés, Szabolcs, Veszprém, Turóc, Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok, Zólyom, Csík, Zemplén, Trencsén, Fejér, Torontál, Csanád, Gömör-Kishont, Abaúj-Torna, Komárom, Alsó-Fehér, Hont, Maros-Torda, Szolnok-Doboka, Hajdu, Kolozs, Győr.

94 Komárom, Zombor, Kassa, Pécs, Arad, Hódmezővásárhely, Pozsony, Selmec and Béla-bánya, Debrecen, Győr, Baja, Szabadka, Szatmárnémeti, Sopron, Marosvásárhely, Budapest.

95 KI-1906-730 (1908-XXII-117-120)

96 KN-1906-273 (1908-XV-397-398)

97 See the pertaining minutes of the 19 February 1908 sitting of the House of Representatives MNL OL K 26 1913-XLI-5984

pertaining Pro Domo document, that Hungarian Orthodox believers must not be recognised as a separate religious denomination.<sup>98</sup> For recognition, a new Church must be organised and laid down in law. It would be practical to tie the new Church ‘in dogmaticis et spiritualibus’ to the Patriarch of Constantinople, with local inauguration of the bishop. The priests of the new eparchy would be educated in Phanar, studying the sources of Byzantine culture, which would provide them with a higher level of education than that of Romanians or Serbs.

The Prime Ministry also considered the possibility of settling the issue without a legal act, thus, without the establishment of a new eparchy. That would have made the maintenance of a relationship with Karlóca necessary in cases regarding spirituality and concepts of belief. The Prime Ministry found the legal basis of such possibility in Acts IX of 1868 and the connecting XXV of 1881.<sup>99</sup> The autonomy of neither Serb nor Romanian parishes may only be extended to parishes whose independence had already existed at the time the Act came into effect. The determination of whether a parish constituted as neither Serb nor Romanian, may raise further questions. Article 1 in Act XXV of 1881 was applicable in a limited scope only, since it prescribed the delegation of tribunal. That, however, applied only in the disputes concerning ecclesiastical assets, basically only in cases of dis-

98 See Section 3/b of Article 8 in Act XLIII of 1895: recognition of a new religious denomination may be denied only if it is ‘*identical to an existing religious denomination established or recognised by law or differs from such denomination only by the language employed at worship and at ecclesiastical government*’.

99 Article 8 in Act IX of 1868 was extended to neither Serb nor Romanian parishes falling under the scope of Article 9 in the same Act by Act XXV of 1881. Pursuant to this Act, if believers of a parish falling under the scope of Article 9 in Act IX of 1868 get separated, and any dispute arises over the church, over ecclesiastical or foundation assets or over the school, then the Royal Tribunal of territorial competence shall rule in ordinary proceedings pursuant to Article 8 in the same Act.

putes between believers. Tribunal delegation was neither applicable in conflicts between a parish and a superior ecclesiastical authority, nor in conflicts between two superior ecclesiastical authorities. Such cases fell under the administrative competence of the Government, just like in the case of Hódmezővásárhely. Thus, in specific cases, creating a Hungarian eparchy was possible also by administrative measures. Yet, the consent of the Patriarchate of Karlóca was required in general, due to issues regarding spirituality and concepts of belief. Obtaining such consent did not seem impossible to the Government, since 'now that the elected Patriarch is suitable from national aspect, it can be discussed'.<sup>100</sup>

Subsequently, the Prime Ministry, yet another time, investigated the political and statistical background of the issue. It stated that, since Greek Orthodox Churches are organised on national basis, the establishment of the Hungarians' own eparchy would be appropriate, as Serbs and Romanians also had ones of their own. The following have been pointed out as positive impact: 'strengthening the Greek Catholic movement for Hungarian liturgical language', in a way which would encourage the Roman Curia to give up its resistance on the subject.

The number of Hungarian Orthodox believers, in the Prime Ministry's opinion, was not significant, but considerable regarding the establishment of a separate eparchy. On the other hand, their geographical spread was deemed as an obstacle. Furthermore, for this reason, Hungarians were in minority against people of non-Hungarian mother tongue in most eparchies. Among Orthodox believers, Hungarians constituted absolute majority in only 65 out of all examined townships,<sup>101</sup> and had mother parishes in only 19 out of such

<sup>100</sup>MNL OL K 26 1909-XLI-3665 (1907-XIV-1715). The Prime Ministry meant Lucian Bogdanovics.

