From liberal democracy to illiberalism: new authoritarian regimes, Hungarian illiberalism and the crisis of "real existing liberalism"

Böcskei, Balázs

Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version
Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

From Liberal Democracy to Illiberalism
New Authoritarian Regimes, Hungarian Illiberalism and the Crisis of "Real Existing Liberalism"

BALÁZS BÖCSKEI

Introduction

The refugee crisis of the summer of 2015 has revealed the imbalance of Europe and the dissimilarity of the sovereignty concepts of each state, which until then have mostly only been revealed by the critical literature of transitology[1]. Not only has it become clear that, as opposed to the interpretation of Fukuyama, "history was not over" – meaning that liberal democracy is not without rivals – but with the redefinition of Russian authority in the last few years, geopolitical realignments[2] and accordingly, changes in European dependency relationships have started to emerge. The incompletion of history is enhanced which was not considered less existent by the Hungarian public opinion for a long time, and which underlined with the referred essay by Faared Zakaria in 1997: „The Rise of Illiberal Democracy" published in *Foreign Affairs*. Zakaria's writing describes the characteristics of the illiberal democracies[3] in an axiomatic way; however, the opening writing of the discourse resulted in more uncertainty than how much was unravelled by it.

The issue has been on the agenda again particularly because of the halt and the backlash of the democratization processes taking place in the former Soviet and post-communist areas. In the same way as the concept of liberal democracy proves to lack homogeneity, that of illiberal democracy has been

---

1 Thomas Carothers, "The End of the Transition Paradigm", *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 13, no. 1, 2002, pp. 5-21. See also Jordan Gans-Morse, "Searching for Transitologists: Contemporary Theories of Post-communist Transitions and the Myth of a Dominant Paradigm", *Post-Soviet Affairs*, vol. 20, no. 4, 2004, pp. 320-349.

2 Robert Kagan, "Is Democracy in Decline? The Weight of Geopolitics", *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 23, no. 1, 2015, pp. 5-10.

3 Fareed Zakaria, "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy", *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 76, no. 6, 1997, pp. 22-43. Available: https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/1997-11-01/rise-illiberal-democracy. (Downloaded: 3 February 2016.) The study does not undertake to interpret the Hungarian political institutions within the framework of an illiberal democracy. The term "illiberalism" is used as a reference to the professional literature.

established as varying from country to country as to its meaning, as well. The possible heterogeneity of the concept, thus the possibility of a universal description of the related countries can be seen in the thematic issues of the *Journal of Democracy*, a journal comprising of the main Western supporters of democracy, which are to be discussed in detail later.

The following research will in many places allude to the contents of the aforementioned journal related to democratization; however, when presenting Hungarian illiberalism, it will rely less on the terminologies of Western political science, instead, it will opt for the ideas of David Ost[4] and Ivan Krastev[5], interpreting the 2010 Hungarian regime change as an answer to the crisis of the "enlightened, rationalized liberalism". By way of introduction, it is important to pinpoint: regarding Hungarian illiberalism, the emphasis is placed on its description within the aforementioned framework, rather than on the additional critical interpretations linked to the regime of Viktor Orbán that transgress the theoretical framework. The new post-2010 political constellation can be interpreted with an approach of political history and legal theory, within a distinct terminological (and critical) framework, but in this article, I only aspire to introduce a new interpretation.

In my view, without the critical reading of waves and theories of democratization, characteristics related to authoritarian/populist regimes or hyphenated democracies[6] are less intelligible: their social base, the swapping of the hegemonic political thinking of the post-regime change Hungary and responses of the regime to the substantial crisis of post-communist liberalism. Accordingly, this article is divided into two sections: in the first segment, the dilemmas surrounding democracy research and the nature of the new authoritarian regimes will be analysed; in the second part, the crisis of enlightened liberalism will be tackled. In the same section, the distinctiveness of Hungarian illiberalism will be investigated, then as a conclusion, the investigation of the post-2010 mainstream political thinking will follow.

Theories of Democracy and Measurement of Democracy

The only thing which is even more difficult than determining (the variedness of) the concept of democracy is deciding on the criteria by which its

[4] David Ost, *Defeat of Solidarity: Anger and Politics in Postcommunist Europe*, Cornell University Press. Ithaca, NY, 2005.

[5] Ivan Krastev, "The Strange Death of the Liberal Consensus", *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 18, no. 4, 2007, pp. 56-63.

[6] Wolfgang Merkel, "Embedded and Defective Democracies", *Democratization*, vol. 11, no. 5, 2004, pp. 33-58.This approach is connected to theories of transitology and democratization, and focuses on the interpretation of movement between autocracy and democracy.

quality and power are measured. Deciding on a certain theory for an interpretative background will significantly affect the criteria on the basis of which the latter two are measured. In pursuance of the theory of egalitarian democracy, it is the citizens' legal, political, as well as the possible greatest social and economic equality that provide identical weight to the citizens, and render a regime democratic[7]. This approach focuses on how particularly disadvantaged social groups are involved (in decision-making), which due to their structural situation, could be excluded from the several processes of policy-making. According to the theory of participatory democracy, not only is the way of the decision-making the criterion of democracy, but also to include the most people in the administration of matters[8]. The theory of participatory democracy does not equal the rejection of representative solutions, but it implies the intensification of social organizations' access to policy-making forums. Mandate theory belongs to those theories which describe democracy as an already defined decision-making process. The latter deems it necessary for the parties to have programmes since the voters will select from the programmes offered the one standing the closest to them, thus authorizing the representative party to implement it. In general, citizens do not make a decision on the basis of this[9]. In accordance with the theory of accountability, they do not or are less likely to vote by virtue of the given programmes during elections; much rather, they give their opinion about the government's efficiency, they repose their confidence in a (certain) party by the right of their (past) accomplishments[10]. The presupposition of the theory of minimalist democracy is that as long as neither running for a position, nor the right to vote are restricted, and if competing for power is regular, the system is to be considered a democracy. In addition, the theory presumes a two party system and the possibility of in-system change of government[11]. Eventually, the deliberative theory of democracy has to be mentioned, according to which decision-making based on the support of the majority through voting is not satisfactory. According to this theory, the substance of democracy is to establish a free and public debate and negotiation involving the most actors possible prior to decision-making, the outcome of which will result in a consensus regarding policy-making[12]. Whichever theoretical direction we choose to contemplate Hungarian

---

7 Michael Coppedge et. al, "Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy: A New Approach", *Perspectives on Politics*, vol. 9, no. 2, 2011, pp. 247-267.

