

THE BALKANS. A HISTORY ABOUT DIVERSITY AND HARMONY

*Emilia Nicoleta SCHIOP**

Review of: Baruch Watchel, Andrew (2016), *Balcanii. O Istorie Despre Diversitate și Armonie*, Bucharest: Corint.

The Balkans represented from the beginning, more than a simple geographical notion. The connotations of terms have proven to be loaded with negative political motivations for legitimacy and justification of the powers that have invaded this space. The evolution of concepts of Balkan, Balkanism, Balkanization supported the West's instigators to form a picture of the disadvantages of the Balkan society, becoming a mark of disgrace associated with a particular circumstance of the history of the Balkan space. The concept of the Balkans has an autonomous textual existence that multiplies its sense and significance in the West. This influenced the eastern states during time in its economy.

The Balkans become an arbitrary construct, and Balkanism is an Eurocentric discourse of the inferiority of a certain part of Europe. The Western Balkan speeches were different from those of the real Balkans, which can be defined by a profound historical evolution.

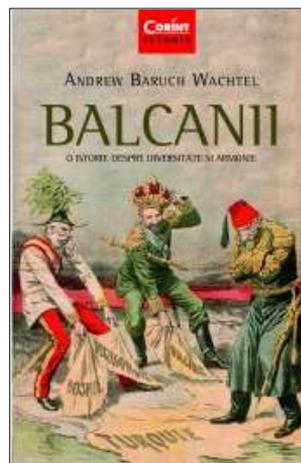
In the present, the economic crisis from Greece, the migration crisis, the terrorism and the stroke of state from Turkey are just some events from the last three years that influenced the western civilization.

Beside these fact, the Balkans offers us different subjects, for example, multiculturalism. It was, also, a period when the Balkan Peninsula was a space of multicultural and multilingual cohabitation. The process of the recovery of gaps to Europe had bad effects on this society with a variety of cultures. They are occidental, because they aspire to the western society. In the same time, the Balkan people they claim a past not very concrete.

The territory is vast and ambiguous. The layers of it highlight the influence of the heterogeneous past for present. The layers have Greek elements, but also Macedonian, Roman, Byzantine and Turkish elements.

The great powers have interests in this area and some of the interests are divergent. The Balkan Peninsula became a vulnerable point. The author, Andrew Baruch Wachtel, wants to highlight a clear version about the Balkan history, a geographically close space, but far from the point of view of interest.

The book starts with a general introduction about this space, then he shows the beginning from prehistory until the Byzantine Empire. He, also, emphasize the details of this area in the Middle Ages and under the Ottoman rule.



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During the Ottoman rule the Balkan people, especially Albanians were convinced to renounce at their religions for islam, using different ways. One way was the promise of lower pay. Another way was the lack of discrimination for the converts.

The Ottomans classified their citizens not according to nationality, but according to religion. The effect was to dissolve the national conscience for the local population. Even if they did not like each other in a special way or even if they did not like their Ottoman leaders, the Balkan people lived relatively in peace. It can be seen as an effect of the long and intense interaction that in different Balkan languages are common words, even grammar characteristics. Also, anthropologists observed mutual traditions, like the ritual of bringing rain, in which a young woman dressed in a leaf costume sings and dances in the village: this ritual was practiced by Greeks, Albanians and Slavic people in the entire region and it is not clear who borrowed it from whom. The studies from the northern Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro indicate the fact that the national costume from these areas includes muslim, Christian and Jewish symbols regardless of the religion of the popular port carrier.

The author insists to show the 19th century and the close period near it (1775 - 1922). An important moment was the national liberation. In the last chapter it is presented the process from the Balkans to the South-Eastern Europe.

The Balkans is an interesting space in which different peoples left a mark. Unfortunately, the model of Constantinople left poverty for population, but luxury palaces for the leaders, for example.

The area is characterized by complexity and tragedy. The beginning of the first world war has its origins in Balkans, when a young nationalist, Gavrilo Princip, killed the successor of the Austro-Hungarian throne.

The book is part of "New Oxford World History" – a well documented, dynamic and actual history, but, also, innovative in comparison with "the old history". The book has more descriptive paragraphs and highlights the relations between cultures.

