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**FUNCTIONALITY OF FEDERALISM IN THE
CONTEMPORARY WORLD
(MIDDLE EAST)**

**SPECIALITY 561.01 – THEORY, METHODOLOGY AND HISTORY
OF POLITOLOGY; INSTITUTIONS AND POLITICAL PROCESSES**

**Abstract
of the doctoral thesis in political sciences**

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THE CONCEPTUAL BENCHMARKS OF THE RESEARCH

The research theme relevance. The federalism is one of the principles applied in the practice of relations between the central power and the power exercised in the territories of that state. It is not only a form of state organization, a principle of relations between the center and its regions, but also a comprehensive concept, a particular vision based on the capacity to discover the development potential of a state in its diversity and on the granting of autonomy to the constituent regions. The federalist vision is in search of the possibilities of dialogue, of mutually acceptable solutions, in sharing responsibility. That is why federalism in the contemporary world is, or may be, under certain circumstances, the basis of social-political stability.

The experience of federalism in the world provides a rich material for reflection in order to highlight the best practices and extract the positive elements in the event of their implementation in the political practice, sometimes marked by deficiencies.

The issue of federalism appears at the forefront of international political practice and, at the same time, of current scientific debates. To know the peculiarities of application of this principle in the political practice of international actors is a matter of attraction for political scientists. Despite the attention paid to the issue of federalism, there remains a whole series of unclear issues. In this context, addressing the problem of functionality of federalism could reveal a number of relevant issues.

Unresolved fundamental theoretical and applied problems of the development of federalism (particularly, in Middle East) adversely affect the political behaviour of the masses, depriving them of the necessary guidelines for the organization of their own state, assessing the activities of its various units. All this taken together cannot but affect political stability in society, the political awareness of pressing tasks by various state structures, and the provision of power with the necessary support from the people.

The nature of the modern stage of the formation of the states objectively requires thorough political and sociological studies that reveal the essence, signs and principles, types and models of federalism, the prospects for its development. These circumstances predetermined the actuality of the problem of the federalism and choice of the topic, the object and the subject of the study, its goals and objectives.

The empirical material, which requires systematization and re-evaluation, is quite rich and offers the possibility of new and careful research. Thus, the proposed subject involves examining the current situation in the field of federalism, starting with the investigation of the federalist practice of some states of Middle East (United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Syria, especially).

It would of course be impossible in a single paper to examine the issue in question in exhaustiveness. That is why we are using only a few (real or possible) experiences of federalism in those countries that we have considered more relevant to addressing the issue. It should be noted that the problems of federalism continue to attract the attention of researchers. There is multiple evidence of recent interest in re-invigorating debates on the issue of federalism, such as the „Federalism in the Middle East” conference organized by the well-known Freeman Spogli Institute of Stanford University in 2017. In fact, federalism in the Middle East is a very relevant issue in the current context. The region has long been was, in opinion of the experts, a zone of turbulence and conflict, and the rapid developments in the region, internal instability and weak predictability, the destruction of statehood and uncertain responses of elites to modern challenges repeatedly put this problem at the center of political discussions. On the political horizon, there are more and more federalization projects in which their external and internal authors see the opportunity to get out of the perils of general conflict, into which more and more countries and regions are drawn.

Therefore, special place in the work will be devoted to studying the problem of federalism in the Middle East. It should be noted that political realities in Middle East, marked recently by the federalist trends, have some justification. The regularly voiced idea of federalization conceals the attempts of local authorities and external actors to come up with a model for preserving statehood in a situation of weakening or disintegration of institutions. On the other hand, federalist initiatives can be seen as an attempt by the central government to preserve the unity of the country by finding a consensus with regional (often ethnic or non-confessional) elites. This is the expression of the desire to improve the political system, which has the power to carry out the mechanisms of governance, to create more subtle management mechanisms. The federal government even may be not have much of the rivalous regions in its governance processes, but also stimulates the development of civil societies and democracy.

The description of the situation in the research domain and the identification of the research problems. Contemporary scientific approaches to the functionality of federalist principles in the contemporary world have seen a significant increase over the last period, usually resulting from both political and legal approaches. They focused on the historical experience and evolution of the concept of federalism, the various theoretical and practical aspects of the federal relations, highlighted the specific nature of this form of political organization, the particularities of political doctrine of the federalism and its implementation in the national systems of the modern states, on the global, national and regional scale of

federalism. Such studies have been signed by a number of notorious researchers such as D. Elazar, P. King, W. Riker, R. Watts, K. Wheare, V. Ostrom, M. Burgess, A. Lijphart, A. Stepan, P. Norris, R. Shapiro, J. Erk, L. Anderson, D. Ziblatt, M. Bookchin, J. Woelk, C. von Beyme, D. Weinstock, W. Norman, D. Halberstam and others. Their work was the theoretical and methodological basis of our research.

In the Republic of Moldova the problems of federalism were approached, even tangentially, by V. Beniuc, V. Juc, V. Saca, A. Burian, S. Nazaria and others. It is worth mentioning the general character of several of the above-mentioned works, which suggested the opportunity to carry out a special study focused on federalism issues, with an integrated view on the phenomenon of federalism in the countries of the Middle East, the area characterized in the last decades by the complex social-political processes, civil conflicts, reversals of regimes, challenges to security against the backdrop of some manifest tendencies to reinvigoration the idea of federalism.