<sup>101</sup>See Statisztikai adatok a görögkeleti magyarság számáról az 1900. évi népszámlálás szerint [Statistical data of the 1900 census on the number of

65 townships. Another important question was whether they had enough educated and patriotic pastors. The Prime Ministry, based on these statistical data, concluded that it would have been dangerous to 'follow the popular stream' urging 'the establishment of enormous organisations' without a proper base. In all, it came to the standpoint of withdrawing the issue from the agenda and expected the clarification of uncertain factors (number of mother Churches and priests, willingness of believers to affiliate with a separate eparchy) from the upcoming census of 1910.

Brief remarks were added to the document by Kunó Klebelsberg, rapporteur of the case. His notes stated that what made the issue of Greek Orthodox believers important, was their location in the language border zone. Yet, a gloomy picture emerges from his remarks on granting independence to certain parishes. The reason is that superior ecclesiastical authorities would be aggrieved of separation of ecclesiastical property, and there is a risk of taking legal action in many of those cases, particularly in areas falling under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitanate of Nagyszeben. Such unexpected conditions would hinder Church organisation for a long time.<sup>102</sup>

Finally, the Prime Ministry dropped the whole issue on 6 May 1909, with a remark suggesting that the case should not be settled by means of bureaucratism.<sup>103</sup> In reality, Greek Orthodox believers of Hungarian mother tongue lacked the self-organisation and social

Hungarian Greek Orthodox believers], 62-65 MNL OL K 26 1909-XLI-3665 (1903-XVa-5051). The territorial fragmentation is well characterised by that 65 settlements lied in 13 counties (Baranya 1, Bihar 17, Szatmár 1, Háromszék 18, Udvarhely 6, Nagyküküllő 2, Csongrád 1, Maros-Torda 2, Békés 6, Pest-Pilis-Solt-Kiskun 2, Borsod 1, Csanád 2, Alsó-Fehér 1, Arad 1) and 2 towns of municipal rights (Hódmezővásárhely, Kecskemét).

<sup>102</sup> MNL OL K 26 1909-XLI-3665 (1907-XIV-1715) Pro domo document, Budapest, 6 May 1909

<sup>103</sup> MNL OL K 26 1909-XLI-3665 (1908-XLI-990)



background which Greek Catholics had achieved since the 1860s. Even any similar national demand was missing among Greek Orthodox believers, since it was practically unnecessary. Their applications presented in specific cases were restricted to the maintenance of their earlier self-government, in the framework of which they could live a satisfying spiritual life.

The withdrawal of the issue from the agenda by the Government, due to plenty of unclarified questions, is observable also in the handling of subsequent cases. A good example is the organisation of the Parish of Szentes, which became known nation-wide after an article of journal *Pesti Hírlap* in 1911. Csongrád County had notified the Prime Ministry of the said Church organisation in 1909, but no effective measures were taken. The County briefly described the situation on 7 July 1909. According to that, 230 believers of the settlement started organising an autonomous parish. Neither the consistory nor the town council had yet been elected at the time, and only an invitation to application had been issued for the pastor's office. Worships were held only in Hungarian in the settlement, but just occasionally, at major holidays with the help of an invited pastor due to the vacant pastor's office. Spiritual life was also hindered by the fact that Greek Catholic liturgical books had to be used, since the settlement lacked approbated Orthodox liturgical books in Hungarian. Beside all that, the community had to cope with inner conflicts of the following reasons. Most offices in the consistory were automatically held by the descendants of the founders.<sup>104</sup> By the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a considerable number of Romanian believers were present beside Greek believers. The activity of Romanian and Serb priests delegated by the eparchies of the area was not popular among the Hungaricised believers of the parish. Both the Bishops of Temesvár and Arad attempted

