

Doctoral (PhD) theses

**Former Prime Minister, Miklós Kállay's years in
emigration in Italy and the United States of America
between 1945 and 1967**

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The aim of the thesis, the delimitation of the topic

The subject of my thesis is the presentation of Miklós Kállay's years in emigration, during which he lived in Italy and the United States of America, highlighting the former prime minister's dedication to Hungarians, his loyalty to his nation, which was the driving force behind all his years in emigration. This twenty-two years between 1945 and 1967 focuses attention to the hitherto very little-known phase of Miklós Kállay's life, which is definitely a significant and exciting period from a researcher's point of view in the history of Hungarian emigration. The most obvious group of sources for this is the collection of documents in the Kállay Collection of the Jósza András Museum in Nyíregyháza, which was donated to the museum by the eldest son of Miklós Kállay, Kristóf Kállay.

The correspondence of Miklós Kállay with his relatives, former colleagues, old friends and acquaintances after he first lived in Italy and then moved to the United States is part of the documents of the Collection. These letters form the backbone of my research, because through them we can gain insight into the phase of the former prime minister's life that he spent abroad out of necessity. These documents are a source of outstanding value, which, in addition to Miklós Kállay's correspondence, contain many important documents related to the history of Hungarian emigration to America. Many of Miklós Kállay's acquaintances lived in the United States, which is why they provided the former prime minister with fresh information from across the ocean in their letters.

In the thesis, I present the environment in which the activities of Miklós Kállay and many of his colleagues took place, the period and world political background in which those living in emigration had to thrive. This era, the early Cold War, created the Free Europe Committee in the United States and the Hungarian National Council operating in New York with its support, of which Miklós Kállay was also a member, and which was founded by Hungarian politicians and diplomats who emigrated at the end of World War II and in the following years. The Free Europe Committee and, next to it, the Hungarian National Council, which represented Hungary under Soviet occupation in the free world, brought about a completely new structural change for emigration political platforms. Among the objectives of the thesis was to add a number of additions to the history of the Hungarian National Council, the results of which can be seen by reading several chapters of the thesis, since, from the point of view of the prominent members of the organization and the former prime minister, light is cast on a historical period of world politics and Hungarian emigration that has so far marked many white spots.

One of my goals was to present the life of the former prime minister, who went into exile, at the end of the war and through the turbulent period that followed. Because from Miklós Kállay's point of view, this is still a largely unknown research area with many new features. His years in Italy, in which he lived in quiet seclusion but became more and more enthusiastic about emigration public life, away from the public attention. To point out the questions and dilemmas related to the period spent there, to which we are looking for answers in the correspondence. In addition to processing the correspondence, it is also necessary to present the environment in which he and many of his colleagues worked, the period and world political background in which those living in emigration had to thrive. This era, the Cold War, created the Free Europe Committee, which fundamentally changed the public life of emigration up to that time. In the thesis, I tried to present the lives of several prominent politicians and diplomats living in emigration, of course through Miklós Kállay's extensive network of connections. An even more detailed mapping of this and the preparation of a related summary are included in my further research plans.

Through the sources read in the dissertation, we can learn the former prime minister's dilemmas and motivation regarding the exercise of public life activities in emigration, the seemingly endless visa administration of the period before his move to America, in addition to which he also closely followed the events of public life in emigration. There are countless problems, debates and tasks to be solved concerning the Hungarian National Council, for which many people from many points of view have been looking for solutions. And in light of this, it can be seen how complicated politics was on the emigration scene, many dedicated politicians and diplomats who wanted to do something were forced into the narrow framework, in the drift of events in world politics. It is also revealed how much organization preceded the publication of Kállay's memoirs as Prime Minister, which was not easy in many ways, since the author lived in Italy and did not speak English at the time, but the book was published in America, intended for an international readership. However, not only one but several issues to be discussed and dealt with arose in each letter, so I thought I would not choose the discussed topics separately, but present the events in progress.

In my thesis, I would like to provide a comprehensive picture of Miklós Kállay's emigration years, using all the sources, press materials and literature available to me. Thanks to the correspondence, we can learn the former prime minister's political outlook and motivations, and gain insight into not only his personal correspondence, but also of several prominent emigrant

personalities of the era, thereby learning about the developing and then the early Cold War period from a lesser-known perspective.

