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Abstract

The aim of the study is to describe in detail the beginnings of the Hungarian University of Economics, or the Karl Marx University of Economics in Budapest established in 1948 as the first Marxist university in Hungary. The study is based especially on the research in the State Archives of the Hungarian National Archives in Budapest and in the Archives of the Corvinus University of Budapest in the frame of broad research on the beginnings and the development of higher education of economic disciplines in the Central Europe. The study presents the initial period of the first separate economic university in Hungary on the background of the Hungarian Working People's Party to get the higher education in country under its control. It is also summarized the original organizational structure of the Budapest's University of Economics and its staff structure controlled by the Hungarian Working People's Party as a party gradually taking over the country's political power into its own hands at the turn of 1948 and 1949.

Key words: higher education, economic disciplines, university of economics, Hungary, Budapest, Hungarian Working People's Party



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Resumen

El objetivo del estudio es describir detalladamente los inicios de la Universidad Húngara de Economía, o la Universidad de Economía Karl Marx en Budapest, creada en 1948 como la primera universidad marxista de Hungría. El estudio se basa especialmente en la investigación de los Archivos Estatales de los Archivos Nacionales de Hungría en Budapest y en los Archivos de la Universidad Corvinus de Budapest en el marco de una amplia investigación sobre los orígenes y el desarrollo de la educación superior en las disciplinas económicas de Europa central. El estudio presenta el periodo inicial de la primera universidad de economía en Hungría en el contexto en el que el Partido de los Trabajadores Húngaros intentaba que la educación superior del país estuviese bajo su control. También se resume la estructura organizativa original de la Universidad de Economía de Budapest y la estructura de su plantilla, controlada por el Partido de los Trabajadores Húngaros como un partido que poco a poco fue tomando el poder político del país entre finales de 1948 y principios de 1949.

Palabras clave: educación superior, disciplinas económicas, universidad de economía, Hungría, Budapest, Partido de los Trabajadores Húngaros

The Hungarian University of Economics, or the “communist” Karl Marx University of Economics in Budapest was established still in a period of post-war plural democracy, but its practical form was rather incomplete as a result of the ever greater influence of the Hungarian Working People’s Party of the state. The main mission of the new and the first separate university of economics in Hungary was in full correspondence with the concept of higher education promoted by leading bodies of the Hungarian Working People’s Party: to provide Hungary with a new generation of an aware economically-educated intelligentsia, ideally from working class or farm working background, who could become the key leaders to build socialism in Hungary, a socialist society along the Soviet Union model. In correspondence with this fact the University of Economics in Budapest was first Hungarian university to have the post of curator established, who was a de facto extension of the state, specifically the Hungarian Working People’s Party, within the university academic sphere. The Hungarian University of Economics, or the Karl Marx University of Economics in Budapest was also the first university in the country which staff structure was from its very beginning strictly under full control of the Hungarian Working People’s Party. Every pedagogue of the newly established university was thoroughly ideologically lustrated before his placing at the new “communist” university. In correspondence of the stated role of the Hungarian University of Economics the university management and the student life was under consistent control of university working people’s party bodies.

Study Conditions at the University of Economics

It is of note that the Ministerial Council on establishing the University of Economics in Budapest made its decision on 23 July 1948. They also then decided that the new university would be established not with a government decree, but with a separate legal act. There was insufficient time, however, to prepare the act or for standard parliamentary approval, and as such the opening of the new university in the coming academic year was dealt with through an ‘interim’ government decree, with the relevant act being ratified as soon as possible. This somewhat unusual situation shows the vested

interest of the new government in dealing with the appropriate higher education teaching of economic disciplines in accordance with the new requirements of a country transforming economically into a socialist state under the Communists as soon as possible. Preparation for the basic conception of the University of Economics, specifically the draft bill, took place in close co-operation with the relevant bodies of the Hungarian Working People's Party (*Magyar Dolgozók Pártja*; MDP). The key figure involved in this organisational preparation was Dr Tamás Nagy, deputy head of the MDP's Intellectual Division and formed head of the Planning Office's Economics Department, who was also to become the new university's curator. At the same time, however, he became head of the key department of economics (see later). Exactly a month later, on 23 August 1948, at a joint meeting at the MDP's Intellectual Division headquarters, the wording of the official decree on admissions procedures at the new university, including an information guide, was approved. Subsequently, the dean of the Technical University in Budapest's Faculty of Economics was informed by the Minister of Religion and Education that the Hungarian University of Economics in Budapest would be established by law and that its curriculum and regulations would be standardised by ministerial decree. The minister also told the dean that before the act would be introduced, it would be necessary to adjust admissions procedures conditions, and informed the dean that it would be necessary to introduce the official decree on admissions procedures at the new universities including the information guide to faculty students as soon as possible, since all the students currently at the Economics and Commerce department, and at the Teaching Institute would only be able to transfer to the new university if they successfully completed the admissions procedure. From this, one might determine that interested parties might assume at the beginning that the new act would be submitted and approved by parliament as soon as possible, perhaps even before the gates to the new university were opened.¹

In the introduction to the official decree regulating the admissions procedure at the newly established University of Economics, it was stated that the Faculty of Economics of the Palatine Joseph University of Economics' would be abolished on 30 September and in its place the Hungarian University of Economics would be opened on the same day. Its objective was to be the education of such theoretical and practical economists, and such specialists for leading positions, including as teachers

and scientists who are indispensable in terms of building a planned economy. The period of study at the new university was set at four years. During the first three years, study was joint for all students. Students undertook a specialisation in the fourth year. Students were able to specialise in industry, commerce, finance, agriculture, co-operatives, etc. As has been mentioned above, the new university only accepted students for study on the basis of an admissions procedure. Only students who could show a valid school leaving certificate were able to take part in the admissions procedure. Nevertheless, on the basis of an admissions committee, the Minister of Religion and Education was able to make exceptions in accordance with Government Decree no. 7870/1948 and approve the admission of study applicants without a valid school leaving certificate. This exception was naturally very important in terms of the interests of party bodies and making higher education accessible for the widest possible section of the working and farming classes in order to increase numbers of the university educated working class and farm workers as quickly as possible. Of the original Faculty of Economics students who were able to transfer to the new university, only those who had passed in the standard manner two valid half-year semesters were able to apply. As has also been mentioned above, students of the former Faculty of Economics were able to ask for recognition of the work they had already done at the abolished Faculty of Economics, with those who had passed two, or three valid half-year semesters in the standard manner being able to enrol for the second year of the new university, and those who had passed four, five, six, seven, or eight valid semesters at the Faculty of Economics being able to enrol for the third year. This meant that even students of the fourth year at the Faculty of Economics whose studies were coming to an end had to enrol for the third year. This was done to ensure that even students of later years at the abolished Faculty of Economics passed as much as possible of the new teaching curriculum at the new Marxist University of Economics, even before their specific field of specialisation in the fourth year. Naturally, every student had to demonstrate they had passed all the recognised studies at the old Faculty. Nevertheless, even though studies at the original Faculty of Economics were recognised, students accepted for the second or third year were required to undertake examinations in subjects from the lower years which were not taught at the Budapest Technical University's Faculty of Economics.²

