

RELATED TO THE TRADITION OF THE EXTREME RIGHT – DOWN BY LAW IN THE POST-COMMUNIST DEMOCRACY

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What legacy of the political tradition is legitimate in the present Hungarian democracy? This is not an easy question to answer. After decades of Communist rule and almost two decades of new democracy, the criteria seem to be worrying: concepts of democracy and of authoritarianism, and borders of the legal and illegal that remain uncertain in the historical consciousness, and sometimes in justice and law enforcement, too. These include relations to the past legitimate and illegitimate at the same time, depending upon whether they are referred to from the left or from the right and there are few things in common in their competing interpretations of recent Hungarian history. Let me give you some examples from recent public life and debate of Hungary to express this atmosphere of uncertainty as to history, legacy and tradition:

- The bones of János Kádár, ruler of Hungary from 1956 until 1988, were stolen from the cemetery, from the Pantheon of Heroes of the Workers Movement – and they cannot be found.
- Rumors went about that among the martyrs of 1956 there were victims of the terror of Kádár, Hungarian fascists buried, who were executed by the Communists, and there were assumptions that even Ferenc Szálasi, leader of the „Arrow Cross” “hungarist” movement, could be one of them.
- The memorial of Endre SÁgvári, executed during the Second World War by the Hungarian fascists – a young Communist who resisted the political police in a cafe when arrested –, was permanently destroyed; and there were long lasting legal proceedings going on to rehabilitate the policemen who arrested and tortured him and some other Communist activists of the Hungarian resistance against fascism.
- Nationalist demonstrators stormed the headquarter of the Hungarian state TV in September 2006, as their predecessors did in 1956 with the Hungarian broadcaster, who believed that they were the followers of the 1956

revolution against Communism in the 21st century, destroying the building and equipment of the television station, which did not accept their spontaneous memorandum for inclusion in the national TV programme.

Legal and illegal, legitimate and illegitimate, past and present, left and right, play a mouse and cat game in the political culture of the present day Hungary, where traditions of the extreme right from the 19th-20th centuries seem to have regained momentum in the political discourse facing the continued influence of Socialist and liberal parties on politics and policy. The parties of the right have remained in the opposition since 2002 and this way they lent legitimacy to anti-Communist and anti-liberal mobilisations, which had some connections to the extreme right, with its roots in Hungarian nationalism and fascism.

The Tradition

Hungary had a complex tradition of extreme right thinking and practice in the political culture of the 19th-20th centuries.

The reasons differ and are as follows:

- late development of capitalism,
- presence of German and Jewish urban settlers,
- prevalence of rural-agrarian Hungarian culture,
- late development of democracy,
- encounters with authoritarianism in the Habsburg empire and the regimes of Horthy and Kádár during the 20th century,
- alliance with Germany in the First and Second World Wars,
- perception of Western powers as enemies and invaders; they are accused of imposing a bad deal in the Trianon treaty on Hungary and of granting the country to the Soviet Bloc after the Second World War.

These different elements in the historical interpretation produced a favourable framework for such developments of political ideas. Anti-liberal, anti-urban, anti-democratic, anti-capitalist and anti-semitic directions were established in the Hungarian political discourse since the end of the 19th century. They received a push from the democratic and communist revolutions in 1918-1919 after the First World War, when the dissolution of the Habsburg Empire enabled liberal democratic and socialist-communist uprisings to gain power in postwar Hungary. Jewish intellectuals played a dominant role within the leadership of these movements as among the Communist ruling elite, according to the popular and populist perception.

When the intervention of the Entente and its allies helped Admiral Horthy to reestablish the ancien regime, although without the Habsburg family, after the First World War, the restoration empowered a new stream of anti-liberal, anti-democratic, anti-communist, nationalist, anti-semitic thought and action, which became the leading and dominant tradition of interwar Hungary. The Horthy regime consolidated its power and pushed the radical, extreme right in the opposition to be accepted by the Western powers. The ideas of the Third Way, a Hungary between eastern Communism and western liberalism, remained alive and received new impetus from Italian, Spanish and Portuguese, Austrian and German fascist allies of Horthy-Hungary. The Hungarian fascism, “hungarism”, established by Ferenc Szálasi remained an undercurrent – Szálasi was sentenced to jail by Horthy – until the German army occupied Hungary and captured Horthy, and this opened the way for the Hungarian „Arrow Cross” (*nyilas*) movement of Szálasi to collaborate with the Germans in defending Hungary against the Soviet army and giving way to the „*Endlösung*” in Hungary.

After the Second World War, many representatives of the Szálasi regime emigrated to escape the Soviets; some of those captured were sentenced to death like Szálasi himself. The tradition of the extreme right, which led to the lost war and the Holocaust, was persecuted in Communist times. Even in the sixties there were trials of former activists and supporters, which imposed heavy sentences on them. Despite the anti-fascism of the Communist regime, there were groups of the population that continued relations with participants in the emigration of the extreme right to the West and some networking among former activists. Moreover, the extreme right symbols and ideas captured the interest of the youngsters of the Kádár regime as elsewhere within the Eastern Bloc during the 80s, in the form of the skinhead subcultures that had many links to fascism and anti-semitism. There were undercover agents of the secret police among these youngsters and there were trials against skinhead musical groups and members of the subculture, but this repression, as hard as it was, could not extinguish the tendencies towards anti-communism and anti-semitism of the extreme right from the Hungarian youth subculture of the eighties.

