

Chapter 14

Democracy for Losers

Comment on Bálint Magyar

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Using the mafia analogy to illuminate the predatory injustices perpetrated by territorially anchored political states echoes an ancient and venerable tradition. Still popular today, as the influential writings of Charles Tilly demonstrate (Tilly 1985), the analogy goes back at least to Saint Augustine:

Remove justice, and what are kingdoms but gangs of criminals on a large scale? What are criminal gangs but petty kingdoms? A gang is a group of men under the command of a leader, bound by a compact of association, in which the plunder is divided according to an agreed convention. (Augustine 1972, IV, 4)

Bálint Magyar uses the ~~mafia-state~~ analogy masterfully to classify and dissect the government of Viktor Orbán, with special emphasis on the way “the plunder is divided.” Rather than trying to criticize or correct his penetrating look into contemporary Hungarian politics, which I am in no position to do, I will concentrate on his remark that the post-communist mafia state in Hungary is “not ideology driven.”¹ There is a good deal of truth in this claim, and especially in the notion that the regime’s worldview is eclectic, erratic, internally inconsistent, and instrumental to wealth accumulation by regime insiders. Without aspiring in any way to refute this highly original use of the ~~mafia-state~~ analogy, I nevertheless think something important can be learned by focusing more explicitly on the instrumental role of ideology in bringing about and sustaining the Orbán system, a role that the “mafia state” metaphor does not encourage us to explore.

Nothing I say is meant to diminish the role of clientelism, cronyism, nepotism, and self-dealing in building and sustaining the current system. Orbán and his circle can no doubt be understood as kleptocrats whose methods of rule are quixotic. They have managed to seize the heights of power only

because they were able to rally and sustain significant public support. This support cannot be explained, as Bálint Magyar is the first to admit, by focusing solely on their criminally corrupt behavior. This is what he means when he describes the post-communist mafia state as marked by a “gap between the real nature of power and its required legitimacy.” In explaining the public legitimacy it has managed to garner, we should also look closely at the way Orbán describes the world to his supporters, a task made all the more urgent by the fact that his perspective on past developments and current trends is plausible and is spreading rapidly beyond Hungary. Given that classical mafia networks and groupings are sustained partly by patriarchal, traditionalist, and tribal allegiances and often resort to quasi-religious symbols and rituals, the blanket assertion that the post-communist ~~mafia state~~ in Hungary is “not ideology driven” may distract needlessly from some less scandalously acquisitive dimensions of the system Orbán has built.

I will explore the ideological underpinnings of Hungary’s ~~mafia state~~ by reexamining Orbán’s notorious and eye-opening July 26, 2014, speech in Băile Tușnad, Transylvania in which he reaffirmed his commitment to building an illiberal state in Hungary. It was an audacious and politically resonant speech. The era of liberal democracy is over, Orbán announced, suggesting that the train of illiberal democracy already had left the station and that those who refused to clamber aboard will be left miserably behind.

Those of us who are haunted by thoughts of a relapse into the cultural climate of 1930s Europe are acutely aware of the dark side of anti-liberalism. But we should not allow historical memories and current anxieties to dominate the way we understand the disturbingly broad appeal of Orbán’s anti-liberalism. He is consciously inverting our anxieties, stressing the dark sides of liberalism, and doing so with considerable political success. Rather than dismissing such talk as mere propaganda designed by a criminal elite conspiring to delude the unthinking masses, we need to understand what he and his supporters have in mind.

As my reference to the 1930s was meant to suggest, there is nothing new about anti-liberalism. On the contrary, anti-liberal ideology developed in tandem with liberalism itself. It found its first great historical expression in the theorists of the French and German counter-Enlightenment. But the flame of an incendiary ideology is only politically dangerous when public emotions become exceptionally flammable. Today, around the world, authoritarian, xenophobic, and even racist public sentiment seems all-too-easy to ignite by anti-liberal grown-ups playing with fire. What I want to try to explain, using the Hungarian example, is why.

