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FROM THE GREEN MOVEMENT TO A PARTY

THE EFFECT OF THE CRISIS AND DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENTS IN HUNGARY

ABSTRACT   General political, economic and moral crises began in Hungary in 2006, after the prime minister's speech about the real state of the Hungarian economy was delivered. Fidesz, the then largest opposition party refused any further cooperation with the government and started to attack the governing socialist-liberal coalition. After four years of permanent campaign against the socialists, Fidesz won the elections in 2010 and started to rearrange the whole political and social system in Hungary. Parallel to that, the appearance of social movements in Hungary can clearly be understood as a reply to crisis phenomena, whether they are left-leaning organisations, green--ecological, critical of globalisation ("globcrit") or far-right, fascistoid groups and networks. One part of the green-ecologial movement was formed into a party and was named as Politics Can Be Different (LMP), but after 2010 other organizations appeared such as Szolidaritás, an organisation established with reference to the Polish example, with a trade union background, Milla (One Million for Press Freedom), 4K (Movement for the Fourth Republic) and HaHa (Students' Network), the Hungarian Two-tailed Dog Party (MKKP) and the Hungarian Pirate Party.

Keywords: crisis, new democratic movements, protest activity, Hungary

INTRODUCTION

Beginning from the 2000s, many "colour revolutions" have taken place all over the world. The multicolour movements demanding change organised themselves around

several themes, but they had the common attitude of taking a commitment against the more and more visible crisis phenomena. The demands had common characteristics, such as the increasingly harsh criticism of globalisation and the objectives of replacing governments with authoritarian/semi-authoritarian features and increasing the transparency of political decisions. The protests following the Seattle WTO Summit of 1999 (Prague, Genoa, Davos, Madrid, Copenhagen) were embedded in the process of the upheaval of globalisation criticism, and then the movements of groups protesting against corruption and authoritarian practices in post-socialist countries (Serbia, Georgia, Belarus, Ukraine, Azerbaijan) projected the appearance of a new generation. An analysis of the Arab Spring that still invokes unpredictable consequences and extremely complex political relations showed the interactions of modernisation and globalisation appearing in the periphery, with religion and traditions. Internet (and especially Facebook) played a major role in the development of the continuously transforming movements and in the escalation of events. Members received information through social media sites, organised themselves and rapidly reacted to developments. Therefore, the movements involved virtual communities in which disputes continuously took place and the changes of the members' positions could be measured.

The appearance of social movements in Hungary can clearly be understood as a response to crisis phenomena, whether they are left-leaning organisations, green-ecological, critics of globalisation ("globcrit") or far-right, fascistoid groups and networks. In this study, I concentrate on democratic, single-issue movements operating in a democratic manner, founded after the 2000s. The study focuses on the surge of the Hungarian green movement and its organisation into a party (Politics Can Be Different – Lehet Más a Politika – LMP), but is also affects the history of Szolidaritás, an organisation established with reference to the Polish example, with a trade union background, Milla (One Million for Press Freedom – Egymillióan a magyar sajtószabadságért), 4K (Movement for the Fourth Republic – Negyedik Köztársaság Mozgalom) and HaHa (Students' Network – Hallgatói Hálózat), and the appearance of such organisations as the Hungarian Two-tailed Dog Party (Magyar Kétfarkú Kutya Párt – MKKP) and the Pirate Party (Kalózpárt). In my essay, I often refer to far-right/radical movements but do not elaborate on them in detail because their complexity and depth could be the subject of a separate study.

CRISES AND MOVEMENTS – THEORETICAL OUTLOOK

The ever more frequent and deeper changes (and the chains thereof) appearing simultaneously with the process of globalisation, political and economic crises, are often unpredictable, unexpected and cause uncertainty in both people in general, and decision-makers in particular. According to theories on change, it is primarily the acting individuals (and not the groups) that have motivations, plans and interests that can be negotiated with other acting individuals for the purpose of enforcing interests of a group or the development of the group. However, the relationships of the actors and the conse-

quences of actions are systems with multiple components, and they can swiftly disappear or reappear in case of a crisis situation. Dahrendorf emphasises[1] that this is exactly the reason why a group's actions, social and political changes of structure have to be connected with persons and personal abilities to understand the system process and the factors causing changes. He considers the development of norms and values a change of structure, while according to him the change of roles and relations in an unchanged system of norms and values is adaptation. According to the theories of social changes,[2] social systems inevitably wish to provide resources for their survival – even at the expense of others, while economic interest has an interest in finding a place for their operation that offers a stable political system and legal background. If this is impossible or hindered by obstacles, the structure has to be changed, or certain elements of the structure have to be strengthened to enable a change in the future. The ability to innovate may provide an adequate answer thereto, by assisting in the solution of crisis situations. Social or political and economic innovation can be successful, where the adequate intellectual capital and human resources meet the will, initiative, capital and political support.

Currently, the neoliberal economic system ruling in a large part of the world is hindered by increasing and more extreme social contradictions, and its operation is limited by crises and ecological limitations. However, system malfunctions shall not be confused with efforts aiming to change it. Upon reviewing the history of the aforementioned movements in the 2000s, we shall agree to the statement that political and economic crises are properties of the system, and they shall not be considered symptoms of its change. Thus, the battles for positions in the dominant economic-political circles do not affect the framework of the system in the long run.[3]

Social changes are only partially instructible, controllable and measureable, as they stem from the aggregation of complex processes. They are rather predictable and spontaneous interlacements of processes. Therefore, the changes are cyclical; they consist of accelerating and decelerating phases, sometimes being open to innovation, sometimes expecting patience. It is also doubtful whether innovations and developments contribute positively to social development, and their effects and consequences are dubious. Multivariate processes almost exclude the possibility of unified reference frameworks; new paradigms are related to paradox phenomena and signs of a crisis.[4] Bell also emphasised that it is not the central, top-down initiatives that are the most innovative, but the locally organised, grassroots actions, programmes, cooperations that ensure the presence of locality and civil courage, while being based on personal cooperation at the same time.[5]

The reason for the creation of social movements is the inadequacy of organisational--institutional structures in the society to satisfy new types of social demands and to

1   R. Dahrendorf, *A modern társadalmi konfliktus*, Budapest 1994, pp. 102-104.

2   W. Zapf, *Modernizáció, jólét, átmenet*, Budapest 2002, p. 21.

3   A. Artner, *Globalizáció alulnézetben – Elnyomott csoportok – lázadó mozgalmak*, Budapest 2006, p. 103.

4   T. Kuosa, *Towards the Dynamic Paradigm of Futures Research*, 2009.

5   D. Bell, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society: a Venture in Social Forecasting*, Budapest 1973, pp. 64-67.

manage new social problems. Thus, the movement takes a stance for or against the existing system, rejecting, criticising, and channeling the current state.[6] It is an elementary accessory for an operating democracy (and a good measurement to the degree thereof) to have a viable and effective non-governmental sector.

The major traditional social rifts, which were typical till the 1960s, partially lost their significance until the 1980s. Partially new, previously non-existing conflicts appeared and transformed the party system and the non-governmental sector. Usually, these conflicts of the developed world were not absolute in their nature, they did not question the existing regime, but aimed to reduce injustice in the distribution of standards of living, to transform power structures and to fight for second and third generation rights or the protection of the private sphere. With the development of the welfare state, real class conflicts lost their meaning, while new kinds of eligibility problems arose. The romantic ideal of gaining rights did not invigorate certain social groups anymore, and the appearance of mass parties and collective parties rendered ideological clashes obsolete. However, new types of eligibility problems arose, such as the threats to natural environment, the decay of living standards (especially urban life), the dissolution of traditional communities, and the primacy of economic interests. As consequences of the slow dissolution of welfare institutions, the appearance of the new exclusion (new poverty), the increase of income disparities, the problems of redistribution, the sharp increase of utility prices affected everybody, and started to mobilise everyone to a certain extent, whether they were proponents of post-material values or members of globalization-sceptic groups. With the disappearance of classes, interest groups, civil society organizations and movements have appeared to more profoundly represent partial interests, and they have participated in social-political life as a new mediating medium, and a sphere of social action.[7]

By the 1990s, the rapid development of information technology systems operating production systems created such knowledge-based information societies that can acquire enormous quantities of information via new communication channels, and may exchange and provide information at the same time. It enables people to join movements and networks virtually (not just materially) and to communicate their opinions in matters affecting them. New forms of participation and persuasion are discovered every day, and the media, political and business sectors work to cover these channels as much as possible.

