

of traditionalism. We can even observe here that one paradox led to another. A mass longing for modernisation and its benefits, which looked bigger and shinier from afar, contributed to a jump into a form of what Giddens named the post-traditional society.

In the context of globalisation, the term *transition* became a universally recognised notion, one that applies to politics and economics as well as to anthropology and culture. It had been more or less accepted in most circles of the movements, which were involved in politics, economics or social sciences. The starting point of transition was the clear-cut collapse in the socialist political and economic system and the hazy goals were liberal democracy and a market economy. Nobody claimed any definite knowledge on how this road from point A to point B would be walked, how changes would be implemented, or what kind of problems might be encountered on the trajectory from the known system to an unknown new construction of society. All this had been delegated to the capitalist machine fuelled by the neoliberal ideology. With a high level of certainty, we can now say that most projections of a transition from socialism and a planned economy to democracy and a market economy lacked a specified knowledge of the broad cultural aspects of the roads of transition in different countries. Furthermore, progressive and highly committed social scientists who themselves lived in the socialist system and tried to get involved in various activities for the redemptive social changes, underestimated conceivable impact of ethnic and religious traditions on the political restructuring of particular societies. To an extent, everybody knew that the commitment to social changes could not really be kept under control. Eventually such social and cultural activists had to face the problem of their complicity with the consequences that followed the apparently liberating transformation.

Politicians like Milošević in Yugoslavia, Zhirinovsky in Russia, Mečiar in Slovakia and many others appearing suddenly out of blue, were much quicker to decipher the potentials of the “cultural heritage”. In some cases – notably in the former Yugoslavia – the misreading of the danger of an explosive mix of culture and politics contributed to irreparably fatal consequences such as ethnically and religiously motivated armed conflicts. These extremes of transition, which will take an awfully long period before their social effects are rearranged into anything resembling tolerant or even multicultural societies, mark the historical limits of the complex social changes in the former socialist world. The processes, which Giddens understands through his notion of *detraditionalisation* (a concept within a