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The article analyzes the changes that took place in public consciousness during the political and economic transition in the states of Central-Eastern Europe as a result of the fall of totalitarian communist regimes and the formation of a democratic system. Special attention is paid to the transformation of political values (welfare, freedom, equality, security). The loss of economic and ideological legitimacy of the communist regimes, their collapse lead to the widespread dissemination of a new system of values in society, but at the same time to social anomie, when new individual values contradicts with the old ones.

It was found that the concept of well-being began to be perceived to a greater extent through the prism of the market economy, private initiative, integration into the EU, at the same time significant paternalistic attitudes were preserved, which affected the privatization processes in particular. Ideas of economic equality remained popular, although to a greater extent in the form of state redistribution of profits, but income differentiation was increasingly perceived as a necessary stimulus for successful economic development. In security matters, the idea of integration into NATO and the EU, under the condition of maximum preservation of national sovereignty, became dominant. The idea of stability gave way to the value of development, sometimes even revolutionary. The value of order began to be interpreted through the prism of democratic views, including free elections and a multi-party system, although differences in the political culture of different states caused different results of the implementation of democratic principles: they were more successful in the states of Central Europe, less successful in the Balkan states. The vast majority of the population of the states of Central and Eastern Europe were rapidly moving away from the Marxist interpretation of the value of freedom, now understanding it as limiting state intervention in the personal and public life of the individual.

The intensity of value transformations in different countries of the region is compared: the greatest changes for that period were experienced in Central Europe (Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia), while in South-eastern Europe (Serbia, Bulgaria, Albania, Romania) society turned out to be more polarized by value beliefs. Thanks to such cardinal changes in public attitudes, the countries of Central Europe went through the predominantly peaceful path of political and economic transformations of the 1990s. Whereas in South-Eastern Europe, where a value consensus in society had not been formed, the transformations were accompanied by instability and frequent upheavals.

Social stratification also affected the differences in value orientations: political elites, intelligentsia, businessmen were more prone to transformation of views, while workers, peasants, pensioners often maintained loyalty to the official values of the communist era or changed them partially and very slowly. In conditions of general growth of social anomie, value changes were unstable and could quickly roll back under unfavorable circumstances.
РАДИКАЛЬНІ ТРАНСФОРМАЦІЇ ПОЛІТИЧНИХ ЦІННОСТЕЙ У

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Ключові слова: Центрально-Східна Європа, політичні цінності, політичні й економічні трансформації, добробут, національна безпека, економічні реформи.

У статті аналізуються зміни, що відбулися у суспільній свідомості під час політичного й економічного транзиту в державах Центрально-Східної Європи внаслідок падіння тоталітарних комуністичних режимів і формування демократичного ладу. Особлива увага приділяється трансформації політичних цінностей (добробут, свобода, рівність, безпека). Виявлено, що поняття добробуту почало більшою мірою сприйматися крізь призму ринкової економіки, приватної ініціативи, інтеграції до ЄС, разом із тим зберігалася і значні патерналістські настрої, які позначилися зокрема на процесах приватизації. Залишилися популярними ідеї економічної рівності, хоча вже більшою мірою у формі державного перерозподілу прибутків. У безпекових питаннях домінуючою стала ідея інтеграції до НАТО і ЄС за умови максимального збереження національного суверенітету. Ідея стабільності поступалася цінності розвитку, іноді навіть революційного. Цінність порядку почала трактуватись крізь призму демократичних поглядів, хоча відмінності у політичній культурі різних держав викликали різні результата в імплементації демократичних принципів: більш успішними вони були в державах Центральної Європи, менш успішними у Балканських державах.

Порівняно інтенсивність трансформацій цінностей у різних країнах регіону: найбільших змін на той період вони зазнали у Центральній Європі (Чехія, Польща, Угорщина, Словаччина, Словенія), тоді як у Південно-Східній Європі (Сербія, Болгарія, Албанія, Румунія) суспільство виявилось більш поляризованим за ціннісними переконаннями. Соціальна стратифікація також впливала на відмінності у ціннісних орієнтах: політичні еліти, інтелігенція, бізнесмени були більш схильні до трансформації поглядів, тоді як робітники, селяни, пенсіонери часто зберігали відданість офіційним цінностям комуністичної доби або ж змінювали їх частково та дуже повільно. В умовах загального зростання суспільної аномії ціннісні зміни були нестійкими та за несприятливих обставин могли швидко відкотитися назад.