8 Carol Pateman, *Participation and Democracy Theory*, Camb-Typotex, Cambridge, 1970.

9 Körösényi András, "A demokratikus elitizmus konszenzusán túl", *Politikatudományi Szemle*, vol. 16, no. 4, 2007, pp. 7-28.

10 *Ibidem*.

11 Adam Przeworski, "Minimalist Conception of Democracy: A Defence", in Ian Shapiro, Casiano Hacker-Cordón (eds.), *Democracy's Value*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999, pp. 23-55.

12 Michael Coppedge et. al, "Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy…cit.".

democracy, it could be described as stagnant, then as steadily declining in nature in the recent years.

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), as well as Freedom House, regard the minimalist concept as normative, i.e. the formal institutional system of democracy, regarding that as an electoral democracy. This perception, advocated by Joseph Alois Schumpeter, is based on the procedural approach of democracy, viz. that it is a political system in which leaders gain a position by means of competition for others' votes[13]. Schumpeter describes this in his work entitled *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* as follows:

> ''Democracy means only that the people have the opportunity of accepting or refusing the men who are to rule them. But since they might decide this also in entirely undemocratic ways, we have had to narrow our definition by adding a further criterion identifying the democratic method, viz., free competition among would-be leaders for the vote of the electorate"[14].

Based on this, post-2010 Hungarian democracy can also be described as deteriorating; at the same time, by 2015 the widely-referenced Freedom House has registered a negative shift as well. Many in the Hungarian public sphere have argued against the labelling of the recent state as "stagnant", as a result of the changes to the institution system that have supervened, regarded by them as radical.

Reports of Freedom House focusing on the countries of the former Eastern Bloc are referenced in the Hungarian public sphere. In this report[15], Hungary was labelled as a "semi-consolidated democracy", downgraded from that of "consolidated" or "substantial". The report's rating is as follows: the most efficient country (highest quality of democratic values) is marked with one point, the worst one (lowest quality of democratic values) with seven points. Hungary's result have been constantly deteriorating in the past seven years; in the 2015 report, its rate was 3.18 (in 2013: 2.96; in 2014: 2.89), therefore, got into the same category as Bulgaria, Romania and Serbia (semi-consolidated category). The report has rated thirteen countries as consolidated democracies, six as hybrid regimes; as compared with the state of 31 December 2013, twelve countries have been downgraded. Further east of Hungary semi- or completely substantial regimes could be found. The report refers to Viktor Orbán's speech in 2014, in Băile Tuşnad[16], in which the Prime Minister proposed the question

---

13 Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, Routledge, London, 1994.

14 *Ibidem*, pp. 284-285.

15 Freedom House: *Nation in Transit 2015*. Available: https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/nations-transit-2015#.VrJOabLhDDc. (Downloaded: 1 January 2016.)

16 *Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's Speech at the 25th Bálványos Summer Free University and Student Camp*. Available: http://www.kormany.hu/en/the-prime-minister/the-prime-

of illiberalism. Uniquely, the report only deals with the question in two paragraphs, as if the meaning and the very existence of illiberalism were evident by the Prime Minister's allusion. According to the latest, 2016 report of Freedom House, Hungary's aggregate rating is 3.29, which is also a deterioration compared to the year before. Strengthening of nationalistic and intolerant sentiments related to the refugee crisis was cited as a reason for the deterioration of the government's democratic quality. According to the organisation's justification, the government's decisions in this field are contrary to international human rights practices, and undermine the democratic functioning of society. Another objection was the handling of the refugee crisis: allegedly because of the crisis, an anti-fundamental law extension regarding state of emergency has been implemented. The reason why perception of corruption is getting more unfavourable is attributed to quantitative changes rather than qualitative ones[17].

In addition to the methodical discussion of measurability of democracy[18], another question can be raised: that of the absence of aspects which explain differences undermined through the measurement of formal institutions of democracy. Characteristically, criteria defined by Western standards[19] on the one hand, fail to account for political and economic factors shaping the quality of democracy – despite these significantly contributing to its decline. On the other hand, they offer no substantive explanation as to why there is a constant dissatisfaction in the region related to the functioning of

minister-s-speeches/prime-minister-viktor-orban-s-speech-at-the-25th-balvanyos-summer-free-university-and-student-camp. (Downloaded: 15 April 2016.)

17 Freedom House: *Nation in Transit 2016*. Available: https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/2016/hungary. (Downloaded: 12 April 2016.)

18 Judith Kelley, Beth Simmons, "Politics by Number: Indicators as Social Pressure in International Relations", *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 59, no. 1, 2015, pp. 55-70. Sally Engle Merry, "Measuring the World: Indicators, Human Rights, and Global Governance", *Current Anthropology*, vol. 52, no. 3, 2011, pp. 83-95. Problematic aspects of measurability of democracy include the following: definition problems, data selection and data aggregation.

19 Several indices are used in the USA and Europe to measure the rule of law, democracy (for example: Bertelsmann Stiftung, World Bank, World Justice Project or the above mentioned Freedom House). Debates revolving around indices and measurability are often the basis for internal (national) and external (international) fights regarding political interpretation. The main point of criticism towards international and civil organizations responsible for the creation of the index is, among others, that it is their desired political and economic solutions that serve as a basis of the scoring system; it is by that virtue that countries are preferred and rankings are set up (Kevin E. David, Benedict Kingsbury, Sally Engle Merry, "Indicators as a Technology of Global Governance", *International Law and Justice Working Papers*, 2010/2. Available: http://www.iilj.org/publications/documents/2010-2.Davis-Kingsbury-Merry.pdf. (Downloaded: 15 April 2016.)

democracy, despite it being consolidated[20]. The measured democracy does not reflect, for example, the asynchrony existing between institutions and actors, neglects social-historical antecedents and conditions, and renders organicness and rapidness of democracy's introduction uninterpretable. Thus, as a matter of fact, several factors have been left out of the analytical sphere which could have made the purpose of the comparative method relevant[21].

From Transitology to the New Authoritarian States

The paradigm of transitology that proved to be hegemonic in Hungary at the time the regime change and thereafter, did not prove to be universal regarding the third wave of the democratization[22]. The tendency of transitology mentioned[23] has been mostly focused on the transition's institutional aspects and the development of democratic institutions and less emphasis has been laid on examining political-economic or micro-level attitudinal changes. In pursuance of the statement of transitology, the concerned countries, gradually distancing themselves from the characteristics of a dictatorial system, are entering the stage of democratic transition. The latter can be divided into three sections: political opening, the collapse of the former regime, then the new one's consolidation. The occurrence of the first independent elections is an important stage of this, so are the subsequent reforms. The success of transition is not affected by the starting positions, although the process surmises a functional state, thus the building of the state and that of democracy materialize side by side[24]. Every single wave has its own characteristics (stagnations,

[20] Pew Research Center (2011): *Confidence in Democracy and Capitalism Wanes in Former Soviet Union*. Available: http://www.pewglobal.org/2011/12/05/confidence-in-democracy-and-capitalism-wanes-in-former-soviet-union/1/. (Downloaded: 3 February 2016.)