Orbán presents himself as a reformer able to speak unpleasant truths that liberal politicians have been unwilling to confront or admit. Hungary’s *liberal* democracy, over the previous two decades, has failed to defend the

country's national interest, he says. As a result of the disappointments doled out by liberalism, "we have to abandon liberal methods and principles of organizing a society, as well as the liberal way to look at the world."²

What is remarkable about the entire speech is the way Orbán casts himself as a non-ideological reader of global events, an observer of liberalism's historical decline. He implies that he has come to his illiberalism reluctantly, as if an anti-liberal were a liberal who has been mugged by reality. He has embraced illiberalism, he tells an electorate aware of his earlier political views, only after being profoundly disappointed in the performance of liberalism as an ideological framework for guiding political and economic development in post-communist Hungary. The Hungarian regime today may not be ideology-driven, but its legitimacy derives in large part from the claim that liberal ideology, for its part, has simply not worked. In drawing this conclusion, Orbán is being (or pretends to be) very empirical and practical. He was compelled to jettison the liberalism of his youth because of its miserable failure to fulfill its most solemn promises. So what chronic shortcomings of liberalism does he claim to see and what remedies does he propose?

First, the liberal definition of freedom has proven to be a terrible disappointment. Open borders, which represented the hope of travel abroad in 1989, now represent an easy-to-exploit public fear of immigrants flooding the country. Liberal toleration increasingly is derided as a euphemism for the interests of wealthy families and businessmen who need cheap domestic help and poorly remunerated workers, but who do not have to live in the run-down neighborhoods where immigrants and lower-class Europeans uncomfortably rub shoulders. Another negative side-effect of open borders is parochial and provincial resentment against "devernacularized," mostly Anglophone or Germanophone, elites. They regularly are smeared as potential defectors and traitors. And the fact is that open borders mean that they can easily leave the country and flourish.

Next, liberalism's emphasis on individual rights obscures the nature of political abuse after 1989, which took the form of the privatization of the public patrimony, a kind of industrial-scale corruption that violated no individual rights and was indeed consolidated by the creation of individual rights to own private property. This is what Orbán means when he says that "in Hungary liberal democracy was incapable of protecting public property that is essential in sustaining a nation." Similarly, focus on individual rights fails to capture the experience of humiliation and fears of national decline that have played such a large role in post-communist political life. Moreover, liberalism's justification of economic inequality by the myth of meritocracy masks the central role of luck in the arbitrary distribution of wealth in society, a masking which is humiliating for the losers of the economic lottery because it encourages the winners to attribute their success to their superior talent and

greater personal effort. The myth of meritocracy is additionally offensive in the region's historical context because of the privileged access to economic success provided, after 1989, to those who occupied important political positions in the previous oppressive system.

As a skilled populist demagogue, Orbán has exploited such themes to discredit liberal politics in favor of authoritarianism and xenophobia. What gives his stance resonance around the world is his rejection of the liberal idea, shared by all leaders of rich Western countries, that we still live in a post-Cold War world. The rest of the world has a quite different vision of where we stand today. Indeed, most agree with Orbán that we live in a post-colonial world. In this vision of recent history, the West does not represent freedom and progress but rather bullying interference in the sovereign affairs of other countries. One example is the strong conditionality enforced by the EU on newly admitted states (with no mention made of ongoing EU subsidies in Hungary). Another is the American invasion and occupation of Iraq. The easiest of Orbán's claims to defend, in fact, is that the age of *exporting* liberal democracy is over.

The American approach, exporting liberal democracy by conquest and occupation, has proved a spectacular failure. And the European approach, exporting liberal democracy by expansion of and integration into the European Union, is facing, especially now after the Brexit referendum, what could well prove to be a terminal crisis. In any case, the experience of outsiders trying to control your country while looking down at you as hapless contestants in the great "liberal imitation game" naturally creates a politics of resentment. As Nietzsche and Max Scheler have explained, resentment works by ideologically devaluing, and indeed rejecting as valueless, the ideals that one cannot oneself attain, in this case the ideal of a liberal political order on the Western model. Orbán's silly fantasy of creating an "iron dome" around Hungary appeals to a populist desire to be insulated from Western interference as well as from the quick-paced and all-corrosive forces of globalization. The proposal is unrealistic, but the anti-liberal worldview behind it has become easy to sell politically to the extent that publics everywhere now smell fatal weakness in the West. Ironically, Brussels' apparent incapacity to discipline Hungary for its defiance of liberal orthodoxy confirms Orbán's claim that the West has grown hopelessly weak.

To be sure, anti-liberalism would not have proved to be such a politically effective and (to Orbán's supporters) attractive ideology if Hungary were not an ideologically fragmented society where highly articulate pro-European forces have by no means been vanquished wholly. But the wholesale pro-European self-identification of Hungary's post-transition elites has made the anti-elitist backlash even more virulent as American-led liberalism and the European Union have fallen into parallel crises of legitimacy.

