

“THE THIRD”, “THE FOURTH” OR EVEN “THE FIFTH WAVE” OF DEMOCRATIZATION AND AUTOCRATIZATION? THE ESSENCE, DYNAMICS AND CONSEQUENCES OF POLITICAL TRANSITIONS IN EUROPE AND THE WORLD

The article examines the essence, directions, dynamics and consequences of political transitions in Europe and the world, in particular through the prism of what should be the sequence of «waves» of democratization or autocratization from the end of the 20th century until today. It is argued that it is inappropriate to say on average that some “new wave» of democratization has begun in the world today, but instead the “third wave” of democratization has ended globally and the “third wave” of autocratization has begun. Although, in contrast, the next or “new” “waves” of democratization do sometimes take place in certain regions of the world, but they are not universal one and instead are often replaced by the “rollbacks” from democratization. In general, the current trend is, on the one hand, an increase in the number of autocracies and hybrid regimes in the world and a decrease in the number of liberal and illiberal democracies. On the other hand, the processes of “erosion” of democracy as such continue to take place today, when the quality, level and efficiency of democracy declines in most countries of the world due to various crisis phenomena.

Keywords: transition, transformation, “wave” of democratization, “wave” of autocratization

„TRZECIA”, „CZWARTA” CZY NAWET „PIĄTA FAŁA” DEMOKRATYZACJI I AUTOKRATYZACJI? ISTOTA, DYNAMIKA I KONSEKWENCJE PRZEMIAN POLITYCZNYCH W EUROPIE I NA ŚWIECIE.

Artykuł analizuje istotę, kierunki, dynamikę i konsekwencje przemian politycznych w Europie i na świecie, w szczególności przez pryzmat tego, jaka powinna być sekwencja „fal” demokracji lub autokracji od końca XX wieku do dziś. Argumentuje się, że nie należy mówić o tym, że w dzisiejszym świecie rozpoczęła się jakaś „nowa fala” demokracji, lecz że zakończyła się, w ujęciu globalnym „trzecia fala” demokracji i rozpoczęła się „trzecia fala” autokracji. Kolejne lub „nowe” fale demokracji mają wprawdzie czasem miejsce w niektórych regionach świata, ale nie są one powszechne, a zamiast tego często zastępowane są przez „cofanie się” demokracji. Ogólnie ujmując obecny trend, to z jednej strony wzrost

liczby autokracji i reżimów hybrydowych na świecie oraz spadek liczby demokracji liberalnych i nieliberalnych. Z drugiej strony, procesy „erozji” demokracji jako takiej trwają do dziś, kiedy to w większości krajów świata, z powodu różnych zjawisk kryzysowych, spada jakość, poziom i efektywność demokracji.

Słowa kluczowe: przejście, transformacja, „fala” demokratyzacji, „fala” autokratyzacji.

«ТРЕТЯ», «ЧЕТВЕРТА» ЧИ НАВІТЬ «П'ЯТА ХВИЛЯ» ДЕМОКРАТИЗАЦІЇ ТА АВТОКРАТИЗАЦІЇ? СУТНІСТЬ, ДИНАМІКА І НАСЛІДКИ ПОЛІТИЧНИХ ТРАНЗИТІВ У ЄВРОПІ ТА СВІТІ

У статті розглянуто сутність, напрями, динаміку і наслідки політичних транзитів у Європі та світі, зокрема крізь призму того, якою повинна бути порядковість «хвиль» демократизації або автократизації з кінця ХХ століття і до сьогодні. Аргументовано, що сьогодні усереднено не доречно говорити про те, що в світі розпочалась якась «нова хвиля» демократизації, а натомість глобально завершилась «третя хвиля» демократизації і почалась «третя хвиля» автократизації. Хоча, на противагу, наступні чи «нові» «хвилі» демократизації все-ж подеколи мають місце в окремих регіонах світу, але не є універсальними і натомість часто змінюються «відкатами» від демократизації. Загалом поточним трендом є, з одного боку, збільшення кількості автократій і гібридних режимів у світі та зменшенням кількості ліберальних й ілліберальних демократій. З іншого боку, сьогодні й далі відбуваються процеси «erozії» демократії як такої, коли через розмаїті кризові явища якість, рівень й ефективність демократії падає у більшості країн світу.

Ключові слова: транзит, трансформація, «хвиля демократизації», «хвиля автократизації».

After the collapse of the USSR and the “Warsaw Pact” system, many post-communist countries began “the third wave” of democratization was ongoing in the world. However, everything turned out to be not so simple, since out of all the post-communist countries of Europe and Asia, only a small number of states succeeded in truly democratizing and becoming liberal or consolidated democracies, and that was mainly in Europe. In this case, we are talking about countries that managed to integrate into the European Union, although not all of them on the time of the study, retained their status as liberal democracies, after all in some of the former post-communist countries of Europe, regressive processes, which are often called the “erosion” of democracy, began at various times. In contrast, still other countries were only partially democratized, but never liberalized, and therefore remained either partial or electoral democracies, or hybrid political regimes, or gradually slipped into authoritarianism. In addition, some countries that

