
”Az Aranykorszak örökösei?” A politikai szellem fenomenológiája. Szociológiai tanulmány a romániai átmenetről a kolozsvári BBTE diákjainak politikai kultúrája példáján”, (*The Heirs of the Golden Age? The Phenomenology of the Political Spirit*), WEB, 2002/10 p. 13-26 and In *Ethnopolitika* (ed). Barni N and Fedinec Csilla (2003) Budapest. Teleki László Intézet p. 206-236 ISSN 963-86388-5-0

“The Heirs of the Golden Age?” The Phenomenology of the Political Spirit
Study on the Romanian Transition Based on the Political Culture of the Students of “Babe-Bolyai” University

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Introduction

In December 1989 - while in some major cities of Romania the armed conflicts were hardly finished or still going on¹ and the inhabitants were dominated by a strong sense of euphoria² caused by the fall of the dictator and of the communist system – a shocking statement appeared in the mass media which in the meantime became free. This statement did not fit the situation of that time. In the opinion of the

¹ The events that overthrew the communist regime and were known under the name the Revolution in December began in Timișoara. On the 16th of December, 1989 the reformed congregation and later a wider range of the inhabitants protested against the eviction of the reformed bishop, Tőkés László and then they started to demonstrate in large numbers against the regime. The power of that time interfered brutally, still by the 19th of December the town was declared other major cities of the country (in Cluj, Sibiu, Reșița, the demonstrating mass clashes with the organs of the dominating power on the 20th and 21st of December), the borders are closed on the 21st of December. The Romanian dictator, who has just returned from Iran, convokes a public meeting on the main square of Bucharest. This meeting was transformed into a demonstration against the dictatorship and then it grew to a bloody revolution. On the same day the Secretary of Defense N. Milea, commits suicide. At 10 a.m. on the next day the emergency state is announced. At 12.06 p.m. a helicopter takes off from the building of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party having on its board the escaping president and this meant the end of the regime. The events in Bucharest were broadcasted live to the last by the public television. Soon (on the 23. of Dec) the dictator and his wife are captured and executed after a short trial on the 25th of December in Târgoviște. The armed conflicts lasted however until the 28th of Dec. The National Salvation Front (NSF), which supports the democratic changes, will take over the power on the 22nd of December. On the pattern of the central NSF local NSF-s are formed in every locality and they form the local power. (I don't intend to get into the question whether “it was a revolution or not” and I don't want to analyze the international geopolitical situation either. Source: *Agerpress, Rompress*. Furthermore see *Dan Pavel: Limba de lemn* (The Wooden Language) in. Polis/4)

² For example “*Citizens! Romanian brothers! We have gained the victory! The tyrant has fallen! The power is in the hands of people!*” *Libertatea*, 22. December. 1989, 1st issue, “*The Christmas of Freedom*” *Romániai Magyar Szó*, 23. Dec. 1989, “*Freedom has arrived*” Hargita Népe, 23rd of December 1989.

person who made the statement³ – member of the newly founded executive power⁴ – “twenty years must pass until Romania will be able to close up the ranks of the civilized West, but until the Romania needs a paternalistic system to keep the nation united⁵”. This statement caused a lot of debates⁶ but in the high optimistic mood the general public left it out of consideration. After the “*big change*” caused by the revolution every stratum of the Romanian society started to have (completely rightful and reasonable) expectations from the new political power. Practically everybody expected something from the “democracy” as a new system. The politically marginalized, pursued and imprisoned expected freedom and tolerance, the working class expected higher wages and shorter working week, the intellectuals wanted freedom of the press and of speech, possibilities to succeed professionally and to travel to western countries, the ethnic minorities claimed to respect and consideration to their rights, the Greek-Catholics wanted the relegitimation of their religion and the return of their confiscated churches, the villagers reclaimed the estates which were taken away from them; that is briefly they wanted: “a better, a more free, a more endurable life⁷”. The system of these requests and expectations can be interpreted as a spontaneous aspiration for modernization, which aimed at the spheres of the economy, of the social structure, of the political system, and the cultural life. However, the process of the Romanian transition started with the violent overthrow of an extremely brutal totalitarian political system and both the elite which came to power – the “leaders” - and the citizens – the “subjects” – did not have enough experience to manage the democratization and the marketization process and to carry out a real overthrow of the regime.