The turn of the 1980s-1990s marked the cardinal changes of the world political system, the most extensive since the Second World War. During this period, the socialist system ceased to exist, which meant the end of the Cold War for the sphere of international relations, the creation of more than 20 new independent states for state building, and the collapse of totalitarian regimes in most of the states of the socialist system for the political sphere.

The collapse of the socialist system had a particularly strong impact on the historical development of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, changing their economic and political systems and the foreign policy. It had a significant impact on the outlook of various groups of society.

One of the main components of the political system is political culture, which reflects its ideological and worldview side. It has a significant impact both on the development of society and the state, and on the establishment and evolution of their institutions: “Each nation has its own political norms that influence how people think about and react to politics. To understand the political tendencies in a nation, one place to begin is with public attitudes toward politics and the citizen’s role in the political system — what we call a nation’s political culture”.

Political culture includes society’s level of political knowledge, its evaluations of the political system and its institutions, attitudes toward family, neighbors, religion, and other values and feelings.

that shape and influence people’s political outlook\(^2\).

The object of research is political values as an integral part of political culture. Political values are considered as “conceptions of the desirable, used in moral discourse, with a political relevance for behavior”\(^3\). Henry John McCloskey identifies such political values: justice, equality, freedom, self-development, fraternity, privacy\(^4\). Gabriel Almond and Bingham Powell attribute welfare, its quality, quantity, and equity; personal and national security; and freedom from interference in a life of reasonable privacy as political values\(^5\).

The subject of research is the change of political values in the course of the historical evolution of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in the late 1980s - early 1990s. The subject of research is synthetic in nature, as it lies at the intersection of historical, social and political sciences. This approach allows to consider the subject from new angles with the help of complementary methods.

The work uses general scientific methods (systemic approach, historical and logical methods, generalization and concretization), as well as methods of historical (historical-genetic, comparative-historical method), political (theory of political culture) and social sciences (descriptive procedures, traditional document analysis).

In preparing the work, the data of world sociological research World Values Survey for 1990-1995 were used\(^6\). Survey materials were obtained from the official websites of this project, therefore the data about the countries of Central and Eastern Europe presented and analyzed to a greater extent than in published public printed publications. We also used data from other sociological studies (Poles, Barometer of Transformations in Eastern Europe, Sociostyles in Central and Eastern Europe, and others).

Ukrainian, Polish, American, Slovak, Bulgarian, Moscow, Czech, Slovenian, Hungarian, Serbian, Albanian authors cover the problem in a comprehensive way. In Ukraine political values and their transformations are studied by O. Diomina, T. Lavruk, L. Liasota, F. Semenchenko, Y. Shcherbakova.

Various aspects of the political component of the worldview of the population of the states of Central and South-Eastern Europe are reflected in detail in the studies of V. Adamsky, J. Bunchak, K. Vodichka, P. Vodopivets, Y. Kish, and many others\(^8\).

In the first years, even months before and after the fall of the communist regimes, the political values of the majority of the population of Central and Eastern Europe underwent drastic changes. It is necessary to single out a complex of reasons for this event. Economic crisis of the 1980s in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe leads to the loss of the ideological legitimacy of the existing regimes. The introduction of political pluralism leads to the formation of legal organizations with the alternative to the official communist values. The weakness of Soviet Union and therefore its refusal from the Brezhnev doctrine leads to an increase in the cultural influence from the Western democracies.

Citizens of the states of the region, who were brought up by official communist ideology for more than 40 years, lost their value orientations at the moment when the leadership of the communist parties themselves announced the need for fun-


damental changes, resulting in the phenomenon of anomie. “Anomie, expressing a deep conflict of values, reflects not only individual, but also the widest value gaps, which have become an important sign of the initial stages of transition,” notes the Serbian scholar Dragomir Pantich. In Serbia, for example, in 1978, one quarter of the young people was anomic, but in 1988 this number increased to three quarters.

