

THE INTEGRATIVE TENDENCIES OF THE CIVIC CULTURE IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to explore the role of the civic culture and education in the globalization era. Recent sociological studies (G. Devin and others) infirm Norbert Elias' hypothesis according to which the multiplication and the complicate "interdependent connexions" established generate a mechanical tendency towards the integration and even unification of the international communities. One has noticed that the mentioned interdependent relations lead to stable integration forms only if they are supported by an appropriate axiological-normative system: values, beliefs, democratic procedures. In other words, European integration must be supported by a political culture founded on knowledge, communication, civic involvement and tolerance.

The major role attributed to civic culture in accomplishing social inclusion and in creating a "common identity" in the globalization era encourages and justifies the deep and multidimensional analysis that it is subject to, as well as it reveals the importance of performing research work in this field, thus bringing solid arguments for my option. The process of revealing its specific characteristics in a society that has experienced a tough transition process marked by an accentuated anomical state – as the Romanian society has – is not only epistemically but also socially and pragmatically useful. The results of the political culture pattern can direct the evolution and the intensity of the civical socialization process.

In the first part of the paper I will analyse the "aggregate sovereignty" concept in the age of mondialization and in the second part, the interdependencies between democracy and social inclusion. The third part explore integrating tendencies of civic culture in the globalization era.

Keywords: *civic culture, social inclusion, multicultural and intercultural societies, mondialization, aggregate sovereignty*

Introduction

This paper intend to explore the integrative tendencies of the civic culture and education in the globalization era.

Today against the more and more accelerated globalization process, and in the context in which citizenship gains new, supra-national dimensions, the multidimensional exploration of civical culture versus political cultural particularities, as well as of its integrating tendencies has become significantly important.

Recent sociological studies (G.Devin and others) infirm Norbert Elias' hypothesis according to which the multiplication and the complicate "interdependent connexions" established generate a mechanical tendency towards the integration and even unification of the international communities. One has noticed that the mentioned interdependent relations lead to stable integration forms only if they are supported by an appropriate axiological-normative system: values, beliefs, democratic procedures. In other words, European integration must be supported by a political culture founded on knowledge, communication, civical involvement and tolerance.

For discovering the integratives tendincies of civic culture in the contemporary society I intend to begin with the analyse of the following two essential and inerent problems: : The

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“Aggregate Sovereignty” concept in the Age of Mondialization and The Inclusion, multiculturalism and interculturality in the democratic societies.

In time, research work has offered a large number of explanations as to the definition and structure of the political culture concept, as to its different levels of fragmentation and homogeneity, the political culture types co-existing in society and the ways in which they influence democratic stability, perception, evaluation and the enforcement of the normative-legislative system, as well as the relationships between civic culture and the human rights domain etc.

In our days, the major role attributed to civic culture in accomplishing social inclusion and in creating a common identity in the globalization era (J.Baudouin, G.Devin and others) encourages and justifies the deep and multidimensional analysis that it is subject to, as well as it reveals the importance of performing research work in this field, thus bringing solid arguments for my option.

I hope the present study will contribute to the completion of some significant knowledge niches in the political research area and it will open new exploring fields regarding the role of civic culture in the Age of globalization.

Literature Review

Civic culture has been a topic of significant interest for a large number of research workers. G. Almond, S. Verba (1956) and L. Pye are known as the parents of political culture, and thanks to their effort the research in this field has drawn the attention to more and more specialists generating an important number of controverses in the course of time. R. D. Putnam, J.Coleman, S.M.Lipset, R.Lane, M.Duverger, Ch. Foster, D.Easton, A. Wildawsky, F.Fukuyama, S.Huntington, G. Sartori, G. Devin are just a few famous names that have brought substantial contributions to the research work performed in this field. After 1989, research work concerning political culture patterns has become more intense in Romania, too. D. Sandu, O. Trasnea, V. Magureanu, A.Craiutu, V. Tismaneanu, D.Pavel, M. Miroiu, V.Pasti, A. Mungiu are only a few of the researchers that have substantially contributed to the study of the particular features concerning socialization and Romanian political culture. Although the number of studies dedicated to socialization and the political - civic domain has continuously increased, research work opportunities in this field are still generous, and they reveal areas of study that remained unexplored or insufficiently explored, of which some will represent the object of our research.

The Complexity of the World in the Age of Mondialization. The “Aggregate Sovereignty” Concept

At the end of the 60s, the general perception of the international scene radically changed: the increase in complexity of the international system, the multiplicity and variety of its actors became more obvious.