The Romanian society was characterized by total lack of previous connections to market and democratic affairs (Pavel, 1998:92). The context after the changes of the regimes in the East European caught the other countries of the region “in

³ Silviu Brucan, politologist, former ambassador in Washington, in the 50s he was the editor in the chief of Scântea (The Spark), the central newspaper of the RCP, later he was one of the persons who signed the so called Letter of the Six, at present he is a public figure

⁴ Member of the Council of the National Salvation Front (FSN-*Frontul Salvării Naționale*) which was formed on the 22nd of December. 1989.

⁵ Quoted by V. Tismăneanu – M. Călinescu: “*The revolution and Romania’s Future*”, In “Romania after Tyranny” editor Daniel N. Nelson, Westview, 1992, page 38

⁶ See the Silviu Brucan – Octavian Paler debate Celestine Bohlen: “*A Veteran Leader Resigns in Bucharest*” New York times, 1990, 5th of February, or Karacs Imre – Victoria Clark: “*Brucan’s Dreams of Brain Power*” The independent, 29th of January 1990

⁷ Péter László, quote of an interview made with BI, 45, town worker

inconsistent position regarding the overthrow of the regime, the political-ideological knowledge and the existential affairs which determined the content of the knowledge” (Csepeli-Örkény, 1991:162), but Romania was caught even more unprepared. With this I do not mean the acquirement and preservation-consolidation of the means of power but the structural reorganization of the economy, the spreading of democratic values that is the effective realization of the wider interpreted transition.

In my opinion, the inputs which were drawn up in 1989 are still not “accomplished”, though the prediction came partly true: after twelve years, those predicted twenty years did not lose from their timeliness, but the paternalistic affairs and relations between the social actors are unfortunately still part of reality.

In this study, which is based on three sociological surveys, I will try to present the political culture of the students⁸ in Cluj/Kolozsvár in connection with the incorporated “traditions” which are characteristic of the circumstances of the party state. I will discuss the relation between the transition process and democratization, respectively I will examine if there is any connection between the state of the political culture in the present circumstances and the political socializing (which before 1989 meant indoctrination) system of the totalitarian regime. First of all I will sketch the structural conditions and circumstances of the process of democratization. I will continue with the definition of the notional meaning of the political culture, which forms the main constituent and content of the process. Besides that, I will try to draw some conclusions about the political culture of the examined population based on the analysis of the possessed statistical data. From my point of view one cannot state anything about today’s political culture without taking into consideration the political-social antecedents constituted by the communist-totalitarian system and which were forced upon us through socialization (but the antecedents of the ages preceding the totalitarianism cannot be left out of consideration either). In this perspective I wish to draw up a possible interpretation regarding the state that I call the political culture of the “unfinished transition”. The basis of my working hypothesis is constituted by the assumption that there is a close relation between the present state of the political

⁸ The subjects of our research were the student of the “Babe°-Bolyai” University in Cluj. The “Babe°-Bolyai” University is the largest University in Romania; it is the legal successor of the Ferenc József University founded in 1872, which has named King Ferdinand University in 1918 and of the Universities Babe° and Bolyai, which were united in 1959. In this university that is officially qualified as a multicultural university the courses are held in Romanian, Hungarian and German. See the methodological reference of the analysis further on.

culture and the political attitudes, which were assimilated and incorporated during the communist regime.

