

THESES OF DOCTORAL (PhD) DISSERTATION

Not a revolution, but a war of independence - the situation and activity of József Mindszenty in 1956

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1. Antecedents of the research, problem solving

Since 2012, I have been dealing with the topic of my dissertation more specifically, with minor interruptions. Several factors played a role in the fact that this was the case: two passionate professional conversations with Sándor M. Kiss in 2012 within the framework of the Doctoral School of PPKE, and the study of his volume by László Németh, in which Németh's 1956 writings are collected, and in which he specifically highlights that Mindszenty posed a “counter-revolutionary threat” in those days. This differentiated, multi-questioning, then completely new aspect for me opened up the possibility of a new narrative, which the profession of historian had not dealt with before, but essentially since. Just as there is no independent work written with a monographic demand on this topic.

In my first publications and lectures on the topic, they moved mainly in the history of ideas (in connection with the assessment of the events of the counter-revolution / revolution / war of independence / uprising in 1956), in the foreground. However, this shows different proportions in the final material of my dissertation, the part of the history of ideas forms a smaller but integrated part. Some moments that have become interesting for me in the meantime (rehabilitation document, the 'Jaszovszky interview', simultaneous but double occupation of the State Ecclesiastical Office), person [Albert Egon Turchányi, Prince Löwenstein, Pálinkás (born: Marshal Pallavicini) Antal], Zoltán Tildy, Imre Nagy's system of relations with Mindszenty] and I tried to explore and clarify an event (truncated bishopric conference) as much as possible, to connect it with other events.

In my opinion, however, other important but not so rich moments in my literature (mostly Mindszenty's release and departure for the US Embassy) have already been sufficiently explored and presented in a different context but objectively (church government measures, most notably suspensions and its effects).). However, compared to the previously described parts, certain events and aspects (relationship network related to Mindszenty, possible outline of room for maneuver) are not part of the historical narrative at present, despite their exploration in partial research and publications (parties, individuals' relations with Mindszenty).

My two great insights have not changed since the beginning, they have only strengthened: the topos known to public discourse have been used or are used to a lesser extent in the literature in connection with Mindszenty's 1956 appearance, he was freed and / or an uninformed, underinformed politician, etc.) do not cover reality or contain only partial truths. The other is that the history of Mindszenty generated many events in these five free days later, but even then, which can be explained not only by the open air of 1956, but rather by the charisma of the prince-primate and his spirit noble in his martyrdom, which still influenced Hungarianness, when nothing could be heard from him or him (1949–1956).

2. The methodology

The most important, essentially constantly on the agenda methodology was the exploration, systematization, selection, acquisition, acquaintance and continuous comparison of the literature relevant to my research and dissertation. The literature on Mindszenty is significant, as is the 1956 War of Independence, and the amount of professional material left in their

sections is remarkable, so I tried to get to know, select and integrate them organically and not intermittently into my work. I treated this as a special challenge by not using most of the work in libraries, but trying to get a personal copy of each, which I essentially succeeded in setting up a personal professional library.

I also considered it important to get to know the results so far, the methodologies and research principles applied in different eras, not only the published factual material. I have also devoted the detailed exploratory research of the last eight years to the published collections of sources and archival sources. I was primarily looking for official sources, but I also focused on searching for material from recollections and private collections, but the latter, despite my attempts over several years, yielded little results in the most important case (Mindszenty Archives of the Mindszenty Foundation). I also copied and digitized the excavated sources and collections to the best of my ability.

During the review and comparisons, it turned out that in some cases the previous research also has a methodological problem, so I either treated the source with criticism or indicated that if the previous interpretation of the source is controversial in the meantime, it gives cause for other interpretations. The processing aspects always fit into the concept of my dissertation in a lucky way, but I gave new space to the new data I recognized (the role of Prince Löwenstein matured, for example) or incorporated it into the professional work process (the acquisition of the State Ecclesiastical Office required this, for example). During the integration of the historical data, by refining and weighting the previous criteria, the formal division also became final.

One of my methodological principles became apparent after my first professional publications, and this is the justification for the synthesis statement. The embedding and unification of the previous partial researches into the system, the (critical) comparison of their findings, the presentation of the pre- and post-life of the persons involved in the events, the search for connections have not yet taken place, as Mindszenty's role in 1956 has not been presented in smaller studies, publications.

Therefore, the synthesis of my dissertation is reflected not only in the processing of the sub-researches so far, but also, in my view, in the fact that my work is multi-layered: not only political and event history, but also historical history. undertakes to present and collide with the actions (problems of counter-revolution / revolution / war of independence) and on the proposal of the doctoral committee I also present the political credo of the princely primate. Related to this is the communication of the results of my research, which results in a closer and more established methodology in this way. I find it important to note that all of this was not because of my professional convenience, but my belief that my topic required it.

