

# Open Research Repository

## Rhetoric of action: The language of the regime change in Hungary

Item Type	Book chapter
Authors	Bozóki, András
Publisher	Central European University Press
Download date	2024-10-04 23:55:15
Link to Item	<a href="http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.14018/11545">http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.14018/11545</a>

**András Bozóki**

## **The Rhetoric of Action: The Language of the Regime Change in Hungary**

The title of this paper was partly taken from Albert O. Hirschman's book, The Rhetoric of Reaction, which is an outstanding study of different types of conservative arguments against consciously initiated radical ("progressive") reforms. Hirschman distinguishes three types of argument used by "reactionaries" against any major change: perversity, jeopardy, futility. According to the perversity argument "the contemplated action will bring disastrous consequences"; according to the jeopardy argument "the new reform will jeopardize the old one"; finally, the futility argument goes on by saying, "the contemplated action attempts to change permanent structural characteristics of the social order, it is therefore bound to be wholly ineffective, futile".<sup>1</sup> My aim in this chapter is twofold: first, to outline the major rhetorical changes in Hungarian public discourse as contributions to, and consequences of, the regime change, and secondly, to interpret these rhetoric as different types of "actions".

Students of democratization in Central Europe have pointed out that in countries like Poland, Hungary and the former Czechoslovakia intellectuals involved in politics played a crucial role in the discursive battles of the regime change by redefining the name of the game.<sup>2</sup> At times when communist party bureaucrats and other apparatchiks from the older generation did not dare to mention the concept of "reform", those critical intellectuals started to speak about it. When the term "reform" was accepted officially, around 1987, they went further on to emphasize the importance of a "radical reform".<sup>3</sup> When officials spoke about "inhabitants", they started to speak about "society"; and later, when people of the old regime accepted the term "society", they moved forward to characterize it as "civil society", and so on.

The years before and after 1989 can be described as an epoch of symbolic politics in Hungary. By symbolic politics, I mean a politics which is not oriented toward the policy issues of economic redistribution, but toward breaking grounds by delegitimizing the old framework of power and constituting a new one in the name of new values and ideas. It is about past and future, advocating normative visions much more than pragmatic problem-solving. Symbolic politics also meant the appearance of new actors in the political field outside the institutions and power-centers. The decade of symbolic politics, between 1987 and 1994, represented a special discourse characterized by the prevalence of identity questions, a high degree of moralism, a confrontative style and the revitalization of cultural-ideological cleavages, all of which was very different from both the materialistic language of the former authoritarian dictatorship and of a normal, consolidated democracy. The first "action" to be analyzed here was the movement of intellectuals to undermine the communist regime.

Action 1. - The Rhetoric of Crisis: Delegitimizing the Old Regime and Distancing the Past

Due to the lack of transparent political pluralization of state socialist society, it is no wonder that critical or opposition intellectuals, who had the informal status and prestige in the suppressed society, were those who started questioning some basic principles of the regime. A group of intellectuals, who were regarded as the owners of transcontextual knowledge, could legitimize their special social status exclusively by their knowledge.<sup>4</sup> This position entitled them to formulate social claims on a normative-ethical basis, from a moral-universal perspective. This type of political intellectual had to be in opposition or close to the opposition during the 1980s. Others, who claimed to be experts of a particular field could retain their jobs but their criticism (which was also important) had to be a practice-oriented, reformist type of dissent. While the former group was working on the delegitimization of the system, the latter aimed to "rationalize" it, by pointing out its "irrationality" or disfunctionality. In a period of dictatorship and Soviet domination, "universalist" intellectuals had to "substitute" democracy and to keep national consciousness alive.

During the period of opening and liberalizing the regime, the role of expert intellectuals (lawyers, economists), or in other word, the intelligentsia, became increasingly important on the side of the opposition. They could criticize the operation of the system for violating human rights and for the malfunction of its economy on a professional basis but already with a political edge. By the late 1980s the normative models of these professionals had evolved. Earlier, economists were speaking about the harmonization of plan and market, sociologists were preoccupied with the transformation of the inner workings of the redistribution system, constitutional lawyers were talking about socialist constitutionalism, and political scientists discussed the theoretical possibilities of democratic socialism, corporate pluralism or the chances of a "new compromise". By the late 1980s the picture changed. For economists, the self-regulating market economy based on private property became the normative model; for sociologists it was the welfare state, for constitutional lawyers a state based on the rule of law, and for political scientists a representative democracy based on a multiparty system.