[21] Shortly before the writing of this essay, the latest ranking of a democracy index by the Economist Intelligence Unit has been published, in which Hungary shares its position with the Philippines, behind Ghana and ahead of Suriname. The index is also based on the combination of the above mentioned democracy theories, and is based on such categories as the electoral system and pluralism, the autonomy of NGOs, the functioning of the government, political participation and political culture. My aim with the illustration of the above classification of countries to same "groups" was to refer to the same uncertainty I mentioned in the main text in line with the measurability of democracy. Economist Intelligence Unit: Democracy Index 2015. Democracy in an age of anxiety. Available: http://www.yabiladi.com/img/content/EIU-Democracy-Index-2015.pdf. (Downloaded: 23 February 2016.)

[22] Samuel Huntingon, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Oklahoma – London, 1991.

[23] Laurence Whitehead, *Democratization: Theory and Experience*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2002.

[24] Thomas Carothers, "The End of the Transition…cit.", pp. 6-9.

reversals), although if we regard the waves as process models (I. wave: 1828-1926; II. wave: 1943-1962; III. wave: 1974-1995), then it can be stated that each of them have been followed by a relapse. But while the first and the second wave reveal several similarities, the third wave is unalike. Here, the idea of highlighting the role of the political actor is emphasised, which does not neglect the aspects centring on institutions either. Accordingly, the more and more prevalent neoinstitutionalism examines the mutual coherences between actor and institution. According to this theory, institutions could equally be dependent or independent variables. In case of the former, stabilization of democracy is defined by occurrence of historical traditions and social environment (habits, norm, moral), while in case of the latter, it is the institution's influence on the actors that is determinative[25]. Herein, I can only allude to the fact that the analysis of the third wave in the neo-institutional frame would rather amount to the more substantial knowledge of the "reversals", since the paradigm of the transitology (liberalisation, then democratization, finally, consolidation) has not reached its terminus. Since liberalization has provided little basis for the second stage (democratization), the necessity of liberal democracy being established from below is already questioned at this point, which again should only imply the correction of the methodology of comparative political science.

As Petr Kopecký and Claus Offe draw the attention to this:

> "Most researchers of democratization either come from the area of the comparative political science or proceed from the Latin-American or South-European school of transitology, hence the state's and even more, the nation's problems are technically extraneous to them"[26].

It should be emphasized from the aspect of Hungarian and regional processes: it has not been instantly recognised that the building of a state does not equal the building of a nation, in the same way as the emergence of nationalism should not be explained solely as a reaction to the end of the communist suppression, as the liberation of the national spirit and sentiments. Offe, as early as in the beginning of the nineties, drew attention to the fact that the East-Central European regime changes have neither historical nor revolutionary models, and one of the distinctive features of the sudden, systematic changes is precisely the complete absence of developed theoretical premises and the normative arguments. While the territorial integrity and organization of democracies following the Second World War, or of South-

[25] Michael G. Burton, Richard Gunther, John Higley, "Introduction: Elite Tranformations and Democratic Regimes", in John Higley, Richard Gunther (eds.), *Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Latin America and Southern Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992, pp. 1-38.

[26] Petr Kopecký, Claus Offe, "Mire tanít minket a kelet-európai irodalom a demokratizálódásról (és viszont)?", *Politikatudományi Szemle*, vol. 9, no. 3-4, 2000, p. 61.

European and South-American countries mostly remained unaffected – with the former keeping their population as well – in East-Central Europe, certain countries and the region were accompanied by migration, local arguments, national and ethnic conflicts. The other great distinction is that regarding the former groups of countries, processes of modernization were political and constitutional in nature, i.e. were related to the form of governance and the legal relation between state and society, whereas regarding the latter, the most important task proved to be the reformation of economy[27]. In Offe's terms, it is the "dilemma of the simultaneity" the emergence of which makes East-Central European regime changes special. A number of issues appeared concurrently. Firstly, territorial questions, i.e. designation and stabilization of borders of the state and the population. Secondly, the question of democracy, i.e. the period following the era of the one-party-state, the competition for power between the parties in a system that is validated in a constitutionally limited way, along the emergence of basic civil rights. Finally, issues of ownership structure and economy, and political management of the production and distribution problems[28]. Thus far, it has been accepted in the professional literature that the new democracies of East-Central Europe represent a more mature form of the evolution of democracy, while countries of the post-Soviet region have turned in an authoritarian direction, thus are reckoned among the reversed type, whereas the Balkan development takes a specific intermediary form[29].

In this field, in relation to Hungary, an alternation can be perceived at several scientific levels already[30], since Hungary is unequivocally classified among illiberal democracies. In the opinion of Gregorz Ekiert, as a general rule, economic downturn cannot serve as an exclusive explanation to the strengthening of illiberalism and the increase of its mobilization; much rather, strengthening of illiberal tendencies is warranted by an authoritarian state occupied by an illiberal party[31]. All this is strengthened by the institutionalization of the missing civic awareness characteristic of times after

---

[27] Claus Offe, "Demokratikusan tervezett kapitalizmus? A demokráciaelmélet szembesítése a kelet-közép-európai hármas átmenettel", *Szociológiai Szemle*, vol. 2, no. 1, 1992, pp. 6-7.

[28] *Ibidem*, p. 9.

[29] Ágh Attila, "Demokráciakutatás a politikai és közpolitikai elemzés keresztútján: a demokráciák minősége és teljesítőképessége", *Politikatudományi Szemle*, vol. 21, no. 2, 2012, p. 57.

[30] Gregorz Ekiert, "The Illiberal Challenge in Post-Communist Europe: Surprises and Puzzles", *Taiwan Journal of Democracy*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2012, pp. 63-77; Erin K. Jenne, Cas Mudde, "Hungary's Illiberal Turn: Can Outsiders Help?", *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 23, no. 3, 2015, pp. 147-155; Krasztev Péter, Jon Van Til (eds.), *The Hungarian Patient. Social Opposition to an Illiberal Democracy*, CEU Press, Budapest – New York, 2015.

