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**The archbishopric province of Eger between the borders of  
Trianon**

**The Hungarian parts of the dioceses of Kassa, Rozsnyó and Szatmár (1920-  
1993)**

**Dissertatio ad Doctoratum**

**Thesis booklet**

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The Trianon tragedy is the common pain of all Hungarians, even more than a hundred years after the signing of the peace decree. It had economic, cultural and social consequences that are still decisive today. In addition to these, however, it also influenced the Catholic Church and its organizational structure. The peace treaty not only changed the political borders of Hungary, but also transferred parts of dioceses, if not entire dioceses, to the territory of a foreign country, where we can speak of an Orthodox majority. Thus, it was considered a regular program of the episcopal conferences to deal with the fate of the dioceses that were divided or moved abroad.

However, the universal church began to make changes slowly. First of all, because the permanence of the borders was uncertain, and on the other hand, the Hungarian bishops tried to delay these processes. The Holy See, strove to reach an agreement with the various states and to enforce Catholic interests. The various concordats, on the other hand, included the adjustment of dioceses to political boundaries. In this way, new administrations were formed in the parts divided by national borders.

The recent territorial changes of the Vienna Awards also had an impact on the dioceses. The returning parts formed a unit again with the Hungarian parts. New bishops were appointed, and some dioceses were even reattached to their former archbishopric provinces. However, this change did not last. At the end of the war, the borders were restored, and diocesan issues had to be started all over again.

The emerging communist dictatorships did not want to maintain the relationship with the Holy See, so church government issues were also suspended. However, in several countries the diocesan arrangements can be made by this time, while in Hungary this only happened shortly after the fall of communism. In the situation that developed after the Trianon decisions, almost every diocese was affected sooner or later.

In my doctoral thesis, I wanted to present the development of the archbishopric province of Eger in the Hungarian parts during the given period. The arrangements of the dioceses of the surrounding countries created a situation as a result of which the Archdiocese of Eger was left without a suffragan bishopric. However, the Hungarian parts of these dioceses still remained connected to the metropolitan, and in fact, over time, were merged into the archdiocese.

In nine major chapters, my thesis discusses the ecclesiastical struggles that arose as a result of the Trianon decisions and within them the fate of the Hungarian parts of the archbishopric province of Eger. I tried to prepare the thesis together with the larger connections, so that the

struggle of the entire Hungarian Church can be seen and thus we can see a more complete picture of the struggles of the archbishopric province of Eger. This is also why the sections concerning the wider, entire Hungarian Church and the chapters specifically referring to the archbishopric province of Eger.

The first part is meant to be a comprehensive overview. It presents the situation of the Hungarian Catholic Church at the end of World War I. A separate chapter deals with the archbishopric province of Eger, where I wanted to give a little insight into the biographies of the bishops of the dioceses, and I wanted to provide some data about the state of the dioceses. After the first two introductory chapters, secular and ecclesiastical changes in Hungary were presented in the period between the World War and the signing of the peace decree.

The second part still wants to provide a comprehensive picture of the losses of the Hungarian church organization and how it tried to assert its interests at the Holy See. To present this, there is a separate chapter on the short period from the signing to the ratification, and then the events after the actual tragedy are explained.

The third part intends to present the life of the archbishopric province of Eger after Trianon. Although the life of the Archdiocese of Eger is not presented in detail, considering that the archdiocese was not affected by the tragedy of the mutilation of the country. Rather, the main issues there are described, including the relations with the vicarages of the suffragan dioceses in Hungary. We also gain an insight into the life of these vicars: how their governance developed, what changes took place after the war. This section also raises the questions of canon law that arose in the era. Here, however, only the questions are raised, the answers are given in the rest of the thesis, in the given places.

The fourth part examines concordats with neighboring countries and their effects. Only those concordats that had an impact on the Archbishopric of Eger are mentioned in the section, so the Austrian and Yugoslav concordats are not mentioned. A separate chapter presents the effects of the agreements on the Hungarian parts. Here we must not forget that the territorial changes of the Vienna decisions took place relatively soon after the Czechoslovak *modus vivendi*, so it is not possible to analyze the effects of the changes at length.