The Balkans are closer to the culture of Europeans. For example, Bosnia and Herzegovina is as close as a culture of Christian peoples, although it is Muslim. There are more similarities between it and the Balkan states than between itself and the Muslim countries. The Bosnian state is an interesting case of variation in attitudes and the relationship to religion throughout history. But a strong component is characterized by general perception and behavior towards religious diversity.

In the case of the conflicts in the Balkans it can be said that they had religious influences, the differences between Christians and Muslims becoming ever more prevalent.

In order to integrate in the European Union, the states from the Western Balkans has made efforts both by adopting legislative measures to harmonize with the *acquis* and through various projects and actions in cooperation with the EU. There is still a need to develop many aspects that are currently being adopted or has to be adopted. These countries has political will for membership, but at the same time it still needs to make permanent efforts to bring it closer to the European Union.

The Balkans has not renounced at the European values with deep roots from history and offers the opportunity for both Christians and Muslims to promote their values, showing tolerance and being a model of good coexistence in multiculturalism, even that in the past the area was affected by the conflicts with ethnical and religious reasons.

The Balkan countries have a much stronger capacity to promote their culture in different forms (both internally and internationally) in comparison with the past.

The book is well structured and offers a clear image about the Balkan world. Usually people are spending holidays in that area, for example in Greece, Turkey, Bulgaria, Muntenegro or Croatia. On the other side, the Balkans are associated with a stigma and are not known well from all the perspectives. Beside the institutional regression or the lack of democracy, the area hide a rich and beautiful culture (traditional music, dances, national costumes, architecture) that gives it a special charm beside the picturesque landscapes.

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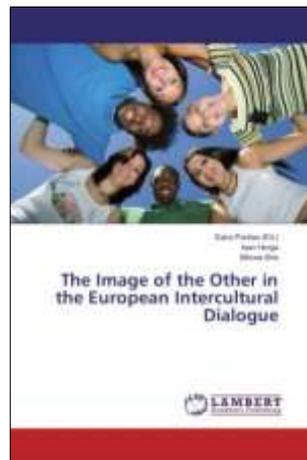
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CULTURE AND INTEGRATION IN THE MULTICULTURAL EUROPE

Anca OLTEAN*

Review of: Dana Pantea, Ioan Horga, Mircea Brie, *The image of the other in the European Intercultural Dialogue*, Lambert Academic Publishing, Saarbrücken, 2017.

Dana Pantea in the article *Image, Culture and Communication* from the present volume points out the fact that in contemporary world, boundaries became more and more diluted, losing their traditional significance of barriers (mental, ideological, economic, cultural, etc). Thus the issue that arises in the present day context of migrations in Europe is the perception of the “other”, the migrant coming with a different background in the European Union. New problems arise though, as the issue of “prejudice”, “discrimination”, “stereotype”. Globalization process brings forward the issue of “otherness” is the opinion of the author. Other issues emphasized by this volume are “culture”, “gender”, “race”, “ethnicity” of different populations that inhabit today the European continent being involved in the complex process of intercultural communication.



The volume continues with the article Maria Manuela Tavares Ribeiro entitled *National and European cultural institutions–Dialogue and the idea of Interculturality*. Right from the beginning, the author points out the issue of European diversity in our Europe. This cultural integration imposes to foreigners to adjust to European values, norms and cultural backgrounds from the European landscapes. The European citizen should, thus, be aware of the “common cultural heritage” of Europe. The opinion of the author is that “national and regional cultural identity coexists alongside the <<European cultural identity>>”. Another key subject brought forward by the author is the issue of “cultural centres” that serve as mediators between the represented country and the host country. Maria Manuela Tavares Ribeiro mentions such institutions as Sociedade Dante Alighieri (1889), Aliance Française, Association Française d’Action Artistique, Office des Relations Publiques et de la Propagande, in Germany-Goethe Institut, Istituto Italiano di Cultura, British Council, Centre Cultural Calouste Gulbenkian (Paris translations from Portugal), Institut Polonais Paris, Institut Franco-Allemand Polonais (Warsaw), Centre Cultural Roumain. National policies influence, all in all, the nature of European cultural politics. Council of Europe, UNESCO, other networks that are independent are impacting on national cultural politics. In the opinion of Maria Manuela Tavares Ribeiro, the trip towards the “European identity” is a complex and difficult journey. (Tavares, 2017: 20) Communication policy is, in the opinion of the author, an important tool in promoting the European culture and values. Moreover, the author

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underlines that EU's information and communication policy is a mean that can very well promote the "European diversity".