[31] Gregorz Ekiert, "The Illiberal Challenge in Post-Communist Europe: Surprises and Puzzles", *Taiwan Journal of Democracy*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2012, pp. 63-77.

the Hungarian regime change, the absence of civil society's progress; while it is not rare, that civil society becomes polarized, and anti-liberal organizations and movements appear as part of them. Compared to this, Robert Kagan, geopolitical expert and historian of the American Brookings Institution, emphasizes the primacy of geopolitical aspects in the "realignment" of democracies, with which at the same time, rejects the concept that history has ended. In pursuance of his statement, the existence of the American hegemony has played a significant role in the democratization waves, in the same way as authoritarian turns do not supervene independently of the retreat of the US, of the increase of Russia's and China's power, of the strengthening of the military, trading and economic relations to them and the soft-pressure practices used by them ranging from cultural diplomacy to financing of NGOs[32].

In the same way as Freedom House's report left the definition of illiberalism undefined, uncertainty can be perceived in professional literature as for the adequate denomination of countries in the "grey zone"[33], that is, those not having reached a certain point by the third democratization wave, where transitology had supposed them to arrive at, at the time of the regime changes. Countries in the grey zone are usually examined through the literature of hyphenated democracies[34], hyphenated autocracies[35] or hybrid regimes[36]. In general, countries of the grey zone show numerous democratic features, such as "sufficient room" for the organization of parties and civil society, the existence of a democratic Constitution, the institution of regularly held elections, yet the operation of the system is full of deficits. These include the complete lack of the articulation of civic interest, the authority's arbitrary, democratically unauthorized functioning, the lack of transparency in political decision-making, concentration of power, low levels of political activity and participation, the "collaboration" of the government and independent institutions, legitimacy of the elections, etc.[37].

---

[32] Marc F. Plattner, "Is Democracy in Decline?", *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 23, no. 1, 2015, p. 9.

[33] The definitional difficulty is best exemplified through the abundance of denominations in the literature for the grey zone countries. (pl.: semi-democracy, formal democracy, electoral democracy, facade democracy, pseudo-democracy, weak democracy, partial democracy, illiberal democracy, virtual democracy). Mikael Wigell, "Mapping 'Hybrid Regimes': Regime Types and Concepts in Comparative Politics", *Democratization*, vol. 15, no. 2, 2008, pp. 230-250.

[34] Wolfgang Merkel, "Embedded and Defective Democracies", cit., pp. 33-58.

[35] Andreas Schedler, *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*, Boulder, Colo, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006.

[36] Mikael Wigell, "Mapping 'Hybrid Regimes': Regime Types and Concepts in Comparative Politics", *Democratization*, vol. 15, no. 2, 2008, pp. 230-250.

[37] Thomas Carothers, "The End of the Transition…cit.", pp. 9-10.

Ivan Krastev illustrates the paradox of Putin's regime (and that of authoritarian states) by the example of Russia[38]. According to Krastev, it is not through repression that "user-friendly" regimes consolidate themselves, but by ensuring a certain degree of freedom. In his opinion, a state organized in the same way as Putin's Russia has no ideology, the idea of common weal presented by Putin lacks all ideological definiteness. As opposed to the practice of the Soviet Union, it does not try to export ideology, furthermore, people can retain the opportunity to leave the country[39]. The middle-class that is capable of being politically mobilized and become part of the resistance, do not hesitate to use this chance and go abroad – which, similarly to retreating to the virtual world, is a way of exit instead of protest. As Krastev alludes to the fact as well, leaving the country because it is not democratic, is not the same case in terms of its future, as voting and being involved in collective action in the order for the country to become democratic. Paradoxically, while the Soviet Union on grounds of its isolation, intensified its power, Putin's Russia is able to conserve itself with the possibility of exit. Krastev sees the reason of several post-Soviet and post-communist "reversals" in something else: viz. that their citizens regard their institutions as "managed democracies"[40], i.e. such institutions (for example the European Union) are in charge of decision-making which have not been elected by citizens, therefore have no mandates. They regard the European Union as the winning party in a dependency relationship with their country, also one that has its local "attendants", so they do not experience any change through elections. At the same time, there shows a growth in anti-elitism and in the support of political forces whose interest lies in pitting the elite and the people against each other[41].

In Jacques Rupnik's opinion, the reason for the stagnation of democratization processes is that the modernisation project within the liberal paradigm has been reduced to procedural democracy, and without a change of culture, citizens of states professing an interest in it have turned away from

---

[38] Ivan Krastev, "Paradoxes of the New Authoritarianism", *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 19, no. 2, 2011, pp. 5-16.

[39] *Idem*, *Democracy Disrupted. The Politics of Global Protest*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014, pp. 21-23.These user-friendly attributes are present in Hungary as well: for the middle class, that showed inclination to become involved at demonstrations, virtual presence was not the only way of exit. Conservation of the regime is also reinforced if protesters opt for actions and ways of demonstrating that do not have winning the majority of population over as an aim. In recent years in Hungary, no protest was followed by institutionalization of the protesters, they did not form organizations, gave up the intention to seize power. Krastev identified this particular action as "participation without representation".

[40] *Idem*, "A Fraying Union", *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 20, no. 4, 2012, pp. 23-30.

[41] On the posters of the government during the campaign of the referendum aiming to reject the migrant quota, the following slogan appeared: „Let Brussels know".

institutional democracy[42]. Béla Greskovits stated in 1993 that back then, populism did not gain ground permanently in economic policy, so the political regular advocacy of economic interests at the expense of others did not occur[43]. This would have meant the compensation of losers of the regime change which – as later will be alluded to apropos of David Ost – involved the accumulation of the anger of "wrathful people", also, the strengthening of a latent base aiming for a political turn. Neither the recession nor the national atmosphere has facilitated the compensation, in addition, despite freedom of political choice being existent, it was subordinated to the matter of economic urgency, thus significantly restricted democratic competition. According to Greskovits, populist parties are required for a populist turn, actors displaying the antithesis between the elite and the people – from the early 2000s, this has been displayed by Fidesz (Hung.; acronym for Alliance of Young Democrats), politicizing in the spirit of "plebeian anti-communism"[44], and have started preparing the turn (back). For this, it was also required that social groups disadvantaged by economic reforms discontinue their deferred and accumulative resistance to them. For this, structural, systematic and political institutional changes were necessary – such as the financial crisis in 2008 and the lack of leftist legitimacy in 2006 – at the same time, voting remained the mere act of protest against economic measures that also caused a social crisis[45]. Accepting the statement of Greskovits, according to which, after the regime change in the East-Central European region, control of economic policy and of political situations related to it shows exclusionary features, it can be acknowledged that indeed "dual democracies" have been established, "the equilibrium of which is based on the alliance between the state elites and a strategically important minority of the opposition, on the political and material compensation of that minority and on the extrusion of the remaining[46]. Populism, that had been blocked for decades, would result in an anti-egalitarian consensus between the post-communist and anti-communist counter-elites; the rise of populism would be attached to the crisis of post-communist liberal democracies[47].

