

UNIVERSITY OF SZEGED
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF HISTORY

THE INDUSTRIALISATION OF THE GREAT HUNGARIAN PLAIN – FOR
INSTANTIATE SZOLNOK COUNTY (1950-1970)
A CASE STUDY

PROPOSITIONS OF THE PHD. THESIS

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Reasons for the choice of topic

The topic of our Ph.D. thesis is the industrialisation of Szolnok county (which lies in the centre of the Great Hungarian Plain) during the first two decades of the socialist planned economy. Our reasons for choosing the given theme are complex: partly the author of the thesis was born and lives in Szolnok county, precisely in Jászberény. Partly – and this is the main point – he wishes to deal with his choice a topic which is less explored, hardly written about, which is at the same time an exceptionally remarkable one. We aim our theses to be a case study, that is we wished to illustrate the industrialisation of the Great Hungarian Plain at the given age to provide an insight into an industrially underdeveloped provincial part of Hungary, namely, Szolnok county. Some remarkable literature was published about the socialist type of industrialisation both before and after the democratic changes of 1989-1990, but as far as we know no such work has been published dealing with the industrialisation of exclusively one county. It also has to be added that a candidate theses in Geographical Studies was published by Agnes Pal about the industrialisation of Szolnok county, but the exploration of the topic was carried out not from a historical point of view, and also even if she had wanted to she would not have been able to obtain the primary sources for her study, all the archives, which were once set up by the party apparatus of the county, the country and other national administrative bodies. The author of the present thesis may consider himself lucky as the availability of these documents is granted nowadays.

The aim of the research and the thesis

The aim of the thesis is to provide an overall notion of the socialist type of industrialisation of Szolnok county, as well as of the social changes, the transformation (the conversion) of the organisation of the society. Also as a case study it should give a partial (Great Hungarian Plain) and national perspective to the historical events of Szolnok County. Within industrialisation we wish to deal mainly with, ministerial industry, which was prominently handled and considered as especially important, but mention is made of suppressed small-scale industry. It had occurred to us even before starting the research and it became more emphatic during the course of research: it is especially important to exploit and reveal the contemporary plans for industrialisation for this period of time especially for the first half of the fifties. That is, what did they plan originally, how did they modify the plans and what parts were finally realised and why? Our aim was to exploit the course of locating industry

however we did not consider our aim to examine and record the whole industrial history of the two decades only the most prominent parts are highlighted. We had not set a hypothesis concerning the later positive or negative effects of industrialisation, though based on information having obtained before the research we had supposed that concerning the rate of industrialisation Szolnok county was in the middle section of counties of the Great Plain, while in the second half of all the Hungarian counties. To summarise the theses wishes to answer the fundamental question of what was the extent and what were the later consequences of the industrialisation of Szolnok county in accordance with the industrialisation of the Great Hungarian Plain and of the whole country.

Spatial and time limits of the thesis, its structure, sections

The spatial limits of the thesis are primarily defined by the boundaries of socialist-time Szolnok county, which – with minor changes - correspond to those of former Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county (1876-1950). We must also emphasise that our thesis is aimed to be a case study therefore we could not disregard the comparisons with other counties of the Great Hungarian plain (Bács-Kiskun, Békés, Csongrád, Hajdú-Bihar, Szabolcs-Szatmár counties), and national wide conclusions were drawn as well. Pest county and some other counties with only a minority of their parts lying on the Great Hungarian Plain were not considered as counties lying on the Great Hungarian Plain.

As for the time limit the thesis examines the period between 1950 and 1970: the beginning and the end of the period is chosen not because of the round date, but because of the time limits of the socialist people's economic plans and the population censuses. Within this interval we have examined three five-year long and one three-year long extended range socialist people's economic plans, however we had to refer to the period of the first three-year long plan (1947-1949.), moreover we had to give an impression of the beginnings of the industrialisation of Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county in the 19th century to give a better support material to our starting point. Returning to the opening and closing date of our thesis the first five-year long socialist people's economic plan started on 1st January 1950 and the third one finished exactly on 31st December 1970. The population censuses of the age happened to coincide almost with the beginning of the first five-year long socialist people's economic plan (1949) and with the end of the third one, which helped us to examine the social-historical background of the thesis. The findings of the census of 1949 served as a starting point and those of the 1970 census assisted us in drawing the final conclusions: Where did the society

get to in parallel with or rather as a consequence of industrialisation? The 1970 population census appeared to be an interesting one from another point of view at setting up the thesis-plan: the number of people working in the industry reached its peak at that time (44.2%) compared to the total population of the country after the outset of the industrialisation and before the expansion of tertiary sector.

