

## IDENTITY IN THE CONTEXT OF

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*Abstract: The Year 1988 has brought along multiple challenges that have accelerated the global flows and have sped up the forming of powerful regional alliances based upon political, economical and military fundamental criteria with the purpose of building a cohesive response strategy to the challenges posed by globalisation. The main risks are posed by the misunderstanding of modern day changes and by the self exclusion from the process itself, but, at the same time, the risk is comprised by the loss of fundamental values that shape and define national identity.*

*National identity is given by the totality of the defining traits of a nation, those that set it apart from the others, that emphasise its valuable features. It can be synonymous with „national specificity“, (G. Calinescu), and it comprises a cultural and another historical dimension of a nation, the speech, traditions, the consciousness of a national cohesion, all these factors lead to the group solidarity.*

*Frequently, national culture and identity have been posted as integrating part of European culture or even global culture. Romania, as a European nation, has since its integration in January 2007, offered its citizens the possibility of free travel, labour and settlement within all of the 26 member countries. Free travel gives the chance of cultural exchanges that are consequently precipitating the process of transformation within national culture, values and identity. This process is faster than ever and it intermingles with that of regional, continental and global transformations.*

*M. Ralea, is showing a pressing issue within "The Romanian Phenomena", one of great importance: many Romanians are forced to study by the western standards and books, however Romanian existence is very different from that of the western world. National identity is thus very fragile in facing the western tide. He characterises our inner potential as "Adaptability".*

*Europe has always been a model of wellbeing and economical boom, of prosperity, discipline, culture and civilisation, of law and order. Their institutions seem effective and more likely to offer quality services to the citizens.*

*The things we know, study, those that we leave to our children are particles of identity. We can state, that the study of each social entity is a micro-study of its identity.*

*The identity in its own right represents a fascinating subject that has incited real interest in the specific forum as well as in the public world and in the political sphere.*

*It is almost a must in the specialised literature, with tens of definitions and as many essences and differences, a subject as sensitive as it is real and one that cannot be ignored without risking a great deal more than we can afford to lose. Sensitivity is generated by frictions with issues such as race, nation, ethnies, class or gender. In a collective way it is used regarding cultural identity, social identity, national identity, political identity, categorised identity and collective identity.*

*Keywords: identity, globalisation, cultural identity, social identity, national identity.*

The current situation of the Romanian society lies below the spectrum of two major processes: breaking egalitarian socialism by revolution in 1989 and globalization as seen by Malcolm Waters, a social process in which geographical constraints on social and cultural order lose importance, together with people's awareness of this situation. (Globalization, 1995).

World globalization is understood as a world where ethnic and cultural spaces are relative. It causes queries and results in increased manifestations of resistance against the overwhelming forces of globalization.

Many researchers see globalization as being a cultural, economical, political globalization, others consider it to be a process of enhancing diversity, and the third category is regarded as a symbiosis between the two.

The homogenization, uniformity and standardization of the lifestyle represents the negative effect of globalization leading to a removal or cancellation of identities.

Cultural identity is in dialectical relationship with globalization. As a phenomenon, globalization, in the analysis and interpretation fosters global perspective and general, cosmopolitan direction, while identity register refers to the unique, local, specific direction.

Globalization always obliges at identity reconstruction (Vasiliu, 2005: 33). Identity acquires new meanings in the context of globalization process being subjected to profound redefinitions.

It is also interesting that such a phenomenon could not be expressed in a single definition. The influence of globalization in the land of identity and culture materializes itself in the standardization of goods and cultural patterns. It emphasizes multiculturalism, crossing borders or breaking them.

The concept of identity is extremely prolific in current sociology, particularly ethno-cultural identity / globalization relationship. Romania is trying to recover its identity after communism and to reaffirm its national values, traditions, according to the needs of the new society in symbiosis with globalization.

Whether we are talking about individual identity, collective, social, cultural or ethnic, we're talking of a social phenomenon that offers several plans to tackle and to be defined.

The boundary between identity types is relative, often social and collective identity are treated as synonyms, and ethnic and cultural identity seem to be representations of the same reality.

The point is, though, that they are facets of the building process of identity. Of course, in turn, the identity is an ongoing process that gives coherence to individual experience and places the routine of his particular biography in the flow of historical time (Horvath, 2003).

### **Ethnic Identity**

Ethnicity is defined in general as a population designated by a name (ethnonym), which relies on the same origin, with a common cultural tradition, as specified by a consciousness of belonging to the same group, whose unit is generally based on an identical language, territory and history" (Dictionary of Sociology. Larousse 1996, pages. 102-103).

According to estimates of the French Academy, "in the world there would be around 12 000 ethnicities and would speak 2796 autonomous languages (without including idioms and dialects separately inventoried). All these languages are part of the 11 main linguistic groups and 50 more restricted secondary groups. French Academy believes that speakers on Terra use between 7000 and 8000 different dialects." (Dobrescu, 2012, page 106).