There is a huge literature on the concept of civil society as it was used in the 1980s.<sup>5</sup> I do not intend to discuss them in detail here. What is important to underline at this point is that the term "civil society" was not understood in Central Europe as it had been discussed in the philosophical and sociological explorations of Locke, Ferguson, Hegel, Marx or Gramsci. First and foremost, civil society meant a political strategy against the oppressive state. Among critical intellectuals it was commonly agreed that civil society was always in opposition to the state.<sup>6</sup> While the state was represented as institutionalized power and domination, civil society meant autonomy, public space, self-organization, independent initiatives, domination-free activities and communication. If the nature of the oppressive state cannot be changed, it should be left alone and self-organization of society ought to be embraced as an aim. Which was a winning strategy to delegitimize the communist state, but which also had a negative side-effect for the period of post-communism when democratic legitimacy would have required a greater acceptance of the (already democratic) state.

Besides the rhetoric of civil society, the language of human rights, equal human dignity, the insistence of an abstract but living, substantive, constitutional law (behind the facade of socialist legalism) were the elements of the language of emancipation from the late 1970s onwards. This came equally from the Anglo-Saxon liberal philosophy (e.g. John Rawls) and

from the new rhetoric of world politics in the second part of the 1970s in which the idea of human rights became a political issue (The Helsinki Accord in 1975 and the foreign policy of the US under the Carter Administration). The nascent Hungarian democratic opposition was strongly influenced by the non-violent legalism of the Czech Charter '77 as well as by the self-organizing, self-limiting character of the Polish Solidarity movement. The idea of self-limiting action also came from the writings of the influential democratic political thinker, István Bibó (who died in 1979), who, like Jan Patočka in Czechoslovakia, became the intellectual forerunner of the idea of "self-limiting revolution".<sup>7</sup> Adam Michnik's idea of "new evolutionism", which was formulated first in the early seventies, became also increasingly influential.<sup>8</sup> The regime change of 1989 in Hungary can be interpreted in this framework, already "designed" by them.

By the end of the 1980s the influence of neo-conservative and liberal discourse became stronger among the Hungarian intellectuals, especially among younger economists and political scientists. They rejected all "third way" ideas as utopian, including populism based on the idea of a cultural nation, and any post-Marxist, humanistic version of non-exploitative democratic socialism based on neither the market nor the state but voluntary associations. They were suspicious of the idea of "civil society", as an "unclear" concept which hides other, more important, "clear" notions such as a self-regulating free market economy, the rule of law, democracy, constitutionalism and individual liberty. Left-liberal and right-liberal approaches appeared at the same time in the liberal camp. The former group of intellectuals interpreted constitutionalism as a result and continuation of civil society of the eighties and they saw the emerging political parties as the suppressors of civil society. On the other hand, the latter group understood constitutionalism as an idea significantly different from civil society, and the emerging political parties as the continuation of civil society.

While the first group claimed that a strong party system shows the weakness of civil society, people in the second group believed that strong party system is the manifestation of a strong civil society. But they were in agreement about the acceptance and promotion of the idea and practice of Western democracies against socialists and nationalists.

During the disintegration of the regime, opposition forces gradually got rid of the "reformist" discourse and adopted a more and more "revolutionary" or confrontative one. The main function of this discourse was to identify the enemy, namely the communists. (See the key notions in [Appendix 1](#).) In Hungary, communism had a soft, reformist, and relatively pragmatic character from the mid-1960s onwards and the members of the Communist Party were career-oriented people or simply opportunists rather than true believers. The tactics of the opposition was to identify opportunists with the party, the party with communism in the ideological sense of the term, and finally communism with the past. Party members were successfully stamped this way. Parallel to this, the epoch of communism was condensed and presented as something alien, an imported idea, not a "genuine" part of Hungarian history. Communism was understood as the colonization of the country, a terroristic oppression of society and the conscious atomization of citizens. This was true, of course, for the first two decades of communism in Hungary. Nevertheless it served the goal of distancing the past and of identifying the enemy according to its darkest characteristics.

Anticommunism united nationalist and radical democratic oppositions against the regime and isolated the communist subculture (party members, bureaucrats, apparatchiks, servants of the regime etc.) from the rest of the society. The introduction of the distinction between "us" and

"them", whose borderline was not as clear and obvious in the Hungarian case as in Poland, helped the "gray zone" to choose between black and white and to join one of them. The reduction of the public discourse to "black-and-white" issues served the function of distancing the past by proving that the majority of society was on the "white" side as contrasted to the communists, who represented only a dark, oppressive minority.

Technocratic, non-ideological reformers, or believers in democratic socialism were downgraded as "reformist communists", which meant they had supposedly much more in common with orthodox communists (including the paramilitary groups of the communist party that carried out the violent restoration after the 1956 revolution) than reformism of any kind. This phenomenon, among others, clearly showed a certain amnesia, a selective or quickly transformed memory about the past.<sup>9</sup> Later on, the legacy of the 1956 revolution became a subject of different interpretations: it was understood on the Left as the first truly democratic socialist revolution, while on the Right it was interpreted as the example of fight for national independence, a resistance to the Soviet Union. The rhetoric of crisis undermined the influence of pro-Communist technocrats and successfully pushed them into a defensive position and to change their minds. Distancing the past, on the other hand, served the goal of drawing a line between dictatorship and democracy.