managed to democratize to varying degrees during the so-called “third wave” have become less democratic over time. Accordingly, a situation arose when the “third wave” of democratization was soon followed by a “the third retreat” from the idea and logic of democracy, or the so-called the “third wave” of autocratization. Soon, already at the beginning of the 21st century, many countries of the world began to democratize again, and this process began to acquire quite intensive contours. In contrast to them, other countries began or continued to steadily autocratize. All this raised the question for some researchers on whether it is possible to talk about the end of the “third wave” of both democratization and autocratization, and instead on the launch and uptake of the “the fourth wave” of similar (by nature) processes. Accordingly, several research questions definitely need attention, in particular, what are the time frames of “the third wave” of democratization, whether the “fourth wave” of democratization has begun, why in the same time period some countries are democratizing, while other countries are becoming autocratized, and whether the combination of processes is defined can serve to parallelize different “waves” of democratization and autocratization, etc. It is proposed to solve the questions both in general theory and on the basis of an appeal to empirical findings in different countries and regions of the world. At the same time, the reference point will be taken mainly in the late 1980s – early 1990s, when the “third wave” of democratization reached its peak, but never managed to become a one-way process.

Proceeding to the consistent solution of all the questions, it is necessary to establish a theoretical and methodological framework, according to which the transition from one type of political regime to another, to democracy and to autocracy (from democracy), including at the expense of hybrid regimes, is caused by a non-cooperative interpretation transit as such. This means that despite the varying popularity of democracy or autocracy in different time periods and in different countries and regions of the world, political actors and the public cannot agree on a single direction of political transit. That is why some countries in certain periods – definitely depending on the political realities, geopolitical situation, socio-political conjuncture, etc., gravitate towards democracies (i. e. democratize), and others towards autocracies (i. e. autocratize). It was as a result of this that after the collapse of the Soviet Union and during the twenty-year period after that, not even half of the former (or current) post-communist countries of Europe and Asia managed to democratize and become full-fledged democracies, including Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary, Croatia, the Czech Republic, and this despite the fact that some of them, especially Hungary, very significantly worsened their indicators in the decade after that (thirty years after the collapse of communism). Instead, other countries became democracies only partially, like Bulgaria and Romania, or even satisfying the category of hybrid political regime, as is typical for Georgia, Macedonia, Moldova, Serbia, Ukraine, and also earlier Armenia. Still other countries, after short-term outbreaks of democratization in the early 1990s, began to gradually or sharply autocratize, as, for example, in the case of Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, etc. In general, this proves that among the

former (and often current) post-communist countries, the majority did not manage to democratize, because they became options and cases of dictatorships or unconsolidated transit and hybrid political regimes. A similar trend was continuously repeated in other parts and regions of the world where hints of democratization were made by many countries, but very few of them actually implemented democratization and the movement in the direction of consolidated/liberal democracy.

At first glance, the explanation of the mentioned processes of democratization and autocratization is quite simple, but far from linear and one-sided. If only because we are dealing with different and heterogeneous samples of countries that, over long periods of time and even under the same initial conditions, moved and are still moving in significantly different directions¹. This is supplemented by the fact that political science failed to predict many socio-political processes, including the collapse of communism, and probably will not predict even more processes, since many of them depend not only on institutional, but also on actual political and behavioral factors and a number of exogenous shocks. In addition, the political transit or the transit of political regimes and the movement in the direction of democracy or autocracy in some time periods does not at all repeat similar processes in other time periods. As a result, purely theoretically, the first part of the "third wave" of democratization, which began in the 1970s and 1980s, significantly differed from the second part of this conditional "wave" in the 1990s.

In the same way, democratization and autocratization processes in the early 2000s and later turned out to be even more different, which is purely logical to separate them into a separate cluster, which scientists sometimes call the "fourth wave". Although, again purely theoretically, in such a case it would be possible to talk about five "waves" of democratization and autocratization, provided that the post-communist transit belongs to or reveals the "fourth wave", and the processes surrounding political regimes from the beginning of the 21st century and still "the fifth wave" (in this case, these "waves" intersect and "find" each other).

The attitudes of researchers on this matter are quite different, and in this case we appeal to the most cited and most used among them. Most scientists state that the "third wave" of democratization began in the first half of the 1970s and lasted approximately until the beginning of the 21st century, when many former post-communist countries were integrated into the European Union, and in general democratization (although not completely to consolidated democracies) was oriented 60 countries in different parts of the world². According to this logic, the "rollback" from the "third wave" of democratization (in the direction of autocratization) began in the second half of the 2000s, in particular as a result of a cascade of global or regional crises, in particular financial and economic, migration, demographic, etc., as well as as a result of a series of wars and conflicts. Nevertheless, the author of the concept of "waves" of democratization S. Huntington

¹ McFaul M., The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship: Noncooperative Transitions in the Postcommunist World, *World Politics* 2002, vol 54, nr. 2, s. 212-244.

² Huntington S., Democracy's Third Wave, *The Journal of Democracy* 1991, vol 2, nr. 2, s. 12-34.; Schenoni L., Mainwaring S., Hegemonic Effects and Regime Change in Latin America, *Democratization* 2019, vol 26, nr. 2, s. 269-287.

substantiated such logic in his seminal work “The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century”³ from 1991, and therefore everything that happened after the collapse of the USSR and similar regimes did not necessarily have to fit into the framework of the “third wave” of democratization according to S. Huntington. Especially since the work of S. Huntington does not mention the collapse of the Soviet bloc, although many scientists still believe that the “third wave” of this author covers the democratic transitions of 1989–1991⁴. At the same time, it is possible to put forward the position that democratization, and later autocratization of the post-communist period (as well as in relation to synchronous events) is something else, which would be appropriate to describe with the term “the fourth wave”, since political processes within this period and cluster of countries had their own well-defined fullness and consistency⁵.