Particularities of the political processes currently taking place in the Middle East have been devoted to the works of both Western authors, such as M. Gunter, A. Danilovich, E. Davis, M. Peck, B. Galligan, D. O'Driscoll, D. Natali, J. Jüde etc. and belonging to researchers directly linked to the Middle East area: M. Chibli, A. Allawi, H. Al-Qarawee, K. Keram, L. Khalil, K. Aqil, S. Choudhry, N. Saleh, I. Vanli, P. Kumaraswami, R. Al-Akhali, M. Ahmed and others.

Such a study could offer the possibility of assessing the quality of democracy in the examined states, appraising hypothetical scenarios of the future development of the region, testing the possible solutions for peace and stability of the Middle Eastern states, examining the application of the principles of federalism in concrete political realities.

Then we start from the idea: in general, despite the considerable volume of scientific literature on various aspects of the phenomenon being studied, the problems of political tension in the Middle East region in the context of the issue of federalism must be continued and deepened, the more that the previous works has lost its relevance due to rapid changes in the nature of political confrontations in the region. This dissertation is intended to highlight the modern features of the deployment and settlement of political disagreements in the Middle East in their refraction to the issues of the functionality of federalism.

Taking into account the above mentioned, the relevance of the researched problem, we considered that it would be useful to verify the following main hypotheses:

1. The phenomenon of federalism, in all its diversity, is an integral part of modern political processes. The contemporary forms of federalism are the result of a series of

developments and require a re-evaluation that will be theoretically justified by scientific investigations.

2. The launching and the deployment of federalization projects in various states (including those in the Middle East) points to the fact that the functionality of current federalism is interdependent with the political reality of the respective state, driven by both internal and external factors.

3. There is a complex relationship between federalism and the democratization processes. Federalism is beneficial for democratic development, supports working democracy and, in some cases, can contribute to a better organization of state power. At the same time, in poorly functioning democracies, federal forms can hinder democratic development.

Thus, each chapter of the thesis will serve to verify one of these hypotheses; will serve to achieve the aim and the objectives of the research, to formulate conclusions and recommendations based on the application of the most appropriate methods.

The purpose and the objectives of the thesis. The main purpose of this PhD thesis is to elucidate the conditions of functionality of contemporary federalism and to identify the opportunities and obstacles that play roles in determining the political present and future of the some countries.

In order to achieve this major goal of the research, the following **objectives** have been proposed:

- to study the theoretical and methodological peculiarities of the scientific approach of the contemporary federalism phenomenon;
- to higlights the principles of contemporary federalism;
- to achieve a systemic approach of federal relations in contemporary states;
- to identify some issues of sovereignty and equality of rights of federal subjects;
- to determine the particularities of the federal integration processes of the Middle East states;
- to identify some directions for improving the organization of state power;
- to study the problem of federalism related to certain states in the Middle East;
- to make a comparative analysis of federalism in various states of the world;
- to determine the relevance of problem of federaslism for the political realities of the Republic of Moldova.

Methodology of scientific research. In order to achieve the aim and objectives of this doctoral thesis, two categories of research methods were used: 1. the methods that have served

to examine the theoretical material, to elaborate the bibliography and to investigate the sources, the necessary information, such as: the analysis, the synthesis, the induction, the deduction;

2. three research methods that directly served to solve the problem: the systemic approach, the comparative analysis, the normative-value method.

The systemic approach was applied to investigate and determine the particularities of federal processes. The same method has contributed to the complex research of contemporary federalism, which will allow us to identify its main elements, as well as the interaction between them (it is a research method used very often by various researchers in the field of political science). The systemic analysis allowed us to have some conceptual clarifications in addressing the investigated phenomenon.

The comparative analysis is another method of research widely used in the field of social sciences and more recently applied in the field of political sciences. Its importance derives from the overcoming of the national framework in the case of a complex research and the extension of the investigation area. The examination of specialized literature allowed us to remark the use of this method in the case of the research of political institutions, of political phenomena, of legal systems or of public policies.

The normative-value method it is a very useful method for researching the federal relations in contemporary states, for studying the issues of sovereignty and equality of rights of federal subjects, for analyzing and identifying some directions for improving the organization of state power.

Scientific novelty and originality of the obtained results. The novelty is determined primarily by the conceptual political science approach to the study of federalism, based on a specific analysis of the problems of the political process development, mainly in the countries of the Middle East. The thesis has an innovative character well-argued by the research process of current problems, which have resulted from a series of changes in the political realities of various contemporary states. Here is presented a complex approach of federalism, based on systemic and comparative analysis of ongoing political processes. It is one of the few papers in Republic of Moldova in which the issue of federalism is examined taking into account the current geopolitical situation in the Middle East.

The important scientific problem solved in the thesis is the complex approach of contemporary federalism, which fact led to the systemic and contrastive analysis of political realities and which allowed the determination of functional conditions of the implementation of the principles of federalism in various states of the world, especially in the Middle East.

The theoretical value and the practical relevance of PhD thesis. The results of the research carried out during the elaboration of this thesis have a theoretical importance and an obvious practical relevance. The theoretical and practical value of this paper is conditioned by addressing the issue of contemporary federalism, applying the most appropriate research methods in the field of political sciences, formulating conclusions and recommendations that are needed both for researchers and for politicians. Results of the study make it possible to clarify political understanding of federalism. This is a subject whose actuality is marked by the specificity of the global society, the recent changes of the economic system and of the political system in various states of the world, the latest geopolitical situation. Therefore, this thesis is first of all a way of dialogue and of the presentation of solutions for the improvement of the act of governance in states with great cultural diversity.

Thus, taking into account the objectives of these researches, we can mention that **the theoretical importance of the thesis** is marked by:

- the achievement of some results regarding the methodological particularities of study of contemporary federalism;
- the study of the experience of examining the forms of contemporary federalism;
- the identification of specific elements of the federal processes;
- the determination of the factors that influence the functionality of federalism (based on the examples of the Middle East states).

