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**The European green parties and movements as a factor for
the Europeanization and modernization of the Bulgarian
political process after 1989**

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INTRODUCTION

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DISSERTATION

Significance and relevance of the problem

The green idea, also called greenism or environmentalism in various academic sources, is among the newest political ideologies of modern times. In the context of the Western world, it is probably also the most recent. Its development has been so intense in the half century between the 1960s and the present day that it is now difficult to imagine a significant political strategy or package of policies that does not have a distinct 'green' dimension or about which we do not know the perspective of the green parties and movements.

The green idea is not only spreading relatively rapidly in the Western world. It receives political expression as in a new type of political parties, the so-called green parties, but also in a new type of social movements, the eco-movements. The political space of the European democracies is constantly changing, but so is the agenda of the European societies. Perhaps the most striking example in this regard is the so-called The European Union (EU) Green Deal, a fundamental political concept that, for the first time in history, does not simply take into account environmental policies in the construction of a vision for the future, but places environmental policies precisely at the center of a policy for the future. Europe, is becoming increasingly 'green'.

The mentioned processes mainly concern Western Europe. But this does not mean that the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, which for a long time belonged to the former socialist Eastern Bloc and only in the late 1980s stepped on the path of democratization, can be seen as foreign to the green idea that arose and established itself under completely different social, economic and political conditions. A short look at the Bulgarian democratic development reveals that "green" has had a significant presence in the political process since the very beginning of the post-totalitarian changes. Green formations can be found in the genesis of the Bulgarian democratic party system. Later, a significant share of environmental causes was also observed in mass public protests in Bulgaria.

After 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet type of socialism, Bulgaria embarked on a new path of modernization, to a serious extent dominated by the desire to belong to the big European family. What is the role of the greens in these processes of modernization and Europeanization of the country in the last more than 30 years? In what way has the Bulgarian political process been influenced by green ideas and policies? How do these ideas and policies fit into the modernization and Europeanization of Bulgaria? To what extent is their development and implementation on Bulgarian soil a product of ideological and political transfer from the European green parties and movements? These are the questions that form the subject of the present dissertation.

When we talk about the influence of European green ideas on Bulgarian politics, we need to specify how we understand the forms of this influence. It is obvious that the first place is the direct influence of the program visions of the European green formations on the program visions (and political proposals) of the Bulgarian green parties. Here we can directly trace how an environmental agenda is formed. At the same time, the influence on the Bulgarian political process can also be indirect. This is the impact of the agenda of the European green formations

on the formation of the agenda of the countries whose party systems they are part of, and of the European Union as a whole. From now on, we can talk about the influence of the environmental agenda of the EU itself on the policies of the member states, in particular Bulgaria. The two processes are different, but they have an intersection precisely in the capacity of green parties to exert influence both on other, partner parties and on the political structures within which they function.

The processes of change in the societies of Central and Eastern Europe after the fall of the communist regimes are often denoted by two key concepts - Europeanization and modernization. Europeanization, in the simplest terms, expresses the inclusion of the political process of a certain country to the dynamics of the EU, so that these dynamics begin to dictate the logic of development of the said national political process. Modernization, in turn, and taken in a narrower post-communist sense, reflects the development of political systems in the direction of greater empowerment of citizens and greater transparency and accountability of political institutions. In the present work, these two concepts are used to explain the impact of the European Greens on Bulgarian politics, to place it in a certain theoretical and conceptual framework.

Based on these considerations, the dissertation seeks to research and analyze two lines of influence of the European Greens on the Bulgarian political process. The first is their influence and impact on the ideological and programmatic state and development of the Bulgarian green parties; and the second is the implementation (inclusion and implementation) of the green policies of the EU, such as the policies of the Bulgarian governments.

Target

The aim of the work is to establish the tools for the implementation of green ideas and policies.

Subject and object

The object of the dissertation is the green ideas and policies in the Bulgarian political process after the beginning of the democratic changes, and the subject - the implementation of ideas and policies by the European green parties and movements towards Bulgaria.

A hypothesis

The main working hypothesis is: European green parties and movements are the central factor for the modernization and Europeanization of the Bulgarian political process in the field of environmental policies, but this is achieved not only directly, but also through the policies of the European Union. The hypothesis has two parts; the first concerns the influence of the agenda of (European) parties on the agenda of other (Bulgarian) parties, and the second concerns the influence of some (European) policies on other (Bulgarian) policies.