The Renaissance: Skinheads

The system transition beginning in 1989 gave way to a renaissance of right wing tendencies in Hungary, as well as elsewhere in the former Eastern Bloc. The tradition of the national right, having been outlawed by the Communists, received the glory of former suppression. This created a new start for the right wing traditions. Some parties of the interwar period were reinstated, but they were not able to engender permanent political support, so they did not survive as elements of the party system. These include extra-parliamentary parties that

have some capacity to mobilise participants in demonstrations, cultural events or marches but are unable to be stable actors in party politics. However, the network of groups and movements is a part of the „uncivil society” in Hungary, from the skinheads to the supporters of the „Arrow Cross” of Szálasi. Violent actions, symbolic manifestations, concerts and radical demonstrations make up their repertoire of action, and the organisations carrying them out also have developed and practiced formal and informal, legal and illegal, violent and non-violent strategies. We only list some of the reasons for the phenomenon in a sketchy way, referring to the literature on the changing sociocultural conditions and socialisation of Hungarian youngsters after the regime change, however, without being able to analyse them thoroughly.

- The existence of youth urban subcultures or “street corner societies” goes back to the sixties. The trend of violence against all “foreign” actors on their “territories” is a constant element of these subcultures.
- A young, urban, secularised, middle class background is to be found in case of the skinheads, with socialisation problems at school and in the family, so peer group effects combined with the mass media culture of violence result in different forms of deviant behaviour, the use of alcohol and drugs, and minor criminal activity.
- The family and school socialisation is in crisis during times of suddenly imposed social and economic changes, and of educational reforms, e.g., the loss of the legitimacy of the dominant cultural-ideological reproduction of the Communist society. The agents of social control, youth organisations, and the police are in an uncertain situation. Most of the youngsters involved in elementary or secondary school education do not have a chance to find employment. Youth unemployment expands drastically, and hits especially hard families of the lower middle classes, endangering them through marginalisation and lowering their social status. Among youthful unemployed, the strata with elementary or lower secondary education dominate.
- The classical conditions for right wing mobilisation develop: relative deprivation, crisis, uncertainty and resentment of the lower middle classes and fear of losing social status (S.M. Lipset). The title of a well done collection of studies on the status of the Hungarian youth is “The Losers. Youth at the Change of the Millenium”.
- Especially among pupils belonging to the socially and economically “sinking” lower middle class, socialisation problems may bring a relevant some in Budapest and bigger cities near to the violent racist subculture. The number of skinheads increased in Hungary – according to

police estimates – from 2000 to 4000. Among them we have to differentiate the violent “hard core” composed of some hundreds from the followers or fans of the music and subculture, who are supporters and affected by some right wing racist symbols and songs (police reports, sociographic journalism).

Traces of stereotypes, intolerance and prejudice against other ethnic groups can be found in Hungary, as has existed elsewhere in the world for centuries. Empirical research put Hungary near to Spain in this respect (Szokolczai). Traditions of a negative attitude toward racial minorities are to be found in Hungary’s case, especially against Jews, and much less so against Romas. Hungarian racism supported German fascism, and contributed to the Holocaust in and outside Hungary, where both ethnic groups, the Jewish and Roma – although in different percentages –, were involved as victims.

Communism tabooed the concept of ethnicity and of the nation, so presumably all pre-Communist traditions of nationalism and racism were able to survive the Communist indoctrination of Hungarian society. Moreover, these traditions have become internalised, although taboo, and secret norms and characteristics of relevant groups in Hungarian society have evolved. As Archie Brown stated, the “homo sovieticus” – based on the dominant political culture of Communist countries – was in sharp contrast with the “real” political culture of the civil society, where racism and nationalism were preserved as anti-Communist tendencies. All anti-Communist tendencies were endowed after 1989 with the holy glory of having been suppressed and persecuted. Racism, even in its fascist (hungarist) form, survived in the Hungarian emigration to western democracies in overt forms, too. Based upon the Communist policy, specific but limited “strengthening” effects can be documented against some ethnic groups, even “loading” the pre-Communist racist and exclusive nationalist tradition. Solidarity was forced from above by the Communist elites with the suppressed Third World emancipation movements and with the established Communist regimes in Asia and Africa, for campaigns were organised in which the population was forced to participate; the welfare services on behalf of Romas, and Cuban and Vietnamese “guest workers” and students may have affected the symbiosis of racism and anti-Communism among the population.

New, modernised and post-modern forms of racism based upon developments in the western youth subculture have been present through cultural and social diffusion processes in Hungary and elsewhere in the Eastern Bloc since the sixties, despite the “gatekeeper” censoring role of Communist sociopolitical control. Old and new forms of nationalism and racism may interact in the post-Communist democracies, in Hungary and elsewhere in the region, based upon pre-Communist and Communist traditions that remain alive in the post-Com-

munist political cultures. The “Western model” of racism, with the new right and skinhead subcultures, were available cultural patterns for Hungarian youth, brought in via music and youth culture in the Communist system as well. They were combined with “homegrown” traditions of nationalism and racism that survived or even were resurrected by Communist persecution, and created a widely accessible cultural and political “consumer pattern” for youngsters as a result of post-Communist transformations.

In case of the skinheads, a rich symbol repertoire and a musical, popular cultural background combined with the traditional symbolic contents of German and Hungarian right wing racism. Lyrics of Hungarian skinhead bands condemning Romas and Arabs, making them scapegoats, can be referred to at length. Let me give a shorter example in my own translation: “You are here rooted now/You find your way here/You were spoiled, educated/You were helped until now./Hip, Hip Gypsy boy/It is not for you/Better you will not get.” (Gábor Szántó cit. 114.p.)

Some skinhead bands were sentenced to jail for their anti-Communist and racist lyrics in the late period of Communist times. “Short but sweet” is a poem of one of the skinheads, who was sentenced for violent attacks; he used the nickname “Small Hitler” (Kishitler) in his diary – which was obviously not presented to the greater public: “On the first „OI” sound/All Gypsies will pay for it/Second „OI” sound/All Arabs extinct.”