Ethnic identity is a different level of identity along with the individual, social and cultural ones. It is related to the awareness of the ethnic cultural values, types of action, attitudes, the group's religion, by acknowledging and affirming what makes it different from

other groups. In defining ethnic identity are involved two points of view: one which claims that ethnic identity is innate, stable over times and which emphasizes criteria such as language, nationality, physical characteristics, religion, which they consider prescribed to individuals; another, modernism, which claims that ethnicity is not a given objective, as more of a construction on cultural and social bases (Smith, 1999, Ohene, 1999 Gellner, 1999).

Identity is to some extent a matter of personal choice. In some contexts, by adopting specific identity strategies, social actors can define their identity according to a certain pursued objective (Baderus, 2005: 227-234).

### **National identity**

The identity of ethnic groups is warranted by the same origin, language, common cultural heritage, the conscience of membership identity and a reduced number of members. The nation is the largest dimension and integrates several ethnic groups. From a sociological perspective, the nation is a relatively large group of people, delimited territorial and political, whose members show loyalty to the same institutions and they have the feeling that belong to the same community. The most important component of a nation is the population that has a sense of identity and cohesion and usually speaks the same language.

Currently are known 197 nation states around the world, which means that there are as many human societies with a national, distinct and legitimate identity. The differences are given by the country's name, country's coat, flag or national banner, national anthem.

National identity is given by all the essential and specific features of a nation, that make it different from other nations, giving it individuality and originality of value, is synonymous with what George Calinescu calls "national specific" or "basic personality" (A. Kardiner, Ralph Linton).

### **Romanian Identity**

It is often reduced to "Romanian soul" (Noica), "Romanian spirit" (Nae Ionescu), "pastoral / mioritic space" (L. Blaga). It is stated by Romanians' collective consciousness through collective memory and historical memory, and the national character that is both inherited and acquired. Romanian identity is the sum of qualities and faults as a result of Romanians' historical development, but also as a result of changes and Romanian society's transition. Globalization no longer appears as a threat to identity, but as a phenomenon that preserves and enhances the nations.

Romanian identity has undergone extensive changes, as a result of the accession to the European Union, of the right to free movement, the experience resulting from migration. It can be seen an attempt of reaffirming the identities in the context of Romanian society as it is at present constituted.

Along with the image Romanians have about them, it takes shapes the image of other national groups about Romanians. Romanian identity is what is specific to Romanians, how they build their culture, how they organize their lives, how they relate to universal culture in terms of food, clothing, religion, art, communication, language.

It implies attachment to the group, common origins, the feeling of safety, sharing common ancestral traditions and customs.

The process of national identity changes is faster than ever before and is intertwined with the regional, continental and global changes.

Romania is a constituent part of the European continent and every Romanian citizen is legitimate to consider himself a European citizen.

### **Socio - cultural identity**

Globalization has a decisive impact on cultures and national identities. There is a tendency to impose a dominant culture on the other, leading to uniformity. Nations fight to preserve their cultural identity by participating in the great, unique global culture, allowing themselves to be influenced by it, in an attempt to enrich their own culture.

The great danger is that what was perceived as specific will be reunited under the spectrum of unique culture, in an attempt to synchronize all cultures, for the elimination of existing differences and contradictions. By socio - cultural it is understood as a matter of fact that any act or product of social actors is a combination of social and cultural factors.

Socio- cultural identity is the result of a continuous process of identifying others with similar elements of latent dimension, collective memory, updated symbols expressed by and through values, symbols certain experiences (emotions, attitudes), cognitions, representations or social actions ( Horatiu Rusu page 121 ).

The value model predicted by the process of cultural globalization is either a hybrid construction, or a value model of a strong community.

The structure of national value model can be changed by the action of these two models. By joining the European Union, Romania must make, among other things, a cultural plan option that will be the values that will define it in the context of European nations and how it will participate in the value construction of the Union.

Integration requires verification, modeling, relocation, reconfiguration of the value model of the community.

Cultural integration movement leads to identity vulnerabilities in the identity plan. The cultures of the EU members can be protected by economical, political and administrative measures.

The national value model must be correctly identified in its essential set of data spelt out to the community to impose it to common consciousness. On the other hand it must be harmonized with the European one, which should be enriched with distinctive notes of Romanian model.

The European model requires compliance with common values and the national model permanently amends the European model.

The Romanian identity model may be legitimate if it satisfies the following conditions: to enter the period of maturity, to acquire validation and have an appropriate historical context. This structure will result in building a common model and strengthen a national identity model.

### **Instead of conclusions:**

Integrating the social and cultural plans of a community in the global order is a desirable state for those who support globalization processes. Exposed to different national

cultures and global culture, communities often have a response of synchronization with cultural spaces.

Globalization is a phenomenon which must be controlled and each nation must retain specificity by filtering and separating the values of non - transferable, striving for perfection of the human being and uniting people through tolerance and solidarity.

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