No doubt about it, the America-led postwar international order is being shaken, most notably by the declining global influence of America, the world's leading liberal democracy. Notice in this regard the way Orbán derides America by weaving together traditionalist and anti-capitalist themes, stating on the one hand that “the strength of American ‘soft power’ is deteriorating, because liberal values today incorporate corruption, sex and violence, and with this liberal values discredit America and American modernization,” and then adding that “the internet, understood by the liberal world as the greatest symbol of freedom for many long years, is being colonized by big corporations.” He also mentions “the global economic” and “global military power shift that emerged in 2008,” treating the world financial crisis as a watershed because it revealed capitalism run amok, that is, the extent to which the ostensibly free international financial system was colonized by gamblers who almost single-handedly destroyed the world economy with their greedy schemes for personal enrichment devoid of any restraining concern for the public interest. More recently, Orbán has ratcheted up his attack on the liberal capitalist order by a flurry of anti-Soros propaganda with strong anti-Semitic overtones.

Other signs of the regime change on an international level which is happening before our eyes are the weakening of the “Atlantic Alliance” between the United States and the major European powers and China's success at bringing more people out of poverty than any country in world history. The latter has undermined the belief that economic prosperity necessarily is linked to liberal democracy.

China's success, in particular, plays a central role in the new global appeal of anti-liberalism. Confidence in the political superiority of liberal democracy in the post-Second World War period, and especially after 1989, hinged on two factors: first (in Western perceptions), on the military victory of America over the Nazis and, second, on the political victory of America over the Soviet Union. These twin victories were thought to prove the ideological superiority of liberal democracy over all forms of autocracy, communist and capitalist alike. The rise of China seriously has undermined this flattering narrative, suggesting that liberal democracy beat the Nazi version of capitalist autocracy only because America was much bigger than Germany and therefore that capitalist autocracy in China is by no means destined to lose its competitive struggle with America (Gat 2009). While refusing to imitate Western-style political and economic arrangements, China's political and economic success cannot be denied. This helps explain Orbán's assertion that Hungary should concentrate on improving trade relations with China rather than absurdly lecturing the Chinese on human rights.³ The non-liberal Chinese miracle is an important part of the global context that make's Orbán's virulent anti-liberalism look like a sign of the times. His love affair with Trump is also

interesting from this perspective, not to mention the preferential treatment of Putin that he and Trump conspicuously share.

By stressing the anti-liberal *Zeitgeist* visible around the world today, I do not mean to diminish the importance of specific Hungarian factors that obviously play a large role in Orbán's political appeal. The great territorial amputation of Hungary performed at Trianon in 1920 left cultural scars easy for nationalistic political entrepreneurs to exploit and provides the basis for a rather unique form of xenophobic authoritarianism, which, especially when combined with the specifically Hungarian form of the post-communist mafia state analyzed by Bálint Magyar, we might hazard to call "goulash anti-liberalism." The Trianon trauma might seem to be buried in the distant past. But Hungary is a small and linguistically isolated nation. The fact that the population speaks a rare language can create a sense of existential vulnerability and can even engender unspoken fears of extinction. Liberalism provides no remedy for the existential fears of being obliterated as a people that arguably are expressed in a continuing obsession with Trianon. Orbán can exploit politically such artificially pumped-up anxieties by suggesting that Hungarian liberals have betrayed extraterritorial Hungarians and by urging the country's new anti-liberal political class "to recognize that Hungarian diaspora around the world belongs to our nation and to try and make this sense of belonging stronger with their work."

On the other hand, the irredentism driving Putin's seizure of Crimea, accompanied as it was by claims to have rescued ethnic Russians stranded abroad after the collapse of the USSR in 1991, makes Orbán's ploy seem representative of larger trends rather than being exclusive to Hungary. Above all, Orbán's focus on the grievances of extraterritorial Hungarians represents a bitter *j'accuse!* against the Wilsonian international order that could commit such a wicked crime against the people, unilaterally shrinking the borders of the state so they no longer align with the territory inhabited by the nation in the sense of a moral community within which "we" want to live.