The students, as suggested above, were able to enrol for day or evening study, with day study being called afternoon study. Those students who enrolled for day study had to sign a declaration that they did not have any daytime employment, specifically that they were not in any kind of employment which might in any way prevent them from visiting lectures, tutorials or seminars. Students had to submit study applications – considering that the official decree on admission procedures for the newly established University of Economics was ratified on 23 August and deans of the abolished Faculty of Economics were informed on 24 August – within an unusually short period, by 4 September. Applications could be submitted in person or by post to the address of the bursary of the old faculty, and was meant to contain all the usual data which is given in study applications: candidate name, his precise address, the year he is applying for, the study form (day or evening) including necessary appendices. These were to be made up of a handwritten ‘meaningful’ curriculum vitae – which is how it was literally described in the decree – three pages in length at most, birth certificate, an original school leaving certificate or its copy, and for students of the Faculty of Economics their book of passed study duties. Study candidates without a school leaving exam were to submit a valid certificate for their highest-achieved education level. The appendices also had to include a signed affidavit as mentioned above that the candidate for day study had no daytime employment. Due to the endeavours of the new ‘people’s democratic’ regime of the central party of workers and farm workers to give higher education access to all social classes in society, however, it is somewhat surprising that along with the application for study, candidates also had to supply two stamped envelopes with their precise address of residence, although this is something which was not unusual in other communist countries either in the recent past when citizens were communicating with some state institutions. The admissions procedure had a written and oral part, and both parts were to take place in the month of September.³

Basis of Examination Regulations at the Newly Established University of Economics

The general official study guide for candidates for study at the University of Economics also gave the basic principles of its examination regulations. The

basic form of continuous assessment of study results was the colloquium. Each curriculum study had to be completed in each semester with a colloquium, except for those subjects which ended the semester with an examination. In the first semester of the academic year, students undertook the colloquium in January, and in the second semester in either June or September. The examination period at the new university as such did not differ from traditional higher education model practices applicable today, including the Czech Republic. Students who did not manage to pass the colloquium in January, however, did not have to wait to repeat the first semester subject in the next academic year's first semester, but rather were able to complete the colloquium for both semesters together at the end of the second semester. Success at the colloquiums and the reliability of study results were also meant to be guaranteed by the mid-year written work, specifically written tests for each subject. Without successfully completing the required colloquiums for a given year of study, students were not able to enrol for the next year. They would only be able to undertake colloquiums and examinations not passed, but would no longer be able to study as normal. This meant that the student lost practically a whole year of study. In this case, however, the student was able to pass colloquiums for an appropriate fee (Sine Auctor, 1955, p. 9).⁴

At the end of each academic year, students had to undertake a comprehensive examination in the year's principle subjects. Only those students who had passed all the required colloquiums were able to take the comprehensive examination. The comprehensive examinations could be taken in the second half of June, in September, or in December. Anyone who hadn't passed the comprehensive examination by December at the latest lost a year's study and was only able to return to the course in the second semester of the following academic year, and only after successfully passing the comprehensive examination. At the end of the first year, the comprehensive examination was made up of these subjects: Social Sciences, Economic History, Economic Geography and Economic Mathematics. At the end of the second year, the second comprehensive examination was made up of the curriculum subjects: Economics, Business Management (plus a written exam in accounting), Statistics, Economic Law. The third comprehensive examination, closing the third year, was made up of these subjects: Industrial Policy, Planned Economics, World Economics and World Politics. Students who transferred to the new university from the

abolished Faculty of Economics of Budapest's Technical University. Students who were able to enrol for the second year of the university were required to pass the first comprehensive examination closing the first year of the new university's curriculum. Students of the abolished Faculty of Economics who were able to enrol for the third year had to pass the first and second comprehensive examination, i.e. the comprehensive examinations at the end of the first and second year. In this way, even students of the abolished Faculty of Economics had to demonstrate a knowledge corresponding to the whole content of the new economics course at the separate University of Economics. Students, however, who had already passed a comprehensive examination in accordance with the old curriculum in Statistics, Accounting or Commerce and Political Arithmetic, did not need to pass the comprehensive examination for these subjects again at the new university (Business and Political Arithmetic). Students were, however, given sufficient time to prepare for the so-called levelling examinations, and these exams could be taken by students at different times. 'Old' students could take the levelling comprehensive exam in subjects corresponding to the first comprehensive examination of the new curriculum by the end of December 1949 at the latest, and the comprehensive examination in subjects corresponding to the second comprehensive examination had to be taken by the end of December 1950 at the latest.⁵

Individual departments at the newly established Hungarian University of Economics were established through Government Decree no. 9160/1948. Their heads were subsequently named by the Minister of Religion and Education shortly before the beginning of the new academic year on 27 September 1948. University curator, Dr Tamás Nagy, was named head of the key, and de facto high profile department, the Economics Department. Nagy was a former deputy head of the MDP's so-called Intellectual Division, but later became a reform communist who in the mid-1950s was actively involved in the revolutionary socio-political movements which resulted on 23 October 1956 in the well-known open bloody uprising of the Hungarian people, and at the end of the 1980s he even actively participated in preparing the socio-political and economic reforms of the people's democratic Hungary.⁶

Since he was a key figure who stood at the establishment of the first Marxist University in Hungary, we should present a few brief biographical details about Dr Nagy. Tamás Nagy was born in 1914. In 1932-1933 he

studied at the Vienna Business Academy, from where he transferred to Law study at the Péter Pázmány Royal Hungarian University's Faculty of Law, which he completed in 1936. After completing his studies, he was a minor official. At the end of the interwar period, Nagy publically acknowledged his left-wing leanings. He was also active in Hungary's Social Democratic Party, and as a member of the party was involved in giving talks at its Marxist seminars. After the war, he joined the Hungarian Communist Party, which began operating in Hungary again in October 1944 after the arrival of the Soviet army in the country, and he was later a member of the Hungarian Working People's Party. As a founding curator of the independent University of Economics, he was significantly involved in the building up of the first Marxist university in Hungary, in which he became a university professor in political economics. He is also responsible for the Hungarian translation of Marx's *Das Kapital*. From 1954, he worked at the newly established Economics Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Here, he headed the Economic Mechanics Division, subsequently becoming Deputy Director of the institute.