Attempts by the communist parties to carry out reforms did not bring improvement in the socio-economic sphere, and the number of their supporters was steadily declining. As a result, the popularity of both the opposition itself and the values propagated by it grew.

Historical experience also played a positive role, despite the active communist propaganda to discredit the previous system. Valentin Kudrov notes that “the older generations remembered well the pre-war realities of bourgeois democracy and for the most part did not want to preserve the dictatorship of the proletariat with a one-party system and a non-market economy.”

The command-administrative economic system, which is based on a planned economy and state ownership, was largely replaced in the public mind by the values of a market economy and private property. The neoliberal economic model was taken as the basis for market transformations in Central and Eastern Europe, but taking into account the economic characteristics of each country.

According to the level of support for a market economy and private property, three groups of countries can be distinguished. The first (Hungary, Croatia, Czechia) was distinguished by the stable approval of the course of liberal reforms by the majority of the population. In Croatia and the Czechia, there were relatively low numbers of supporters of worker or state ownership of enterprises. By the mid-1990s, the level of support for market reforms in the Czechia was 50%, Hungary - 61%, Croatia - 72%.

The second group consisted of Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia. On average, about half of the inhabitants of these countries also supported private property. In 1995-1996 53% of Romanians, 49% of Slovaks, 45% of Bulgarians were in favor of privatization, economic competition and market development. At the same time in Romania and Slovakia a significant proportion of the population - up to 30% - were supporters of state property.

In addition to the low level of support for private property (41-44% in the early 1990s), the majority of Slovak society rejected privatization. This was due to the negative experience of this process: the post-communist government of Vladimir Meciar carried out privatization at a part of the real price, as a result of which enterprises became the property of those who were personally or politically close to power.

The population of Bulgaria was also not fully prepared for the changes that the leadership of the Communist Party itself began. Several generations were socialized under the former regime, adopting a hostile attitude towards private initiative and competition. Studies conducted at the beginning of the transition period pointed to the expectations of the Bulgarians for greater social justice, better state-paid education and health care, elimination of the shortcomings of the previous system, but not to replace it with another type of system. At the same time about 70% of Bulgarians approved the implementation of the first wave of economic reforms in February 1991, including price liberalization and devaluation of the national currency. But instead...
of developing a market economy in the country, it could be observed a trend towards an increase in the role of family farming. Its share in ensuring the welfare of the population increased from 14% in 1989 to 28% in 1995. This is due to the increased mutual assistance of people - a specifically Bulgarian means of additional income and security, carried out through the channels of family relationships.

The population of the third group of countries (at that time part of Yugoslavia, Serbia and Montenegro) was more polarized on the issue of attitudes towards market transformations. In Serbia and Montenegro in 1996, the indicator of support for private property was 38.5% and 42.1%, respectively, for state property, 31.2% and 31.7%.

A special case is the dynamics of changes in the interpretation of the value of welfare in Poland, a country where the independent trade union movement played a particularly important role. Here very strong positions were occupied by supporters of the workers' management of enterprises, their number in 1990 reached 45.1%. Private property was then supported only by 22-40% of the population.

Through litigation, some privatization transactions results were even revised. Nevertheless, by the middle of the decade, when idea of workers' management was not already actual, this figure reached 53%.

Similar opinion was wide-spread in Slovenia. A significant part of the population was in favor of maintaining the system of “social partnership” established by the previous regime, in which enterprises are managed by councils of workers and managers. So the privatization of large enterprises there proceeded very slowly, starting only in June 1993, due to strong opposition from workers, trade unions and part of the government coalition.

It should be noted that competition as one of the main components of the market economy was supported by the majority of the population in all countries of the region - over 60-70%, reaching a maximum in the Czechia - about 88%.