Tasks

- 1) The first task is to clarify the content of the green idea as a political ideology, the main concepts and that it introduces, and what is its relation to the concepts of Europeanization and modernization in the Central and Eastern European context.
- 2) The second task is to reconstruct the green organization in Europe - the genesis and development of green parties and movements both in leading European countries and at the level of the entire EU, placing a special emphasis on their programmatic and electoral dynamics.
- 3) The third task is to trace the formation of the Bulgarian "green" political space, both with an overview of its main organizational entities (parties and organizations), and with an interpretation of its impact on the democratic political process in the country.
- 4) The fourth task is related to clarifying the process of implementing green policies from the EU to Bulgaria. As this is a very broad topic in itself, the study concentrates on a more striking case, which is the environmental components of the Bulgarian National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP).

Methodology

In the dissertation, the methods of the office research were used, with a view to systematization of the leading scientific literature on the subject (mostly conceptualization of the leading contemporary green ideas in Europe and revealing their relationship with the concepts of Europeanization and modernization); the discursive and comparative thematic analysis of political documents (necessary to trace the development and content of the programmatic visions of the green formations and of the EU so that they can be compared); the secondary analysis of statistical and sociological information (with the help of which the electoral dynamics of green formations will be highlighted in order to interpret their role in the political process and decision-making mechanisms by public institutions); the method of historical reconstruction (which will help to reproduce the genesis of the Bulgarian green formations and the successive stages of the formation of an ecological agenda, necessary for the purposes of comparing them with the dynamics of development of their European partners).

The wide scope of the subject requires inevitable limitations and self-limitations. In the present work, the focus will fall on green ideas and policies as formulated and disseminated only by green parties and movements. The green issues in the party documentation of the other political forces and public organizations will remain out of research attention. Next, the analysis will take into account those green policies of the Bulgarian state that have a direct correspondence with the program visions of the European greens and the policies of the European institutions, and not, in principle, the set of environmental measures and policies.

VOLUME AND STRUCTURE

The dissertation has a total volume of 170 standard pages. It consists of an introduction, four chapters, including a conclusion and a bibliography. There are 3 tables in the thesis. The bibliography contains monographs and scientific articles in English, French and

Bulgarian, results of sociological research, statutes, programs and election documents of political parties, public articles and reports of international non-governmental organizations.

First chapter. The ideology of the greens. Basic concepts, concepts and connections with the processes of Europeanization and modernization

The first chapter answers the question - what is the green idea, introduces the main terminology used, with special emphasis on the concept of sustainable development. The main pillars of the green idea are described. The post-material values of greens are reviewed in the context of Ronald Inglehart's analytical framework. In short, the main internal divisions in the circles of contemporary green movements and parties are also justified. The political dimension of green ideology - environmentalism - was introduced. The main terms, concepts and connections with the processes of Europeanization and modernization are described and explained.

Green ideology is represented through its three key pillars: Nature, Human - quality of life, green economy.

The first one develops the vision of the planet as a whole organism and its preservation, summarized in the expression "ecological framework". It included the ideas of the overpopulation of the planet, the limitation of greenhouse gases, the development of renewable energy sources, ecological monitoring of the achievements of genetic engineering and biotechnology related to the sciences of chemistry, physics and other potentially dangerous sciences for humanity, as well as the introduction of eco fees. Similar measures are included in the program documents of the EU Green Deal until 2050.

The second one focuses on the equitable distribution of resources, both locally and globally, thereby unconditionally securing basic human goods and equal opportunities for all citizens. A concept of a new level of relations between world powers is practically being created - a sustainable, green economy (low carbon), which will close the gap between rich and poor and eliminate poverty as a social and economic phenomenon. The vision is for a society with a new value system built on equal rights, opportunities and non-violence for all individuals regardless of their gender, age, religion, social status, ethnicity and national origin. Expansion of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights with the right to a preserved environment and its transformation into a domestic and international norm of behavior in the relations between people, institutions and the state. A person's right to be different. Greens profess the thesis that no individual, group of individuals, or institution has the right to force a person to conform to imposed norms. Diversity should be a major factor in the development of society.

The third one is tied to the so-called "green economy". The Greens, in principle, are against the free market in this form and the planned economy. We are currently witnessing the unlimited growth of production and the hegemony of global markets imposed by transnational capitals. For them, regionalism as a form of governance is the most preferred. A green economy is a type of economy in which financial policies and instruments do not present a danger to the environment, but on the contrary, policies of balance and cooperation between the two spheres are developed. A new democratic social model.

The main principle of the outlined model is that of sustainable development. This principle is placed on a pedestal in the program of every single green party, as the basis of ideology. Problems are solved collectively. Conflicts and wars are strongly criticized and banned. The development of renewable energy sources (RES) is the basis of the economy. There is the

understanding of "one planet - one whole" (holism). Economic growth and new technologies obey the principles of humanism.