The academic researches (especially the extension of the tangible research) have emphasized the emergence of new and significant subjects in the international scene, from individuals to international and supranational organizations.

Ever since 1957, John Herz noticed the decline of the “territorial state” due to the double movement of “vertical intrusions” (which show up with the aviation) and “horizontal intrusions” (which came up with the increase in international exchanges).

In the same context, James Roseneau notices that today we witness a “division into two” of the international scene: on the one hand, a “state-centred” world, articulated around the diplomatic

and interstates classical model, and on the other hand, “multi-centred”, in which national states must confront the more and more harsh competition of other forms of collective governing and individual involvement which, although different between them, have as the common goal to diminish the role of the state, to eliminate the substance and the legitimacy from its actions.

The idea that the state-actor, subscribing to a network more and more dense of international connections and various interests will have a reduced capacity to decide in a sovereign manner, will be made to reduce its autonomy limit, has more and more followers. Today, the world presents itself as a complex network, with multiple trans-national connections which bring together the internal levels (national and subnational) with the external ones (international, supranational). The theorists of the international relations cannot relatively ignore the new international phenomena: the development of the multinational enterprises, of the intergovernmental organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and of the transborder movements: migration, trade, tourism, terrorism (G. Devin, 2002). They ask themselves more and more often to what extent these actors respect the principle of national sovereignty, towards what do the new or the old organizations move, what part do they play, what power do they have? To what extent do the governmental organizations tend to delimit themselves from supranational organizations? Do these organizations stay as active intergovernmental actors (interstate) on the international scene or they are inclined to become suprastatal actors? Does the force of the supranational and subnational actors grow to the detriment of the interstate actors?

In his well-known paper “The New Diplomacy”, Shaun Riordan analyses United Nations, European Union and NATO at the supranational level of the international scene, in other words, he thinks that these organizations are suprastatal actors. He formulates pertinent arguments in support of his point of view, revealing attitudes, rules, and suprastate practices used by these organizations. Instead of the national sovereignty concept he proposes another concept which, he asserts, better reflects the international reality, namely, the concept of “aggregate sovereignty”.

NATO, EU, UN, WTO, “they either limit the freedom to act of its members (states), or take over the defence and the foreign policy”. (Shaun Riordan, 2004).

USA, the only superpower, although it despises UN (it refused to pay its debts for a long time) cannot avoid it. It must at least create the appearance that it acts under its authority. After the 11th of September attacks, the level of acceptance of the UN by the USA has increased. USA understood that isolation, even for a superpower, is not a viable option, and so, they changed their attitude, paid their debts to UN and have entrusted to it the mission to reconstruct Afghanistan. Although WTO is entirely an American creation, USA must take into consideration its rules, just as any other state. USA subjects itself to WTO and NATO rules not because of altruism, but because they want the other states to do the same. USA shares part of its sovereignty in order to build a dignified model to be followed by the other states, and to enjoy the benefits that result from this fact.

With the fall of the Berlin Wall, the role of the supranational organizations has constantly increased, “the concept of national sovereignty aggregation under the auspices of an organization, with regard to a superior good, is connected to the image about the world that diplomats have”. (Shaun Riordan, 2004) On the international agenda there are problems which cannot be solved at a national level: the international environment, crime, drugs, terrorism, etc.

These organizations have the greatest impact over the small and medium countries which have no force to act on their own at an international level. For instance, inside EU, the political coordination and the lobby activity are gathered in Brussels. Already, embassies deal more with internal problems, instead of dealing with traditional issues of foreign policy.

In a globalized world, the only realistic option for the medium and small states is to unite, putting their resources and sovereignty together, if they want to have any influence over the

international events. (Riordan, 2004). The French and German fusion of the steel and coal industries – the founding act of EU – is also a major act of aggregate sovereignty; and so is CFSP (The Common Foreign and Security Policy), which represents not only a intergovernmental collaboration in foreign affairs, but it also proof of the fact that European states taken separately cannot have enough authority and influence to promote and protect the interests of the citizens in the modern world, while EU can do this. Once established, the rights of the European citizens will be easier protected outside with the help of the Union, than with the help of the member states consultancies. A massive body of European laws which regulates the internal affairs of the member states has been adopted. The disappearance of the distinction between internal policy and foreign policy has strengthened the impact of EU on diplomacy. (In fact, the independent activity of some embassies presents the risk of producing confusion and of undermining the impact of the European message).