Despite fluctuations, the value of private property in the minds of the population of Central and Eastern Europe as a whole remained significantly lower than in Western. Etatism and paternalism retained strong positions: 57% of the inhabitants of the region believed that not the individual, but the state should take care of the material security of citizens. The state was considered responsible for the welfare of the population by the majority of citizens of Croatia, Slovakia, Slovenia. Residents of Montenegro, Serbia and Czechia thought that society (not the individual) is responsible for the welfare. In general, sociological research of 1995-1996 showed differences in the level of paternalistic sentiments in different countries. If in Hungary, Poland and Romania only 9-14% of the population were ready to rely on the state, then in the Czechia and Slovakia this figure was 25-26%, and in Bulgaria it reached 35%. The share of those who could rely on companies - domestic or foreign - was extremely low - from 5% in Hungary to 11% in Slovakia.

As a result, the idea of state regulation of the economy retained its significance. Entrepreneurs of the Czechia and Slovakia themselves refused to go into a real market economy, trying to remain under the protection of the state. In 1990, 66.2% of Poles believed that the state should control prices and wages.
es\textsuperscript{31}. There were different attitudes towards state control and regulation. 69% of the inhabitants of the Czechia, 63% of Slovakia, 46% of Hungary were against the rules and restrictions, but only 36% citizens of Romania, 33% of Poland, 30% of Bulgaria\textsuperscript{32}. The ambiguity of public opinion was reflected in the actions of the authorities. For a long time, governments of states could not decide on the strategy of their behavior - to introduce a market model under their full control or to agree to an unregulated transition. In Poland, in 1989, the authorities placed the banking sector under their strict control, but since 1992 it has significantly decentralized it\textsuperscript{33}.

Various social groups also had a differentiated attitude to certain components of the value of well-being. Thus, 85% of local leaders in Poland were in favor of an economic system based on private property, much more than average indicators in country, as evidenced by the results of polls in 1991 and 1994 within the framework of the international project “Democracy and local self-government”\textsuperscript{34}. Among other important factors influencing an individual’s support for market reforms in Poland in the early 1990s scientists point out higher education and a high level of per capita income\textsuperscript{35}. A trend appeared when the market economy and economic liberalism were supported mainly by the intelligentsia and private entrepreneurs, although back in 1987 the attitude towards them was in no way connected with the social status\textsuperscript{36}.

The working class in Poland, which acted as the main engine of social transformations in the 1980s, transformed his value beliefs regarding economic development. About half of its representatives advocated a “benevolent market economy” - a liberal system that would not worsen the personal situation of the people. There were significantly fewer supporters of extremes - about 20% were supporters of egalitarian and etatist values, only 5% were purely liberal\textsuperscript{37}. Polish workers were not against the very principles of a market economy, but against their specific consequences, focusing on the need for compensatory redistribution\textsuperscript{38}. Thus, the majority of Polish workers in the 1990s belonged to the moderate reformers.

The peasantry was especially vehemently opposed to limiting government support. In the Czechia, for example, sociological studies have demonstrated broad public support for state aid to agriculture (66.8% in 1995)\textsuperscript{39}. Polish peasants throughout the entire period of the 1990s protested against many reforms, in particular against price liberalization and higher lending rates. The Samoobrona party became the spokesman for the interests of the most radical peasants. Since 1992, it has focused on the problems of material compensation and ensuring the material equality of those who work hard on the land\textsuperscript{40}.

Integration into the European Union was considered an important means of ensuring the well-being of society by a significant part of the population, and especially by the elites. Societies in Central and Eastern Europe, depending on their attitude towards the EU, could be divided into three groups. Euro-optimists believed that joining this organization would bring dynamic development, improve living conditions and equalize the level of economic development with the countries of Western Europe. The neo-liberals feared a return of socialism to the region through Brussels. Euro-pessimists vehemently opposed joining the EU for fear of losing national sovereignty. They considered the convergence of different economic and social regions of


the West and the East difficult, as a result of which the gaps between the two regions should have been growing rather than decreasing\textsuperscript{41}.