On the issue of the political divide between left views and neoliberal right-centrism, the research summarizes that greens have their differences, but are united in their support for the democratic process and the rule of law in environmental policies, seen as crucial to protecting the public interest from corporate interests.

The value basis of this complex ideological complex is revealed in the dissertation through the lens of Ronald Inglehart's post-materialism thesis. According to his concept of the "quiet revolution", the most enduring value orientations and sentiments of the masses are the most important elements of political culture. Specific combinations of these orientations and attitudes determine the stability and quality of democracy. Inglehart suggests that in industrialized countries, under the influence of socio-economic development, there is a transition from material to post-material values, which begin to play a leading role in people's lives. The main cultural division began to take place along the axis - "materialists" and "post-materialists". Materialists are focused on the economic well-being and security of the state, the prosperity of their families, and the preservation of their own material well-being. For them, the standard of living, law and order are of paramount importance.

Inglehart's main conclusion is that economic development alone does not generate democracy, it affects democratization only to the extent that it promotes cultural change. Inglehart gives reason to believe that:

- The concrete historical manifestations of the ideology cannot be thought outside of the processes of democratization in the modern world and in direct connection with them;
- Internal pluralism (the "mixed" forms) is embedded in the Green Idea, which results from the balance between material and post-material trends in the respective society, and this predetermines the emphasis on geographical differences in the spread of the ideology;
- Tolerance for the self-expression of others is inherent in the Green Idea, which ultimately leads to the corresponding political behavior subject to cooperation and inclusiveness (without, of course, automatically producing it);
- Ideology fosters skepticism towards state power and classical forms of political participation, which creates a risk of "anti-politics", of low motivation and mobilization for integration into the political process of modern democracies despite high levels of self-identification with green ideas.

The dissertation work, which is dedicated to issues from Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), also resorts to the interpretation of two other leading concepts: Europeanization and modernization.

Europeanization is considered as a process that reflects the progress, development and transition of CEE parties and countries towards European principles of functioning. It is a process on many different levels, which is carried out step by step, has no clear parameters and depends on the degree of political will, European thinking and the level of development and thinking of the society itself. Among the main orientations of the outlined process, the research based on systematization and critical reading of the scientific literature highlights:

- The development of party platforms and messages is a key and irreplaceable feature of the Europeanization process.
- The relations between political parties within the framework of European issues, both at the national level and between national parties and European party families, reveal the scale and depth of the processes of Europeanization.
- The significance of the general integration problems (here we can add: and of the environmental problems in particular, because they are an important part of the European integration agenda) is a primary political manifestation of Europeanization. Europeanization in CEE can often take the form of limiting and focusing the political agenda on certain issues.
- Euroscepticism can also be seen as a manifestation of Europeanization in CEE. Europeanization does not necessarily mean an increase in support for European policies, but an attitude towards European policies.

Modernization is a complex and multi-layered process that is related to the trends of political modernity in the world during the last five centuries. It has various dimensions, of which the study focuses on one: the modernization of social and political structures in the late 20th and early 21st centuries with a special emphasis on CEE. This aspect is directly related to the birth and spread of the Green Idea, as it refers to the prerequisites for its formation and confirmation not just in Western Europe, but also in the East. It is also important how the modernization of societies and political systems in CEE in the transition to liberal democracy after the collapse of the communist regimes incorporates conditions for the development and deployment of an environmental agenda.

The new political parties in the new CEE democracies become part of the modernization and Europeanization processes insofar as they function as opponents of their "alternatives" - of traditionalism and provincialism. In this sense, from the point of view of political parties, political modernization is a trend of the global development of democracies. The question is to what extent these parties contribute to the development of the respective societies and political systems towards the new orientations of development in the global democratic world. It is along this axis that the green parties in CEE are a direct part of the modernization process.

The dissertation interprets, in the context of the tasks it sets itself, the concept of ecological modernization. Ecological modernization is a specific theory of political modernization that emphasizes new forms of political intervention in social and economic processes, changing the role of the state. The relationship between economic growth and environmental sustainability is presented through the prism of ecological modernization theory. According to this theory, environmental crises can be solved through technological innovation, economic growth and institutional reforms. The question of the applicability of the concept of ecological modernization in democratizing countries, such as those from the former Eastern bloc and Bulgaria in particular, is important. The balance of policies embedded in the content of the term itself requires a certain level of state capacity and maturity of citizen participation to be effective. In the process of democratization, the capacity of the state is often reduced (due to reforms associated with regime change), and workable solutions adopted by citizens are not always possible. Conversely, the risk is in an elitist approach that alienates the population from environmental policies. A key point is that democratization can paradoxically slow down

ecological modernization because it places different emphases and deals with the redefinition of fundamental relations in the state and society.

