

THE POLITICAL CHANGE IN BULGARIA. POST-ELECTORAL ATTITUDES

In countries with an established parliamentary tradition, political self-determination after elections usually coincides with the actual result of the elections. Any differences are in favour of the winners. Having in mind the complex psychological relations of Bulgarians to political power, we expected originally that answers in our poll would show a wider following of the Bulgarian Socialist Party, BSP (formerly Communist), than revealed in its electoral percentage. And yet we find exactly the opposite. 38%* claim they have voted for the BSP, and 40% for the Union of Democratic Forces, UDF. What is the reason for the substantial differences between the officially published results and electoral attitudes acknowledged by voters one month after the "magic of the dark room?" The problem is very serious, because if the sample is representative (and such it is) then it becomes obvious that someone is not telling the things as they are.

BACKDATE VOTING?

The natural answer of the "radical oppositionists" would be something like this: Here is finally a real evidence that the elections were manipulated. Too simple, however, to be true. If there is something certain here, it is the fact that the discrepancy cannot be explained by forgery or falsification. Firstly, it is difficult to imagine an organization in our ruined country which would be able to effect such a large scale action secretly. Secondly, the discrepancies between stated electoral behavior and the election results working against the BSP come mainly from Sofia and other major cities, where falsification is practically impossible due to their being oppositional strongholds where every move of the BSP and government agencies is under close scrutiny. So, we must look for another explanation for the discrepancies.

We are probably witnessing a kind of "backdate voting". In other words, some of the inquired people do not really reply to the question "how did you vote", but indicate how would they vote now. The data reported by the Central Electoral Board, CEB, show that some 9% of the voters did not enter the "dark room" on 10th and 17th of June. In the poll, the answer "I abstained" to the question "Who did you vote for" is chosen only by 2.3% of respondents. We may conclude that a proportion of abstainers now claims to have participated in the elections. This is confirmed by a control question, on the strength of which we can indirectly conclude that the percentage of abstainers is about 9%; and that coincides with the figures reported by the CEB.

"Backdated voting" explains the differences in the percentage, but gives no answer as to why a "blue" (oppositional) orientation is chosen. It may be suggested, that during the elections we witnessed a momentary over-mobilization of electoral potential outside the genuine field of influence of the BSP. In any case, the political polarization and pre-electoral tensions favoured the ruling party. In fact, the estimate of our Center from the pre-electoral poll of May (39 - 44% for BSP in the proportional representation constituencies) is actually a better indicator of the legitimate political weight of the Socialists in our society than the election results.

Another element turning the "backdated voting" in favour of the UDF is the fear syndrome. As early as the pre-electoral poll we established that political attitudes were formed to a certain extent under the influence of the fear of the "others". In the post-electoral situation when the opposition seized the political initiative there are obvious inducements to withhold demonstrating sympathies for the BSP. This confirms indirectly the significant influence of extra parliamentary politics on the political situation and on political self identification. Finally, we cannot neglect the disappointment of a part of the BSP voters, witnessing the stunning

degradation of the economy in a sharpening contrast to the calm and hopeful pre-election platform of that party.

MOTIVATION OF ELECTORAL BEHAVIOUR

The motives influencing the respondents in their vote seem to be in many ways similar. Nearly half of the BSP voters as well as UDF ones claim to have arrived at their political choice because they agree with the programs and ideas of their respective parties. There are different motivations, however, behind this. While the BSP was suggesting changes within the "already familiar" (and in familiar language), the UDF was trying to mobilize a radical disagreement with the "familiar" and presented their ideas in language new to this country.

Secondly, trust was found to be leaders is another motivation of the vote. About a quarter of BSP voters give this motivation as primarily determining their electoral choice. Among the electorate of the UDF these are only 16%, revealing a more distanced attitude to the leaders and confirming the stated differences in the attitude to the "familiar". While those, who support the "familiar" naturally trust the familiar leaders, those radically abandoning the "familiar" feel considerably less engaged with following definite political personalities.

With the other two parliamentary powers the situation is rather different. While 38% of the followers of the Movement for Rights and Freedoms MRF motivate their choice with trust in the leadership of the movement, among the voters of the Agrarians Popular Union, APU, this percentage is very small. The dominating motivation here is agreement with the program and ideas which in the specific context could mean trust in agrarian ideas in spite of the distrust for the central APU leadership.

