

## **Influence of the Hungarian events of 1956 on the Soviet society and the state**

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In the relations of Hungary and Russia a specific place is held by events of the general socialist past. For 40 or more years there was a process of formation of a new relationship between these countries on the basis of unified political ideology, and at the same time the factor of difficult relations of the recent past continued to exist. Inclusion of Hungary in the number of socialist countries of the Soviet sample automatically left behind both the events of the Hungarian revolution of 1919 and the events of World War II.

Stalin made every effort to expand the number of new allies and to strengthen new political regimes there. But at the same time he obviously doubted the ability of new authorities to keep the countries under control by their own efforts. It concerned the leaders of the Hungarian Communist Party as well. Therefore there were Soviet troops in Hungary, and the party leadership, in Djilas Milovan's opinion, was formed by Moscow from the number of local Jews who didn't have support of the population and were entirely dependent on Moscow (Djilas Milovan. "Conversations with Stalin").

It must be kept in mind that orthodox Marxists seriously believed that their vision of the bright future defined the only right way of its achievement. Those peoples who had different views on the future, caused bewilderment and desire to put them on the right track in Moscow. The propriety of such an approach was validated by old communists from Comintern – Rákosi Mátyás and others. Only after Stalin's death the situation began to change gradually, though on a very modest scale. It is possible to say that the Soviet policy for socialist countries can be conditionally divided into two stages – Stalin and Khrushchev's stage, a stage of direct, "manual" control, and Brezhnev's, a stage of ideological and economic control.

At first, the dictatorship of Moscow was obvious – so, decisions of the Soviet leadership were automatically broadcast to allies in a directive tone. Thus, Khrushchev's instructions on desirability of the reduction of the number of the Hungarian People's Republic army from 145 to 125 thousand people were sent on August 12, 1955 to Rákosi Mátyás (as well as to other leaders of "national democracies") (Военные архивы России. Выпуск 1. 1993: 276). Several years later, going on an important trip to the UN meeting in New York, Khrushchev took with himself a number of leaders of socialist countries, among whom there was a new Hungarian leader Kádár János. It was expected (and the expectation proved right) that the criticism for suppression of the Hungarian mutiny would be directed to the Soviet leader, and the Hungarian leader could be used as human shields. However, the biggest threat as it appeared came not from the Hungarian protesters-dissidents, but from the U.S. President – Eisenhower was ready to call Khrushchev "the murderer of Hungary" publicly at a well-chosen moment (Гриневский Олег 1998: 347), which would be "revenge" for the failure of the Parisian conference in May, 1960. It is interesting to note that Meir Golda in the memoirs claimed that the active position of Moscow in Suez crisis had been caused by the aspiration of Moscow to obscure the "invasion into Hungary".

A really specific place in the Soviet-Hungarian relations was taken by events of the autumn of 1956. Besides military measures, each party fought for a favorable coverage of the

events, and it is obvious that the Soviet propaganda apparatus was very effective. So, the Soviet position was proved by both official information, and special publications, such as the collective report of a group of Soviet journalists "What's happened in Hungary", released by Pravda publishing house in December, 1956 (Крушинский 1956). It is interesting to note that the urgency of the publication had its consequences – the term "mutiny" is often replaced by a more neutral definition "revolt" in the assessment of those events. The authors brand not only hortysts, Nazis, American imperialists, but also the Stalinists Rákosi and Gerő hesitating with reforms on a Khrushchev's sample and making "gross blunders" (Крушинский 1956: 47–48). Considering little experience of the Hungarian socialism and proximity of the capitalist countries, Khrushchev directly said to the Soviet people what could happen to the Soviet state, if he delayed the beginning of de-Stalinization.