Subsequently, however, Nagy came into opposition with MDP's orthodox branch and became involved in the reform movement headed by Imre Nagy. From 1954, he played an active role in the editorial board of the *Economic Revue*, which was founded as a scientific platform for changing economic thinking in Hungary. In May 1956, he even became one of the main debaters in the two-round economic debates for the famed Petöfi Circle.⁷ His involvement in the activities of the reformist communists became ever more active, and he even became a founding member of the Revolutionary Committee of the Hungarian Intellectuals (*Magyar Értelmiségi Forradalmi Bizottság*) on 21 November 1956. He even openly declared the necessity that a multi-party system be reinstated in Hungary, i.e. a plural democracy. Because of his political stance in the reformist period of the mid-1950s and the branding of his economics work as 'revisionist', he was not accepted into the new central workers party, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (*Magyar Szocialista Munkáspárt, MSZMP*), which replaced the original central state party, the Hungarian Working People's Party. He didn't become a member of MSZMP until 1964. Then, in line with the gradual introduction of liberal features within the socialist economic life of the Hungarian state, that is to say the gradual birth of the new so-called Goulash Socialism era, he was able to once again become involved officially

as an economic theorist in preparations for the liberalisation of the Hungarian economy. On the request of the Secretary of MSZMP's Central Committee, Rezső Nyerse⁸, in 1964 to 1966 he held the post of Head of the committee preparing Hungarian economic reform. In 1970 to 1972, he worked as a secretary to a specialist committee for evaluating the experiences resulting from the economic reforms introduced. He retired in 1981, but continued to contribute to scientific economic research. He was even actively involved in the work of the economic reform committee from 1988 to 1989 as part of the deeper socio-political and economic transformation of Hungarian society. In terms of his scientific path, we should also mention that in 1952 he was Candidate of Sciences, and in 1968 acquired the title of Doctor of Sciences at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The first curator and main organiser of the establishment of the first University of Economics in Hungary died in 1993.⁹

The other named heads of the new departments at the established Hungarian University of Economics were also major figures, and often world-renowned experts, including in the West, despite their origin in the so-called Eastern Bloc. The staff heading the other departments were the following: the head of the Economic History Departments was Professor at Pest's Jewish Community Grammar School, Dr Pál Zsigmond Pach ([Berend, 2002, p. 123](#)),¹⁰ the role of head of the Economic Geography Department was taken by head of the Planning Institute's press and information division, György Markos,¹¹ while Secretary General of the Planning Institute, Andor Berei¹² was named head of the Planned Economics Department, head of the Industrial Policy Department was State Secretary, Dr Imre Vajda,¹³ while László Háy¹⁴ was named head of the World Economics and World Politics Department, and State Secretary Dr István Friss¹⁵ was given the role of heading the Financial Politics Department. All these names, however, only applied for the first semester of the first academic year at the new University of Economics.¹⁶

Commencement of the Newly Established University of Economics

The new University of Economics was opened with an official speech from member of the Central Committee of the communist Hungarian Working People's Party, Ernő Gerő, who as a young communist had been active during the Hungarian Republic of Councils in 1919 when he was actively

involved in the work of the Association of Communist Workers Youth. After the Second World War, Gerő played an important role in the gradual communist take-over of power in Hungary. Although in 1945-1949, Gerő was Minister of Transport, and then Minister of Finance in 1948-1949, his main task in the first years of the communist government was to eliminate the anti-communist leanings of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, which he himself was a member of from 1949-1957. In 1948, he became head of the newly established Hungarian Science Council (*Magyar Tudományos Tanács*), which was managed by a six-member party college. It was the idea of the party leaders that this council should gradually replace the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. In the end, however, this did not occur with Gerő arranging for the communist-governed Science Council to merge with the Academy of Sciences which the Communist Party also got control over. In his speech for the opening of the new university, Gerő stressed that in order to fulfil its mission, the new university must keep in as close contact as possible with practice, with everyday life and with the problems of economic life, so that it could assist the government and people's democracy in theoretical analysis of the emerged economic problems and the application of their results in practice (Sine Auctor, 1955, p. 8).

As has been said above, students could only get into the new university through the admissions process, which those who had begun their studies at the Budapest Technical University also had to undertake. As a result of the changing socio-political organisation of the country managed by the communists, the class origin of students and their political opinions were naturally carefully considered as requirements for Marxist economic education. This was also reflected in the determining of a minimum number of points which the candidate had to reach to become a student: while candidates from the working class had to achieve at least 12 points in the admissions process, candidates from a bourgeois family logically had to achieve the most; here more than double, a total of 25 points.¹⁷

The admissions process for the newly established Hungarian University of Economics in Budapest was declared by ministerial decree no. 202 867. On this basis, a total of 4 392 candidates applied for the university, of which 989 candidates applied for the first year, 1 259 students applied for later years of study, and 1 241 candidates applied for the first year of evening studies, and 903 candidates applied for later years of evening studies. 403 students were accepted for the first year, 250 for the second year and 306 for

the third year. For evening study, 190 were accepted for the first year, and 184 students for the second year. It only remains to add that teaching in the first school year of the newly established University of Economics began on 18 October 1948.¹⁸

With the above mentioned criticism of the high number of student drop-outs at the Technical University's Faculty of Economics, specifically the small number of graduates of around 50, and due to the high number of students at the economics-commerce department (2 685), the total number of students of 1 333 at the new university is certainly surprising. Even taking into account the endeavour to eliminate social and cultural inequality in society. Because while in the second semester of the 1947/48 academic year, 1 442 students were enrolled for the first year of economics and commerce studies, in the first semester of the first academic year of the separate economics school, only 593 students were able to enrol, including students for evening study, which in comparison to the condition at the old Faculty of Economics, represents just 41.1% of its students.¹⁹