There are differences between electoral bodies also in the motivation for participation in the elections. Among the voters of the BSP, the highest proportion, 30%, choose the motivation "I wanted to support the worthy candidates". The sympathizers of the opposition differ considerably, the most popular motivation being a personal one, an understanding of the importance of individual participation in the political process ("my vote could change something", 31%).

There are two electorates behind these real motivations and these show opposing digressions from the national average in terms of age, education, distribution in various types of communities. The poll confirms data obtained by other studies that UDF voters are considerably younger than those of the BSP. While only 8% of the voters of the BSP are below the age of 25, among the sympathizers of the UDF people of this age group comprise 22%. Vice versa, voters above 60 constitute 25% of the electorate of the BSP and only 11% of that of the UDF. 55% of the voters of the BSP are above 45, while 69% of those of the UDF are below 45.

The electoral bodies of the other two parliamentary powers show even greater differentiation in terms of age. Theca electoral body of the APU is markedly elderly, with 60% of its voters being above 45. The voters of the MRF reproduce the picture of the opposition in general: 69% are below the age of 45.

It is obvious that the better, educated have more cause to be unsatisfied with the "familiar". It is not therefore surprising that more than half of people with primary and lower education have voted for the BSP and only a quarter for the UDF. From the voters with higher education, 53% have favoured the UDF and 36%, the BSP. Half of the people with secondary education voted

for the UDF and 1/3, for the BSP. Rather obviously unfavorable is the educational structure of MRF and APU voters. 43% of the agrarian voters have primary (and lower) education and 47% secondary; for MRF these figures are 56% and 39%. The conclusion is that the more educated voters unsatisfied with the "familiar" and identifying it with the BSP, are oriented to something "new" - new values relationships, behavior. It is clear that this "new" hasn't succeeded in attracting the aged and those with low education. They have either not been made aware of this "new", or have rejected it in favour of the "old familiar thing" evident in BSP slogans like "security", "tranquillity", "change without stress".

BOUNDARIES OF TOLERANCE

The dynamics of the interrelationship between the electorates of the two main political forces is rather curious. BSP followers after the elections tend to show increasing tendency to recognize the legitimacy of the UDF. At the same time, among the followers of the opposition, there is a growing non-acceptance of the legitimacy of the BSP. Estimating the mobilizational capacity of the electorates we come upon the already familiar phenomenon of "periphery" and "core" (see "Kultura", June 1). The irreconcilable "cores" of the different political followers are isolated by answers to the question "Is There a party that has no place in Parliament?". According to 1/10 of BSP followers there is no place for the UDF, and 1/3 of the same people say the same of the MRF. According to 40% of UDF voters, however, Parliament is no place for the BSP, while 17% want to see the MRF leave. The followers of other parties are also against the presence of the BSP in Parliament: 20% of the MRF voters and 12% of the APU think in this way (in contrast to 3% and 5% rejecting the participation of UDF). Comparing the data about mobilization potential and about levels of mutual non-acceptance leads to the conclusion that the UDF electorate has an active "core" which is 3 or 4 times greater than the one of BSP. The active core of BSP comprises about 10 - 15% of its followers, while up to 50% of UDF voters are activistically-minded. The "core" percentage of BSP is similar to the one which exists in Western Europe, i.e. in a situation of traditional political stability. At the same time, the gigantic (by European standards) "core" of the UDF corresponds much better to the complicated political situation in Eastern Europe.

The fact is not reassuring that, taken nationwide, a great many voters think that there is some parliamentary party (and it is different for different people) which should not be present in Parliament. This means that the legitimacy of the election results, and of institutionalized politics itself, is not at all universally accepted. Consequently, it is not difficult to foretell that extraparliamentary politics will influence for a long time the whole development of the political process. It is obvious that this situation is objectively defined, it involves quite a lot of people. And if there is a big socioeconomic crisis, it may grow into a serious social and political strife with an anti-institutional thrust.