## Action 2. - The Rhetoric of Memory and Vision: Revitalizing Cultural Cleavages in Democratic Politics

The fast political pluralization preceded the first free elections in Hungary where there was no one big, unifying umbrella movement like Solidarity in Poland, the Public Against Violence in Slovakia, or the Civic Forum in the Czech lands. A competition between newly formed parties emerged already before reaching democracy, so the communist-anticommunist rhetorical battle was not the only one. Since the two most important new political parties were created by intellectual circles (historians, sociologists, writers, philosophers and others), these cultural "tribes" <sup>10</sup> occupied the political arena. Their different approaches to the issues of symbolic politics dominated the political agenda during the first couple of years after the elections.

The major revitalized cultural cleavage, widely known as populist vs urbanist, represented two understandings of Hungarian history and two visions for the future.<sup>11</sup> This cleavage had a resemblance to the 19th century Russian division of intellectuals (slavophiles vs Westernizers), and it was also similar to that in Romania (protochronists vs anti-protochronists).<sup>12</sup> Populists tended to see themselves as the true representatives of the will of the people. At the beginning they did not even want to form a party, because they wished to embrace the nation as a whole. They claimed that Hungary should work out and follow its own Hungarian ideology, and not copy foreign ideas coming either from the East or the West. They saw liberalism and socialism as twins, going hand in hand. They favored retroactive justice which however, according to the constitution, could not be carried out without doing harm to the rule of law. If the rule of law was an obstacle to justice they preferred the latter to the former. Liberal or liberalizer "urbanists", on the other hand, were those who wanted to Westernize the country by copying Western institutions and emphasizing the "return to Europe". They preferred

individual rights to the collective ones, and refused the "Hungarian ideology" as an obscure manifestation of a non-liberal "third way". While liberalizers urged an active policy "toward Europe", in other words, for them the idea of "Europe" was a key concept in a modernization project, populists, in accordance with the Christian-conservatives, claimed that Hungary had always been part of Europe, so "Europeanization" could not be a "project".<sup>13</sup> While populists spoke the language of "tradition",<sup>14</sup> liberalizers spoke the language of "progress". The former wanted to "speed up" the regime change after the elections by looking at as a "permanent revolution", while the latter group claimed that the transition should not be "revolutionarized" *ex post*, rather, the new institutional democracy should be further "democratized". (See the differences in their key concept in [Appendix 2.](#))

The populists attacked the government on the basis that it lacked commitment to "Hungarianness" and was the victim of the conspiracy of international capital by "selling out" the country. This was presented most sharply in the radical rightist views of a writer-politician, István Csurka.<sup>15</sup> They also utilized worst-case scenarios concerning the future of Hungarian minorities living outside the country represented by some "charismatic" minority leaders.

However, there was an attack on the government from the other side too, from a left-liberal intellectual movement. This was the initiative called Democratic Charter which claimed that Hungary was not democratic enough, and broader participation of citizens in political life was necessary. They opposed the existing, exclusivist "elite-democracy", based on the idea of institutional representation, in the name of an all-inclusive participatory democracy. Though this was a new appearance of an old debate on representative versus participatory democracy, spokespersons of the Democratic Charter claimed that they were "more democratic" than others.<sup>15</sup> By mobilizing tens of thousands of people in street demonstrations against the growing influence of the radical right, they contributed to the maintenance of a public discourse on democracy as well as to the fall of the Christian-conservative government in the 1994 elections.

By that time it became clear that Hungarian voters were not interested in symbolic politics any longer for they simply wanted a better life beyond freedom and no more ideologizing. Since they had freedom, they did not want to hear too much rhetoric about it. Wishing more equality, security and well-being, they voted back the ex-communist socialists as "experts", as opposed to the failed ideologizing parties with their "trouble-making" intellectual elite.

The symbolic fight for the "true" memory of history (by interpreting and reinterpreting the meaning of Trianon, by discussing whether the end of World War II for Hungary had been meant a liberation or new occupation, and by continuously debating the roles of some historical personalities, like Oszkár Jászi, Miklós Horthy, Imre Nagy, János Kádár and others) was a part of identity politics. Basically the same is true for the clash between different visions of the future of Hungary, though the European Community (later Union) was attractive enough for all major parties to soften their disagreements. The heated debate concerning memory/vision was a battle of opinion-forming intellectuals through the media to gain enough influence in shaping the identity of a new democracy.