The study dwells on the relationship between ecological modernization and views of political modernization, usually related to post-communist societies in transition. With these later theories of modernization, a path is opened to analyze culture as a way of expression, and in this way, it becomes possible to link modernization with ecological issues. Ecological modernization in this sense becomes both a concept for social change and a program for practical politics. Ecological modernization theory focuses on environmental innovation, eco-innovation and the interaction of various societal factors such as scientific, economic, institutional, legal, political and cultural aspects that either promote or hinder these innovations. The relationship between ecological modernization theory and political modernization theory is important. The theory of ecological modernization is closely related to the theory of political modernization that emerged during the Cold War in the West. Both theories share the common notion that societal progress and development can be achieved through the process of modernization. Political modernization theory emphasizes the transformation of political institutions and decision-making processes over time, while ecological modernization theory focuses on environmental management and policy development within this evolving political context. Economic modernization thus plays an important role in shaping political modernization, the two concepts being inextricably linked in terms of their mutual influence on societal development. Political modernization theory, in this context, provides a framework for understanding how changes in policy domains affect environmental policy arrangements and decision-making processes. By examining the dynamics between the state, the market and civil society, this theory sheds light on the evolving nature of environmental politics in the wider context of political modernization.

The process of modernization in CEE, the study finds, cannot be thought of outside of a process the state and the EU in these processes - this makes it necessary to understand the impact of the EU on the policies of the Bulgarian state in the field of environmental changes. The European Union (EU) has had a significant impact on political modernization efforts in Central and Eastern Europe through various mechanisms and interactions. The EU is involved in introducing a democratic political culture in Central and Eastern Europe, which should promote modernization and democratic values among political parties.

Regarding the question of the impact on political parties, it can be drawn from the unresolved problem in the literature on the subjectivity of Europeanization and modernization. If the state, the market and the civil society cannot unequivocally take on this role, can the parties? It is particularly important in the context of the dissertation topic to pose this question in relation to the green parties. There seems to be little data available in the literature for this. What is needed, therefore, is a focus on the programmatic function of the parties and on the imposition of a European agenda. This gives additional grounds for researching the parties themselves in the course of the exhibition.

Second chapter. The Greens in the European political process

The second chapter of the dissertation examines the development of green parties and movements in Europe in the context of their potential and tools for imposing a specific environmental agenda.

It mentions that green movements are born in the Western world, because it develops faster and democratically on a value, market and economic basis than these in the Eastern Bloc. The new green movements that grew in the 1960s and 1970s gradually formed their own agenda - opponents of the absolutization of material values and economic growth. During this period, various social movements developed that had a significant impact on society and shaped the social scene. These movements are characterized by activism, changes in societal norms and values, and the achievement of significant social and legislative reforms in many areas. They have a long-term impact on the face of modern society and continue to shape public debate and movement. The main factor that provoked the emergence of the green parties and movements is the severe impact of industrial development on the environment (air and water pollution, deforestation, the danger of nuclear and energy catastrophes), all phenomena that are still relevant today. A particularly vivid and popular example of contemporary global climate activism in the context of green movements is the work of Swedish activist Greta Thunberg. Her initiatives and messages further allow to trace the scope and effectiveness of eco-movements in today's world. Thunberg's remarks are significant from the perspective of our topic because they emphasize the need for immediate and radical change, the everyday collective and individual efforts, and the generational dynamics. Thus, the environmental agenda is presented as imperative and central to political systems.

The Green parties, formed on the basis of eco-movements, present big challenge to traditional party families with their "new" values, more democratic organizational structures and proposals and desire for reforms of the entire political system. Despite the initial skepticism of political experts, the green parties are gradually finding their place and starting to be a successful and active member in the electoral process on the political scene. In some European countries, they manage to occupy stable positions in the political spectrum, breaking the status quo established by traditional political parties.

The first truly successful Green Party was the German one, which contributed to the liberation of Germany from dependence on nuclear energy, the popularization of the "green" and the normalization of the direct involvement of Green parties in the **executive branch**. The deployment of green parties in Britain and France is indicative of differences in agenda, but also of common trends.