<sup>104</sup>MNL OL K 26 1909-XLI-3665 From Béla Kelemen the főispán of Csongrád County to Prime Minister Sándor Wekerle, Szeged, 7 July 1907

to draw the settlement under their jurisdiction, and had appointed pastors to Szentes alternately for almost fifty years. The final push was given by the activity of Teofil Szekulics from Arad, who attempted to draw the management of the parish's property under the competence of the pastors appointed by Arad. The relationship was deteriorated between the Eparchies of Arad and Temesvár and the believers of the parish to the extent that the county administrative authority took over the case. As obliged in the decree of the Minister of Religion and Public Education, Lajos Cicatris alispán (head of county administration) determined in his order rendered on 5 June 1907 that the parish of Szentes, pursuant to Section 9 in Act IX of 1868, has autonomy by virtue of its foundation, and labelled it as a parish of Hungarian character, in accordance with the request of believers. Following the investigations of the alispán, the MRPE upheld his order with minimal amendment in its decree of 8 July 1909. The MRPE, also recalling its decree delivered in the case of Hódmezővásárhely, stated that the separation of the Romanian and Serb Metropolitanates is not relevant either in the case of Szentes, thus it placed the issues of spirituality and concept of belief under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan of Karlóca.<sup>105</sup>

The Pesti Hírlap's article mentioned that the autocephalous, Macedonian-Greek parish had been, in spiritual matters, placed under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Arad at the separation of Romanian and Serb Churches. The Eparchy of Arad attempted to acquire the Parish's property of 400,000 Hungarian Crowns. Thus, it tried to bring the so-called extraneous members of Romanian mother tongue to a majority in the property management committee and in the executive committee of the parish, instead of the depleted descendants of Greek

105 Schupiter, Elemér: A gör. kel. egyház története [History of the Greek Orthodox Church]. In.: Nagy, György (Ed.): Szentes, Budapest, 1928 (Magyar Városok Monográfiája [Monograph of Hungarian Towns] III) 178-183

origin, represented already by only 3 or 4 families. Teofil Szekulics pastor, appointed in 1902, terminated the previous use of Hungarian liturgy and employed Greek liturgy instead. Subsequently, invoking alleged financial irregularities, the Bishop of Arad suspended the operation of the vicarage committee, reorganising it with Romanian believer members. After nearly eight years of dispute, the MRPE restored the parish's autonomy, and placed its believers under the spiritual jurisdiction of the Bishop of Temesvár. A new vicarage committee of 10 members was established, out of whom 8 members were the founders' descendants (they could not delegate more members), and 2 members were Romanian believers. However, the parish's believers did not benefit more from being subordinated to the Bishop of Temesvár. He did not support the 'heresy' of Hungarian liturgical language and did not wish to fill the vacant office of vicar but appointed an administrator who depended on him in person. That was Simon Vidák, former township clerk of Nagyikinda, a person of dubious reputation and with criminal record. Vidák employed Serb liturgical language, since he did not speak Greek. He confiscated the Hungarian liturgical books and sent it to Temesvár as non-approbated. Further problems raised concerning Vidák's behaviour and the failure of observing his educational obligations, which led to the believers to file a complaint to his ordinary. Vidák, in order to keep his office, made a deal with the candidate of the National Party of Work, Márton Fekete at the 1910 elections, who offered help to Vidák in exchange for securing the vote of Romanians. After Fekete's victory, Vidák received a salary supplement of 800 Hungarian Crowns, although he was not even entitled to a congrua. The Representative succeeded in bringing the Romanians to a majority in the Parish of Szentes by means of putting alispán Sándor Nagy under pressure, who deleted two members from the executive committee's list of members, invoking that they were merely distaff descendants of founders. Thus, Romanians obtained the majority at a ratio of 6:4. The believers of Szentes appealed to the county administrative committee, but the főispán had been a major

supporter of Fekete during the elections. Finally, the only hope left for believers was the MRPE's ruling in favour of them.<sup>106</sup>

According to the *Pesti Hírlap* article, the Parish's Hungarian character was jeopardized partly by the pastor and partly by Romanian believers. Since the Prime Ministry only had private information on the Parish's endeavour to gain independence, it asked the MRPE to find out whether the allegations in the article are true.<sup>107</sup> The competent Ministry notified the Prime Minister that further studying of the case is required,<sup>108</sup> but he did not provide information on the merits after all.