On the other hand, still other researchers point out that the so-called “democratic transits” within the framework of the so-called the “third wave” according to S. Huntington is very often nothing more than transitions from unconditionally autocratic regimes to semi-autocratic regimes that lack status and democratic characteristics⁶. An even more radical, but similar position is expressed by S. Gunitsky, who notes that from the 18th century until the beginning of the so-called “Arab Spring” in 2011-2012, thirteen “waves” of democratization and autocratization took place in the world, but this if by “waves” we mean shifts from more autocratic regimes to more democratic ones or vice versa, but not the formation of complete/consolidated democracies or autocracies⁷. Although this logic of distinguishing “waves” of transformations in principle does not contradict the position of S. Huntington himself, who notes that a “democratic wave” is a group of transits from non-democratic to democratic political regimes that take place during a certain period of time and which significantly exceed the transits’ number in the opposite direction during the same period of time⁸. Moreover, other researchers, including S. Mainwaring, A. Pérez-Liñán and F. Bizzarro propose something similar when they claim that a “wave” in this case should be understood as any historical period during which there is a steady and significant increase in the share of competitive regimes (democracies and semi-democracies) or parts of autocratic regimes⁹.

Nevertheless, researchers continue to most often appeal to S. Huntington’s logic and traditionally describe all democratization processes from the mid-1970s to today as the “third wave” of democratization, and all reverse processes as a rollback from this “third wave” democratization

³ Huntington S., *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Wyd. University of Oklahoma Press 1991.; Huntington S., After twenty years: the future of the third wave, *The Journal of Democracy* 1997, vol 8, nr. 4, s. 3-12.

⁴ Haggard S., Kaufman R., Democratization During the Third Wave, *Annual Review of Political Science* 2016, vol 19, nr. 1, s. 125-144.

⁵ Gunitsky S., From Shocks to Waves: Hegemonic Transitions and Democratization in the Twentieth Century, *International Organization* 2014, vol 68, nr. 3, s. 561-597.

⁶ Diamond L., Thinking About Hybrid Regimes, *The Journal of Democracy* 2002, vol 13, nr. 2, s. 21-35.; Schedler A., Elections Without Democracy: The Menu of Manipulation, *The Journal of Democracy* 2002, vol 13, nr. 2, s. 36-50.

⁷ Gunitsky S., Democratic Waves in Historical Perspective, *Perspectives on Politics* 2018, vol 16, nr.

⁸ Huntington S., *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Wyd. University of Oklahoma Press 1991, s. 15.

⁹ Mainwaring S., Pérez-Liñán A., *Democracies and Dictatorships in Latin America: Emergence, Survival, and Fall*, Wyd. Cambridge University Press 2014, s. 6.; Mainwaring S., Bizzarro F., The Fates of Third-Wave Democracies, *The Journal of Democracy* 2019, vol 30, nr. 1, s. 99-113.

or as the "third wave" of autocratization¹⁰. Accordingly, here – including this in our study – the question is whether all democratization and autocratization processes since the mid-1970s are so identical that they can be included in a single consolidated and integral "wave" of democratization and one integral reverse "wave" of autocratization. Or instead, without disputing the date of the beginning of the "third wave" of democratization (even according to S. Huntington), it should be considered as completed by some "third wave" of autocratization, and therefore later the beginning of certain subsequent "waves" of similar processes in different groups of countries, in different regions and in various periods of time.

The theoretical hint at the expediency of such a step is due primarily to the fact that after the Second World War, but to a greater extent from the beginning of the "third wave" of democratization (in the sense of S. Huntington), the formation of the "newest" concepts and "adjectives" of democracy began and there were so many of them, that sometimes even "waves" of democratization or autocratization appear as "adjectives" of the studied political processes¹¹.

Moreover, the typology of political regimes as a result of the progress of transitology and comparative political science has developed extremely intensively and extensively, as a result of which today the step of the transit itself to democracy or from democracy (that is, to autocracy) has been significantly "reduced" and the step of the transit itself to democracy or from democracy (that is, to autocracy) was detailed. In addition, in the theoretical environment, the number of concepts of democracy (or even pseudo-democracy), autocracy, and hybrid political regimes is growing more and more¹². The situation is complicated by the fact that the most important feature of the modern political process and political science is the increase in the number of political regimes that are neither purely democratic nor purely authoritarian. The number of such "intermediate regimes" increases significantly if democracy is interpreted maximally or within the framework of a sociological approach, because "new democracies" are often illiberal¹³. Along with this, it is legitimate to distinguish, already in accordance with the minimalist tradition and institutional approach, both electoral and liberal democracies. In addition, non-democratic political regimes can also be divided into those in which there is multi-party electoral competition (that is, electoral autocracies) and those that are politically "closed" (that is, non-electoral autocracies)¹⁴. In the end, accumulated theoretical and practical experience during democratization or autocratization does not at all provide unified schemes of the process of consolidation of democracy or autocracy, although the general

¹⁰ Zagorski P., Democratic Breakdown in Paraguay and Venezuela: The Shape of Things to Come for Latin America?, *Armed Forces & Society* 2003, vol 30, nr. 1, s. 87-116.