“Unfinished Transition” and Political Culture

By now numerous Romania authors have written about the Romanian transition process (see for example Zamfir és Zamfir 1994 és 1995; Sandu 1996; Sandu 1999; Chelcea 1994; Tismăneanu 1997; Pavel 1998, Berevoiescu-Chiribucă-Com^oa-Lăzăroiu-Stanculescu 1999; Roth 2000). The above-mentioned authors laid stress on different aspects using different methodological apparatus and different points of view, and perspectives. I am not trying to present this bibliography in my study. However, two things can be ascertained. First, the discussion of the process of transition was made mostly on macro level, the focus being on the social structure, and the second, the everyday life experiences of the subjects of the transition were left out of consideration: a few tried to interpret the experiences following the revolution from the point of view of the everyday life actors. In the present study I will partly follow this tradition (my data are of statistical nature) but I will handle the question of the political culture on the example of the students embedded in social structure.

Habermas himself says that this had core – in this case the political culture and the participation in public life of the investigated students in Cluj/Kolozsvár – “can be only examined and estimated if we face it with those conditions, circumstances in which it can be realized or not” (Habermas, 1983:33), or if we take in consideration the context which defines its condition⁹: the quality of the democratic order and the different “traditions” In this way we can make connections between the knowledge characteristics of the inter-subjective everyday world build by the individuals (which contains also values of political nature) and the political system; that is the social micro and macro level can be connected.

The core of the transition, parallel with the marketization, is formed by the democratization. In the present study I will mostly deal with political projection of the transition but I also take notice of the fact that the economic relations also play an

⁹ See the study entitled “*Student und Politik*”, which appeared in the volume of studies “*Kultur und Kritik*” (1974) by Jurgen Habermas, in which he writes about the research conditions of the political participation of West German students and about the possibilities of the participation.

important role in the development of political culture. The democratization refers to the process during which everything we call “democracy” or “democratic” is consolidated. The notion refers to the political system corresponding to the modern legal-rational domination (Weber, 1997:224), which can be traced back to the political structure of the antique Greek *polis* communities. The political articulation, like the natural and imminent diversity of the economic, cultural and political values and alternatives, presumes different interests that periodically participate in the wield of power by the means of the institutions of the pluralism and of the division of power that competing with each other. Thus the most important condition of the modern, participative democracy (see Sartori, 199:118-120) is the pluralism, that is the possibility and the self-evidence of the existence of different – sometimes contradictory, but in any case different – political aspirations and interests which take place at the same time, in the same political community of a modern state. The competing diversity of interests, systems of value, views, ideologies, parties, political and civic institutions has to be present at the same time in the same social structure. The pluralism refers after all to the sociological articulation of the modern, (and today’s postmodern) society: the power and the influence has numerous sources.

The political aspect of the transition, which is still going on in Central and Eastern Europe and which can be illustrated by the process started with the fall of the Berlin Wall has different antecedents in the various countries. It is true that “the communist regimes of the Central and East European countries destroyed root and branch all the other political traditions” (Sartori, 1999:238), but in my opinion the way and the cause of the overthrow of the political regime made the development of the democratization in Romania extremely difficult.

The political aspect of the Romanian transition has resemblances and also major differences from the developments that occurred after 1989 in the former communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. It was similar the communist-socialist past which was forced upon them from outside, though communist regime manifested itself differently in various countries (Szabó, 2000:42); the Warsaw Pact and the member states of the COMECON were “de-Europeanized” after the II. World War, that means they got separated from the rest of Europe, and from the so-called Free World: they were cut off and “they lost the rationalistic system of values focused on freedom” (Vajda, 1988:334). Moreover, at the very beginning of the transition in every ex-Soviet satellite states it appeared the negative consequences of the collapse

of the ex-Soviet market. There also appeared the institutions of the political system based on the pluralist party system, free general elections were held and “in every country started to function pluralist political institutions based on the separation of power” (Kéri, 1995:92). In my opinion, in the case of Romania, the difference from all the other mentioned countries can be traced in the act (and also in the way) of breaking with the past lies in the circumstances preceding the revolution (and in the results of it), in the extremely brutal-repressive “national-communist”¹⁰ (Brezinski, 1993:135; Roth, 2000:38), “paternalist-homogenizing” (Kligman, 1998:14-24) and “sultanistic” (Linz-Stepan, 1993:45) character of the former regime and in the “ruling style” of the dictator couple which was based on the Securitate, the feared secret service. All these are strongly related to the cult of personality, which has its historical roots and model in Orient. In Romania the communist regime – alone in the region – “was overthrow with violence, with bloodshed, with terrorists and innocent victims”. (Pavel, 1998:79). In 1989 “the elements of the party state and a significant proportion of the old party apparatus changed their old positions to new ones” (Segert, 1993:2), and “they derivates their legitimation from the occurrence in December 1989” (Pavel, 1998:94). Unlike in the other “friendly countries”, where the political changes, the democratization was initiated and partly influence-managed by the former ruling elite, by the reformer wing of the communist party, in Romania the turnout of the communist regime was forced mainly by the oppressed people.¹¹