Diplomacy inside EU is preoccupied with observing the programme of the economic reform, strengthening the legislation in the area of migration, the reform on the subventions for farmers, the enforcing or the annulment of restrictions regarding the commercialization of the potentially contaminated meat. These preoccupations have become key elements of the political work done in the bilateral embassies, instead of the foreign policy or defence activities (Riordan 2004). This fact weakens the connection between the foreign policy ministries and the diplomatic networks, at least inside EU. The diplomats often report not to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs but directly to the Ministry of Agriculture or Economy. (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is diminishing its role in favour of the Prime Minister or other generalist ministries).

Inclusion and Social Multiculturalism in a Complex World

a. Democracy and Social Inclusion

Inclusion and social multiculturalism are essential demands in a complex world, during the process of globalization – democratisation. The need for inclusion is present in any society, but the chances for its achievement are significantly bigger in a democratic society.

The human being is by definition a social being, belonging to a group: “he cannot survive, can develop and distinguish oneself only in and through society”. Just as it was necessary to affirm more substantially one’s individuality, oneness, one also needs to be “confirmed”, understood, and appreciated by the others, the fellow creatures. In other words, social inclusion plays a fundamental part in a man’s life. Trying different statutes and roles, the interaction with the other members of the group, lead to the shaping of our social identity, strengthen our devotion to the group, the feeling that we are useful, that we are important for those around us. At the same time it gives extra meaning and energy to our actions, it helps us accomplish ourselves as persons; grow our self-esteem and feeling of security.

On the other hand, a society whose members feel included, integrated, is a society that functions well. Its members will tend to respect values, norms, the “behavioural schemes” proposed and appreciated by a certain society, will feel obliged to get involved in the life of the society, to fulfil their “social obligations”. In other words, the life of the society, the way in which it is organized and functions depends on the degree of inclusion of its members.

In the societies with a low level of inclusion we come across a big number of marginal categories such as the unemployed, the poor, the homeless, delinquents, drug addicts, prostitutes, disabled people, discriminated ethnic minorities. In such societies, there is an increasing number of districts, areas and even regions where people lead “a life of misery”: resources to the limit of subsistence or even worst than that, low levels of education and social assistance. Such a life generates and strengthens the frustrations, the anger, “the culture of the street” or the so-called

“subcultures behind the block”, and at the same time leading to the rejection of the projects, institutions, values and norms of the “marginalising” society. *The persons and the groups (ethnic, religious or of any other nature) which feel excluded is marked by anomie, isolation, suffering, becoming part of what is called “underclass”: the class of the underprivileged, of those thrown at the outskirts of society. In such environment frequently there are virulent nationalist manifestations, periodical interethnic conflicts, violent outbreaks without well-outlined goals (with vague goals).* On the other hand, a society which despises and isolates certain persons or social groups cannot expect gratitude, devotion, and civic behaviour.

Lack of social integration through its consequences is a failure both for the individual and for the society. On their own, the persons and the marginalized groups cannot surpass their situation because they lack the resources (economic, educational, and political) they need and so they are subjected to a continuous process of discrimination. Feeling deserted by society, they tend to isolate themselves even more from it, adopting behaviours and ways of life different or even deviated, connected to transgressions, emphasising even more their peripheral condition. In time they can turn into genuine dangers for society.

Among the main democratic processes which support social integration we want to enumerate the following: intercultural cooperation, harmonization of the personal interests with the collective ones, the presence of moral-civic values in the personal values scale, respect for the rights of others, fulfilment of citizenship obligations etc.

By definition, democracy presupposes the participation of its members in the management of the society, in the elaboration and the application of the decisions. Participating in social life, people can satisfy their imperious need for social integration, for belonging and identification with the social universe in which they live and which gives meaning to their life. And the more they will be part of the decision making process, the more they will agree with the governmental decisions.

In democratic society, people have the possibility to express their opinions, interests, and personal values. Harmonising the differences of opinion and interests – condition for integration and social peace – is achieved through dialogue, negotiation, and the art of persuasion. In this way, both the personal and the social needs are accomplished, the responsible involvement of the individuals and of the groups in the socio-political life and the attachment to the civic-democratic values (freedom, responsibility, tolerance, dignity) increase, and social consensus is also achieved.