However, among those who were included in socialist society recently the tragic aspect didn't attract any interest – rather on the contrary, the Hungarian insurgents and their actions were morally and politically approved. It is noticeable in collected by KGB materials about a political situation in the Baltics – "hostile elements regard events in ... Hungary as the positive phenomenon and express their sympathy to the Hungarian counter-revolutionaries" (Военные архивы России. Выпуск 1. 1993: 247). It obviously follows from the documents that a noticeable part of Balts in general and Lithuanians in particular was ready to perceive the Hungarian events as the beginning of the Soviet regime crash. Party bodies and security officers recorded several important questions, among which – whether "the use of weapons against the Hungarian people is the continuation of Stalin's policy?" (Крушинский 1956: 249), "against the Hungarian people" though the official press reported about "gangs of rebels". Khrushchev's ideological message – "that's what could be without the XXth party congress" – was cardinally changed. For the Soviet authorities in the region, where the armed struggle of the "forest brothers" against the Soviet authorities ended quite recently, the anti-Soviet activity influenced by events in Hungary was a revealing phenomenon, and certainly frightening.

It is known that in Hungary the Political Bureau (Politburo) in many respects looked at tragic events with the eyes of the entrusted person, the prominent party functionary, the ambassador Andropov Yury. His diplomatic and personal contribution to a 1956 problem solution through military force was undoubted. Andropov, protecting socialism values, considered himself, figuratively speaking a "surgeon". Having held a high party position, he hadn't weakened attention to the situation in Hungary. Paradoxically, he was ready to go for resolute reforms to the USSR "from above". He began to actively collect valuable Hungarian experience of social and economic stabilization by the method of direct borrowing. Having become the head of KGB, Andropov acquired administrative and repressive levers of the power. He struggled with dissidents, corruption and at the same time offered a successful Hungarian model of the rich agricultural cooperatives which provided in the 1960s the growth of welfare and public stability in Hungary. Quite successful was the "Abasha experiment" (Геловани 2018). (Abasha district, western Georgia) based on the methods of work of Nádudvar agricultural cooperative of Hungary. Being convinced of economic efficiency of new managing measures, Andropov within the political and state concept connected his own administrative experience and the experience of the leader of the Hungarian People's republic Kádár János, the creator of gulyáskommunizmus – establishing order and then reasonable social and economic innovations. Andropov actively supported Kádár János during the events of 1956. Andropov's nominee Gorbachev Mikhail who was engaged in the solution of agricultural tasks in the USSR had close contacts with Kádár János. Interestingly, the German chancellor Brandt Willy writes about Kádár János of the 1970-s with great sympathy in his memoirs.

Having become the head of the USSR, Andropov at the beginning of 1983 announced preparation of a complex economic reform in the USSR. Mikhail Gorbachev had a far bigger scope – in 1986 the law on private activities, including in agriculture, one of the first laws of the beginning of Reorganization was adopted.

The subject of the 1956 events in the dissident movement (and public mood) in the USSR declined quickly enough. There came events in Czechoslovakia, and the fight for democracy there took place within a calmer environment – demonstrations, free press, attention of foreign media and low level of violence. Events in Hungary began to seem in the USSR rather as a distant echo of war.

Later, in the minds of the Soviet people, a peculiar “policy of expectations” began to play a role in relation to Hungary (“Hungary as an example”). Having overcome many serious difficulties in its twentieth-century history, Hungary achieved stability and well-being as one of the best socialist countries in Eastern Europe. This was one of the reasons for the steady sympathy of the Soviet population for the Hungarian People’s Republic.

The Soviet people could only dream of the standard of living of the population of Hungary and of the same internal freedom.

Considered material leads to several conclusions.

1. The events in Hungary of 1956 had an important and versatile impact on the Soviet society and the state.

2. The events of 1956 found resonance mainly on national suburbs of the USSR, among supporters of independence.

3. The era of economic prosperity of the Hungarian People’s republic caused in the Soviet society considerable sympathies and hopes for the increase in the standard of living in the USSR modelled on Hungary.

4. A number of statesmen of the USSR drew the conclusions both from the events of the Hungarian revolt of 1956, and from measures to stabilize the situation in HPR of the Kádár János era.

5. The question of the role and the extent of influence of "the Hungarian experience" in the state course formation of the USSR of the 1980-s seems historically important and requires further study.

## Literature

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