In the years immediately preceding the “break” the Romanian official party ideology – essentially the dictator personal approach – vehemently refused all types of *glasnoty* and *perestrojka* politics. One the one hand the official interpretation considered that this type of politics is a forbidden turn off from the glorious road of

¹⁰ The national-communism in Romania had the following main characteristics: 1. The more or less unconcealed opposition to the Soviet Union (there were no Soviet military camps on the territory of Romania, they denied to take part in the invasion of Czechoslovakia and they publicly disapproved with it, the pursued an independent foreign policy) 2. The assimilating policy, the nationalistic discourse against the national minorities living on the territory of Romania, which led to the mass emigration of the Jews and Germans (the Romanian power allowed their emigration since the government of the country to which they emigrated paid 7-800 USD for every person; the education of the emigrants served as an excuse for their emigration). 3. The orthodoxy. See further on Nelson, D. N. (editor): “Romania after Tyranny”, Westview Press, Bouldier, 1992.

¹¹ See further on Vladimir Tismăneanu: *The Reinvention of Politics. Easten Europe from Stalin to Havel*, Iași, Polirom, 1997 or Gail Kligman - Vladimir Tismăneanu: “Romania’s First Postcommunist Decade” In *East European Constitutional Review*, vol. 1, No 1, 2001, p.78-85 or Vladimir Tismăneanu: “Introduction”, In. *European Constitutional Review*, vol. 10, No 1, 2001, p. 76-77.

building communism; on the other hand the official comprehension thought that in Romanian communism is already established in a local fashion the *glasnoty* and *perestrojka* long time ago. The regime became more and more isolated on the field of international relations¹² (its prestige was eroded even among the COMECON member states); it started to take more and more unpopular measures but was not confronted with significant resistance. From our study's point of view it is important to underline that in Romania in the period preceding the revolution "no significant oppositional, dissident gathering was formed"¹³ (Ágh, 1993:3; Nelson, 1996; Tismăneanu, 1997). The superior party leadership, the Central Committee consisted of the end of the 80's only of the Ceaușescu family members, the party apparatus being controlled by the Securitate (see Tismăneanu, 1997). The most significant attitudes against Ceaușescu – but not against the whole regime or against communism – were Gh. Apostol's nonconformist critics against the secretary-general during the 12th Communist Party Congress, the so-called Letter of the Six, respectively the notice of the poet Dan Petrescu before the 14th Communist Party Congress¹⁴. In the

¹² See for example the resolution of OSCE which was adopted in Vienna in 1988 and was not signed by Romania out of protest, the withdrawal of the Favored Commercial Principle of the USA in 1988, the systemization plan which had as its aim the destruction of villages, the introduction of the food-ticket.

¹³ During after the Hungarian events of 1956 the leaders of the Transylvanian (mostly Hungarian) students movements were imprisoned (most of them in 1959), the strike of colliers of the Jil-Valley in 1977 – for two days they kept hostage the Prime Minister himself in one of the galleries – was of an economic nature, also the demonstration in Brașov on the 15th of November 1985. None of the above mentioned acts meant a real threat to the regime.

