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**The Prelude, History and Aftermath of the 1956 Revolution
and War of Independence in Várpalota**

Thesis of PhD dissertation

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I.

Research assignment, topic choice

Most of the events of the Revolution in Várpalota are known thus this thesis can be pioneer in integrating previous knowledge and revealing some new resources. The reason of this thesis is that some of the data of events in Várpalota was published incorrectly based on misspellings of resources. Fights in Várpalota have paramount importance because the freedom fighters fought against the Soviet and the Hungarian Army and there was some resistance after the 4th of November. There is an interest of this kind of research especially, if thei research is based on critical use of resources

The following themes appeared, which will be proven by this thesis.

- *Events happened after the 1945 Soviet invasion are iconic prelude to the Revolution.*

- *The second dictatorship of proletariat was an important period for Várpalota and Várpalota had her weight for the dictatorship as well.*
- *Resources of Várpalota i.e. coal and her geographical situation influenced her improvement and revolutionary events.*
- *Social fabrics of Várpalota influenced events of the Revolution.*
- *Studies on Revolution in Várpalota revealed that the direction of the revolution headed towards law and order.*
- *Main goal of the counter-revolutionary judicial processes were reprisals instead of bringing guilty people to justice.*

II.

Adopted methods, sources

Comparing sources was inevitable. Researchers face a new complication: extant sources distort the past because they are

created by Home Office, prosecution officers, and judges. These sources misrepresent history because their reading led to only just jurisdiction.

There is a key element in usage of particular terms because the same word is used by the revolutionists and the prosecution officers but the two sides mean different ideas using the same word. Thus, it is essential to keep distance from the ideas of the one party state.

1. Archival sources and official records

Records of the Revolution in Várpalota are kept in Hungarian National Archive. There are several connections with other cases. Here are some of them: cases at Csór, Tatabánya, Székesfehérvár, Mr. Brusznai, Central Workers' Council of Great Budapest, Pannon National Council at Győr, the Vienna 'counterrevolutionary group', which was believed to operate at Hotel Orient via Baglyas group. Photos maps included into the investigating dossier were great service. So were the military maps for HQ.

2. Bibliography

History of the Revolution in Várpalota has been written several times. The first was the ‘White Book’ crafted by the propaganda of Mr. Kadar, the dictator. This viewpoint was enforced to all history books till the end of the totalitarian regime. Excellent tracts are: the album compiled by Mr. Tibor Fakász, articles authored by Mr. Gyula Mészáros, source collection (Hidden Documents...) published by Mr. Frigyes Kahler and Mr. Sándor M. Kiss, Revolution of the Counties written by Mr. Attila Szokolczai, There are two relevant books: one is on the trial of Mr. Brusznay by Mr. Frigyes Kahler, the other is a monography on Veszprem by Mr. Gyula Mészáros,

3. The press

Local press has a predominant role in writing Várpalota’s history. These were: *Új Várpalota /New Várpalota/* (press of the Communist party officials), *Veszprém megyei Népiújság /Popular Press of Veszprem County/* (the county press) and *Várpalotai Napló* (local revolutionist press), Newspapers not just reported events they tried to influence them. Local radio,

the 'Free Miner Radio' had an important role although her tapes disappeared but some announcements can be recovered from trial documents.

4. Reminiscences, oral history

In 1993, a book was published on the topic: 'Némák szóra kelnek'/'Mutes speak'/. In this opus, heroes of the Revolution remember the glorious events. Reconstructing events needs comparison of narrations. There were little gaps to fill in, which was done by the researcher. These completions corroborated sources found in archives.

III.

Key points of the essay, new results

- *Events happened after the 1945 Soviet invasion are iconic prelude to the Revolution.*

Occupation of the Soviet Army was a trauma that cannot be talked about. Tension was increasing by continuous presence of the Soviet forces. Hungarian society got a 'little' dose of

Soviet expressions although there were some phrases, which had totally different meaning, and this shift of meaning was not detected by everyone. Let us see the term 'democracy'. Most people associated the term 'democracy' with constitution, free elections, multi-party political system. Marxists associated democracy with the dictatorship of the proletariat. Certain terms e. g. 'reactionary' or 'kulak' had not been used. These new terms were spread by the Communist influence. All the steps toward creating a dictatorship of the proletariat e. g. installing the police of politics, introducing planned economy, violent nationalisation of land and industry without any compensation, trials on sabotage and public supply increased discontent. False hope arose after the Austrian State Treaty /till this treaty the excuse for Soviet presence was the security of supply lines to Austria via Hungary/ and after the Polish events. Society opposed oppressive policies not the Communist party. Some even could imagine a peaceful solution inside the Communist party. It was invisible for these people that society wants more than regime correction, people required radical changes the end of dictatorship of the proletariat.