The ratio of Euro-optimists and Euro-pessimists was not the same in different countries. For example, Slovenian researcher Mitya Velikonya notes that in Slovenia joining the EU was taken for granted, as a return to the state in which it had always been. In Serbia, unlike Slovenia, there was no consensus on the stability of the European path\textsuperscript{42}. In independent Slovakia, until the end of 1998, there was no targeted policy for joining the EU, although the authorities officially declared their commitment to integration\textsuperscript{43}.

The problem of security and national sovereignty in their value dimension was also closely connected with European integration. On this issue, the positions of Euro-optimists and Euro-skeptics differ. While the former view the EU and NATO as guarantors of security in the region, the latter consider joining these organizations a loss of national sovereignty. Research in the early 1990s showed that most of the population of Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and Czechia supported the mood of Euro-optimists and considered joining the European Union as a defense of national identity, not its loss\textsuperscript{44}.

Unlike Euro-optimists, Euro-skeptics pointed out that sovereignty is one and indivisible, therefore, the transfer of part of it to the supranational bodies of the EU and NATO ultimately means a rejection of the idea of an independent state. Such ideas were spread, first of all, in the newly formed states formed after the collapse of Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. Thus, in 1993, the majority of Slovenes believed that the independence of their country was much more significant for them than the possible advantages of joining Europe\textsuperscript{45}.

The majority of the population of the states of Central and Eastern Europe took a balanced position regarding European integration. According to a study by the Sociological Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, conducted in 2003, 80% of Czechs preferred the EU model based on the free cooperation of member countries, and only 20% preferred the creation of a single state\textsuperscript{46}.

Peculiarities of understanding the value of security in the societies of various countries of Central and Eastern Europe were different. Already in the early 1990s, the societies and authorities of Poland, Czechia and Hungary unequivocally expressed their support for joining the EU and NATO, while the Balkan countries as well as Slovakia did not have a clearly developed position until the mid-late 1990s.

For example, in the concept of Poland’s foreign policy, adopted in April 1990, it was planned to ensure security through the creation of regional associations, cooperation with the USSR and Germany as the most powerful neighbors, and the formation of a continental security system together with other European states. After the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, the position of the Polish leadership leaned more and more towards Euro-Atlantic integration. In the official documents of November 1992, the OSCE, NATO and the WEU were named as the structures that should become guarantors of the state’s security. Presidents Lech Walesa and Aleksander Kwasniewski were active promoters of the policy of ensuring the security of Poland by joining NATO. Poland categorically opposed the “cross-security” projects, which would transfer security management in the region into the hands both NATO and Russia. The same was its response to the offer of limited membership in NATO, without the possible deployment of Alliance bases on its territory and with limits in certain types of weapons\textsuperscript{47}.

During the discussion of Poland’s accession to the EU, the Polish elite was divided into moderate and radical European integrators. Both the right-wing parties League of Polish Families, Law and Justice, and the left - the Polish Peasants’ Party and the Union of Labor categorically supported the idea of “Europe of the Fatherlands”, which implies the preservation of national sovereignty and equal rights of all EU member states. They were partly supported


\textsuperscript{44} World Values Survey 1990 / World Values Survey Association. - URL: https://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVS0DocumentationWV2.jsp

\textsuperscript{45} Водопивець П. Словенці між Гегелем і Гердером / П. Водопивець // Вестник Європи. - 2002. - № 5. - C. 45.


by the Union of Democratic Left Forces and President Aleksander Kwasniewski. Opposite positions were taken by active supporters of European integration Bronislaw Geremek, Alexander Smolyar, Andrzej Olekhovsky.

The Czech government, which initially supported the joint activities of the Central European states to join the EU under the Visegrad Agreement, with the arrival of Vaclav Klaus as Prime Minister, actually froze such cooperation, seeking to negotiate with Europe on its own terms. This was also facilitated by the relatively better economic performance of the Czechia in the region.

Romanian authorities initially tried to ensure the security of Romania with the help of regional alliances. President Ion Iliescu considered the neighboring Balkan countries (Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, possibly Greece and Turkey), as the main allies. He maintained ties with Yugoslavia even during the period of international isolation of the government of Slobodan Milosevic. Romania tried to join the Visegrad Group as well, but without success. However, in his book “Romania in Europe and the World” published in 1994, Iliescu declared the primacy of integration into European and Euro-Atlantic structures.