¹⁴ I don't wish to minimize the actions of those who were imprisoned due to their political behavior and to their ideology. But this isolated cases – due to their emphasis and to the fact that the "public opinion" did not know about them – didn't form a considerable force against the regime, they didn't form a structural alternative either. We can talk about two types of dissident lines. Those who were once the "apostles" of the party and who criticized the way of the leading and not the regime, respectively the protesting intellectuals who criticized a regime, urged the democracy and righted against the regime at the very end of the 80's. To the latest can be ranked A. Blandiana, M. Dinescu or D. Cornea, Tőkés L. and the poet Dan Petrescu who published a notice that the secretary-general will not be reelected; but behind this persons there was no a strong civil organization that could have offered a dissident alternative. Furthermore one must mention the publication called "Counterpoints" which was edited in 1914 by Hungarian intellectuals. The signers of the Letter of the Six were the communist personalities that "lost grace" (Gh. Apostol, ex-secretary-general; Al. Bârlădeanu, ex-member of the Polit Bureau and assistant-Prime Minister; C. Pârvulescu, the founding member of the RCP; C. Mănescu, ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs and President of the UNO General assembly; G. Răceanu, veteran party member; S. Brucan, former ambassador in Washington and chief editor of Scânteia – the central news-paper of the party) who in march 1989 accused the dictator that he violated human rights, he alienated the alien countries, he undermined the national economy, he didn't respect the signed Pact of Helsinki and they also urged him to stop the systematization. This was actually the strongest attack on the leadership. On the XII. Congress Gh Apostol accused Ceaușescu that he didn't follow the right way of the RCP. One must also mention D Mazilu's Report made for the Human Right

Central East European sense - such as the Charta 77 or the Solidarity, the Hungarian oppositional movements – there was no dissident, civic, alternative movement in Romania (Segert, 1993:5) not even reform group within the state party; a type of duplicity was rather characteristic to toward the regime in almost all level (see Kligman, 1998). Deriving from the particularities of the Romanian regime, which was called by Linz and Stephen “sultanistic regime” the actors of the pacted transition were missing. The reformer soft liners inside the communist party did not double the hard liner communist leadership, and in the non-existing opposition there were no moderates and radicals, and this was caused by the sultanistic character, which did not allow any kind of opposition anywhere (Linz-Stepan, 1996: 356). Thus in the total lack of civil sphere and the absence of reform aim and of counter-elite, the blank of second Habermasian public sphere there were no “turnout years”.¹⁵ Later this meant a real disadvantage both for elite and for the whole society. (By elite I mean the superior leadership of the party state and by counter-elite I refer to those mainly informal social groups, which don not possess any political power and based on their relation and commitment to democratic system and liberal set of values set themselves against the socialist order and are able to talk differently about the same social realities). In the lack of such actors there could not be developed a constructive dialogue between the state party and the society. That’s why in only in Romania (except Albania and a former Yugoslavia) could not be formed a structured imagination/apprehension about how the transition should take place and also the system of the positive goals could not be articulated, as well as the shape of the orientations which tended to the democratic values. Unlike in Hungary and Poland, in Romania the inexistence of dialogue made the formation of a minimal consensus between the elite ant the society regarding the reform of the system impossible. There could not be formed a commonly shared system of rules and goals which could have been followed in the relation and communication between the elite and the society and which it could have been connected to the axiological basis of the later

Committee of the UNO in 1988, which condemns Romania on the field of human rights. Source: www.libraryofcongress.org, the programs in romanian and hunarian language of Radio Free Europe and Mediafax, Péter László.

¹⁵ By second public sphere I mean the field of the discourses, which were formed in a sphere that differs from the dominant discourse due to the official ideology. On the relationship of the central dominant and alternative discourses see furthermore: M. Foucault: “*The Order of discourse*” in Holmi, III. Year, No 7, p. 858-889.

democratic institutional system. Due to the total absence of the second public sphere in Romania there could not formed a single counter discourse against the totalitarian ideology. The particularity of this counter-discourse (for example in Hungary, Poland or in the former Czechoslovakia) was “that its starting point was not formed (either thematically or linguistically) by Marxism but by everyday life” (Kuczi, 1992:16). Having its position between the everyday language and official ideology and using sociological system of notions and terms, the counter-discourse strove to express modernity, for it interpreted the society “as a result of the actions of the rationally choosing individuals” (Kuczi, 1992:23).