Naturally, for evening study and, later distance study (*Sine Auctor, 1955, p. 9; Szögi, 1994, p. 102*), the total number of students accepted was regulated quite strongly to the advantage of the working classes at a central level from the ministry, then still the Ministry of Religion and Education. For the 1950/51 academic year, for example, Budapest's University of Economics was allowed to accept a total of 260 students for evening study: 125 workers, 25 working farmers (i.e. de facto farm workers) and 110 from other social classes.²⁰ Furthermore, those workers who the state had named in leading roles or management posts in the economic construction of the state, whose work and field of work required the largest and most thorough knowledge of economics possible, were naturally able to be accepted into evening university study regardless of their prior education, regardless of the highest level of education they had achieved. Candidates for evening study, however, were not able to apply themselves. Their filled application form had to be submitted by an appropriate factory committee, who were authorised to submit to the university. An essential part of the application was naturally the factory committee's statement on the aim of the study candidate, his appropriate recommendation.²¹

On the basis of the ministry's order, the university's study department naturally had to undertake entrance exams so that the determined numbers were precisely followed. The admissions process for evening study was

supposed to take place under the control of a special admissions sub-commission, with one sub-commission set up for every 100 candidates. However, the university couldn't even decide for itself on the composition and activities of these sub-commissions, with the ministry having the decision-making power here too. We should add that from the third year, evening study students were able to specialise in industry or trade. For day study, it is interesting that distance learning students were relieved from party political education on the basis of a decision made at secretariat-level. The University of Economics' curator did not agree with the introduction of party political training for evening study too, however, and he asked the Ministry of Religion and Education to remove it from the compulsory duties for evening school students shortly before it was implemented. He claimed that party political education would be a great burden for evening study students due to their time availability.²²

Selected Aspects of the Initial Period the Budapest University of Economics began Operating Against the Background of the Transformation of Hungarian Higher Education as Directed by MDP

As has already been mentioned above, the University of Economics in Budapest became the first socialist university in Hungary, built up from scratch according to the ideas of the Hungarian Working People's Party leadership of a Marxist university. The University of Economics in Budapest became the first 'vetted' school where both the staff and curriculum fully corresponded to the expectations of the 'communist' party in accordance with the programme of building a socialist society, specifically a socialist economic order in Hungary (Berend, 1966, pp. 25-26).²³ The key objectives of Hungarian socialist higher education at the time were the same as the goals of higher education in other socialist countries in the region. The development of Hungarian higher education was then in accordance with the central socio-political line of the one governing political party of workers and farm workers in Hungary, whose key programme priority was to eliminate disparity in society based on social origin. The politicians' programme of eliminating inequalities according to social origin in society, essentially class struggle, was declared in Hungary in June 1948 and its objective was clear: to remove the educational monopoly of the wealthy social classes by implementing a united spirit of democratic education in

practice. The politics of removing class disparity went hand in hand with the nationalisation of private property in the country in the interests of the state security of the socialist alignment of the state, which was to be fully governed by the working people at all levels. The period of official class struggle in Hungary lasted between 1948 and 1962, when it was officially notified at the party congress of the Hungarian Socialist Party, the successor to the Hungarian Working People's Party, that the construction of the foundations for socialism in the country had ended and that most attention would as such be focused in particular on boosting and developing the socialist economy and creating a strong socialist awareness within society. Laying solid foundations for socialism in the people's democratic Hungary and the new direction of the party's official socio-political line did not mean declaring a successful end to the removal of class disparity in society, and nor did it mean definitively giving up this policy. The new political programme of the central party of workers and farm workers meant above all the abandoning of Stalinist socialism and essentially giving up on a fully classless society, recognising the fact that even a socialist society would still be hierarchical. As such, the main objective of the party leadership was instead of building a classless society, rather a reduction in the differences between various social groups (Sáska, 2006, pp. 593-594).

Also serving to remove 'class' disparity in society was the deliberate regulation of proportions of candidates accepted at university. Naturally to the great benefit of the workers, while, as has been seen above, often they did not even take into account appropriate prior education achievements as an unconditional basic requirement for acceptance for higher education. Everything was subject to the central mission of socialist higher education: to transform quickly the workers and farm workers into the new intelligentsia, which was to be able to replace the bourgeois intelligentsia fully and at all levels, and eliminate from society representatives of the wealthier classes, whose presence in socialist society was considered inadmissible. Higher education statistics very quickly changed after the Hungarian Communist Party's monopolisation of power, specifically the subsequent Hungarian Working People's Party after the merger of the two workers parties into one central political subject for workers and farm workers and their victory in parliamentary elections on 31 August 1947. This change was of clear benefit to the working class and farming class. The cultural monopoly of the original ruling capitalist social classes, marked in

statistics as group 'X', was practically broken in the 'best' year of Rákosi's regime, the 1952/53 academic year when there were practically eliminated from universities. In this academic year, only 0.8% of students came from the 'undesirable' 'X' social group. The proportion of students from working families in the same academic year was, in contrast, 33.7%, and that from farming families was 22.8%, with almost every other university student being of worker or farm worker origin. Changes in the social composition of university students were naturally achieved through a particularly marked increase in the overall number of students accepted during just a few years for both day and evening study. This marked increase in the number of university students, however, was implemented naturally mainly in evening or distance study. While in the 1948/49 academic year, 1 384 students studied at Hungarian higher education institutions through evening or distance learning, five years later in the 1953/54 academic year the total number of higher education students using these forms of study was up to 15 thousand, which represents an increase of greater than 1000% (!) (Sáska, 2006, pp. 593, 596-597; Balogh, 1986, p. 365-366).²⁴

Authorities particularly proudly highlighted these figures in comparison to the situation before the Second World War, when the base figures used for comparison were from the last academic year of peacetime, 1937/38. As propaganda, this comparison of the results of socialist university and 'bourgeois' university statistics was of course larger, mainly due to the specific socio-political context of the conservative national right, specifically national-Christian semi-authoritative Hungarian state between 1919 and 1944 with its semi-feudal social elements from the era of the Hungarian Dual Monarchy (Tóth, 2004 [2005], pp. 129-152; Tóth, 2004, pp. 545-580; Tóth, 2003, pp. 203-250; Tóth, 2013; pp. 31-80).²⁵ Statistics from the 1937/38 academic year as such truly are not particularly positive from a social perspective. During this academic year, only 2.7% of students at Hungarian higher education institutions were of working class background, and 0.8% of students were from farming backgrounds. In absolute figures, however, the situation looked even worse, since 3.5% of higher education students from working class or farming backgrounds represented a total of just 412 students at all higher education institutions, a truly miniscule figure (Sáska, 2006, p. 596-597).