Outline of the applied methods

During the work, I tried to examine and analyse the sources independently, highlighting connections and, where appropriate, drawing conclusions. In order to apply all of these, it was necessary to get to know them in detail, to study them, and to place them in a historical context. In addition to the sources, I made the media appearances accompanying the ex-prime minister's active emigration activities, i.e. numerous periodicals, daily and weekly newspapers, the subject of my investigation in order to support or shade what I read in the sources and in the literature. The first of my examination aspects regarding these is a view free from extremism, because in my thesis, although it was mentioned, it was not my aim to include media materials with an extreme political orientation in the discussion of the thesis, because I think it can be the subject of other, new analyses, which is included in my plans for expanding the topic. In addition, regularity, i.e. reporting on the organizations and persons arising in connection with the topic I am researching on a regular basis and not on an occasional basis, and of course reporting on the political life in emigration, specifically on news concerning the Hungarian National Council, fits into the profile.

During my research, I also worked with sources that could be called special, the analysis of which required a different perspective during the processing. In these, the former prime minister addresses the people living in emigration. Such are his open letter from 1955 entitled *Letter on Hungarian Matters*, as well as the interview conducted by Radio Free Europe as a result of the letter's press coverage, in which he was specifically asked about the political life in emigration, his insights, and his political goals in emigration, as well as the radio interview following his trip to South America, in which he was asked about the results of his trip. In these, we can see even better and more nuanced the role of Miklós Kállay in emigration and what he thinks about himself and his role. Similarly, the questionnaire in connection with the establishment of the Hungarian National Council and the written answers given by Baron Gábor Apor and Miklós Kállay were also an extremely important source. From the questionnaire, we can get to know their specific ideas and goals within the central organization of emigration, by discussing all essential questions regarding the function and operation of the Hungarian National Council, based on their personal answers. Because of its importance, I therefore analysed the questionnaire in a separate chapter. In addition to the sources, I carried out the research of the topic by mapping the literature. For the topic of my dissertation, I had several volumes available

on the history of Hungarian emigration to America. At the same time, the processing of the history of Hungarian emigration to America during the Cold War period could already be considered to be narrower, as far as the degree of processing is concerned. This is of course the most ideal situation from the aspect of the research. I reviewed numerous specialist literature, journals, and studies to put the topic of my thesis and the sources available to me in a suitable framework. For me, the research aspect of the used literature was the use of publications published in the years following the change of regime, which were objective, informative and supported by references. I referred to three volumes that did not meet the first criteria, but it can be said of them that they have withstood the test of time, because they are also useful for today's researchers and are not characterized by the history-falsifying attitude of the Kádár era. I also monitored recent publications on the topic, of which I incorporated the most relevant ones into the thesis. In some chapters, it was necessary for me to refer to my own studies written on the subject, thus pointing out the novelty and unexplored nature of the topic, since documents unknown to academic circles and the general public form the backbone of my thesis. When researching the correspondence and documents, it was clear that the former prime minister has a wide-ranging network of connections, which is due to his family connections, his time in office, and the time he spent in the post of prime minister and comes palatinus. For this reason, it was necessary to select among the letters and documents and frame them according to the thesis, because the sources still available will form the material for my further research.

The results and conclusions of the dissertation

The dissertation presented Miklós Kállay's years of emigration according to the objectives, so we got a complete picture of the decades following his prime ministership, with the help of the available sources and literature. My aim was to introduce Miklós Kállay's motivations and objectives regarding his role in the public life of the emigration. From this we can conclude that the former prime minister saw his own activities in the Hungarian National Council and in emigration in general as a service that he did for his country - although physically far away from the home country, but always there in spirit.

From the sources, from the interviews with him, from his words to Hungarians in emigration, it became clear that he always remained self-identified, that his actions were not guided by his own interests, but by the representation of the Hungarian cause in the free world. From the correspondence, the quoted sources, the events that received press coverage, the open letter and the interviews, a picture of Kállay emerges, which in many respects is similar to the picture of

the prime minister, which we have known better and for a long time. And although the later image of Kállay is similar to the known one in many ways, it is still important to see how many things led him to the point where this image did not change radically. There would have been opportunities for this, as his life was overshadowed by personal and national tragedies. We can read the effect of this in the relevant parts of his memoirs and in his early letters.