Those intellectuals who were not members of the communist party and who structured the counter-discourse offered actually another alternative: they secured a possibility of choice for the members of the society. The counter-elite (except Romania) spoke about the same social environment as the official ideology but using other notions and interpreting it in very different way. The constituent element of the content of the - sociological - counter-discourse was not the mechanical opposition against the ruling power: the actual verifiable reality was considered to be the only possible reality. It was about society, “which consisted of citizens who had the possibility to choose consumer products, place of work, their behavior at working place, school, values etc., who attached importance to these things and who had the possibility to decide on this matters” (Kuzci, 1992:42). Later this alternative, modern discourse obtained a particular institutional existence: it started to function as the Habermasian public sphere. Because it had legitimacy, and both the elite and counter-elite accepted its normativity, respectively the values out of which it was formed and became the organic part of commonly possessed political asset. Essentially I wish to emphasize the fact that in Romania for the lack of (all sort of) counter-elite, at the time of the outbreak of the revolution there was no group besides the state party officials, which could have had instrumental part in this transition¹⁶. Or which could have had a function of a political socialization in the now situation. In Romania at the beginning of the major social transition the transformation of the structure was carried out without taking into consideration the Schmitterian *democracy learning process*. In

¹⁶ This is also supported by the fact that the hardcore of the “historical parties”, which later formed the opposition against the NSF, returned to Romania from abroad. See Ion Raþiu, Radu Câmpeanu, two major senior leaders of the PNÐCD and PNL – the Peasant Party and the Liberal Party.

the other countries of the region the process of dialogue and finally the compromise had a new political culture generating and educating – learning function for both sides, this did not take place in Romania though.¹⁷ The lack of all kinds of creative and compromising communication between the elite and the society, the turnout – and with this I don't mean the revolutionary events but the democratization which supposed to follow the revolution – was not carried out by means of negotiations between the parties, with the efficient collaboration of the society, but with the bare physical presence of the members of the society.¹⁸ Thus transition determined by the sultanistic character and by the duplicity of the individuals during communism regime “could only begin with violence” (Linz-Stepa, 1996:357). The two ground constituents of democracy are competition and participation (Dahl, 1971). Competition means competing elites, but for the “shortage” of dissident movements before 1989 in the process of Romanian democratization the actors had to be “invented” first of all¹⁹, a strong and legitimate counter-elite had to be built, contrary to the other states of the region, where this process was carried out with legitimate actors and using an elaborated system of roles and rules. At the beginning of the transition Romania did not dispose of procedural consensus (Sartori, 1999:102), not even regarding the way of handling-managing the conflicts which would appear later (we will talk about this matter in detail later on). This also had to be elaborated at the start together with the counter-elite and with the civil society, which was merely being born. The civil society is free, that is it is independent from the dominium of the state and it forms the ground of modern democracy. This civil society consists of not merely political but private individuals and it presumes the political initiative of its members – the free citizens – and their all kind of social activities. This all had to be built (Marino, 1996:314) and only a “democratic minimum” could be reached (Tisnăneanu, 2001:76). These aspirations presumed also political culture – this would be another topic in the present study. The political culture is a comprehensive,

¹⁷ See furthermore G. Kligman – K. Verdery: “*Romania after Ceaușescu: Post-Communist Communism*” In. *Eastern Europe in revolution*, edited by Ivo Banac, Ithaca Cornell, 1992, p. 117-147.

¹⁸ Although some authors use it also in this meaning that is they think that the revolution was merely a “*coup d'état*” that was carried out smoothly, etc. See the about mentioned article of Pavel 1998, in *Polis/4*.