In addition to the case concerning the community of Szentes, the issue of the Orthodox believers of Hungarian mother tongue in Szekler Land was also addressed by the Prime Ministry in 1913.<sup>109</sup> The case started with a submission lodged to the Ministry of Religion and Public Education by Ferenc Szabó, resident of Marosludas, aiming at the establishment of a separate Orthodox eparchy, primarily in Transylvania. The submission stated that 26,489 Greek Orthodox Hungarians belonged just to Háromszék county, and their number was significant also in the area of Kalotaszeg, Torda and Marosvásárhely. An annex to the submission included the list of the concerned settlements,<sup>110</sup> with a separate indication of the ones where the exist-

<sup>106</sup> *Pesti Hírlap*, 2 April 1911, A szentesi görög-keleti magyar egyházközség bukása [The fall of the Hungarian Greek Orthodox Parish of Szentes], 34

<sup>107</sup> MNL OL K 26 1913-XLI-5984 (1911-XLI-2176). The Prime Ministry to the MRPE. 7 April 1911

<sup>108</sup> MNL OL K 26 1913-XLI-5984 (1911-XLI-2176-4693) MRPE's answers to Prime Ministry. It must be added that MRPE failed to answer despite the Prime Ministry's urgings on 14 June and 8 August 1911.

<sup>109</sup> MNL OL K 26 1913-XLI-5984 MRPE's state secretary Albert Berzeviczy to Prime Minister István Tisza. Budapest, 12 September 1913.

<sup>110</sup> MNL OL K 26 1913-XLI-5984. Submission of Ferenc Szabó to Ministry of Religion and Public Education on organizing of Hungarian Greek Orthodox Church. Marosludas, 17 June 1913. Szabó mentions the Csangos of Hétfalu

ing parishes should be attached to the eparchy to be established,<sup>111</sup> and of the ones where new parishes should be established beyond the existing Romanian parishes.<sup>112</sup> In all, Szabó named 103<sup>113</sup> settlements in Transylvania,<sup>114</sup> remarking that there are no settlements to

incorrectly as believers of Orthodox religion, listing also their settlements.

- 111 MNL OL K 26 1913-XLI-5984. Bácsfalu, Botfalu, Csernátfalu, Derestyé, Hosszúfalu, Tatrang, Türkös, Zajzon, Bedecs, Béré, Keleczel, Nagykalozta, Gyeróvásárhely, Gyerófidongó, Magyargyerómonostor, Ágostonfalva, Vargyas, Nagybacon, Kisbacon, Füle, Magyarhermány, Olasztelek, Száldobos, Hátszeg, Petrozsény, Gyalár, Vajdahunjad, Marosvásárhely, Mezőbánd, Mezőbgergenye, Nagycserged, Egerszeg, Erdőszentgyörgy, Gernyeszeg, Malomfalva, Megyesfalva, Maroskeresztúr, Marosszentgyörgy, Moson (Székelymoson), Názánfalva, Nyárádszentbenedek, Erdőszengyel, Vidrátszeg, Maroshévíz, Nagyajta, Ár[a]patak, Bölön, Kisborosnyó, Bereck, Bodola, Alsócsernáton, Kézdimartonos, Kökös, Kovászna, Dobolló, Aldoboly, Hídvég, Lisznyó, Markos, Mikóújfalu, Uzon, Sósmező, Sepsiszentgyörgy, Előpatak, Zágon, Egerbegy, Székelykocsárd, Magyarfráta, Gerendkeresztúr, Harasztos, Marosludas, Marosújvár, Alsószentmihályfalva, Torda, Hídalmás, Magyarereggy (the latter is most likely the result of incorrect data collection, since Magyarereggy is in Baranya County with no residents of Orthodox religion).
- 112 MNL OL K 26 1913-XLI-5984. Abrudbánya, Abrudfalva, Gyulaféhevár, Magyarigen, Rozsnyó, Zernyest, Apahida, Bonchida, Mócs, Szamosfalva, Déva, Aranyosbánya, Szászsebes, Küküllővár.
- 113 It must be remarked that on the list of settlements submitted by Szabó, six of the Csango Villages of Hétfalu near Brassó are mentioned as of Greek Orthodox religion, which is an incorrect statement. Besides, a few settlements (Keleczel, Löget, Bodzaforduló, Bodzavám, Szitabodza, Nyín) listed are not in the Gazetteer of 1913. See MNL OL K 26 1913-XLI-5984 Cf. *A Magyar Szent Korona Országainak Helységnévtára 1913* [Gazetteer of the Lands of the Hungarian Holy Crown, 1913], Budapest, 1913
- 114 On the list of settlements submitted by Szabó, more markings are unsuitable to determine whether he suggested the establishment of new parish or the attachment of the existing one, although in almost all such cases even Szabó acknowledged partially that these were parishes of believers of Romanian nationality: Nagyoklánd, Marosorbó, Mezőpete, and Brassó and its peripheries (Óbrassó, Méheskert, Tocile, Bolgárszeg).

