

BOOK REVIEW

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Constantin SCHIFIRNEȚ. Modernitatea tendențială. Reflecții despre evoluția modernă a societății.

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Tritonic Publishing House has signaled in 2016 the aparition of the book „*Modernitatea tendențială. Reflecții despre evoluția modernă a societății*” (“*Tendential Modernity. Reflections about the modern evolution of the society*”), written by Professor PhD Constantin Schifirneț, outstanding personality in the field of the Romanian Sociology whom, in the lanscape of the sociological research, we discover him as author of extremely valuable researches, true scientific foundations of social radiographies, corresponding to various periods. In his bibliographic list we find papers from various fields: modernity, europenization, sociology of communication, culture sociology and antropology, sociology of ages and generations, Romanian philosophical and sociological thought.

The book Cartea „*Modernitatea tendențială. Reflecții despre evoluția modernă a societății*” (“*Tendential Modernity. Reflections about the modern evolution of the society*”) as suggested by the author

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from the very title, an explanation of modernity as a „*type of evolution in the societies and areas with an insufficiently functional economy*”.

In the author's opinion, „*tendential modernity*”, a concept appeared for the first time in 2007 in the paper „*Formele fără fond, un brand românesc*” (“*Forms without foundation, a Romanian brand*”), is defined as „*act of development in the opposite direction: from the animation of the national spirit and from the political construction to the economic development*” (p. 14), „*the essence of the progressive process of modern Romania*” (p.15).

The sociologic discourse of the author about modernity is build based on classical studies from the field of the exact sciences which were the foundation of the theoretical frame.

In chapter I, entitled „*Modernity*” it is analyzed the concept of ,modernity, are described the principles and the characteristics of modernity, the cultural and political program and the social consequences of modernity. The scientific argumentation of the processes of „*modernity*” and „*modernization*”, supported by the theses of Habermas and Huntington, compels the author, in the second chapter, „*Modernization, the path towards modernity*”, to place the two concepts face to face. *Modernity is defined as a „standard which represents a purpose of the evolution of societies”* while modernization is the „*process of accomplishing this purpose*” (p. 42). As the author states, at the base of the theory about modernization stands the following idea: „*the advances industrial technology produces not only an economical increase in developing societies, but also other structural and cultural changes*” (p.47).

In order to later outline the explicative model of the „*tendential modernity*” in the fourth chapter of the book the author makes in the third chapter an analysis of the different types of modernity, entitled local or continental „*Types of modernity*”: Asian (Japanese, Chinese), Latin-American.

In the same time were inventoried and analyzed the concepts and perspectives about reflexive modernity, liquid modernity, organized modernity, organized modernity, multiple modernity compressed, wrong modernity.

In this frame, the fourth chapter, „*Tendential modernity*” the author explains the concepts „*tendential*” and „*tendentiality*” and

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„tendential modernity is understood as a distance between classical (occidental) modernization and modernization accomplished as a consequence of the difference of speed between the economical dimension of modernity and its cultural, political and intellectual dimensions. [...] an evolution determined by internal and external factors that usually act in a contradictory manner, and the intensity of their influences upon the development of a society can be different.” (p. 93). In the author's opinion, in promoting and sustaining modernization and modernity an important role is played by the elites (economical, political, cultural), a fact explained in the chapter entitled „Elites, between the rhetoric and the reality of modernity”.

The author appreciates the fact that the tendential modernity is produced from the top to the base, from the educated minority to the majority which is hostile to change. An important role in the process of modernization is played by the space of modernization (Chapter VI, „The space of modern development”). Within this frame, the author refers to the occidental space which he appreciates as being a modernity emergent space. It is appreciated that the tendential modernity is influenced by the effects of modernity and modernization within the rural and agrarian space (Chapter VII „Modernization of the rural space”) and the state held an important role in the modernization process, moreover so in the societies that are insufficiently economically developed (Chapter VIII, „The State, producer of modernity”).

In the chapter that was destined to conclusions, „Universal tendentiality of modernity”, the author underlines the fact that *„Tendential modernity derives from the logic of the social determinism of the space and development context of society. The presence or the absence of the trend of modern change has to do with traditions, the organizational traditions and culture, but also with the intensity of transformations in a society”* (p. 158).

The book proves to be an extremely valuable resource for students, researchers, sociologists and all those readers who are interested by the sociological explanation of the processes referring to modernity and modernization.