The change the social movements wish to bring about aims at such a social structure that is displayed in the symbols and texts of the movement. Activists of the social movements are connected by their own movement identities that are usually very complex, having multiple elements and typically relate to one issue (single issue) or a group of similar cases. They are connected to the specific issue by their identities and common sets of values, and differentiate and isolate themselves from their enemies, neutral actors, and relate to their allies. The movement is a meeting of different

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[6]　M. Szabó, *Társadalmi mozgalmak és politikai tiltakozás*, Budapest 2001, p. 62.

[7]　R. Dahrendorf, *A modern társadalmi konfliktus*, Budapest 1994.

identities, and therefore a conscious identity-building and community-constructing process.[8]

Action is the individual's freedom of choice, in which the goals, means and situations of action define the framework of the action. The utilitarian dilemma shows an important condition: the hierarchy and importance of partial goals may change, but the action continues until the reason creating the action is eliminated or the goal is realised (Habermas, 2011). Collective behaviour theory is based on the behaviourist understanding of social processes, applied to the examination of social phenomena that include some kind of collective action, like panic, mass hysteria, strike or the social movements themselves. According to the collective behaviour theory, these forms are only different in their appearances, their logic has a common origin, and therefore their analysis may also be conducted in a similar manner. However, these forms of collective behaviour show a confused operation of the social system, they are created as a result of some social tension or error, hindering the normal operation of society and creating an anomic state. The theory considers the discontent of the individuals to be the direct cause of collective behaviour.[9] In case of collective action, the competent individuals interact with like-minded companions and align the principles of their actions. During the course of the process, participants of the collective action articulate their suggestions not only for themselves, but also for others, and try to persuade them about the rightness of their way. If we accept that their decisions are guided by logic and possess rational bases together with arguments and general norms being accepted by the society or its subgroups, then the claim can be justified that social movements are communities acting for or against a certain change, with some kind of continuity. There are completely different examples regarding the sections, schedules, ideological background, goals and means of this change, ranging from revolutionary to conservative and the divisions are often unclear.

Social movements are less institutional organisations than parties, less stable in their ideologies and their philosophical system is not completely clear (or they lack a general ideology completely). Therefore, the theory of interpreting frameworks (*frame analysis*) is the ideal tool to study movements beyond their organisational properties. However, *frame* does not simply replace ideology, but its auxiliary property is very significant. The authors differentiate between three types of social movements: value--oriented, participation-oriented and power-oriented movements. During the development of a movement, it is a serious dilemma to decide which actions take place in the frame of the political system (inducing reforms) and which step over the framework, setting the demand to change the political system as their objective. This issue accompanies the development of the non-governmental sector (and, simultaneously, the ecological movement, for example), causing a crisis of values, division or dissolution in many cases. In case of value-oriented movements, it means reaching a certain social

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8   A. Melucci, *Challenging Codes. Collective Action in the Information Age,* Budapest 1996, pp. 135-139.

9   D. Mikecz, *Az ellenállás kultúrája. Kultúra, identitás a mozgalomkutatás kultúrájában*, Budapest 2010, pp. 110-112.

change. Members of the power-oriented movement aim to take over legitimate social institutions, without wanting to change them, so they intend to become relevant elements of the political system within the provided political framework. Participation--oriented movements wish to satisfy the needs of their members and do not articulate general programmes for the wider society. It is useful to study the arguments of Ted Robert Gurr and Monty G. Marshall (2005) based on conflict analysis, about the circumstances of the birth and development of movements. According to this, new ideologies are created during socially tense conflicts and discontent, to provide a more acceptable justification to political changes. In the new approach to the system, previously existing social tensions and conflicts are articulated, whether they are social, political – or increasingly more often – environmental. The theory and action frameworks and concepts insisting on change, however, only develop gradually. In the beginning, they do not require complex ideology, it is rather the vague theories, symbols and buzzwords that are acquired by the followers, and then they adapt to opportunities and open the way to new directions, simultaneously with developing and carrying on original ideas. The leaders of the movements have to find common elements, normative conceptual ranges that hold together and guide the heterogeneous groups. This differentiates them from spontaneous mass protests. The decision to challenge the system and generate a conflict triggers a reaction from governmental and non-governmental actors as well. The form of solving conflicts provides the degree of democratic quality of the specific political structure and culture.[10]

The reason for the creation of social movements is the crisis of the complete social system or certain elements thereof. The crisis leads to the questioning of the whole system responsible for the crisis and looking for opportunities to form alternative answers. The introduction of alternatives (or the intentions thereof) can be performed in various ways, from violent revolutions to negotiated agreements. Since not every crisis leads to the creation of a movement, it is important to examine the mechanisms of articulating social interests and the so-called flip-over point, when certain social groups present and disclose the reasons of the crisis and provide alternative solutions. After raising awareness, in case the social-political system lacks a problem-solving reaction, the action to eliminate the reasons for the crisis is articulated.

The movements may be mobilised by opportunities or threats as well. However, their activity is reduced when these two circumstances are only slightly present. In a period when there is only a minor chance of a change (either a positive or a negative one), the willingness of groups to initiate protest actions is low.[11] When the protest becomes public, it triggers response reactions from the international community on a global scale, and from the government and its bodies on a local level, and forces them to intervene. Depending on the level of the crisis, the depth of the intervention, its direction and level of interaction with the movement activism, confrontation lead to the reaching of an agreement, or to the institutionalisation of the solution mechanisms of

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[10] Ibid., pp. 115-121.

[11] M. Szabó, *Társadalmi mozgalmak és politikai tiltakozás,* Budapest 2001, p. 23.

the crisis. The effect of the movement may increase with successful attempts and the modification of the level of crisis, or it may decrease, or fail utterly due to organisational and leadership problems. Nevertheless, if the crisis persists, the appearance of new and usually more radical movements can be expected. Many factors (the crisis and cynicism of the political system, dissolution of traditional social structures, a change in the economy or the environment or the knowledge of a future change, etc.) may result in the appearance of social activism, and the different forms of protests related to it. This is not universally caused by the legitimacy crisis of the government and the actors of the economy, but it is true in the case of Hungary, where doubts were raised regarding the legitimacy of the political elite. According to Habermas, when certain elements of life become interwoven with politics, social relations become bureaucratic, and there is an increased opportunity for increased citizen activity and the creation of alternative, new movements. According to him, the ultimate goal of the social movements is to end the colonisation of life, and the most important means to do so is protest. The reason for this is that crisis situations push the activities of citizens toward retreat or activism. On the activist side, the certain new social movements appear which are usually presented by feminist, green, pacifist, globalisation sceptic and student movements. Protest is their operating environment, means, source of identity and indicator of effectiveness.[12]

DILEMMA

According to Ralph Dahrendorf (1994), the main risk of democratic processes is that the movement does not undertake continuing political activity, fearing that it would become an actor and "accomplice" of the political elite. Inertia freezes the movement. When resistance does not break legal boundaries, and when cooperation is defined by the corporative cooperation of the government and partial interests. This complicates changes and the entry of new actors to the field of democratic competition, and it may weaken the power of radical initiatives, but it may also the realisation of goals through cooperation and to the increase of chances of reaching an agreement.

Challenges to movements often (but not exclusively) arise inside the sphere of civil society, where the areas of resistance are formed somewhat independently from the state, but with the intention to influence it. Thus, civil society shall also be considered an area of struggle, public and political processes regarding the actions, where conflicts are also created among norms and identities.[13] Movements not only direct attention to crisis phenomena, but they also intend to counter them. They perform some kind of permanent criticism of society, in which not only resistance, conflict and retreat are represented, but also the clash of interest and arguments based on institutionalised cooperation.[14]

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[12]   J. Habermas, *Válogatott tanulmányok*, 1994.

[13]   F. Mező, *A társadalmi mozgalmak és az ellenállás területei*, Budapest 1999, p. 1186.