### Action 3. - The Ideology of Modernization and the Rhetoric of Pragmatism: The Return of the Socialists as "Experts"

After the 1994 elections a socialist-liberal coalition came to power. The harsh ideological debates were significantly softened and the country gradually turned to a less symbolic, less cultural "normal politics". The major differences in ideological positions still remained but the political actors' vocabularies were reshaped. Center-right and right-wing parties realized the poor political benefit of the old nationalist rhetoric and reshaped themselves as "civic" parties dealing with issues like the state of political community and the public good. They started to speak the language of autonomy, self-government, embourgeoisement, moral community, family, envisioning a bottom-up reconstitution of society based on (moral) communities. On the other hand, the socialist-led government adopted the language of "enlightened", non-ideologizing modernization of the "experts". They emphasized the importance of top-down "Europeanization", macroeconomic crisis-management, the state-organized market economy by monetarist design. They used the old dichotomy of traditional/modern, presenting themselves as the modernizing forces against the shadows of the pre-communist past.

This "modernism", however, was again a bit outdated, a product of modernization theory, which was the dominant paradigm in Western social sciences in the 1950s and 1960s. The rhetorical adaptation of this approach worked well in delegitimizing communism in the late 1980s, but it proved to be rather poor in reconstituting the country's identity. No doubt, Hungary was a modern country, in almost all sociological aspects of the term, so the idea of "modernity" was confused with "modernization" or "modernizing".<sup>17</sup> Modernization requires "modernizers" and ex-communist socialists tended to see themselves as "modernizers", whatever this concept means, of post-transition conditions. (See: [Appendix 3.](#)) After the second free election in 1994, the rhetoric of modernization became the everyday language of the technocratic professionals, former intra-party reformers of the old regime. This new rhetorical "cleavage", the clash of two dominant languages was further colored by leftist and rightist populism as an opposition discourse against the elitist policy of the modernizers.

Naturally, the language of modernization was not used by the socialist majority government for theoretical but for political reasons. This malleable notion was used to give signals partly to the reformers of the 1980s and partly to the socialized middle strata of the Kádár era. The message for the former was to let them know that the government needed their expertise and for the latter it suggested that no more radical change, conducive to anomie, would be instituted and the time of symbolic-ideological politics of the regime change was over. Beyond this action for "slow down", modernization, as a substitute of an ideology was also used to serve as a panacea to cure the identity crisis of the socialist party which had come about because the classical redistributive social-democratic policy could not be pursued during the time of shock-ridden transformation. The populist-syndicalist left wing within the party was watching suspiciously the capitalist transformation taking place under the socialist party government. On the one hand, using the rhetoric of modernization pacified the populist left wing by diverting their attention from capitalism, and on the other hand, it encouraged the technocratic elite by letting them know that they could go on benefiting from privatization. So modernization ideology in a broader sense served to bridge the gap between the party elite, the winners of

transformation and the socialist voters mainly recruited from the losers of the transformation. Modernization ideology was also suitable to cover up the economic-political discrepancy of the governing parties and their intellectuals. It served as a political common denominator between the economic reformers of the socialists and liberals. It bridged over the former break between the communists and anti-Communists as it aimed at the (near) future and not at the past. The idea of modernization also had the following message in the Hungarian actual political situation: it was not a question of choosing between liberal capitalism and democratic socialism but it was a question of the future of modernity. So the final message was that modernity, though the first item on the "agenda" was to develop the "market economy" in the post-communist period, had some significance beyond political regimes. At the same time, this sort of rhetoric sustained the subdued break line that had been present as a result of selecting different cultural values.

The pragmatist and modernizing rhetoric of the professionals around the government was aimed to be the "last" action: to slow down the former "actions" of the regime change, and by so doing, completing consolidation. Modernization ideology in Hungary served as a substitute for the lack of ideology in the anti-ideological consolidation of democracy.

### Popular Perceptions of Life under Post-Communism

Until now, I summarized mainly the language of the opinion-forming elite. That was not accidental since the Hungarian regime change occurred via negotiations, in the aura of a more and more dominant "culture of critical discourse" 18 shaped by intellectual elite. Most people, on the other hand, suffered by the drop of living standard and, anyway, had to accommodate to the new rules of the game. The name of the new game was "wild capitalism", an "original capital-accumulation", in which everything is possible if you are smart. People understood that their actions in these crucial, anomic years would shape their future history by creating a new hierarchy of social inequalities. Those who had a chance to choose at all soon realized: good choices could make them rich for generations, bad choices might deprive them from this exceptional opportunity.