CAPACITY FOR ELECTORAL RE-DISTRIBUTION

The data suggests that at the moment one should not expect cardinal changes in electoral sympathies. If, of course, the reticence to admit socialist sympathies is not already in itself signal for reorientation. Both political blocs may count on the loyalty of the majority of their followers (if we take into account the non-declaration of socialistic sympathy, the proportion is more favorable to the UDF than the data suggests by itself). Nevertheless, there are great differences. About a quarter of the BSP electorate is dubious about its choice or declare intentions of changing their vote in new elections. Even among the members of BSP around 20% are not certain that they will vote again for this party. The electoral defeat of the opposition

and its renaissance after it are two great factors for consolidating the multicolored and "undisciplined" electorate of the UDF. Almost 90% of "the blue" followers claim that they will vote again for the oppositional union, only 3% feel disappointed with their choice. In other words, the oppositional electoral body seems to be more loyal in comparison to the electors of the party in power. The MRF electorate stands somewhere between the BSP and the UDF ones: 84% of them will vote the same way again (only 16% of them are not sure or they'll vote in another way). Although the election result is favorable to the Movement, 36% of its electors are not satisfied with the elections because they think "there was too much ado about nothing". About 27% value the elections as a "step towards something better". It is not certain whether this dissatisfaction has to be treated as the result of a distanced, supra-party view of the political situation in the country. It is rather the expression of a deep distrust on the part of the minority Turkish population to everything outside it. On the other hand, the moderate optimism of MRF followers seems to be a potential for a future trust in politics as an instrument for solving problems. It is not surprising that the APU followers are very dissatisfied with the election results: only 4% think the results are favorable for their party, while 46% think of the elections as "Much about nothing". The dissatisfaction is connected with the fact that agrarian followers show the smallest percentage of readiness to give their vote to the APU again (66%). And 1/3 of them either hesitate or they'll vote in another way. Taking into account the unfavorable sociological profile of the Agrarian electors, such data confirms again the crisis of the APU.

SOCIAL EXPECTATIONS

The polarization between the electorates of the main political powers decreases once we move from politics and ideology to economics and everyday life. Here we see a deal of pessimism concerning the future. Pessimistic expectations are clearly dominant: around 1/3 of respondents generally think that after the parliamentary elections we will live better, while 47% say we will live worse or, "without any changes". And 16% have no opinion. Expectations of the near future are strongly influenced by personal social status, i.e. by people's opinion about their own living standard. It is usual that people who estimate their social position as "good" are more optimistic in comparison than those who think they live "a bearable life" or that their life is "not good". For example, the percentage of people who estimate their own status as good and hope they'll live better is 30% bigger than people that have the same optimistic attitude but have a subjectively low social status. Not all respondents have the same opinion as to the lowering of their living standards, even if this resulted from decisions of the party of their choice. The majority of them, 53%, would agree to lower living standards "if it is for a short time and will bring improvements". About 28% agree with the statement: "Hardship has to be equally distributed". Most respondents are able to make a realistic estimation of the situation in the country: the majority (64%) think there is no escape "without tightening of belts". People hesitate about other inevitable consequences of the economic crisis. In agreement with the inevitability of unemployment are only 40%, of high prices - 44%, of shortage of goods - 30%, rationing system - 44%, invasion of foreign capital - 52%, poor and rich scissors - 31%, returning land to its former owners - 44%, and privatization of industry - 33%. There is no agreement about the economic crisis and its overcoming. The respondents were asked to point to the most radical means guaranteeing solution to the crisis. They give preferences to such means as "stopping strikes and demonstrations" (38%); "getting rid of incompetents" receives a value of 32%, and "change of political power", 10%. It is interesting that the part of those who rely on free private initiative and on Western help is smaller than expected (8% and 3%). The weakness in the polarization between the political blocs once we enter the socioeconomic sphere is seen clearly in the attitude towards the adverse effects of dealing with the economic crisis. Above 60% in both electorates do not want lack of goods and half of them reject high