George Contogeorgis, in the article *From the Nation of the State to the Nation of Society. The political change of the emergence of a cultural polysemy of collective identities*, considers that the idea of nation implies a correlation with a cultural community. The idea of nation is to be found in the ancient Hellenic city-state considers the author. In the modern world, it was imposed the "society of the state" where the political power of the state was governing. Cultural homogeneity was pursued by the states in order to prevent other cultural communities to assert their projects of dominance. (Contogeorgis, 2017: 27) The perception of "otherness" as enemy and alterity followed according to the politics of national states. Modernity brings with itself the idea of citizen's rights from the sphere of individual freedoms. The idea of pluralist states where the "other" is not regarded with animosity, but as a political partner, is emphasized by the author. In the present day states, economy and communication, in the context of globalisation, escaped from the statal narrow framework and knew a process of emancipation. It arise a sort of "constitutional patriotism" (Contogeorgis, 2017: 31) around whom are gathered the majority and the minorities (ethnic minorities, working migrants) in the context of globalisation of work, services, education and research that convive together in multicultural societies.

Ioan Horga, in the article *New narration of the EU frontiers*, writes about the special importance of boundaries throughout the history, although they started to be studied only in recent times. (Horga, 1997: 38) The importance of borders is given by the fact that they "serve as demarcations of both the territory and sovereignty of one state as well as of its identity". The concept of "identity" and "borders" are inter-related, they are impacting on EU policies and bilateral relations of European states. EU's integration is characterized by widening (the continuous expansion) and the deepening (the approfondation of the integration process). The author quoted an EU enlargement Commissioner that considered that deepening a widening are complementary, not contradictory processes. In economic terms, points out the author, widening implies the transfer of the four economic liberties over new territories. The phenomenon of de-bordering in the European Union areal coexists with Europeanization and affirmation of the concept of European citizenship. Deepening and widening of the EU goes hand in hand with globalisation, considers professor Ioan Horga. (Horga, 2017: 45) The issue of international migration on the territory of EU countries is strongly emphasized by the author. In the part of conclusion, the author points out that, former historical enemies are working out to solve their problems, in order to reach the objective of European integration and perhaps this is the merit of this present day Europe.

Ludmila Roșca writes the article *Freedom-a condition for positioning of the individual in Society: Legal and Moral Issue*. The author quotes the German philosopher Hegel that wrote that the human individuals are material entities, but they also have a spiritual side and aspirations. People are following their intellectual paths based on individual rational choises. Another author quoted by Ludmila Roșca is Kant who wrote on "transcendental freedom that arises from the worldview of the person" (Roșca, 2017: 64) and which is impacting on individual's destiny and professional path. According to Hegel quoted by Ludmila Roșca, the individual have desires (the need to eat, the need to study) that are generated by the individual nature of each of us (Apud Roșca, 2017: 65) Mihai Ralea, quoted by the author, sees the individual in ensamble, having his emotions, considering that human existance "is more than the ability to think". (Roșca, 2017: 66) According to Rădulescu Motru, freedom means to approximate and to adjust to the norms

of social life of a certain society. Ludmila Roşca brings into discussion the international official documents mentioning for the first time in history the individual freedom, such as the British Document, Magna Charta Libertatum in 1215 or Habeas Corpus Act of 1679, the American Declaration of Independance in 1776, the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen in 1789. In the XXth century, she mentions Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. In the opinion of Ludmila Roşca, the university is the ideal place where individual spirit can evolve because, in this framework, it is developed “a philosophical sense of truth” (Roşca, 2017: 72) In the university, the individual learns that he has a responsibility. The undertaking of responsibility is liberating the individual. (Roşca, 2017: 72) In the part of conclusions, the author states: “Realization of own potential depends on individual’s ability to valorize capabilities, to define priorities, to get skills, required in various fields of professional/ social useful activity”. (Roşca, 2017: 73)