The fifth chapter presents the history of the Vienna Awards and revision successes and their effects on the Hungarian church organization. I tried to separate the parts relating to the archbishopric province, but the difficulty was that the changes affecting the life of the

archbishopric province of Eger were such an integral part of the country's growth that it was impossible to treat it separately in its entirety. Thus, in the case of both the dioceses Slovaks and the bishopric of Szatmár, explanations are made in two places.

The sixth part aims to give a brief overview of the situation of the Hungarian Church after World War II, the difficulties it faced during communism and the state's agreement with the Holy See. This also serves to shed light on the broader perspectives of dealing with truncated parts in Hungary.

The seventh chapter is intended to present the life of the truncated parts in Hungary after World War II. How did their fate develop as vicarages, who and how led the parts. This is where their connection to Eger is presented: first only the archbishop's jurisdiction will be extended to these parts, and then they will be attached to the archdiocese. Here we also deal with the issue of diocesan settlement, since this was actually the legal settlement of these parts.

The eighth part wants to present the fate of the remaining parts of Czechoslovakia. This is also necessary because after World War II, these parts were still part of the archbishopric's province. For this, it is also necessary to discuss the Czechoslovak ecclesiastical questions, but essentially a detailed presentation will only take place until the settlement of the diocese, since the dioceses of Kassa and Rozsnyó were separated from the archbishopric province of Eger at that time.

The ninth part presents the fate of the bishopric of Szatmár after the World War. Since it did not return to the archbishopric province after the Romanian concordat, this section presents the situation of the diocese in a purely informative manner, as if presenting its final fate.

The research has a dual purpose: on the one hand, it wants to show a comprehensive picture of the ecclesiastical situation in Hungary after the Trianon and, within this, it wants to deal with the fate of the archbishopric province of Eger, especially the Hungarian parts of Kassa, Rozsnyó and Szatmár. The thesis thus moves from a larger perspective to a smaller one. It strives to present a comprehensive picture, which is why we can find secular and church historical parts in it, which present the given age and its changes. Depending on these, we can really understand what conditions prevailed at that time, what were the biggest problems of the Hungarian Church, and thus of the truncated parts, for which a solution had to be found.

In the light of the whole picture, we can get to know the history of those parts whose seats were taken over by foreign empires. In particular, the papal measures can be observed, which at first

respected the unity of these parts, did not wish to harm them, and then, even after World War II, he did not initiate their merger into the Archdiocese of Eger for a long time.

Research results of my dissertation:

1. With the source materials at my disposal, the impact of the Trianon tragedy on the Hungarian church was primarily presented. As far as I know, the comprehensive investigation of this topic has only been processed in detail. This subject of the investigation meant not so much the presentation of the new thesis, but rather the arrangement of the existing materials and the elimination of erroneous information. In the case of the examined sources, I found several contradictory parts in the various sources, which made it necessary to examine them. This could be verified in other writings dealing with the given issue, as well as in documents providing the actual data.
2. The archdiocese itself does not play a leading role in the investigation of the archbishopric province of Eger. Given that the Archdiocese of Eger was not involved in the Trianon tragedy, the issues that were dealt with there during the examined period are only partially mentioned here. In addition, it is shown that the archbishop nevertheless tried to help the priests and faithful living in the Hungarian parts of the suffragan diocese. What's more, the contact was also realized beyond the border, since the local embassies also announced their activities, and letters were exchanged due to the metropolitan contribution.
3. In matters of priest education, presentations were made on issues affecting specific parts. In these, I mainly tried to present the national context, where mainly the data of the Central Seminary in Budapest, the Pázmáneum in Vienna, and the Pontifical Hungarian Institute in Rome were used. In addition, with the help of archival sources, I touched on the relationship of the Hungarian parts with other seminars.
4. In the investigation of the Hungarian embassies between the two world wars, the changes that took place in the respective parts are presented. Among these, it is worth noting the perception of the surrounding countries. While the bishop of Szatmár could visit the entire territory of his diocese, the Czechoslovaks did not allow this to the bishops and apostolic administrators seated there. The work of the vicars helping to govern the Hungarian parts also speaks for itself that they did not simply strive to maintain the existing situation, but also tried to boost the religious life and organized new spiritual skills. All this was accomplished in cooperation with their chief pastors.

