

## **The Revolution Belongs to Those Who Finish It**

**Zuzana Szatmáry**

Ingrid Hrubaničová hit me with her urgent question – where are the women of November 1989? So I speak up. Although my male revolutionary fellow travelers of the male gender will certainly – and with a dose of tolerance as it is customary in our heck of the woods – label my speaking as a typical reaction of a sex-starved hysterical woman. But I don't mind; I have a good training and I have gained the courage to be vulnerable, which is something that cannot be said about my male fellows – both revolutionary and non-revolutionary.

There are just two options. I may remain silent and not only nobody will commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the Revolution, but they even won't ask a similar question. Or I will speak up and Mária Filková who beside others arranged housing for the new freedom fighters will end up on a non-recyclable "junkyard of history", and Sona Szomolányi will together with me recollect her knowledge, with which she contributed both to ideational foundation of the Revolution and to the academia, on a bench at the Danube river – provided there will be some benches. And myself? Of course, boys will be happy to forget that when it was necessary to fight, arrange, establish, send, write they could address the penultimate female anarchist who independently from them would not only always think about some backup but also found time to establish independent labor unions and build an independent non-profit sector or a publishing house or a magazine or an independent law center for the less fortunate.

In the meantime, I too have learned not to be ashamed of what I have achieved. Why shouldn't I then speak up about what and masculine silence was around me when the European Union went crazy and – considering what I had done before November and after it – decided on my behalf and about me that I was the Woman of Europe for the lands of Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia and Slovakia. Not only was there around me that big, even masculine, silence, but in that silence such spit was falling on me that I almost drowned in it. Thank god I'm a good swimmer.

But I also learned something. I learned that good deeds are not repaid by good deeds. I learned that my beloved Dumas was right when he said that revolutions belonged to those who finish them. And that it is important not make people feel grateful or else – due to that feeling – they would hate us. Because they feel belittled. I learned that it is natural when people prefer their own interests. What are Gorky's Universities and the experiences of Mark Twain and Jack London compared to me. And so I can remain silent when I want; or I can speak up.

Translated by **Eva Riečanská**

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