¹¹ Lytvyn V., *Politychni rezhymy suchasnosti: instytutsiini ta protsesualni vymiry analizu*, Wyd. LNU imeni Ivana Franka 2014.

¹² Croissant A., Merkel W., Introduction: Democratization in the early twenty-first century, *Democratization* 2004, vol 11, nr. 5, s. 1.; Epstein D., Bates R., Goldstone J., Kristensen I., O'Halloran S., Democratic transitions, *American Journal of Political Science* 2006, vol 50, nr. 3, s. 551-569; Wigell M., Mapping "Hybrid Regimes": Regime Types and Concepts in Comparative Politics, *Democratization* 2008, vol 15, nr. 2, s. 230-250.

¹³ O'Donnell G., Delegative Democracy, *The Journal of Democracy* 1994, vol 5, nr. 1, s. 55-69.; Diamond L., Democracy in Latin America: Degrees, Illusions, and Directions for Consolidation, [w:] Farer T. (ed.), *Beyond Sovereignty: Collectively Defending Democracy in the Americas*, Wyd. Johns Hopkins University Press 1996, s. 52-104.; Diamond L., *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation*, Wyd. Johns Hopkins University Press 1999, s. 42-50; Zakaria F., The Rise of Illiberal Democracy, *Foreign Affairs* 1997, vol 76, s. 22-43.

¹⁴ Lytvyn V., *Politychni rezhymy suchasnosti: instytutsiini ta protsesualni vymiry analizu*, Wyd. LNU imeni Ivana Franka 2014.

theoretical understanding of them is much poorer than that of democratic or autocratic transit¹⁵. In this context, even the “test of two transfers of power” proposed by S. Huntington himself does not always help, according to which it is expected, according to the researcher, that democracy becomes irreversible (or consolidated) only if the “democratizing party” (government party) gives way power of the opposition party after the defeat of the first and the victory of the second in the next elections, and later returns to power again in the next electoral cycle. After all, even today there are cases when, even after the implementation of such scenarios, the previously democratic political regimes of some countries became autocratized (as happened in the case of Hungary).

On the basis of all this, the researchers even developed a “thirst” to single out the “next waves” of democratization or autocratization as a tool for structuring and ordering scientific and analytical knowledge – both theoretical and empirical. Or at least they increasingly, especially since the mid-2000s, began to discuss the “end” of the “third wave” of democratization and the beginning of the “third wave” of autocratization.

Against this background, some scientists, including L. Diamond¹⁶, M. McFaul¹⁷, A. Abushouk¹⁸, M. Olimat¹⁹, A. Sarihan²⁰, P. Howard and M. Hussain²¹, M. Cilento²², C. Popescu²³, as well as some others, considering at least reflecting on the fact that from the beginning to the middle of the 2000s it is appropriate to talk about the start of the so-called “fourth wave” of democratization, and hence later the “fourth wave” of autocratization. They do this mainly in the context of the events of the so-called “Arab Spring” – the collapse of several dictatorships/autocracies in the Middle East and North Africa, which are often associated with the events that took place after the collapse of the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe and Asia. At the same time, the fact that glimpses of democratization during the “Arab Spring” were relatively short-lived is rarely taken into account here, since a few months after the apparent beginning of democratic transit (increasing the level of democracy in autocracies), most of the Arab “political innovations” were curtailed, causing an inevitable rollback in the direction of autocracies again²⁴ (as, for example,

¹⁵ Linz J., Stepan A., *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*, Wyd. The Johns Hopkins University Press 1996.

¹⁶ Diamond L., A Fourth Wave or False Start? Democracy After the Arab Spring, *Foreign Affairs*, May 22, 2011, źródło: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/middle-east/2011-05-22/fourth-wave-or-false-start>

¹⁷ McFaul M., The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship: Noncooperative Transitions in the Postcommunist World, *World Politics* 2002, vol 54, nr. 2, s. 212-244.

¹⁸ Abushouk A., The Arab Spring: A Fourth Wave of Democratization?, *Domes: Digest of Middle East Studies* 2016, vol 25, nr. 1, s. 52-69.

¹⁹ Olimat M., The Fourth Wave of Democratization, *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 2008, vol 25, nr. 2, s. 16-48.

²⁰ Sarihan A., Is the Arab Spring in the Third Wave of Democratization? The Case of Syria and Egypt, *Turkish Journal of Politics* 2012, vol 3, nr. 1, s. 67-85.

²¹ Howard P., Hussain M., *Democracy's Fourth Wave? Digital Media and the Arab Spring*, Wyd. Oxford University Press 2013.

²² Cilento M., The “Fourth Wave” of Democratization and the Difficult Balance between “Transitology” and Area Studies, *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* 2014, vol 5, nr. 16, s. 658-669.

²³ Popescu C., Is there a fourth wave of democracy or not? An evaluation of the latest theories, *The USV Annals of Economics and Public Administration* 2012, vol 12, nr. 1(15), s. 32-38.