[14]   Zs. Boda, *Globális ökopolitika*, Budapest 2004, pp. 180-181.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

In Hungary, the crisis has already began in 2006 and it is practically still around today, in 2013. The election campaign in 2006 was all about promises. The then governing socialist/free democrat coalition communicated the temporary rise of living standards with success propaganda and successfully referred to the country's accession to the European Union 2004, while the largest opposition party, the self-proclaimed right-wing Fidesz (*Fiatal Demokraták Szövetsége – Alliance of Young Democrats*) used a depressive campaign (with the main slogan being: "we live worse than four years ago") that utterly failed. However, some months after the elections, the re-elected governing parties practically shocked the public by introducing certain austerity measures. The public was also surprised to learn that the growth of the previous years was practically financed by loans, and repayment requires significant corrections in the budget. The already negative public perception exploded when a confidential speech of prime minister Ferenc Gyurcsány was leaked, in which he admitted that the government lied to the voters about the country's state and they only conducted "apparent governing" in the last years. The speech was disclosed on 17 September 2006 and it lead to street riots. The protesters took over the headquarters of the Hungarian Television, set cars on fire and clashed with police in several areas of Budapest. The anti-government protests, organised mostly by the right-wing parties, continued all around the country until the elections in 2010. This time, policy issues were not discussed, the main question was whether early elections would take place, or the prime minister would be replaced by the governing parties. Taking advantage of the government's sharp loss of popularity, Fidesz started a powerful campaign to present the prime minister as illegitimate and to reject all forms of cooperation with Mr. Gyurcsány or the coalition parties. A lasting period of political crisis began that brought about a moral and ethical crisis. The socialists could not escape their network of interests and cases of corruption and their politics could only focus on remaining in power. The corruption scandals, and ambitious, but nevertheless futile attempts at reform were the main characteristics of the dead-end politics of the government. After losing a referendum, conducted regarding social questions in 2008, it could only keep its power, but lost the opportunity to perform any important government actions. The country was in such a state, when the credit crisis originating in the US reached its borders in 2008. It had an elementary impact on the otherwise weak and decreasing Hungarian economy. Unemployment raised sharply, the prices of utilities increased, and financial collapse was only avoided with the assistance of an IMF loan acquired in October of 2008. In spring the governing coalition was dissolved, the free democrats quit the alliance and the rapid collapse of the liberal party soon began. The popularity of the socialists did not decrease drastically, as it had already hit bottom in early 2008, stagnating between 18-22%. After all this, there was no doubt that Fidesz, the largest opposition party, was the main contender in the 2010 elections. The overwhelming majority of voters wanted changes; part of the votes could be considered protest votes, not primarily

aimed to support Fidesz that participated in the politics of the twenty years after the transition to democracy.

The building of the Hungarian Television under "siege" in 2006
Source: http://www.indymedia.org/or/2006/09/847163.shtml

The far-right, national radical Jobbik (*Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom – Movement for a Better Hungary*) also gained support. Although it was established as a party in 2003, it could only present itself after 2006, as the crisis deepened. As hopelessness and poverty increased, many became attracted to the party, which gave vent to antidemocratic, anti-EU, anti-Semitic and racist sentiments, invoking the attitude of Hungary in the 1930s, that was also supported by an intellectual group consisting of lawyers. Jobbik introduced the issues of the Roma minority and the fight against global capital into national politics, although these used to be taboo and it also gave expression to social concerns, gaining support especially in the poorer regions of Eastern Hungary. A new party also appeared in the centre and a little left to the centre, in the liberal-green-anarchist field, introducing fresh air and young dynamism, which immediately resulted in a 5% national support. *Politics Can Be Different – LMP* was a party organised on a civil society base, registered in 2009, with followers including greens, anarchists, liberals, supporters of the alterglob movement, conservatives and new left sympathisers as well. The new force contributing to policy issues apparently came from nothing and gained ground swiftly, in not more than a year. Since neither the free democrats, nor the winners of the first democratic elections (*Magyar Demokrata Fórum – MDF – Hungarian Democratic Forum*) could introduce a valid party-list in the elections, they did not win any seats in the national assembly. The winner of the election was Fidesz and its allies, the Christian Democrats, having a two-third majority, followed by the MSZP (*Magyar Szocialista Párt – Hungarian Socialist Party*), Jobbik in the third place and LMP also winning seats

in parliament. Although the results of the European Parliament elections in 2009 were similar, the election results of 2010 surprised many. The bipolar, two-party party system broke up, the so-called left-wing socialist-liberal block was beaten, and Fidesz could practically begin to transform economic and social subsystems without an opposition.

GREEN AND GLOBALISATION-CRITICAL MOVEMENT IN HUNGARY

From the mid-1980s, new types of action-centric organisations started to appear in Hungary, making their voice heard primarily in environmental issues. In the second half of the decade the green movement became an important platform of expression of social discontent with the communist regime, and the case of the Gabčíkovo–Nagymaros Dam was an excellent issue for them.[15] In 1984, the Danube Circle was founded, which hosted a lively discussion about environmental issues, and current social, political issues as well. When the policy of the government regarding the dam changed (the Hungarian party terminated the construction in 1989), the nature of the conflict changed; demonstrations and forums stopped when the general elections of 1990 were nearing. The opposition moved primarily from the relations of the state and the society to foreign relations. In the new institutional system and party structure formed after the transition to democracy, the green movement only had a marginal role, especially because it could not provide answers to social and economic issues directly affecting the people, partially because the formation of parties assisted the organisation of "movements" with significant supporter base, as in the cases of SZDSZ (*Szabad Demokraták Szövetsége – Alliance of Free Democrats*), MDF and Fidesz.[16] Some of the most popular persons in the green movement entered politics in the newly formed parties, while others moved on to the academic sector. The main issues of the years following the transition to democracy were mitigating the damages of the polluting communist era and the rapid changes of the economy and the society, effectively marginalising the protection of the environment. Although the Gabčíkovo–Nagymaros Dam was an important issue in the late 1980s, it failed to gain such importance after the fall of communism as the nuclear energy issues in Germany, that could unite the green, antiglob and pacifist movements, forming a movement-based, new left related network.[17] The "glamour" of the swift transition to capitalist market economy and freedom diverted attention from the importance of the environment, and members of society were occupied by issues of consumption and growth. The majority of the people identified democratic transition with welfare, the appearance of basic rights was considered obvious, and wealth appeared in form of quantity rather than quality. The activities of ecological move-

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[15]　Due to protests from local environment activitsts and the crisis of the Hungarian economy, the government unilaterally shut down the contrcution of the barrage project with Czechoslovakia, and terminated the contract thereof in 1989.

[16]　M. Szabó, *A zöld mozgalmak és polgári kezdeményezések Magyarországon: kutatási problémák, módszertan, elmélet*, Budapest 1999, p. 16.

[17]　D. Mikecz, *Új pártok, változó mozgalmak*, Budapest 2012, p. 72.

ments soon extended from being strictly environment-based: its thinkers recognised that based on the "everything is related to everything" principle, these problems cannot be solved in isolation from other tensions (consumer lifestyle, social justice, human rights, etc.) of the modern society.[18] In the 1990s, several polls showed that society considers the protection of the environment important, but it cannot and it is not willing to spend money on it. It considers environmental organisations weak, but trusts them much more than other sectors. It is also very meaningful to see that 74% of respondents considered the government an actor that is able to solve environmental problems and shall be responsible for protecting the environment. This clearly shows the statist attitude of the average Hungarian citizen, *the paternalist thinking* and *dependency attitude*, which are the heritage of the political elitism institutionalised in the 19th century, the right-wing authoritarian system, socialism after 1948 and the transition to democracy. Citizens were originally divided in environmental issues, giving priority to economic growth, creation of jobs, material (consumption) security. The development of the green movement was also hindered by the lack of alternative methods of mobilising the masses (different from the principles of the economic-political system) or protest forms limiting the market, and no general national organisation was formed for uniting experimental, alternative initiatives different from the mainstream. The reason for this was mainly the existence of a different set of values and motives of the representatives of the movement, and also the existing personal conflicts. In this period, the media presented the greens as obstacles to development, spiritual idealists, parasites, etc. Also, members of the movement feared for their livelihood, and in many cases did not oppose polluting corporations and did not report those. If they did, they were likely to find themselves in slander and libel proceedings. In the 1990–2000 period, the enforcement of interests stagnated, even though the non-governmental sector rapidly extended,[19] and the number of environmental NGOs also increased.[20]

In the late 1990s, the green movement became important again, when the case of the dam was put back on the agenda in 1997, after a meeting of prime ministers Gyula Horn and Vladimir Mečiar. The ongoing protests (Danube Charter) influenced the outcome of the elections in 1998 and played a role in the defeat in the socialist/free democrat coalition. With regard to this, after environmental conflicts caused by some major investments in Budapest and other cities, the green movements seemed to be able to build social support from their success in local issues that would provide an opportunity for integration and collective efforts. This did not materialise however, and the frequently mentioned *"Saint Florian principle"* remained valid. This means that green movements only focused on local ecological problems and did not have the power or the opportunity to influence national issues.[21] Heterogeneity caused a fragmentation of the movement rather than

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[18] V. Móra, *A zöldek (környezet-, természet– és állatvédő szervezetek)*, Budapest 2008, p. 120.

[19] L. Kákai, *Önkormányzunk értetek, de nélkületek!*, Budapest 2004.

