
ABSTRACTS

ANDREW ARATO

REVOLUTION, RESTORATION AND LEGITIMATION:
IDEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS OF THE TRANSITION
FROM STATE SOCIALISM

The idea of the „self limiting revolution” represents one of the major contributions of recent East European thought and action to political philosophy. And yet from the outset, from the times of the first Solidarity, this idea was scornfully rejected by would-be radical revolutionaries, largely but not exclusively from the nationalist right. Of course, as long as the geopolitical reasons for strategic self-limitation, rooted in an intact Soviet imperium, continued to apply, it was not fully apparent that only a minority of intellectuals and movement militants promoted a self-limiting radicalism also on the bases of historical learning experiences and normative considerations. Given the strategic reasons, there was apparently no need to fully argue a case that would have contributed to ideological divisions within the opposition, divisions that were pragmatically unnecessary.

With the happy collapse of the geopolitical context of self-limitation the idea of radical revolution has clearly reappeared at least among some intellectuals and politicians. And yet, as the continued use of adjectives like peaceful, velvety, gentle, quiet, bloodless, negotiated, legal, and constitutional indicate, there has been, at least for a time, a reluctance, on a wide variety of grounds, to define or interpret the East European transitions as revolutions in the classical sense of the modern revolutionary tradition.

In what follows I first re-examine the problem of what constitutes a revolution in its modern sense. Second, I will show how the presence of only some of the important criteria favors in principle at least the retention of the notion of self-limiting revolution, and, focusing on Hungary, how this state of affairs has powerfully effected the legal-constitutional development of a post-Communist society. Third, I will consider the reasons why mainly but not exclusively in the form of revolutionary restorationism radical revolutionary ideology is nevertheless experiencing a revival among political forces even in Hungary,

perhaps the least revolutionary of East and East Central European societies. I will try to point to the present political weakness of this revival, as well as to the normative complex from which it nevertheless may continue to draw its energies. Finally I will try to show why the social scientific notion of „transition” and the liberal defense of the continuity of the *Rechtsstaat*, however justified in themselves, are unfortunately in themselves inadequate in the face of the challenge of revolution. I end by making a plea for an ideology that recognizes the originality and radicalism of the East European transformations, beyond mere imitation and restoration, and the need to distinguish this civil society-centered ideology from all concepts of radical revolution.

MÁTÉ SZABÓ

THE CULTURE OF PROTEST — THE SECTOR OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Social movements have the function of permanent discontent and protest within the political system towards the institutionalized political actors. Their dynamic complex is called „social movement sector” which contains all the different social initiatives criticizing and protesting against the existing social-political actors. It is characterized by of spontaneously mobilized sociopolitical resources; a loose, network-type organization; and a combination of single-issue goals and general social ideologies and utopias. Protest culture is the specific segment of political culture concerning protest activities. In pluralist democracies, both the incumbents and the protest movements share a common „consent of democrats” which should be characterized by the acceptance of non-violent protest, and the cooperation of all relevant actors to avoid the escalation of violence. A type of proportionality in the use of protest activities, administrative sanctions and measures against the protest movements should also be present.

In Hungary, both the social movement sector and the culture of protest are relatively new phenomena. Before the transformation and democratization of the system the autonomous social movements were suppressed, and the so called „pseudo-movements” huge bureaucratic organizations, acclaiming themselves to be social movements dominated the political scene. In the authoritarian system, all sociopolitical protest was outlawed. In the crisis of the old system, the emergence of autonomous social movements of political protest played an important, but not a dominant role like in Poland, in the GDR and Czechoslovakia. The sociopolitical movements in Hungary have been institutionalized rapidly as political parties, and they play the role of governing, opposition or extra-parliamentary parties in the political process, which is different from that of social movements. The social movements of system transformation have become institutionalized political actors, but new social movements emerged with new forms of protest activities in the recently institutionalized new Hungarian democracy.