In this new social environment, or in this new perception of social reality, formerly atomized society has had to (re)create networks of interest-groups in order to reach the desired individual benefit. Individualism plus pure interest relations have been the orders of the day. Political (and other) jokes, which were so typical in popular communication during the Kádár era, have disappeared. An "imagined capitalism" started to function in the minds of the actors. The ideas of solidarity, civil society and political community have been replaced in the popular perception by different "-cracies", such as "technocracy", "meritocracy", "plutocracy", "partocracy", "cleptocracy" etc. These groups have been competing with each other in a game which lacks rules, or the existing rules are always renegotiable. Democracy has been seen by many as the best tool for the conversion of power of the late Kádárist technocratic elite.

Let me offer, finally, two almost untranslatable words from the Hungarian popular jargon in order to make perceptible the general state of affairs as perceived by many during the first couple of years of post-communism.



The first Hungarian term is nyomulás which is widely used in many different situations of everyday life. This means "pressing forward" or "general penetration" in an active, "pushy", aggressive, very determined way. This is the way business goes in the post-communist "wild capitalism". But not only successful business people can be characterized by this term: People in all strata of the society can behave like this. Nyomulás is a key concept for general behavior: This is the way to success for some, and to survival for others.

The second term is lenyúlás, which has no proper equivalent in English. The term describes the move by which one tries to stretch out his/her hand for something in order to grasp it. This move is clearly top-down in its direction ("le" means "downward"). This is an illegal or half-legal act of people regarded smart to grasp certain assets. In the general understanding of the public this notion is very close to stealing and this action is widely recognized as the key moment of privatization. No matter whether privatization was "spontaneous" or "state-controlled", the moment of lenyúlás remained its crucial aspect in the popular discourse. It is sometimes ironic to see former high-brow intellectuals as vanguard of nyomulás and lenyúlás by working hard to get closer to government and business circles. As top advisers, top politicians or top privatizers they change their identity rapidly accomodating themselves to the new reality. (It is even more curious, which sometimes also occurs, that they change their job, social position and mentality, but still try to sell themselves as „intellectuals” to the wider audience as well as their former, academic circles.)

## Conclusions

The popular perception of change and its language, existing in sharp contrast to the elite discourse, deserve further investigation. My goal in this chapter was to give examples of the elite discourses "as actions" in order to make sense of the language of the regime change in Hungary.

I distinguished three types of rhetoric of elite action. In the first period of regime change (between 1985 and 1990) the rhetoric of competing groups centered around the redefinition of the present state of the political system. The actions of the reformist-transformist intellectuals in that period can be characterized by the extensive use of the "crisis argument". They claimed that the regime in fact was in a deep political, economic, moral (etc.) crisis, therefore something had to be done. The late communist ruling elite, on the other hand, argued that the crisis argument did not fully fit the situation and the regime was able to survive with minor reforms. In this battle the former group was successful to delegitimize the language of the orthodox forces and therefore it was able to delegitimize the regime itself.

In the second period investigated here (between 1990 and 1994, the dates of the first and second free elections) the rhetorical battles focused on issues in historical memory and different visions of the future. This was the period of constitutional politics which required the adaptation of concepts like democracy, justice, restitution, compensation and others to the conditions of early years of post-communism. This was the period of Kulturkampf between Christian-nationalist-conservative and left-liberal-cosmopolitan intellectual groups that organized themselves in and around different political parties and coalitions. All actions had a rhetorical reference to the past (memory) and future (vision) due to the nature of a "new beginning".

Finally, the return of former communists to power in 1994 was marked by a new type of political action and a change in the rhetoric adequate to that. This was the rhetoric of „pragmatism”, the language of modernization, the discourse of consolidation. The rhetoric of action has lost its former moral fervour or constitutional/foundational orientation and it suggested a sort of "back to business" attitude. Humanistic intellectuals, formerly active in the cultural and political battles of the regime change, withdrew from the front lines. The "moralist" intellectual "politocracy" has been replaced by the "amoral" professionals of status quo. Some corruption scandals and corruption discourses following them just make more clearly visible their contrast to the more recent "sounds of silence".

In these three periods, 1. crisis/non-crisis arguments reflected upon the regime change, 2. different memory/vision arguments came from the "founding" nature of constitutional politics, and 3. modernizing-pragmatist-elitist vs. radicalizing-populist arguments reflect upon the different state of mind of the winners and losers of the regime change in the period of democratic consolidation.

According to an ideal-typical crisis argument from the first period, "the regime is in a deep structural crisis and the only outcome to avoid catastrophe is to reform or transform it". According to typical foundational arguments from the 1990-94 period, "the identity of new democracy should be based on a) the pre-communist traditions and institutions of the Hungarian past, or b) a future-oriented, open society with more participatory characteristics". According to the typical post-1994 modernizing-technocratic argument, "politics is about pragmatic actions and not about general ideas: let's make things better". The shifts in the content and style of political discourse, as well as the transformation of key notions in the linguistic battles, clearly represent the direction of political changes in Hungary (and the rise and fall of politically engaged intellectuals) from regime change to consolidation.