[20] Currently, there are 1400 ecological NGOs in Hungary (Móra, V., 2008, pp. 120-121).

[21] M. Szabó, *A zöld mozgalmak és polgári kezdeményezések Magyarországon: kutatási problémák, módszertan, elmélet*, Budapest 1999.

prove a common identity, as it was clearly seen from the early 2000s. Mistrust did not only affect the government, but also the relations of each other as well, especially related to the opening of the EU tenders and the establishment of partnership agreements.

THE 2000S AND NETWORKING

The 2000s brought about serious changes in the life of the green movement. Greenpeace, the organisation well-known for its radicalism and direct actions opened its office in Hungary, among other major transnational organisations that started international and European campaigns in the country.[22] Globalisation and "Europeanisation" appeared in the life of the Hungarian non-governmental sector, the Hungarian organisations became members of networks and umbrella organisations. This caused the adoption of certain patterns, and could increase resources temporarily (due to foreign foundations and other grants, cooperations – in a human and financial sense as well). In Hungary, the problem of global climate change entered scientific research and public discourse in the early 2000s. The greens thought that it is an issue that can connect global commitments with local actions.[23]

The establishment of the regulations that opened the way to the participation and requesting of Phare-funds (and to spending them), opened new or informal partnership relations and cooperation opportunities to the NGOs. The civil sector recognised that in a collective effort they can influence decision-making more, actively participate in reviewing EU and national operative and action programmes, and in rationalising the allocation of EU funds later on. Therefore, more closely cooperating, formal and informal civil networks became much more important to prepare for the accession to the EU and to participate in creating development programmes as a new member country. From 2004, social participation became much more active than before, as earlier the NGOs had protests as the only means (against developments considered environmentally harmful), but in the social discussion of EU-programme preparations they could participate as actors of recommendation/decision-making. The greens were among those actively supporting such cooperations, and participated in the establishment and development of civil participation as catalysts. Participation beginning from 2004-2005 shall be considered a mutual learning process (although different for each region or town) that could turn the Hungarian NGOs to major pressure groups. It was a question whether actors of the Hungarian civil sector – based on their properties – could fill their traditional roles among society and decision-makers, and could be service providers ensuring professional knowledge that allows them to become actors and participants (and not just spectators) of the medium and long term processes affecting society and focusing on sustainable development.[24] To answer this question,

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[22]   Such as the climate act campaign in 2009-2010: http://www.klimatorveny.hu/.

[23]   Some prominent green leaders think this issue is overemphasised and defeats all other issues.

[24]   V. Glied, *Civil szervezetek szerepe a környezeti ügyekben a dél-dunántúli régióban,* 2009, p. 70.

we could mention that the civil sector is clearly an actor of decision-making processes, but in different cases it is only moderately able to shape those and to enforce its interests. The commonly mentioned cooperation-learning process seems to restart from time to time, as actors often change and there is fluctuation in the public administration bodies. Contrary to several recommendations concerning participation, models and research detailing the advantages of exemplary, progressive participation; participation is in most cases formal and can only be successful in so-called *soft* issues (such as strategy development, recommendations during planning, etc.). In *hard* issues, such as billion HUF value investments, participation is unwanted. I think that discussion on participation is itself a soft issue, as it diverts attention from actually important issues. It serves as a valve to social issues and a decoy as well, providing a fighting arena to decision-makers and other political actors.

Cyanide pollution of River Tisza in 2000
Source: http://www.yubanet.com

After 2005, the structure of the green movement was established with its inner processes "fixed": cooperation defined by formal and informal rules was stabilised, and became a routine in most cases. This ensures unified and somewhat rapid enforcement of interests – e.g. during common statements, press releases – that is the key to the organisation of the movement and probably its greatest strength. However, social embeddedness remained low, and the membership base of the movement was "overused" by the mid-2000s. The so-called second generation, with people in their twenties and thirties included the message of networking in themselves as a generational attitude, as the usage of the internet and other communication channels as well. According to Veronika Móra, although this increased their popularity, the role of the protection of the environment did not increase in society.[25] This is on the one hand a consequence of post-environmentalism, as organisations newly created after the transformation of

[25]   V. Móra, *A zöldek (környezet-, természet– és állatvédő szervezetek)*, Budapest 2008, pp. 122-123.

legal order, after the transition to democracy found that creating environmental regulations (and the systems thereof) was more important than increasing social embeddedness. On the other hand, the post-material set of values spreads much slower, the majority of the society considers consumption supported by multinationals to be of value, "casting their votes in supermarkets rather than in the public sphere". As the majority of the public turned away from politics, they also turned away from public affairs. Indifference, a low level of individual responsibility, mistrust, turning away from the real to the virtual are all factors that hinder the spread of green ideology and values.

Nevertheless, the cyanide pollution of the Tisza river, floods on the Danube and the Tisza, the problems of polders, problems related to the pollution and constructions on the beaches of the Balaton, the multiplication of weather anomalies, increasing urban smog, the foam pollution of the Rába and the red mud catastrophe are all warning signs to the public. "The single issue" remained valid in this period (with a few exceptions), but the space for permanent cooperation also appeared via different forums. The establishment of a negotiation structure was initiated by the government, and it is therefore a top-down process, even though the organisation of the forums and the works therein were performed by the participating organisations. The EU requires the member states to enforce the principles included in the 2001 "White Book" on European governance, issued by the European Commission (such as openness, inclusion and highlight role of NGOs in consultation processes, accountability, efficiency and consistency).[26] The White Book declares that there is no contradiction between the concepts of wide consultations and representative democracy. It is a requirement of good governance that effective communication is established with the affected parties, and NGOs have a major role in mediating the interests of the citizens. The culture of consultation with NGOs shall especially be assisted in new member states that show major weaknesses.[27]

Non-governmental organisations were not absolutely positive about the accession to the European Union in 2004, although the volume of grants increased greatly. A significant part of the sector found itself in a financially adverse situation, as community sources are hard to acquire by civil organisations lacking resources (due to several administrative reasons), while national grants and sources from private foundations decrease due to the role of community sources. The European Union and other international funds (Norwegian, Swiss ones) created a special market of grants, where organisations compete with each other, yet appear as potential cooperating partners. The successful applications of NGOs required adequate capital for pre-financing, and to finance their operation in cases of having to resolve discrepancies or other administrative errors.[28] The NGOs with a stronger supporter base, human resources capacity, social base and good connections started to act in the market of grants as multinationals. They gathered the organisations operating in similar fields, and created networks. The reason for this is clearly to increase their capacity for pressure, while they also want

[26] A. Pánovics, *Régiós civil fejlesztési források felé – félúton*, Pécs 2011, p. 12.

[27] TEEN, 2006.

[28] V. Glied, *Civil szervezetek szerepe a környezeti ügyekben a dél-dunántúli régióban,* Budapest 2009, p. 70.

to gather a wider source of information, increasing the action radius of their fields of interest. In the environmental sector, this clearly meant the extension of watchdog functions to the banking sector, monitoring seeds (breaching GMO-free regulations) and consumer protection.

After the accession to the EU, the greens – such as the organisations in other fields of non-governmental sectors – switched to a *project approach*. The major support received from the community cannot be spent on operation and maintenance, but mostly on a specific development or programme. This factor caused many organisations to develop projects for a call, which they could not maintain after the project period, causing them to terminate. This approach dominates in the establishment of green networks and partnership initiatives, and it has thus become a new type of "single issue".

The creation of LMP

After the water dam case in 1997-1998, the movement retreated to local levels. Many local and university green organisations were created. The organisation of greens at the national level gained momentum during the cyanide pollution of the Tisza in 2000, having been joined by semi-civil, semi-political organisations working along the Hungarian globalisation critic agenda, when Védegylet (*Protect the Future*) was founded. The Budapest-based organisation – although defined itself as a non-governmental organisation – soon started to operate as an ecological policy think tank and communicated policy issues. It gained popularity relatively quickly and its influence and lobbying capacity increased after László Sólyom was nominated and elected President of Hungary (during the Sólyom for President campaign) and it acted in events such as the "peace sign" demonstration to protest the Iraqi War or the NATO radar station proposed on the Zengő Mountain. Among the "old" greens of the organisation, a number of members of the new generation also appeared, under the leadership of András Schiffer, Benedek Jávor, Gábor Scheiring, Bence Tordai and others.

