



## **Book review**

# **REVIEW OF ACADEMIC EDITION "THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA ON THE PATH OF TRANSFORMATION: SOCIO-HUMANISTIC ASPECTS" (Chisinau, 2011, 248 p.)**

**"The Republic of Moldova on the path of transformation: socio-humanistic aspect"**<sup>1</sup> is a collection of the important scientific work papers of the researchers of the Institute of European Integration and Political Sciences of the Moldova Academy of Sciences, that includes a very important and vast spectrum of interdisciplinary investigations regarding the modernisation of Moldavian's society in the process of European Integration of the Republic of Moldova. This work elucidates and evaluates processes that take place in the socio-humanistic area, with the scope of obtaining of a new knowledge about the contemporary society and thought.

A scientific dimension of the publication is that it identifies and analyses the most acute problems of the country: the lack of democracy, recidivism of communism, dialogue and tolerance, social stratification, the poverty affecting the largest social group and rise of a new elite based on the illegal accumulation of wealth,

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<sup>1</sup> Edited by the Institute of European Integration and Political Sciences of the Academy of Science of Moldova, Chisinau, 2011, 248 p. Coordinating editor: Svetlana CIUMAC; Authors: Victor JUC, Pantelimon VARZARI, Victor MORARU, Lilia BRAGA, Andrei TIMUȘ, Valeriu MÎNDRU, Vladimir BLAJCO, Alexandru ROȘCA, Ivan RUSANU, Ana PASCARU, Gheorghe BOBĂNĂ, Lidia TROIANOWSKI, Gheorghe PALADI, Olga GĂGĂUZ, Mariana BUCIUCEANU-VRABIE, Olga POALELUNGI, Svetlana CIUMAC.

the challenge of the demographic ageing of the population, labour force migration problems, challenges of media democracy, spiritual degradation of society, family values decline, difficulties in European Integration etc.

The significance of this work is explained by the fact that the attention of the Government, Parliament and political parties as well of civil society is drawn towards the problems of transition processes in Moldavian's society, and therefore influences the decision making development in the country.

This work includes the most important achievements of scientific investigations structured in four sections: *Research of the European Studies and Political Sciences areas*, *Research of the social and economic areas*, as well as *Research of the Philosophy area* and *Research of the Demography area*.

Research of the European Studies and Political Sciences areas embraces the period from the beginning of the institutionalization of the political relations between the Republic of Moldova and the European Union paying a special emphasis on the role of the political elite and bureaucracy in the process of democratization of the Republic of Moldova and political culture of civil society status.

As argued by researchers, today there are sufficient theoretical grounds to speak of politics as regularities of existence, the division of power and authority among people at all levels, from the level of everyday existence up to the complex processes of delegating and dividing power between the political elite of power-holders being an objective reality.

It is stressed in the work that democracy usually equivalent with the stability of a political system. At the same time, democracy is not just a universal solution for all problems of the political system but compared with all other forms (despotism, dictatorship), democracy is a more stable form of government. But this is not the case in new democracies. It is a rarity when a government remains for its entire mandate, early elections are organized frequently, and parties have no ideological identity.

Generally it is difficult to define what democracy is. Types of democracy differ in time and space. Democracy in ancient Greece, imperial Great Britain, United States is of the same category only by great imagination in its interpretations. Democracy in forms and norms, as well as, in practice is unlike in Japan, Germany and Moldova. On the contrary, it is easier to define what democracy is not. Democracy is a synonym for a stable, complex but integrated, tolerant, efficient, predictable, political system. This is exactly what the political system in Moldova is still not.

The ideas expressed in the investigation "The political elite and bureaucracy in the context of democratization of the Republic of Moldova: between functionality and dysfunctionality" are in consonance with the opinion of the famous British sociologist and anthropologist Mary Douglas described in the book „How Institutions Think”: „the institutions not only have their own genesis and evolution, but also their own acceleration and inertia”. The changes in the political systems of Eastern Europe, at the beginning of the 90s and till the present, have been showing that society never has the final number of possibilities and its disposal for shaping and formalizing social life and foundation of bureaucracy. Institutions are created when in synergy of interests, directions and actions, to minimize risks we select one of the many present options for solving a particular problem and then others accept it.

Hence, the evolution, function, structure and dynamics of institutions are far more important than at the beginning. Parkinson's Law says that institutions grow spontaneously as long as the formal expansion of jobs and personnel and bureaucracy apparatus can be justified by a substantive growth of function and efficiency. The more work there is, the greater the volume of communication which leads to collapse of certain parts or the whole of institution. Therefore, when the expansion of jobs can no longer be legitimized or when the institution finishes to make the order it was created for, and instead creates the disorder it originally intended to save, it falls as spontaneously as they had risen.

One main conclusion can be done. It is often the dynamics of institution is stronger than the dynamics of ideology. There are general social rules of behavior governing social groups, which go beyond manifest political differences.

Mass media is politically engaged, turning politics into a show, in support of glamour politics („Current political stratagems: spectacularisation of politics”). Media practices prove that the process of monitoring political phenomenon is characterized by minimizing the complexity of given situations and problems and the journalists give frequently examples of a simplified approach to some major political issues, ignoring or superficially focusing on the very important problems.