Popular music is an important part of skinhead socialisation. Racist attitudes are raised among other, seemingly apolitical and neutral, symbols of a youth subculture. The attitude raised, and mobilised in situational conflicts such as street fighting initiates the next steps of political orientation to right wing symbols and political substances. The songs blame ethnic groups as scapegoats for all social and cultural problems, and the same is to be found in interviews of anonymous members of the subculture. Hungarians are endangered by foreigners, who are rich, criminal, sexist. Young Hungarians are unemployed because “foreign students” (sic!) take their jobs. The deviant, welfare dependent Gypsy, abusing welfare services, is the other scapegoat. These “frames” for understanding the social and economic problems of the transformation mobilise the subculture against the enemies. The “friends” who fight the “foe” are WE, the Movement, the “White Hungary” as the name of one of the bands tells us. “Sadism and fighting spirit/Fight against the World and everybody/You should believe in the victory/You may master everything/Skinhead lived,/Skinhead lives/Skinhead will live.” (Szántó 115.p.) “This generation is a victorious generation/If you meet somebody not white,/Do not hesitate/It is not enough to cry!/Come with us, what are you waiting for?” (Szántó, 118.p.)

The mobilising framework is clear: the white, majority, Hungarian youngsters should be the movement's mainstream. These are mainly males. Skinhead girls are present, even participating in the violent clashes, but the backbone of the movement, seen through its violent symbols, is macho-like. The cult of violence, brutality and racism is combined in later documents with the Hungarian identity with ancient, "nomad" traditions, or later fascist, or "trooper"-like mentality. Among young skinheads the participation of the students of naval and military secondary schools is apparent; these are two professions where the masculine community, "brotherhood", has a high relevance.

"Ideologisation" of these frames from the youth subculture was created by the right wing political organisations who accepted skinheads as their youth troopers. These organisations had and have direct connections to the traditions of the interwar racist and right wing ideology in Hungary. The other source is the international, in this case mostly European, connections, mainly to Austria and Germany. Although not much public documentation is available, the first skinhead journal was printed in Bielefeld. In the first neo-Nazi trial in Hungary, the Austrian connection was documented. Symbolically, the Hungarian skinheads use the German tradition, combined with the Hungarian fascist, "hungarist" elements. Through the change of the regime, skinheads developed from a suppressed subculture to legalised organisations, articulating their demands politically. So the "Association of Nationalist Youth" produced leaflets, in which racism does not appear directly, but rather the right wing populist frame of peace, fighting crime and drug use, order, natural preservation and fighting the exploitation of Hungarians in their own country. For this reason, "cheap summer camps" and "cultural programmes", are provided "for the long term realisation of the above goals".

Nowadays, the cultural and political activities of skinheads are intertwined. As the barriers of the Communist sociopolitical control failed, they used all new opportunities to articulate their positions, which – at least temporarily – diminished the number of their violent attacks on "foreigners" and Gypsies. Racism may be articulated in Hungary publicly, so employing more or less civilised formulations, the goals of the skinheads are now integrated into the official political discourse, while they support the activities of the right wing groups. Skinheads in Hungary and elsewhere started as a youth subculture. Informal social networks built the integrative forces and resources of the movement. Their violent attacks were organised in this way. Members met to "fight", they "walked" into areas where possible victims may be found (pubs, districts or underground stations) and the actual appearance of members of the victim group combined with a facilitating situation, especially the absence of authorities or bystanders who might intervene, provoked the violence. A loose, networking character and the use of "light", home made or sport weapons characterised the action. Molotov-cocktails against Roma homes appeared at a latter stage.

The absence of any formal organisation also depended on the Communist organisational monopoly. After the regime change, skinheads started to build up their organisational infrastructure. Eger, a country town in Hungary with lots of secondary schools and a well developed skinhead movement, shows two main organisational patterns, which were found elsewhere as well.

1. “Movement within the organisation”. A group of skinheads infiltrates a right wing organisation or vice versa, and the “nationalist youth” builds up a “youth section” within a preexisting political party or political organisation. The outcome may be variable; the organisation excludes the skinheads “going too far” (the case of the Smallholders Party); the skinheads leave the organisation because they don't fit well into it, or a longer term “symbiosis” may exist.

2. Development of their own organisation, combining resources with right wing activists and/or getting support from abroad from the “hungarist” emigration. The organisational resources of the Hungarian skinheads did not extend to stabilising a formal organisation of their own. They work together with “adults” with “political experience” from the right wing parties and movements. Their Godfathers change rapidly (in Hungary Romhányi László, Király B. Izabella, Porubszky Potyka István, Ekrem Kemál György, Szabó Alert, etc.), because the loosely integrated subculture membership is not easily bound for long to persons and organisations.

The developing organisational infrastructure of the right wing in Hungary is similar to western patterns. Despite the long time Communist suppression, in six years, beginning in 1989, the extreme-right-wing subculture established itself in Hungarian sub-politics, meaning that it has no electoral relevance. There is a great variety of organisations, having a small group character, organised around a person, journal, club or meeting place like the “Jurta Theatre”. Despite the fact that the extreme right nowadays still preserves the cult of the hierarchy and the leader, the *Führer*, its organisational character is like that of new social movements, and is in the form of a loosely coordinated network. Their networking has also a strategic character; as a result of sociopolitical control, under the threat of being prohibited, persons and resources may be saved through allocation within the networks. The skinhead subcultural networks overlap very neatly with this organisational pattern of the extreme right wing, existing beyond the borders of Hungary.

Skinheads were rejected by the Communist system. Police interventions, informants, prison sentences and prohibitions tried to prevent the mobilisation of the movement. This and the original orientation combined to produce a clear-cut anti-Communist orientation within the subculture. Skinheads or their bands did not play any active role in the change of the regime in Hungary, but they profited heavily from the transformation of the political opportunity structure.