The process that the former prime minister went through can be observed in the thesis. We can see the seclusion of the early years, when he himself said that, in his view, it is more ideal for the time being if he does not join the members of the active emigration. Then, during the writing of his memoir as the Prime Minister and its publication management, his perspective changed, which spurred him to take action and move to America. The aim of the dissertation was to present a lesser-known and researched period of the ex-prime minister's emigration years and the history of Hungarian emigration to America from the perspective of Miklós Kállay and several prominent emigrants, which is supported by the content of the chapters of the dissertation.



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List of publications related to the dissertation

Hungarian book chapters (3)

- Kertész, T. F.:** A Magyar Nemzeti Bizottmány megalakulása körül felmerült kérdések: Kérdőívelemzés Apor Gábor és Kállay Miklós válaszai alapján.
In: Hat évtized a régióban : Ünnepi kötet Dr. Rémiás Tibor 60. születésnapjára. Szerk.: Mohácsi Endre, Jósa András Múzeum, Nyíregyháza, 107-115, 2022, (A Jósa András Múzeum kiadványai, ISSN 0133-8110 ; 83.) ISBN: 9786155619298
- Kertész, T. F.:** Kállay Miklós emigrációs évei.
In: Kállay Miklós : Az utolsó magyar királyi miniszterelnök. Szerk.: Holmár Zoltán, Jósa András Múzeum, Nyíregyháza, 34-39, 2021, (Jósa András Múzeum Kiadványai, ISSN 0133-8110 ; 80.) ISBN: 9786155619243
- Kertész, T. F.:** Kállay Miklós életének és politikai pályájának alakulása a második világháborút követően.
In: Amerikai magyarok - magyar amerikaiak, Új irányok a közös történelem kutatásában. Szerk.: Ambrus László, Rakita Eszter, Eszterházi Károly Főiskola Líceum Kiadó, Eger, 177-189, 2019. ISBN: 9789634961284

Hungarian scientific articles in Hungarian journals (4)

- Kertész, T. F.:** "Levél magyar ügyben" - Kállay Miklós nyílt levele az amerikai magyar emigrációhoz - 1955. március 25.
Nyházi. Jósa András Múz. évkv. 64, 191-199, 2023. ISSN: 0547-0196.
- Kertész, T. F.:** Hidegháborús erőviszonyok és emigrációs mozgástér.
Nyházi. Jósa András Múz. évkv. 63, 265-279, 2021. ISSN: 0547-0196.
- Kertész, T. F.:** Bobrik Arno (1891-1976) követségi tanácsos, diplomata pályafutásának ismertetése Kállay Miklóssal váltott levelein és a korabeli sajtón keresztül.
Nyházi. Jósa András Múz. évkv. 62, 177-186, 2020. ISSN: 0547-0196.
- Kertész, T. F.:** Kállay Miklós az amerikai emigrációt megelőző évei Olaszországban 1945-1953. között báró Bakách - Bessenyey Györggyel való levelezésének tükrében.
Tört. Tanulm. 28, 239-251, 2020. ISSN: 1217-4602.





List of other publications

Hungarian book chapters (1)

8. **Kertész, T. F.:** Az arisztokrácia szerepe az amerikai-magyar emigráció életében a 20. században
Kállay Miklós kapcsolati hálóján keresztül.
In: A magyar arisztokrácia társadalmi-közéleti kapcsolatai és szerepvállalása. Szerk.: Papp Klára, Püski Levente, Novák Ádám, Debreceni Egyetem Bölcsészettudományi Kar Történelmi Intézet, Debrecen, 279-297, 2019, (Speculum Historiae Debreceniense, ISSN 2060-9213 ; 26) ISBN: 9789634901150

Hungarian scientific articles in Hungarian journals (1)

9. **Kertész, T. F.:** Kállay Miklós dél-amerikai körútja 1956 nyarán.
Nyházi. Jósza András Múz. évkv. 59, 369-378, 2017. ISSN: 0547-0196.

Informational/educational articles (1)

10. **Kertész, T. F.:** Kállay Miklós dél-amerikai körútja 1956 nyarán.
Rubicon. 28 (5), 75-77, 2017. ISSN: 0865-6347.

The Candidate's publication data submitted to the iDEa Tudóstér have been validated by DEENK on the basis of the Journal Citation Report (Impact Factor) database.

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