be attached as above in the Eparchy of Karánsebes. He also remarked having no available data on the Eparchy of Arad, but there were several settlements to be attached in his opinion, e.g. Békéscsaba, Gyula, Kétegyháza, Világos, Borosjenő or Nagybuttyin. The Prime Ministry did not wish to address the submission on the merits. Firstly, because the Prime Ministry sustained the standpoint, that the willingness of the settlements to join a possible new eparchy should be determined first in an overall investigation. Secondly, because the Prime Minister himself ‘does not consider the current circumstances suitable for dealing with the case of a Hungarian Greek Orthodox eparchy on the merits but wishes to consider it after the overall settlement of the pending questions of the Serbian Greek Orthodox Church’.<sup>115</sup>

Such procrastination of the Prime Minister was completely reasonable, since dealing with the case of Orthodox Hungarians in 1913 would have caused further ill-timed confusion. On the one hand, the Hungarian Greek Catholic Eparchy of Hajdúdorog, which had been established as a result of a very delicate political deal,<sup>116</sup> was considered a grave harm of interests by the Romanian nationality. Prime Minister István Tisza most probably did not wish to aggravate the situation by questioning the integrity of the Romanian Orthodox Eparchies, especially not during the pact negotiations with Romanians, where he expected support from the Romanian clergy in particular.<sup>117</sup> On

115 MNL OL K 26 1913-XLI-5984. Pro Domo. 12 December 1913

116 In reality, the settlement of the issue of Hungarian Greek Catholics was part of a political barter between the Hungarian Government and the Ruler. One of the key issues for Francis Joseph was forcing the adoption of Act of Protection by the National Assembly, and he tried to neutralize the obstructive activity of the opposition with the establishment of the Eparchy of Hajdúdorog as a significant national issue. See Végheő, Tamás: A Hajdúdorogi Egyházmegye felállításának közvetlen előzményei [Direct prequel to establishing the Eparchy of Hajdúdorog]. *Athanasiana*, 35 (2013:1): 109-121, 112-115

117 Hitchins, Keith: The Nationality Problem in Hungary: István Tisza and the Rumanian National Party, 1910-1914. *Journal of Modern History*, 53 (1981:4):

the other hand, taking advantage of the conflicts regarding autonomy and inner party clashes of the past twenty years, the Hungarian Government suspended the autonomy of the Serbian Orthodox Church in 1912.<sup>118</sup>

Despite postponing measures whatsoever in the case of Orthodox Hungarians, which attitude did not change later in the examined period, the issue was brought up from time to time in the House of Representatives. On 11 March 1911, it was mentioned by István Rakovszky in the National Assembly, in connection with the applications of Kis-Küküllő and Bars Counties titled 'The organisation of Hungarian National Greek Orthodox Church'.<sup>119</sup> The subject of the application was the establishment of an eparchy, to which 'Greek Orthodox Romanian residents of Hungarian mother tongue could belong, thus creating Hungarian parishes within the framework of such metropolis'. Regarding the number of concerned believers, Rakovszky remarked that 'the data of the last [1910] census would probably show 50,000 such [i.e. Greek Orthodox Hungarian] residents'.<sup>120</sup>

The Government apparently did not wish to deal with the application of the two counties on the merits. János Zichy, Minister of

619-651, 647

118 The collections of Gábor Kemény G. provide good overview on certain issues of the Serbian Orthodox Church. See Kemény G., Gábor: *Iratok a nemzetiségi kérdés történetéhez Magyarországon a dualizmus korában* [Documents on the history of nationality in Hungary in the era of Dualism]. Vol III, Budapest, 1964, 455-487, Vol IV, Budapest, 1966, 647-654, Vol V, Budapest, 1971, 61-77, 452-457, 561-567, Vol VI, Budapest, 1985, 161-166

119 KI-1910-152 (1910-VII-88) The aforesaid applications were submitted by the two counties, at least as indicated by the filing numbers in the document registry, in 1908. The original title of the applications was 'Organising the Hungarian National Greek Orthodox Church', the issue of the Hungarian Orthodox believers was likely brought up connected to that. Finally, the case was delegated to the MRPE by the Application Committee with an affirmative vote.