5. In the case of the concordats, only the countries in whose territory the archbishopric province of Eger was located were discussed. Thus, the Polish concordat was also presented because the 19 settlements added to Poland also affected the structure of the archbishopric province.

6. The effect of the concordats on the Hungarian parts is different, since they did not happen at the same time. That is why the data was processed to different extents: while the apostolic administration of Mérék existed for 12 years, the Hungarian parts of Kassa and Rozsnyó were administered for a little less than a year. In addition, their leadership was different: during the Romanian concordat, in the Hungarian part of Szatmár, the vicar was appointed apostolic administrator, who tried to build a structure and promote the life of faith. As a result of the Czechoslovak *modus vivendi*, however, the Hungarian parts of Rozsnyó and Kassa were entrusted to the Archbishop of Esztergom, but this spanned such a short period that no significant changes took place.

7. In the case of dioceses reuniting after the revisions, we can observe the uncertainty towards individual bishops, even among those who have only been appointed to the given episcopal see, but have not yet been ordained. In the case of the appointed and accepted bishops, we can see that they strove for a uniform pastoral care of the area, and also in the case of the local minorities, they wanted to promote acceptance, not feelings of anger and revenge.

8. The war losses of the parts of Rozsnyó, Kassa and Szatmár, as well as the administration of the areas, are presented using archival materials. The fate of the expelled priests played a prominent role in this. Because of the mass expulsions, the priests had to be placed somewhere, new chaplaincies had to be established, and because of this, new structures were formed. Furthermore, the pastoral employment of the monks expelled in 1950 was considered a task.

The three dioceses experienced their difficulties in different ways. In the post-war period, the leadership of the Kassa and Rozsnyó parts was concentrated in one person, while the Hungarian part of Szatmár had independent leadership. The leadership of Kassa was formed in a special way, because after the death of Bishop Madarász, the authority of the chapter vicar and the apostolic administrator became uncertain. Despite this, a new seminary was established in the region, and new canons were even appointed with the permission of the Holy See.

9. The Hungarian parts of the suffragan dioceses were entrusted to the Archbishop of Eger in 1952. This was preceded by the state's order that these parts should be abolished. The bishops indicated this to the Vatican, but the Holy See did not order the termination, but rather extended

the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Eger to these areas. Archbishop Czapik had been the governor of the parts of Szatmár since 1951, and with this provision his jurisdiction also extended to the parts of Rozsnyó and Kassa. Pál Brezanóczy was appointed vicar of all three parts. The vicarage moved to Eger, and the seminary in Hejce was also closed. This provision did not eliminate the independence of the truncated parts, but it created a close relationship with the Archdiocese of Eger. As a result, priests were assigned to parts of Eger, and priests from Eger were transferred to northern parts. However, this was done rarely and with prior consent.

10. As a result of the settlement of the Czechoslovak dioceses, canon law uncertainty came into force. The order of the Holy See stated that the Czechoslovak dioceses do not overhang the political border. Thus, the fate of parts of Hungary became uncertain, which entailed the question of settling the territories. The opinion of the bishops was to merge the territories into the Archdiocese of Eger. But the clergy there showed strong resistance, as they would have liked to see their territory as a separate diocese, or as a separate vicarage, but they certainly did not want to be merged. In the end, the opinion of the priests was also sought, but in the end the Holy See still decided in favor of the annexation to Eger. However, the archbishop wanted to implement this gradually. This is also shown by the fact that the three truncated parts were united, but their documents were filed separately from documents of Eger, there was a separate office and vicar who supervised the northern archdeaconries.

11. After the communist regime, at the initiative of the Holy See, the planning of the new diocesan division began. This was already advocated by Cardinal Mindszenty, but the political situation did not make it suitable for implementation. The draft divided the large dioceses, and the Archdiocese of Eger received new suffragans.

12. The Czechoslovak diocesan organization and the historical processing of the Diocese of Szatmár after the World War II are also only intended to serve a better understanding. In the case of Czechoslovakia, we are talking about actual suffragans, which, as a result of the diocesan arrangement, meant a change and had an impact on the life of the Hungarian parts. In the case of the Diocese of Szatmári, a descriptive description is given: how the fate of the diocese developed, what changes took place in the territory of the diocese.