Apart from discussing policy issues, Védegylet also gained attention by various actions that introduced a new range of participation and protest methods in the Hungarian public life. Its activists spread leaflets, issued publications, organised conferences, or chained themselves to trees in Budapest's Roosevelt Square to protest against the cutting of trees there. These actions strengthened the internal cohesion and connections of the organisation, and connected green ideology with new left, anarchist and globcrit thinking.[29] This variety made Védegylet interesting and accepted by many, but it also lead to serious political conflicts by the mid-2000s, regarding the time and image of a newly established party. Some opposed entering the political arena, others wished for a purely ecological party, while young members suggested a leftist collective party that could synthesise value of the political left, gathering disappointed socialists, liberals, conservatives and keeping the civil base it already had. The civil green organisation network refrained from supporting a party in the mid-2000s,

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[29]   A. Tóth, *LMP: kísérlet a politikai tér újraalkotására*, Budapest 2013, pp. 188-191.

as it would harm its positions in the non-governmental sector. Members arguing for creating a party said it could win support from those that were tired of the bipartisan hysteria and the related political conflicts. They claimed that an increase of ecological policy conflicts will make it necessary to have a party that deals with environmental issues and can gather supporters by doing so. After internal conflicts and changes in basic values, András Lányi and his supporters left the organisation in 2005 and founded the "Élőlánc Magyarországért Mozgalom" movement that is basically conservative and orthodox in green policies.[30]

The young members, with Mr. Schiffer and his supporters spent three years with preparation and felt that the time has come to establish a party. With Lányi and his supporters, an older core of members that urged civil cooperation and considered politics a civic activity left Védegylet. But this did not break the group, and the organisation reached major political success in 2005 by nominating László Sólyom, a professor of law with strong green values to be President of Hungary. Internal conflicts of the governing parties and luck also contributed to having Mr. Sólyom elected President of Hungary, with the support of the then opposition Fidesz party. This step basically institutionalised ecological policy issues and brought them to the political arena, although it only contributed to political capital with other environmental-social cases.

Élőlánc did compete in the 2006 elections, but could not achieve any significant success. Mr. Schiffer and his supporters concluded that a campaign based on enthusiasm without money and an apolitical attitude is not enough to convince voters about voting on a green-liberal political force. After 2006, both external and internal conditions were provided for the appearance of a new ecological-globalisation critic formation. After the demise of MSZP and the loss of confidence with SZDSZ, there was an open space in the leftist-liberal area that András Schiffer and his supporters recognised. Citizens turned away from politics in large numbers, blaming not only the governing parties, but also the entire political elite for the crisis. Védegylet thought the crisis will not only result in negative processes, but will also provide an opportunity for ecology--based solutions instead of a neoliberal (gathering) economic policy, for the change of consumption customs and persuading the politicians about a national minimum that would provide a basis for goals of multiple political terms. They also considered answers provided within traditional ideologies to be inadequate, and the ideological determination of political decisions to be obsolete, with parties of the transition period to be tired and having no confidence from the voters. They recognised a need for a third force as opposed to the technocrat/pseudo-liberal/social democrat (so-called left-wing) and populist/namely socially sensitive (so-called right-wing) parties, that would not define itself according to the left/right distinction, and that would face conflicts by providing true solutions, and globalisation critic/ecological answers on a radical democratic basis. András Schiffer and his supporters developed the basic theses of the Hungarian ecological party based on the patterns of the German green party, synthesising ecological

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[30]   A. Lányi, *Porcelán az elefántboltban – Az ökológiai politika kezdetei Magyarországon,* Budapest 2009, pp. 186-188.

policy suggestions of the socialist, liberal and conservative ideologies, with the inclusion of alterglob/human rights/ecologist based recommendations.

To prepare for the establishment of the party, the organisers created the Ökopolitikai Műhely Alapítvány (Ecological Policy Workshop Foundation) in the spring of 2008 to form a civil environmentalist, human rights, anti-discrimination and liberal group. The organisation developed and corrected the future programme, structure and attitude of the party using an intranet application called Szimplakör. The party initiative was based on the ideas of participation and democracy. The intellectual background group participating in Szimplakör (Simpla Circle) concluded that Hungary needed a party based on post-modern values, democratic ideology and participatory democracy that overcomes left/right division and can undertake a new regime change with limits to wild capitalism and autocratic populism. The party based on the foundation and members of Védegylet (especially their civic professional background) was founded in 2009 under the name Politics Can Be Different. The majority of green, alterglob, human rights and other alternative NGOs, with a research group of significant influence, soon started to support the party. The party was established at a right time, as part of voters (especially from the younger generation of thirty-year-olds) showed interest in the new political organisation. LMP began campaigning for the 2009 European Parliament elections virtually without any money, fuelled by the enthusiasm of the organisers and the activists, reaching the result of 2.65%, collecting 75,000 votes. This indicated that a good campaign could allow them to be successful in the elections in 2010.[31]

After the 1980s until the early 2000s, there was no national issue in Hungary that could help a movement build its identity and serve as a mobilising force. Until the foundation of LMP, there was no party that would provide a purely ecological programme (green economy, protests against nuclear power) as it happened in West Germany or Austria. Many issues formed a part of the agenda before the formation of green parties in Western Europe (such as nuclear energy, acid rains, air pollution) that divided society – although many understood their importance – that enabled forming political capital, and helped to integrate local groups into a large national organisation after achieving political success.[32] The popularity of LMP could benefit from a large number of environment-related issues in the second half of the 2000s, after the shock of the cyanide pollution of the Tisza. Ecological policy topics were mentioned in the news every week, and the media was curious about the movement and the party. In their first period of politics, the greens were very heavily attacked by the opponents, and many accused them of being successors of the failed liberal attempt at receiving funding from abroad and thus becoming servants of multinational corporations. Relations of the green movement, LMP and the business sector have been contradictory from the very beginning, even though goodwill and reaching win-win situations was the primary

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[31] A. Tóth, *LMP: kísérlet a politikai tér újraalkotására*, Budapest 2013, p. 206.

[32] Gy. Gergely, *A hazai zöld civil szerveződések szerepe, lehetőségei a helyi környezeti konfliktusok megoldásában – Stratégiai perek: szűkülő mozgástér?*, Budapest 2009.

guidance in establishing partnership. One or more business actors (investors, constructors, etc.) and political actors are usually affected by environmental conflicts. There are many examples that prove that a business association's ethical conduct and environmental efforts can be supported by the opinions and agreement of non-governmental organisations that may "legitimize" the activity of the company, political party or local government for the support they receive. Research literature frequently calls these "pseudo NGOs" or non-governmental organisations outside the civil sector.[33] While many of the NGOs opposing political roles (a part of the green movement) left LMP, Fidesz used NGOs successfully to legitimise its goals and to put pressure on the government from 2002, when it started to organise the "civic circle" organisations. At the time of the elections in 2002, it called several hundred thousand supporters to the street to try to reverse the outcome of the elections, although it was unsuccessful then. After the lost elections, it successfully built a network of NGOs and advisers, but failed in 2006, partially due to the mistaken campaign and bad personal selections, and also because of the agility of the leader of the governing socialists, Ferenc Gyurcsány. The waves of protests in 2006 were advantageous for Fidesz, as it consciously constructed its tactics around the rejection of any compromise with the government, dividing the society to the extreme. It is still unclear what type of relationship existed after 2002 between far-right groups, the civic circles and Fidesz. According to Ervin Nagy, the former vice president of Jobbik, Fidesz and the far-right naturally had an informal relationship based on the distribution of work which the largest opposition party used skilfully, as it did not want to leave the democratic political stage, a thing which Jobbik and the far-right groups could do.[34] Therefore, it is safe to say that during the riots in 2006, Fidesz and many of the related far-right, radical groups (civic circles, MIÉP, Jobbik, etc.) did not act as if they were participating in a pre-organised, professional coup d'état or "revolution", but they seemed to be surprised by the course of events. This is probably how it happened, since an inspection has concluded that small groups of football hooligans, skinheads and other fascistoid/neo-nazi elements have entered the protests during the riots of autumn 2006, with the leadership of unknown persons. While the government and Fidesz pointed at and blamed each other for escalating the events, the speakers of the protests did not only blame Ferenc Gyurcsány and the socialists, but the whole political system, and called for the resignation of the whole political elite. This is what Fidesz understood well, and developed a so-called civil background that would not question the government's decisions, even though they have a negative effect on them. This alliance had a somewhat religious nature, in which the personality of Viktor Orbán and the rejection of the pro-Gyurcsány/liberal elements played major roles. The leader of the opposition strengthened its own camp, pointed at the main enemy, and also collected most of the protest votes, thus reaching a two-third majority in the 2010 elections.

[33] E. Márkus, *Civilek a sajtóban – közmegítélés*, Budapest 2009, p. 163.