Chronology served as a guideline for our thesis: not only do the main chapters follow one another in chronological order but as far as it was possible the events described in them are arranged in chronological order. There is a single exception, when describing the first five-year long socialist people's economic plan we disregarded the chronological order and presented the plans and the implementation of the industrialisation in the eight most important settlements of the county. Apart from the preliminaries the thesis analyses the preparation and the bill of each economic plan. (According to the custom of the given age the bill was passed and put into statutory effect by the Parliament only about half a year prior to the beginning of the actual economic plan.) Next come the descriptions of the most important events in each plan-period. We only dealt with those economic and social events which had their influence on Szolnok county and its development. Consequently we did not aim to treat all the events of the country at the given time. At the end of each plan-period using contemporary sources we try to give a conclusion of the period concerning the county and the country both in economic and social respects. Compared to the other socialist people's economic plans we gave a bigger range to the first five-year long socialist people's economic plan, partly because the changes were the most radical, partly because everything seemed to be resolvable for the ones who made the plans. On the other hand the economic bases laid down by the plan seemed unbreakable in the long run and acted as a coercive measure for the later plans.

Research methods, exploration of the sources, literature used

The major part of the thesis is based upon the author's research in archives: we had considered exploring the primary sources of the given age to be our priority since the beginnings. The documents of the Szolnok County Archive, and those of the parties MDP (Hungarian Democratic Party) and MSZMP (Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party) helped the author to see the industrialisation of the age more clearly, though it is worth mentioning that after the "moving" of the documents in the eighties it awaits the researcher in a rather disorganised state in the store rooms. The other main course of research was the survey of the documents kept in the national archives. We have surveyed the documents of the Hungarian

National Archive (MOL) based in Hess Andras square, those of the Industrial Department of the MSZMP and the MDP (IKO), and those of the Economic Policy Department of the MSZMP. Naturally, when it was necessary we have used the documents in the archives of the central party organisations (Central Management, Central Comity, Political Comity) and the documents of different bodies set up to coordinate and carry out industrialisation such as Country Planning Institute (TERINT), People's Economic Council, State Economic Comity, Economic Policy Comity. The other venue of the research was the building of MOL in Lángliliom Street in Óbuda, where the documents of the Central Planning Board (OT, having been responsible for economic planning) are kept. In both capital based archives we strived to survey not only the documents concerning Szolnok county but also the ones revealing national relations so as not to restrict the research to local history level. We have also surveyed the relevant articles of contemporary county press (Szolnok Megyei Néplap - Szolnok County People's Newspaper-, Tiszavidék). Apart from the propaganda articles characteristic of the age there is a considerable number of fact-finding articles, containing critical elements which are worth taking into consideration as valuable sources in our thesis. The repertory concerning the content of the county press is available only till 1961 the material of the following decades has not been processed, which made the research more difficult. Eventually mention must be made of the illustrations published in the annex at the end of the thesis. Most of the photos were borrowed from the photo archives of the Jász Museum of Jászberény and of Damjanich János Museum of Szolnok. Unfortunately the photos of the county press and of other contemporary sources could not be used in this thesis because of their extremely poor quality.