prices; and half would accept a rationing system. On many issues that carry a strong ideological component and thus make for political polarization, the UDF has succeeded in making its followers believe in its ideas. For example, more than 60% of its electors suggest that unemployment is inescapable, while the same percentage of the socialist electorate thinks of it as impermissible. Above 70% of BSP adherents think that there should be no strikes and demonstrations, while the same part of the "blue" electors do not think so. About 70% of the BSP supporters do not want to see a return of the land to its former owners, while more than a quarter of the opposition supporters see this as an element of the cure for the crisis. Almost half of the BSP electors think the invasion of foreign capital inadmissible, while 83% of the UDF adherents think the cure is impossible without it. More interesting answers are given to the question "Should there be rich and poor?" and "Is industry to be privatized?" The differences for the first question are clear - 3/4 of the BSP electorate does not want such a degree of social differentiation, while more than a half of the opposition electors think of it as something inevitable. The most contrasting answers are given to the second question: above 80% of the socialists do not accept "private industry", while 2/3 of UDF electors think of it as a necessity for the overcoming of the crisis. Age and education influence opinion about the most effective means for overcoming the crisis. The younger - ages between 25 and 45, "getting rid of incompetents", and, in second place - "stopping strikes and rallies". The older (above 45) see the abolishment of strikes and rallies as means of dealing with the crisis (46% aged between 45 and 60, 56% for the over-60 group). It seems that the dividing line in the attitude towards this crucial problem comes at the age of 45. This is not accidental. People aged around 45 constitute the generation that suffers from the drastic transformation of the whole social system. From a psychological point of view, these people have the right to consider this change as a fiasco of their long efforts towards personal realization within the limitations of the previous system.

Attitudes concerning social justice also differ along variables of age, education, and political preferences. There are two basic groups: about 42% of respondents choose the option that justice means the ability of everybody to obtain profits without limitations within the framework of the law. This brings in question the established concept about the collectivistic culture of Bulgarians. A similar to the above proportion of people choose the traditional egalitarian option and link justice with the absence of poor and rich. The correlation between the two variants is influenced by age, education and the political structure of the electoral body. The individualistic attitudes are concentrated among the young and active age groups.¹ Egalitarian answers increase with age, with opposition to social differentiation reaching above 2/3 in the over-60 age group. The same is seen in relation to levels of education: the higher the educational level, the more individualistic the answers. Concepts of social justice are not influenced by party sympathy. But the same can not be said about the correlation between the idea of freedom and party sympathy. The desire for personal freedom - seen as freedom of individual initiative - obviously stands above the values of the collective body. BSP electors stick to more traditional ideas about freedom, while UDF supporters lean towards individualism. Why does party preference have such an influence upon the idea of freedom and no influence on the idea of social justice? The possible explanation lies in the character of the election campaign of the UDF. It laid stress on freedom. That was the dividing line between the rejected past and the desirable future. The topic of social justice was rarely discussed. For this reason populist understanding of social justice may be seen both among the UDF electors and BSP ones.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS POWER AND POLITICAL ACTION

In the light of the paradoxical political development after the elections, when the formal losers took the political initiative, there is one important question - the mobilizing abilities of the different political formations. 1/5 of the BSP supporters claim that they have participated in mass political events before the elections and only 6% - after them. This strong activity decline confirms the rather passive character of BSP supporters. There is some activity decline among UDF adherents, but it is on a different level. More than 40% have taken part in mass political actions in the election campaign and 1/4 - in the period after it. The orientation towards extraparliamentary political activities is seen in answers to the question - "Where must the political struggle, take place?" Only 19% of UDF voters think that politics should be confined to the Parliament building; 6% think just the opposite and 75%, combine the two kinds of politics - "street" and parliamentary. Dealing with BSP supporters the situation is different: 59% want politics to be carried on only in Parliament, supporters of "street" politics are at 4.4%; 37% agree with the combination between "street" politics and politics in Parliament. All of which confirms some comments after the elections, according to which the BSP enjoys passive support only. It does not have an electorate capable of being mobilized in support of the politicians of the party in a situation of acute political struggle. The UDF adherents have a strong orientation towards extra-institutional political activity. This, combined with the weak inclination to follow leaders, provides at least a part of the explanation about the appearance of a "street" opposition structurally autonomous from the UDF.

