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Negotiations of the Kállay-government in Turkey
Focusing on György Pálóczi-Horváth's work

Theses of the PhD Dissertation

2023.

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The topic of the doctoral research

Under his government Miklós Kállay's aim was trying to reduce contact between Hungary and Germany and to establish contacts between Hungary and the Anglo-American alliance so that he could lead the country out of World War II. He and his narrow circle of trust was trying to move in the latitude of Hungary that they don't cause the occupation of Hungary but can lead the country out of the war successfully. The line of Hungarian Policy was caused by recognition that Germany would lose World War II. This recognition thought possible the German defeat with the conflicts of war in 1942-1943: Anglo-American forces landed in North Africa in November 1942 and German forces were defeated at Stalingrad in the end of January 1943.

So the Hungarian started to try establishing contacts with Anglo-American diplomats in neutral countries, such as Stockholm, Switzerland, Lisbon, Istanbul then Ankara. Andor Gellért contacted with enemy diplomats in Stockholm. György Barcza, György Bakách-Besseney then Ferenc Honti tried to achieve results in Switzerland and András Tamás in Lisbon.

Albert Szent-Györgyi, András Frey, Ferenc Váli, Károly Schrecker and László Veress went to Istanbul because of starting contact with Anglo-American diplomats. The Special Operations Executive was negotiating with them in every case. This British organization transmitted British diplomacy to Hungarian negotiating. The answer of British policy was negative, SOE replied to Hungarian that Hungary should organize escaping from World War II but before it they had to do anti-German activities and sabotages which could shorten the war. György Pálóczi-Horváth was working with SOE, so he attended every time when Hungarians would contact with SOE.

The first experiments of contacts were failed because of the stiff attitude of Allies, they had some doubts about every experiment that could have aimed to save the current regime. They accepted the unconditional surrender for any basis of negotiation. The unconditional surrender could cause the pace without compromise, so they gave way to a fight dictated by hopelessness for Germany and Satellites.

The stiff attitude of Allies was seemed to ease off constantly from Allies at last, and László Veress accepted Hungary's surrender on behalf of the Hungarian government on the night of 9-10 September as the result of the experiments of contact. The Hungarian government undertook they would make at a suitable moment a public announcement of their acceptance of unconditional surrender. They would reduce and end the military and economic cooperation

with Germany and call out the Hungarian forces from the Soviet Union. They would receive an air mission and create a radio contact between the Hungarian government and Allies. Miklós Kállay fulfilled the conditions which he could without provoking Germany.

The radio contact came into being with the knowledge of the Hungarian government. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Political Police compiled the messages and László Veress was writing and coding the texts and the detective on duty put it out. The British side (i. e. SOE) was convinced the Hungarian government delayed the most important acts by the content of messages. The SOE started reducing the pressure on Hungary from late 1943 and László Veress didn't get answers eventually for his messages.

The intelligence of Germany gets comparatively accurate information about the experiment of contacts between Hungary and the Allies. It could get decoding from the end of 1942 and press of Allies and neutral countries which leaked information about contacts of Hungarians. So Hitler could talk to Miklós Horthy that he had had intelligence about British-Hungarian contacts highlighting activities of professors Albert Szent-Györgyi and Gyula Mészáros, András Frey and Antal Ullein-Reviczky. The German government's plan for the occupation was called Operation Margarethe and was managed by 30th September 1942. The information about Hungarian's contact played a valuable role in the creation of the plan.

The aims of the doctoral research

The title of the PhD thesis is “Negotiations of the Kállay-government in Turkey - Especially for György Pálóczi-Horváth’s work”. The title shows that my main aim in the thesis was researching the negotiations of the Kállay-government with the new archival source of information.

So the most important accomplishment of my research was presenting a coherent overview about the experiments of British-Hungarian contact in Turkey which fits into a general synopsis, namely what was Hungary’s current place in international politics, how the nations judged Hungary and took Hungary's attempt at approximation.