Review of the findings

Preliminaries

Szolnok county, an administrative unit, lying in the central part of the country with almost its entire territory was considered as a symbol of industrial backwardness in Hungary. Apart from Szolnok, Martfű (and perhaps Törökszentmiklós) considerable industry cannot be mentioned before the start of socialist industrialisation. Only Szolnok, the administrative centre of the county could boast with considerable industry: the first sawmills appeared in the 19th century, after the building of the railway junction a railway vehicle service station was planted here which was followed by a sugar-works factory and a paper-mill in the 20th

century. In the outskirts of Martfű – with even in a nationwide respect a very rare “green-field location” - a significant shoe factory was built in the time of World War II., which basically determined the development of the settlement having had a small number of inhabitants. Insignificant compared to this factory, but considering the poor industrialisation of the county, the Lábassy agricultural machine factory in Törökszentmiklós is also worth mentioning. The other settlements of Szolnok county possessed the “usual” Great-Plain industry – if we can speak of industry at all – brick-works, mills, distilleries, small-scale industry.

The socialist period starting at the end of the forties aimed in a revolutionary manner at the re-shaping of the economic and social structure of the whole country – including that of the Great Plain region as well as Szolnok County. Industrialisation was considered as a universal tool for solving the intense economic and social problems (unemployment, agricultural overpopulation) such as everywhere in Europe. The industrialisation of the Great Plain and of Szolnok county cannot have been questioned or argued in the socialist period of time, the only phenomenon to be solved was only the way of it: should they have adopted agricultural industrialisation better fitting the local conditions, or the Stalin-model, forcing heavy industry having become an antiquated model by the middle of the 20th century? To tell the truth, the question could not have been a real question, as the industrialisation planned by Ruisz Rezső and his circle to harmonise industry and agriculture in the 1930’s did not stand a chance against “classical” socialist industrialisation favoured by Gerő. The county-level plans for location of industrial investment taking into consideration the local conditions were soon set aside by the central bodies of economic supervision, which did not allow any kind of intervention in the centrally set questions of industrialisation: let us not forget that the communist leadership of the time had a centrally governed society in mind and did not allow or adopt any kind of opinion coming from below. The final phase of the first three-year long socialist people’s economic plan was finished in this spirit, but the events took an overwhelming turn with the start of the first five-year long socialist people’s economic plan in 1950.

The period of 1st five-year long socialist people’s economic plan (1950-1954)

The 1st five-year long plan – which gets a bigger limelight in our work due to its “let us change everything” radicalism – was spent in Hungary in the spirit of forced industrialisation and cold-war preparation. It is characteristic of the time that the location of a relatively serious base of heavy industry started in Szolnok county, which was in opposition

with the earlier plans. Three of the five most valuable industrial projects of the Great Hungarian Plain were located here: River Tisza based Chemical Works (Tiszai Vegyiművek) in Szolnok, Metal- and sheet iron works (Fémnyomó- és Lemezárugyár) and Copping Machine Factory (Aprítógépgyár) in Jászberény. In our thesis we follow the sharp changes of the inner affairs and the economic policy influenced by Soviet influence leading up to 1956, and their effects on Szolnok county. Based on these effects (and the plans that were never carried out) we will demonstrate that the original intentions for the economic and social reorganisations of Szolnok county had been more radical than how they were finally carried out. We argue that both in economic and social aspects a never-to-be seen transformation started but the remedial plans declared in the preliminary of the 1st five-year long plan for the industrially underdeveloped regions (principally for the Great Hungarian Plain and for South-Transdanubia) were never realised. Moreover the “industrial axis” of the country, especially Budapest took a greater advantage over the rest of the country. With the presentation of the plans realised and not realised we wish to demonstrate the enormous rush, confusion and disorder which characterised the country and Szolnok county with the planning apparatus having been bureaucratic and enormously swollen. The submissions set up by the Communist Party leadership of Szolnok County and sent to the leaders of the Country prove that the importance of local level was reduced to nil, while there appeared the phenomenon of “expecting everything from up above” – which was sometimes criticised towards the end of the sixties. Mention is made of the categorisation of the settlements of the county, giving more space to the five settlements with development of overriding importance, though the industrialisation of Karcag, Mezőtúr and Túrkeve (having had plans for a totally different development) was never realised, while Szolnok and Jászberény gained considerable location of industry from the centralised distributive system.

