

Theses of the Doctoral (PhD) Dissertation

A pastor election debate's social historian aspects

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**ESZTERHÁZY KÁROLY EGYETEM TÖRTÉNELEMTUDOMÁNYI
DOKTORI ISKOLA**

**EGER
2020**

Content of the paper

The topic of this dissertation is the debate of the Lutheran church in the community of Aszód. Exploring the background of the one-and-a-half-decade long sequence of ecclesiastical lawsuits provides multiple opportunities. A micro historical study indicates the social processes hidden under the surface. The community debates and conflicts of interests can reveal the mundane impacts of the actual political-historical events and even the micro-level effects of the social and economic procedures. Therefore, as a goal of my dissertation I chose the micro-level analysis of the debates between the Lutherans who lived in Aszód within the county of Pest-Pilis-Solt, which were centered on the election and dismissal of the local pastor Dániel Ede Mikulás. To achieve this, I considered the detailed presentation of the local society indispensable. Thus, I introduce the Lutheran community of the 19th century town over the triaxial study of the modernizing society: the wealth, the occupational structure and the prestige. I complement the research with the introduction of the linguistic circumstances, as the debate on the pastoral elections of the Lutherans in the trilingual community was characterized by linguistic disagreements too. Hence self-identification, including linguistic-national identity, is an important research aspect, without which it would be difficult to interpret the root causes of the community conflicts. Therefore, in addition to exploring the conceptual questions of the identity, I also present the definition of the key participants' identity during their introduction. In this regard, the local teacher István Koren's biography was given a prominent role as a case study. Although Koren commented little in relation to the pastoral election, finally he left the town due to the same matter. His decision was based on his sympathy with the Slovak national movement. Albeit we have to address his memoir, self-identification and his relations to the Slavs/Slovaks and Hungarian language and nation with great care in a refined manner. The complexity of his own identity and ideology can not only reflect the identity and struggles of the Slavs who lived in Aszód, but can also reveal the feelings of the period multilingual Hungary's non-Hungarian inhabitants as well. It shows us that the process of assimilation is much slower, more complex and complicated than it may seem through the lenses of a macro-level analysis.

Thus, we have to examine the debate of Aszód from more aspects. The role of the local landlord family, the Podmaniczks, similarly to the position and divided opinion of the Lutheran Church, is not negligible.

Therefore, the argument of Aszód has to be examined in its own complexity. We can also identify the value system of the contemporary local society through the documents of ecclesiastical lawsuit. Did the role in the social hierarchy, the self-classification in regard to economic status and prestige or occupation, or maybe the affiliation to the lingual group or ethnicity caused the tension within the society? And if so, could these contradictions be the principal causes of the debate? How did the population relate to power, how did the local intellectuals and landlords appear in the lives of the population, and what role did they play in the outlined dispute?

The dissertation intends to explore and answer these questions in line with the Hungarian and international methodological traditions of microhistory writing.

Methods of the research

Methodologically the paper can be divided into two separate parts. The first half deals with the presentation of the local Lutheran society. In this unit both qualitative and quantitative as well as macro- and micro-level studies are presented. Among the utilized sources, I want to highlight the Lutheran church registers in Aszód out of which I built a complex database, which enables a more thorough investigation, both on macro- and micro-level. This Microsoft Access database is based on the registers containing the data of the people related to the city appearing in the registers between 1800-1870. This involves the data of 5047 persons. Thanks to its structure the database provides an opportunity for statistical researches and the extraction of micro-level data as it is also suitable for tracking a career or family history, for example. Individuals are connected to each other in the database according to their family relationships. Individual details such as birth, baptism, marriage, and death are all included in the database with distinct dates and locations so that parents, godparents, spouses, and wedding witnesses can also be identified. Furthermore, family trees of several generations can be created using the database. In addition to the registers, I outlined the demographic and social conditions of the city using country descriptions and censuses along with processing feudal documents.

In the second half of the dissertation the circumstances of the pastoral election and the related debates are being explained. This section is mainly a qualitative source analysis in which I also processed ecclesiastical law documents, correspondences, church minutes, and relevant data from the contemporary press. The legacy documents of István Koren are particularly valuable which I processed in order to write the teacher's memoir.