120 KN-1910-120 (1911-VI-55)

Public Religion and Education mentioned the reasons in his reaction to Károly Cserny's speech on 20 May 1911.<sup>121</sup> According to that, the concerned believers did not form a compact block, furthermore, the believers themselves had not yet applied for the establishment of an eparchy. The only measure taken with such purpose was committing the assets of the Greek Orthodox Parish of Ungvár, in order to establish an ecclesiastical higher authority later.<sup>122</sup> The Minister added

121 KN-1910-161 (1911-VII-492-493) It must be added that Cserny mentioned it only briefly and tangentially. He primarily construed issues of education in his lengthy speech. Finally, referring to Viktor Rákosi's speech on 11 May (See KN-1910-153 [1911-VII-281-282]), he also mentioned the issue of Hungarian Greek Catholics for the first time. Describing the movement, he also tried to go beyond earlier principle excuses concerning the establishment of a Greek Catholic Eparchy and the liturgy. He remarked that not the liturgical language matters but the development of '*a type of worship of the Hungarian eparchy, which differs from the Slav eparchies*'. Cserny did not share the point of view of establishing a completely Ruthenian eparchy along with the establishment of the new eparchy. He found this avoidable, since '*an eparchy can be created with Ruthenian minority who would gain a liturgy of Ruthenian order to satisfy their own religious needs. And, if the Ruthenian minority bear such right in the Hungarian eparchy, then similar rights of Hungarian minorities can be enforced in Ruthenian, or even in Romanian united eparchies*'. After construing the issue of the Greek Catholics, he mentioned only briefly the issue of Greek Orthodox believers, considering it as a similar problem but more easily resolvable.

122 MRPE brought up the issue to the Prime Ministry as early as on 27 April 1907, but finally the Ministry of Finance responded to the request. The pertaining documents are not included in the file, a marginal note of Czukán indicates that the documents were not even delivered to the Prime Ministry due to an administrative mistake. Finally, the Prime Minister consented to the transaction one year later, subsequently to a further request. See MNL OL K 26 1911-XLI-5392 (1908-XLI-1867)

Subsequently, the administrative committee of Ung County initiated selling the real properties of the Greek Orthodox Parish of Ungvár to the Greek Catholic Eparchy on 14 July 1908. The MRPE rendered its Decree concerning the use of the received sum only on 1 September 1914. Pursuant to that, Francis Joseph consented to '*fruitful management*' of the received sum, which should



the lack of approbated Hungarian liturgical books, which issue was addressed by of the Episcopal Synod of Karlóca at the time.<sup>123</sup>

Despite the less inspirational answer of the Minister, Cserny brought up the issue again in the National Assembly on 13 December 1912, following the establishment of the Eparchy of Hajdúdorog. He primarily urged the appointment of the Bishop of Hajdúdorog and the determination of the Eparchy's official seat. However, he also mentioned the issue of Greek Orthodox believers. His speech goes beyond the prior pressing of fast development, and takes into account the difficulties of implementation, which were only known from ministerial documents so far. As the most serious problem, he highlighted the unorganised character of the spread communities, which are even unaware of the endeavours of one another, while the Greek Catholics had created an 'organised framework for years, within which the issue can and should be resolved'. Finally, Cserny asked the Government not to settle the issue with measures of bureaucracy but try to use social interconnections in order to take the proper steps.<sup>124</sup> Cserny's words were indorsed by Representative Alfréd Pál, who addressed the

be 'used for the purpose of implementing the concept of the planned Hungarian Greek Orthodox eparchy. The received 14,316 Hungarian Crowns and 74 Fillérs were invested by the MRPE in 4% debentures of Hungarian Crown, and the interest thereof covered the spiritual needs of the elderly members of the Greek Orthodox Parish. See MNL OL K 26 1911-XLI-5392, No. 50186/911. MRPE Decree, 1 September 1911

123 KN-1910-178 (1911-VIII-377) In his speech, Zichy reacted also to the issue of Greek Catholics. He stated that the Church and school life of Hungarian communities in Ruthenian eparchies is in accordance with the rules. He indicated not sharing Cserny's optimistic point of view concerning the establishment of an independent eparchy, due to the geographically fragmented character of Hungarians. Thus, if '*they are drawn out and under a Hungarian eparchy, and Ruthenians are excluded, repercussions of nationalities may occur, the impact of which is unforeseeable*'. Zichy considered the calendar reform or publishing proper Ruthenian liturgical books as more current issues.