On the other hand, **the applicative value of the thesis** consists in:

- the accumulation of new experiences on the systemic analysis of federalism;
- the investigation of contemporary federalist models based on comparative analysis;
- the results of the study make it possible to clarify political understanding of federalism.
- the possibility of using this theoretical material in the didactic process, to teach courses in the field of political science at the level of university and postgraduate studies;
- the possibility of using the thesis material for carrying out previous researches focused on addressing the same issues;
- the elaboration of some recommendations (conclusions) on the functionality of contemporary federalism;
- the scientific argumentation of some solutions regarding the social and political stability in the current federalist or undergoing federalization states.

The basic scientific standpoints presented for the defence can be summarized as follows:

1. The political realities of the contemporary world denote the applicability of the principles of federalism to the political practice of countries in which there are difficulties in development and consolidation. The concept of federalism means the mutual dependence between federalism and democracy, as well as the development of a decentralized state based on respect for the rights and values of its citizens. 2. The federalism as a political model is flexible and democratic, able, in a favorable context, to resolve the political problems between the central and local authorities, in a country of many cultures and nationalities. 3. The principles and modalities of contemporary federalism are politically determined. The cases of Iraq, Syria, and not least, the case of the Republic of Moldova amply demonstrates this.

Implementation of scientific results was achieved by examining and approving them at the Center of Political Research and International Relations and the Profile Seminar of the ICJPS, through reports and communications at more than 10 International scientific conferences, scientific publications, as well as within the didactic activity of the author as associate professor at Mardin Artuklu University in Turkey.

Publications. More than 20 scientific works, edited in Chisinau, Berlin, Minsk, Comrat, Iasi, etc. have been published on the theme of the thesis.

Summary of the thesis compartments. This PhD thesis contains annotations, a table of contents, an introduction, 3 chapters, general conclusions and recommendations, a bibliography.

Keywords. Middle East, federalism, political systems, functionality, political reality, sovereignty, state power, federation, confederation, federal processes.

CONTENT OF THE THESIS

In the **Introduction** is presented the argumentation of the actuality and importance of the investigated theme, is determined the scientific novelty of the research, are identified the purpose and the objectives of the thesis. Also, in this compartment are mentioned the hypotheses that will be verified, the main research methods applied for the purpose of the thesis, the main results presented in various publications and at national and international conferences. Also, are mentioned the theoretical importance of PhD thesis and the practical relevance of the obtained results.

The **Chapter 1** of the thesis, with the title *The theoretical and methodological landmarks of the research of contemporary federalism*, is divided into 3 sections, serves to verify the first hypothesis, contains an analysis of scientific materials on the topic of the

scientific approach of contemporary federalism, includes a description of the situation in the field of researches. In the same compartment of the thesis are identified the research problem and the ways of its solution. As a result of applying the first category of scientific methods, which serve to select and analyze the theoretical material (the synthesis, the deduction, the induction), were studied the conceptual bases for the interpretation of contemporary federalism, described the experience of examining contemporary forms of federalism, investigated the theory of federalism and its stages of evolution, were determined the perspectives of the phenomenon of federalism. All of these have allowed us to achieve the goal of studying the theoretical and methodological peculiarities of the scientific approach of the contemporary federalism.

The examination of important bibliographic sources allowed us to make a description of the situation in the field and to remark the interest of political scientists for the practical application of federalist principles in countries such as USA, Canada, Germany, United Arab Emirates, Iraq, and others. In this context, it is important to note that federalism is a topic of debate for various political scientists. The high relevance of the „federalist theme” can be explained by the following two factors. The challenges of modernity produce such alternative and interrelated motives as the need to create political alliances for the construction of a modern, dynamically developing state; on the other hand, the need for small self-governing territorial entities to be, more adaptive, more responsible for citizens, more able to protect and legitimize group affiliations, religious, ethnic, cultural, social and other traditions [46, p. 3].

The need for the application of the principles, institutions and technologies of federalism in settling a multinational state is especially high in which the contradiction between the desire to preserve the identity and independence of individual nations (ethnic communities, state-territorial entities) and the unity, integrity of the nation-state remains fundamental. The second factor that actualizes research in the field of federalism is complex and contradictory tendencies in the most territorially political organization of modern states.

The „polyphonism” (multiplicity of forms) of federalism [40, p. 2] offers the opportunity of considering the phenomenon from various points of view. However, the diversity of investigations and points of view related to addressing the issue of federalism can be classified into two main research directions. In the first one can be grouped the researchers who support the idea that federalism and democracy are inconceivable one element out of another [5]. Other researchers (those in the second category) focused on promoting the opinion that the federalism as an institutional form can become the object of manipulation by political elites [47, p. 6]. They think that the federalism is capable of fortifying and diminishing the potential of democracy –

depending on the circumstances of the application of those principles. Therefore, some researchers make theoretical and practical investigations to the arguments of the advantages of federalism, and others – to justify its disadvantages. In this context, addressing the issue of functionality of federalism could reveal a number of relevant features of the phenomenon, generating some viable solutions to overcome existing crises.

At present, the idea of federalism is often circulated by the academic community as the „basis for increasing political participation and democratic stability” [21, p. 2] and its potential for a „social-political balance” [31, p. 20].

The experience of federalism around the world provides a rich material for reflection in order to highlight the best practices and to identify positive elements in the event of their implementation in political practice, especially the one marked by deficiencies [19].