Society gives important rights to its members, and they are entitled to enjoy them as long as they can pay off their civic obligations. In this way, the rights-obligations exchange takes place between society and its members, which has as main effect the strengthening of the social integration and the consolidation of democracy. The studies have demonstrated that where there are many marginalized people (individuals, groups) democracy is in danger. Democracy is being consolidated as it manages to reintegrate in social life the persons and the groups at the outskirts of society.

To conclude, we may say that democracy favours, more than any society, the active integration of the individuals in society. In return, active integration and social inclusion strengthen democracy.

b. Interculturality in Contemporary Democratic Societies

One of the main functions of culture is to strengthen social cohesion conferring legitimacy upon the social relations. Culture gives meaning to the ties that bring people together, and allows them to integrate in social groups. Sharing the values, norms, customs of the group, the man will attach more to it and will feel more secure. In return, the social group will have no reason to show

him hostility. *Culture explains not only the resemblances and the social integration, but also the differences and even the conflicts between groups and societies.*

Specialized literature explains the existence of many social groups and specific cultures in modern societies with the help of two new concepts: multicultural society and intercultural society. Although similar, in reality the two terms designate different realities. *MULTICULTURAL SOCIETIES* refers to different nationality, religion, culture and ethnic groups sharing the same territory, but which don't have a common point or do not interfere with each other from equal positions. In such a society, the differences can be negatively perceived, and discrimination can be considered legitimate. The minorities are massively tolerated, but are not accepted or taken into consideration. Even where there are laws meant to stop discrimination, in reality they do not truly prove their efficiency.

INTERCULTURAL SOCIETIES are groups of different nationality, culture, etc. living together in the same territory, and which mutually recognize and respect their ways of life and are in good relations with each other. We are talking here not only about a process of tolerance, but also about the maintenance and cultivation of good intentions. In this situation, cultures and ethnic groups are just as important, between them being no hierarchical relations. In other words, Micheline Rey asserts that "who says intercultural, necessarily says, starting from the prefix "inter", interaction, exchange, openness, reciprocity, objective solidarity. It also says "culture": acknowledging the values, the ways of life, the symbolical representations to which human beings, individuals or societies relate to in their interaction with the others, and in understanding the world, recognizing their importance and the interactions which simultaneously interfere with the multiple registers of the same culture but also of different cultures."

History demonstrates that the great civilizations had intercultural vocations (knew how to value the cultural diversity of their time). Art gives us multiple examples of the coexistence of the different cultural universes. The artists were some of the first to understand how profitable the intercultural exchanges are: they feed, freshen up, and revitalize the artistic creation.

Opening towards other systems of values leads to the enriching of imagination, forms of expression, and contents. The history of humanity shows us that in those regions of the world in which different cultures had relations, the artistic creation has reflected this fact enriching itself in terms of form, content, and styles. Such an example is Andalusia of the VIII-XV centuries, which turned Spain into a crossroads where several cultures met: Muslim, Hebrew, Byzantine, etc. The cultural dialogue has generated an extraordinary creative effervescence in the fields of architecture, sculpture, painting, music, poetry, philosophy etc. The so-called Mudejar art came into being, and it will be exported to the "New World" after the Spanish conquest. Another territory with intercultural vocation was also South America and the Caribbean. The Spanish, Portuguese, French, English colonisations, the transfers of European, African, and, later on, Hindus, Chinese, Levantine populations have led, starting with the XVII century, to the increase of the artistic effervescence, to the creation of some works of art which reflect the appearance of a specific culture as the result of the conciliation, coexistence, synthesization of different cultures. At the same time, Andalusia is the birth place of a famous thinker: Averroes of Cordoba (1126 – 1198), considered to be the symbol of an exceptional cultural openness and whose work marked the universal history of literature and philosophy. Other existing evidences of the Oriental, African, Western cultural dialogue are: the famous Giralda Tours and the Golden Tour (Seville), Alhambra Palace and the Arabic University (La Granada), The Great Mosque (Cordoba), etc.

In spite of the cultural syncretism and specific artistic vitality of these places and times, let us not believe that here there have been no manifestations of intolerance and interethnic, religious or racial tensions. Beyond all these, the cultural exchanges have given birth to a specific blooming culture, to some spiritual richness never met before in those areas. The examples taken from

history strengthen our conviction that today, in such a diverse world the conscience of the multiplicity of beings, groups, societies is a necessity.

Accepting diversity, having an adequate behaviour in a multiple reality, and capitalizing the various differences is an obligation (noble one) for each and one of us.