The dissertation method of my dissertation is conceptually articulated, not always following a chronological schedule. I will present the more precise background, meaning and weight of each character, which I consider important, either in a separate description in the main text (Turchányi, Pálincás, for example) or in more detail in the footnote. The justification for this was determined by the narrow time interval of the core of my topic (essentially 5 days). I wanted to indicate the context, embeddedness or weight of the appearance of an event or character at

the time given to Mindszenty or his surroundings. I also wanted to use this methodological concept to show what were the events that took place largely in parallel with Mindszenty's 1956 activities, but at one point they still reached him or were just counting on him. This requires careful reading of the full text (body text, footnotes, attachments), of course.

3. New results, the theses

I consider the historical implications of my work to be relevant because Mindszenty never considered the events of 1956 a revolution, only a war of independence. It is essentially unresolved in public life, but also in historiography, the possible further reflection of this, because it was a manifestation of the prince-primate, which he did in history, but has a metahistorical content. The definition of a concept involved a change over time, which was neither justified nor triggered by historical events, but its tension and distance can be shown to us to this day. In my dissertation, I undertook to describe and present this tension and distance, in connection with which I tried to present and support the following new results and findings, listed in a thesis-like manner:

- In 1956, József Mindszenty consciously lived that he was not liberated, he did not occupy his position at the head of the Hungarian Catholic Church as a result of a political compromise or a bargain, but he was liberated as a result of the war of independence,

- József Mindszenty - in contrast to certain statements of Hungarian historiography and the statements of his critics and opponents - had such and so much information in 1956 and, above all, a basic concept on the basis of which he could play a meaningful role in ecclesiastical, public and political,

- József Mindszenty maintained his special role in public law arising from his position as prince-primate in 1956 (and this was noticed by several supporters and critics and opponents at the time),

- the foundations of the political credo of József Mindszenty were also able to prevail during his short operation in 1956, among the columns of which the approach of the organic policy with an integer metaphysical worldview based on transcendent foundations is also decisive,

- József Mindszenty co-operated with the governments of Imre Nagy during his operation in 1956, but these governments wanted to isolate and then block the person and activity of the prince-primate after his release, gradually saw a counter-revolutionary, reactionary threat or the possibility of its action, as the reform communists did, left-wing (Kéthly, Németh), progressive civil democrats (Bibó, Tildy),

- in contrast, a counter-pole could have formed around Mindszenty (outlined in its lines), an alternative to Imre Nagy's cabinet and supporters, who, united in a 'People of Mindszenty' concept, could have implemented a restorative interpretation of the freedom struggle (Christian, conservative, right-wing),

- I carried out the double but joint takeover of the State Ecclesiastical Office and presented a detailed presentation of its justification,

- by analyzing the programs of Radio Free Europe, I show why, as a result of the anti-communist uprising he hoped for, he trusted that Mindszenty's action would be the hoped-for alternative to the reformist revolutionary government,

- I clarified the problems of the revolution, the war of independence, the counter-revolution by recording the content and conceptualization of Mindszenty's political credo. Mindszenty consciously used the terms, especially on an exclusionary basis, for certain systems, of which only the revolution had a negative interpretation for him in all circumstances,

- Mindszenty, thus continuing a somewhat Hungarian political tradition, tried in his slavery to continue the struggle for freedom politically with his rapidly depleting means, which in the meantime (by 1960 at the latest) became an integral part of his political credo, linking it to several previous elements.

Mindszenty did not consider the two concepts (war of independence and revolution) to be compatible with each other, and in fact considered them to be almost contradictory in terms of goals and means, especially in the case of 1956. This opinion did not develop in retrospect, but came into play as early as 1956, as he was certainly in this position on 1 November and held this opinion until his death, which some simply did not take into account to this day.

In the course of my work, a source bibliography and historiographical overview on the topic has not been created yet. In the body of the text, I will give details of several previously unquoted parts of the case (Turchányi case, Tildy's testimony about Mindszenty during the Imre Nagy case, for example). In my appendix you can read, among other things, a previously unpublished translation (Prince Löwenstein's 1956 speech) and the authentic text of Mindszenty's last free 1956 interview (the so-called Jaszovszky interview).

4. Publication activity on the subject

My early results can be read in two of my major studies, of which I presented the topic at professional conferences at least three times (my two smaller lectures in 2012 are not worth mentioning here) and once I was asked to give a lecture on József Mindszenty's aristocratic network. At one point in my research, I had the opportunity to present my results so far - which I now consider to be incomplete and inaccurate in several details, but in its thematic structure and conceptual findings - the partial result of the scholarship won at the Tamás Molnár Research Center of the National University of Public Service, and also publish the final result.

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- Mindszenty 1956 – Nem forradalom, hanem szabadságharc, 2015, NKE-MTKK, Budapest.
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