In the process of their development, the European green parties are freed from their anti-systemic character of party-movements and join the traditional party system by accepting part of its basic organizational principles, which allows them to be more effectively involved in political life and to fully perform their functions as political parties. The support for European integration is strong accepted in the larger green parties, particularly the Dutch, French and German Greens. Green parties are most favorable to European integration when it affects their core commitment to protecting the environment, strengthening democracy and liberalizing immigration laws. The forms of organization of green parties derive from a specific principle of a new political ideology - namely that the whole of society should have a louder voice in making decisions that affect society - so-called localism. Localism refers to the orientation

towards smaller units of political organization, geographically decentralized and therefore closer to those who are the subject of political decisions. On this subject, again, it is clear that the Green parties have retained at least some important aspects of their traditional values. The European Green Party (the "European Greens" or "EGP") is a European political party acting as a federation of parties from the member states of the European Union, professing green policies and values. It is the fourth largest party family in Europe. It has relatively little influence in the new democracies, but still has a significant presence in the majority of EU countries. The ideological orientation of the EGP is denoted by the term "Green politics", and the political positions taken, from the point of view of the left-right opposition, are most often centrist. The European Greens stand for the basic principles of green politics, such as environmental responsibility, personal freedom, democracy (inclusive), respect for differences, social justice, gender equality, global sustainable development and non-violence.

The implementation of European green policies in CEU (Central and Eastern Europe) and in particular in Bulgarian politics and the Bulgarian agenda can be presented as a result of the affirmation of several basic principles and priorities of the European green parties. Among them, in recent years, a key place has been taken by the National Recovery and Resilience Plans (NRRPs), one of the main instruments of influencing and integrating policies, especially for the countries of the former socialist bloc, within the EU. The "Green Deal", as this set of restructuring policies is better known, is one of the foundations of the NRRP. The European Green Deal is an ambitious set of policies and strategies proposed by the European Commission in December 2019. The Green Deal spans across sectors and policy areas and aims to transform and modernize the EU's economy and society to address the challenges of climate change and achieve a sustainable future. Politically, the Green Deal is the product of a consensus between the main political forces in the EU, but it inevitably reflects to the greatest extent the political and ideological views of the Greens in the Union.

Third chapter. The Bulgarian green

The third chapter of the dissertation interprets the genesis and development of the Bulgarian green formations in order to trace to what extent and in what way they are carriers of the ecological agenda in the processes of Europeanization and modernization in Bulgaria.

At the end of the 1980s, CEE countries were struggling with severe environmental problems, an example of which is the gassing of the city of Ruse in Bulgaria. This incident became the catalyst for the political opposition against Todor Zhivkov's regime. In the region, civil resistance is expressed through the development of environmental movements that are skeptical on the state institutions.

The political institutionalization of green movements leads to a loss of contact with the majority of the population, but at the same time green parties play an important role in shaping the political process in the early years of democratic change in the region. After the collapse of the totalitarian system in Bulgaria in 1989, the process of democratization began, which led to the emergence of numerous political parties, organizations and clubs. Some of them were formed before 1989, as opponents of the communist government.

These associations, although without a clear organizational structure, play an important role in the development of civil and democratic processes in the country. Developing civil society is the driving force behind the political change and a symbol of the new democracy.

The main battle in the political sphere is for freedom and human rights, with the main division being along the axis (cleavage) of communism-anti-communism.

The lack of experience, program and political culture is a common feature of many of the new political parties. The strong leadership played a key role in the success of the parties in this period, especially against the powerful political opponent – the Bulgarian Communist Party, later renamed the Socialist Party (BSP). After the formation of the anti-communist Union of Democratic Forces (UDF), many of the first political parties entered its composition. The reading of the historical facts allows us to establish that the Bulgarian Greens logically find their place in the anti-communist pole, and together with that they establish themselves as one of the most prepared in terms of values, ideology and practical-politics.

In this context of genesis and development of democratic changes, the Green Party, “Ecoglasnost” and its divisions play a historic role in the democratization of the Bulgarian political process. The most prominent and significant Bulgarian ecological structure in the last years of the communist regime and in the early years of political democracy was "Ekoglasnost". "Ecoglasnost" symbolizes a shift towards environmental awareness and activism, reflecting the growing concern for environmental sustainability in Bulgaria during this time of political transformation. "Ekoglasnost", along with this, has a significant role in spreading the ideas of other dissident formations such as the Committee for Environmental Protection of the City of Ruse, the Independent Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Club for Support of Glasnost and Redevelopment, and focusing them in an ecological agenda.

The emergence of similar organizations shows that the protest movement unites different layers of society with different origins and social profiles. This testifies to the diversity and breadth of participation in the green movement and green parties in Bulgaria. In Bulgaria, environmental problems are a key factor for the democratization of society, representing a basis for dissident activity. The research finds out that green formations are two types: the first type, such as the Green Party and Green Alliance, are created to participate in elections and access resources, without active political action. Their goals are - more system integration, reflecting environmental goals at the program level. The second type of green formations in Bulgaria stems from civil campaigns and aspiration for social and political change. Examples of this type are "Ekoglasnost" and "The Greens" (renamed "Green Movement"). These parties not only express ideologies, but also aim for systemic changes at the organizational and political level. Despite the desire to participate in power, they are distinguished by a broader approach and a desire for a new political paradigm based on participatory democracy. This type of parties represents a culture of socio-political interaction that reflects the rejection of the political status quo and the search for new political solutions. Green social movements and NGOs such as "Green Balkans" are promoting the environmental agenda, but at the same time they embody the anti-political tendency of the greens in general.