In modern society, human diversity (biological, cultural, linguistic, etc.) is an indisputable reality. Whether we like it or not, we are aware of it or not, *cultural multiplicity in exactly the reality in the middle of which we live*. If we don't want the human relations to suffer, we should start by admitting and being aware of its existence just as we are aware of our own existence. Ignoring it is not only noxious, but also counterproductive. Fundamental characteristic of XXI century, *cultural multiplicity* can be a source of enrichment for the individuals and the society, a factor of progress or, on the contrary, the reason for major conflicts. In itself, it is neither bad, nor good. But the way in which it is administrated can have the above-mentioned effects.

To conclude, cultural diversity – expression of the human generosity – must be known, accepted and capitalized by modern societies for their mutual advantage.

Cultural diversity among and inside societies suggests the fact that there is no singular cultural pattern, “the best”, that there is no inherent good or bad culture, the idea that represents the basis of *cultural relativism*. This is a theoretical principle imposed by modern cultural anthropology in interpreting the cultures of the world and the relations between them. It opposes the tendency of the men to evaluate the practices, traditions, and behaviours of other people as compared to theirs. That is why, the values of a culture must be analysed in close connection to the social context they belong to and not following the criteria of a different culture. For a European, from his cultural perspective, the veneration of the cow – animal considered sacred in India – by the Hindu population is at least bizarre. The principle of cultural relativism rejects ethnocentrism, meaning the act of labelling the habits of other people, ethnic groups, as being “good” or “bad”, “civilized” or “backward”, and to consider their own culture as being morally superior to another one. Rather than doing hierarchies with the world's cultures, we should try to better know and understand them: to find out why do people behave in a certain way, what do they cherish the most, which are the rules that regulate their life. On the other hand, cultural relativism does not mean that any cultural practice is allowed, does not mean relativization, annulment of the normative system and loss of the role to regulate the social relations. Those supporting ethnocentrism perceive the practices of other cultures as deviations from normality, and not only as simple and natural differences between cultures. The ethnocentric manifestations are more frequent in traditional societies, homogenous and isolated, in which the probability of the contact with other cultures is very small. Ethnocentrism operates with expressions such as “the chosen people”, “the blessed nation”, “the superior race”, “treacherous foreigners”, “and backward people”, “barbarians”, “savages”. It has contrary effects on individuals, groups and societies. On the one hand, it strengthens nationalism and patriotism, and protects the ethnic identity; on the other hand it feeds racism, discourages change and blocks the cultural exchanges. In certain circumstances, it helps cultural stability, but in others it can cause the collapse of a culture and the disappearance of a group.

At the other extreme, *xenocentrism* consists of the underestimation of the native cultural values and the overrating of the foreign cultural values. It builds upon the prejudice that everything that is foreign is automatically good. Civic culture has as its central value acceptance and capitalization of cultural diversity. Civic education invites to rejecting both ethnocentrism and xenocentrism, and adopting the position of cultural relativism through which people can distance themselves from their own culture in order to look around with more objectivity and realism.

If in a totalitarian society the values and the norms are imposed upon the members of the society (conformity, collectivism) with the intention to wipe the interethnic, intercultural

differences, then in a democratic society the situation is the other way around. Democracy develops a civic, participatory culture, a culture of the free speech, of the interethnic dialogue, responsibility, consensus and diversity. It is a culture based on communication and persuasion which allows and encourages change by appeasing its excesses, which combines tradition with modernity.

Democratic culture, by proposing a set of values and principles (equality of chances, respect for the dignity and diversity of human beings, assuming responsibility, etc.) creates the premises for achieving and strengthening solidarity and social integration.

To the extent they are shared by the members of the society and are translated into attitudes and behaviours, the democratic values have an inclusive role. They address every member of the society, without regard to ethnic background, religion, sex, age, education, etc.

Democracy is an inclusive society also through the manner it approaches the differences and even the value conflicts. It does not reject differences, on the contrary even, it tends to respect and capitalize them. The value conflicts try to prevent or to administrate them so that they don't turn violent. It was noted that in any society there are *value conflicts*, what differs being the degree in which they are accepted and administrated. While totalitarian societies ignore or suppress them, the democratic societies are preoccupied with their tracking down and manage to a great extent to administrate them. Examples of value conflicts which democratic society manages to neutralize better than any other type of society are the tensions between freedom and order, or between equality and freedom. Regarding the administration of interethnic conflicts, democracies haven't always managed to find the best and prompt strategies.