- *The second dictatorship of proletariat was an important period for Várpalota and Várpalota had her weight for the dictatorship as well.*

Age of Communism had a key role in the history of Várpalota: She regained the title of a town, number of her inhabitants increased, and the outlay of the town was shaped at that period. Várpalota's facilities (coal and close by alumina mines, extant and increasing industrial facilities) existed before Communism and they still could be used. These facilities were used by Communist political will, which was manifested in the industry development programme. Várpalota was crucial in the Communist experiment, as the research proved.

- *Resources of Várpalota i.e. coal and her geographical situation influenced her improvement and revolutionary events.*

Várpalota is at the section of different landscapes e. g. between Bakonyalja, a mountain, Sárrét, a plain, in the middle between the cities of kings and queens (Székesfehérvár, kings, and Veszprém, queens). Her importance derived from her military

position not from her inhabitants or economical excess. Várpalota's geography made a great impact on her growth. The very same geography produced a special outcome since Soviet and Hungarian Army troops were located nearby. Three former cities Váralota, -Inota, Pét were merged into one: Várpalota. Merging was not without obstacles, which raises the question: 'How many worlds can be in one city?' Várpalota and Inota become one but Pét preserved some of her independence and the preservation was aided by her distance to the other two.

➤ *Social fabrics of Várpalota influenced events of the Revolution.*

Society of Várpalota was altered significantly, which was a result of her becoming an industrial site. Following new sites opened their gates for work: mines, chemical industrial site at Pét, buildings, power station, and aluminium forge and so on. These created a huge need for labour force. To satisfy this need people were recruited not just from the county but all over the country. Even this was not satisfactory so inmate or slave workers and mining soldiers were employed. New labour force

was rootless in Várpalota, they had neither real estate nor relatives in the town. Their situation gave the feeling of nothing to lose when faced against the Communist party state. Furthermore ‘Whose town was Várpalota?’ Were the Communists the real proprietors? As the Communist party announced this proudly? The miners? Because entire workshops depended on their work and product. Revolution gave the common experience for the inhabitants of Várpalota and made them believe that they truly found their home in this town.

- *Studies on Revolution in Várpalota revealed that the direction of the revolution headed towards law and order.*

There were enormous amount of fire fights in the town. Revolutionists fought against the Red Army and the Hungarian army as well. These fights did not prevent revolutionists from forming their own institutions on the 26th of October. Council of revolution, although it was reformed several times, took the responsibilities and duties from the Town Council. Main aim of

the Council of revolution was to restore and keep civil order. To achieve their goal police-national guard patrols were sent out. One of the main objectives for the national guard was to collect weapons, which were held by inappropriate people and to stop spreading gunfights.

- *Main goal of the counter-revolutionary judicial processes were reprisals instead of bringing guilty people to justice.*

There were throughout investigations on the revolutionist events in Várpalota, Number of indicted people was high compared to the size of the town. Three major reprisals could be given to the ‘suspicious’ people: trials, detention and working rights restrictions. Judicial and extra-judicial measurements were applied by Mr. Kádár’s regime so that the regime may be accepted by society. Legal processes were applied to achieve goals of reprisals. Judges had the aforementioned goal in their mind instead of discovering the truth.

➤ *Possible directions of researching*

One way for researchers is to investigate the archives of factories. These archives may contain plenty of information regarding to revolution and Workers' Councils. Extant papers reveal fragmentary data on the birth of Workers' Council. It would be nice to know more about the Workers' Councils acts and the people who manned them. The fullest roster of Workers' Council is preserved in the object dossier of Várpalota's Coalmines. Even this dossier lacks information on the acts of Workers' Councils. Besides it might be useful to research dossiers of Communist party organisations in the county and in the city.

IV.

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Other major publications

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- Galambos István: A Nemzeti, valamint a Földigénylő Bizottságok szerepe a demokrácia álarcát öltő proletárdiktatúra kiépítésében Keszthelyen. In: *Orpheus Noster* 2/2 (2012), Budapest, 61-71.
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- Galambos István: Mária Román királynő párizsi követsége. Könyvrecenzió. In: *Miles Christi Évkönyv* (2012), 425.
- Galambos István – Cservenka Ferdinánd: Román védvonal Magyarország ellen. Könyvrecenzió. In: *Miles Christi Évkönyv* (2012), 426-431.
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