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Radical politics: Hungary, Poland, Europe

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Recent modifications of Hungary's constitution provoked a new wave of international criticism of Victor Orbán's government. Orbán is accused of authoritarianism, trying to eliminate the system of checks and balances of liberal democracy. He is criticised for the modification of the status of the constitutional court and central bank, the change of electoral law, the new media legislation limiting freedom of speech. Orbán's economic policy and nationalistic rhetoric – glorification of national resistance to the European pressure – are other subjects of widespread criticism. How real are threats to liberal democracy in Hungary today? What are political alternatives in Hungary?

In Poland there is a myth of Orbán's government. His spectacular electoral victory and radical program of changes, his „revolution”, are often considered as a post factum justification of PiS government policy in 2005-2007 and as a real source of hope. New radical, nationalistic right *in statu nascendi* sees Hungarian extremist Jobbic as a model. What are the new ideas on the right concerning liberal democracy, the state of law, the attitude toward the European Union? How far are they influenced by the Hungarian experience?

Given the internal Polish situation the Polish government's (Donald Tusk and Radosław Sikorski) support for Orbán's government in the European Union seems to be lacking coherence. The only explanation can be that attacks against Orbán is perceived as an element of a larger strategy of isolation and marginalisation of the „new member states” within the EU in the time of troubles and major changes.

The situation in Hungary and the dilemmas of the Polish right should also be seen from a larger perspective of the crisis of democratic politics in Europe and in several member states. Years of economic and financial crisis, the sentiment of the lack of political alternatives and the lack of hope are contributing to the formation of populist and radical forces of different shades. The question we want to pose concerns not only geography and ideology of populist movements. What can explain the paradox that the strength and expansions of those movements are still quite limited, despite the depth of the economic and political crises, and the crisis of hope in today's Europe? Hungary seems to be an exception. What are the prospects for radical movements?

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