With the help of the articles of Szolnok Megyei Néplap (Szolnok County People’s Newspaper) we demonstrate that the more prominent towns of the county, such as Jászberény and Szolnok had propagandistically been called – even at this level – “little peasant towns” and “dusty, dirty provincial towns” before the time of industrialisation, and at national level the industrialisation, proletarianisation of the “kulak” (wealthy peasant) provincial towns became a political priority. Similarly to the national trends the number of people working in factories increased while the number of those working in agriculture decreased the number of commuters, of those who left the county in search of work in more industrialised parts of the country esp. in Budapest drastically increased. The problem of the employment of women labour force and that of the housing shortage first emerged at that time (esp. in Szolnok,

which could have been difficult to surpass in the way it was overcrowded.). These two problems can be traced all through the period of time examined in our thesis. As the economic system of the country was determined by politics it is no wonder that during and parallel with the forced industrialisation some branches of industry were peculiarly attacked by the political management. After the nationalisation, when centrally controlled, so called ministerial industry gained primary force, they turned on the privately owned, independent industrial existences. Private craftsmen belonged to this category who were forced by all the different means to give up their trade, although they played a crucial role in supplying the needs of the inhabitants of provincial settlements. It is reinforced by the fact that some positive changes were immediately introduced for craftsmen at the beginning of Nagy Imre's "new period" as the supply for provincial inhabitants had become inadequate. The defence against private mills can be regarded a characteristic phenomenon on the Great Hungarian Plain as about a thousand (!) privately owned mills were closed based on trumped-up austerity charges. It happened at a time when industrialisation was accompanied by an enormous waste.

The period of 2nd three-year long socialist people's economic plan (1958-1960)

After the first years of the 1st five-year long plan when the initial impulse of industrialisation slowed down, the foundations defining undoubtedly the direction of economic development of the country for the next decade had already been laid. The faulty economic policy, the industrialisation exceeding the capacity of the country is well illustrated by the temporary one year-long plan of 1955 and then the 2nd five year-long plan, which was started in 1955, then interrupted by the revolution and which was never carried out in its original form. Coming into power the MSZMP started a consolidating one-year long plan in 1957 and the 2nd three-year long socialist people's economic plan was carried out between 1958 and 1960. After the revolution of 1956 there came the seeking of an economic way out which embodied in the "new economic mechanism" introduced in 1968. The preliminary of the 2nd plan had careful suggestions – but falling into the same old trap – it also directed the country towards a more forceful industrialisation. It is worth mentioning that the crucial questions of the industrial decentralisation of the country, and the reduction of Budapest's predominance were not mentioned in the preliminary at all. However in the second year of the plan, in 1959 – with the supervision of the plan – the first decisions restricting industrialisation in Budapest had to be brought, and this one was followed by several others (in 1958 the restriction for people to move to Budapest was introduced). The second phase of

the argument about the decentralisation of industry renewed (this argument first started in the 1930's and then died out). Though the MSZMP would have liked to, could not start with "*tabula rasa*" as the results of the earlier period's faulty industrialisation had been given, moreover there were some valuable projects which had to be finished even against their will if they did not want to waste the already invested enormous amount of money. That means the MSZMP had to follow a forced path, though there were a number of former economic managers in its leadership, there were more believers of rapid further industrialisation.

The 2nd three-year long socialist people's economic plan did not bring along such a significant wave of industrial location on the Great Hungarian Plain and in Szolnok county as the previous five-year long plan: it is typical that building of the most valuable project of the Great Plain, the poultry processing plant of Törökszentmiklós cost one sixth of that of the River Tisza based Chemical Works. Half of the socialist industrial investment still went to Budapest while the least went to projects on the Great Plain. Apart from the continuation of the industrialisation the agricultural collectivization carried out at a rapid rate had its influence felt on the structure the society. As a consequence if these two factors the structure of employment changed radically: as the number of non-agricultural employees increased with 13%, the number of agricultural workers decreased with 17%. Exclusively during this period of time ca. 150-170 thousand former agricultural workers joined non-agricultural sectors, mainly industry. The social balance of the first decade of the social planned economy is given by the census of 1960: it shows a rapid development in the population of the country, the migration from the agricultural parts of the country was large-scale while the natural reproduction was the higher in these parts. In Szolnok county it was Szolnok the county seat, which showed a considerable development during the past decade while the other towns of the county showed a stagnant or decreasing number of population. The only inhabitant attracting town of the county was the county seat, consequently the other towns with less developed industry could not attract the surplus of agricultural workers. The surplus labour force of the county unable to find jobs locally flooded to Budapest as Szolnok could not offer jobs for so many. More than 40% of the migrants from Szolnok county chose Budapest as their destination, this rate was only surpassed by Pest county (which lies close to the capital) and by the exceedingly underdeveloped Szabolcs-Szatmár county. The rest of the migrants of Szolnok county went to the industrially more developed part of the country east of the river Danube. The fact that Szolnok county was more developed compared to the other counties in the Great Plain is reinforced by the number of the commuters coming here. On the other hand the 1960 census showed that Szolnok county had the worst employment rate of all the