Ensuring security as a value in Bulgarian society was also seen not on its own, but with the help of military-political alliances, however, the desired configuration of collective security looked vague. The idea of integration into NATO did not find unequivocal support among the elite and the general public. Only since 1993-1994 Bulgaria’s center-right forces began to talk more specifically about NATO membership, while the center-left politics remained staunch opponents of this move until the end of the 1990s. And only in the early 2000s, when a national consensus was reached in the country on joining NATO, this strategy began to be pursued consistently.

The leadership of Slovakia, which gained independence in 1993, led by Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar, pursued a policy of neutrality and equal cooperation with the European Union and Russia. Minister of Foreign Affairs Juraj Schenk in 1995 stated that “an important role in the system of European security should be played, apart from NATO, by the institutions that can be formed by the CIS”. The government considered its main task to be the strengthening of national independence, and not joining any interstate unions.

Thus, in the public mind, both national sovereignty and integration into regional and international structures played an important role in realizing the value of security.

Economic security was inextricably linked with political security. This problem has been especially acute for the post-socialist states, which during the years of the communist regime formed a significant external debt, in the context of privatization and liberalization of foreign trade. In Hungary and Poland, a discussion has unfolded about the need to limit foreign presence in the economy by tightening the rules of the import regime and attracting foreign capital.

The Hungarian conservative governments headed by Jozsef Antall and Peter Boross (1990-1994), limited the circle of participants in privatization in Hungary to citizens of the state precisely in order to ensure economic security. The coalition cabinet of socialists and free democrats that followed him, headed by Gyula Horn (1994-1998), liberalized the privatization process, allowing foreign companies to participate in it.

A similar to the Hungarian policy was pursued by the government of Vladimir Meciar in Slovakia, where the access of foreign companies to privatization was limited, and only Slovak citizens took part in it. Thus, according to the Prime Minister, a “capital-forming stratum” of the population was formed.
At the turn of the 1980s - 1990s, in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the interpretation of such a political value as order is completely changing. Now it is provided not by the Communist party and Soviet system, but by a democratic constitutional state with separation of power. The value of hierarchical interaction decreases. In the mid 1990s, only 9-10% of the population of Central and Eastern Europe believed that the strongest could impose their opinion on others.

However, the interpretation of the behavior of political leaders to ensure order was not unambiguous. The loss of value orientations by the population as a result of the rapid change of regime, the atomization of society created a demand for charismatic leaders who were extremely reluctant to compromise. If the population of the states of Central Europe, despite the emergence of such strong political personalities as Vaclav Klaus in the Czechia, Jozsef Antall in Hungary, Lech Walesa in Poland, was more inclined towards a compromise solution of political disputes, then in the Balkans intolerance towards political opponents often dominated. This difference is evidenced by the peaceful nature of the dismantling of the communist regime in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, as well as their further calm development, on the one hand, and the frequent upheavals that occurred during the change of power in Romania, Yugoslavia, Albania, Bulgaria at the turn of the 1980s and 1990s as well as in later periods.

In Poland, for example, the first non-communist Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki advocated that all Poles - members of the PZPR, non-party and former oppositionists could participate in the creation of a democratic order and a market economy. Indeed, local communist leaders did not perceive the democratic changes as a defeat and a threat to their personal interests, as evidenced by the results of the 1989-1990 polls. The pluralism of elites here was facilitated by intra-group pluralism, which forces different points of view to be coordinated. This obviously deradicalizes political competition and leads to the search for compromises, and as a result stabilizes the system.

South-Eastern Europe, according to Kamen Denchev, is characterized by a “Balkan political culture”, which has never been distinguished by tolerance and readiness for a civilized dialogue. Political groups that do not perceive democratic values and consider them a sign of weakness of power exist here and enjoy significant support from the population. As Dragomir Pantic notes, the Balkans were characterized by increased authoritarianism.