The taxi driver's demonstration of October 1990 was an important event in the making of the new social movement sector and protest culture. Since then, many interesting and politically relevant social initiatives appeared, which have contributed to the recently developing protest culture. The Democratic Charter, an umbrella organization of „all democrats” against the new dangers of the new democracy, the welfare-oriented Association of People Living Under Social Minimum, the politically active skinheads and the initiatives of the alternative life-style movements, and the radical „movements” within the biggest governing party, the Hungarian Democratic Forum are analyzed in the study from the point of different internal and external factors of their development.

The analyzed internal factors are as follows;

- a) Origins, „causes” of emergence.
- b) Mobilization dynamics.
- c) Organizational patterns.
- d) Forms and strategies of political action.
- e) Goals and programmes.
- f) Ideology and utopia.

There are still no relevant empirical researches on the social support of the movements, and the motivation of their activists.

As a preliminary conclusion, the existence of a complex and differentiated sector of new sociopolitical movements within the Hungarian political system has been stated. This sector contains different or even conflicting sociopolitical movements, which play a significant role within the process of Hungarian politics. The culture of protest is still in the making and there are several problems which should be solved by mutual processes of political learning. The authorities of political-administrative control are still not a part of the „consent of democrats” beyond the differentiation of government and opposition, and there are specific movements using political violence in their actions (especially the skinheads), or abusing their direct political and personal relations to the governing parties getting more political space for their protests (HDF-radical movements). The political-administrative control over social movements should be pluralized and democratized, but the socialization experiences of the relevant actors are still gained in the old authoritarian-bureaucratic system. But the political learning processes toward a new culture of political protest has started in Hungary, and the existence of a pluralist sector of social movements is an immense challenge for its establishment and institutionalization.

BRONISLAW MISZTAL

THE POLITICS OF PROTEST AND THE PROCESSES
OF DISMANTLING SOCIALIST STATE IN POLAND
AND HUNGARY

Political traditions of Western Europe allowed protest politics to be generated as a result of changing coalitions and alliances between various actors who would quest for available opportunity structure within the social reality, whereby separation of power, knowledge and religion enhanced civil society's autonomy from the state. Unlike in the West, the organizational practice of democracy was non-existent in Eastern Europe during centuries preceding communist rule. The state dominated social, economic and political life and wielded discretionary power over a multiplicity of spheres, without being answerable to the society. Modernization was the major task in Eastern Europe, but with the absence of autonomous civil society this task was carried out by the state.

Social classes, rather than movements of political organizations, have been political actors in Eastern Europe for the most part of the past centuries. There was little integration between such actors in terms of social agendas. Subsequently, backwardness in both political and economic dimensions prevailed. The social reality of Eastern European societies prior to, and to some extent irrespectively of the communist domination over their polities was therefore marked by inconsistency, or discontinuity that adversely affected the ability of certain actors to make, or use political opportunities. The four decades of communist rule have not produced political opportunity structures on a universal basis. Socialist states were confronted with the dilemma how to generate new structural actors that would become future constituents for the power-wielders and yet not be capable to utilize the mobilizing potential.

In Poland disintegration of state socialism was going on for decades, but elsewhere the decomposition of the legitimacy/capacity myth took a few months, prompting conclusion about an allegedly universal logic behind those historical processes. The study analyzes how the structural conditions existing in two countries, Poland and Hungary, had influenced the politics of protest that led to the decomposition of state socialist economic and political order, and furthermore, how they affected the strategies of reconstruction after the political space has been left vacant by defeated communist power holders. The „roads to the unknown future” that have been taken by Poland and Hungary, as it is demonstrated, differ despite the fact that they had originated at the seemingly similar point, since they result from different political opportunity structures in the past, prior to and during the communist rule, and in the periods immediately after the collapse of communist regime. Also, the framing processes that affected the nature of political discourse during and after the revolutionary transition had an impact on the institutionalization of the movements and the appropriation of opportunity structures by major actors of change.

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