Attention to the problem of federalism, an attempt to understand and explain the formation and functioning of federative systems, has generated considerable research interest for a long time. The volume of scientific literature devoted to the analysis of various aspects of this concept is really huge. The whole set of sources considered by the author during the preparation of this study can be divided into several groups.

Firstly, these are studies of a general theoretical nature devoted to the examination of the specifics of the phenomenon of federalism as the fundamental principle of organizing social relations in heterogeneous societies. A large number of studies from this group became part of the scientific tradition and were integrated as an integral part in the political ideology and practice of modern states. The works of D. Elazar [13; 14; 15; 16], A. Lijphart [27], W. Riker [35], and others, which have become scientific classics, conceptualize federal relations as a means of overcoming numerous social schisms, the mechanism of social integration and conflict overcoming.

The second group of studies is devoted to the analysis of the functioning of federal systems in individual political systems at different stages of their formation and development. Most of them set themselves the task of the most complete and detailed description of individual cases: the functioning of federal relations, their evolution in specific circumstances [10; 18; 28; etc.].

The recurring themes in the literature include a multitude of concepts. Lately, researchers have devoted themselves to studying the various facets of federalism. The advantages and deficiencies of federalism are given, for example, a special attention [33; 38]. The disadvantages observed in the functioning of federal governance usually have two types of inconvenience:

1. the lack of opportunities to impose a single national policy, which may cause some confusion;
2. the difficulty in making responsible decisions: the overlapping of the limits of competence between the national government and those of the federation's entities makes it difficult to attribute guilt to failed policies.

Of course, since the theoretical postulates until their application in political practice there is a very long distance. Respectively, the political approach means the examination of the most diverse aspects of the phenomenon, such as: the values of federalist principles and the value of federalism, the migration and federalism, the contemporary models of federalism, the nationalism vs. federalism, the ethnic issues determined by federalism, the confessional factor, the political dilemmas of federalism, the role of political parties in federal state formations, the historical-political motivations of federalism, the federalism and the electoral system, the contradictions of the federal political system, the institutional design of states in transition, the distribution of power in a federal state, the principle of autonomy in federations, regionalism vs. federalism, the economic and fiscal problems of federalism, subsidiarity and federalism, the verticality of state power, the question of the articulation of power, the federalism and the issue of decentralization of power, the relations between the center and the periphery, the impact of federalism on state development, the mechanisms of political participation in federal conditions, the popular movements of federalist matrix, the particularities of federalism in different countries and many others [7; 20; 25; 26; 29; 34; 39 etc.]. It generates a wide range of interpretations – from the perception of the principles of federalism as a panacea capable of curing all the maladies of modern society to disregarding its potential.

Critics of federalism claim that there is no direct correlation between federalism and the potential attributed to it or, in other words, there is no guarantee that a federal system governance will encourage democracy, provide economic prosperity, or favor the minority. It cannot be overlooked that federalism is not a viable alternative to secessionism, and, under certain circumstances, it can even be a factor favouring separatist impulses.

In any case, the opinions of researchers from different countries are focused on the attestation of the fact that some of the mechanisms for managing the relationship between federalism and democratic aspirations illustrate how different federal models affect the preferences, the strategies and the decisions of actors involved in the political process. This affirmation is particularly valid for societies where both federalism and democracy are the objects of institutional change.

In other words, it is no coincidence that contemporary specialists in the field of political sciences, in their debates on the conditions of federalism, on concrete applicability of the principles of federalism, on state structure, on functionality or non-functionality of contemporary federalism often apply the formula „puzzle” [9, 42] of federalism. Moreover, other researchers also attest to the ambiguity of the concept in question: „federalism suffers from conceptual ambiguity” [1, p. 299]. It is noted: „Federalism is one of the most influential concepts in modern political discourse as well as the focus of immense controversy resulting from the lack of a single coherent definition” [17]. Despite the attention paid to the issue of federalism remain a number of unsolved issues.

In the researches of Moldovan scientists the problems of federalism did not enjoy due attention. However, several studies have been published that have addressed the issue. In his study, V. Beniuc undertook a complex examination of the concept of federalism. The author emphasized: with all the different interpretations of federalism, there is no such criterion that would generalize all the features of federalism. But it does not have to. The main thing is to understand the principle of federalism and the specificity of manifestation in every concrete country [50, pp. 5-6].

And in the works of other political scientists the problems of federalism appear to be examined in the context of the controversial discussions about the eventual federalization of the Republic of Moldova. Thus some researchers, applying the concept of federalism to the political realities of the Republic of Moldova, are inclined to reject the federalization of the country, explaining: that in case of Moldova, federalism contributes neither to efficiency, nor to justice; and on the contrary, it limits the application of these principles. Moldova is too small as a country, it can be effectively governed by one government, and the creation of other state structures will increase the costs for state employees and will reduce the effectiveness of administration” [30].

In a consistent and documented study, „Building International Post Cold War Relationships” V. Juc argues that the federalization of the Republic of Moldova „is unacceptable and contradicts national interests, being a legal means of international recognition of the regime secessionist” [23, p. 234].

As evidenced by several papers by Moldovan researchers, the problem of federalism (well circulated in political and in the media agenda) appears to be capitalised to the concept of national interest. This political concept, in fact, becomes a prism through which the issue of federalism can be interpreted into concrete political realities. In our opinion, it is a judicious and

constructive approach. Thus, according to V. Beniuc, „the essence of national interest, in principle, and for Moldova in particular, is determined by the factors that ensure the continuity and quality of state and society in the internal and international competition environment" [2, p. 116]. Practically, no work avoids the connection to the political situation of the Republic of Moldova.