The Role of Culture and Civic Education in Contemporary Society

The major changes produced on the international scene force us to rethink the role of the civic culture in such a world. It is known that, beginning with the modern societies, political culture has played an essential part both in the life of the community and in the life of the individual. The community was offered a set of values, attitudes, norms and ideals which ensure the functionality and the coherence of its institutions. The individual was given a guide to facilitate his participation in public and political life. Today, the increase in number and diversity of the actors demands the development of a political culture capable to give coherence and to support the process of conciliation, harmonization and making common cause of the international community. This is civic culture: "a pluralist culture, based on communication and persuasion, a culture of consensus and diversity, a culture which has allowed change, but moderating it"(G.Almond, S.Verba,1955). It characterises that society in which there is a great number of individuals who actively take part in public life, own political information, are aware of their rights and liberties and cooperate in order to achieve their common interests. It is that type of culture that promotes social inclusion and multiculturalism.

Education in general and civic education in particular have as their main mission, together with the forming and development of the individual, also the accomplishment of the social inclusion. Thus, it is expected that in school young people are taught not only general knowledge, values and norms, but also cooperation skills, conflict resolution, taking initiatives, taking up responsibilities, participating in the decisions-making process. In other words, they should learn to prepare themselves for their part as future citizens and human beings.

H. Richardson in his paper "National Identity" considers that achieving the following objectives would be essential premises for the young people's integration in school and society:

- practicing group communication and cooperation
- manifesting group and individual responsibility
- democratizing relations, taking part in the decisions-making process (developing decision making competences)
- affirmation and personal development

In achieving these objectives, the trainers have a very important role, as they should administrate with maximum responsibility these processes. The studies show that, although school intends to achieve these goals, often they remain only at the level of aspirations. Instead of personal achievement, the school offers the young person a diploma. Instead of practising cooperation, school rather encourages competition. Instead of encouraging young people's initiative and responsibility, school limits them by imposing on them an overburdened, heavy and rigid syllabus. Often, social control takes the place of the democratization of relations and development of the decision-making abilities of the young people.

Coming back to the goal of personal affirmation and development, we notice that preconditions for its achievement are the importance for the members of the school to know each other and the manifestation of mutual respect.

Maybe the first concern of a teacher should be to know his disciples, to know their abilities, talents, preferences, but also their weaknesses and limits. Only by knowing them we can support and direct them in reevaluation of their talents, capacities, in passing all bounds.

The great privilege of the teacher is to discover a new Mozart, Eliade or Brancusi. But great is also the privilege to be around any young person at the age of the big trials and major decisions and to support them in finding their place and role in this world.

Conclusions

In modern society, human diversity (biological, cultural, linguistic, etc.) is an indisputable reality. Whether we like it or not, we are aware of it or not, *cultural multiplicity in exactly the reality in the middle of which we live*. *Cultural diversity* among and inside societies suggests the fact that there is no singular cultural pattern, "the best", that there is no inherent good or bad culture, the idea that represents the basis of *cultural relativism*. To conclude, cultural diversity – expression of the human generosity – must be known, accepted and capitalized by modern societies for their mutual advantage. Accepting diversity, having an adequate behaviour in a multiple reality, and capitalizing the various differences is an civic obligation for each and one of us.

Today, the increase in number and diversity of the actors demands the development of a political culture capable to give coherence and to support the process of conciliation, harmonization and making common cause of the international community.

Democracy develops a civic, participatory culture, a culture of the free speech, of the interethnic dialogue, responsibility, consensus and diversity. This culture based on communication and persuasion allows and encourages change by appeasing its excesses, and combining tradition with modernity.

Democratic culture, by proposing a set of values and principles (equality of chances, respect for the dignity and diversity of human beings, assuming responsibility, etc.) creates the premises for achieving and strengthening solidarity and social integration

In the future I intend to deeply analyse the influence which Romanian civic culture pattern has on the enforcement of the democratically normative legislative system. The research will pay

particular attention to the characteristics of the political cultural model specific for each social category: young students (18-30 years old). There are studies (Elena Nedelcu, 2000) that indicate that civic involvement is not significant for this age category either, which is different from the countries known as being traditionally democratic (U.S.A., France, Sweden, Holland etc.). An international survey - accomplished between 1999-2000 by the young French sociologists coming from 64 universities in the world and whose results were published in *Le monde* under the title "*The students Planet*" reveals that young people coming from countries that are traditionally democratic are very active when it comes to civic initiatives though they do not seem to be attracted by the political career, preferring instead the professional one. I am interested in proving if these assertions are still true or not.

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