[34] Huth, Gergely: 'A Jobbik már nem az a párt, aminek látszik', 12 March 2010: http://www.magyarhir lap.hu/belfold/a_jobbik_mar_nem_az_a_part_aminek_latszik.html.

LMP competed at the elections as the "least bad choice" that served as an advantage in the campaign with a negative note and a lot of accusations. The 7.5% results and the 16 received seats in parliament showed that there is demand for an ecological party on the political stage (at least for a narrow base of voters). However, the eco-party seemed to have used all its resources for the successful elections, and had to face a dilemma: should it target the large space on the political left wing, or should it continue on its own? This question let to the division of LMP within three years.

NEW MOVEMENTS AFTER 2010

The division of LMP

A new era of Hungarian politics has begun, labelled by the new government as a revolutionary transformation and a new era ("revolution in the voting booth"). It soon became clear that the 2/3 majority in the parliament is not enough to conclude rapid reforms: the economy stalled and started to decline, the national debt has reached the level before the democratic transition, emigration was gaining momentum, the foreign currency interest rates of loans rose dramatically and caused tens of thousands of families to find themselves in a hopeless situation. The systematic reforms affected personal livelihood, economic satellites and intellectual groups, and turned social groups, professions and generations against each other, causing further tensions between Hungary and the European Union.

LMP tried to solve this dilemma by ignoring the required discussions. Many of its supporters considered MSZP a party with a neoliberal economic agenda that sometimes performed social policy programmes to remain in power. A large share of its members was not willing to enter a political compromise aimed to create a united left-wing opposition. They tried to manoeuvre and keep an equal distance from the left and the right as well, and aimed to take sides with the people as a constructive opposition force. They initiated a referendum campaign in the spring of 2011, but due to disinterest from the public (and the National Election Committee's failure to allow some of the more important referendum questions) they could not collect the required number of signatures. The party prepared to communicate in policy matters, thus showing an example to the other parties. It quickly turned out that this type of politics cannot be successful. Fidesz started reforms in all social systems and began to restructure the country completely. The flat tax rate on income tax showed that the new government was favouring the richer middle classes. Cutting the funding of education and social services and simultaneusly increasing the volume of budget spent on the unsuccessful Hungarian football, retroactive legislation, amending the constitution, the destruction of checks and balances, total takeover of the state media, reform of the election system, controlling of the arts and cinema sectors angered many. And not just these phenomena angered the people, but also the arrogant, surreal, cynical and sniffy communication of the government and its politicians, things that

were far beyond the acceptable levels for many. LMP clearly thought that the election campaign was suitable to mobilise the masses, while it turned out that the party could only rely on a couple of hundred activists. Nevertheless, the Civil Unity Forum supporting Fidesz could mobilise several hundred thousand supporters for its "Peace March for Hungary" rally on 23 October 2012. It was also proved that although the newly popular movements and informal groups – such as Szolidaritás and Milla – could move masses of citizens, they had no political routine. LMP could not break through the wall of ignorance, and could not get rid of its intellectual style that may seem alien or "too professional" for many voters. It is also clear that a party may grow out of a movement, but it cannot expropriate the movement, as the two can only be effective simultaneously, such as in case of the German greens. While they thought that the citizens had had enough of divisive political clashes and a new, cooperative political culture may emerge for the common goals of the nation, the exactly opposite thing happened: the period after the crisis and the 2/3 majority of Fidesz increased hysteria in politics, poverty and social inequalities increased. LMP made same mistake as SZDSZ in 1990 and 1994, by having no single (charismatic) leader that the party could be identified with.

During the autumn of 2011, LMP initiated talks with opposition groups about a possible cooperation, but these terminated when the new formation of Gordon Bajnai, an ex-socialist prime minister announced his new initiative during late 2012. Szolidaritás proposed the creation of a great opposition round table, but LMP still did not want to join MSZP and the new party of Ferenc Gyurcsány, Demokratikus Koalíció (*Democratic Coalition – DK*). The calls from the left divided the unity of the party, which could not be repaired by the "New Resistance" campaign in December 2012. On 23 December 2012, LMP's members of parliament protesting against an amendment of the national assembly's internal regulations chained themselves to the parking place of the Parliament building, and they were only removed after an intervention from the police. The desperate action increased party support temporarily, but then it kept stagnating around 2-3%. Part of the parliamentary faction thought that this meant that only a unified left will be able to defeat Fidesz in 2014. The new election act further supported this notion, as the elections are going to be held in a one--round system, making the opposition votes divided against the government candidate if no coalition is formed.

During the autumn of 2012, after failed talks with trade unions, LMP found itself on its own. Szolidaritás and Milla announced to have entered into talks with Gordon Bajnai, thus closing another door for the ecological party. The new political force was established as Együtt 2014 (*Together 2014*) on 26 October 2012. This step divided LMP for good. The only remaining question was whether the members considered defeating the Orbán-government or the independence of the party to be more important. The green party rejected cooperation with Együtt 2014 at its congress held in November 2012, then, the group led by Benedek Jávor announced to quit the parliamentary faction and LMP as well. Those who left founded a new party under the name Párbeszéd Magyarországért (*Dialogue for Hungary – PM*) and joined the Bajnai-

-initiative. The negotiations with MSZP during the summer of 2013 and the alliance agreement of the socialists with Együtt 2014 basically proved LMP right, as the leftist--liberal camp was unified again, with support from a green-globcrit group, Szolidaritás and Milla. The social democratic party was invited to joint Együtt 2013, and Ferenc Gyurcsány's DK also applied for membership (although this is not concluded before the deadline of this paper).

Before the 2014 national elections LMP had been expected to fight on its own, and it was doubtful if the voters are convinced that it is able to act as an individual force in the national assembly. However, reaching the 5% limit to enter parliament also seemed impossible in 2009, the green party could make it. In 2014 LMP was able to mobilise just its own voters and tired of the conflicts of the left and the right but just in a very small measure. At last the party achieved the 5% threshold, but it was just enough to send 5 representatives to the Hungarian Parliament, due to the new electoral process which was implemented in that year.

Szolidaritás, Milla, 4K, HaHa

Changes in 2012 created new, previously unknown movements and groups, which could rapidly bring masses on the streets and then be transformed into parties (or diminish entirely). The movements are based on several single issues, and the buzzwords of the protests they organised are mixed with multiple levels of grievances and demands. These initiatives were created and fuelled by the divisive politics of Fidesz. At first, the communication of the government considered the employees of law enforcement agencies, media professionals, disability pensioners, students, artists-scapegoats who disagreed with the government's reforms.[35]

Magyar Szolidaritás Mozgalom (*Hungarian Solidarity Movement*) was created for a single reason, to protect the privileged pension schemes of law enforcement employees. This led to the creation of a general group of trade union leaders, organised according to the Polish example, to provide an initial impetus for anti-government protests. Shortly, several organisations protesting against the nationalisation of private pension funds and the punishment of homeless people joined. Szolidaritás has deeper roots than the other movements, as its dynamic is provided by people coming from a classic civil background that raised their voice for goals such as restoring legality, progressive tax systems and social security. The consistent agreement of the two leaders, the soldier Péter Kónya and fireman Kornél Árok was unquestionable, serious political challenges only affected the movement in early 2012. Regarding their ideological framework, all movements voiced their aim of overcoming the fighting and ideological war dividing the country, which would only be possible by strengthening social activity and participation. The fight against political passivity, the fear of the leaders being blackmailed by their livelihoods and the fear of freezing due to failure helped the movement overcome its apolitical attitude and guided it toward party politics.

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[35]   Gy. Vári, *A Szolidaritás útja*, Budapest 2013, p. 242.

Clown Revolution in 2011, organised by the Hungarian Solidarity Movement

Souce: www.nol.hu

Kónya, Árok and their supporters organised their protest titled "Clown Revolution" on 16 June 2011 to Alkotmány Street in Budapest, protesting against the government's decision to retroactively raise the retirement age for law enforcement employees and introducing other regulations affecting employee rights. The organisers dressed as clowns intended to parody the government's favourite term of "revolution in the voting booth". After the initial success, Szolidaritás and several hundred joining organisations announced organising the "D-Day" demonstrations on 29 September. The protest of 50-60 thousand participants was planned to take three days, started at the Kossuth Square of Budapest and ended with a sitdown strike in Clark Ádám Square via the Chain Bridge. A few hundred participants also went to the Sándor Palace, the seat of the President of Hungary. The group Egymillióan a Demokráciáért (One Million for Democracy) left Milla and joined the trade unions. Milla did not want to participate in the events of Szolidaritás, partially because it considered the activity of the trade union group a competitor, and it thought that Szolidaritás and law enforcement trade union organisations had connections to political parties, particularly MSZP and Jobbik. From autumn 2011 to 23 October 2012, Szolidaritás and Milla implicitly shared the organisations of street demonstrations, and also held a joint opposition protest on 2 January 2012 and opposed the ceremonial entry into force of the new Constitution.