\* \* \*

#### APPENDIX 1.

Linguistic differences between communist party officials and radical reformist intellectuals (1987-89).

#### Key Words

Communist Party officials  
(in power)

Radical intellectuals  
(in opposition)

democratism	democracy
problems	crisis
manageable	(un)solvable
population	nation
inhabitants	society
rights and duties	human rights and civil liberties
geopolitics	moral politics
social peace	civil society
organizational change	structural change
exchange rate	debt
social backwardness	poverty
institutional reform	radical reform
socialist democracy	western democracy
socialist pluralism	pluralism
consensus	new consensus
comrade	fellow citizen
party	movement
modernization	modernity
socialism	state socialism
liberalization	liberty
brother countries	neighbor countries
people	Hungarians
Soviet Union	glasnost
stabilization	restructuring
Kádár	Gorbachev
Gorbachev	Imre Nagy
1956: counter-revolution (1986)	1956: "events" (1986)
1956: "popular uprising" (1989)	1956:revolution(1988-9)
victims	martyrs
investment	environment
order	constitutionalism

Source: A compilation by the author from press discourses, party manifestos and public speeches.

## APPENDIX 2.

Linguistic division among the Hungarian political intellectuals during the period of Kulturkampf (1990-94).

### Key Words

Left-liberal camp  
(in opposition)

Right-conservative camp  
(in power)

difference	unity
minority	majority
future oriented	thousand years old
pluralistic	strong
manageable	decisive
Jewish-Christian	Christian
free	universal
radical	conservative
global	deep
consensual	spiritual
inclusive	impartial
Western	Hungarian
social	national
trust	roots
open	substantial
rule of law	good government
humanistic	positive
bottom-up	motivation
critical	conscious
challenge	yes
tolerance	commitment
alternative	tradition
philosophy	public service
businesslike	vocation
post-communist	tragedy
systemic change	self-building
cleavage	responsibility
entrepreneurship	chances
European	Carpathian
professionalism	dignity
recovery	rise
structural	moral
discourse	principle

Source: Barna and Dalos (1994) with slight modifications by the author.

### APPENDIX 3.

Linguistic differences in the political discourse after the ex-communists' return to power, under the socialist-liberal government (1994-98).

#### Key Words

Left-liberal camp  
(in power)

Right-conservative camp  
(in opposition)

modernization	embourgeoisement
effectiveness	dignity
financial balance	economic growth
social liberalism	liberal bolshevism
macroeconomics	microeconomics
adaptation	identity
globalization	Hungarian interests
multiculturalism	national culture
capital accumulation	poverty
difference	unity
foreign investment	Hungarian entrepreneurs
privatization	corruption
competent management	nomenclature bourgeoisie
social sensitivity	social responsibility
professionalism	kleptocracy
inhabitants	citizens
normalcy	alternative
security	criminality
order	new order
anti-populism	anti-elitism

Source: A compilation by the author from press discourses, party manifestos and public speeches.

## Endnotes

1. See Hirschman (1991: 167).
2. See for instance, Bernik (1994), Bozóki (1994), Böröcz (1991), Havel (1992), Kemp-Welch (1997), Konrád and Szelényi (1991), Lengyel (1996), Reich (1993), Scherpe (1993).
3. This was the strategy of the group of reformist economists in Hungary in the second part of the 1980s. Cf. Bokros, Csillag, Lengyel and Matolcsy (1988). See also the case study of J. M. Kovács (1990), and, for a good basis of comparison, a more general analysis of modernizationist and „progressive” intellectuals by Ron Eyerman (1990).
4. For a detailed description of intellectuals as a potentially New Class see in Konrád and Szelényi (1979). For other concepts of New Class, see Gouldner (1979), Bell (1980), Bruce-Briggs (1981), Shatz (1989).
5. See the works of Arato (1993), Bozóki (1995), Keane (1988), Konrád (1984), Krygier (1996), Meiksins Wood (1990), Molnár (1996), Seligman (1992), and others.