Results

The population of the city increased from 1890-1900 individuals to 3985 inhabitants between the period of 1785-1910. Based on the comparisons of the country descriptions and censuses to the birth registers, immigration was the main reason for the population growth. In the first half of the century, especially during the reform-era, the center of estate was characterized by the immigration of craftsmen and merchants, whose numbers stagnated after the War of Independence until the second half of the 1850s, and then began to grow dynamically. While the slow but steady growth of the population during the first half of the century was due to natural reproduction and immigration from the cities of the mostly Lutheran counties of upper Hungary, new immigration from the 1860s was rather driven by industrialization, railway development and the emergence of new factories. These newcomers no longer came from the cities of northern Hungary and were mainly Catholics. Regarding the distribution of feudal land properties in the reform-era Aszód, we could conclude that more than half of the population had little or no land, as the number of landless peasants accounted for 62% - of those recorded – in the orderly censuses in 1828, and about 50% as per the feudal litigation documents. Barely 5% of the peasants with land owned a single plot in 1828, most of them, 73% had half a plot in the 1820s. Then, due to the fragmentation of the land property, the proportion of half plot owners increased to 87% by the early 1840s. Although, the number of land owner peasant families increased by two by this time. However, the landless peasant category conceals the merchant and craftsman groups. They accounted for 35% of the population in 1828 and 44% by 1842. With regard to the linguistic character of the different occupational groups, we can state that the early German-speaking settlers were not engaged in farming, they were rather merchants and craftsmen. The Slav/Slovak-speaking settlers were farmers, yet they also occur among the immigrant craftsmen, so the industrial class did not have an exclusive linguistic profile. Within the studied period, the cases of farmers switching to handicrafts can be very rarely observed. Concerning social relations, I examined the local society based on the three classical axes. Therefore, apart from distribution of wealth and occupational categories, the dissertation also deals with the social prestige. I intended to describe the latter one through godparent and marriage networks, which were utilized as conscious strategies at the time. The network investigation found that the group of craftsmen and traders and the group of farmers were mutually closed towards each other. In the course of the analysis, I examined Gyula Benda's popular hypothesis about godparent relationships, in relation to Aszód, based

on which the godparent relationship can not only be of asyndetic type, but patronage connections can be discovered too in the nature of godparent relations. The study revealed that in case of the farmers of Aszód, highly popular godparents existed who likely had high prestige within the community. However, amongst the craftsmen, a rotation system could be discovered, which certainly aimed to strengthen the cohesion between the broader group. The examination of the marital relationships also pointed out that each occupational group was relatively closed socially. In terms of marriage, there was no passage between the craftsman-merchant and the farming families. Smaller farm owners married servants too, especially when it came to second or third marriage. I identified three types of marriage strategies within the craftsman families.

To examine and understand the internal circumstances of the city, we should consider the situation of the Podmaniczky family. The Protestant minded landowner family played an important role in the life of the area, they built a small Lutheran cultural base and a thriving small town in their center of estate. According to the classification of Zoltán Fónagy, the Podmaniczky family could be defined as a large, middle-landowner family, with properties in and around Aszód and partly in southern Nógrád and Heves counties, whose manorial center was located amid the lands of the Catholic aristocratic Grassalkovich family – usually referred to as large-landowners or magnates. The Podmaniczky family had a tradition to manage the family's lands and properties undividedly. Eventually, the cessation of this tradition led to the fragmentation of the lands and then to the “absorption” of the properties. Although, this process unfolded in the 1870s, it began already in the 1840s, thus accompanying the period of the pastoral debate of Aszód. Two separate branches of the Podmaniczky family lived under one roof in the city and the relationship between the branches represented by Lajos and Ármin was not free of conflicts. Of course, this did not necessarily affect the debate over the pastor, yet it is a fact that Lajos Podmaniczky and Ármin Podmaniczky had different roles and opinions in the discussion. The relationship between the Podmaniczky family and the inhabitants of the town was not too bright either during this period. There was a disagreement on the subject of feudal settlements related to the curialistic lands. In 1839 the craftsmen filed a lawsuit against the classification of their properties as curialistic lands and the associated high tax levels. The lawsuit was concluded with the feudal agreement in 1858, when their lands got declared as curialistic lands and therefore no compensation was due to them. Upon signing the feudal agreement some