---

42 Jacques Rupnik, "Is East-Central Europe Backsliding? From Democracy Fatigue to Populist Backlash", *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 18, no. 4, 2007, pp. 17-25.

43 Greskovits Béla, "A gazdasági alkalmazkodás vesztesei és a kompenzáció", *Európa Fórum*, vol. 3, no. 3, 1993, pp. 57-79.

44 Mike Károly, "Az antikommunizmuson túl", *Kommentár*, vol. 9, no. 3, 2014. Available: http://www.kommentar.info.hu/iras/2014_3/az_antikommunizmuson_tul (Downloaded: 3 September 2015.)

45 Greskovits Béla, "A tiltakozás és a türelem politikai gazdaságtanáról", *Külgazdaság*, vol. 40, no. 7-8, 1996, p. 84.

46 *Ibidem*, p. 85.

47 Ivan Krastev, "The Strange Death of the Liberal Consensus", *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 18, no. 4, 2007, pp. 56-63.

The Crisis of "Real Existing Liberalism"

Above, I have illustrated authoritarian turns based on the research of democracy and new authoritarian systems, explanations of which mentioned at the closure of the section lead to another reading, marked in the title. In the following, I will interpret democratic stagnations from the view of existing, enlightened liberal democracies, through which I will discuss the nature of Hungarian illiberalism. As I have already mentioned in the introduction, my examination of its antecedents is less focused on Viktor Orbán as a person or the political techniques of the right-wing, much rather, I will define it as a response to the paradigm of modernisation and to the crisis of "real existing liberalism". Until its major defeat in 2010, buzzwords such as "rationalization", "rational", "responsibility", "competiveness", "stability", "professional", "West", among others, were the terms to be commonly used by one side of post-regime left-liberal elites, and which were in use over several terms and repeatedly as descriptive terms to justify their politics; for the critics of these words such as "populist", "Kádárist", "paternalist" and "irrational" were used by the other side. These descriptive categories – in line with the strengthening of the technocratic political perception – have filled up with normative political content after the regime change. Among others, as a result, the "populist" masses' ability to advocate has constantly weakened, they have been disadvantaged in the Hungarian recognition system, their problem mapping has not gained legitimacy in the leftist-liberal discursive field and political thinking. This trend of depoliticization is based on the liberal misapprehension, framed by David Ost, according to which the fundament of democracy is capitalism itself, rather than the challenges of capitalism[48]. The modernized (neo)liberal perception of terminology and language has led to a strategy of demobilization and depoliticization, which resulted in such a discursive strategy, in which discourse in the interest and on behalf of social groups in need of the state's help was considered populism. While the ideology of "modernization" as the decisive thought of the public policy in post-regime's Hungary appears in scientific and social theory literatures as a question or as a hypothesis, in Hungarian public discourse, it takes the form of a statement[49]. Thus, the left that was in power until 2010 has interpreted as articulation of nationalism, populism and demagogy the expression and manifestation of protection of interests different from the one utilized within liberal discourse. Ágnes Gagyi regards

[48] David Ost, *Defeat of Solidarity: Anger and Politics in Postcommunist Europe*, Cornell University Press. Ithaca, NY, 2005.

[49] Sebők Miklós, "A modernizációs konszenzus, mint a rendszerváltás ideológiája és közpolitikája", in Antal Attila, Földes György (eds.), *Holtpont. Társadalomkritikai tanulmányok Magyarország elmúlt 25 évéről*, Napvilág, Budapest, 2016, pp. 46-76.

this as the ascetic and formal manifestation of democratic anti-populism[50]. All this can be traced in the representation of superior European values, in the economic policy that has been reduced to technocracy and rationalization, which is accompanied by the rejection of the revitalization of the welfare state. In his latest research, Miklós Sebők states that that "moderate-social democrat" and "hardcore-neoliberal" representatives of modernization, although in different ways, could be found around social-democrat party MSZP and liberal SZDSZ, although they have never been incorporated either in sociological or in political sense. Members of their elite group, "like a revolving door of politics and business", have filled various positions, such as that of Prime Minister and various kinds of ministers, governmental experts and bank managers. As Miklós Sebők proves it, this group of neo-liberal modernization has tried to influence public authorities concerning public speech and ownership, in a way that lacked elected authority. The community of vanguards of the modernization consensus based on common interests and values prevailed simultaneously in the discursive and redistributive dimension of public policy: in public discourse and public policy decisions. Representatives of the consensus have supported each other in these two spheres. Political and intellectual public discourse have stood behind a redistributive and political-economic regime, while this latter has created the conditions for the further dominance of modernization discourses[51].

Ost, among others, used the example of the Polish Solidarity to illustrate how Polish liberals have lost the support of the working class[52]. By the designation "liberal", Ost meant the former Polish community that defined themselves as the "democratic opposition", who were in favour of the ideas of economic and political liberalism at the same time. They were convinced that private property and market economy are the basis of political franchises, and that these two can only be materialized together, that their conjunction gives the essence of democracy and development. In Ost's thoughts, parties representing this idea were Polish Freedom Union, Hungarian Alliance of Free Democrats and Czech Civic Democrats Alliance. In Hungary, this group comprised of those sharing the political and public policy views realised by a group of reform economists and the democratic opposition. It is shown not only in Poland, but in post-2010 Hungary as well, that those not having been part of the modernization paradigm of the regime change, do not accept the vision of society offered them by the leftist-liberal elites that were the governing party for twelve years out of the twenty that is being examined herein. I do not interpret all this as a rebellion against liberalism, but as a rejection of "real existing liberalism". This latter is a

[50] Gagyi Ágnes, "Az antipopulizmus mint a rendszerváltás szimbolikus eleme", *Fordulat*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2014, pp. 298-316.

[51] Sebők Miklós, "A modernizációs konszenzus…cit.".