Hungarian counties. The rate of collectivisation was the quickest here and the elderly peasants formerly having their own farms were not employed in the newly-formed co-operatives, so they became dependent.

The location of industry in the provincial parts of the country having had a wide propagandistic publicity is an interesting and illuminating part of the industrialisation policy of the time: its aim was to relocate most of the industry from Budapest to the county. At the categorisation of the factories all those plants fell into the 3rd category (the ones which should be re-located) which were smelly, out-of date, heavily polluting the environment, that is a kind of surplus principle operated: even in theory only those factories could have been re-located which did not meet the requirements of the technological demands of the age. In spite of this there appeared an organised, fierce resistance against the location of the industrial plants to the country. Several cases are known when the workers were warned to note the “dangers” of the industrial re-location (the difficulty to find qualified workers and intellectual workers was one of the main characteristics of the socialist industrialisation, later on they were enticed by outstanding salaries.) We are pointing out that the re-location of industry to the country was still in its infancy during the time of the 2nd three-year long plan and practically there were hardly any premises for re-location. No mention was made of Szolnok county, no re-location was even planned, although the county management would have welcomed any industrial plant re-located from Budapest to Szolnok county.

The period of 2nd five-year long socialist people’s economic plan (1961-1965)

The rapid rate of the industrialisation of the country continued during the period of the 2nd five-year long plan, though those first signs of the economic break-down started to appear towards the end of the period, which led to the new economic management program, first defined in 1966 and introduced in 1968. The ones making the plans once again overburdened the economy of the country, the aims having set reached far beyond the capability of the national economy. In the chapter dedicated to the 2nd five-year long plan we compare the plans made by the Communist Party Management of the County with the ones finally defined by the Central Planning Board. Like in the case of the 1st Plan we can state that the two plans are totally different, every decision is still brought at “higher levels”. The period of the 2nd five-year long plan brought larger-scale projects to the Great Hungarian Plain and to Szolnok county within, though the larger investments went to Szolnok again, two new sulphuric acid and a long delayed superphosphate factories were built within the River Tisza based Chemical

Works. The latter one owned a kind of negative record: the final amount of the investment was two times more than the originally planned amount (“the deliberate underestimation” of the investment expenditure was a wide-spread phenomenon in the county.) Some of the industrial products produced in Szolnok county had a national importance: all the household refrigerators were produced in Jászberény, two third of the production of sulphuric acid and half of the superphosphate fertiliser was produced in our county. The production of refrigerators in Jászberény became one of the success stories of Hungarian mechanical engineering: almost every type of refrigerator produced here was on world-standard, moreover the parameters of certain types were better than those of the similar ones produced abroad, though the labour cost of the refrigerators exceeded the world standard (the waste of labour force was a characteristic phenomenon of the Hungarian industry). Moreover the Heller-Forgó type air conditioning cooling equipments were produced in the Metal in Sheet Iron Works (since 1964 Refrigerator Factory). The success of the factory is more noteworthy as just a few years before the management had been at a loss to camouflage the production of artillery cartridges for the production of which the factory had been located in Jászberény. Not all machine factories were successful like this, the other machine factory in Jászberény had troubles finding a new profile and the Agricultural Machine Factory of Törökszentmiklós like all the factories of this kind in the country was in danger of closing down for good – to support agricultural machine industry in other KGST (Council of Mutual Economic Assistance) countries. The largest problem Hungarian industry had to face was that it could not step over from the phase of extensive development into the phase of intensive development, though it was ordained by the five-year long plan.