After the events of autumn 2011, leaders of Szolidaritás quit (or were expelled) from the trade unions on which the organisation was based. Szolidaritás intended to make up for the loss of its organised institutional background by joining the NGOs, but it turned out to be a complicated issue. The group committed the same mistakes as many other movements: it failed to maintain the enthusiasm and commitment to a common goal among its members, lacking definite political successes. The government proposed

compromise solutions, but usually swept away the demands of Szolidaritás equipped with its 2/3 majority. Kornél Árok leaked his plans to establish his own party in early 2012, but his fellow leaders rejected the idea and believed in forming an opposition round table. While the movement worked to establish its organisational background, the original organisation practically dissolved. Árok considered the civil efforts to be futile, if there was no party in the background that could compete at the elections. The apolitical, uncompromising stance of Szolidaritás provided the movement with symbolic credit which has partially diminished after the dissolution. The movement could not elaborate upon its the important identity, and failed to show a third way of cooperation between the NGOs and the democratic opposition for the common good of the nation. On top of that, anti-establishment and anti-corruption buzzwords and problems of poverty were more successfully communicated by Jobbik. The success and subsequent "emptiness" of Szolidaritás is a good example of how effectively Fidesz could remove the checks and balances aimed to restrict the power of the government, and change important systems without any real opposition. The "stop-and-go" political games permanently applied by the government made it impossible for opposing organisations to adapt to the ever-changing central communication, and to increase or maintain the resistance of their members, which ultimately led to fatigue.

This is why it was a little surprising, but practically rational that the organisation of Mr. Bajnai and the "truncated" Szolidaritás decided to join forces. To Mr. Kónya and other leaders of the movement, Mr. Bajnai was an acceptable figure of the left, and considered him a professional, not a reformer of the new left. The movement joined forces with the Bajnai-organisation on 23 October 2012, and created the party named Együtt 2014, with the accession of Milla as well.

One Million for Press Freedom (Milla)

Milla was the first movement that began to organise against the measures and reform plans of the Fidesz government. Milla was originally founded as a Facebook Group named One Million for Hungarian Press Freedom, on 21 December 2010, the day after the first protest for the freedom of the press. The group created by civil activist Péter Juhász rapidly gained supporters. Its members began their operation by showing how Fidesz started governing without a programme, with spontaneous ideas and provisions, and that the "National Cooperation System" created by the government was only a fake negotiation body that did not induce true discussions and expected reactions to centrally invented questions. On top of that, they were angered by the sense of absurdity, the success propaganda of the government and the enormous discrepancy of reality and government communications.[36]

During the first half of 2011, Hungary held the Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the first time, while the government and the prime minister kept talking about a freedom fight, explaining that Hungary will not allow the EU to inter-

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[36] Gy. Petőcz, *Milla: őrkutya, vagy vadászkutya?*, Budapest 2013, pp. 268-269.

fere with internal politics. While the 2/3 majority started to transform the political system, the opposition contemplated the changes as a lame duck, being unable to actively influence the processes. MSZP was healing its wounds, LMP could not overcome having put on a course by the two major parties and organise an independent political pole. Jobbik acted as constructive opposition, dealing with taboo subjects defining the essence of politics. In this situation the non-governmental sector became more active and protested against the amendment of the media law, claiming that it threatened balanced and politics-free information services in the country.

On 14 January 2011 the series of protests arrived to the Kossuth Square in Budapest, protests against limitations of press freedom. This was the first on-line organised demonstration in Hungarian history. A general concept package was elaborated for the national holiday on 15 March, which included the issue of the increasing emigration, the dangers of narrowing the rights of democratic institutions, an increase of social differences and the invasion of social subsystems by politics. Many intellectuals and artists supported the protests, providing faces to the demands of Milla: dialogue, democracy, and an end to political infighting and fear. The rap song "I don't like the system" was composed in autumn 2011 and rapidly spread on the Internet and provided the tone of the protests. This song represented a new generation complaint of several dozen thousand young people having a university degree, without a goal, sensing poverty, hopelessness and dissolution of democracy around themselves. Milla also had to ask "where to go" for itself, just as Szolidaritás did. The initial buzzword of the Milla-organisers was: no politics please! Nevertheless, when they found themselves in the centre of protests and increasingly had to deal with politics, they felt that the major civil potential should be converted to votes in the election. This was a major issue in the history of Milla, as it was the only democratic proto-political force in the field between the left and the centre.

After the protests of 15 March – which were joined by 40 thousand participants – they had to consider stepping forward toward creating a political group. Those not supporting this direction either left the movement, or went on to work in Milla's NGO wing. They established their own media channel, and gathered interests with gags and street protests. This division basically meant that the movement had to develop and represent two different programmes. One aimed to defeat Fidesz, in cooperation with the opposition, both inside and outside the parliament, and another aimed to change the entire political system.[37] Milla is a third-generation creation of new social movements, it was organised on the internet, conducting most of its discussions in the virtual space and identifying with pro-Europe, liberal, green and new left values. They reject populism, institutions established according to partisan logics, and all forms of corruption. Meetings of the activists concluded that the Third Republic founded in 1990 fell in such a great crisis that it cannot be overcome. The only solution could be to create a new pole and announce the idea of the Fourth Republic. Milla has not only been a movement, but also a framework, providing a platform to people and groups accept-

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[37]   Ibid., p. 281.

ing a democratic minimum. The movement was created for a single issue (the amendment of the media law) and later went on the enforce some kind of a watchdog function that draws attention to anomalies in the Hungarian political system, the forced paths of economy and politics and discrepancies in understanding democracy, emphasising civil and opposition roles and the lack of political culture. The Fourth Republic (Negyedik Köztársaság – 4K) imagined grassroots reforms in a narrow, civil space, free from politics. It is clear that the power induced in civil roots and supported by discontent could not be turned to profit by Szolidaritás or Milla in public politics, for the facts listed herein.

Fourth Republic (4K) and the Student's Network (HaHa)

4K entered the political arena as a generation-based civil force, a group of young digital consumers. The organisation appeared with community street games and flash mobs in the autumn of 2010, it was active in the cooperation with students and those protesting against the new constitution, decided to transform into a party in 2011, and held its first congress in 2012. It mainly expected the membership of those tired of political fights, pointless debates and anger. They demanded real political participation, real democracy and the reconquest of public life. They intend to act against a bleak future for the youth, by directing attention to uncertainties and the problem of emigration. 4K believes that the crisis is the consequence of a global process, and the result of the rule of banks and political background deals not approved by the public. This includes the activity of Gyurcsány and the Orbán governments, which only provides answers on a forced path, which are merely reactions to the problems arising. They also understand – what LMP, Szolidaritás, Milla and other organisations failed to – that the love of freedom and enthusiasm in Eastern Europe and Hungary usually manifests in resistance and protests, not in the hope of unity and reaching common goals. In this environment, the sense of community is provided by acting against something or somebody, and dissension is the base of joint living, with paternalism and trust in the government is still defining most of the concepts of individual responsibility. However, politicians and the state are not able to solve certain problems, and it requires the choices of individual to get things right, if that is possible at all. There is no tradition of a collective formation of will in Hungary, it is mostly the individual enforcement strategies that prevail, in which the community is only a tool, while wealth and power are the goals.[38] This leads to the conclusion that participation in public affairs is useless, the feeling and belief of the individual that *"I cannot change anything"* and *"someone else can try to change things, I am not willing to risk anything"* are going to define the thinking of the average citizen, with apathy and indifference becoming the prevailing view. This is what 4K intends to change, and as a self-defined leftist patriot party it wishes to emphasise the importance of participation, demanding a tax reform, the restoration of economic and legal stability, and the strengthening of workers' rights. The major challenges for the 4K in the

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[38]   D. Mikecz, *Köztér és köztársaság: 4K.*, Budapest 2013, p. 365.

future are going to be the establishment of a real organisational structure and the mobilisation of its potential voters.