124 KN-1910-426 (1910-XVII-452-453)

issue from the aspect of conversions in Máramaros. After brief description of the schism and the conditions of American believers, he mentioned the reasons why the establishment of a Hungarian Greek Orthodox eparchy would have been blissful. It would absorb believers who are led to conversion by religious belief instead of political incitement, thus, contraselection of believers conversing of political reasons would become possible. Such persons could only join a possible new Hungarian eparchy instead of Romanian or Serbian Churches, since Greek Orthodox Church is organised on national basis. Under such conditions, they would think twice before conversion.<sup>125</sup>

The issue of a Hungarian Orthodox eparchy was last discussed in the examined period on 20 February 1914. Prime Minister István Tisza, in his oft-cited report on the disruption of negotiations with the Romanian in Hungary, declared that the establishment of a Hungarian Orthodox eparchy was no longer part of the Government's plans. Then he did not exclude the review of the issue,<sup>126</sup> but, after all, that did not happen.

## 8. Summary

Although the presence of Orthodoxy and Eastern rite is as old as the state, Orthodox Hungarians of the present day may be deemed more as assimilated successors of modern historical development and of Greek immigrants of the 17-18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The language assimilation of this group on the turn of the 18-19<sup>th</sup> centuries is traceable, but, due to their specific nature, language and religion did not engage in such irresolvable conflict as in the case of Greek Catholics. One of the reasons is that, as the descendants of wealthy merchants, they were

<sup>125</sup> KN-1910-426 (1910-XVII-453-455) In his answers, Zichy reacted only to questions concerning Greek Catholics but did not mention the issue of Greek Orthodox believers. See KN-1910-426 (1910-XVII-460-461)

<sup>126</sup> KN-1910-513 (1910-XXII-254)

able to use the opportunities offered by the organisational autonomy of their parishes. Furthermore, they have never built any independent national institutional system around themselves.

At the separation of the Serbian and Romanian Churches after the Compromise, the issue of Orthodox believers of Hungarian identity gained a short-term focus but, as reflected in the parliamentary debate, their main objective was maintaining the autonomy and rights of the existing parishes. In essence, this objective was acceptable for the Serb and Romanian Representatives as well.

After the debate of Act IX of 1868, the issue of Orthodox believers did not appear before the Government or the public. The question of reconciling Eastern Rite and Hungarian nation emerged mostly in endeavours of Hungarian Greek Catholic movements. Finally, the issue of Greek Orthodox Hungarians occurred on Governmental level for the first time on the merits in the slipstream of cases culminating at the turn of the century, which concerned Church political issues in connection with Greek Catholics (Hungarian liturgy, schismatic movements, American Greek Catholics).

This is also reflected by the fact that, after the resistant approach of 1898-1899, the Government took the establishment of an Orthodox eparchy seriously between 1903 and 1905. The basic reason was the culmination of problems concerning Hungarian and Ruthenian Greek Catholics. The effective resolution of such issues was one of the Government's strategic goals, which drove the Prime Ministry to initiate the Vatican action. For just a brief moment, István Tisza raised the possibility of achieving the goal on an apparently easier route.

Finally, the failure of such ambitious plan was determined by the lack of prelude and by formulating as merely an inspiration by the moment. On the other hand, no such plan could have been based on Orthodox believers of Hungarian mother tongue, due to low population and geographical spread. Not even the 'social need' existed as it did in the case of Greek Catholics, who had a decade-long movement for the achievement of aims regarding nationality and religion.

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After that, the Coalition Government basically acknowledged that the issue of Orthodox Hungarians was put on the agenda due to the liturgical reforms to be developed for Greek Catholics. Although the two issues were separated and the Government wished to handle the issue of Greek Orthodox Hungarians partially in itself, that did not go beyond thorough examination of individual cases of parishes, and no effective measures were taken. Finally, the case was practically dropped by 1909, and the separate Hungarian Greek Orthodox Church was established only 40 years later, under completely different historical circumstances.