

University of Massachusetts - Amherst

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April 4, 2009

From Democratization to Globalization to
Justice: Political Generations in Hungarian
Environmentalism from the 1980s to the 2000s

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From Democratization to Globalization to Justice

Political Generations in Hungarian
Environmentalism from the 1980s to the 2000s

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Preview

- “Political generations” in social movement research
- Political generations in Hungarian environmentalism
 - State socialist, green oppositionist, NGO environmentalism, alternative globalization, and...
 - Social justice environmentalism as “emerging frame”
- Concluding thoughts

Political Generations

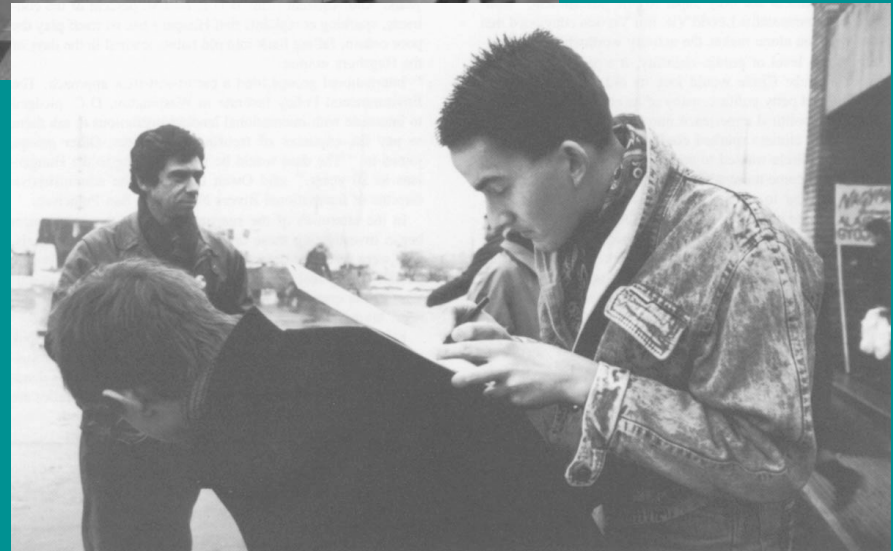
- Nancy Whittier (1997): “individuals (of varying ages) who join a social movement group during a given wave of protest.”
 - Movement identity of political generation “based on external context and internal conditions of movement at time of entry”
 - Shared identity, interpretive frameworks, & social networks.
 - Political generation identity stays consistent over time.
 - Cohort replacement contributes to *change* in movements.
 - NOTE: tends to highlight change rather than continuities (through retention of activists).

Prehistory of the movement

- Ottó Herman--19th century natural history
- Tradition of camps and hiking clubs
- Zsuzsa Gille: historical research on waste campaigns under state socialism
- 1972 Stockholm-- UN Conference on the Human Environment
- 1970s “nature protection” in Hungary
 - Establishment of national park system
 - Nature protection and ornithological groups

1980s: Environmental Oppositionist

- Danube Movement
- “independent civil society” and “anti-politics”
- Other alternative movements: base Catholicism, peace, anti-*falúrombolás*, feminist, scientists



Photos: MTI and John Norbel

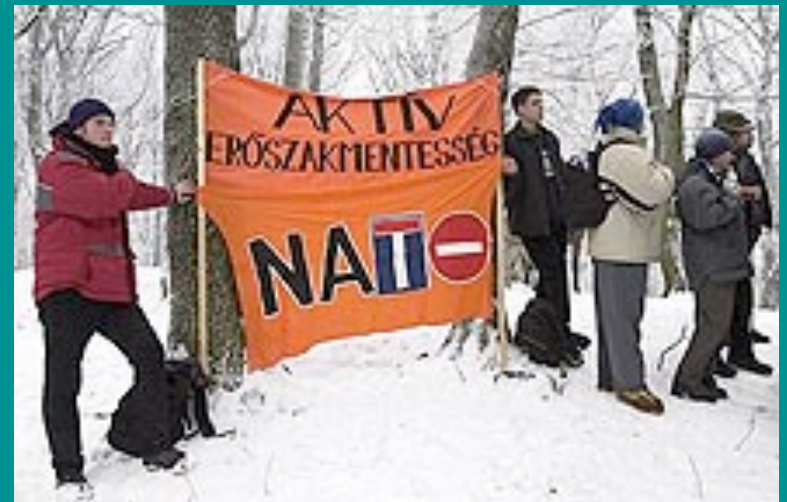
1990s:

Environmental NGOization

- Hungary's "twin transitions": democratization and marketization
- NGO as new institutional form
- Professionalization and training
- Issues: incinerators, consumer society, land privatization
- Erosion of older environmental/nature protector split

Late 1990s-early 2000s: Globalization

- 1997: Amsterdam summit
- 1999: Battle of Seattle
- 2000: Baia Mare cyanide spill and Arpád Pusztai's Hungarian tour (GMOs)
- 2003-2004: protest against NATO radar at Zengő
- 2004: EU accession
- Key theme:
ökogyarmatosítás



Social Justice as “Emerging Frame”

- Autonomia’s “Greenworks”: Early attempt to bridge sustainable development and poverty alleviation (1999-2002)
- Ministry of Environment’s “Green Source” small grants (2003-2004)
- *Rügyecskek* (Buds): urban tree-planting and recycling job creation program (2005-2007)
- *Védegylet* (Protect the Future): broadening environmentalism to include rights of future generations, homeless people, etc. (2000 on)

ZöFi Gang Csoport

- Early 2007: urban garden projects
- Dankó utca in Magdolna quarter, Bp. VIII
- Feb 2007: Planning with residents
- March 2007: planting and landscaping



ZöFi Gang Csoport

- May 2007: Green courtyard unveiled
- Spring/summer 2008: growing in, bearing fruit
- Gang projects in other courtyards around city.



Bridging environmental social science and communities

- ESSRG (St. Stephen's University)
- Participatory action research in rural areas

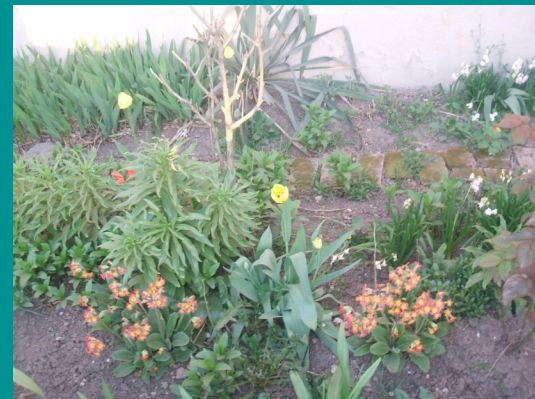
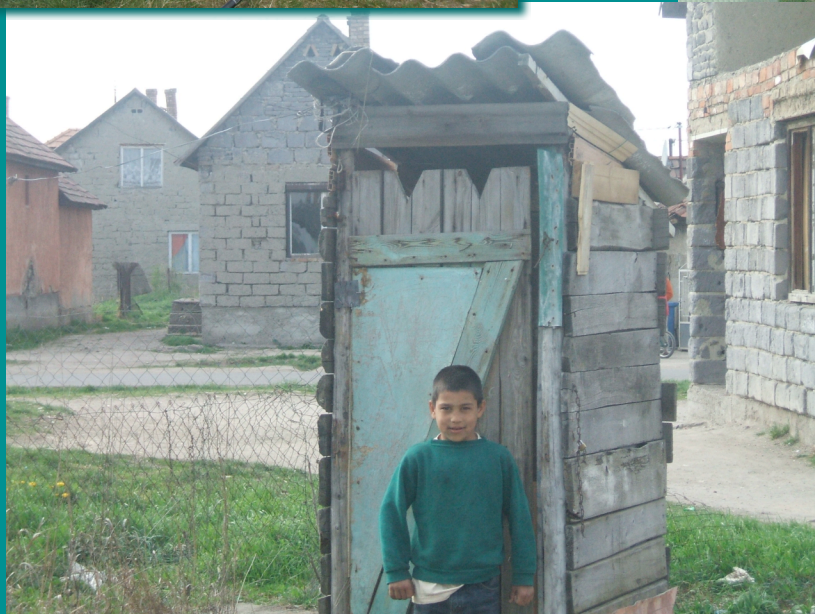


“Across the Bridge” project

- Collaboration with SAKKF Egyesület near Miskolc
- Photovoice research process
- Community-generated photography
- Group discussion of images
- Seeking wider public audience



Environment: Values and Issues



More environmental themes



Photo Exhibitions



Concluding thoughts

- Social justice frame and activism: emerging but quite fragile
 - Relevance to current issues: sustainable development, re-localization strategies
 - Attention to building grassroots constituencies for environmentalism
 - Challenge of breaking down barriers between social movements
 - Role of science: from expert knowledge to community-engaged research