craftsmen began prosecuting the landowners, uniting with the landless peasants who also lived on curialistic land. This situation has certainly strengthened the conflict of interest between the craftsmen and the farmers. These were the conflicts characterizing the different groups and interest groups of Aszód's society, which were even supplemented by the linguistic aspect. That is to say, based on the correspondence and legacy documents of István Koren, who lived in Aszód since the 1830s, his Hungarus- identity got constantly complemented with his Slav/Slovak identity. He was in contact with the circles of Ľudovít Štúr, even some of the Lutherans of Aszód read the movement's journals and leaflets along with Jan Mastic, a local teacher for a brief amount of time, whose stay in Aszód ended with a linguistic-political scandal. This is an important case to highlight as it also appeared during the pastoral election in 1847.

The appointment of Dániel Ede Mikulás as a pastor initiated a series of conflicts, as its integrity was impeached by some of the Lutherans of Aszód, hence they turned to the diocese with their case. The investigation revealed that the ecclesia of Aszód had been operating illegally from multiple aspects and blamed a local inspector, Lajos Podmaniczky for it, on account of refusing to summon the presbytery, for example. The examination also uncovered that the inspector's refusal was due to his argument with Jan Mastic, a former teacher in Aszód, and his "Pan-Slavic" group. In order to retain his pastoral position, Dániel Ede Mikulás involved the Ministry of Religion and Public Education in 1848, citing the "Pan-Slavic" group seeking to prevent his pastoral activities. This even resulted in a press debate too. Eventually, a new pastoral election was conducted where the followers re-elected Dániel Ede Mikulás as their pastor, this time, in a legally approved way. On the other hand, the case of the pastor reappeared again in 1850 and another ecclesiastical lawsuit was initiated due to the Lutherans' constant complaints. From this time forth investigations and appeals were performed relentlessly. The case of the pastor went through all levels of ecclesiastical judiciary. Although, from the 1850s onwards, instead of referring to the "Pan-Slavic" group, Dániel Ede Mikulás intended to strengthen his position by opposing those Aszodians who were in favor of the revolution against the emperor. In the end, the pastor was expelled from his services permanently upon exposing an embarrassing outside marriage affair of his in 1862.

During the series of trials, the Lutheran church in Aszód was divided into two parts. One of the groups consisted mainly of farmers, who supported Dániel Ede Mikulás throughout his

pastoral ministry. Within the same group only a few craftsman families could be found, and examining their relationships, it appears that they did not stay in close contact with the craftsman society of the city, namely they did not cultivate an intense marital and godparent relationship with its members. The group opposing the pastoral ministry of Dániel Ede Mikulás consisted mainly of craftsmen. The position of the groups was also affected by the actual opinion of the Podmaniczky family at the time. Before and during the War of Independence, Lajos Podmaniczky was the inspector of the ecclesia and he wanted to attain the election of Dániel Ede Mikulás. Later, Ármin Podmaniczky was elected as the inspector, which decision was refused to be accepted and acknowledged by Dániel Ede Mikulás. Eventually, the resignation of Dániel Ede Mikulás was achieved when the family member representing the Podmaniczky family opposed him.

The debate over the pastoral election in Aszód had many aspects. Regarding the linguistic opposition, we can conclude that the language matter appeared in the arguments of the intellectuals supporting Lajos Podmaniczky and Ede Mikulás Dániel, yet this had no considerable effect on the ecclesia getting divided into two groups. The underlying cause of the conflicts rather lied in the differences between the groups emerging on the basis of the occupational structure, and the distinct mentalities and values associated with those. These contradictions were augmented by the conflict related to the pastor, as Dániel Ede Mikulás visibly tried to take advantage of both the current high-level politics and the cracks in the micro-society in order to maintain his position.

The linguistic aspect involved in the study also seeks to interpret the events, especially the key players' behavior, from the perspective of the identity. To achieve this, I have utilized the model of dual identity from the social science literature used in anthropological studies, which can be linked to Györgyi Bindorffer, and I propose the historical adaptation of the concept of situational identity. Accordingly, I assume that this type of identity could have existed in the multiethnic and multilingual Hungary, which could have been evoked by the various life circumstances of the historical players being socialized in a multilingual environment. I slightly modified the concept of situational identity while exploring the historical setting.