6. Cf. Smolar (1996), Vajda (1983), Weiss (1993).
7. Bibó (1991).
8. Michnik (1987).
9. See in detail Rév (1994). While Rév mainly discusses the problems of amnesia, Pokol (1993) gives examples about how some crucial concepts have been redefined as reflections to the "transformed" public memory. On the ambivalent character of 1989 see the analysis of Fehér and Heller (1994).
10. The term "tribe" was first used in this context by G. M. Tamás (1989).
11. On the populist-urbanist division see Nagy (1990), Kovács (1994), Fricz (1997).
12. On the famous controversy between „Slavophiles” and „Westernizers” see for example Seton-Watson (1960), Walicki (1980) and many others. On the similar division in Romania, see Irina Culic’s chapter in this book.
13. Cf. Scheppele (1996), Wolek (1996).
14. See in detail, Gábor Gyáni (1993).
15. See the infamous pamphlet of István Csurka (1992).
16. On the movement of Democratic Charter see in detail, András Bozóki (1996). Similar differences could be found in the understanding of democracy in the Czech Republic. See Garton Ash (1995), Havel and Klaus (1996).
17. On the political uses of modernization as ideology see Müller (1992), Böröcz (1996), Bozóki (1997).
18. A key concept introduced by Alvin Gouldner (1979).
19. See in detail, Kovács (1997).

## References

Arato, Andrew (1993). From Neo-Marxism to Democratic Theory: Essays on the Critical Theory of Soviet-type Societies. Armonk, N.Y.: Sharpe

Bell, Daniel (1980). „The New Class: A Muddled Concept” in D. Bell, The Winding Passage: Essays and Sociological Journeys, 1960-1980. New York: Basic Books, pp.144-164.

Barna, Imre and György Dalos (1994). "Szócséplő" (An Ironic Political Dictionary) Mozgó Világ, Vol.20. No.1. Appendix

Bernik, Ivan (1994). „The Role of Intellectuals in the Slovenian ‘Velvet Evolution’ from Authoritarianism to Democracy” in A. Bozóki ed. Democratic Legitimacy in Post-Communist Societies. Budapest: T-Twins, pp.157-169.

Bibó, István (1991). Democracy, Revolution, Self-Determination. Edited by Károly Nagy. Boulder, Co.: Social Science Monographs

Bokros,L., I. Csillag, L. Lengyel and Gy. Matolcsy (1988). "Fordulat és reform" (Turn and Reform) Közgazdasági Szemle, No.3.

Bozóki, András (1994). "Intellectuals and Democratization in Hungary" in Chris Rootes and Howard Davis eds. A New Europe? Social Change and Political Transformation. London: UCL Press, pp.149-175.

Bozóki, András (1995). "Civil társadalom és polgárosodás" (Civil Society and Embourgeoisement) in A. Bozóki, Konfrontáció és konszenzus: a demokratizálás stratégiái. (Confrontation and Consensus: Strategies for Democratization) Szombathely: Savaria University Press, pp.201-220.

Bozóki, András (1996). "Democrats against Democracy: The Charter Movement in Hungary" in Philip Lawrence and Mathias Döbler eds. Knowledge and Power: The Changing Role of European Intellectuals. Aldershot - Hong Kong - Sydney: Avebury, pp.88-120.

Bozóki, András (1997). „The Ideology of Modernization and the Policy of Materialism: The Day After for the Socialists” Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics, Vol.13. No.3. pp.56-102.

Böröcz, József (1991). "Vanguard of the Construction of Capitalism? The Hungarian Intellectuals' Trip to Power" Critical Sociology, Vol.18. No.1. pp.111-115.

Böröcz, József (1996). "The Modernizing Stand: Pitfalls of Conceptual Streamlining" A paper presented at the Central European University. Budapest, July 1996.

Bruce-Bruggs, B. ed. The New Class? New York: McGraw-Hill, 1981.

Csurka, István (1992). "Néhány gondolat..." (Some Thoughts)Magyar Fórum, August 20. pp.8-16.

Eyerman, Ron (1990). „Intellectuals and Progress: The Origins, Decline, and Revival of a Critical Group” in J. A. Alexander and P. Sztompka eds. Rethinking Progress: Movements, Forces, and Ideas at the End of the 20th Century. Boston: Unwin Hyman, pp.91-105.

Fehér, Ferenc and Ágnes Heller (1994). "1989 uralkodó eszméi" (Dominating Ideas of 1989) Világosság, Vol.35. Nos.5-6. pp.72-93.

Fricz, Tamás (1997). A népi-urbánus vita tegnap és ma. (The Populist-Urbanist Debate Yesterday and Today) Budapest: Napvilág

Garton Ash, Timothy (1995). „Prague: Intellectuals and Politicians” The New York Review of Books, Vol.42. No.1. January 12. pp.34-41.

Gouldner, Alvin (1979). The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Class. London: Macmillan

Gyáni, Gábor (1993). "Political Uses of Tradition in Post-Communist East Central Europe" Social Research, Vol.60. No.4. Winter, pp.893-913.