¹⁹ In the Parliament and Presidential elections of 1990 the NSF gets 77.3% of the seats in Senate and 68.0% of the seats in the House of Representatives. The presidential candidate Ion Iliescu got 85.7% of the votes, while Radu Câmpeanu had 10.64% and Ion Rațiu 4.29% of the votes (both of them returned from emigration after December 1989). Source: report by Mediafax, 1990, 25th of May.

axiomatic notion; the conceptual scheme of the political knowledge. From my point of view the political culture forms the content, which gives consistency to the democratic institutional system and makes connection – as a mediator – to the political system. The political culture²⁰ can be defined as the “orientation pattern” that denotes the facts and objects of the political system (especially to the parties, the magistrates, the constitution, the state, the executive power, the civil organizations, etc.). Is nourished by the social values and norms, the symbols, the commonly shared tradition, the collective memory, and its constant source is the political socialization. I mean all those social effects and – not necessarily conscious – processes by means of which the traditions, attitudes and political roles are formed and become steady. The social structure and the character of the political system determine the concrete content of the political culture, as well as its quality and the measure of its level. In the opinion of Almond and Verba the political culture has a differentiated meaning: they distinguish between the attitudes toward the political system and the attitudes toward other objectives even if the definition of the boundary between the political and the non-political spheres is far problematic. The political culture refers to the specific political orientations; it is a reaction toward the particular set of social processes and objects (Almond-Verba, 1996:33-69). A particular type of this is the civic culture, which refers to the largest context: it is a medium, which by means of the consensual social communication integrates the “old” with the “new” in the medium of plural culture. At the level of the individuals the constituent element of the political culture is the political attitude. The political attitudes can be methodologically distinguished from other orientations by means of their relation to political facts (see further Gabriel 1997, or Kavanagh 1972; Barnes-Kaase 1979; Ingelhart-Clark 1990; McKenna 1994; Lipset 1995; Örkény-Szabó 1998; Szabó 2000). In my opinion the political culture in a Romanian context as the knowledge that refers to the different dimensions of the politics and as the attitude toward a public life. Thus the political is a practical knowledge because it is strongly connected

²⁰ We can have some reserves about unconditioned application of the notion of political culture – regarding the applicability. The usage of notion, that mainly refers to West European and American context, as well as to knowledge’s and attitudes of political character which developed after the Latin American transition, is constrained: for lack of comprehensive empirical researches concerning the Central-East European region, the special literature uses this notion even related to this region. (See f.e. Szabó, 2000, Szabó-Örkény, 1997, Csepeli-German-Kéri-Stumpf, 1994).

to the participation: to the expression of opinions, to the solution of local and regional problems. It is not all the same how we approach the question of political knowledge: if we approach it from the knowledge of the citizens or from the direction of power. The former approach refers more to the pure political culture as a set of values, while the latter refers to the possibility of planning political institutions and processes (Lánczi, 2000:27) but in my interpretation the process of policy making is also part of the political culture because also contains the procedures and techniques of the conflict solving (Sartori, 1999:103).

The starting years of the Romanian democratization – up to 1996 but it was not confuted by the coalitional experiences either between 1996/2000 – were characterized by confrontation and by the impossibility of solving conflicts by means of consensus. In the beginning of the Romanian transition the identity of the dominating elite was given by its confrontation strategy. Right after the change in December 1989 the dominating elite marginalized the recipient political opposition, which gathered round the so-called historical parties²¹ and it also tried to delegitimize it (Kligman-Tismăneanu 2001:78) and to solve the conflicts by means of other conflicts. The identity of the opposition – the forming alternative political force, who held the functions of the counter-elite – was defined by its assumed anti-communist mission, which they publicly undertook. They qualified the power as crypto-communist and they waged “a moral civil war” against it until the death of their leader.²² The first period of the transition – mostly until 1996 - was characterized by a political partition, detachment having different nationalistic aspects. There was no constructive dialogue, no consensus and no search for compromise.²³ But who formed

²¹ National Liberal Party (PNL), Cristian Democrat National Peasant Party (PNȚCD), Romanian Social Democrat Party (PSDR). The PSDR merged in June 2001 with PDSR the Peasant Party and the National Liberal Party).

²² Corneliu Coposu, politician, member of the Peasant Party, jurist, he spent 17 years in jail as a political prisoner, the president of the Democratic Convention – the main oppositional gathering – he died in the fall of 1995.