We remarks in this respect the fundamental compartment „National Interest as a Political Priority of Sustainable Development of Society” elaborated by the researchers of the Institute for Legal, Political and Sociological Research, but also a several works signed by V. Juc [24], V. Saca [36; 37], A. Burian [51], C. Ejov [12] etc.

Defining the national interest of the Republic of Moldova, V. Juc highlights the following: „on the one hand, as a category whose parameters are determined by the international situation and, on the other, as a system whose values prevail in society and at the state level - is the design and the expression of social needs and of the state through the activity of political leaders” [23, p. 114].

There is also a certain interest of Moldovan law specialists who approached the respectively subjects: the problems of federalism was found in the works of I. Guceac, A. Smochină, S. Țurcan, M. Cușmir, V. Rusu, A. Guceac and others.

The **Chapter 2** of the thesis, with the title *The challenges of federalism in contemporary Middle Est*, contains 5 paragraphs and is focused on investigating federal relationships in contemporary states of the Middle East.

After explaining the Middle East concept and arguing the relevance of issue of federalization for this region, the author explains the choice for countries to consider. Of all countries of the Middle East, the author have decided to focus attention on only a few (UAE, Iraq, Iraqi Kurdistan, Syria) which presents, in his vision, the most relevant experience for the phenomenon of federalization in the Middle East. These countries form the basis of analysis in accordance with the need to reconcile the genewral connotation of federalism with reality, which is found in concrete political practice.

It is important to note that federalism is one of the key concepts that should be considered when analyzing the political situation in the Middle East in recent decades: „The ghost of federalism roams the Middle East” [30]. On the political horizon, more and more federalization projects appear, in which their external and internal authors see an opportunity to get out of the cloaca of general conflict, into which more and more countries and regions are being drawn.

By addressing the topic of federalism in the Middle East, it is necessary to clarify the situation in an area „where clearly old models failed, or they are applied without taking into account new realities. This is typically work in progress” [28, p. 1]. The author considers that federalism manifests itself as an attractive project for the Middle East. That is why it is intrinsically linked to democracy itself. Federalism can strengthen democracy by allowing for a more accountable government that is nearer its citizens.

Based on the principles of federalism, certain political and legal criteria of a federal structure (applicable to the Middle East realities) are formed: 1. the same territory and population are simultaneously under the jurisdiction of two levels of government; 2. each level of authority has its own competence; 3. none of the levels of government has the right to abolish another; 4. At the federal level, it is mandatory to provide regional interests; 5. Provides for a mediation institution for resolving disputes between regional and regional authorities.

It is a fact that: 1. the resolution of conflicts between levels of government takes place in the public sphere, and not in an administrative way; 2. formally unrelated, but almost always present satellite of a real federation is a democratic political regime; 3. society is the main „customer” of the federalist project [49, p. 149].

Federalism in the Middle East is a loaded word. It is contradictory and misunderstood. Reasons for the Middle Easternization of federalism as a route for secession have not been studied enough. One can venture a mixture of interlocked explanations. Some are power-related and contextual.

The federalist tendencies observed in the countries of the Middle East can be considered „two directly opposite images” [52, pp. 24-25]. On the one hand, as the desire to improve the political system, to create more subtle governance mechanisms and, thereby, to increase the inclusiveness of political power. Strengthening the election of local authorities and expanding the powers of local councils in the administrative and financial spheres, the government not only involves the regions in administrative processes, but - at least in theory - stimulates the development of civil society and democracy in the country. It is clear that the formal norms of the constitution reflect rather the aspirations of the active part of society at the time of the adoption of the fundamental law than the political reality. Nevertheless, even a formal expansion of the space of democracy can already be considered a positive step. On the other hand, federalist initiatives can be seen as an attempt by the central government to preserve the unity of the country by finding a consensus with regional (often hetero-ethnic or other confessional) elites. In the case of Iraq, this trend is particularly pronounced.

In the chapter are revealed the main particularities of the current political processes, in the context of the issue of federalism, are exposed the difficulties faced by countries on the path of federalization, the situation in each country being dedicated respectively a subchapter. The most difficulty in the federal experience of the UAE, for example, consists in establishing an appropriate and reasonable balance between the federal powers and the power of the individual Emirates. Vulnerabilities that affect the federation's functionality in Iraq come from a number of reasons, including sectarian religious systems, the fact that the actual division of power between the government of Iraq and Kurdistan is not sufficiently clear. Among other feebleness are: historical conflicts based on secular culture; lack of traditions of political culture; the fact that Baghdad's state policy is not independent as Iraq's national policy.

Is thoroughly examined case of Iraqi Kurdistan. It is concluded that the consolidation of federalism in Iraq is impossible unless ambiguities on this issue are removed.

The political transformations in the Middle East are also pursued on Syria's example. Federalism is very connected and available for a country like Syria that has a multi-identity. So that the federal model, in autor's vision, is a real solution for it. The republican regime has restored sovereignty to the people. However, due to inadequate democratization of the regime, the impact of people over the decisions concerning their own welfare has been minimal. the democratization of the regime is possible through the creation of a pluralist structures without hampering the unity of the state

As a result, have been analyzed and identified some directions for improving the organization of state power. the delimitation of particularities of the federal integration processes of the Middle East states (United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Iraqi Kurdistan, Syria).