I included in this research the life of György Pálóczi-Horváth and views of the SOE intelligence organization which was transmitting the British policy. The main goal of my research was to give a coherent overview about the SOE, i.e. the operation, structure, aims and problems. This topic is based on primary sources and British monographs.

I focused on György Pálóczi-Horváth’s biography and work, because his career fits in the theme of negotiations in Turkey and questions of British diplomacy. I was interested in what a life he lived and I tried to get to know his personality through the sources of ÁVH. In addition, I became interested in the following issue during the reading of ÁVH sources: what contradictions could be revealed in one or more primary sources which were created during the interrogations. What were the purposes and the methods of these interrogations and what has resulted in the victims' life? Although this issue already counts with extensive amount of succesful research results, I would have liked to present a new approach on the existing findings.

I started the research on György Pálóczi-Horváth’s life with his period of youth. This topic is based mainly on his autobiography which was typed by him. He confessed in 1954 that he had written his biography under the pressure of ÁVH all long into the night after a day worth of interrogation. Basil Davidson arrived in Hungary in 1939 and he was recruited by the Secret Intelligence Service and Section D and he became the leader of the Hungarian Office. György Pálóczi-Horváth and Basil Davidson met immediately after Davidson arrived in Hungary and they started working together early. The Britanova News Agency came into being in Hungary through their collaboration and Pálóczi-Horváth was writing illegal pamphlets for Basil Davidson. He continued his collaboration with Davidson after 1941 when Hungarian forces

occupied Yugoslavia and Pálóczi-Horváth started black propaganda activity in collaboration with Viktor Sztankovich. They were broadcasting radio called Szabad Magyar Rádió from Haifa. Then this radio divided into two sides because of inner disagreement and György Pálóczi-Horváth started broadcast in a Hungarian radio called Magyar Nép Adója. I focused during this theme on researching the black propaganda and Political Warfare Executive which gave an interesting and supplementary overview for this phase in Pálóczi-Horváth's life. György Pálóczi-Horváth was broadcasting from 1941 to 1942 and his task was to raise the anti-German feelings in Hungary to help to overthrow the current regime and to encourage sabotage.

Basil Davidson tried to send some letters to Hungary during Davidson and Pálóczi-Horváth collaboration but the couriers were arrested by the Second Department of the General Staff. I focused on the issue of letters, what happened with the letters and the couriers as well, so Satvet Lüfti Tozan Turkish diplomat and Jenőné Miske-Gerstenberger. And I researched what happened to consignees and what consequences they had to face after the unsuccessful delivery. This topic based on archives of Pálóczi-Horváth, Jenőné Miske-Gerstenberger and Árpád Szakasits who was the one of the consignees. And the letter addressed to István Barankovics is shown in Annex to give an extensive overview about the theme.

György Pálóczi-Horváth went to London in 1945 after the Hungarian experiment contacts and occupation of Hungary by Germany where he started work by BBC as a program assistant, later a regular translator and reader of daily news.

Hungarian Communist Party called Pálóczi-Horváth to Hungary in 1947. His job was to edit a weekly newspaper called Tovább. He was elected general secretary of the United Nations Association and he was taken to the radio commission of the Hungarian Communist Party and he started work at the Hungária publisher.

György Pálóczi-Horváth was arrested by the ÁVH in 1949 and he was sentenced to 15 years, 10 years for forfeit and complete confiscation of property. The ÁVH started reviewing his trial in 1954 then the trial justified him because there was no evidence of judgment. He started work at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Institute of History and at Irodalmi Ujság. He defected in Hungary and went to London and he never came home again.

The research sources and methodology

I could investigate documents in the Historical Archives of the State Security Services for researching of György Pálóczi-Horváth's biography including the Pálóczi-Horváth's confessions as well. I tried to balance the bias of Pálóczi-Horváth's documents and compared the relevant persons about the Hungarian and Hungary cases in the most of chapter of thesis like the one of Pál Ignóty who wrote about the SOE activities in Hungary, as well as Jenőné Miske-Gerstenberger and Árpád Szakasits documents about unsuccessful correspondence between SOE and Hungary and Miklós Tóth's documents about András Frey's case and radio connection between SOE and Hungary. Ferenc Váli's confessions were situated in Gyula Sándor's historical archives. And Ottó Hátszegi's "Balaton" archives was important as well which contains the confessions of Gyula Kádár colonel of the Second Department of the General Staff.