One reason why West Europeans find the politics of contemporary Hungary so difficult to understand is Western skepticism about "minority rights" when applied to "co-nationals" allegedly imprisoned inside the territory of other, usually contiguous, nation-states. Because Nazi propaganda invoked such *Minderheitsrechten* to justify a policy of aggressive annexationism, the liberal democracies of the West proved unwilling to include minority rights in the postwar Universal Declaration (Mazower 2004). The nonchalance with which Orbán and Putin appeal to their stranded diaspora to justify violations of the liberal international order may even reflect the failure of anti-Nazi revulsion at minority rights to penetrate Russian and Hungarian political cultures. The lack of any association between the rights of extraterritorial nationals and National Socialism, due in Hungary to a failure to come to terms

with Hungarian complicity in the Holocaust, is one factor that makes these cultures especially susceptible to anti-liberal appeals. (This is not to deny that Hungarian irredentism – which in many ways resembled the French pattern after 1871 – predated Nazism or that some of the countries that protested most vocally against this irredentism became willing Nazi collaborators after 1939.)

Whether anger at Trianon remains a real motivation for the Orbánistas or is merely a pretext that matters very little. One way or the other, Hungarian public opinion today is pervaded by a feeling that being integrated into the liberal-capitalist economic order is a trauma. The remedy that Orbán offers is to insulate Hungary to some extent from this malign influence. When he says that “a democracy is not necessarily liberal,” and adds, “Just because something is not liberal, it still can be a democracy,” he is addressing himself directly to those who view the transition after 1989 as a losing proposition. His admiration for developmental dictatorships in China and Singapore, as well as his manipulation of elections and crackdown on dissent, makes his claim to be building an illiberal *democracy* easy to mock. His interest in genuine democracy is obviously negligible, as demonstrated by his persistent efforts to destroy local self-government and access to information, as well as his resort to strategic gerrymandering and quasi-democratic referenda.⁴ But before feeling triumphant, we must remember two things: first, that the traumatic transition of 1989 was not democratic either (since wild privatization was not popularly selected in a competitive election), and second, that however Hungarian voters voted in the twenty years before Orbán’s rise to power, the policies of the governments did not change, Hungary’s political elites remaining fully in accord with the demands of Brussels.

So, here again, Orbán’s political success stems in part from his ability to speak to the losers of 1989, to empathize with their suffering and give it a voice. (This is not to deny the social heterogeneity of Fidesz voters who ranged from lower middle-class losers to yuppies and middle-class winners, not to mention national oligarchs.) The similarity of Orbán’s mixture of nationalism and class resentment that in 2016 fueled both the Brexit referendum and the rise of Donald Trump becomes clear in a famous passage from his 2014 speech in Transylvania. After declaring that Hungarian politics from 1989 to 2010 was based on the liberal principle “that we are free to do anything that does not violate another person’s freedom,” he goes on to unmask this principle as class ideology, since self-satisfied westernized Hungarians were the ones who decided what constituted a harm:

We constantly felt that the weaker were stepped upon. It was not some kind of an abstract principle of fairness that decided upon conflicts originating from a recognition of mutual freedoms, but what happened is that the stronger party

was always right: the stronger neighbor told you where your car entrance is. It was always the stronger party, the bank, that dictated how much interest you pay on your mortgage, changing it as they liked over time. I could enumerate the examples that was the continuous life experience of vulnerable, weak families that had smaller economic protection than others during the last twenty years.

Such politicized nostalgia for a precapitalist, feudal-style protection racket lends some support to the mafia parallel. Orbán is addressing himself here directly to those who think the dark science of traumatology offers a better picture of their country's post-1989 development than the sunny science of transitology. He is offering himself as the leader of a democracy for losers. The losers of the transition speak directly through him. He draws support, for instance, from those who feel offended by the orthodox Brussels view that Hungary under Orbán is "backsliding." The real backsliding, they believe, occurred after 1989. The losers of 1989 include those who borrowed money in Swiss francs and then, after a radical devaluation of Hungary's currency, had to make skyrocketing monthly payments in depreciated forints. This is what Orbán has in mind when he remarks that "the liberal Hungarian state did not protect the country from indebtedness. And – and here I mostly mean the system of foreign exchange loans – it failed to protect families from bonded labor." Such crushing burdens reinforced the sense that integration into the global economic system was humiliation and impoverishment not freedom, as it had been originally presented by its liberal cheerleaders.