As Kosta Baryaba notes, the Albanian elite was characterized by a despotic and authoritarian mentality that always needs a “father personality”. As soon as such a person ceased to correspond to the interests of the ruling elite, he was easily betrayed and a new replacement was sought. A sociolinguistic analysis of the political communication of the Albanian leaders indicated the absence of a constructive dialogue between political forces - there was only a monologue. And verbal insults and threats were later realized in the form of political violence. The leadership of the country in 1992-1997 led by President Sali Berisha pursued an intolerant policy towards the opposition, initiating a number of lawsuits against its leaders. Electoral fraud and political violence during the parliamentary elections of 1996 allowed the British political scientist James Pettifer to say that “Albania is slipping into a one-party system”.

In Bulgaria values of order and participation in society were very contradictory. Nearly 63% of Bulgarians expressed their readiness to participate in demonstrations against the government if their living conditions worsened, although only 11% believed they could influence politics through protests. At the same time, 90% of the country's inhabitants agreed to comply with the laws, even if they were not perfect, in which the Bulgarian au-

thors saw the desire for social order, observance of laws and strong power.

Such extreme views influenced the political system of Bulgaria. The opposition here was actually deprived of real participation in the development of bills. In turn opposition made different destabilizing actions, when deputies left the meeting room or did unsuccessful attempts to declare no confidence to the government several times in a row.

Romaia, where the communist regime was violently overthrown in December 1989, has been marked by high levels of political violence since then. During 1990, the new government twice used miners to suppress anti-government rallies, as a result of which the headquarters of a number of opposition parties and independent publications were destroyed.

In Slovakia in 1991 there was much higher support for the strong personality of a political leader than in the Czechia. New democratic institutions did not enjoy significant confidence. The Prime Minister of the country Vladimir Mechiar (1990-1998) pursued a policy of personification of power, consistently eliminating, often by criminal means, political competitors, tried to concentrate in his hands the entire process of political decision-making.

Government of Slobodan Milosevic in Serbia in the 1990s created an undemocratic regime with limited rights for the opposition. Democratic norms were not institutionalized, but only formally proclaimed. The suppression of student protests on March 9, 1991 with the use of military force, the arrest and beating of Vuk Draskovic on July 1, 1993 were distinguished by cruelty.

The political value of development and the nature of political changes have also received unequal interpretations in the societies and elites of different states of Central and Eastern Europe. Initially, the population was enthusiastic about the changes that had begun. At the turn of the 1980-1990s only 10-20% of the population opposed the reforms. Changes were most positively perceived in Poland, where half of the citizens welcomed the opportunities offered by the changes. And 19.8% of the inhabitants of Bulgaria, 20.9% of Poland, 37.1% of Slovakia, 44.7% of Czechia even spoke in support of revolutionary changes.

However, in practice, due to economic and social reasons the vast majority of countries carried out the transformation gradually, under the strict control of the authorities. Thus, in Czechoslovakia, prices were liberalized in stages with a saturated commodity market.

In Hungary, changes in the existing order during the 1990s were also produced not spontaneously, by methods of shock therapy, but on the basis of step-by-step actions. Such dynamics of gradual reforms was laid down during the reign of Janos Kadar and was developed in post-socialist conditions. The well-known Hungarian economist Janos Kornai opposed such a policy, he considered the rejection of radical economic transformations as the creation of social debt for future generations. At the same time, along with radical reforms, Janos Kornai recognized the need for a long-term program of institutional reforms.

In Poland, a combination of the two methods could be observed. On the one hand, after the Solidarity government came to power, a program of “shock therapy” was proclaimed, which was supposed to transform the country’s economy at a very rapid pace. Its author, Minister of Finance Leszek
Balcerowicz, believed that reforms should be carried out quickly, especially at the very beginning. On the other hand, the gradual economic and political reforms carried out in the country throughout the 1980s significantly reduced the radical change. For example, price liberalization in 1989-1990 actually affected only 20% of their total volume. The restructuring of the ownership structure, as the reform program proclaimed, also had to take place in an evolutionary way.