The right wing political parties and other organisations that are the potential allies of the skinheads emerged in the new political space. Their variety extends from the Christian-democratic nationalists to the Hungarian fascists. The skinheads' political space expanded, and they used this to organise themselves or to join other organisations. The first new coalition government of Hungary had a Christian-democratic character, also integrating some right wing personalities and groups, who left the coalition government, like the Torgyán-led Smallholders, István Csurka and his Party of Hungarian Truth and Life, the Hungarian Market Party and many others. Even among opposition groups the Hungarian Green Party opened space for right wing, fascist ecologism. There is a "Social Movement Sector" of the right wing civic and political organisations and social movements, where skinheads found their alliance partners. Opponents of the skinheads, as of the right wing, were the "left-libertarian movements", the Socialists, liberals, alternatives and civil rightists who belonged to the intra- and extraparlimentary opposition. Some of the former government parties of the centre right, which have been in opposition since 2002, developed strong right wing directions, in effect "fishing" among former neglected and marginal right wing groups to build up alliance structures against liberals and socialists. In this situation, the originally anti-liberal appeal of right wing groups has been strengthened.

Skinheads started with an anti-institutional strategy in the Communist system, being almost outlawed. They developed a multidimensional strategy incorporating elements of direct-coercion in the form of racist street-fighting or attacking the President of the Republic at a state celebration on 23.10.1992, and at the same time developing alliances with right wing organisations; using the freedom of demonstration and speech, they organised rallies, meetings and festivals, and published journals and leaflets. The recent 2006-2008 provocation strategy is based on abusing the right of assembly or the right of free speech, occupying the podiums of other organisations or trying to organise prohibited gatherings or associations, using forbidden totalitarian symbols, and preaching against ethnic groups. Skinheads and their successor organisations are further on the margins of legality, using light or sometimes extreme violence. The forms are more moderated, the actions better organised, the skinheads groups having calculated the media presence, and secured a "Hinterland" for legal existence. This strategy of "calculated normbreaking" is very similar to the "civil disobedience" strategy of alternative and anti-racist movements, but used in a different context and for different goals. Violence in word and action is involved, and the goal is not to strengthen, but to disturb the "rule of law". However, strategically, the use of the media and trials to influence publicity, as part of an attempt to build up the image of being innocent and suppressed and defending the right of free speech, etc., seems to be borrowed from the well established strategies of the non-violent movements.

Authorities always exert influence on their territories and population; social movement mobilisation is one of the social processes reshaping power structures and, thus, a relevant subject to be controlled, too. Totalitarian and authoritarian systems use “rejecting” control to abolish or try to abolish all unofficial initiatives. Democracies, as plural systems, exert “selective” control, rejecting some of social movements, for example those using violence, and supporting and facilitating others, for example ecology or anti-racism. The forms and rules of control are different; these include the constitution, penal code, criminal procedures, administrative courts, police strategies, secret services or other state organs facilitating or sanctioning social movement organisations. In this respect I would like to mention only shortly the legal, especially penal code-based, sanctions against racist violence and propaganda in Hungary, and neglect many other interesting aspects of sociopolitical control.

In the late Communist system, skinheads felt the heavy sword of the Communist penal code, which was strictly against subversive propaganda and injuring racial communities. In the particular cases the court never used the full strength of the law and sanction against youngsters, hoping for their further development. Skinheads sentenced to jail received pardons from the new Head of the Republic, as did many other prisoners in jail for “lighter” crimes. As the old penal code was “democratised”, the severe remedies against subversion towards the state were annulled, and the injuring of racial communities by propaganda was annulled by the Constitutional Court. So a “legal free” space developed for skinhead violence and racist propaganda at the beginning of the 1990s. The space was used by the actors. In skinhead trials, lighter sentences were imposed, as demanded by the public, and especially by some anti-racist groups, because the courts did not want to use the still existing rules of international “apartheid”- in the form of prohibitive sanctions, or those based upon the peace treaty of Hungary ending the Second World War that condemned fascist action and propaganda.

“Uncivil Society”: the extreme Right

The existence of “uncivil society” in Hungary is an undeniable element of the protest culture but it is on the margins of political society exerting no direct political influence on electoral politics, while remaining an element of party politics. During the 90s the reorganised Smallholder Party and the party of István Csurka, the Party of Hungarian Life and Truth, were near to the politics of the extreme right scene. After the turn of the millenium, the Party of Young Democrats, Fidesz, lost its governmental position in 2002 and this marked a right wing mobilisation in the interests of regaining power in 2002-2003 and after the 2006 elections, when Fidesz again failed to gain a majority vote to

govern Hungary. The Socialist and the liberal coalition parties could form a government in both 2002 and 2006 and this contributed to a new fever of anti-liberal and anti-Communist campaigning, which gave an impetus to the more radical right wing mobilisation as well. A radical grouping of former members of Fidesz called „Jobbik” („Far Right”) left the party. They entered into a coalition with the remains of István Csurka’s MIÉP for the 2006 elections. The new right wing party „MIÉP-Jobbik” had marginal support in the 2006 elections, but played a role in mobilising people against the newly elected social-liberal coalition in 2006-2007. The legitimacy of extreme right action and thought emerged within the mass demonstrations against the hated Prime Minister of the Socialist Party, Ferenc Gyurcsány, who was attacked with a convincing list of facts and arguments that made him the public enemy for the right wing, as follows:

- he was before 1989 member of the League of Young Communists (KISZ),
- after 1989 he became a rich capitalist using opportunities of privatisation and marketisation,
- he married a relative of a former top leader of the high Communist nomenclature and
- he used methods of Communist manipulation in the political and electoral fight, according to his opponents.

In this way Gyurcsány embodied the emblematic characteristics of an enemy of the right wing, being a capitalist and an ally of liberals and Communists while gaining power using dubious strategies and tactics. A new wave of informal and illegal, even violent, right wing mobilisation went on in 2006-2007, using phrases and symbols of the former anti-Communist, antisemitic and anti-liberal right wing from the 19th-20th centuries against Gyurcsány, the new liberal-communist „Golem”. A new element of these efforts was that, contrary to the 90s when the extreme right was an undercurrent of the centre right and did not receive recognition by established political parties, within the anti-Communist, anti-government mobilisations in 2006-2007 the new right tried to refer to constitutional values and human rights, contesting the social-liberal government with its own arguments and thus stepped out from the dark side of the „uncivil society” of the outlawed right wing with a new strategy and image.

