The former Prime Minister of Hungary, Ferenc Gyurcsány, held his yearly evaluation of the state of the nation not long ago. Currently the head of the opposition party called the Democratic Coalition (DK), it is worth noting, that his formation is developing in the sphere of the Hungarian liberal, left-wing, and if the process continues, it may eventually surpass the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP), which has traditionally been the largest party in the force field of the Hungarian left following 1990.

It is unnecessary to present the state of the Hungarian liberal-left since 2010. It is enough if we refer to their three great electoral losses in face of Fidesz’s 2/3s majority in 2014. Thought the governing party’s popularity has taken a plunge a couple of months ago and new street movements appeared, the „old“ opposition has not benefited from these, save for the Democratic Coalition.

As for the speech of the former Prime Minister, it should be noted that if we measure the talent of a party leader concerning his or her rhetorical abilities, Ferenc Gyurcsány is still unchallenged on the side of the opposition. His speeches have a dramaturgic sweep; his theatrical capabilities can not be overlooked.

While he listed several well-known and some lesser-known political topics, he also made statements according to which Hungarian society must transition from the „deadly“ era of cultural division to the era of „peaceful cultural coexistence”. More pragmatically speaking: the „two Hungarys“ have to be reconciled.

Why is this important and what is the significance of his words? Because to this day, the right-wing sees him as the greatest „hater“. Obviously, his latest statements will not convince them of the contrary, but the speech was primarily directed at his own voters. More precisely, to those liberals and left wing voters who react vehemently to
Fidesz. Many opposition voters think that the right represents the „culture of absolutism” and that there can be no compromise in face of authoritarianism. Gyurcsány speaks of this as well, moreover he emphasizes that there can be no compromise with despots in a political sense. The world of culture however, is different. The political community of a democratic country can only consist of left and right-wing together, and no political community can exist without the right. It seems as if the speaker would have liked to get this message through to the „ultras” in his own camp.

Perhaps it is not an „exaggeration” to say that this is a new, novel base or starting point for the left. This is the first serious idea in the sea of opposition movements which is fairly empty in terms of ideology. Many things are still missing (a position on Europe, a view of capitalism just to name a few); nevertheless, if the left-wing opposition can get to the point where the cultural community overwrites political divisions it could take a great step forward. It would also direct the attention of all Hungarians to the fact that for 25 years the Hungarian version of liberal democracy has functioned without such a common cultural base. Looking for the source of the backslide of economic performance? Look no further.