Havel, Václav (1992). Summer Meditations. New York: A. Knopf

Havel, Václav and Václav Klaus (1996). "Rival Visions" (With a Commentary of Petr Pithart) Journal of Democracy, Vol.7. No.1. pp.12-23.

Hirschman, Albert O. (1991). The Rhetoric of Reaction: Perversity, Futility, Jeopardy. Cambridge Mass.- London: Belknap Press

Keane, John ed.(1988). Civil Society and the State. New York - London: Verso

Kemp-Welch, Anthony (1997). „Politics and the Polish Intellectuals, 1945-89” in J. Jennings and A. Kemp-Welch eds. Intellectuals in Politics: From the Dreyfus Affair to Salman Rushdie. London: Routledge, pp.169-194.

Konrád, George (1984). Antipolitics. London: Methuen

Konrád, George and Iván Szelényi (1979). The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich

Konrád, George and Iván Szelényi (1991). "Intellectuals and Domination in Post-Communist Societies" in Pierre Bourdieu and James Coleman eds. Social Theory in a Changing Society. Boulder: Westview

Kovács, Éva (1994). "Indulatok a mai népi-urbánus vitában" (Passions in the Contemporary Populist-Urbanist Debate) in J.P. Martin and K. Schay eds. Értelmiség és politika. (Intellectuals and Politics) Budapest: Széchenyi Kollégium, pp.14-39.

Kovács, János Mátyás (1990). „Reform Economics: A Classification Gap” Daedalus, Vol.119. No.1. pp.215-248.



- Kovács, Melinda (1997). "Paperweight: Press Discourses in Hungary and the U.S." M.A. Thesis, Department of Political Science, Central European University, Budapest
- Krygier, Martin (1996). "The Sources of Civil Society" Quadrant, October, pp.19-22. and November, pp.26-32.
- Lengyel, László (1996). A rendszerváltó elit tündöklése és bukása. (The Rise and Fall of the Elite of the Regime Change) Budapest: Helikon
- Meiksins Wood, Ellen (1990). „The Uses and Abuses of Civil Society” in R. Miliband, L. Panitch, and J. Saville eds. Socialist Register. London: Merlin Press, pp.60-84.
- Michnik, Adam (1987). Letters from Prison and Other Essays. Berkeley - Los Angeles: University of California Press
- Molnár, Miklós (1996). Civil társadalom és akiknek nem kell. (Civil Society and Those Who Do Not Want to Get It) Budapest: Educatio
- Müller, Klaus (1992). "'Modernizing' Eastern Europe: Theoretical Problems and Political Dilemmas" Arch. Europe. Soc. Vol.33. pp.109-150.
- Nagy, Péter Sz. (1990). A népi-urbánus vita dokumentumai, 1932-1947. (The Documents of the Populist-Urbanist Debate, 1932-47) Budapest: Rakéta
- Pokol, Béla (1993). Pénz és politika. (Money and Politics) Budapest: Aula
- Reich, Jens (1993). Abschied von den Lebenslügen: Die Intelligenz und die Macht. Berlin: Rowohlt
- Rév, István (1994). "Amnesia: The Revised Framework of Hungarian History" Budapest Review of Books, Vol.4. No.1. pp.2-6.
- Scheppele, Kim Lane (1996). "Imagined Europe" A paper presented at the Law and Society Association Meeting, Glasgow, Scotland
- Scherpe, Klaus R. (1993). „The German Intelligentsia in a Time of Radical Change” The European Studies Journal, Vol.10. Nos. 1-2. pp.297-311.
- Seligman, Adam B. (1992). The Idea of Civil Society. New York: The Free Press
- Seton-Watson, Hugh (1960). „The Russian Intellectuals” in George B. de Huszar ed. The Intellectuals: A Controversial Portrait. Glencoe: The Free Press, pp.41-50.
- Shatz, Marshall S. (1989). Jan Waclaw Machajski: A Radical Critic of the Russian Intelligentsia and Socialism. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Smolar, Aleksander (1996). "From Opposition to Atomization" Journal of Democracy, Vol.7. No.1. pp.24-38.

Tamás, Gáspár M. (1989). "Szint vallani" (To Come Clean) Hitel, March 1. pp.13-14.

Vajda, Mihály (1983). "Ellenzék vagy kritikai nyilvánosság?" (Opposition or Critical Public Sphere?) Beszélő, No.8. October

Walicki, Andrzej (1980). A History of Russian Thought from the Enlightenment to Marxism. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Weiss, János (1993). "A civil társadalomról -- öt tételben" (On Civil Society in Five Parts) Világosság, Vol.34. No.12. pp.51-60.

Wolek, Artur (1996). "Symbolic Politics in Central Europe after 1989: Right-wing Agenda in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland" MA Thesis, Department of Political Science, Central European University, Budapest