In short, the Bulgarian Green in its genesis reproduces key characteristics of the European Green - a dynamic relationship between movements and parties, skepticism towards the

conventional mechanisms of the political system, a focus on citizens as subjects of politics, along with one function which, however is much less represented in European green formations: subjectivity in the process of democratization of societies and political systems. There is considerable potential for mobilization of public opinion by environmentalists. They rise as defenders of the public interest and fight against the problems of the system such as corruption and the democratic deficits. Eco-protests often turn into mass protests against the political system. Bulgarian nature is a symbol of Bulgarian culture and identity, which differentiates Bulgarian greens from their counterparts in Western Europe. Despite its successes, the green movement has struggled to establish an influential green party in power for an extended period. The relationship between the movement and the parties is problematic, emphasizing the need for autonomy and influence of the green parties. The analysis of the last more than 30 years shows that the continuation of current trends may lead to new problems for society related to the environment and the sustainability of green policy in the future.

Fourth chapter. The implementation of European green policies in Bulgaria. The Just Transition Mechanism.

The fourth chapter of the dissertation examines a specific case of the implementation of European green policies in Bulgaria through the Just Transition Mechanism, in order to trace the question of the subjectivity of Europeanization and modernization, for the specific institutional carriers of a European environmental agenda.

In the decades of political democracy in Bulgaria after 1989, dozens of examples of transfer, adaptation and implementation of European green policies in the country can be cited - both at the legislative and operational executive levels. In this chapter we will focus on the so-called Just Transition Mechanism, which is one of the important policies under the Green Deal and also a key component of the National Recovery and Resilience Plans of the EU Member States.

The just transition mechanism is adopted in the thesis as a suitable case for the implementation of European policies for at least three reasons: (1) it is a key EU tool for implementing environmental policies in member states, which requires cooperation between the community and national institutions; (2) enjoys the firm and categorical support of the European Greens and their Bulgarian partners in the Green Movement; and (3) it generates a policy debate that enables the green policy position to stand out more prominently as an alternative to other policy options within the same portfolio. Moreover, it is a matter of a very current political agenda relating to the third decade of the present century, and in this sense the content and characteristics of the Just Transition Mechanism can be seen as a synthesis (in a certain area) of the previous development of green policies.

The discourse of ecological modernization of the EU has become very influential in the last 30 years, but it is increasingly based on a depoliticization of decisions that are argued with no alternatives and market rationality. In this way, other points of view are systematically marginalized and give birth to resistance. Ecological modernization aims to combine economic growth, environmental protection and energy security. The approach assumes that economic development and environmental protection are compatible. The principles of ecological modernization can contribute to the development of the circular economy. The theory of

ecological modernization has been criticized in academic and political circles, based on the supremacy of the economic factor over nature conservation, unfounded technological optimism and challenge to the claim that continued modernization is essential for ecological sustainability. According to critics of the approach, there is also an element of social justice missing. The principle of ecological modernization is enshrined and is part of the European Green Deal. The green deal is of particular importance for Bulgaria, as it will have a huge impact on all sectors of socio-economic life and on citizens. The European leaders' decision to integrate measures supporting the fight against climate change into all sectors and policies has been fulfilled by the European Commission with the presentation of this package. The files are of an extremely horizontal nature and affect the competence of numerous departments at the national level. It is important that legislative proposals are considered cumulatively, given their strong interrelationship, and that climate goals are integrated into all sectoral policies and all levels of government, in order to achieve the goals in a fair and sustainable way for citizens and industry. It is important to protect the national peculiarities, the geographical ones, the starting positions of the countries and the already achieved reductions, the principle of technological neutrality and the role of natural gas as a transition fuel, the preservation of the competitiveness of the national economy and the well-being of citizens, as well as the fair distribution between States of the benefits and challenges of the transition. The Green Deal is the subject of various interpretations and debates in Bulgaria, with some expressing concern over the possible risks it may bring to the country, while others support it for its ambition to make the green transition fair, just and inclusive.