[52] David Ost, *Defeat of Solidarity: Anger and Politics in Postcommunist Europe*, Cornell University Press. Ithaca, NY, 2005.

rationalist type of liberalism, which is described by Tibor Mándi in his summary about liberal thinking after the regime change of 1989 as follows:

> "Its political preferences, were presented neither as 'good' nor 'desirable' but (only) as 'rational' and 'necessary' alternatives, thus eliminating the possibility to choose: voters could dismiss the government but they could not dismiss politics. So what we witness, in his opinion, are not majoritarian democracy and liberal constitutionalism, but the conflict between populism and liberal rationalism represented by the European elite"[53].

As I mentioned, according to Ost, the liberal misapprehension stems from the fact that capitalism itself is considered as the fundament of democracy, instead of the challenges of capitalism[54]. This former reflective thinking obviously interprets every piece of criticism of capitalism or reference to the social expenses of market economy as an attack against democracy. The lower someone's status, the more discredited, and the more one will be interpreted as a crowd addressed "by populism". Thus, post-1989 Hungarian elitist political thinking verified rejections of demands aiming at the democratization of political representation and at participation, and verified existent elitist politics as one being the self-evident, consensual condition of the West, of Western and liberal democracy the normalcy of which was justified through extrinsic verification of the global power centre.

The lessening of the presence of the state, depolitization of politics, questioning and rejection of welfare politics has led to reinterpreting the position of social groups most in need of state services and benefits – this perception – especially during the period intertwined with a legitimation crisis after the speech of Őszöd[55] had leaked — was unable to channel and organize anger, resistance, criticism. In addition, through the expropriation of the language of rationality and necessity (cf. the reform discourse after 2006)[56], there was no possibility for the linguistic and political representation of the

---

53 Mándi Tibor, "Politikai gondolkodás", in Körösényi András (ed.), *A magyar politikai rendszer – negyedszázad után*, Osiris – MTA Társadalomtudományi Kutatóközpont Politikatudományi Intézet, Budapest, 2015, pp. 13-34; Ivan Krastev, "The Strange Death…cit.".

54 David Ost, *Defeat of Solidarity: Anger and Politics in Postcommunist Europe*, Cornell University Press. Ithaca, NY, 2005.

55 Speech of then-Prime Minister, Ferenc Gyurcsány, given at a private meeting, one month after the left won the elections. In it, not only did he argue for future reforms but also made reference to economic data previously pretermitted. The speech leaked on 17 September 2006 which was followed by riots. As a result of austerity measures, popularity of the governing left plunged already by summer, after the leak of the speech, mainly down to its impact – it was obvious that the left could not win the upcoming elections. Ferenc Gyurcsány remains one of the most rejected politicians ever since.

56 The discourse of the reform aimed at the supply system was rejected not only due to its language but also because citizens regarded reform as austerity.

aforementioned social groups. They were considered by left-liberal politics not as a group forming according to their own identity, but as a mass of impatient people attuned to populism – rhetorically, the compensation of whom may be the aim of the government, but never in the current political period but in a more distant future[57].

The difference of the perceptions of politics is revealed in the political philosophical foundation of democracy. At the moment of the regime change and afterwards, Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF) and liberal Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ) defined democracy mainly as institutional order, as a constitutional state supported by democratic institutions. In his 2003 book dealing with the development of Hungarian parties among others, Ervin Csizmadia describes in detail how Fidesz – which was at that time in opposition to the aforementioned parties, also to the social democratic MSZP – has aspired to give democracy a different ideological foundation since 1996[58]. On the basis of this, on the one hand, Fidesz refused the heritage of the ideological-political philosophy of the 80s, the idea of the restricted revolution, since they saw it as the ideology of the elite's centrist consensus, which should be exceeded. This is a recurring notion after 2010 as well, as the new regime interprets the upcoming phase as "the second regime change".

The substance of this "perfectionist" ideology of democracy is that the "limited revolution"[59] was processed by the 80s elites, and so democracy must include, besides the rehabilitation of the notion of nation, the process of elite change. Thus, continuity can be perceived with regard to the right-wing governing after 2010 in this respect as well, because as we will see below, the intention of the second Orbán-government's public law policy is, at the same time, the intention to suppress and terminate the era of post-communism and the intention to distance itself from the preceding political system.

"Illiberalism" after "Liberalism"

The paradigm shift regarding political thinking executed by Fidesz, the governing party after 2010, can be described even more insightfully in the study of Tibor Mándi, providing an overview of the liberal political thinking of the post-regime change era, and by recalling András Körösényi's statements about

[57] All these could be seen from statements of the Prime Minister as well as from the explanations by intellectuals and experts of the government at the time.

[58] Csizmadia Ervin, *A politika és az értelmiség. Pártok, agytrösztök, hálózatok,* Századvég, Budapest, 2003, p. 86.

[59] The expression „limited revolution" refers to a characteristic of the Hungarian regime change, by which continuality with the former regime remained in terms of legality (Kádár regime), but legitimacy was interrupted.

the mainstream Hungarian political thinking of 1989-1995. According to the latter, the features of the era's political thinking are the following: (1) the normative-emancipatory concept of politics replaced the traditional concept of politics, which amounted to the moralizing approach of politics; (2) anti-state and anti-implementation attitude, criticism of the excessive power of the state; (3) by introducing a new dimension of separation of powers, propagation of the branches, radicalization of the separation of powers; (4) legal overregulation of politics leading – through the radicalization of the concept of the rule of law – to the neutralization of concepts of state and common good; (5) instead of political leadership, dominance of the technocratic-modernizing ideology favouring the "independent expert" and the "independent intellectual"; (6) concept of the substantive and consensus-oriented democracy (against the concept of the one that is procedural and based on the perception of the majority); (7) Finally, anti-political orientation and the myth of civil society[60].

After 2010, the right has broken away from the discourse of politics based on human rights as from a legal approach and with the marginalization of "political" and natural sense of justice. Zoltán Gábor Szűcs describes this very phenomenon about the question of the autonomy of politics as turning towards the primacy of politics – which he describes as a "realistic turn" just as much as he approves of calling it an "anti-liberal turn"[61]. Through this turn, in many cases there occurred a split from the transitional political thinking outlined by Körösényi.

At the same time, according to Körösényi, examining at the level of Dahl's polyarchy[62], no significant rupture has occurred after 2010 compared to the institutional system of the regime change of 1989-1990. Hungary is interpreted by him as a democracy the nature of the political system of which has significantly changed. He calls it a regime, since there have occurred changes in the institutional, procedural structure as well as in content[63]. Connected to the first type of change, the adoption of a new constitution by Fidesz can be mentioned, that openly severs ties with numerous regulations of the previous Constitution. A new electoral system is implemented that is

60 Mándi Tibor, "Politikai gondolkodás", cit., p. 22.

61 Szűcs Zoltán Gábor, "A politika autonómiájától a politika primátusáig", *Századvég*, vol. 20, no. 1, 2015, pp. 116-117.