All of this is also evident in the attitude towards the legitimacy of decisions imposed on the government the street action. Half of the UDF adherents think of such decisions as legitimate, while 66% of socialist supporters reject them. The level of personal readiness to take place in "street" events in order to impose decisions on the authorities is again different, with 67% of UDF adherents willing to take part in such an action, while among the others it is only 18%. The differences in the mobilizational capacity for politics out of Parliament confirms the basic conclusions out of the election results. Evidently, dissatisfaction with the election results is a great stimulus for extraparliamentary political activity for the UDF adherents.

There are great differences in opinion about the role of the opposition in Parliament. 66% of BSP supporters think that the role of the opposition is "to help the government", 65% of opposition voters want their representatives "to be the vox populi" in Parliament. The preference for this answer in comparison to "to criticizing the government", speaks again of the fact that the opposition does not accept the idea of limiting politics to Parliament only. In the eyes of the opposition, the motions "out of Parliament" and "in Parliament" form an unbroken political continuum.

RELIGIONS AND ETHNIC GROUPS

Our study elucidates some aspects of the political behavior of the ethnocultural and religious groups in the country. It is clear that Bulgaria isn't an exception to the general rule evident in other countries of Eastern Europe: the abolition of totalitarian oppression over national sentiment leads to a revival of national consciousness in various communities. This process seems natural for societies on the way to democracy, and just as naturally leads to various perils.

In our case, the Bulgarian Turks and Pomaks (Bulgarian speaking Moslems) are a representative sample. Nevertheless, the obtained data and our analyses are only preliminary, these groups not being the main object of this study. The poll tries to establish some of the most characteristic

types of political behavior and attitudes of Turks and Pomaks in the conditions of an ongoing ethnocultural crisis.

The first surprise came with the religious orientations of the studied groups. 2% of the Turkish minority say they are Christians; 1% - Catholics, 18% - atheists. From the Pomak ethnocultural group 4.5% say they are Christians, and 31% - atheists. These figures destroy the established stereotype, according to which the Bulgarian Turks and the Pomaks are always Moslems.

The Turkish and Pomak population lives mainly in the countryside (69% and 64% respectively) and the population is poorly educated (61% of the Turks are with primary education, only 2% have higher education). In respect to their political organization, over 24% of the Turkish ethnic respondents and nearly 20% of Pomaks are supporters of the MRF. 87% of Turks and 74% of Pomaks approve of its activity. They opt "that this organization protects the interests of a great part of the Bulgarian people". Only 3% of Turks and 11% of Pomaks do not approve of this organization, because "it favors outside interests". This attitude shows a tendency towards ethnopolitical homogenization.

Under certain conditions this tendency could stimulate confrontational attitudes in these two groups. These conclusion are indirectly confirmed by two other factors: the attitude of these groups towards the activity of their organization and their participation in nationwide political organizations like the BSP and the UDF. More than 64% of Turks are not members of any organization and only 12% are members of nationwide organizations. With the Pomaks, the situation is different - 29% are members, and 51% are not. Gypsies are the least organized, 80% of them participating in no political organization.

Preference for the MRF has its roots in Communist policy on the national problem. This is corroborated by the negative attitude towards the heirs of the BCP. The greater part of these people shows distrust towards the activity of the BSP. They see its electoral victory is a prelude to the restoration of old injustices. On the other hand, negative attitudes towards the BSP do not channel their sympathies towards the UDF, although the later's sharpest criticism of the ruling party was on national issues.

ARE THERE MACEDONIAN NATIONALS IN BULGARIA?

One of the aims of this study was to provide answers to the following questions:

- Is there a non-Bulgarian national consciousness among the Christian Slavic population in Pirin Macedonia?

- What are the forms of expression and the relative proportion of non-Bulgarian national consciousness?

- What is the attitude of other ethnic groups towards the Macedonian problem?

The hypothesis for the existence of a separate Macedonian national consciousness was not proved valid by direct questioning: only 3 respondents (two of them living outside Pirin Macedonia) see themselves as Macedonians by national affiliation. This is statistically insignificant. It is natural to suppose that forms of expression of Macedonian self-identification could be rather less evident due to the decades of fear around the nationalities problem. But they could be gauged in the degree of support for the All-Macedonian Organization "Ilinden",

an organization that clearly supports a Macedonian identification. Most respondents do not know the character and the program of the Organization. Most tend to connect it in some way with the Ilinden anti-Ottoman uprising of 1903.