The **Chapter 3** of the thesis, with the title *The problems of functionality of federalism*, is divided in 3 paragraphs and contains the presentation of the results obtained on the basis of the comparative analysis of the contemporary federalist models. In the same compartment of this doctoral thesis were investigated the principles of contemporary federalism and the main issues of federalism in the contemporary states, including the Middle Eastern countries and Republic of Moldova. Consequently, as a result of these researches, was achieved the complex theoretical approach of federalism, were determined the particularities of the evolution of federalist relations, have been identified the conditions of functionality of federalism in various states of the world.

In this context, were identified the particularities of federalism in Europe and presented basic models: the American, the German, the Swiss model of federalization and the French

model (known as the centralized model). The experiences of federal states suggest a set of general principles that guarantee the evolution of the federation; the federal states are founded on common values and human rights; the concept of European federalism means the mutual dependence between federalism and democracy.

A special place in the chapter deals with the problem of federalism in the political and scientific agenda of the Republic of Moldova. The subchapter on the eventual application of federalist principles in the political life of Moldova focuses on the analysis of the circumstances, the context (including geopolitical) of the idea of federalism for the republic of moldova, the positions of political actors in relation to this issue, certain peculiarities of the conflict in the eastern Moldovan republics, analyzis of the consequences of political decisions [30].

The launching of the idea of federalization of the Republic of Moldova (at that time backed by the OSCE and others) took place while the present territory of the Republic of Moldova „never, at any time, did not „function” as a federation.

Along the way, a number of projects have been proposed: Moscow Memorandum or „Primakov Plan” (05.08.1997), the federalization project of the OSCE (1-3.07.2003), the Kozak Memorandum (2003), the project Voronin-Sova (2004), the Yushchenko plan (2005) and Dodon project (2013). It is worth noting that within them, the true principles of federalism have been respected.

However, the formulation of the idea of federalization has always been accompanied, in the case of external experts, by questions marks: „Conflict settlement through federalization?” [99, p. 90], „conflict resolution for Moldova and Transdnistria through federalization?” [30, p. 1], the hindermost pointing to many deficiencies that make the federalization plan practically unfeasible [30, p. 2].

There is still much to be done to do for make the Moldova democratic transformation clear and one can not neglect that there are still some issues need to be analyzed and to make them clear and to give and take in order to strengthen the transformation of democracy and its institution based on the benefit of the state. There are a few variables that, in the case of the Republic of Moldova, as the specialists see [4] do not fall with the demands of federalization: the way in which federal units are constituted, status of subjects, the vertically division of competences, the delimitation of interests at national and territorial level, distribution and exercise of competences, etc.

These are the circumstances due to which „any federalist solution, experts reasonably conclude, means the end of the European project of the republic” [11, p. 4]. For more analysts, it

is clear - any solution to federalisation of the Republic of Moldova could be proposed (even in the form of an „extended autonomy” for Transnistria), none of them has the chance to succeed. The Moldovan social and political system goes on an own path and in spite of challenges, despite the tense and turbulent situations, it is functioning in reality. Criticism of federalization project seems to be judicious.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The processes of federalism naturally integrate the general course of things and mark politically changing realities. For many years there are perceptible major changes in the world we live in, notes the researchers preoccupied with understanding this world and discover the trends of social development. In this context the issue of federalism has grown ever more pertinent, ever more pronounced. The advancement of this issue is taking place against the backdrop of aggravation of political and geopolitical situations related to such complex categories as national interests, state system arrangement, the existential problems of states.

In the post-Cold War era, a number of countries have adopted federal features in their constitutional frameworks in order to deal with diversity and the resulting conflicts. These include Belgium (1993), Russia (1993), Bosnia and Herzegovina (1995), Ethiopia (1995), South Africa (1996), the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (2001), Iraq (2005) and Nepal (2015), amongst others. Furthermore, ongoing debates about federalism, decentralization and the provision of territorial autonomy for certain ethnic groups in countries as diverse as Syria and Libya emphasizes the contemporary relevance of the federal idea.

In the context of the issue addressed, the opportunity to answer the question from the many possible ones is highlighted: federalisation – it is a way to stable democracy and good governance in contemporary societies, divided societies? The attempt to propose a pertinent answer to this interrogation and was the objective of the work.

The central contribution of our research consists in identification of specific elements of the federal processes and the determination of the conditions of the functionality of federalism. The conclusions we reached can be formulated as follows:

1. The experience of federalism in the world provides a rich material for reflection in order to highlight the best practices and extract the positive elements in the event of their implementation in the political practice marked by deficiencies.

2. Federalism gained considerable popularity in the second half of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, which is explained by the attractiveness of successful federal projects, and by objective trends in the development of the modern world (democratization, globalization, the spread of network structures in the economy, information sphere, etc.). Under these conditions, they can be explained the increase in the number of federal states and the expansion of the use of federative principles by states.
3. The subject of federalism in the contemporary world offers the opportunity to examine the given phenomenon, very pronounced in the society, from the point of view of the political sciences, revealing the specifics of democratic processes in the frame of the manifestations of federal relations [144].
4. Political factors are of great importance in the construction and functioning of federal structures. The federalism as a political model is flexible and democratic, able to resolve the political problems between the central and local authorities, in a country of many cultures and nationalities. The contemporary federalism does not only reflect the form of government, but it does so and develops it becomes a way of organizing political power or a factor which in a significant degree determines the political system in the country.
5. The history of the formation and development of many federal states of the world shows that socio-political, economic and natural-geographical factors take a special place among the factors of influence (causes and conditions) on the formation and development of the state system. These circumstances stimulate correspondingly different economic interests of individual regions, which can strengthen or weaken the centripetal and centrifugal tendencies in the organization and functioning of the state.
6. The interrelation of federalism as a form of territorial structure / national-territorial structure and democracy, as a political regime, represents a huge potential for the development of democracy by increasing the number of actors involved in the decision-making process, decentralization of power, and the inclusion of social minorities in the political process. Federalism permits diversity. Local governments may deal directly with local problems. The entire nation is not strait jacketed with a uniform policy to which every state and community must conform. State and local governments may be better suited to deal with specific state and local problems [43].
7. The federal structure of the states it is not determined by the territorial area, by the density or the number of inhabitants, by the existence of several nationalities, by the political regime or by the government, but by the unification or deregulation of several states to achieve

common interests. The existence of a dynamic federative basic element implies a balance between the members of the federation. In general, these federal states are founded on common values and human rights, in other words on democratic principles.

