

Valerie Hopkins: I am looking for someone from the Institute who can speak to me about its mission [and] work?

Per our English-language webpage (<http://veritasintezet.hu/en/>):

The government of Hungary created the VERITAS Research Institute for History by passing Government Regulation 373/2013 (X.25.), with the explicit goal of studying and reevaluating the historical research of Hungary's past one hundred fifty years, especially of those historical events generating much debate but never having reached a consensus understanding.

What are these themes, events and episodes on which we shall focus?

There are three:

The first is post-reconciliation Hungary's societal and political evolution and the circumstances leading to the formation of political parties in that era. The question of Hungarian embourgeoisement. The lead-up to World War I and the postbellum impact on Hungary and her people.

Closely related is our second theme: Trianon --- 20th-century Hungary's greatest tragedy, the wounds of which remain unhealed even today. The Miklós Horthy-associated interwar period. The achievements and events of this nearly twenty-five-year period, which are worthy of study and critique.

Our third theme is the post-war period from 1945, considered the turning point in Hungary's history, when the country joined a "new world" and became a satellite state of the communist empire, when all of the hoped-for democratic changes took place in name only, leading to the collective disappointment of all those who had no place in Mátyás Rákosi's Hungary.

[...] we should not neglect to remember the events of 1956, which, beginning as a popular uprising, over the course of thirteen days (in some parts of the country lasting even longer), matured into a full-fledged fight for freedom and became one of the most outstanding events of 20th-century Hungarian history.

Valerie Hopkins:...and the recent addition of the 1956 Institute under its umbrella?

The historians of the 1956 Institute would have joined the VERITAS Institute and done their research with full and unchanged independence. Regrettably, they have chosen to continue their valuable work elsewhere.

Valerie Hopkins: How do you counter your critics' comments that while researchers work independently, for public commemorations or issues of specific importance, the institute produces history "favourable to the government's political and historical narrative"?

We do not agree with the contention that the VERITAS Institute has produced history "favourable to the government's political and historical narrative".

Our historians strive to expand the historical knowledge base of the public by sharing academic works and to provide nuance on data and perspectives that have been false for decades. To this day, we can feel the strong influence of post-1945 historical works that on more than one instance have lacked a factual basis, or on the other hand, have generalized.

Moreover, history is by no means a fossilized finished process. If you take a look at events from the past many centuries, you will see that historiography always reinterprets the process; in the quest for the root causes of events, historians (may) come face to face with new results. Thus, history is rewritten / reevaluated time and again.

On the other hand, what cannot / is not reevaluated are facts. For example, if the Kingdom of Hungary as a result of the Treaty of Trianon lost two-thirds of her territory (excluding Croatia) and one-third of her Hungarian population, that cannot be "rewritten".

However, the questions surrounding that tragedy, questions of why, how, by whom, etc. are open to analysis, with research results leading to various conclusions.

Valerie Hopkins: Do you have plans to substantially change the work that the 1956 Institute was doing when it was part of the National Library?

No, we did not. They would have continued their independent research as before.

Valerie Hopkins: As I have read, the institute supported the 2014 Memorial to victims of German occupation. Can you confirm that?

This is false. The VERITAS Institute has no say in which memorials are erected in Hungary.

Valerie Hopkins: Does the institute's budget come from the PM's Chancery budget? If so, what percentage?

No, it does not. The VERITAS Institute is under the umbrella of the Emberi Erőforrások Minisztérium (EMMI), also known as the Ministry of Human Capacities in English.