This organization is not popular among the Bulgarian voters only 9% approve of its activity.

The ethnic and religious minorities in the country look rather more favorably on "Ilinden" in spite of a similar degree of lack of knowledge about it.

Attitude towards the "Ilinden" Organization

	Approval	Disapproval	Don't Know/Don't Care
Bulgarians	8%	38%	54%
Turks	15%	9%	76%
Pomaks	24%	21%	47%
Others	33%	11%	56%

WHAT DOES THE STUDY SHOW ABOUT PIRIN MACEDONIA?

The study gives the following ethnic correlation: 81% claim to be ethnic Bulgarians, 4% Turks, 10% Pomaks, 3% Gypsies, and only 0.3% Macedonians. From this population, 77% are (Orthodox) Christians, 5% belong to another Christian religion, and 18% are Moslems.

Having in mind the geographic proximity of the source of "macedonism", and because of the socialist policy concerning the Macedonian problem, the results change when we study the attitude towards the "Ilinden" organization. 18% of the respondents approve of its activity, 32% do not, 12% have no opinion, and 37% are not acquainted with it. For comparison - in the whole country 9% approve it and 34% do not. In Pirin Macedonia itself, the data is different when concerning the attitude towards other organizations based on ethnicity. The activity of the MRF is approved by 24% of the respondents, and 46% do not approve of it.

We may conclude that the "Ilinden" Organization is "let to live" negatively, there being no real interest in its activity and ideology among the population; and, on the other hand, positively, because some minority groups approve of its activity on the basis of their own already established stereotypes of political behavior

GEOPOLITICAL PROJECTIONS

What about the attitude of the Bulgarians towards the world and the processes of world politics and world economy? Only a small part of the questions in the poll deals with foreign problems, so the following analysis does not claim to be comprehensive.

Generally speaking, the attitude towards the outside world is a difficult problem for Bulgarians. It is bound up with national difficulties in the past, and also with the crisis of societies in Eastern European countries. It is obvious that, from a geopolitical point of view, Bulgaria has to again change - as it had to 45 years ago - the direction and the model of social development under the impact of factors outside itself...

The data shows generally amorphous and undifferentiated attitudes concerning international relations. This fact correlates with the traditional isolation from the world, and, on the other hand, with the strongly ideologized and inadequate notion about the direction of processes in it. This makes it rather difficult to gauge the international relations attitudes along the "traditional - contemporary" axis. But it is evident that the ideologized thinking in this sphere, which defines our place in the world in the logic of "blocs", is on the way out. Only 14% want Bulgaria to keep relations mainly with the Soviet Union, and 2% - with the countries of the former Eastern Bloc. The pragmatic, unideologized attitude is dominant - 57% prefer relations with all countries, from which Bulgaria may benefit. It is obvious that this includes maintaining relations with the Soviet Union, but these are no longer treated within the logic of the notorious "unified blood circulatory system".

The bipolar structure of the international community is now destroyed and Bulgarians begin to understand their native land as a separate country with its own specific interests as a nation and as a state, which do not coincide with the interests of its allies from the Warsaw Pact. To the question "Is there any country threatening us?", 31% answer in the negative, for 30% the answer is difficult; for 39% there is such a country, and for 3/4 of them that country is Turkey. Obviously these people relate the threat to the specific geopolitical situation on the Balkans, and not to the propagandist East - West confrontation. Another fact is that 20% of them think that in difficulties, our country must rely on itself: A greater part, 22%, see the Soviet Union as the country we could rely on in hard times, and 13% think we should rely on developed Western countries. Of those 13/ the largest part, 4%, indicate the Germany, 3% the USA, and 6% - the rest of the Western world. These attitudes are new, given our ideological background, although in fact they are projections of traditional, pre-communist ones, submerged over the decades. Partly they should be a result of the emerging geopolitical silhouette of unified Germany as a European superpower.

Because of this change of orientation in international relations thinking, to "get to Europe" is seen as an economic necessity, and as the means to overcome the oriental backwardness of the country. This may explain the curious fact that only 0.6% give preference to relations with the rich Arab countries, where Bulgaria has considerable and well known interests.