²⁴ Diamond L., A Fourth Wave or False Start? Democracy After the Arab Spring, *Foreign Affairs*, May 22, 2011, źródło: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/middle-east/2011-05-22/fourth-wave-or-false-start>; Howard, Phillip N. (2013). „Democracy's Fourth Wave? Digital Media and the Arab Spring” (PDF). OUP. URL: <http://philhoward.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Democracys-Fourth-Wave-First-3-Chapters.pdf>

in Egyptite Bahrain, but not in Tunisia, which managed to successfully consolidate into a relatively stable democratic state, at least by institutional and electoral standards). Other researchers, including I. Szmolka²⁵, M. I. Syazli Saidin, W. Kamal Mujaniy and A. Mazuki²⁶, etc., in general, on the example of the same countries of the Middle East and North Africa, appeal to the "fifth wave" of democratization in this context, considering the "fourth wave" to be the post-communist transformations in Europe and Asia (thus, they believe that the "third wave" of democratization – in the case of S. Huntington – ended before the collapse of the USSR).

At the same time, these scholars somewhat expand and update the list of transformational cases and processes, in particular by taking into account the problems of protests and democratic movements focused on racial equality, human rights, freedom, democracy and social justice, etc., including in the Arab world, Hong Kong, Chile, Iran, Thailand, Myanmar.

It follows that in the case of singling out the "fourth" or the "fifth wave" of democratization (and, accordingly, justifying the expediency of such singling out), it is necessary to thoroughly and systematically understand the processes and effects of the "third wave" of democratization. At the beginning of the 1990s, the situation regarding the development of democracy in the world looked very optimistic, since this period became a time of a kind of "democratic optimism", when Latin America mostly completed its path to electoral democracy, in conditions of relative political peace, the "Soviet empire" collapsed, an unprecedented series of multiparty elections in African countries took place. At that time, some commentators even began to talk about the "end of history" and the triumph of democracy and the liberal world order. However, even in spite of this, much more skeptical ideas still prevailed in the scientific and analytical environment and, as time has shown (somewhere in a decade, some in a few), this was not at all unfounded. Purely theoretically, it was clear almost immediately, since the majority of the world can become liberal, democratic and peaceful at the same time – and only on the basis of stages of ups and downs, i.e. gradually and in the long term. In practical terms, this meant (and this was previous experience) that the broad democratization of the early 1990s was sooner or later to be replaced by a "reverse wave" of authoritarian regression, as the "waves come and go."²⁷

Purely practically, this turned out to be the fact that since 1974, when the Portuguese "Carnation Revolution" took place, the so-called "third wave" of global democratization began in the world, at least according to S. Huntington. As a result, the number of democratic political regimes around the world has almost doubled, even though different researchers, research centers and analytical projects give quite different data on this matter.

For example, according to the data of the project "Freedom in the World" of the organization "Freedom House": the number of free (democratic) countries in 1974 was 44 (29 percent), and

²⁵ Szmolka I., *The fifth wave of democratization? Processes of Political Change in the Arab World from a Comparative Perspective*, Wyd. University of Granada 2012.

²⁶ Saidin M., Mujaniy W., Mazuki A., *New Wave of Democratization: The Case of Tunisian and Egyptian Revolutions*, Proceedings of the 2014 International Conference on Advanced ICT, 2014.

²⁷ Lytvyn V., *Politychni rezhymy suchasnosti: instytutsiini ta protsesualni vymiry analizu*, Wyd. LNU imeni Ivana Franka 2014

already in 2012 87 (45 percent) (in 2008, there were in general 90 or 47 percent)²⁸; the number of non-free (autocratic) countries was 65 (or 43 percent) in 1974, it was 48 (or 24 percent) in 2012 (there were 42 or 22 percent in 2009); the number of electoral democracies in 1989 was 69 (41 percent), and 117 (60 percent) in 2012 (there were 123 or 64 percent altogether in 2006-2007 of them). These numbers are impressive, since the breadth and stability of the “third wave” (if we count from 1974 to 2012) of democratization had no precedent in the history of political systems and international relations.

At the same time, since the mid-2000s, the flurry of optimism that accompanied the end of the “Cold War” has significantly weakened. The revival of ethnic violence in the former communist countries and the countries of South Africa, as well as the increase in “new skepticism”, in which special attention should be paid to the explanation of various modifications of authoritarianism²⁹. It was gradually supplemented, as mentioned above, by a cascade of world or regional crises, in particular financial and economic, migration, demographic, etc., as well as a result of a number of wars and conflicts. That is why at this time, but precisely starting from the beginning of the 2000s, a number of scientists began to express their disappointment with the socio-political and economic results of the development of democracies and the processes of democratization of the past decades or the countries of the so-called “third wave” – that is, countries that were rapidly democratizing, including some of them in the post-communist region. In this regard, T. Carothers³⁰ calculated back in 2002 that out of almost 100 countries that left autocracies in 1974 and joined the ranks of democracies, only 18 (10 countries of Central-Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, which joined the EU, as well as Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Uruguay, Chile, South Korea, Taiwan and Ghana) were on the way to becoming successful and well-functioning (liberal or consolidated) democracies or at least made progress in democratization and maintained positive dynamics in this process (a decade later, only Croatia joined these countries, which also completed its integration into the European Union). It is from this point of view that F. Zakarias wrote about the emergence of the phenomenon of illiberal democracies – that is, countries in which the holding of competitive elections began before the establishment of a valid legal order. The specificity of this statement was the diversity of approaches to the interpretation of the institutional parameters of democracy, since a democratic political regime with strong institutions (and elected bodies in such a case must guarantee civil liberties) is called not only democracy, but liberal democracy, and the word “liberal” is no less important here than “democracy”³¹.