The enormous post-war growth in students studying at universities compared to Horthy's regime was stressed as proof of the superiority of the

people's democratic system led by MDP. Statisticians at the time emphasised that while in the 1937/38 academic year, a total of 11 747 students were studying at universities, in the 1952/53 academic year that figure was three times higher: a total of 36 401 students, and this figure only included students in day study. A year later, this figure was 38 383, which was the highest figure of total university student numbers in Hungary for many years, specifically for the whole fourteen-year period of the central Working People's Party's political programme entitled 'Class Struggle'. On the other hand, however, the figures given show that the 'socialist' discrimination of the so-called 'X' social class was much greater than the 'capitalist' discrimination of the working class and farm workers, because with a three-times larger number of university students in 1952/53, the total number of students from the discriminated-against 'X' social class was less than 300. As such, the number of university students of working class or farming origin in Hungary in the early 1950s was roughly fifty times larger than it was before the beginning of the Second World War. In the 1952/53 academic year, their numbers reached almost 21 thousand (Sáska, 2006, p. 596-597). The authorities' conclusion from these figures was clear: in the people's democratic society under MDP leadership, education was spreading massively, since many more people were studying at universities than before the war, and at the same time equality in society was increasing, although this was naturally at the cost of making higher education practically inaccessible for youth with a previous bourgeois background, or from kulak families (Sáska, 2006, p. 597-598).²⁶

The 'socialist' restructuring of higher education as managed through the ideology of the central Working People's Party, however, was in a certain way both necessary and warranted due to the economic and political changes in the country, where the whole economy was transformed in line with the Soviet model. The 'reactionary' capitalist and bourgeois focus, in content and profile, of university studies could hardly satisfy the demands from the experts of a centrally planned economy with its firmly fixed period, large manufacturing in associated manufacturing complexes and the new concept of law of direct return in the socialist economy. The content of technically-focused higher education study was not focused on practice, and agriculturally-focused higher education study was not focused on large agricultural production, medical faculties were not educating doctors for the masses of the workers, but for private practice, as the cabinet said at its

appointment in 1950. According to party bodies, the higher education system until then could not educate the qualified specialists needed to build socialism, which meant that not only was the thorough restructuring of higher education teaching, not just in terms of content, required at practically all levels, but also the working class and farm workers and their children needed to become involved to a massive extent in higher education study as part of the objective of building a classless society in the country (Sáska, 2006, p. 597).

The dynamic ‘socialist’ growth in the number of university students, however, had to partially reduced shortly afterwards due to incommensurate requirements on the performance of the Hungarian economy as a result of the above detailed decision of the party in 1951 to increase the economic plan requirements in 1951. The Hungarian Working People’s Party Secretariat, working in 1952, decided to reduce the number of students at Hungary’s universities in the 1952/53 academic year by 960, and by 200 in evening study. For the 1953/54 academic year, there was a plan to reduce university student numbers even more markedly by 1 960, and by an even greater 2 070 for the 1954/55 academic year. Over subsequent academic years until the 1962/63 academic year, the total number of higher education students in Hungarian universities ranged below 30 thousand, with their numbers exceeding 30 thousand again in the 1961/62 academic year. Party bodies also had problems, however, with the relative numbers of ‘proletariat’ university students. Also fairly soon, it was shown that there were insufficient numbers of proletarians and farm workers who wanted to study at university, and this led from the 1954/55 academic year to a permanent five-percent fall as compared to the 1952/53 academic year. The greatest relative number of university students of working class origin was seen in the 1953/54 academic year. Until the end of the so-called ‘class struggle’ official period in the ‘people’s democratic’ Hungary, their proportion remained in the order of 32-33%. The relative numbers of students of farm worker origin, however, in contrast continued to fall significantly over the monitored period to just under 20% in the 1962/63 academic year (Sáska, 2006, p. 597-598).²⁷

At first, however, as follows from documents of the time relating to the beginnings of the Hungarian University of Economics in Budapest, Hungarian ‘socialist’ higher education came up against the asocial remains of capitalist socio-cultural society behaviour, to paraphrase the rhetoric of

the time. For example, the University of Economics in Budapest had to warn the Ministry of Education a number of times at its beginnings that the prices for student dormitories for its students were too high. The curator of the University of Economics considered a monthly price of 90 forints for a bed to be incomprehensible, expressing his lack of understanding for how the dormitories could require such a high sum from the students, when 4 to 8 students were located in one room, making the rent for one dormitory room come to a sum of 360-720 forints. The curator informed the Ministry's higher education division that the mass criticism of these prices by the students, who were even beginning to arrange a move-out en masse from the student dormitories into private rented accommodation, was justified. The curator rejected this idea, however, not just because of the interests of the university, but also the education of the students (Balogh, 1986, p. 366).

The fact that the University of Economics' curator's complaint was not unjustified is illustrated by the prices of the time, specifically the high growth in prices between 1946 and 1952. In 1952, for example, a kilogram of beef cost 21 forints, which in 1949 was just 8.40 forints. In 1949, pork cost 11.90 forints, but in 1952 it cost 28.90 forints. The greatest price increase occurred between the years of 1949 and 1952, when the consumer price index for a basket of goods, clothing, mixed goods, heating, lighting and services grew in comparison to 1946 (=100%) in 1949 to 151% and in 1952 up to 262 %, with the greatest increase in the consumer prices index seen for food (1952 = 236%) and clothing (226%). From this data then, it is clear that the monthly sum of 90 forints for accommodation in student dormitories was not an insignificant sum of money for the student's families in their budgets (Márton, 2012, p. 381-382).

The university curator also informed the ministry of other deficiencies of the student dormitory operators, which suggest the poor social, or rather Spartan, conditions of university students at the time. Students in dormitories were only given thin and worn blankets, usually only one, which apparently led to an unusually high number of illnesses. As such, in this regard the curator called on the ministry to act immediately in the interests of the students' health. The parallel request that the university establish its own doctor's surgery to eliminate the undesired absence of students because of the over-benevolence of private practitioners towards students pretending to be sick appears to be more of an amusing addition.²⁸

The Hungarian University of Economics in Budapest was established still in a period of post-war plural democracy, its practical form was rather incomplete as a result of the ever greater influence of the communists on the workings of the state. Budapest's University of Economics' main mission was clear: to provide Hungary with a new generation of an aware economically-educated intelligentsia, ideally from working class or farm working background, who could become the key leaders to build socialism in Hungary, a socialist society along the Soviet Union model. This objective was to be secured with extensive state supervision of the newly established university, which was the first Hungarian university to have the post of curator established, who was a de facto extension of the state, specifically the Hungarian Working People's Party, within the university academic sphere. With the definitive takeover of power by the communists, specifically MDP in spring 1949, academic life at the Budapest University of Economics was controlled even more thoroughly by the central workers and farm workers party, as even the fourth rector himself, László Házy (in 1957-1963), noted with satisfaction at the end of the Karl Marx University of Economics' tenth academic year. In his overview to the University Revue (*Felsőoktatási Szemle*), the official specialist periodical of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs (*Művelődésügyi Minisztérium*), he praised the fact that university management was much simpler thanks to the active approach of university party bodies, including its Executive Party Committee, because their suggestions and criticism were a marked help in meeting the university's social objectives in regard to its central role in educating economics specialists (Hay, 1959, p. 559).