True, the amount of boilerplate anti-liberal rhetoric that Orbán recycles in his public statements is impressive. Using "rootless cosmopolitan" as a code word for Jew is not unprecedented, to say the least. The same can be said of claims that liberalism is hyper-individualistic and erodes the common life of "we Hungarians." This is what he has in mind when he says that "liberal democracy was not capable of openly declaring, or even obliging, governments with constitutional power to declare that they should serve national interests. Moreover, it even questioned the existence of national interests." Along these same lines, he claims that the liberal picture of society as a spiritually empty network of producers and consumers cannot capture the moral depth of the Hungarian nation.

We could take such off-the-shelf anti-liberal sloganeering as a sign that Orbán's talk is just that, talk, and need not be taken seriously. But this would be a mistake. Resentment against liberal politics, and especially against liberal internationalism, is real and consequential. Liberal ideology itself emphasizes impersonal markets and the unbiased rule of law. But liberal arrangements always favor certain social groups over others and distribute society's benefits and burdens not fairly but according to the power of one's social networks. The Polish example proves that populist breakthroughs do

not always depend on an economic downturn. What gives populism its grip on the public mind is the way its proponents “unmask” liberalism’s hypocrisy, exposing the systematic favoritism underlying its superficial fairness. This is why populists always blame the ex-communist new rich first.

Those who see themselves as the losers of liberal politics naturally gravitate toward a self-appointed “leader” who speaks the unvarnished truth about liberal hypocrisy and promises to defend their interests just as well as the liberal elites hiding behind markers and the rule of law once defended the interests of the well-connected winners of the transition. We may deride cult-of-personality style governance as institutionally weak. But we should not underestimate the appeal of political systems dominated by a strong leader. First of all, strong-leader populism is a system easy for most people to understand. Unlike the EU, a virtually leaderless system in which thousands of tiny decisions are made anonymously and therefore unaccountably, leader-dominated politics is oriented toward bold decisions as well as inviting hope that the leader will rescue the losers from their plight. The accession of Emmanuel Macron to the French presidency shows that this shift has now penetrated the core of Western democracy, too.

In other words, far from being unique to Hungary, Orbán’s way of describing the contemporary crisis is spreading to ostensibly better-established liberal democracies as well. To associate Orbán with Putin, Miklós Haraszti has described the former’s foreign policy as “drifting in a Western boat propelled by an Eastern wind.” But Orbán’s boat also is propelled by a “Western wind.” The ineffectiveness of the EU in addressing Hungary’s authoritarian turn is due in part to the power of Eurosceptic and “the boat is full” anti-immigrant parties in the West. Punishing Hungary for xenophobia when paranoid fears of being swamped demographically are on the rise throughout Europe is an obvious non-starter. This is the context in which Orbán has been able to emerge, grow, and thrive. He was an early and remarkably prescient detector of the evolving illiberal *Zeitgeist*.

The eclectic anti-liberal ideology that Orbán has stitched together for purely instrumental purposes is an amalgam of many “antis”: anti-globalization, anti-capitalism, anti-EU, anti-gay, anti-immigrant, anti-pluralism, anti-multiculturalism, and anti-American. This negative list is much richer and more suggestive than his perfunctory nods to a positive vision of a Christian workfare state. Consider first the odd suggestion that there is some kind of dark alliance between Brussels and Africa, EU policy, and the immigrant crisis. The two are connected, in the anti-liberal mind, because both are viewed as threatening to dilute the national identity of Hungarians. Anti-Americanism comes into the picture here as well, since the world’s greatest liberal democracy, the United States, played a leading role in fomenting the current immigration crisis by its warmongering in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Syria.

A major contribution of Bálint Magyar's diagnosis of Orbán's authoritarian clientelism is to undercut exaggerated and unhelpful comparisons of the current Hungarian regime with European fascism. The regime's nationalism is in many ways a mirage: "The Hungarian octopus creates a collectivist, nationalistic ideology under the pretext of the so-called national and social justice, which is just a tool to justify their egotistic aspirations for concentrating power and wealth."⁵ Thus, the regime uses the illegitimacy of privatization wealth not to renationalize the public patrimony but rather to redistribute it to political supporters. In Bálint Magyar's words: "With the legalized instruments of state monopoly of coercion, the mafia state coercively extracts private fortunes – sometimes indirectly through different forms of nationalization – to serve its own interests and redistributes this amongst clients of the adopted political family." This is the sense in which "national capitalism" displays a more than passing resemblance to the fascist original, at least to the extent that companies like Krupp, I. G. Farben, and so forth played an essential role in the workings of the Nazi economy. Orbán promises to insulate Hungary from interference by Brussels even while living hypocritically off EU subsidies. More generally, Orbán promises order, but his rule is more haphazard, arbitrary, and unpredictable than oppressive. This is what distances the ~~mafia state~~ from genuinely fascist precursors. His government is oppressive but (so far) not bloody. The paramilitary groupings involved in the rise of fascist and Nazi regimes in the 1920s and 1930s were partly a legacy of World War I. This source of mass political violence in the psychology of war-traumatized veterans is not available to populist politicians today. (Until now, the border guard-vigilante dynamic that Orbán cynically unleashed remains a pale replica of early twentieth-century paramilitarism, but the possibility remains that he will resort to more violent means to stay in power if the less violent ones lose their efficacy.)