International relations attitudes correlate more or less predictably with party sympathy. Among those who would rely on the Soviet Union in case of difficulties, 73% are BSP supporters and 13% are UDF supporters. Such an orientation is shown by 31% of the BSP members and only by 2% of the UDF members. Active preferences towards the developed Western countries are shown largely by the UDF electorate and the inhabitants of Sofia and other big cities. Among those, who would rely on Germany, 9% are BSP voters and 77% UDF. For the USA the figures are, respectively, 5% and 80%.

On the other hand, it is a positive trait that pragmatism in foreign affairs is not a monopoly of a given political force. There is an even distribution among the BSP and UDF voters, 39% and 40%, of those who think that good relations should be kept with all countries where this is

profitable. It is this kind of pragmatic approach that would lead to stability and predictability in Bulgarian foreign policies, and respect, by foreign partners.

The ethnocultural composition of our nation also has interesting geopolitical projections. The Pomaks and especially the Turks show clearly different orientations from the nation as a whole. The relative part of those preferring relations with the Soviet Union is much lower, 4% among the Turks, and 6% among the Pomaks, while the mean for the country is 14%. Supporting relations with the Western countries are 8% of the Turks and 19% of the pomaks, the mean for the country 20%. To the forefront come instead the relations with the Balkan countries, 9% among the Turks give this preference, and none of the Pomaks, the mean for the country being 2%. The same holds for Turkey: 8% of the Turks and 2% of the Pomaks, the mean for the country being 0.7%. The same groups show greater, 2 - 3%, preference for the rich Arab countries, the average being 0.6%. Obviously, this kind of attitude is a result of religious and ethnocultural, and not of economical reasoning.

As opposed to attitudes in other spheres, the international orientations of Bulgarians still have no immediate expression in the field of social practice. These are mediated by the international relations mechanism and the process of foreign policy decision making. Only when this mechanism is sufficiently democratized will our international policy actually correlate with the dominating views and attitudes in the country.

POLITICAL CULTURE AND POLITICAL STRUCTURES

In order to understand what in fact is the Bulgarian nation as a political subject, we have to analyze values systems. In our poll we tried to do this by using questions about religion and God, and opinions concerning justice and freedom.

According to the data, more than a half, 52%, of respondents believe in God. Very interesting and unexpected is the distribution of the religious feeling in the various types of areas. More than 60% of people in the countryside believe in God. This is expected. The same is true about small towns. This is somewhat less expected, but could still be explained, within the old atheistic thinking by backwardness and mental proximity between villages and small towns. However, in Sofia 55% declare themselves believers. It is thus clear that the old explanation does not work. It does not hold also for other big cities, where the religious are exactly half of the population. Only in the moderately large towns there is some dominance of unbelievers, 53% vs. 47%. While about a half of the religious could be covered by explanations within traditionalism, there evidently should be different explanations for the rest. It looks very much as if two types of religious cultures are beginning to take shape, which we will tentatively call "traditional" and "new".

This conclusion is confirmed by the age distribution of religious people. Most of them are above the age of 60, they have been christened in the Orthodox religion, and have derived their knowledge of religion in the pre-communist education system. More than half of the youngest respondent group, those aged under 25, also declare belief in God. This is obviously nontraditional, which has not been acquired by way of education or within the family, but is the result of a conscious politically motivated choice, conflicting with the former ideology of official atheism. The less clear responses to this question from the generation between 45 and 60 are possibly due to ideological fatigue.

The aged and rural population, believing in God so to say by force of habit, without taking their own decision on the problem, is the same population, from which the BSP draws its support. At the same time the belief in God for the young, educated urban population, supporting the UDF is another indication of nontraditionalism, of conscious self-identification rejecting the known reality. A possible conclusion would be that in their case belief in God is part of the overall personal activism.

At the same time, it is clear that the formation of the two types of religiosity ("traditional" and "politically motivated") is as yet unfinished. This is illustrated by the distribution of religious people with respect to their educational level, where the traditional picture is reproduced: the largest part, almost 70%, is among the uneducated; 50% out of those with secondary education, and only 40% of those with university education declare belief in God.