In conclusion, it remains merely to say that the current school name, the Corvinus University of Budapest, is named after the King of Hungary, and also Bohemia, Matthias Corvinus. The school has had this name for ten years. In 1990, the institution was first renamed the Budapest University of Economics (*Budapesti Közgazdaságtudományi Egyetem*), and then in 2000 after an integration process of Hungarian higher education institutions in which it merged with the College of Public Administration, it was renamed the Budapest University of Economics and Public Administration (*Budapesti Közgazdaságtudományi és Államigazgatási Egyetem*). The institution has used its current name since 1 September 2004. The last renaming was connected with another merger process, when the Faculty of Horticulture, Faculty of Food Industry and Faculty of Landscape Architecture became a

part of the school, until then having been part of the St Stephen University headquartered in Gödöllő. Despite the three times Budapest's University of Economics has been renamed, however, there is still a large statue of a sitting Karl Marx in the hall of the university's main building which looks out over students and teachers, and whom the university was named after almost half a century ago.

Notes

¹ Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Országos Levéltára (The State Archives of the Hungarian National Archive; hereinafter referred to only as MNL-OL), XIX-J-1-h, f. Ministry of Religion and Public Education (Vallás- és Közoktatásügyi Minisztérium; hereinafter referred to only as VKM), Higher Education and Research Department (Felsőoktatási és Tudományos Főosztály; hereinafter referred to only as FTF), 1948, cart. no. 215, doc. 203.630/1948 entitled '*Emlékeztető*' and doc. no. 202.863 entitled '*Magyar Közgazdaságtudományi Egyetemre való felvétel szabályozása*' dated 24 August 1948.

² MNL-OL, XIX-J-1-h, VKM, FTF, 1948, cart. no. 215, appendix to doc. no. 202.863 entitled '*Felvételi Hirdetmény*'.

³ *Ibid.* The appendices to the study application were also, of course, to necessarily include a candidate photograph, here three photos. Since the established University of Economics was declared just a few weeks before the new academic year began, candidates also applied to the old Faculty of Economics. They were naturally required to apply for the new university, but every candidate who had submitted their study application to the old Faculty of Economics had to add all the appendices which were decreed by the official decree on the admissions process for the new university to their application by 4 September. If they did not do so, their application would become invalid. (*Ibid.*)

⁴ Közgáz Levéltár (The Archives of Corvinus University of Budapest; hereinafter referred to only as KL), f. 7/b Statisztikák (Statistics) 1949-1984, cart. no. 1, 1949/50-1954/55, document without further administrative markings, document entitled '*Beiratkozott hallgatók*'.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ MNL-OL, XIX-J-1-h, VKM, FTF, 1948, cart. no. 215, doc. no. 204.893/1948, document dated 27 September 1948, document entitled '*A Magyar Közgazdaságtudományi Egyetem egyes tanszékei teendőinek ellátása*'.

⁷ The Petőfi Circle was an important intellectual movement in the mid-1950s which played a significant role in opening the reform movement of the time within the MDP in the October Revolution in 1956.

⁸ Rezső Nyers (born 1923): one of the key economists in the Hungarian People's Republic (he studied at Budapest's University of Economics), he played an important role in the socio-political changes at the end of the 1980s. He was a founding member of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party. In 1956, before the revolution broke out, he was Food Industry

Minister for a short time. After the revolution was defeated in 1956, he became a government agent for the so-called Revolutionary Workers'-Peasants' Government of Hungary headed by János Kádár, whose objective was the restoration of the communist regime under the cover of the presence of the Soviet army in the country. In 1957, he became a member of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (MSZMP) Central Committee, where he remained until 1989. In 1958, he became a member of the Hungarian Parliament, in which he sat until 1998; see below); he had already been a member of parliament, however, between 1948 and 1953. In 1960, he was named Minister of Finance, and in 1962 Secretary of the MSZMP Central Committee, and in 1966 member of the Party Committee. In the mid-1960s, he was involved in the preparation of a reformist economic package and a new economic mechanism whose application in practice was, however, stopped by a boosted MZSMP conservative wing. In 1974, he became Director of the Economics Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and later Chair of the Editorial Board of the renowned Economic Review. In 1987, he was elected to the head of the reform parliamentary committee, becoming state minister in 1988. In June 1989, he was elected head of MSZMP and a member of the party's Central Political Committee. Following the dissolution of MSZMP, he became head of the Hungarian Socialist Party (*Magyar Szocialista Párt*, MSZP), although he only remained in the role until 1990. From 1990 to 1998 he was a MSZP member of parliament. In 1998, he left politics. See: Nemzeti Emlékezet Bizottsága (NEB) – Rezső Nyers (<https://www.neb.hu/hu/nyers-rezso>).

⁹ 1956-os Intézet – Oral History Archívum – Nagy Tamás (<http://www.rev.hu/sulinet45/szerviz/kislex/biograf/nagyt.htm>).

¹⁰ Pál Zsigmond Pach (1919-2001): historian, university professor, major world-renowned representative of post-war Hungarian historiography. His students included leading Hungarian historians, Iván T Berend and György Ránki. See: Berend I. T. (2002). Pach Zsigmond Pál, 1919-2001. *Magyar Tudomány*, 1, p. 123 (http://multkor.hu/20090529_pach_zsigmond_pal). Of his extensive publications, we would at least refer to the following: *Die ungarische Agrarentwicklung im 16-17. Jahrhundert Abbiegung vom westeuropäischen Entwicklungsgang* (Budapest 1964), *The Transylvanian route of Levantine trade at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries* (Budapest 1980), *History and National Consciousness* (Budapest 1987), *Hungary and the European Economy in Early Modern Times* (Aldershot 1994).