The authors Lutz Michael Büchner and Liubov Ilieva in the article *European Social Dialogue, a hidden phenomenon of the intercultural dialogue in Europe* underline the importance of intercultural dialogue between people pointing out that European social dialogue is mentioned and set as a priority in the Lisbon strategy. Communication is not merely a “a simply exchange of data” is the opinion of the author (Büchner, 2017: 77), it encodes feelings and thoughts of the emitent person embodied under the shape of „sounds, words and action”. The author asserts that several system of patterns can be identified in „language, behaviour, emotions and customs” that embodies, in fact, the ellements of our culture” (Büchner, 2017: 78). The stereotypes formed in the mind of individuals, mainly during the interval 12-30 years, there are very hard to be changed, is the opinion of the author. Cultural standards impact and influence the process of inter-cultural communication, points out the author. To improve work and living conditions of from European Union is a big challenge and I think that the values, conceptions upon life, attitude towards work and performance should be in a continuous process of evolution in order to achieve a social and economic cohesion on the territory of the European Union countries.

Mircea Brie and Daniela Blaga, *Image of the Other: the Perspective on Ethnicity*, refer to the term of „race”and „ethnicity. „Ethnicity” implies solidarity towards an ethnic group and differentiation from other groups, be them ethnic or not. (Brie & Blaga, 2017: 94) The majority of nation states are multiethnic, point out the authors, including several ethnic groups where minorities are either assimilated, either integrated. The melting pot idea based on multiculturalism and on the principle of „unity in diversity”is the best present-day model of organizing societies. In what concerns the policies of EU, the authors quote Andrew Moravcsik that separates three distinct levels of decision making (internal/ domestic, inter-state, supranational) (Brie&Blaga, 2017: 96) In the opinion of Mircea Brie and Daniela Blaga, identity is not necessarily something given by birth, but „the expression of the awareness of belonging to a cultural community”. The authors mention the divide white versus black ethnicity. In the opinion of the two authors the lack of education or its low level is the main ground for discrimination in Romania, nowadays. They notice in the Romanian society some negative traits such as the lack of tolerance in society, corruption that favorize discrimination. Discrimination is encountered in the life of usual people. Mircea Brie and Daniela Blaga quote the Survey of the National Council for Combating Discrimination. It seems that mental disability and old age of people are reasons for discrimination. Another survey quoted by the authors conducted by INSCOP reveals that 65.3% from Romanians disagree with potential Asian migrations in Romania and only 26.5% are in favor of Asian emigrants. (Brie&Blaga, 2017: 104) In the part of

conclusions, the authors underline the ascension of the “national” sense of belonging in the detriment of the “unity” and “solidarity” promoted by the European Union treaties.

Gabriela Goudenhooff in the article *Image and communication: the Strawberry pickers and the Representation of Transnational Experience* defines diaspora by quoting Vertovec (Apud Goudenhooff, 2017:112) as including “immigrants, guest-workers, ethnic and ‘racial’ minorities, refugees, expatriates and travellers“. Another author, quoted by Gabriela Goudenhooff, is Castells who considered that “ethnicity, religion, language and territory” can not determine the creation of a nation. The author points out the broader meaning that has the term *diaspora* nowadays. Diaspora differs from “migration” and “exile through its globalization and networking. The author notices that defining Diaspora, we have a spatial dispersion phenomenon. Other characteristic of nowadays diaspora is the preservation of identity. (Goudenhooff, 2017: 116) Quoting Robin Cohen, the author points out different diaspora stances: “victim diaspora”, “imperial diaspora”, “trade and business diaspora”, “homeland diaspora”, “cultural diaspora”. The author tries to picture Romanian diaspora, as it appears in Romanian newspapers. Last but not least, she focuses on the case of Romanian strawberry pickers working abroad, reflected by the international bibliography and newspapers articles. These strawberry pickers are oscillating between “identity” and “prejudice”, considers the author (Goudenhooff, 2017: 121)