The history of the alternative university representation organisation, HaHa started much earlier than 2011. The organisers already appeared among the Occupy movement and the Anonymus group in the mid-2000s. In the 2011 they had several actions, occupying the office of Máté Kocsis, mayor of Budapest's 8th district, protesting in front of the Bankcenter office building and raising awareness with other similar media hack events. The group initially consisted of 20-30 members and pronounced clear messages: as accomplices, the individual consumers, the corporations, the bankers and the politicians are all responsible for the situation. The university and high school protests were fuelled in autumn 2011, when the government announced plans to reform higher education, introducing an obligatory student agreement, a radical decrease of state-financed university seats and great reductions in the education budget. HaHa also profited from the notion that the National Conference of Students' Represents' Councils (HÖOK) was not appropriately representing the students' interests. HaHa chose a variety of methods for its protests. Its activists disrupted speeches of the state secretary responsible for the reform of higher education (who used to be an active member of the communist party before the transition to democracy) and other ministry officials, they organised marches, student forums, talked at demonstrations organised by Milla, occupied university halls and auditoriums and held night vigils. They played a major role in the resignation of President Pál Schmitt, continuously organising campaigns, especially on the internet.[39]

March of the students, December, 2012
Source: eduline.hu

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[39]   M. Gerő, 'El kéne foglalni valamit… Az Occupy Wall Street és a hallgatói mozgalom'. In *Tarka ellenállás. Kézikönyv rebelliseknek és békéseknek*, ed. by P. Krasztev, V. T. Jon, Budapest 2013, pp. 322-323.

The organisation gained popularity during the winter of 2012/2013, when discontent reached a new peak. On 12 December 2012, a group of students entered the Kossuth Square of Budapest with a march of several thousand protesters and reached the steps of the Parliament building, only to meet a wall of policemen. On 11 February 2013, HaHa and high school activists held a demonstration in Budapest's Deák Square, marched to the Faculty of Humanities building of the Eötvös Loránd University and "occupied" the main building. The "first Hungarian 'occupy a university' event" ended in 45 days, after the participants concluded an agreement with the leaders of the university. According to the agreement, the students were free to organise forums in the previously occupied auditorium and the university declared to "support self-organisation of the students". Moreover, the organisers negotiated with the government, which again took a "stop and go" stance. While the students always compared the dismantling of higher education with the billions spent on building stadiums and spent on football, members of the far-right/neo-fascist football hooligan movement Ultras Liberi demonstrated at the student protests. After the initial protests, the government changed its original education policy reforms in many aspects. It revoked its proposal on quotas of admitted students, and provided almost 55,000 seats instead of the proposed 10,500 in higher education institutions. In February they divided the ministry unit responsible for education into a state secretariat for elementary and secondary education and another one for higher education. The controversial state secretary Rózsa Hoffman remained head of the elementary and secondary education unit, while the István Klinghammer was appointed state secretary for higher education. The stand-off was thus resolved, although no agreement was reached, and issues affecting the Hungarian youth were postponed and ignored.

POLITICS AGAINST POLITICS

Hungarian Two-tailed Dog Party (MKKP)

Magyar Kétfarkú Kutya Párt (Hungarian Two-tailed Dog Party) started as a joke in the city of Szeged in 2006. A group of friends had initially intended to use street campaigns, thought-provoking, cynical, symbolic messages to draw attention to anomalies of consumer society, the poor quality of the media and the flood of promises from politics and politicians. The formation, which was not registered as a party, was soon joined by a team of young creatives that started to operate in Budapest and major cities (university towns). Their declared aim was to make citizens think and to annoy politicians. They articulated intentionally impossible promises to voters, such as infinite life, free beer and a tax cut of 100%. They announced that these promises were no more impossible to keep than those promised by politicians.

The formation appeared in public in 2009, a year before the elections, when it organised a protest at the building of the National Statistics Bureau. The 200-300 participants clearly stated to be tired of political fights, hysteria in the political arena and

an unnecessary and hypocritical overuse of the patriotic themes. Leaders of the initiative announced that no election programme was necessary, as the other parties did not have plausible programmes either, or in case they did, those were completely unreal and intended to be forgotten after the elections. It is interesting to note that many impossible demands of MKKP turned into reality after 2010. Official government communication entities and other government bodies committed errors that could have been announced in the programme of MKKP, or published on its fake news website started after 2010, Hírcsárda. The joke party closely cooperates with the átlátszó.blog.hu portal that is a watchdog monitoring state investments, the effects of political decisions and the consequences thereof. The fact-finding and investigative series of articles on the blog try to disentangle and systematise operations of economic background organisations of the political elite.

In 2013, MKKP initiated official proceedings to become an officially registered party and requested the court for registration, also announcing that it was planning to run in the 2014 parliamentary elections. The intention to participate in politics did not change the image of the group, in a 2012 project they made promises to develop their performance in major Hungarian cities. They promised to build a mountain and a spaceport in Szeged; a gigantic church in Debrecen; a triple-size extension of the abandoned high tower building in Pécs; a sandy beach plaza, Mediterranean suburbs and a giant amusement park in Budapest. They also promised to construct an underground railway connecting the eastern and western borders of the country, and a stadium covering the total area of the country, thus reacting to the government's multi-billion stadium reconstruction programme. On 27 April 2013, activists of the joke party joined by the 4K protested on the streets against the serious harms against the political class and the billionaire oligarchs assisting them. They wanted to draw attention to the recent activities of the government providing major development orders to companies and corporate empires without a proper tender, and the government labelling the opposition politicians or NGOs requesting data as supporters of multinational corporations and local representatives of foreign capitalists. Although the protest was ironic and cynical in its tone, it fitted into the series of movement organisations started in the year before, which named the oligarchs, corrupt corporate networks, banks, credit institution and offshore companies to be responsible for the crisis, not to mention the representatives of the political elite. They also started a "populist calculator" to convert the costs of corrupt and useless investments into the expenses spent on medicine and basic food.

MKKP – which is similar to the Icelandic Best Party in many ways – intends to take advantage of an increasingly anti-political sentiment and plans to compete in the parliamentary elections in 2014. Since the elections are only open to officially registered parties, this plan may fail due to administrative reasons, as the court rejects to register the joke party due to its deceptive name.

It did, however, register the Hungarian Kalózpárt (Pirate Party), founded in April 2012 following Swedish and German examples. The group originally operating within LMP left the green party in 2011 and continued politics independently. Pirate parties all over the world are parties that include the freedom of online file exchange, the pro-

motion of civil rights, direct participation, liquid democracy, a reform of copyright, a free flow of knowledge, freedom of information, more secure data safety, the protection of the private sphere, greater transparency in government and the public sphere, democratic education and similar issues in their programmes. The Hungarian party fights for similar goals, promoting the decision-making system established between representative democracy and participatory democracy, the so-called liquid democracy; and a basic income guarantee that would provide every citizen with a monthly income to provide a minimum level of livelihood.

CONCLUSION

Crisis had already arrived in Hungary in 2006, before the global crisis. It has not only been a financial-economic, but also a moral and ethical crisis which affected the governing coalition first, and then spread across society as a kind of judgement on the entire political system. Protests and street riots indicated that the majority of citizens had become tired of promises and party clashes in the political arena. The largest opposition force, Fidesz understood the public mood and continuously attached the government and its discredited prime minister, Ferenc Gyurcsány. This resulted in Fidesz winning a 2/3 majority in the 2010 elections. It began to transform the country completely. The crisis caused two formations to emerge. They entered the national assembly as new parties, and had strong movement networks in their background. Although it faced several scandals, Jobbik could remain united, while LMP dissolved and the quitting leftist, globcrit group joined Gordon Bajnai's Együtt 2014 formation, under the name PM.

Protests against the reforms of Fidesz began as early as the first autumn after the elections. The originally single-issue movements grew to become groups and parties acting against the government and the entire political system by 2012. In the organisation of street protests, Szolidaritás and Milla emerged, while the opposition parties were shocked to see what was going on around them. The government continued to act without a compromise and repelled discontent forces according to the "divide and rule" principle. Therefore, democratic movements had to face the dilemma that most of the non-governmental organisations face when entering the political arena: without actual success the enthusiasm of the members vanishes, the movement freezes and diminishes. Their initially radical anti-politics attitude was misunderstood: Szolidaritás and Milla joined the Együtt 2014 organisation, the 4K is currently in talks with LMP, while MKKP and Kalózpárt also informally belong to the circle of the green party. Having no current single issues, HaHa and other student organisations are silent in policy issues. The bipolar character of politics in Hungary till 2010 extended by several additional poles by 2013. The governing party forms an enormous block in the centre and on the right, while Jobbik and the neo-nazi/arrow cross and national radical groups occupy the far-right. The democratic opposition is fragmented, continuously changing and consists of a mass of ideologically divided left/new left/globcrit/green/ liberal movements and parties.

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