¹¹ György Markos (1902-1976): geographer specialised in economic geography. During Horthy's Hungary, he had to emigrate due to his left-wing leanings, although he later returned to his home country where he was active in the anti-fascist resistance. In 1944 he was arrested by the Arrow Cross Hungarian Movement. Upon arriving at the Hungarian University of Economics as head of the Economic Geography Department, he established a Marxist interpretation of Hungarian and global economic geography in geographical sciences. His scientific activities were of importance in the fields of modern economic and statistical analysis methods. Some of his work includes, e.g.: *One hundred years of Hungarian Industry* (Budapest 1942), *Hungarian Economic Geography* (Budapest 1962), etc. See: Magyar Életrajzi Lexikon – Markos György (<http://mek.oszk.hu/00300/00355/html/>).

¹² Andor Berei (1900-1979), economist, university professor. Already in 1919 he joined the Hungarian Communist Party. After the defeat of the Hungarian Republic of Councils, he was

involved in the organisation of the illegal communist movement, and as such was sentenced to fifteen years imprisonment in 1921. In 1922, he arrived in the Soviet Union as part of an exchange of prisoners between Budapest and Moscow, where he worked for the Communist International and in the V. I. Lenin International School. In 1934-1946 he was one of the leading figures of the communist movement in Belgium. After his return to Hungary, he became actively involved in the Communist Party's party apparatus. From 1947, he was Secretary General of the State Planning Office. In 1948, he became State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and later First Deputy Foreign Minister. In 1948-1956, he was a member of the central leadership of the Hungarian Working Peoples' Party. In 1949-1972, he worked, with a number of interludes, as a departmental head and university professor at Budapest's University of Economics. In 1957, he became director of the Academic publishing house, and in 1962 another major publishers in Hungary, Kossuth. See: Magyar Életrajzi Lexikon – Berei Andor (<http://mek.oszk.hu/00300/00355/html/>).

¹³ Imre Vajda (1900-1969): an economist specialising in planned economics with reformist features, and the role of foreign trade in the socialist economy, correspondence member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (from 1967). In his youth, he was already left-leaning, and in 1917 before the dissolution of the dualist Hungary, he joined Hungary's Social Democrats. He was actively involved in the Hungarian Republic of Councils, was a member of the Worker's Council and also worked in Hungary's Red Army as company commander. After the fall of the Republic of Councils, he emigrated like many of other active participants in the 'socialist' regime to Austria, where he was active in Austria's Social Democratic Party and in the *Világosság* grouping of Hungarian Social Democrats. In 1934, he was involved in the February uprising in Vienna, the so-called Austrian Civil War (in German, *Österreichische Bürgerkrieg*; also the February battle of 1934, in German *Februarkämpfe 1934*), in which a few hundred workers fell. He then joined the Austrian Communist Party, where he was soon a member of the central committee. He was arrested for illegal activities in 1936 and expelled from the country. Upon his return to Hungary in 1938, he once again became involved in the activities of Hungary's Social Democratic Party, where he was active in its left-wing. After the war, he became a member of the nationwide party leadership and held the post of State Secretary for Trade and Co-operatives in state administration. After the merger of Hungary's Social Democrats and Communists in June 1948, he became a member of the Hungarian Working People's Party's political committee (1948-1950) and was also a member of parliament. As a professor at the newly established Marxist Hungarian University of Economics in Budapest, he was involved in its initial development. In 1949-1950 he was once again a ministerial State Secretary, now at the Ministry of Internal Trade. In 1951, however, he was arrested and jailed when false accusations were made against him. He was freed in the dramatic year of 1956, when he was rehabilitated and his membership in the party was renewed. From 1957 until his retirement in 1965, he worked once again as a departmental head at Budapest's University of Economics. From 1963, he chaired the Hungarian Society for Economics. He was also a correspondence member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. He died in Austria while on a lecture tour. Some of his main publications include: *Foreign Trade* (Budapest 1959), *Socialist Foreign Trade* (Budapest 1963), *Hungary and*

Global Trade (Budapest 1965), *The Role of Foreign Trade in a Socialist Economy* (Budapest 1965). See: Magyar Életrajzi Lexikon – Vajda Imre (<http://mek.oszk.hu/00300/00355/html/>).

¹⁴ László Háý (1891-1975): doctor and economist, member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (correspondence member from 1965, ordinary member from 1973). As for the other departmental heads at the newly established Hungarian University of Economics mentioned above, Háý too was a left-wing activist in interwar Hungary. Due to his left-wing leanings, he was active during the Hungarian Republic of Councils when he was a member of the Directorate of Medical Unions, which resulted in him being forced to emigrate after the fall of the ‘Soviet’ regime, first to Austria and then to Czechoslovakia, another of the target countries of the Republic of Councils’ political elite. At the turn of the 1920s and 1930s, he worked in the services of the Soviet Union, in 1929-1934 working for the Soviet trade representation in Berlin, and then in 1934-1943 directly in Moscow at the Institute for Conjunctory Research at the People’s Commissariat for Foreign Trade. After returning to Hungary after the Second World War, he took on the post of director of the Society for Hungarian-Soviet Foreign Trade Turnover (1945-1946), and then head of the Hungarian National Bank (*Magyar Nemzeti Bank*). From 1948, he held various leading positions at the Ministry of Foreign Trade. He wasn’t just a professor of political economics at Budapest’s University of Economics, as he was also rector in 1957-1963. Some of his key publications include the following: *Az újratermelési ciklus alakulása a második világháború után* (Budapest 1959), *A hidegháború gazdasági formái* (Budapest 1964), *A világg kapitalizmus válsága* (Budapest 1966), *A megváltozott világgazdaság* (Budapest 1970). For more on Háý as rector of Budapest’s University of Economics. See: Magyar Életrajzi Lexikon – Háý László (<http://mek.oszk.hu/00300/00355/html/>).

¹⁵ István Friss (1903-1976): economist, member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (correspondence member from 1953, ordinary member from 1960). Friss, too, was involved in the workers movement in interwar Hungary from 1922, and he was jailed from 1929-1933 for organisational activities in the illegal communist movement. In the mid-1930s, he moved to the Soviet Union and lived in Moscow, where he worked as a scientist at the Economics Institute. After the outbreak of World War II, he worked in the Hungarian section of Moscow Radio. After the war, he returned to Hungary and was involved in the process of implementing socialist economics in practice; specifically in 1948-1949 he was involved in preparing the nationalisation process plan. He was head of the Economics Institute from its beginning in 1945. In 1945-1967 he was also a member of parliament. See: Magyar Életrajzi Lexikon – Friss István (<http://mek.oszk.hu/00300/00355/html/>).

¹⁶ MNL-OL, XIX-J-1-h, VKM, FTF, 1948, cart. no. 215, cit. doc. 204.893/1948.