The backlog of the industrially underdeveloped parts of the country, among them that of the Great Hungarian Plan reduced under the influence of the 2nd five-year long plan, and a considerable number of 3rd category industrial plants were located from Budapest to the country. We must add that Budapest started to shift into the phase of its post industrial development at that time, and the influential lobby fighting for the outstanding development of Budapest was not interested in seeking for every development – though there was a considerable resistance to industrial restrictions and to industrial re-locations. Szolnok county did not have its share of the industrial re-locations therefore at the end of 1965 a petition was sent to the Central Planning Board so as the industrial development of both Mezőtúr and Karcag would be supported by a re-located factory in the future. The county seat, Szolnok was still ahead of the industrial development of the county, by the end of the plan period it had become a settlement of industrial type – as the Communist Party apparatus of Szolnok

reported to the Central Comity of the Socialist Party (MSZMP). Indeed Szolnok was developing at an outstandingly rapid rate it was among the five most rapidly developing provincial towns. The number of inhabitants increased with 2200 annually, the number of inhabitants had reached 60 thousand by 1965. The importance of Szolnok is reinforced by the fact that it was considered to be a second-rate rival of the first five counter poles (Debrecen, Győr, Miskolc, Pécs, Szeged) of Budapest). Szolnok county could not avoid the large-scale social transformation which followed the further collectivization of the agriculture. Between 1961 and 1965 nationwide ca. 250-300 thousand people – exceeding the number of the period of the 2nd three-year long plan – left agriculture and sought industrial employment (as a criticism of the contemporary ability to plan social changes we must point out that the original estimate was 75 thousand people leaving agriculture). An other tension was caused by the MSZMP's policy concerning women entering employment. Though neither agriculture nor industry, commerce or any other sector was able to provide sufficient number of jobs, the Party insisted on the thesis of women entering employment beyond full employment, they spoke of the “backwardness of the desirable rate of men-women employment”. In this field in Szolnok county it was Szolnok where women had most difficulties in finding employment (the more industrialised a settlement was, the more difficult it was for women to find employment according to a nationwide trend)

The period of the 3rd five-year long socialist people's economic plan

The last extended range socialist people's economic plan examined in our thesis is the third five-year long socialist people's economic plan taking place between 1966 and 1970. This plan (due to former negative experiences) was characterised by moderate aims, among the plans falling within the time limit of our thesis this is the only one of the plans which both at county and at national scale coincided at several points. During this period of time, namely in 1967 a decision was brought about the development of the nagykun towns (Karcag, Mezőtúr, Túrkeve, Kisújszállás) and a year later about the development of two more villages (Tiszafüred, Kunszentmárton). The industry of the county was still centralized, concentrating on a small territory Jászberény was the only counterpoint of the Szolnok-Martfű-Törökszentmiklós industrial triangle. Typical of the changing times, the county bodies working out the above mentioned plans for these settlements aimed at a parallel industrial-agricultural development and questioned the omnipotence of the industry! They were aware of the fact that they will have to change the former principle of “waiting for everything from

up above” if they want to reach their goals, however for safety’s sake they renewed their claim for factories re-located from Budapest.

The end of the 3rd five-year long plan was the only time by which the industrially backward Great Hungarian Plain had been able to make up for its handicap. The most precious industrial project, the Szolnok based Construction unit Factory built of 421 million Forints was considered to be a significant national project. Szolnok county having obtained considerable industrial investments by the end of the period got to the 5th category, a middle course according to the level of industrial development, along with Csongrád county got to the “moderately developed “counties from the group of “extremely underdeveloped” counties (Komárom county and Budapest were considered to be the most industrialised parts of the country while Szabolcs-Szatmár county was an extremely underdeveloped county.) In 1970 the ideologists could boast with Szolnok county sharing with 3% of the industrial production of the country compared to the 1% in 1938, the total value of industrial products produced here was 8 times more than that of the before war period, and 2/3 of its socialist industry was heavy-industry.