However, early in the 90s serious attempts were made to eradicate the organisations and symbols of the right wing from the political life and discourse of the new Hungarian democracy. This more or less worked during the 90s, but after the turn of the millenium the extreme right developed a new strategy of, using the legal and political space of pluralist democracy as follows:

- to be accepted as a legal and legitimate political actor with its messages and symbols based upon human rights, freedom of association and gathering
- to develop, express and communicate through the media its own political opinions.

The extreme right in Hungary started to use the constitutional and legal institutions and demanded the same rights and freedoms as any other political orientation. In order to do so, it had to deny any continuum with the forbidden traditions of Hungarian fascism, the “hungarist” „Arrow Cross” movement. The political and legal discourse now circles around this point as to the legality and legitimacy of the organisations and symbols of the extreme right in Hungary: do they have any relation to the legacy of German fascism and in Hungary the „Arrow Cross” of Szálasi. If YES, the association has to be dissolved, the journals forbidden and demonstrations banned as inherently illegal. If NO, it has legal ways to organise, publish and demonstrate in the Hungarian Republic just as any other political orientation.

Rules of Symbolic Provocation

The above mentioned uncertainty of historical consciousness and the relationship with the traditions of the interwar period was a motive to regulate these issues by law and jurisprudence in Hungary, so as to be able to identify fascist and extremist groups and ideas. The regulation was produced by one of the first sharp conflicts on these issues, showing the interrelated character of past and present in Hungarian political culture.

The first president of the new Hungarian republic was nominated by the liberal party in 1990 as a result of a constitutional revision agreed by the then biggest centre right party, the Hungarian Democratic Forum, which was leader of the government 1990-1994, together with the then biggest opposition party, a liberal party called the Alliance of Free Democrats. A liberal president accompanied the centre right government 1990-1994, in the person of Árpád Göncz, a dissident intellectual before 1989 who was sentenced to death after 1956. The 1956 revolution gained a central importance supporting the legitimacy of the new Hungarian democracy from 1989 and it at the same time made illegitimate the Kádár regime 1956-1988. In this way, the person of Árpád Göncz was an emblem for these legitimation and delegitimation processes.

Symbolic actions and collective rituals were established related to 1956 from 1989 on. There were state and political celebrations, marches, gatherings, congresses and so on on the days of remembrance for 1956, especially on 23rd

October, the starting day of the uprising. It was the functional equivalent within the new regime of the 7th November day of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, a celebrational anniversary day of the Communist regimes that was observed in Hungary, too. The cult of 7th November was over in 1989 and 23rd October was born as a new state ritual on 23 October 1989, when the new Hungarian Republic was declared by an interim president with the radical change of the former Communist constitution from that day.

The places related to 1956 are also of interest. The Kossuth square in front of the building of the Hungarian Parliament was a place of rallies in 1956, where hundreds of demonstrators/revolutionaries were killed. On this place the new Hungarian Republic was declared in 1989 as a revenge of history on the suppression of 1956. The same place was made one of the central places and focal points of remembrance during the 23rd October state rituals, with flag raisings, speeches and programs for the public presented in front of the parliament building. On 23 October 1992, when the new president Árpád Göncz wanted to give his celebration speech the coordinated noise of the gathered people hindered him from speaking to the public.

The scandal was loud and sharp, with the liberals accusing the centre-right government of having organised the public humiliation of the liberal president, because that time the coalition was in open political conflict. The centre-right government denied this and indicated that extreme right wing activists disturbed the celebrational speech of the president. In fact, among the reorganised field of initiatives and civic groups of former activists of 1956 and their sympathisers there were influences of the right wing emigrant organisations from western countries, and they demanded a „real revolution” instead of the „velvet transition” and criticised the new democracy as too open towards liberal and Communist groups and ideas.

To make the very long and complex story short, an immense political discourse and conflict emerged from the issue of the hindered speech of president Göncz, which in the long run motivated the political actors of the opposition liberals and socialists to establish new ties of cooperation against the ruling parties of the centre-right, who were accused of being nationalists and being too close to the interwar right wing traditions. Later, criticism amplified among socialists and liberals, when Prime Minister József Antall, a historian, authorised organising the reinterment of Admiral Horthy in Hungary. However, the governing centre-right wanted to eliminate liberal and socialist criticism of fascist tendencies of the new government, while the opposition was ready to suggest there was little distance to the interwar past.

The conflicting interpretations of Hungarian history were intended to institutionalise and ritualise constitutional procedures that would not allow the re-emergence of totalitarian actors and ideologies in the new Hungarian republic.

The discussions of government and opposition resulted in a modification of the Penal Code in 1993 (1993/XLV. „On the use of totalitarian symbols”), which modification is in force until the present despite various attempts to bring the issue to the Hungarian Constitutional Court and to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. This regulation is one of the main bases for determining the legality and illegality of right wing groups in jurisprudence and law enforcement in Hungary today. Section 269/B. par. (1) of the Penal Code defines as totalitarian symbols, on the one hand, the swastika, SS-button, and „arrow cross” as symbols of right wing totalitarianism, and, on the other, the red star with five division and the hammer and sickle („sarló és kalapács”) as left wing totalitarian symbols that are forbidden to be propagated and used or placed publicly. Such behaviour may be penalised with a fine, if no more serious crime is committed simultaneously.

It was argued that the use of fascist and Communist symbols hurts the sensibilities of the majority of society and destroys the international image of Hungary. Despite attacks against the rule the Constitutional Court upheld this paragraph as not being a threat to the freedom of conscience and of establishing political organisations. The Constitutional Court argued that the fascist and „arrow cross” symbols were forbidden under Communism but the regime glorified its own totalitarian symbolism. This way a fair treatment after Communism is the dual outlawing of both right wing and left wing totalitarian symbols of the interwar and postwar periods, which was articulated even in the arguments in support of the new regulation by legislators. This historical justice, based upon the experiences of totalitarian systems and democracy in Hungary, legitimate a certain limitation of human rights to express and communicate certain historically sensitive political symbols. One of the original arguments from 1992 is as follows: „The system transition is full with tension. These tensions could be amplified if some people and groupings are enabled to express publicly their hate and resentment against other groups” (ABH 1992, 167, 180.).

