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***Global Trends and National Transformations: The Eastern European Adjustment to World Society***

The emerging new polycentric world order raises immense challenges to researchers and politicians alike. It is neither more transparent nor better manageable than the hated and feared polar confrontation of the previous decades. Contrary to influential visions from the early nineties several years later there are no signs of the end of the conflictual history of humankind. We face fundamental uncertainties in orientation and action at all structural levels of present day social life. The only certain point of orientation and action is the reference to one world we all belong to. However, belonging to one world does not mean that we think and act in the same way. Among many other changes globalization implies also a growing diversity of options, decisions and patterns of action.

There is hardly any other region in the world, which is more sensitive to the complexity and the controversial effects of the current globalization than Central and Eastern Europe. Having played the buffer role during the polar confrontation the whole region is searching for a new identity. But the region has not been monolithic during the previous decades and it is not monolithic in the current transformation. Each country defines the goals and the means of its adjustment to regional and global processes in its own way. What are the factors of this variety of national transformations? Where is the process heading to? What are its implications for world society?

Answers will be searched for by focusing on specific cases, which are indicative enough for broader causes, reasons, patterns of action and effects in social development.