8. Federalism does not always lead to the achievement of ethno-political consensus in society, but it gives the opportunity to manage ethno-political conflict, preventing its growth before violent conflict. In this respect, an example of those federations for which a high level of democratic development is undoubtedly quite indicative is quite indicative. Federalism helps manage conflicts. Permitting states and communities to pursue their own policies reduces the pressures that would build up if the national government had to decide everything. Federalism permits citizens to decide many things at the state and local levels of government and avoid battling over single national policies to be applied uniformly throughout the country if the national government had to decide everything.
9. The experience of building federalism in some countries of Middle East has shown that federalism is not a universal form of the political structure of the state. A federal state can be viable and effective only if it is based on the long-term interests of all its constituent parts and a system of unshakable political, economic, budgetary, administrative, legal values in society [44]. The principles and modalities of contemporary federalism are politically determined. The case of Iraq, Kurdistan, Syria, and not least the Republic of Moldova amply demonstrates this.
10. The democratization process in the modern world has led to an increase in the degree of diversification of established types of political regimes in federations. An analysis of the development of modern federal states shows that federal relations can persist, be politically significant and develop in non-democratic and hybrid political regimes. The case of the UAE is relevant in this respect [41].
11. Since federalism as a political phenomenon carries a rather high conflict potential, successful implementation requires the existence of developed democratic institutions, democratic political culture, strong national parties and well thought out dispute resolution mechanisms. Under conditions of transforming regimes, it is a rather unstable form of government [45].
12. The conclusions obtained in the course of the work can be applied in analyzing the processes related to political decision-making at the state level, in preparing institutional reforms and taking into account the risks associated with them.

Respectively, we believe that the objective has been achieved - to solve the **important scientific problem** - the complex approach of contemporary federalism, which fact led to the

systemic and contrastive analysis of political realities and which allowed the determination of its conditions of functionality in various states of the world, especially in Middle East, but in Republic of Moldova likewise.

According to the conclusions outlined, we propose some **recommendations**:

1. To continue the in-depth study of political practice in the context of the manifestation in society of federalist tendencies.
2. To provide conditions for the involvement of civil society in resolving issues related to political decisions on federalism, to further engage civil society in the debate and application of federal principles. Eventually establish a national Constitutional Consultative Committees in the countries that go the way of federalization.
3. The government and its institutions have to enhance the culture of democracy and federalism inside society. By all possible means - educational system, mass media - education in society of political culture, critical consciousness, ability to debate etc.
4. Weigh the federalist solutions well and launch them only when there are.
5. To ensure the full manifestation of the democratization function of the federalism.

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ANNOTATION

Rafic Sulaiman. Functionality of federalism in the contemporary world (Middle East). Doctoral thesis in political sciences. Chisinau, 2019.

Thesis structure. This PhD thesis contains annotation (in English, Romanian, Russian), summary, introduction, 3 chapters, general conclusions and recommendations, 131 pages of basic text, bibliography of 304 titles.

Key words. Federalism, Middle East, political systems, functionality, political reality, sovereignty, state power, federation, confederation, federal processes.

The field of the study. Political Sciences.

The purpose of the PhD thesis is to elucidate the conditions of functionality of contemporary federalism and to identify the opportunities and obstacles that play roles in determining the political present and future of the the examined countries

The research objectives: to study the theoretical and methodological peculiarities of the scientific approach of the contemporary federalism phenomenon; the systemic approach of federal relations in contemporary states; to identify some issues of sovereignty and equality of rights of federal subjects; to determine the particularities of the federal integration processes of the Middle East states; to identify some directions for improving the organization of state power; the comparative analysis and the determination of the principles of contemporary federalism; to study the problem of federalism related to the political realities of Middle East states.

Scientific novelty and originality of the obtained results. The thesis has an innovative character well argued by the research process of current problems, which have resulted from a series of changes in the political realities of various contemporary states. Here is presented a complex approach of federalism, based on systemic and comparative analysis of ongoing political processes. It is one of the few papers in Moldova in which the issue of federalism is examined taking into account the current geopolitical situation of the Middle East.

The important scientific problem solved in the thesis is the complex approach of contemporary federalism, which fact led to the systemic and contrastive analysis of political realities and which allowed the determination of its functional conditions, especially in Middle East states.

The theoretical importance of the thesis is marked by the achievement of some results regarding the methodological particularities of the approach to contemporary federalism, the identification of specific elements of the federal processes, the determination of the factors of the functionality of federalism.

The applicative value of the thesis consists in the possibility of using this theoretical material in the didactic process and for carrying out further research in the field.

The implementation of scientific results was achieved by examining and approving them at the Center of Political Research and International Relations and the Profile Seminar of the ICJPS, through reports and communications at International Scientific Conferences, publication of more than 20 scientific works, as well as within the didactic activity of the author as associate professor at Mardin Artuklu University in Turkey.