62 Robert Dahl created a list of procedural norms the realization of which is necessary to be able to speak of political democracy – in his use of words, polyarchy. Dahl's seven conditions range from control of the government's political decisions by the elected officials, also, citizens' right to found parties and advocacy organizations (which includes unrestricted freedom of expression and the right of inquiry from independent sources), to all adult citizens' right to political participation – including repeated and fair elections to eligibility. Robert A. Dahl, *Dilemmas of Pluralist Democracy*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1982.

63 Körösényi András, "A magyar demokrácia három szakasza és az Orbán-rezsim", in *Idem* (ed.), *A magyar politikai rendszer*…cit., p. 408.

directed towards majority over proportion, the legal system is transformed. This can be traced in the new structure of courts, narrowing of powers of the Constitutional Court – thus, strengthening of the primacy of legislature – and major transformation and reduction of the ombudsman system. There have been significant changes in the constitutional structure and in the institutions of the political system as well. But to call it a regime, there need to be changes in content too. By that, we mean mode of behaviour, style and political thinking of political actors. The latter can be traced in the practice of government politicians citing the reason of owning a supermajority (more than two-thirds of the mandates) when giving the rationale for their measures – claiming that they enjoy such degree of support from voters that they possess the authority to realize significant political changes. Exercise of power, therefore, has been greatly determined by the authority brought on by the two-thirds majority, the gigantic victory of the right after 2010. Consequently, governing party Fidesz terminated elite agreements, abandoned legal and behavioural norms from before 2010. This includes changing the rules of the operation and appointment of leaders to institutions independent of the government – for instance National Tax and Customs Administration, National Bank, Constitutional Court, Office of the Prosecutor General.

Körösényi names three reasons to explain why, instead of referring to a new system, he refers to a new regime: (1) the changes that have occurred are smaller than those at the time of the regime change, but bigger than constitutional or governmental reforms (e.g. a new Constitution has been adopted) (2) the alterations starting from 2010 are quite strongly attached to the person of the leader of Fidesz, Viktor Orbán and his style of political governance, and to the phenomenon of presidentialization[64], (3) finally, the system is stable and the apparatus is durable (see the repeated two-thirds majority in 2014), but it is questionable how the regime can be consolidated, and whether it can have a future but for the person of Viktor Orbán[65]. Körösényi determines the most important features of the post-2010 regime in the following: conscious drawing of a dividing line between the pre-2010 period and the that of the founding of the regime; permanent inordinate politics and

[64] By presidentialization, we mean the rearrangement of the executive branch and its strengthening within the political system – in addition, the emphasized role of the Prime Minister. Another characteristic of presidentialization is that instead of party governance it gradually evolves into a presidential kind of governance. Independence of the Prime Minister – in this case, Orbán – of his party possessing the supermajority, intensifies. The third sign of presidentialization is competition and politics being person-oriented. Jan Pakulski, Körösényi András, *Toward Leader Democracy*, Anthem Press, London, New York, Delhi, 2012.

[65] Körösényi András, "A magyar demokrácia…cit.", p. 409.

authoritarian governance methods[66]; aiming at the creation of a central political sphere[67]; exceeding the ideology of left and right[68]; anti-pluralism and populism; statism[69] and paternalism[70]; charismatic legitimacy, consolidation difficulties[71], respectively[72].

In addition, the intention of the public law policy of the second Orbán-government is effectively the intention to terminate post-communism ultimately[73]. Rightist theorists (for example András Lánczi, Gábor G. Fodor) closely linked to the government policy, consider the period between 1989/1990 and 2010 to be transitory, but also describe it with the term of post-communism, according to which, in 1989/90, no rupture occurred, but a continuation has started, which can be detected between communism and contemporary post-communism[74]. According to the self-interpretation to the Orbán-regime, indeed, there was a dividing line, between the start and endpoint of the closure of the transition period.

According to the political right, post-communism is a political idea which means continuous crisis management, also, it is public policy-making perceived as technocratic managerialism – accompanied by keywords such as modernization, reform, progress and justice – that are the vision of assertive "progressive philosophy of history"[75]. The Orbán-government want to break not only with the post-communist state, but it also aims to sever the ties with the

66 For example: changing the authorities of independent agencies that control the state, limiting access to public information, a government focusing on conflict and persecution of enemies, state control of civil society.

67 By central political sphere, we mean the necessity of an institutional and political situation where neither the left-liberal opposition not the radical right (Jobbik) stands a chance to defeat Fidesz.

68 Emphasizing national interest and Hungarian values in political communication, ideological mode of speech is only discernible in attacking liberalism.

69 After 2010, the constant presence of the state strengthens in sub-systems of economy and public policy.

70 Related to the populism represented by Fidesz, Zsolt Egyedi discusses a borderline, described by him as paternal populism because through it, a position is given to the state in the structuring of social relationships. Enyedi Zsolt, "Paternalista populizmus a Jobbik és Fidesz ideológiájában", *Fundamentum*, vol. 19, no. 2-3, 2015, p. 50.

71 Constant confrontations of the Orbán regime, and its mode of exercising power results in the understanding of politics as permanently conflict-oriented, and in which alliances, whether national or international, are formed exclusively on an ad hoc basis.

72 Körösényi András, "A magyar demokrácia…cit.", p. 410.

73 Orbán: Post-communism should be closed. *Magyar Nemzet*, 18 November 2011; Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's year-end assessment speech, 16 February 2014.

74 G. Fodor Gábor, Kern Tamás, *A rendszerváltás válsága – The Crisis of the Regime Change*. Budapest, Századvég, Budapest, 2009.