For the Greens, even the Green Deal itself as a set of measures and policies is the basic value and cultural model for solving absolutely any type of societal crisis. This type of rhetoric shows the desire of the greens themselves, in a more general plan, to lay the foundations and be the core of a new way of public and social development on the planet. If the Green Deal succeeds as a strategy of environmental (and not only) policies, it will be far from the last such set of policies. The question at the moment seems not to be if, but when and at what pace these policies will be implemented on an EU-wide basis. Moderation, the right communication strategy with citizens and differs the stages of implementation in different societies, relative to their immediate preparation for a just, smooth and sustainable transition that does not lead to serious social upheavals, would be the right steps in this direction. It is perfectly normal for policies like the Green Deal to meet resistance because of the changes they entail. This is, for example, the case with the closure of the TPP "Maritsa - East" in Stara Zagora. This is a European directive that will be implemented, it is only a matter of time, and above all for proper strategizing and ensuring conditions for retraining human capital in the region. Policies and measures that are scheduled, incl. in the Territorial Plans and in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP).

The National Recovery and Resilience Plan is a framework document that includes future reforms in a number of sectors and goes far beyond the conventional understanding of recovery from Covid-19. The goal for Bulgaria is to take a few more steps towards modernization, sustainability and its European development, modernization and European integration. Reforms and investments from the plan are expected to help Bulgaria become more sustainable, resilient and better prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the ecological and digital transition. The reforms are focused on the transition to sustainable growth of the economy, and the investments to the ecological and digital transition of Bulgaria. The detailed

analysis of the plan reveals its intentions to accelerate the process of decarbonization of the energy sector in the economy of the Bulgarian state, to encourage the use and implementation of digital infrastructure in rural areas as well, to help build and improve conditions in the business environment, education, science, technology and innovation and healthcare.

The main subjects of the implementation are state and supra-state actors - these are the Republic of Bulgaria, which develops and defends the plans, and the European Union, which approves and finances. The environmental aspects of the policy are set by the EU itself, while national plans must comply with these set goals. Green parties and movements - European and Bulgarian - do not have an independent role in imposing and implementing these policies. It is true that the Bulgarian Green Movement at this moment (September - October 2023) participates in the ruling coalition in the country. However, the main speaker and defender of the plans, in the context of massive protests by miners and energy workers against their approval, is Prime Minister Nikolay Denkov, who is a representative of another political formation.

Territorial plans, and in general the Bulgarian National Plan for Recovery and Resilience, should play the role of instruments of the new phase of ecological modernization. If the first phase reported in the literature confronts CEE with the difficulties of the post-communist transformation and, more specifically, with the difficulties of effectively combining the liberalization of the state's economic policy with the targeted strategy of ecological development, the second phase embodies a similar ambition, behind which, however, it stands a country with more tools and with the support of the EU.

The review of the case with the territorial plans shows that the Bulgarian Green Movement is rather a public legitimator of the implementation of European green policies in Bulgaria through the Bulgarian state than an active subject in ecological modernization.

Conclusion

The proposed dissertation research allows to formulate certain conclusions.

The development of the green idea, of its main pillars, reveals the need for cultural changes in societies, according to Ronald Inglehart's theory of post-material values. Without such a "quiet revolution", the spread of environmental ideas and policies would require accompanying specific contexts and would be largely deprived of the potential for independent development. The differences in the political importance of green parties and movements in the western and eastern parts of Europe are also rooted in this. The literature on Europeanization further promotes the emphasis on the party and organizational dimension of the green issue, specifically the theses on party programs as an effective basis of Europeanization and on the importance of the integration issue.

The analysis of the European green parties and movements really makes it possible to follow the concretization of the ideology in program productions, and the dynamics of time. Important for our topic is the observation that at the beginning of the 21st century, in this part of the party systems, ecocentrism gradually emerged as a bygone stage at the expense of more pragmatic solutions and wider cooperation with other formations. The inclusiveness of the Greens shows the potential for partnerships on topics such as localism, civic culture, migration,

women's rights, pacifism. Along with this, the interpretation of specific green parties (mostly those in Great Britain, Germany and France) also suggests a tendency towards heterogenization of ideas and messages. They can hardly be gathered under a common denominator. The conclusion was formulated that the "second phase" of development of the Bulgarian greens corresponds to the "green wave" trends in Western Europe and shows a deepening of the process of Europeanization of the Bulgarian political process.