The Constitutional Court argued in 2000 – when a constitutional review of this regulation was requested – that the Penal Code has to defend the dignity of communities, public peace and order. The use of totalitarian symbols has to be interpreted in relation to Section 2 par. (3) of the Constitution, which forbids every organisation and person from acquiring political power by using means of violence or efforts to monopolise it. Everybody is entitled to counteract such attempts against the Hungarian republic. This involves the strict rejection of every civic organisation using means of violence. Further, the Constitutional Court defined on the one hand as values of the republic democracy, pluralism and human dignity. It defined on the other hand as unconstitutional behaviour upholding publicly relations to former totalitarian dictatorships that suppressed human dignity and using violence in political conflicts, as well as violating the

dignity of persons and groups by means of verbal or physical violence. A restriction of the freedom of expression is legitimate if it is proportional, so the court has to examine the weight and relevance of the actual harassment to determine whether it is an acceptable basis for a sanction that may be heavier or of lesser relevance to basic human rights.

It is – according to the Constitutional Court analysis from 2000 – against the values of the democratic rule of law to spread fear and aggression, and through identification with totalitarian ideologies to endanger groups, organisations or communities, especially those who have suffered from these regimes. The Constitutional Court defined the framework for interpreting extreme right propaganda and action as alien to the new Hungarian democracy. However, there were two concurring opinions of Court members who rejected any form of limitation on the right to free expression even through shocking political contents, and referred to the decisions of the Strasbourg Court and to the absence of a clear and present danger of any totalitarian movement in the new Hungary.

The jurisprudence and law enforcement tried to apply the constitutional limitations to both Communist and right wing groups. Some of the punished activists requested judicial review in the Strasbourg court (as to my knowledge the Strasbourg court hasn't reached a decision yet). However, the present legal situation and court practice is clear as to our subject; if related to fascism and the „arrow cross” in public practice and communication – public is defined as 10-20 people or more – then the danger is to be prohibited and punished. The groups and discourse of the extreme right avoid using the above mentioned symbols, but they continue to refer to the martyrdom of Szálasi, his heroism and the military virtues of Germans and Hungarians who defended Budapest – the memorial day of the last battle of the defenders in the Second World War, 11 February 1945, is a focal point of memorial gatherings and marches in Budapest from the far right every year, called the „Day of Honour” (*Becsület Napja*). As well, they criticise the excesses of liberalism and the renaissance of Communism, demand a new constitution and justice for Hungary and define Roma and Jewish minorities as scapegoats for many economic and social problems. The vocabulary and phrases are quite “traditional”; interwar fascist and „arrow cross” tradition, but the direct public use of totalitarian symbols is avoided. If the symbol is transformed a little bit, or if any other fascist symbol is employed, than law enforcement is uncertain.

However, there are inconsistencies in the practice. The same picture, a photo of Szálasi, is tolerated within a journal of the movement sold at a public kiosk at a railway station, but may not be hung out publicly or distributed on a leaflet, because it is then beyond the internal publicity of the movement, and constitutes harassment of the sensibilities of persons or groups who suffered from

fascism. The first case implicates freedom of the press, the second case harassment of a community, but the same emblem, the same intention and the same organisation is involved. It is not a miracle that the Hungarian press is full with criticism against and discontentment with law enforcement against fascism/neofascism. Leaders of the police have given many interviews distancing themselves from these dilemmas, and advocating Germany as a measure, where more scope for police intervention into extreme right discourse and activity exists based upon constitutional norms and jurisdiction.

Policing the Extreme Right

The police must be a neutral force in cases of extreme right and anti-fascist counter-demonstrators, and this is a challenge for them. However, the same task is to be carried out by the police in Germany but on a – both from quantitative and qualitative point of view – much higher level of tension. Thus, in proceedings on the legality of extreme right organisations the state attorney must carry out a heavy task, that is, to collect evidence on the unconstitutional practice of the organisation and its communications, even though for the public the behaviour of the extreme right is highly provoking and beyond the level of toleration.

Some political forces demanded a simpler legal framework that would be effective in fighting fascist and „arrow cross” propaganda in Hungary, but so-called initiatives to regulate „hate speech” have been stopped twice by the Constitutional Court as dangers to the freedom of speech and of opinion and expression. Controlling recent, gatherings of the Hungarian Guard (Magyar Gárda) that organised marches in the neighbourhood of the Roma community, and the presence of Roma countermobilisation, have not been easy tasks for the Hungarian police.

The proceedings to dissolve the Hungarian „Blood and Honour” association serve as a close-up case study on the relationship between traditions of interwar fascism and recent law enforcement. The organisation was registered in 2002 and received the status of „public utility” (*közhasznú*) association – thereby gaining a higher level of protection and privileges among various forms of associations – because its goals included sport, education and preserving national tradition for the youth. The state attorney initiated the proceedings in 2003, stating that the activities of the association were not in conformity with international treaties on the activities of fascist organisations and endangered internationally acknowledged rights and freedoms and protection from discrimination based upon race, birth and community identity. The proceedings lasted two years and reached every level of the Hungarian judicial system. The

higher courts by and large accepted the arguments of the state attorney, with a slight reduction of some of the evidence. The association was dissolved and its property confiscated, but the members established a very similar organisation with a different name and activities promptly after the court decision.