I had to analyze the available documents of the Historical Archives of the State Security Services according to different criteria. I divided the Pálóczi-Horváth's documents into two parts. The first part included the documents arising before the review in 1954 so confessions, investigations, indictments, petitions and "studies" were recorded in 1949-1950. The second part included the documents arising during the review in 1954 so confessions, indictments and petitions. The first source group include documents which have the aim to sentence the defendant. The The State Protection Authority could do anything for this purpose. György Pálóczi-Horváth had to type his biography overnight after the all-day interrogation for weeks - the signs of fatigue were appeared definitely in his biography like typos, "apologies" that it's too late and he is tired and he fell asleep probably during the typing. He had to sleep in the solitary cell and in the wet basement for months and he didn't get a blanket. He had to stay in a squatting pose for hours. The period of interrogation was expressly long, György Pálóczi-Horváth was arrested by The State Protection Authority on September 5, 1949 and his trial was over on November 29, 1950. He confessed his guilt after 13 and half months detention according to his confession from 1954. Quite questionable confessions were created in these situations of interrogation. Furthermore, the day of trial was come near more conflicting confessions were appeared as well which were increasingly incorrect. The second part of Pálóczi-Horváth's sources include documents which were created during the review in 1954. These documents have a very different aim to find out the truth of the trial from 1950. So the review was seeking new evidences and testimonies. For instance, Pál Ignóty who knew György

Pálóczi-Horváth since 1930 and he was working at BBC with Pálóczi-Horváth in London. György Vértes was the guide in Parliamentary Library and he confessed about Pálóczi-Horváth's activities at the Gondolat and Pesti Napló in 1930s and activities after the his homecoming in 1947. József Garzuly was working at the Second Department of the General Staff and he confessed that the Second Department of the General Staff was observing György Pálóczi-Horváth from 1940 because of his cooperation with Basil Davidson and it wanted to arrested him but delayed the arresting for higher order meanwhile Pálóczi-Horváth leaved Hungary in 1941. Léderer Sándorné met with Pálóczi-Horváth in 1942 or 1943 and she confessed about Pálóczi-Horváth and Baklanov collaboration. At first Léderer Sándorné translated between Baklanov and Pálóczi-Horváth. György Pálóczi-Horváth was informing this soviet person about the attempts of Kállay-group and asked for advice in several cases what stand to take.

The National Archives of Hungary, State Department and Foreign Affairs records and the documents, news of the Hungarian Telegraphic Office gave a new point of view for the research. I focused on the issue about Hungary at the international level and analyzing the current position of Hungary in international life to which these documents were necessary. The mainly records of the Hungarian Telegraphic Office focused on the conferences of Allies and the effect on Hungary. And these documents gave interesting points for black propaganda for instance, a part of broadcast from October 21, 1942 is shown in Annex which was called Magyar Nép Adója and guided by György Pálóczi-Horváth.

I focused on the Turkish press with the records of the National Archives of Hungary. This press was impacted forcefully by the British. So Turkey was vainly neutral where the attempts of the Hungarian contact occurred, the anglophile press covered mainly the actual standpoint of the British.

I was analyzing the life and activity of György Pálóczi-Horváth in the major part of the PhD thesis with the structure, working and purposes of the Special Operations Executive. After the in-depth studying of SOE I was researching the foreign policy and purposes of the Kállay-government and Hungary at the international level. This was a general overview with the aim to help locate the attempts of contact in place and time in the following chapter. I was focused on the attempts of contact which summary was based on countries and persons not in chronological order. And the result of these contacts was the agreement in which the Kállay-government accepted Hungary's surrender. I analyzed the agreement which of the conditions Miklós Kállay and his group fulfilled and what information the German intelligence had about

the Hungarian contacts and attempts. The PhD thesis ends with the German occupation which research was not the theme of the thesis but I felt that it could give a corresponding ending for the process of Hungarian attempts to escape from World War II.