As a conclusion, I intend to define the identity of the key players in terms of these concepts. Based on the grouping of Györgyi Bindorffer, I define István Koren's self-identification as

a conflicting dual identity in reference to his Hungarian and Slav/Slovak character, especially at the end of his career. Meanwhile, I consider the self-identification of Dániel Ede Mikulás as an excellent example of the adaptation of situational identity.

Publications

Essays

Bozó-Szűcs Diána: A társadalmi felemelkedés lehetőségei egy mezővárosi latin iskolában 1830-62, Nyíregyháza, 2014 <http://mek.oszk.hu/12700/12746/12746.pdf>

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Bozó-Szűcs Diána: Egy háromnyelvű mezőváros konfliktusai- Mikulás Dániel Ede aszódi lelkészéje 1847-50. in. Bóna László; Hajdú Anikó (szerk.)Nemzet és kisebbség: Társadalomtörténeti változások a XIX-XX. században = Národ a menšina. Sociálnohistorické zmeny v XIX-XX. storočí. 342 p. Komárom: Téka, 2014.

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Bozó-Szűcs, Diána: Az aszódi evangélikus gyülekezet belső harcai 1850–1862 között
In: Pap, József; Tóth, Árpád; Valuch, Tibor (szerk.)
Vidéki élet és vidéki társadalom Magyarországon
Budapest, Magyarország : Hajnal István Kör Társadalomtörténeti Egyesület, 2016.

Bozó-Szűcs Diána: Útoky Edeho Dániela Mikulása na Petófiho panslavistického učiteľa Istvána Koreňa
In: Zsilák, Mária; Szuda, Krisztína Eszter; Demmel, József (szerk.)
Konfesia a národ : Kontexty konfesionálneho a národnej identity slovenskej spoločnosti v 19. a 20. storočí
Vyskumny ústav Slovákov v Madarsku, Békéscsaba, Magyarország, 2017.

Presentations

Az aszódi latin iskola diákságának társadalomtörténeti elemzése - Fialat bölcsészek a tudományért intézményközi konferencia, Szombathely, 2012.május.4

A társadalmi felemelkedés lehetőségei egy mezővárosi latin iskolában 1830-62 között. -Falak és választóvonalak a történelemben, Társadalomtudományi konferencia, Nyíregyháza, 2012.11. 29-30.

A Koren István vezette aszódi latin iskola- Újat Petófiról, a Magyar Irodalomtörténeti Társaság konferenciája, Gödöllő, 2013.11.16

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A hagyatéki leltár mint társadalomtörténeti forrás- II. Kárpát-medencei Fial Magyar Történészek tábora, 2014.07.18

Az aszódi evangélikus gyülekezet belső harcai 1850-62 között- Hajnal István Kör Társadalomtörténeti Egyesület 2014. évi konferenciája, Eger, 2014.8.29

Az aszódi evangélikusok keresztszülői kapcsolathálója, Tavaszi Szél konferencia, Eger, 2015.4.10

Petőfi „pánszláv” tanára- Mikulás Dániel Edetámadásai Koreň István ellen/„Panslávsky” učiteľ Petőfiho. Útoky Ede Daniela Mikuláša proti Štefanovi Koreňovi Etnokonfeszionalizmus az Alföldön, felekezeti identitás versus nemzeti identitás, MagyarországiSzlovákok Kutatóintézetének konferenciája, Budapest, 2016.11.11

Az aszódi evangélikusok házassági kapcsolatai a 19.század közepén, Stuia Comitatus könyvbemutató és megyetörténeti konferencia, Budapest, 2016.11.29

Az aszódi evangélikus családok felépítése és változásai 1800-1870, Apák és fiúk, anyák és lányok. Szülői szerepek, gondoskodás és tekintély a premodern családban (1500– 1918) konferencia, MTA BTK „Lendület”Családtörténeti Kutatócsoport szervezésében, Budapest, 2018.10.25-26