Empirically, this is very important, since most of the countries of Western and Central-Eastern Europe, and sometimes East Asia, first liberalized, and only then became politically democratized. Instead, the countries of Latin America and Africa, etc., first democratized but

²⁸ *Freedom in the World Country Rating*, Wyd. Freedom House: Official Website, 2012. URL: <http://www.freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/Country%20Status%20%26%20Ratings%20Overview%2C%201973-2012.pdf>

²⁹ Lyrvyn V., *Politychni rezhymy suchasnosti: instytusini ta protsesuabni vymiry analizu*, Wyd. LNU imeni Ivana Franka 2014.

³⁰ Carothers T., The End of the Transition Paradigm, *Journal of Democracy* 2002, vol 13, nr. 1, s. 5-21.

³¹ Zakaria F., The Rise of Illiberal Democracy, *Foreign Affairs* 1997, vol 76, s. 22-43.

then began to liberalize, as a result of which this process often met with opposition and was unsuccessful, in particular, because for the economy, democracy without liberalism, without effective institutions that guarantee the rights of economic agents, was not very favorable environment. As a result, some countries of the second group (and later some of the post-communist countries) either became so-called illiberal democracies, or altogether stopped their transit in the direction of democracy and began to autocratize³².

Eventually, the attention of researchers to the "inhibition" of democratization processes, and therefore to one or another "wave" of democratization, was conditioned and explained by the fact that in the world at the turn of the millennium a rather large number of "old" (or traditional) varieties of autocracies were preserved in different countries and parts of the world. Moreover, these were completely different options of autocratic regimes (even regardless of their earlier attempts to democratize), among which various researchers single out, in particular: a) one-party regimes in Cuba, China, Laos, North Korea, Vietnam, Eritrea, Libya and Syria; b) military regimes in Pakistan, Myanmar and Sudan; c) traditional monarchies of the Arab world (even despite the conceptualization of ideas and the practical implementation of the events of the so-called "Arab Spring", starting from the mid-2000s); d) personalized or bureaucratic autocracy in Russia, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, etc. In addition, transition processes in a number of countries, especially in the post-Soviet space, even if they were initially marked by free and fair elections, were eventually reduced to various manifestations of authoritarianism based on the screen of competition and "electoral façade"³³. This is how the creation of a whole modal series of concepts of autocratic political regimes took place. After all, the need for an adequate interpretation and comparative analysis of what happened (and is still happening) in most post-Soviet and other countries of the world became the reason for the construction of several new concepts of the development of political regimes – electoral authoritarianism/autocracy, competitive authoritarianism/autocracy, the concept of "virtual politics" etc.

In general, the cascade of events of first democratization and later autocratization of groups of political regimes and even significant consolidation of first democracies and later autocracies led many researchers to the opinion that the "third wave" of democratization reached its logical conclusion precisely in the mid-2000s. Even some further glimpses of democratization in the world did not prevent this, since they were almost immediately opposed by almost instantaneous manifestations of autocratization – both in the same and in other states.

At the same time, some researchers nevertheless began to appeal to the next "waves" of democratization and the next "waves" of autocratization in the world, in particular by taking into account the experience and consequences of the so-called "second wave" of "color revolutions" from the beginning of the 21st century (at the same time, the "first wave" of the "color revolutions" was primarily typical of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in the late

³² Polterovych V., Popov V., *Demokratyia, kachestvo institutiv i ekonomicheskyy rost*, "Oikumena" 2007, vol 5, s. 167-204.

³³ Lytvyn V., *Politychni rezhymy suchasnosti: instytutsiini ta protsesualni vymiry analizu*, Wyd. LNU imeni Ivana Franka 2014.

1980s and early 1990s). In this context, it should be theoretically noted that we understand “color revolutions” as a concept that is widely used to denote so-called non-violent “revolutions” and mass non-violent protest actions (although, on the contrary, in some cases, weapons are used against peaceful protesters and this leads to the mass death of people), which partly cause the change of political regimes or at least cause their greater dynamics. The so-called “first wave” of the “color revolutions”, which fits into the time frame of the “third wave” of democratization, are such well-known examples as the “Carnation Revolution” on April 25, 1974 in Portugal, which began as a military coup against the political regime E New, however, it immediately took on the characteristics of a campaign of civil resistance for democracy; the “Yellow Revolution” or “Revolution of People’s Power” in the Philippines in 1986, which was caused by acts of regime violence and falsification of elections, and the result was the overthrow of the dictatorial regime of F. Marcos and the partial restoration of democracy in the country; the “Velvet Revolution” of 1989 in Czechoslovakia and similar “velvet revolutions” in other countries of Central and Eastern Europe, which led to the peaceful overthrow of communist regimes and the transition to liberal political and economic systems; the “Bulldozer revolution” of 2000 in Yugoslavia, as a result of which the regime of S. Milosevic was overthrown, and later the regime of V. Koštunica was established; the “Rose Revolution” of 2003 in Georgia, as a result of which President E. Shevardnadze resigned, and M. Saakashvili was subsequently elected as the new president; the “Orange Revolution” of 2004 in Ukraine, during which a second round of presidential elections was held, in which V. Yushchenko won, and the former opposition came to power; the “Tulip Revolution” of 2005 in Kyrgyzstan, as a result of which the regime of A. Akayev was terminated, and the newly elected president K. Bakiyev came to power, etc.