The democratic changes initiated in our country 20 years ago have formed only prerequisites of civil society, which still has many obstacles on the way of its formation, which hinder the formation of a mature citizen with his indefeasible rights and obligations, enjoying the mature civil culture. In spite of a 20 years distance separating Moldavian society from the totalitarian past, its social and political life is still marked by the 'after' state, which is characteristic of the most countries of the former Soviet Union. The severe competition of political forces in

fight for power excluding any dialogues and compromises transfers Moldavian society in an area for ultimate fighting. It exists a crisis of confidence between the political world and Moldavian citizens, the majority of people considers that the political class governs the country without taking into account the people's interest and that things are going in a wrong direction. It is necessary to give a more meaningful, systemic, task oriented to the formation of political orientation of civil society, increasing its role.

Section "Research of the social and economics" includes original and quite representative researches related to contemporary relations between the state and society as a whole of interdependent events.

The intensification of state regulation for social and economic development and rational use of human potential as a decisive factor for the population welfare growth is treated in a comprehensive article with a significant number of facts, data, situations, interesting ideas about the present situation in Moldova in this respect. The state is called upon to regulation of economic activity of businessmen and all economical agents and social sphere in using rational production factors such as enterprises, land and natural resources, human potential for constant economic growth and working places organization. And all that is directed to the population welfare and the country prosperity. The spectrum of problems is huge, contradictory, confused and the results are under the expectations. In the opinion of author it is due to this complex of situations which never existed before and the difficulties of the transition to a market economy. The total gross volume output in 2010 reduced to five times, the lack of jobs, the decrease of agricultural production and problems with the human capital, the increasing poverty and mortality, etc., all these problems, as is mentioned in the respective study should and can be surpassed and the scientist has his proposals and useful options to reach it.

The recent trends in the formation of the social structure of the Moldavian society are described in the investigation „ Recent trends in formation of the social structure of the Moldavian society”. It is a synthetic suitable picture of the main changes occurring in the social status of the people. Even if not representative on a national level from the point of view of investigated amount of respondents, the researcher, in our opinion, correctly sized the real trend of social stratification, the backgrounds and perspectives.

During the transition period a re-evaluation of existing values orientation of the population is needed which in the Republic of Moldova not only the rating scale of values but their conceptual meaning is changing as well, what generate a stressed atmosphere inside society.

The socio-philosophical approach reported to the present situation in the Republic of Moldova (such as interrelation among human freedom, socialization and security; new challenges and society's condition, the political elite's role and even an analyze of a virtual further evolution of the global educational models) is to be considered as a important engine helping any who would like to access the phenomenon of the Republic of Moldova in transition. Socio-political and philosophical doctrines of the contemporary society transformation include the discussion about the actual causal role of economy in the emergence and stability of a political system. Nobody among transition experts actually disputes the existence of a mutually supporting link between economics and politics. But in addition to the socio-economic factor, the researchers are increasingly concerned with 'background conditions' of democracy, or the latent variables, which stimulate democratic development. These are education and culture, the psychological, internalized values of population, which either directly or reciprocally affects the demand for greater political participation and decision making. Going into the philosophical problem, researchers concerned with establishing the correlation between economics, politics and other cultural and psychological variables. However, although the correlation between the economy and education is undisputed, one hypothesis claims that the specific dynamics of economics and politics is, in fact, the result of the discord between economic and the education systems. Some relatively undeveloped economies invest an above average percent of their GDP in the education of their populations (Moldova is being a case in point). This could tip the balance either way – it could facilitate the collapse of a political system, or, as the existing analysis of countries in transition show, it could also serve as a good starting point for accelerated economic growth.

Researches of the demography area (which include main indicators of the reproductive health, fertility decline and its determinants, the position of women and consequences of emigration) in the context of previous investigations, the philosophical interpretation of reported facts and opinions, are, even if rather sad than prosperous, are more consistent and significant. The fact that the demand for emigration is very high in the Republic of Moldova during lasts 10 years and in all the cases its real and indisputable motivation is poverty. Migration phenomenon really exists in both legal and illegal forms. To be mentioned the following positive moment of migration that is an emigrant from Moldova has good possibilities to proceed a social road in Europe, as the nature of a Moldavian is in harmony with the nature of a European, where abilities, character and devotion are valued.

Analyzing the profoundness and complexity of topics as a integrated edition, is to be mentioned that the present publication is resulted from the scientific researches, developed by the IEIPS, over last years, and summarize the new knowledge in the field of European studies, political sciences, philosophy, sociology and demography, with reference to the case of the Republic of Moldova.

The work is printed in English to enable the international scientific community to gain an insight into research concerning the current problems of the Republic of Moldova.

In conclusion we invite the authors to continue to investigate topics belonging to respective areas; it is a serious and necessary book for specialists, policy markers, inside the Republic of Moldova and abroad.

Intellectuals in general and social scientists in particular, have the responsibility of investigating and offering a social critique of current social changes.

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