The question of the speed of transformations has caused heated debates in the Slovenian political community. The centre-right government pushed for radical privatization with the help of foreign capital and Slovenian emigrants. A group of left-wing economists (J. Menzinger, I. Ribnikar) advocated a gradual process of privatization.

The interpretation of the value of equality has also changed significantly. The economic equality of the Soviet era (in income, consumption) is being replaced by equality of rights and opportunities. Thus, the general Czech public emphasized equality in dignity, rights, responsibility, duties as a priority for the development of their country. The population’s adherence to the meritocratic principles of income differentiation in accordance with qualifications grew - from 62% in 1981 to 78-89% at the turn of the 1980s - 90s. among Poles and from 69% to 87% among Hungarians. Similar sentiments were observed in all countries of the region. More than half of the inhabitants of Romania, about 60% of Bulgaria, 62% of Slovakia, over 70% of Poland, 85% of Czechia were in favor of increasing income differentiation as an economic incentive during this period. According to opinion polls in Slovakia, at the initial stage of market reforms, the prevailing belief was that it was necessary to increase differences in wages, strengthen economic differentiation, so that the most skilled and diligent would get their reward.

Most of the population of the region (52%) spoke in favor of income redistribution, but the level of this idea support varied very much from country to country. With the judgment “All people should enjoy earthly goods, therefore the rich should share with the poor”, the least agreed in Romania (30%) and Hungary (37%), most of all in Bulgaria (63%). The idea of sharing with the poor was supported mainly by the elderly, less educated, with low incomes.

Egalitarian values prevailed among the Poles. Despite the decrease in their support from 80-90% (early 1980s) to 55-63% (1988-1990) with a slight increase by 1995, adherents of economic equality made up the majority of Polish society. Bulgarians were ambiguous in their opinion: 79% of them considered social inequality unfair, but 84% thought that this phenomenon was inevitable. Social status significantly influenced value preferences: economic equality was supported mainly by workers and peasants, it was opposed by private entrepreneurs and the intelligentsia.

On the eve and after the dismantling of the communist system, the perception of the value of freedom was radically transformed. Instead of its ephemeral Marxist understanding as “freedom from the exploitation of workers” (in practice, even more developed in communist totalitarian societies), comes the concept of individual rights and freedoms. Freedom of self-realization began to play a much greater role.

The general importance of the value of freedom in relation to others was also growing, but very different in countries. Only 16% of Czechs, 27% of Hungarians, but 38% of Poles, Bulgarians and even 44% of Romanians agreed with the statement “stable abundance is better than freedom” (a comparison of freedom with the values of stability and
Thus, during the cardinal political transformations of 1989-1991 in most of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, power passed into the hands of the bearers of liberal values, in the most opposite version to the former Marxist views. At the same time, supporters of limited reforms and the construction of so-called “democratic socialism” were defeated. The loss of economic and ideological legitimacy of the communist regimes, their collapse lead to the widespread dissemination of a new system of values in society, but at the same time to social anomie, when new individual values contradict with the old ones. The population of most Central and Eastern European countries during this period recognize the value of a market economy based on private property, competition and denationalization. Security was interpreted in various ways: the preservation of national sovereignty, regional and international unions. The Communist parties and Soviet systems were losing their legitimacy, and in their place came the values of democracy, free elections, a multi-party system. But in a number of countries, especially South-Eastern Europe, an intolerant attitude towards political opponents remained. The value of rapid, even revolutionary development came to replace maintaining the stability of the existing system. The understanding of the value of equality was changing, the emphasis was on its social and political, rather than economic components. Income differentiation was increasingly perceived as a necessary stimulus for successful economic development. Finally, the vast majority of the population of the states of Central and Eastern Europe were moving away from the Marxist interpretation of the value of freedom, now understanding it as limiting state intervention in the personal and public life of the individual. Thanks to such cardinal changes in public attitudes, the countries of Central Europe went through the predominantly peaceful path of political and economic transformations of the 1990s. Whereas in South-Eastern Europe, where a value consensus in society had not been formed, the transformations were accompanied by instability and frequent upheavals.

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