Yet the family resemblance between soccer-stadium democracies in the 1930s and today is not entirely unrevealing. For one thing, Orbán consistently invokes Hungarian solidarity to discourage expressions of solidarity with less fortunate members of Hungarian society, appealing to the "true" nation to attack the poor, elderly, gays, Jews, NGOs (considered foreign-paid agents), Roma, and especially liberals as "foreign" to the genuine community. This is a natural turn, since any regime which elevates loyalty to the highest virtue is bound to obsess about conspiring traitors lurking in its midst. To distract attention from the government's poor economic performance it helps to identify scapegoats and fuel the idea that Hungary is surrounded and infiltrated by "enemies."

The costs of this way of ruling the country are obviously high. First, by encouraging resentment against privileged Anglophone elites, the government also increases the brain drain of talented individuals who arguably

have something valuable to contribute to society. This is what Bálint Magyar means when he writes that “the nationalism of the mafia state is not targeted at other nations, but rather the expulsion from their own nation of all those, who are not part of the adopted political family, or are not built into the order of vassals. Since they are not part of the ‘patriarch’s household,’ they must face all the consequences of being outsiders” (Magyar 2014).

Emigration may reduce domestic opposition to Orbán, but it obviously bodes ill for the country’s future development, which is not to say that it is irrational from the regime’s point of view. Second, the tendency of this sort of government to prize loyalty over competence means that everyday governance is suffering. Third, direct and indirect censorship of the press not only covers up corruption but also fosters a culture of rapidly circulating unsubstantiated rumors, which degrades the public mind and political life in general. Most of all, the tendency of Hungary’s current Godfather and his vassal dependents to seek political legitimacy for their self-enrichment schemes by creating imaginary enemies from whom the government can protect the people not only fosters public paranoia but also is extremely unlikely to end without unleashing the kind of uncontrollable violence that it has avoided mercifully thus far.

NOTES

1. Unless otherwise indicated, all citations of Bálint Magyar are to his chapter in this volume.
2. All passages from Orbán’s speech are cited from budapestbeacon.com 2014.
3. See kormany.hu (2017a, b).
4. For a persuasive argument that populist democracy is a contradiction in terms, see Müller (2016).
5. See aspeninstitute.cz (2014).

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Chapter 15

Nothing But a Mafia State?

Balázs Váradi

Is it ethical to tear down government-sponsored public service billboard posters? Should an opposition politician who accepts to serve as an ambassador be ostracized by her colleagues? How acceptable is it for a Hungarian citizen to petition the European Parliament to punish his or her own government? Making moral judgments and forging political strategies to topple a government are difficult without a clear definition of the political system one lives under.

In this short chapter, I argue that Bálint Magyar's vivid and insightful diagnosis of the present political regime in Hungary as a "mafia state," as developed in his chapter may be an incomplete or even misleading description of the Orbán regime since 2010. To start with, I have two methodological quibbles. One concerns the genre: is Magyar's "mafia book" an extended essay, a political pamphlet, or the diagnostic part of a political strategy to fight Orbán? Another asks about the method: does the proof of the existence of a mafia state in Magyar's bold claims lie in sociology or journalism?¹

This is the way I interpret his contribution – which is a summary of his book, a set of his articles, and an ongoing stream of volumes edited by him² : if we strip down Magyar's analysis from the inventive neologisms he creates combining terms such as the state, the family, and the mafia, he tells us the following:

- (1) The Orbán regime in power since spring 2010 in Hungary
 - (a) has a well-defined essential sociological-political nature.
 - (b) is no more a liberal democracy.
Rather, it is a regime that is
 - (c) within the European Union, *sui generis*.
 - (d) essentially *post-communist*.