Instead, the quite often separated the “fourth wave” of democratization is outlined by somewhat newer cases of “color revolutions”, including in other regions of the world. In particular, in 2005, the so-called “Cedar Revolution” took place in Lebanon, caused by the introduction of Syrian troops into Lebanon and the pro-Syrian policy of the authorities, as a result of which the state’s policy was changed to a pro-Lebanese one. In 2005, there was an attempt at a “color revolution” (and the so-called Andijan shooting or Andijan uprising) in Uzbekistan, which was caused by dissatisfaction with the economic policy of the president and the arrest of businessmen on charges of extremism. In 2006, there was an attempt of the “Cornflower” or “Denim Revolution” in Belarus, the reason for which was the official results of the presidential elections, and the result was mass arrests of protesters. In 2008, there was also an attempt at a “color revolution” in Armenia, which was marked by mass protests after the presidential elections and as a result of which several people died and several hundred were injured. In 2009, the so-called “Brick Revolution” took place in Moldova, which was also determined by the official results of the parliamentary elections, but the result of which turned out to be a recount of voters’ votes. In 2010, the so-called “Melon Revolution” took place in Kyrgyzstan, caused by dissatisfaction

with the policies of President K. Bakiyev and pressure on the political opposition, resulting in hundreds of victims and the resignation of the government.

At the same time, during 2005-2010, other political events took place in the world, which largely resembled "color revolutions". In particular, the so-called the "Violet" or the "Purple" revolution in Iraq in 2005, in particular during the fall of S. Hussein's political regime, is sometimes considered an example of a "color revolution". The term "Purple Revolution" appeared first shortly after that year's election, particularly in various blogs that supported the US invasion of Iraq in January 2005. Another example of a "color revolution" is sometimes considered to be the "Blue Revolution" in Kuwait in 2005, when in this country there were mass peaceful demonstrations in support of women's suffrage. The result was a woman's right to vote, starting with the 2007 elections. In August and September 2007, Buddhist monks, who usually wear saffron robes, were at the forefront of mass anti-government protests against the military dictatorship regime, political repression, corruption, violations human rights, abolition of subsidies and state terrorism in Myanmar, and the tasks were to establish democracy, hold free elections, guarantee human and minority rights, release political prisoners, and end military interference in politics. Therefore, the events that ended with the suppression of protests, although at the same time some political reforms and the formation of a new government, are often called the "Saffron Revolution". During June 2009 – February 2010, there were mass protests in Iran regarding the official results of the presidential elections, which entered the political vocabulary as the "Green Revolution". The main methods of mass demonstrations were demonstrations, uprisings, civil disobedience, and strikes, which were successfully suppressed by the official authorities with human casualties.

As for the next decade, "color revolutions" were not an exception at all. Evidence of this is, in particular, the fact that in 2010-2011, the so-called "Jasmine Revolution" took place in Tunisia. It was a wave of nationwide protests, caused by dissatisfaction with the policy of the then president Ben Ali, which led to his resignation and the appointment of a new government with significant changes. The cause of the "revolution" was also the economic crisis of 2010, in particular unemployment and rising prices, and the impetus was the public self-immolation of a street vendor whose goods were confiscated by the authorities. This act provoked a series of similar incidents between people in a similar situation, and their funerals very often turned into demonstrations of protest. As a result, there was a successful resignation of the country's president and government, which caused a wave of similar protest actions in other Arab states. In February-March 2011, "pro-democracy" demonstrations took place in China, which were later also called the "Jasmine Revolution", even though they ultimately ended in failure. In 2013–2014, the "European Revolution" or "Revolution of Dignity" took place in Ukraine, which was caused by the departure of the country's leadership from the course of European integration and subsequent opposition to this course, as well as excessive concentration of power in the hands of President V. Yanukovich and his "family", by creating a management system with features of a dictatorship. A little earlier, in 2011, the so-called "Lotus Revolution" took

place in Egypt, as a result of which the regime of H. Mubarak was overthrown. The reason for the protests was the desire to end the regimes of brutal police actions, eliminate the state with emergency legislation, avoid election fraud in the future, as well as the fight against political censorship, corruption, unemployment, rising prices, low wages, etc. With the resources of more than a thousand deaths, thousands of wounded and imprisoned in Egypt, the military came to power, the parliament was dissolved, the government and the security service were dismissed, the former ruling party was terminated, and the prosecution of H. Mubarak, his family and former ministers, as well as finally holding new parliamentary and presidential elections, etc. In Bahrain in 2011-2014, there was the “Pearl Revolution”, which took place against the background of the successes and results of the “color revolution” in Egypt and Tunisia, although it turned out to be almost unsuccessful. By analogy, in 2011, the so-called the “Coffee Revolution” took place in Yemen, which was anti-government and directed against the then-current government, however, unlike the previous case, the government was eventually forced to leave the country.