The research on the genesis and development of the Bulgarian greens at first glance highlights a concept preferred by their European partners, such as "civic politics" with individual non-hierarchical commitment and participation. Ideological and political motivations, however, do indeed initially diverge. The Bulgarian Greens have a key role in the process of democratization of Bulgarian society. The absence of cultural change of the kind outlined by Inglehart is unmistakable. Therefore, the public role of the Bulgarian greens is based on other reasons, not so much arising from the authenticity of the ecological issues, as from the resistance against the socialist system. The Bulgarian greens, and especially "Ekoglasnost" in its various first incarnations from the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, occupy the ecological niche and contribute to the process of Europeanization and modernization, but understood not only and not so much in ecological categories as in democratic. The dynamics of development of the Bulgarian Greens over the past 30 years marks a systematic commitment to Europeanization, with a changing emphasis - from the anti-totalitarian democratization of "Ekoglasnost" at the beginning to the European environmentalization of "Green Movement" at the end of the researched period. This dynamic also includes a kind of intermediate, transitional stage in the person of the Green Party of Alexander Karakachanov, in which the environmental imperatives are mainly upgraded over the liberal-democratic ones. Regardless, the genesis of Bulgarian greens leaves an imprint on their later evolution. they continue to have a rather liberal political profile, with lower levels of inclusiveness and openness to partnerships than the European Greens. Along with this, the indisputable belonging of the Bulgarian greens to the democratization of the Bulgarian society and political system received a relatively late (in the second half of the researched period) intersection with the process of modernization, and that in the form that is called "ecological modernization". stepping on a combination between environmental priorities and economic growth, with a clearly strong role of the state.

Over the years, the ideas and messages of the European Greens increasingly overlap with the ideas and messages of the Bulgarian Greens. Regardless, it can be concluded that green parties and movements (European and Bulgarian) are gradually losing their importance as a primary, central factor of the Europeanization and modernization of the Bulgarian political process in the environmental sphere. After Bulgaria's membership in the EU in 2007, the Bulgarian Greens adopted a rather instrumental role for Europeanization and modernization, a role whose manifestations can be found primarily in the expert debate and in the implementation of European policies. There are two trends over time. The first is the decreasing influence on the Bulgarian political process of the green movements and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) at the expense of the green parties. In general, green movements and especially NGOs are establishing themselves as recipients of those European policies, less as factors of Europeanization and modernization. And the second trend is of declining influence of the green parties towards the institutions implementing European policies. Towards the end of the researched period, Europeanization and modernization in the environmental sphere was mainly realized as an EU policy and a commitment of the member states corresponding to this policy, including To Bulgaria. If we can express ourselves somewhat metaphorically, for Bulgarian

politics "green" turns out to be the European Union itself, not so much the green parties and movements in the Union, while the Bulgarian greens enter the function of interpreters and defenders of this aspect of European politics. The case study of the territorial plans for the Bulgarian Recovery and Sustainability Plan clearly illustrates these statements.

The hypothesis with which the research was launched, namely that "European green parties and movements are the central factor for the modernization and Europeanization of the Bulgarian political process in the field of environmental policies, but this is achieved not only directly, but also through the policies of the European Union" can be considered confirmed. The ideological and political importance of the European green parties and movements remains unquestionable for the programmatic evolution of the Bulgarian green space, but the European Union itself can increasingly be defined as a central factor in the construction of the green agenda on the Bulgarian state.

CONTRIBUTING POINTS

1. This is the first comprehensive study of the genesis and evolution of green political parties and movements in Bulgaria.
2. It's revealed the comparative dynamics of European and Bulgarian green parties and movements, in which both overcome ecocentrism and show capacity for political partnerships and integration in the political center.
3. It has been established that democratization is the main process in which the Bulgarian Greens contribute to the Europeanization and modernization of the political process.
4. The thesis is argued that the impact of the European green parties and movements on the Bulgarian political process occurs mostly indirectly, through impact on the agenda of the European Union and hence through impact on the agenda of the Bulgarian state institutions.
5. It has been proven the applicability of the theory of ecological modernization, in which environmental policies are combined with economic growth in Bulgarian conditions.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

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3. Начев, А. “Градовете на бъдещето като мост между бизнеса и ефективното управление в рамките на Зелената сделка и ЕС”, докторантски сборник от научна конференция “III Международна младежка конференция с участие на утвърдени учени – инженерна инфраструктура и конкурентен бизнес”, Изд. Техническият университет, С., 2024 (предстои)

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PARTICIPATION IN CONFERENCES

Participation in an international project - Ambassadors of the Alliance "Transformation for Europe" representing Sofia University <https://us.edu.pl/european-university/>

Participation in an international project - "Democracy in action - Young people and governors decide together" Plovdiv - 27/29.05.2022 Effective

Participation with a report - "Green, greener, greenest. The modern transformation" in an international scientific conference - "First Annual Transform4Europe PhD Conference Societal Transformations and Sustainable Development with Respect to Environment in the Post Covid-19 Digital Era" 8-9 December 2021

Participation in doctoral summer school 5-09.07 - EURASIA Summer School "China - EU Cooperation"

Participation in the organization of a seminar "How to translate climate science into an accessible language" 04/13/2022