¹⁷ MNL-OL, VKM, FTF, 1948, XIX-J-1-h, cart. no. 215, doc. no. 207.558/1948, document dated 20 October 1948, document entitled ‘*Felvételek stb. jelentés*’.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ The above referred to summary of enrolled students for evening study from the archives of Budapest’s Corvinus University, however, details a total of 346 students enrolled for evening study for the 1950/51 academic year. See: KL, 7/b Statisztikák 1949-1984, box no. 1, 1949/50-1954/55, cit. document entitled ‘*Beiratkozott hallgatók*’.

²¹ MNL-OL, XIX-I-1-h, cart. no. 357, 1490-65-20 (doc. of the Ministry of Religion and Education dated 14 June 1950) and 1490-65-19 (also document of the Ministry of Religion and Education, also dated 14 June 1950); document without further administrative markings of 25 September 1951 with the note 'Top Secret'.

²² Ibid.

²³ The 'official' beginning of socialism in Hungary had been spoken of since mid-1948, last but not least in connection with the merger of the Communists with the Social Democrats and the creation of a united central political party of workers and farm workers. Nevertheless, while the Communist Party was still more realistic in its prognoses in 1947 and considered the construction of socialism in Hungary to be a long-term process, in the following period MDP was completely out of touch with reality as a result of its total power in the country, and declared the laying of the foundations for socialism in the whole of the national economy as part of the first Five-year Plan. The MDP's break away from reality in the early period of socialist transformation of the economy was later criticised even by leading academics, such as leading teacher in Budapest's University of Economics already discussed, Iván T. Berend.

²⁴ The elimination of 'class' disparity was implemented in high schools at the same tempo, where the proportion of children from working class and farming backgrounds also soon reached a figure of fifty percent, specifically in the 1949/50 academic year. Here too, the change in social structure of youth studying was achieved through a massive increase in students studying at high school. The number of high school students in the 1953/54 academic year grew by two and a half times in comparison to the previous school year to almost 121 thousand (Sáska, 2006, pp. 365-366).

²⁵ The conservative national right, or Christian right interwar Hungary of 1919-1944 was based on civic parliamentarism with all the bodies belonging to it, but in an autocratic regulated form or practice. The particular political system of interwar Hungary began to take shape on 7 August 1919 when Christian Socialist politician, István Friedrich seized power as self-appointed prime minister in a palace coup. Under his three governments, the basic apparatus of the national right and national Christian regime, which was legitimised under the so-called Cabinet of Concentration of Károly Huszár, the first post-war Hungarian cabinet which was recognised by the allied powers and was able to implement the first post-war parliamentary elections in the country (January 1920), and in ratifying the first basic constitutional act in the country, no. 1920: I, the first post-war Hungarian parliament, the National Assembly on 27 February 1920) it renewed constitutionality in Hungary and declared the constitutional continuity of post-war Hungary with the pre-war dualist Hungary, distancing itself from the socio-political developments in Hungary between 31 October 1918 and 7 August 1919. The interwar Hungarian state thus subscribed to a Monarchist state system. Icons during this period of Hungarian history were the country's Regent, Miklós Horthy de Nagybánya, who was elected as head of state by the National Assembly on 1 March 1920 (although he was temporary head of state, he stayed in this position until 16 October 1944), and long-term prime minister, Count István Bethlen, who was head of the Hungarian government from 14 April 1921 until 24 August 1931. Although the standardisation and consolidation process in internal political life in post-war Hungary as directed by the conservative Christian nationalist political course from the turn of 1919 and

1920 was much consolidated by the second post-election government cabinet headed by Count Pál Teleki, the true consolidation of Hungary's political and economic situation was undertaken and completed during Bethlen's prime-ministership. The naming of Count Bethlen as head of government de facto definitively ended the revolutionary 'atmosphere' in the country, and resulted in speedy and precipitous turnarounds which were reflected both in the overall socio-political atmosphere in the country, and in the volatility and instability of domestic politics. We should briefly add that Hungary had undergone two revolutions by the spring of 1921: the 'Chrysanthemum' and 'Red' revolutions, two 'revolutionary' state formations which significantly incurred into the traditional conservative regulatory and socio-political rhythm of the country. These were: the social-liberal Hungarian People's Republic (lasted from 31 October 1918 until 21 March 1919) whose symbol was the Christian national circle around the denounced Count Mihály Károlyi (the first post-war Hungarian prime minister, first premier of the so-called Chrysanthemum Hungary (from 31 October 1918 to 19 January 1919), and the Republic of Councils, which is linked to the name of Béla Kun (from 21 March 1919 to 1 August 1919), until the Christian nationalists took power in the country and undertook 'monopolisation' directed by neoconservative political powers, specifically the particular nature of the basic political parameters of the so-called Horthy political system in the interwar Hungarian state.

²⁶ For completeness, we would add that the relative proportion of the 'X' statistical category, i.e. students at universities coming from 'undesirable' classes in the people's democratic, or socialist, society in the subsequent academic years fell significantly. In the 1953/54 and 1954/55 academic years, they still made up around 2% of students, in the 1955/56 and 1956/57 academic years they were around 1%, and in subsequent academic years of the period of striving for a classless society, they remained at a constant level of around just 0.5 %. In contrast, the numbers of students from the 'intelligentsia' social category displayed gradual continuous growth from 12.9% in the 1953/54 academic year to 20.8% in the 1962/63 academic year (Sáska, 2006, p. 598).

²⁷ The lowest numbers of university students was recorded in the academic years of 1957/58 (24 013), 1958/59 (23 429) and 1959/60 (25 813).

²⁸ MNL-OL, XIX-I-1-h, cart. no. 357, cit. document without further administrative markings, document dated 25 September 1951 and marked 'Top Secret'. Along with marked increases in the number of university students at Hungarian universities at the turn of the 1940s and 1950s, support for student accommodation at university dormitories also expanded markedly, with many being established. In the 1950s, 46.6 % of university students were accommodated in student dormitories. A similar trend occurred in high schools, where the number of students boarding there also increased, reaching a figure of 25 % of students in the 1950s (Balogh, 1986, p. 366).

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Online Resources

1956-os Intézet – Oral History Archívum

(<http://www.rev.hu/sulinet45/szerviz/kislex/biograf/nagyt.htm>)

Magyar Életrajzi Lexikon (<http://mek.oszk.hu/00300/00355/html/>)

Nemzeti Emlékezet Bizottsága (NEB) – Rezső Nyers

(<https://www.neb.hu/hu/nyers-rezso>).

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