A similar proceeding has recently been initiated involving the „Hungarian Guard” (Magyar Gárda, a so-called self-defence organisation of the majority against the offences of the Roma minority, established in August 2007, which has more than 1000 members). One cannot know in advance whether it will have an influence upon the decision in this case, but the Prime Minister withdrew the Minister of Internal Affairs and Justice in 2008 with the argument that more engagement is needed against the extreme right and fascism. On the first trial day in March 2008, when activists of the Roma minority and the Guard created tensions in front of and inside the court building in the view of the mass media, a subsequent debate started between the head of the court and the minister as to the right amount of security measures during these very sensitive proceedings. The proceedings seem to constitute a way of presenting their views within the strategy of the Guard, which uses the classical concept of Ghandi on civil disobedience. According to this, the actors have to go to court and convince the court and the public of their innocence and they have to delegitimise the misuse of the rule of law and constitutional freedoms by the institution. The court seems to be caught in the trap of the different actors including the demonstrators and counter-demonstrators, the government and the public served by the scandal-hungry mass media and thereby endangering its autonomy. I am very keen to see how the independence of the courts will assured in this case.

However, the strategy and argumentation of Blood and Honour was consequently oriented towards the rule of law and human rights (freedom of speech, equal opportunity, freedom of association, association activities based on its valid status, etc.) but the state attorney found convincing arguments in their status, speeches, interviews and gatherings plus publications to prove that they have a direct link to German, Italian and Hungarian fascist thought from the interwar period as follows:

- Name of the association refers to German fascist law on Jews,
- International networking with British Blood and Honour,
- Skinhead music with racist text on the event „White Christmas”,
- Counterdemonstration to „Gay Pride” the Day of “Cool Pride” (rejecting homosexuals, „meleg” (hot”) in Hungarian),
- „Day of Honour” speeches condemning the Soviet army, and praising German-Hungarian heroism and the Waffen SS,

- Speeches at public events and in the mass media full of references to Szálasi and “hungarist”, „arrow cross” vocabulary and racism, anti-semitism and xenophobia towards the Roma community and other foreign races, „hungarism” following Szálasi.

The decision of the court stated that instead of the stated goals and tasks of culture, sport and education of young people, fascist ideology was cultivated on the level of symbols, actions and publications. However, the public has the image that law enforcement is paralysed, since the same persons with the same vocabulary and symbols organise a new association with a different name and this is tolerated. Long and time consuming proceedings can be delayed by tactics learnt from Gandhian civil disobedience campaigns, which may easily block the enforcement of the rule of law, the *Rechtstaat*. Had there been a dozen of such cases, complicated to process because of the personal, material and media resources of the Hungarian extreme right, the Hungarian judicial system would have been paralysed. However, this strategy was not applied by the extreme right, because internet mobilisation and the 2006 anti-Communist mobilisations opened up more favourable political opportunities for them.

The Challenge of the 21th Century: Internet, Blog, Flashmob

As analysis has shown, the revolution of electronic media communication, the internet, laptops and mobile phones with wide capacity opened up new space for political mobilisation of social and political movements and protests. Compared to political parties, social movements were faster to enter the new communication space as they felt disadvantaged within the established „Gutenberg-galaxy”. Among them, extreme right movements have become globalised through the internet and networking. Although they are as critical as the alternative and leftist movements about globalisation, they use it as an advantage for their own interests. In Hungary, the tiny extreme right scene rapidly switched to the internet and mobile phone communication, to the former by means of discussion forums, thematic groups and blogs on the web, to the latter as a way of organising protests.

This development was noted both by research and the National Security Agency in its annual reports, as one of the main trends after the change of the millenium. Another new form enhanced by the internet communication of members and sympathisers of social movements and protest groups is the so-called „flashmob”: an action coordinated on the internet for a type of public and media sensitive action of separated/isolated individuals, such as the collective consumption of cocoa or marijuana, a fight with pillows at a railway station or shopping center, that follows the action of spread actors. These flash-

mob actions could be seen as trainings for no case, no goal engagement, collective actions that may serve as a first step to be mobilised by social movement entrepreneurs and social movement organisations.

A leading Hungarian right wing blogger, „Tomcat” organises such flashmob actions of the right wing, such as, in April 2008 in Budapest, an action asking for tickets for a right wing concert in a ticket office that had been burnt down earlier by sympathisers, because a fan did not receive adequate treatment in the shop when asking for the right wing concert ticket. A counter-demonstration of mixed composition and with a strong police presence hindered the realisation of the right wing flashmob action that time. However, this type of post-modern protest is used by the right wing political culture. The aggressive communication of the extreme right gained new dimensions on the web. As an example I refer to an US based server, „kuruc.info”, which is famous in Hungary. As analysis has stressed, the name and existence is an interesting contradiction, a critique of modern democracy and modernism preserved within the US from Hungarian authorities. The name refers to the 18th century Hungarian „*kuruc*” (cruz) movement against the Habsburg monarchy, the remains of which emigrated to France and Turkey; their tradition and name for Hungarians are synonymous with „dissenting emigrants acting from abroad against the regime”.

The „kuruc.info” site offers an experience of „Alice in Wonderland” to the user; you enter an alternative Hungary, where everything is different; the party system is manipulated by Jews, not to speak of the economy; there is no democracy; the opposition is integrated into the regime; the security agency is acting as in Communist times. Proceedings, actions and people of the „real” Hungary receive their „true” picture based upon the Hungarian, „arrow cross” based world view of the site. Critics stated that the technical and propaganda element is very well done, almost perfect. Young and talented Hungarian readers are targeted; it has irony and humor, and is not dull propaganda, but is framed for the needs of the youth of the 21th century. The new generation of the extreme right is professionalised, yuppie or „bobo” like the famous right wing blogger „Tomcat” or former Csurka-activist and initiator of the 18.09.2006 storm on the Hungarian TV building, László Toroczkai, who graduated from the Faculty of Communication of the Szeged University.

