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Zsuzsi Falath: It is not my intention to arouse antagonism between the two nations.

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Fotó: Hideghéthy/Felvidék.ma

This story exploded like a bomb, when, about a year ago, we first heard of Zsuzsi Falath. Since the end of 2018, she has suddenly become a personage loved by the Hungarians and loathed by the Slovaks. First of all, she upheld her

Hungarian origin within her family, then spoke openly in public about the fact that, in Slovakia, history is presented and taught with so-called official information, which distorts the references to Hungarians, making them untrue, and paints a false picture of the 1000-year relationship between the two nations.

However, during the past year, there has been no mention of her. The scandal has subsided. It appears that even the threats in the workplace have been discontinued. However, she is now working off her period of notice. Her employer has terminated her employment, by discontinuing the scope of her activities. These events have again captured the notice of the media, and again several thousand people identify themselves with her situation.

How has your life changed in the past year?

People no longer trust me; they accuse me of things like treason and they make my life difficult. It is not usual, here in Felvidék (*Northern Hungary for 1000 years – trans.*) and in the whole of Slovakia to interpret and analyze history the way I do.

Looking back, the first month was the worst, because then nobody spoke to me. It is true that, on a few occasions, I got into an argument with some colleagues about what has happened. Later on, some of them spoke to me because they needed my help, but this was not a sincere relationship. The atmosphere was frozen, and I know that the administrator had advised that they not fire me while the scandal was still going on. They did not fire me, but I was told to resign. However, I was not willing to do so.

Why did you decide to speak out in public, and tell the truth about what is propagated about the Slovak-Hungarian history?

At a book-preview in Somorja, I met Zoltán Babucs and, during our conversation, he recommended a colleague of his, who interviewed young people that were learning the Hungarian language, who were interested in Hungarian culture, and he wanted to know how, as Slovak-Hungarians, they were able to use their language. I had no idea that we would end up speaking about historical facts.

If I understand you well, when you gave that interview, you did not have a concrete intention to expose the historical implausibility...

No, and I really did not expect that this would be the end result, yet I was only telling the truth. Although, they did warn me that there would be consequences. However, I did not imagine that, in the Slovak circles, the Mikes-type chauvinistic translation into Slovakian would become recognized so widely and would smear me so badly. (*Mikes Kelemen, Hungarian poet. Trans.*)

As a young university trained museologist, what motivated you to form your opinion?

I do not wish to serve people who lie, who present the truth in a different way. There cannot be two truths existing at the same time and I want to fight for the truth.

This stand has engendered a conflict and will continue to do so in the future...

It is not my intention to incite animosity between the two nations. What I wish to accomplish, and I am fighting for this, is to stand up for what I know, so that they might understand and accept that the two nations lived together in peace for 1000 years, and that they might see that the truth about the last 100 years has been distorted. For, in the last 100 years, the Slovak historians have lied about these thousand years, when we not only lived together in peace, but we also fought together.

Let us not forget, the Slovaks also fought on the side of Rákóczi, and now they are denying our common past. (*II. Rákóczi Ferenc, Freedom-fighter. Trans.*)

It is important that the Slovak nation have its own history, but they should not willfully destroy memorials and they should not falsify historical facts.

It is not my intention that the relationship between the two nations should become acrimonious, but actually to ensure that the thousand-year-old legacy be faithfully preserved.

Can you give some examples?

One example is the Museum of the city of Pozsony, where the history of Pozsony is exhibited. (*Pozsony – former coronation city of Hungary, presently Bratislava. Trans.*) When the exhibition about the annexation of Pozsony (to Czechoslovakia) was organized, there was not even a mention of the monumental group of statues of Maria Theresa and her court, sculpted by the Hungarian, János Fadrusz, which the Czechoslovak legionnaires destroyed (and which was one of the most important symbols of Pozsony).

Another example is the massacre in Pozsony, when, in 1919, in front of the shopping center the crowd was mowed down in a rain of bullets. On the display panel, it was described as a "strike", in spite of the fact that this was a bloodbath, where many people died. Furthermore, they only displayed those photographs where the Czechoslovak legionnaires were greeted with bouquets of flowers, but they failed to show photographs of the demonstrations on the part of the Hungarians and Germans.

Is this attitude demonstrated in other areas?

This is evident in the schoolbooks too. The Slovak and Hungarian schoolbooks contain contradictory information. It is my firm opinion that they should be integrated to reflect the historical truth.

Do you think that the discontinuance of your work functions has anything to do with your commitment to your Hungarian nationality?

It is my opinion that I was fired because of my commitment to the Hungarians; there could have been no other complaint about my work. I also took on many other responsibilities that were not in the scope of my work, and I fulfilled them more than adequately. Moreover, my colleagues turned to me for help with technical issues, so there could not have been a problem with my work or my knowledge.

What do your family and friends say about the situation that has arisen?

My Slovak friends do not understand the course of history nor how this has influenced the politics today, so they have turned

away from me. However, there are some of my Slovak friends and colleagues, who agree with me and they see the facts, and my Hungarian friends unanimously take my side.

What effect have these attacks had on you?

They have affected me a great deal. These have been hard times, spiritually too. However, I am now able to withstand them with more strength. I can tell you that if we fight for the truth, we must expect to deal with the negative effects too.

What is next?

Now I am working off my notice and, starting in January, I shall be looking for a new position, but not in the same line of work. I would also like to take a rest; I have to recover spiritually. Besides, according to my director, I have written myself out of this profession, as a museologist, and he added that, if this affair gets into the press, he will fight me.

In addition, I would like to perfect my knowledge of Hungarian, so that in the future I will be able to deal with these things and wrap up this affair completely, but after all this, it is possible that in Felvidék I will never get this opportunity.

You are very determined. If we could go back one year, and you would know all that you would have to live through, would you still have spoken out with these facts?

Of course, because I do not want to live in a lie.

"Workplace discrimination is unfortunately not uncommon in Slovakia. Perhaps this is why the legislature has determined that, in the new Code of Civil Law, the anti-discrimination and workplace lawsuits are closely connected and are to be placed beside each other. The interesting part of this affair is that, willingly or unwillingly, the nationalistic theme appears in the story. In my opinion, such affairs should be followed up in a legal manner, because nobody else should be subjected to a similar treatment. The appropriate legal steps are in preparation." – David Nagy, legal representative.

*Az eredeti interjú szlovák nyelvű megfelelője **ITT**_olvasható.
Slovenský ekvivalent pôvodného rozhovoru je k dispozícii **TU**.*

*The original interview in the Slovak language can be read by clicking on **ITT**_*

Kapcsolódó cikkek

- „Nem akarok hazug emberek szolgája lenni“
- Falath Zsuzsi és jogi képviselője a Kormányhivatalban jártak meghallgatáson
- Hogyan lehet a lehetetlent valóra váltani?
- A kiegyezéshez hiányzik az akarat
- A szlovák történelemhamisítások leleplezése miatt meghurcolt muzeológus panaszt tett Bukovszky László ellen
- „Agyon kellene löni, és a hulládat a Dunába lökni, te magyar ügynök!”