ADNOTARE

Rafik Sulaiman. Funcționalitatea federalismului în lumea contemporană (Orientul Mijlociu). Teză de doctor în științe politice. Chișinău, 2019.

Structura lucrării. Teza conține: adnotare (în limbile engleză, română, rusă), sumar, introducere, 3 capitole, concluzii generale și recomandări, 131 pagini text de bază, bibliografia din 304 titluri.

Cuvinte-cheie. Federalism, funcționalitate, Orientul Mijlociu, sisteme politice, realitate politică, suveranitate, putere de stat, federație, confederație, procese federale.

Domeniu de studiu. Științe politice.

Scopul tezei de doctorat constă în elucidarea condițiilor funcționalității federalismului contemporan și identificarea oportunităților și obstacolelor care se manifestă în procesul determinării prezentului și viitorului politic al țărilor examinate.

Obiectivele cercetării: studierea particularităților teoretice și metodologice de abordare științifică a fenomenului federalism contemporan; abordarea sistemică a relațiilor federale în statele contemporane; identificarea unor probleme ale suveranității și egalității în drepturi ale subiecților federali; determinarea particularităților proceselor federale integraționiste; identificarea unor direcții de perfecționare a organizării puterii de stat; analiza comparativă și determinarea principiilor federalismului contemporan; cercetarea problemei federalismului raportată la realitățile politice ale unor state din Orientul Mijlociu.

Noutatea științifică și originalitatea rezultatelor obținute. Lucrarea are un caracter novator derivat din cercetarea unor probleme actuale, survenite în rezultatul unui șir de modificări ale realităților politice din diverse state contemporane. Abordarea federalismului este complexă, bazată pe analiza sistemică și comparativă a unor procese politice în derulare. Este una dintre puținele lucrări în spațiul moldovenesc în care problema federalismului este examinată ținându-se cont de actuala situație geopolitică a statelor din Orientul Mijlociu.

Problema științifică importantă soluționată în teză constă în abordarea complexă a federalismului contemporan, fapt care a condus la analiza sistemică și contrastivă a realităților politice și care a permis determinarea condițiilor de funcționalitate a federalismului, în special, în statele Orientului Mijlociu.

Importanța teoretică a tezei rezidă în obținerea unor rezultate referitoare la particularitățile metodologice de abordare a federalismului contemporan, determinarea unor elemente specifice ale proceselor de ordin federal, precizarea condițiilor de funcționalitate a federalismului în statele contemporane.

Valoarea aplicativă a lucrării constă în posibilitatea utilizării materialului tezei în procesul didactic și pentru realizarea unor ulterioare cercetări în domeniu.

Implementarea rezultatelor științifice s-a produs prin examinarea și aprobarea lor în cadrul ședințelor Centrului Cercetări Politice și Relații Internaționale și ale Seminarului Științific de Profil al ICJPS, prin rapoarte și comunicări la Conferințe științifice internaționale, prin mai mult de 20 de publicații științifice, precum și în cadrul activității didactice a autorului în calitate de prof. asociat la Universitatea Mardin Artuklu din Turcia.

АННОТАЦИЯ

Рафик Сулейман. Функциональность федерализма в современном мире (Ближний Восток). Докторская диссертация в области политологии. Кишинёв, 2019.

Структура диссертации. Диссертация содержит: аннотацию (на английском, румынском, русском), резюме, введение, 3 главы, общие выводы и рекомендации, 131 страниц основного текста, библиографию из 304 наименований.

Ключевые слова. Федерализм, функциональность, политические системы, политическая реальность, суверенитет, равенство прав, государственная власть, федерация, конфедерация, федеральные процессы.

Область исследования. Политические науки.

Цель диссертационной работы: определить условия функциональности современного федерализма и выявить возможности и препятствия, которые играют роль в определении политического настоящего и будущего некоторых стран.

Задачи исследования: изучить теоретические и методологические особенности научного подхода к современному федерализму; осмыслить, на основе системного подхода, федеральные отношения в современных государствах; выявить некоторые особенности в проявлении суверенитета и равенства прав субъектов федерации; определить характеристики федеральных интеграционных процессов; определить некоторые направления совершенствования организации государственной власти; провести сравнительный анализ и определение принципов современного федерализма; исследовать проблемы федерализма, связанные с политическими реалиями ближневосточных государств.

Научная новизна и оригинальность полученных результатов. Диссертация обладает новаторским характером, исследованием текущих проблем, возникших в результате ряда изменений в политических реалиях различных современных государств. Комплексный подход к федерализму определяется системным и сравнительным анализом текущих политических процессов. Это одна из немногих работ в Молдове, в которых рассматривается вопрос о федерализме с учетом нынешней геополитической ситуации в ближневосточных государствах.

Важной научной проблемой, решаемой в диссертации, является комплексный теоретический подход к феномену современного федерализма, который привел к системному и сравнительному анализу политических реалий и позволил определить обстоятельства функциональности федерализма в разных государствах Ближнего Востока.

Теоретическая значимость диссертации выражается в раскрытии, на теоретическом и методологическом уровне, особенностей современного федерализма, идентификации конкретных элементов федеральных процессов, определения условий функциональности федерализма.

Практическая ценность диссертации заключается в возможности использования этого теоретического материала в дидактическом процессе, а также для проведения дальнейших исследований в этой области.

Внедрение научных результатов осуществлялось путем их рассмотрения и утверждения на заседаниях Центра политических исследований и международных отношений и профильного семинара ИЮПСИ, посредством докладов и сообщений на международных научных конференциях, публикацией более 20 научных работ, а также в рамках деятельности автора в качестве доцента в Университете Мардин Артуклу в Турции.

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