One of the most burning social problems was the worrying rate of migration from agricultural territories, which somehow had to be stopped, agricultural labour force especially young people had to be kept in the provincial territories. While the agricultural territories were threatened by the previously unbelievable labour shortage, the other sectors of economy dreaded the appearance of the population bulge of the Ratkó-period of the fifties, who had just started or had just left secondary education. Especially the ones leaving secondary education faced difficulties in finding employment on national scale. The prospects of women in the labour market were slowly improving: the employment of women in Szolnok county was extremely low, on national scale of the counties of the Great Plain it was only Szabolcs-Szatmár county, which had worse trends. By the end of the period the population decrease had moderated, the migration had decreased. On the other hand based on the 1970 census it turned out that in the age composition of the population aging trends started to appear due to the previous migration. Contemporary research supposed that migration had a bad effect on the educational level of the inhabitants of the county that is qualified, educated work force mainly young people had left Szolnok County. The considerable realignment of the population continued: the ratio of industrial and construction industrial population in the total population increased to one third from one fourth within a decade, the ratio of agricultural population decreased continually. In spite of this Szolnok county retained its agricultural characteristics, though it had lost its dominance. The changes in the employed labour force of the sectors of

economy was even more significant: the ratio of industrial and construction industrial population (38.1%) slightly decreased that of the agricultural population (35.0%), though it was considered a lot lower than the national average (44.2%).

Summary

During the examined 20 years the socialist regime totally converted the economic and social aspects of Hungary and within it those of Szolnok county. As contemporary propaganda emphasised Hungary transformed from an agricultural-industrial country into an industrial-agricultural one, where during two decades the role of the forced and continually developed industry became dominant. In the economy the ratio of industry, especially that of heavy industry was strengthened while the industrial re-location taking local conditions in consideration was out of question. It is evident that in the case of industry both at county and country level “the inherited conditions” were pushed in the background, the building of new, usually import dependent projects were forced. The radical reformation of the society took place: due to the collectivisation of the agriculture the ratio of agricultural workers radically decreased while the ratio of industrial workers considerably increased. Apart from the 2nd three-year long plan which was meant to be transitional – from plan to plan the remedial improvement of the industrially underdeveloped territories was emphasised, because of the considerable industrial locations this remedy was never realised, even the development of Budapest and the “industrial axis” was carried out. In contrast with the original aims the industrialisation of Szolnok county had brought ambiguous results: though an unprecedented volume of industrialisation started in the county, it was not basically built on local conditions and it never became so high-scale as it had originally been promised. However by 1970 Szolnok county had joined the more industrialised counties of the Great Hungarian Plain, and on national scale it joined the second half of the middle section. A considerable transformation had taken place in the society of the county, though Szolnok county basically retained its agricultural character. Total employment had been reached though there still were tensions in the labour market (e.g. the reoccurring problem of women and young people, migration and commutation). In every case the newly built industrial plants were operating and the leadership of the country planned social-economic changes of the same kind for the future.

The author's publications in the subject of the thesis:

- The period of the first five-year long socialist people's economic plan and Jászberény. In: Szolnok Scientific Publications, X. Szolnok, 2006.
- The period of the forced industrialisation in Jászberény in the mirror of living and work conditions. In: Zounuk. 21st Almanac of Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County Archive. Szolnok, 2006. pp. 167-200.
- The changes of the living conditions in the second half of the fifties. In: Bodnár Erzsébet – Demeter Gábor (editors): State and nation in 19th 20th centuries. The lectures of the PhD Candidates Conference in Debrecen on 31st March – 1st April 2006. pp. 334-343.
- Living conditions “in the country of iron and steel” and in Jászberény (1950 – 1956). In Jászság Almanac, 2005. pp. 81-97.
- Industrialisation and living standards in the 1950's. In: Scientific Publications of Szolnok 9th issue, Szolnok, 2005.
- Country planning in the 1950's. In: Scientific Publications of Szolnok 12th issue, Szolnok, 2008.
- Plans and reality: the bibliography of the market towns of the Great Hungarian Plain. In: Jászság Almanac, 2008.

Before publication:

- The industrialisation of Szolnok and the period of the first five-year long socialist people's economic plan. In: Zounuk. 24th Almanac of Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County Archive. Szolnok, 2009.