Also familiar, although from Western research, is the distribution of the religious people along the political spectrum. More than a half of the nonreligious have voted for the BSP; the part of this electorate, declaring atheism, is almost 60%. This is confirmed by European data which indicate that the "left" political orientation is accompanied by increased proportion of atheists, as well as by what has been already said of socialist voters in this country willing to accept the officially promoted thesis in the society, that there is no God. On the other hand, more than 40% of the religious in the country have voted for the UDF, among whose adherents believers are almost twice as many as the atheists, 65% vs. 35%. As to the two other parliamentary powers, it is quite to be expected that the largest part of believers is shown by the electorate of the MRF, while for the APU the level of religiousness is somewhere between the national average and the "blue" opposition - close to 60%.

The differences between the adherents of the two main political forces in connection with the value "freedom" are rather clear. Surprising is the unexpected profile of the responses nationwide: 57% of all voters accept the suggestion that "you have freedom when everybody does whatever they want without violating the law", while the alternative "when everybody bears in mind the interest of the collective", designed to test collectivist consciousness, gains only a fifth of the positive answers. The structure within the electoral bodies is as follows. The first variety, that freedom be restricted only by law, is chosen by 71% of the UDF supporters, and by 49% of the adherents of the BSP. Polar differences surface in the responses of the "collectivist" variety: only 9% of UDF voters accept it as an expression of freedom, while for the BSP these are 34%. The conclusion is that the 1/5 of the population who see freedom in collectivist terms tend to vote with the red ballot. However, in as far as collectivism on this crucial question is a minority attitude, the BSP strategists should avoid relying on it. Erosion of the "collectivist" attitudes is likely to favour orientations towards the UDF.

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From a politological point of view the most important point in such a study is to see how far the different values systems form different political subcultures, and how adequately these find expression in political formations operating on the political arena. The degree of coherence among these three levels would show the level of predictability and stability of the political situation as a whole.

There is a process of differentiation of two basic values systems in the country: one inert, concentrated in smaller settlements, in lower educated groups, and elderly people; and a second, activist and individualistic, concentrated in younger age groups and the inhabitants of major

cities with higher educational levels. These differences are relatively adequately expressed in the formation of two different political cultures, which can also be expressed in terms of categories like inertia and activism, collectivism and individualism. Finally, at present, the two political subcultures are relatively adequately expressed by the two political superpowers: BSP is the representative of the former, while UDF is the carrier of the latter.

At the same time there should be no overestimation of the separation of the two subcultures. It has yet to reach its final shape. The two subcultures overlap along by many criteria. They are to a similar extent egalitarian concerning the problems of everyday life: people would accept deterioration in living standards "if everybody bears it equally", respectively 27% of the BSP electorate and 25% of that of the UDF. 48% in total say that there should be no poor or rich, while 31% would agree to this social differentiation. This reservoir of egalitarianism is by no means small, and it is accompanied by considerable skepticism regarding the sufficiency of institutionalized forms of political activity. 59% of the respondents admit that political struggle can take place also outside the National Assembly. On the other hand, the electorate is evenly distributed with regard to more specific activities: 41% think that strikes and rallies are inevitable, and 39% would take part personally. Those, who don't accept these options are 40% and 40%, respectively. In the as yet unclear political situation in the country, there are sufficient conditions for a populist explosion.

Around half of the electorate is probably trying to avoid the positions of extreme polarization. This supports the hypothesis that there exists a hidden desire for "centrism". Squeezed as it is between the two political superpowers, and in the conditions of growing social and economical instability, this attitude finds neither adequate political or party expression, nor indeed has become conscious of being politically centrist.

And so, where to after the "dark room"? The situation is not likely to offer very much of a choice. Thus far the rapid political structuration of all emerging social impulses has helped us to avoid the "Romanian variation" of the transformation beyond totalitarianism. We should try to avoid cardinal discrepancies between value orientations, political attitudes, and their representation at a national level by way of political parties. The political community has to convince the nation in its competence to realize in practice the expectations of the people. What is needed now is political consensus about the principles of democratic transformation - and not acute debates on the ultimate goals. This is, possibly, the main responsibility of today's politicians of Bulgaria.

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