Edina Lilla Mészáros, in the article “Hannibal ante portas” or the Role of the Perception about the Irregular Migrant in the construction of a common European identity”, points out the idea of identity as a belonging to a group given by individual’s consent, qualities beliefs, values. To the traditional notion of identity, as the author points out, it appears nowadays the idea of “European identity” which generates both “divergence” and “coexistence”, setting up a communication desired for the purpose and consistence of European Union Project. The treaty of Lisbon, quoted by the author, mentions the idea of “unity in diversity” which leads to the idea of peaceful coexistence of European peoples and communities. This idea of “unity in diversity” has to be implemented by European Constitution Project that was rejected by French and Dutch vote, points out Edina Meszaros (Meszaros, 2017: 135) The author considers that the immigrants, by their otherness, played an important role in shaping the European identity. She identifies the perils of immigration as aspiring to the indigenous population resources and threatening their subsistence. The author makes distinction between economic emigrants who want to adjust to better values, life-styles and to gain some economic benefits and refugees without resources who came in a desperate struggle for surviving. Other distinction is the one between authorized (legal) migration and irregular (unauthorized) migration. In the part of conclusion, the author underlines that the problem of otherness brought elements of novelty and change for the European identity.

Mariana Buda in the article *Catalan, Basque and Galician. Regional Languages at the Borders of Spain. The culture of Region*, quotes Samuel Huntington that considered that conflicts are likely to emerge between different cultural entities. (Apud Buda, 2017: 177) The author’s opinion is that, in the case of states with various linguistic, religious or ethnic groups, the path for peaceful cohabitation is the dialogue and not the recourse to violence. (Buda, 2017: 178) The case study in this paper is the analysis of the existent differences between autonomous communities in Spain. According to Mariana Buda, there are 17 autonomous community groups in Spain. (Buda, 2017: 179) and these communities were granted autonomy by the Spanish Constitution of 1978. Spain is an example of regions based state where the autonomous communities enjoy extended powers and “legislative, financial and administrative autonomy” (Apud Buda, 2017: 181) The author points out that, the Spanish Constitution did not state the limits of the autonomy of

Spanish inner communities. Mariana Buda focuses on the issue of linguistic diversity in Spain as an element of multinationality. Concerning the major spoken languages in Spain, Mariana Buda points out the Castilian, the Catalan, the Valencian, the Galician, the Basque. The author concludes that Spain has a particular resemblance and history as a country of the European Union being called “Little Europe” and that Spanish regions existed before the nation-states and the variety of languages besides the official language (Castilian) can be viewed as a sign of differentiations of the Spanish communities.

Anca Oltean. in the article “*The image of Israel in published documents regarding the bilateral politics of Romania-Israel during the years 1948-1969*” (Oltean, 2017: 197), approaches the emigration of Romanian Jews in Israel during the years 1948-1969, as reflected by the collection of documents *Romania-Israel. Diplomatic documents 1948-1969* published by Daniela Bleoancă et al¹ in Romanian language. She points out the very beginnings of the diplomatic relations between Romania and the state of Israel created in 1948. The relations were influenced by the problem of the emigration of Romanian Jews in Israel, a continuous process that manifested during communist period. Also, the persecution of Zionist leaders in Romania during the first years of communism after 1989 affected these diplomatic relations of the two states. The emigration of the Romanian Jews was conditioned by the development of economic relations between the two countries. Almost all the Romanian Jews (approx. 400 000) emigrated in Israel during the communist years) (Apud Rotman, 2004).

Cosmin Chiriac, Cătălin Ghemiş and Liviu Bucur in the article *Challenges in Extracting Spatial Features from Old Maps and Engraving Prints of Oradea* (Chiriac, Ghemiş & Bucur, 2017: 233) The authors focused on graphical representations of the city of Oradea (maps, engraving prints) that they found at the Oradea Criş County Museum and at the personal collection Zgardan. The old maps and engraving prints referring to Oradea (used by the authors) date back to XV-XIXth centuries. The author provides images and analysis of these maps. The author offers details about hydrographic elements that appear on these medieval and modern maps.