In general, we can conclude from this that “color revolutions” is a rather conditional concept, but it is useful for us from the point of view of defining the trends of socio-political development and, at least partially, the dynamics of the development of political regimes in different countries of the world. This is important, because in general, world experience shows that the phenomenon of “color revolutions” is extremely heterogeneous, and therefore there is no generally accepted approach to its definition. Although, on the contrary, some explanations can be made in this regard, since sometimes such measures nevertheless lead to a cascading increase in democratization trends in the world, and sometimes not at all. The difficulty is that since the mid-2000s, the world has entered a phase when the total number of “rollbacks” from democracy in the direction of autocracy outweighs the reverse trends, as a result of which the democratic recession is intensifying in the world, and there are too few individual examples of democratization compared to cases of autocratization. Accordingly, it is purely statistically difficult or not always appropriate to talk about any “wave” of democratization, but rather one should have in mind a “wave” of autocratization, at least in a global context. On the other hand, it can be said that these processes are increasingly gaining regional significance, since in some regions the number of democracies or more democratic political regimes is increasing, and in other regions the number of autocracies or more autocratic political regimes is increasing. In recent years, this has been additionally affected by various restrictions, in particular due to the opposition of the governments of various countries to the “Covid-19” pandemic in the world, as well as other crisis phenomena and wars. Therefore, in general, this proves that talks about “new waves” of democratization in the world (globally) are premature, and the problem is rather the order of naming the past “waves” of democratization and autocratization in the world.

This proves a whole array of trends that we can see for almost two decades now. As stated above, the growth of the number of democratic political regimes during the “third wave” of

democratization³⁴, as well as in some countries (regionally) during the so-called "fourth"³⁵ or even the "fifth" waves of democratization" (and this is not always a continuation of the "third wave" of the democratization) caused academic attention to be paid to new democratic states outside the Western world³⁶. With this in mind, scholars have come to realize over time that the quality of most "new" democracies differs significantly from their counterparts in Western democracies. As a result, it was stated that the division between full (or liberal or consolidated) and partial (or defective) democracies is as important as the earlier division between democracies and autocracies³⁷. This was followed by the fact, as it was also mentioned above, that a whole series of concepts and typologies of democracy appeared, among which the most popular are "hybrid regimes", "defective", "liberal", "illiberal" and "consolidated" democracies, etc. In addition, today scientists³⁸ increasingly note that the ability of states to ensure the rule of law and control corruption is the main factor in distinguishing between effective and ineffective democracies. Accordingly, the peculiarity of the transitological paradigm has definitely become a change in its content and content, as a result of which the expectation or identification of the "fourth" or the "fifth wave" of democratization can occur only under the condition of rethinking the essence of democracy and autocracy as such.

Moreover, earlier, in particular from 1990 to 2000, the number of autocratic regimes (even before the collapse of the USSR) significantly decreased, but during 2000-2010, the number of autocracies in the world practically reached the level of stability or even growth. Moreover, this trend has once again become almost global, although the largest number of autocracies today is typical for Equatorial and South Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, and the smallest number 3 – for Europe and America. Accordingly, the world globally and on average entered not so much the next "wave" of democratization (this can only be said regionally and only contextually), but rather the "wave" of "rollback" from democracy and democratization. Moreover, today the phenomena and processes of transformation of autocracies, in particular from one variety to another, etc., have become very typical³⁹.

After all, today, not only the movement in the direction of autocracies or the autocratization of political regimes in general, but also the consolidation of autocratic regimes to replace the processes of democratization in the world is happening more and more often. There are several basic reasons for this. First, it is the very nature of autocracies, which are focused on maximizing

³⁴ Huntington S., *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Wyd. University of Oklahoma Press 1991.

³⁵ McFaul M., The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship: Noncooperative Transitions in the Postcommunist World, *"World Politics"* 2002, vol 54, nr. 2, s. 212-244.

³⁶ Collier D., Adcock R., Democracy and Dichotomies: A Pragmatic Approach to Choices about Concepts, *"Annual Review of Political Science"* 1999, vol 2, s. 537-565.

³⁷ Rose R., Democratic and Non-Democratic States, [w:] Haerpfer C. (ed.), *Democratization*, Wyd. Oxford University Press 2009.; Ottaway M., *Democracy Challenged*, Wyd. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2003.

³⁸ Rose R., Democratic and Non-Democratic States, [w:] Haerpfer C. (ed.), *Democratization*, Wyd. Oxford University Press 2009.; Welzel C., Alexander A., Measuring Effective Democracy: The Human Empowerment Approach, *"World Values Research"* 2008, vol 1, nr. 1, s. 1-34.

³⁹ Magaloni B., Kricheli R., Political order and one-party rule, *"Annual review of political science"* 2010, vol 13, s. 130-133.

their temporary preservation. Secondly, one should not forget about the “screen of modernization”, which is most often used to preserve autocratic regimes. Thirdly, some autocratic regimes are indeed the reasons for the formation of “developmental states”, and therefore cannot yet be transformed into democracy, because this issue is not considered a priority even by the population of their countries. Fourth, the survival of autocracies is affected by their current essence and nature, especially when they hold elections and create the appearance of representativeness, but the country develops according to patterns of subordination and “moderate repressiveness”.

Summing up, it must be stated that today, on average, it is inappropriate to say that some “new wave” of democratization has begun in the world, although “waves” of democratization are taking place in certain regions of the world. This, on the one hand, is caused by the increase in the number of autocracies and hybrid political regimes in the world and the decrease in the number of liberal and illiberal democracies. On the other hand, it manifests itself in the processes of the democracy “erosion” as such, when due to various crisis phenomena, the quality, level and effectiveness of democracy declines in most countries of the world. Although, on the contrary, the solution of the current problems should serve the next surge of democratization, and therefore its “new wave”, the orderliness of which in this case is a secondary issue rather than a determining one.

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