75 Lánczi András, Molnár Attila Károly, Orbán Krisztián, Orbán Miklós, *Magyar konzervatív töprengések a posztkommunizmus ellen*, Attraktor, Máriabesnyő-Gödöllő, 2004; G. Fodor Gábor, Fűrész Gábor, Giró-Szász András, *Az ideológiák vége. A Nemzeti Együttműködés Rendszere*, Századvég, Budapest, 2010. May. (Downloaded: 3 July 2013.)

legal overregulation of politics, mentioned before, and the process of depolitization. In addition, although citizens may evaluate government's performance they are not capable to decide and act by themselves. Only the leader is able to do this, the monarch or the Prime Minister. Based on Tilo Schabert, Gábor G. Fodor, director of strategy of a government-affiliated think tank (Századvég[76]), describes the situation as follows: the political leader is, in fact, the monarch of the order created by chaos[77]. He makes governance possible by generating chaosmos, that is, order created by chaos, in the mode of creativity. Extension and invisibility are the keys of the government. The meaning of the former being

> "…anything that is related to the process of governance, certainly, the process of governance itself, can be considered a potential source of power. This is the main and most important principle of autocracy. This strategy requires the monarch to expand his political sphere in the widest way possible, and to interpret everything in terms of power: each event, ideal, personal issue and phenomenon the monarch touches becomes political through that. The principle of invisibility demands from the monarch – and this is one of the principles that is the most inconsistent with principles of public administration and policy management – to rule their government by mechanisms which are invisible to the outside world. He can fulfil this requirement most effectively if he maintains the state of constant confusion, incessantly exposing his 'court' to their politics of transformation and change"[78].

Accordingly, creative governance means to create confusion, thereby, uncertainty for the government. The totality of temporary configurations emerging from constant uncertainty is considered government. The chaos created by the government results in creativity, creativity controls power, and the monarch rules the chaos of power by building autocracy[79]. This role of the monarch is occupied by Viktor Orbán during his governance[80].

From the aspect of the issue – bearing in mind how difficult it is to pinpoint the essence of the Hungarian illiberal system – on the basis of

---

[76] http://szazadveg.hu/foundation?l=en

[77] G. Fodor Gábor, *Kormányzás/tudás*, Századvég, Budapest, 2008, p. 51.

[78] *Ibidem*.

[79] *Ibidem*, p. 53.

[80] In comparison with the other governments following the regime change of 1989, the recent one is the most characterized by lack of transparency to the public; despite the existing governmental structure, it is next to impossible for the public to decipher who the people in charge of political decisions and policy making are, and what authority they hold. Regarding both changes to the government and to personnel policy, with no substantial explanation provided, the public is left with guesswork. Policy of resources in Prime Minister Orbán's environment, interpersonal and power relations, and decisions of his related to all these issues are unfathomable. This conduct displays a vastly new perception of technique of power: one centred on the intention to remain undisclosed to the public.

Körösényi's statements, it has to be emphasized that authoritarian governance as a way of exercising power does not have the same meaning as it had before the establishment of the authoritarian system: Orbán has significantly changed the political system but the authoritarian governance (method of exercise of power) characteristic of the new regime has been acquired within a democratic system, through an authorization by the voters that can be withdrawn[81]. Körösényi is not the only one to refer to the existence of charismatic legitimacy: thoughts of Attila Károly Molnár based on Rousseau (Legislature in *The Social Contract*) also depict the intentions and manifestations of Orbán[82]. According to Molnár, the legislator forms a political community through evoking the feeling of collective pride, does not speak or persuade rationally, but converts the thinking of people and mobilizes them to take action. He does not speak the language of force or intellect, but uses the language of emotions instead[83]. In his speeches and public explanations of his policies, Orbán frequently directs his audience by appealing to their emotions, through mentions of Hungarian history, customs, traditions and values. In his utterances, he aims at the construction of a professed Hungarian political community; dismissing rights and duties, his politics is focused on a professed Hungarian experience. If we project this onto the pre-2010 depolitization trends, actualized on the basis of Rousseau and Max Weber, we will face an image of Orbán who has broken away from liberal consensus. To demonstrate this, a longer excerpt by Molnár should be quoted:

> "The legislator of Rousseau and the charismatic leader of Weber both question the micro-legitimation of liberal democracy – according to which, subservience depends on the permission of the individuals – and instead emphasizes the religious, non-rational nature of democracy. In fact, the charismatic leader can disrupt all status quos, whatever the historical age, thus: even in modernity. This means that history cannot be over. But on the other hand, the charismatic leader can be attached to democracy, but does not necessarily create democracy. […] Just like with the case of the legislator, the charismatic leader's impacts also come from his personality […]. For creating the new meaning – also, for transgressing boundaries and for giving things sense – courage is needed. […] Its effect is irrational due to these: 1. he creates a community of followers, re-integrates them, gives them new identity 2. mobilizes them, expects and gets extraordinary obedience (which is not understandable from any rational viewpoint, and so with this third step, he is able to break the status quo"[84].

[81] Körösényi András, "A magyar demokrácia…cit.", p. 413.
[82] Molnár Attila Károly, "A politikus nagyszerű lelke", *Kommentár*, vol. 10, no. 6, 2015, pp. 7-19.
[83] *Ibidem*, pp. 11-12.
[84] *Ibidem*, pp. 14-16.

From all this, however, the dilemma follows: since the regime is strongly linked to the person of the founder and his concept of politics, it is questionable how lasting it can be. So far, only that much can be ascertained that from 2010, paradigmatic change has occurred in political thinking, the support of which seems stronger nowadays then critics of Orbán's politics predicted before the April of 2014 or the summer of 2015.

Conclusion: The Existence of the Orbán-Regime

There is a consensus that liberal democracy means the institutional limits which tame political power and the rule of law. In this regard, the pursuit of evading barriers and according political intentions are dominant in Hungary. In this sense, on the axis of liberal democracies on one end and authoritarian regimes on the other, Hungary has moved in the direction of the latter, but despite the Prime Minister's terminology and the uncertainty resulting from the universality of the term, in the sense of political science, it cannot be stated that Hungary has arrived in the state of illiberalism.

According to my statement, the democratization theories taken for granted at the time of the regime change and afterwards, are in need of being corrected, primarily, as a result of the widespread neglect of the political-economic aspects. The democratization theories provide an adequate framework for certain institutional comparisons, but they prove to be insufficient for the understanding of the diversity and stagnation of the transitions. New patterns of exercise of power in the region strongly coincide with the absence of politics recognizing the social expense of transitions, and with the demand for political leadership and a leader.

According to my hypothesis, requiring further research, because of the changes in the Hungarian institutional system and the change of the paradigm of political thinking; also, due to the political peculiarities after 2010, the institutional system conceived by critics of the Orbán regime will more likely be similar to that of the post-2010 version and its political conditions, then to the one from 1989-2010 that is in need of correction. It should also be added that after "the end of ideologies", the hegemony of modernization – technocracy, nowadays we have again entered the age of importance of political sovereignty. The situation is complicated because it is not only the case of liberal democracies standing in opposition to authoritarian regimes, but imbalances between European democracies have appeared on the agenda as well. Illiberalism, although it is not a desirable project for after post-communism, but in Hungary and the countries of the region, elections can be won by it, without short-term consequences. The key of its correction is to understand its current success.