Huszarik Mihai-Răzvan, in the article “Mixed marriages in Nădlac” (Huszarik, 2017: 251), focuses on the subject of mixed marriages in Nădlac, a city situated in the Western part of Romania, near Arad, inhabited by several ethnic groups that cohabited for more than 300 years. The author provides us the year 1699 when the Peace of Karlowitz was signed, placing Hungary from Ottoman dominance to the dominance of Habsburgs monarchy. The need for workers in Agriculture determined the migration of Slovaks from Upper Hungary (Felvidek) to Lower lands. Official statistics together with the Church documents offer important data about Slovak community from Nădlac. They were, in majority, Lutherans. First Slovaks were colonized in Nădlac in 1803. 200 families of Slovaks moved to Nădlac in this year. In 1805, other 600 Slovaks came here. In 1850, points out the author, there were living in Nădlac minorities such as the Slovaks, the Serbs, the Magyars, the Germans, the Greeks, the Bulgarians, the Roma and the Hebrews. Until 1912, the Slovak population doubled in Nădlac (Huszarik, 2017: 256) The magyarization of Slovaks happened in the context of the distance from the territories of Slovakia and because of the 19th century process of magyarization. (Huszarik, 2017: 259) Mixed marriages had a positive impact on the evolution of Nădlac, most of them being concluded between Slovaks of Lutheran religion and Magyars of different religion or, also, Lutherans. (Huszarik, 2017: 261)

²¹ The original title of the volume is Daniela Bleoancă, Nicolae- Alexandru Nicolescu, Cristina Păiuş an, Dumitru Preda, *România-Israel. 50 de ani de relații dipomatice*, volume I, 1948-1969,

Aurelian Lavric, in the article *The role of the Intercultural Dialogue in preventing separatism at EU Eastern Border: the Moldovan case*, considers that, in the vicinity of EU borders, in Eastern European areal, there are potential emerging conflicts and one of the issues that arise can be the diversity of ethnicities. In order to prevent such conflicts, the intercultural communication between ethnicities, in this part of Europe, is a necessity. (Lavric, 2017: 269) The author includes in this Eastern European areal, states such as Belarus, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, pointing out that the population of the Republic of Moldova has a multiethnic structure. On the left side of the Dniestr, there is located a strong community of Romanians and Ukrainians. In the Southern part of the Republic of Moldova, there is a territorial unit belonging to Găgăuz community (Lavric, 2017: 269) Bulgarians are to be found in Taraclia rayon, while Ukrainians live in the rayons of Briceni, Ocnîța, Edineț. The main ethnic groups in the Republic of Moldova, are the Moldavians, the Romanians, the Ukrainians, the Russians, the Găgăuz, the Bulgarians. The problem is to integrate ethnical minorities in the culture of majoritarian population. (Lavric, 2017: 378) There is an important Russian speaking minority in the Republic of Moldova due to Russification from the years 1940-1941 and 1944-1991. There were disputes between the majority of the population (the Moldavians) and the Russian speaking minority from Transnistria region, and, another conflict, was between Găgăuz minority from the South and Moldavian population (Lavric, 2017: 378). Like Ukraine and Georgia, also the Republic of Moldova signed the agreement of Association with EU. In this context, Russia is a destabilizing power who puts in danger the process of integration of the Republic of Moldova into EU. Russia impacted negatively in the Republic of Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine, by revisionist actions. The author remarks the separatist tendencies in the Republic of Moldova and not only in the case of Transnistria. (Lavric, 2017: 378) Separatism can appear in a state where there is not a strong “unifying principle” according to Barry Buzan (quoted by the author) or “when prosperity or central authority diminishes” (Buzan Apud Lavric, 2017: 274) The author thinks that the authorities of the Republic of Moldova do not have a strong state project to overcome these issues of insecurity (Lavric, 2017: 276) Last but not least, the author focuses on the case of Transnistrian separatism and in the issue of Găgăuz problem from the Republic of Moldova.

Liubov Melnychuk, in the article *European identity in the context of wider Europe*, defines the term “identity” that is an awareness to geographical, linguistic, cultural communities and wonders if national and European identity are able to coexist. European narratives came as a solution after the ravaged by war Europe, trying to rebuild the continent starting from cultural and history related affinities. Woodrow Wilson and Jacques Delors are mentioned by the author as visionary minds who dreamed to unify Europe. The 21st century, with its scarcity of resources, undermined the European construction process, underlines the author. (Melnyciuk, 2017: 295) Rejection of EU constitution and the delay in the ratification of Lisbon treaty were signs that show the weakness of the present-day integration process (Melnyciuk, 2017: 295)

