

Betrayal and contraband – the identity adventure of the Soviet Moldovan in the Romanian capitalism and the identity dream of the EU

In 1990, after 20 years of Soviet life and education, I left the USSR and settled in Romania. After 20 years spent in Romania and in the EU space, every time I talk about “us” I am asked to specify who are those “us” / “we” and whom do I mean by it. And every time I realise the others’ perception is the same as confused as our own sometimes is. Who are “we”, those who apparently have the same culture and come from the USSR? Are we Soviets, are we “Russians”, are we “Moldovans”, or are we “second-rank Romanians”? In my presentation I shall try to retell the journey of this group of post-Soviet people who have tried to redefine their identity in the new social and political construction they are living in. How is this new identity remodelled and what is left of the old one in the new context? What causes these identities to be fluid?

Vasile Ernu was born in the USSR in 1971. He graduated the Faculty of Philosophy (“Al.I.Cuza” University of Iași, 1996) and has an MA in Philosophy from the “Babeș-Bolyai” University in Cluj (1997). He was the founding editor of the Philosophy&Stuff magazine, as well as associated editor of the *Idea artă+societate* magazine. He has worked with the *Idea* and *Tranzit* foundations and with the *Idea* and *Polirom* publishing houses. In recent years he has written opinion pieces in the periodicals *România Liberă*, *HotNews* and *Timpul*, also having permanent columns in the magazines *Noua Literatură*, *Suplimentul de Cultură* and *Observator Cultural*. He debuted with the volume *Născut în URSS (Born in the USSR)* (Polirom 2006, second edition 2007, third edition 2010), also published in 2007 by the *Ad Marginem* Publishing House in Russia, in 2009 by *KX – Critique & Humanism* Publishing House in Bulgaria, in 2010 at the *Akal* Publishing House in Spain and at the *Hacca* Publishing House in Italy, as well as in 2011 at the *L’Harmattan* Publishing House in Hungary and at the *Sulakauri* Publishing House in Georgia. The book is being published by the *Claroscuro* Publishing House in Poland. It was nominated for the *Debut Prize* awarded by the *Cuvîntul* magazine, for the *Novel and Memory Prize* awarded by , the *Observator cultural* magazine and for the *Opera Prima Prize* awarded by the *Anonimul* Foundation.

The volume has received the *Debut Prize* awarded by the *România literară* and the *Debut Prize* awarded by the *Romanian Writer’s Union*.

In 2009, Vasile Ernu has published at *Polirom* the volume *Ultimii eretici ai Imperiului* (The last heretics of the empire), which is later published in 2012 by the *Hacca* Publishing House in Italy, currently being published by the *Ad Marginem* Publishing House in Russia. The volume has been nominated for the *Essay Prize* awarded by the *Observator cultural* magazine (2009), and was awarded the *Tiuk! Prize* in 2009.

In 2010, Vasile Ernu has published at *Polirom*, together with *Bogdan-Alexandru Stănescu*, the volume *Ceea ce ne desparte. Epistolarul de la Hanul lui Manuc* (What keeps us apart. The letter-writer from Manuc’s Inn).

In 2012, Vasile Ernu has published (at *Cartier*) the volume *Inteligența rusă azi* (Russian intelligentsia today).

Vasile Ernu (together with *Costi Rogozanu*, *Ciprian Șulea* and *Ovidiu Țichindeleanu*) has coordinated the volume *Iluzia anticomunismului. Lecturi critice ale Raportului Tismăneanu* (The illusion of anti-communism. A critical reading of the Tismăneanu report), *Cartier* Publishing, 2008.

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