Summary of the research results

I established in my PhD thesis that György Pálóczi-Horváth's work and biography could be fitted in the theme of the attempts at contact and negotiations of the Kállay-group. His view, opinion and activities gave relevant and interesting details for the theme of Hungarian attempts in Turkey by researching other historians.

I tried to analyze subjective records according to different criteria during the research. The review provided relevant information for Pálóczi-Horváth's confessions and "studies" which was initiated by the State Protection Authority in 1954 and could resolve several contradictions. György Pálóczi-Horváth confessed during the interrogations in 1949-1950 that Basil Davidson had called him in the SOE and he had come to Hungary on British order in 1947. And he confessed as well that he had leaked political and economic information for journalist, Edward Howe, as well as for a SOE officer, and for the General Secretary of United Nations Association, John Ennals. He confessed that he had collaborated with György Heltai who had given Pálóczi-Horváth classified information which Pálóczi-Horváth had forwarded to the British. These confessions were extracted doubtless under pressure and torture by the State Protection Authority, having the obvious purpose to sentence Pálóczi-Horváth whether based on trumped up charges. I resolved several contradictions in the PhD thesis which had arisen in the indictment and established that Pálóczi-Horváth's confessions weren't correct. György Pálóczi-Horváth didn't work for the British after his returning to Hungary in 1947. He met Edward Howe and John Ennals but he couldn't collaborate with them because they weren't in the list of National Central Authority of Controlling Foreigners. If someone traveled to Hungary for 1 or 2 weeks, this office would only check the visa. Pálóczi-Horváth made friends with György Heltai in London in 1946, where both of them confirmed their friendship. Of course, it is impossible to define how regularly and where they actually met but it was established during the review in 1954 that the charges weren't correct in the indictment from 1950 i. e. Heltai sabotaged the work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and he called from Switzerland and gave Pálóczi-Horváth classified information after Gordon had defected who served as ambassador to Switzerland. György Pálóczi-Horváth just answered the phone and both of them recanted their confessions in 1954.

The structure, operation and aims of Special Operations Executive wasn't researched completely in the Hungarian historiography so far. In this PhD thesis, it wasn't necessary to give a full disclosure about SOE but the issue was analyzed in needed depth related to the topic

of György Pálóczi-Horváth and the Hungarian negotiations in Turkey. I consider that the issue of the SOE requires further research because the SOE and its predecessor worked actively in Hungary between 1939-1941 then the country became enemy and it operated anti-German activities in the satellite countries from the Middle East, for example it was black propaganda, and sent letters to Hungary, attempted to explode a factory in Győr in the case of Hungary. And the SOE negotiated with Hungary in 1942-43 and transmitted the British policy i. e. the Allies. So the issue of the SOE is therefore important for Hungarian history.

In the PhD thesis, I established that the Hungarian government didn't have the chance of successfully escaping from World War II. The stiff attitude of Allies showed the failure of Hungarian attempts for contact that seemed to let up but refused to leave unconditional surrender as a basis for negotiation. Moreover, the information of Hungarian attempts for contact was helped by the work of German intelligence which was published in the British and anglophile press. So the German intelligence was well informed about Hungarian and it could be suggested that Germany turned against Hungary at last. It's important that Anglo-American forces in fact were never able to help the Hungarian military to successfully escape from World War II. On the other hand, escaping without military assistance involved a great risk of danger of Hungary becoming occupied by Germany. In the PhD thesis, I established that the Hungarian government fulfilled all of the conditions which couldn't provoke the German occupation and declared its purpose of escaping from the war to the Anglo-American properly under the danger of German occupation.

Published materialy in the topic

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