Simion Roșca, in the article *The impact of Europeanization on the quality of democracy in the Republic of Moldova* (Roșca, 2017: 313), asserts that European societies are nowadays the cradles of European values and these values can guide political actions. The author has in view the Republic of Moldova, but also the other candidate states, analyzing the implementation of European values. „Europeanization and quality of democracy” are vague ideals in the Republic of Moldova, nowadays, considers the author. The author provides different scientific explanations of the term “Europeanization”, focusing later on the term “quality of democracy”. Democracy means firstly the

responsibility of political and decision-making factors in front of the citizens. Also the term “democracy” implies active involvement of citizens in political and social life, but also in the decision-making process, and, last but not least, democracy implies competition between organisms and organisations, but also between governors. (Roşca, 2017: 318) The author focuses on the coordinates of the quality of democracy (political control in the sense of constitutionalism, necessity of electoral competitions, the right to vote, the right to self-expression, the right of being informed or to look for alternative sources of information, to right to association). The author Simion Roşca sets as priority of analysis, the quality of democracy existent in the Republic of Moldova. Former Soviet Union, Russian Federation and in the Republic of Moldova pose problems in the issue of implementing democracy (Roşca, 2017: 320). In the Republic of Moldova, democracy is on the way of being implemented, starting with the mid-90s, knowing a success in the domain of political transformation, including by the periodical change of the president. In all these evolutionary processes, the political elite of the Republic of Moldova had to fight with the communist opposition. He makes a painting of political leaders and evolution in the Republic of Moldova in post-communist years. Corruption is another factor that is an impediment to European integration of the Republic of Moldova, points out the author. The quality of democracy should be reflected also, in the political life of the county (Roşca, 2017: 328) Objectives of the association agreement of the Republic of Moldova and EU must be on agenda of the political parties of the Republic of Moldova, concludes the author.

Polgár Istvan and Denis Bortiş, in the article *The EU seen as the other in the UK*, defines the term “Euroskepticism” vis-à-vis EU, used for the first time in the newspaper “The Times”, in November 11, 1985. (Polgár & Bortiş, 2017: 333) The idea of supranational structure as EU it might be seen as a threat to national self-determination in UK, point out the authors. Labour migration caused by European integration is another factor of concern for concern for the national ethnics. And, last but not least, it is a disappointment after the post-communist crises of the EU citizens which push them towards national stances. (Polgar&Bortiş, 2017: 334) This negative trend started to manifest in EU after 2008. Euroskepticism can be a reaction of a too much diversity, asserts the author. (Polgár and Bortiş, 2017: 336) The author focuses on the Brexit of 2016 when UK decided to separate from EU. In the author’s opinion, the main reason for UK’s leaving EU is that it wants to conclude preferential economic agreements with states such as “China, Brazil, Japan and India” and the EU’s legislation is not allowing to do so. In the field of immigration, the foreign policy of UK wants to reduce the number of foreign workers also in what concerns the EU citizens, as well people outside EU, points out Istvan Polgár and Denis Bortiş (Polgar and Bortiş, 2017: 345) With the Brexit, UK will come out from “EU umbrella” and its role in international politics might be diminished.

Carlos E. Pacheco Amaral, in the article *Social contract and state sovereignty: crisis, regional autonomy and integration*, asserts that at the foundation of Europe, stay many fondatory myths basing their stories on migration phenomenon (especially Asian migration) (Amaral, 2017: 354). The social contract has as finality the state, considers the author. The social contract considers all citizens as equals and makes distinction between citizens and foreigners (Amaral, 2017: 361) The actual crisis reappraises the idea of “sovereign state”, being influenced by the reminiscences of “social contract”.

Luminița Șoproni, in the article *Media communication and country image. The case of Romania in EU*, asserts that mass communications happened in the context of a mass-media landscape with a systemic and industrial character. It arises a society

formed by cultural industry. The author identifies the functions of the nowadays mass-media “information”, “interpretation”, “instruction”, “diversion”, “bonding” (Şoproni, 2017: 369) The author focuses on “Romania’s image and international media coverage”. Luminița Şoproni underlines the cases reflected by international mass-media when Romanians were criticized for their behaviour abroad, and finally for their mental universe. The lack of action coming from the Romanian authorities makes problematic the brand of the country, abroad. Her opinion is that a great brand is sold, firstly, internally. (Şoproni, 2017: 376)

The present volume present international researchers’ views in the so debated issues of migration and integration, presenting how “our Europe” is evolving further becoming a values based union. The articles gathered in this volume are a very interesting lecture for teachers, researchers and students.

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