As my analysis of the 90s extreme right subcultures in Hungary has shown, the sector of social movements is a unity, where opponents have to be able to be part of the scene, and must carry out their technical, infrastructural skills and behavioral patterns on the same level in order to be able to confront other social movements. As I have shown, the civic organisations for defence of human rights and the racist skinheads were actors of a continuum, developing by their conflict similar directions of mobilisation and protest culture. This preserved

dynamic of the sector of social movements and „the globalisation of bad and good” go on in the same globalisation process. In 2008 Hungary, we are faced with a postmodern extreme right using contemporary language and means of communication. But it has direct links to legitimise its identity and delegitimise the democratic system of Hungary with the traditions of German and Hungarian fascism. Pseudonyms of editors and members of kuruc.info who have been redacted are borrowed from the members of the governments of Sztójay and Szálasi 1944-45, the name of a state secretary and a minister responsible for deportation of Jews from Hungary. Hungarian state authorities are unable to do anything with the US based portal, acting like the 18th century emigrant Rákóczi from Turkey, and the 19th century emigrant Kossuth from Italy against the Hungarian regimes of that time that they condemned.

Compared to the 90s and to the beginning of the century an eruptive mass mobilisation has taken place in 2006 in Hungary, a „white hot mobilisation” that raised the level of the presence of the extreme right within the Hungarian protest culture, and as a new protest cycle, it had an impact on the innovation of issues, actors and the repertoire of contention and political opportunities and their framing as well. Let us summarise the transformation of the extreme right in Hungary from the 90s to the after autumn 2006 situation in a table:

Printed communication	Electronic media communication
Hierarchy and leadership in the organisation	Decentralisation, coordination of autonomous participants
Intellectual discourse and street fighting	Political activism within institutions
Amateurs, heroes, true believers	Professionalism and semi-professionalism
Critique of liberalism and democracy	Critique of globalisation and US
Isolated islands, subcultures	International and national networking
Reproduction of informal networks	Mobilisation by informal and formal networks
Illegal practices	Use of the space of the rule of law/human rights

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SUMMARY

**Related to the Tradition of the Extreme Right –
Down by Law in the Post-Communist Democracy**

MÁTÉ SZABÓ

Political values are in a state of confusion in Hungary in the wake of post-Communist transition. All tendencies of anti-Communism, whether active before or (operating underground) under the Communist era, may now operate. Following decades of Marxist-Leninist indoctrination, certain sections of the general public have rehabilitated ideas of the pre-1945 Far Right. For people embracing Far-Right ideas, all anti-Fascist tendencies now smack of Communism. To further complicate the situation, when after 2002 the Centre-Right opposition parties organized demonstrations against the coalition government of the Hungarian Socialist Party and the Alliance of Free Democrats, supporters of the Far Right joined in force. New Far-Right organizations have sprung up, like “64 Counties Youth Movement”, “Jobbik” (the “Movement for a Better Hungary”), and the “Hungarian Guard.” Those organizations protest against what they call “anti-Hungarian” tendencies. When they are criticized for their anti-Gypsy and anti-Semitic statements and for demanding a revision of the 1920 Treaty of Trianon, they label their critics as Communists. Radical right websites, like “kuruc.info” (whose Internet server is based in the United States) and some like-minded press publications have revived the ideology of inter-war Hungarian Fascism, which was associated with the name of Ferenc Szálasi. The Far-Right movements of the 21st-century Hungary are rooted in the racist and Fascist traditions of the 20th century. They are opposed to the Communism of 1949-1990 and an alleged post-1990 Communist influence. Their present strategy is to align their policies with Far-Right groupings in Western Europe and to undermine pluralist democracy by using the democratic freedoms as camouflage: the freedom of assembly and the freedom of speech.

RESÜMEE

Verwandt mit rechtsextremistischen Traditionen in den post-kommunistischen Demokratien

MÁTÉ SZABÓ

Die postkommunistische Wende hat die politischen Orientierungen des historischen Bewusstseins gründlich durcheinander gebracht. Jegliche Form des Antikommunismus aus der Zeit vor und während des Kommunismus hat sich von der Verfolgung befreit. Als Folge hat sich nach der marxistisch-leninistischen Indoktrinierung, die mehrere Jahrzehnte angedauert hatte, auch ein Teil des früheren rechtsextremistischen Gedankengutes in der öffentlichen Meinung rehabilitiert. Auf der anderen Seite ist jeglicher Antifaschismus ein wenig Kommunisten-verdächtig geworden. Diese Tendenzen wurden durch den Kreis der rechtsextremistischen Unterstützer der Mitte-Rechts-Opposition nach dem Jahre 2002 bekräftigt, die gegen die sozial-liberale Regierungskoalition demonstrierten. In diesem Kreis erschienen Organisationen, wie die „Hatvannégy vármegye mozgalom“ („Bewegung der vierundsechzig Komitate“), die Partei „Jobbik“ oder die „Magyar Gárda“ („Ungarische Garde“). Solche Organisationen treten gegen die Ungarnfeindlichkeit auf, stempeln die Roma- und Judenfeindlichkeit als kommunistische Ideologie ab und schreiben im Kampf gegen die – ihrer Meinung nach noch immer – kommunistische Politik auch irredentistische Gedanken auf ihre Fahne. Das aus den USA betriebene, aber in Ungarn redigierte Internetportal „kuruc.info“, sowie andere rechtsextreme Internetportale greifen in indirekter Form auf die Traditionen des „hungaristischen“ Faschismus von Ferenc Szálasi aus der Zwischenkriegszeit zurück, was auch von mehreren, in Ungarn veröffentlichten Presseorganen propagiert wird. Die ungarischen rechtsextremen Bewegungen des 21. Jahrhunderts wurzeln auf organische Art und Weise in den rassistisch-faschistischen Traditionen des 20. Jahrhunderts, die dem Kommunismus und dem Einfluss der Kommunisten nach der Wende gegenübergestellt werden. Ihre neue Strategie ist – ähnlich den westeuropäischen Rechtsextremisten – die Untergrabung der pluralistischen Demokratie mit ihren eigenen Mitteln, und durch die Berufung auf die demokratischen Freiheitsrechte, das Versammlungsrecht und das Recht auf Meinungsfreiheit.