

**REVIEW OF DR. GEDIMINAS MESONIS MONOGRAPH  
“GOVERNMENT FORM IN CONSTITUTIONAL LAW:  
THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA IN CENTRAL AND EAST  
EUROPEAN CONTEXT”**

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In my opinion, the monograph of Dr. Gediminas Mesonis “*Government Form in Constitutional Law: the Republic of Lithuania in Central and East European Context*” is a very significant scientific work in the field of comparative constitutional law.

The states analysed by Dr. Mesonis in the monograph stretch from the Baltic sea to the Black sea. It is for the first time that constitutional systems of very distant Baltic and Balkan countries are compared with a modern approach. After reading carefully this monograph I can state that it reflects two major aspects of the research of the author i.e. theoretical and practical.

As for the theoretical part, the author raises theoretical targets and proposes unique methods of solution. It must be recognized that the concept of government form is manifold and by no ways homogenous. The idea is supported by the fact that the concept has been analysed by both legal writers and political scientists. To reveal the substance of the concept the author uses methods belonging to legal and political sciences. Meanwhile, Dr. Mesonis gives legal methods higher priority. From my perspective, it is clear that the author is a distinguish representative of the legal school. However, one can notice that the arguments are typical not only of legal science. The application of different scientific methods in the monograph is a debatable issue. The logics and the way the author presents his ideas emphasises the fact that it is hardly possible to rely on legal methods only when analysing the "state government form". This part of the monograph is dominated by systemic, comparative analysis and holistic approaches. The author used also the sociological method. This method is employed in those cases where the methods typical of legal science fail to solve the tasks of the research.

The author manifest the courage to start a discussion with various highly regarded scientists. Dr. Gediminas Mesonis gives good arguments discussing Giovanni Sartori, M. J. C. Vile, Maurice Duverger and other legal writers ideas. Gediminas Mesonis notices discrepancies and inadequacies, typical of these authors theories. The monograph provides not only analysis of the existing doctrine, but uses also a new mechanism to recognize and evaluate criteria characterizing new forms of government. These criteria are helpful to get a deeper insight into government forms of various countries. We have to agree with the author that without the division of criteria to major and auxiliary, recognition and division of government forms becomes hardly possible. The proposal to establish this system of criteria proves that the monograph is indeed a significant scientific work, which allows for further cognition of the government form.

The practical significance of the monograph is that it systemizes the material, which reflects the manifestation of criteria describing government forms and national particularities. The material collected and the analysis thereof leaves no doubts as regards the government form in Central and Eastern Europe and the direction of constitutionalism development. After reading the whole monograph I have to agree with Dr. Mesonis that the dominant form of government in the region is that of parliamentary republic. For the analysis of particular government forms of Central and East Europe the author uses the method of comparative analysis. This method helps to analyse similarities and differences between particular

constitutional norms. In the analysis of practical aspects of constitutional legal relations (*de facto*) the employment of more methods is needed. Consequently, the author, just like in the first part of the monograph, uses also the sociological and descriptive analysis methods.

I would like to challenge the pessimistic point of view of Dr. Mesonis regarding the experience of the historical change of government form in Central and Eastern Europe. It is absolutely true that the experience of non – democratic regimes outweighs by far that of democratic ones in Central and Eastern Europe. However, we cannot underestimate the experience of democracy, no matter how limited in time, that countries like Romania, Poland and the Baltics (Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia) have had. Recognition of positive experience is necessary as a certain philosophical foundation, which gives preconditions for the consolidation of democratic values in the region. The conclusion made by Dr. Mesonis that the government form firmly relates to democratic political regime is a very wise and well founded one. I share the opinion expressed by the author that the classification of government form is not reasonable in those situations where non democratic regimes prevail. I would like to urge the author to further continue the inquiry into the issue of relationship between non-democratic political regimes and the variety of government forms.

The monograph complies with all the criteria of scientific work and I'm deeply convinced that it will be of interest not only to Lithuanian, but also to Central and East European readers interested in problems of the government form. It is important that the monograph contains an abridged version in English. I recommend that the complete version of the monograph shall be translated in English in order to make it available for a greater number of readers.