²³ Here are a few moment of the attempt to solve conflict by means of other conflicts during the Romanian transition: **January 12., 1990**, national mourning day in the memory o those who died in the Revolution. 240.000 people are protesting in Bucharest and influenced by their demands Ion Iliescu declares the Romanian Communist Party illegal, he also publishes his intention to organize a referendum concerning the death penalty, which was abolished by the NSF on the 31st of Dec. 1989; **January 17.**, on its plenary session the NSF annuls its decisions made on the 12th of January; **January 25**, in his televised speech Ion iliescu draws the attention upon “extremist tendencies” in some Transylvanian countries; **January 28**, a protest of considerable proportions takes place on Victoria Square being organized by the PNȚCD, the PNL and the PDSR. Parallel the NSF organizes a counter-

these opposition groups? First of all the already mentioned “historical parties”, but they worked closely together with some groups of intellectuals from the civil society (the GDS – Group for Social Dialogue – the publishers of the weekly newspaper **22** and students organizations along with Civic Alliance) (see Nelson, 1992; Linz-Stepan, 1996; Tismăneanu, 1997). The students had an important role in events of December, even the victims of that happened on the University Square in June 1990 where in the first place students.

In this study, which we have already mentioned, Habermas points at the fact that in the examination of the political culture the students play an important role

protest. Brutal, violent conflicts take place between two sides, several people are injured, **January 29**, influenced by the requests made by Ion Iliescu in the medias, the miners go for the first time to Bucharest. More than 5.000 miners travel to the capital city in order to protect the NSF. On the same day five Roma households are set on fire in Reghin; **February 1**, The NSF agrees with the division of the power with the opposition formed by the historical parties. The PCNU (Provisional Council of National Unity) is formed and it takes the role of the Parliament until the 22nd of May; **February 18**, On Victoria Square protest against the government, and against the president takes place. The groups, which were armed with axes and iron bars manage to break into the building due to the unpreparedness of those who were defending the Governmental Palace; **February 19**, The miners travel for the second time to Bucharest. More than 4.000 miners arrive from the Jil-Valley to defend the NSF; **March 11**, In Timișoara, on the occasion to protest an anticommunist proclamation is adopted, which will be mentioned later as the Proclamation of Timișoara. Point nr.8, which caused a lot of debates, requests the legal prohibition of the participate of the ex-communist leaders and securitate agents; **March 18-19**, The clashes between the Hungarians and Romanians last for several days in Târgu-Mureș the consequences are tragic, there are several injured. Despite the requests of those who participated in the conflict Ion Iliescu refuses to go to Târgu-Mureș; **April 22**, A series of anti-communist protests are being held in Bucharest on University Square. The traffic is stopped for the first here as a sign as a protest; **June 13**, Protests in Bucharest. Since the Police responds very violently to the protests, the demonstrators break into the main building of the central police station and buildings of the Ministry of the Interior and of the TVR (Romanian Public State TV station); **June 14-15**, Two trains arrive from the Jil-Valley filled with miners, from the terrace of the Government Palace president Iliescu asks the miners to go to University Square “to make order” (Iliescu in his speech which was broadcasted in the Public Radio at 5a.m. June the 14th). There is terror in Bucharest, the miners disperse the demonstrators, there are several dead and injured; **October 15.**, First demonstration of the newly formed Civic Alliance, that supports anti-communism and democratic intelligentsia; **December 24**, Although initially the visit of King Michael to the country was authorized, the Government led by Ion Iliescu and Petre Roman has the king captured on the highway București-Pitești and force him to leave the country from the international Airport Otopeni; **December 25**, the first unsuccessful visit of king Michael. Entering the country without the permission of the authorities, he has to return. The demonstration of the students in Timișoara is supported by some labor unions. The request for general strike and demission of the Government are not very popular. **September 13, 1991**, the miners go for the fourth time to Bucharest. Since their request are not fulfilled by the Government, the miners, led by Miron Cosma, ravage Petroșani and they violently occupy the trains which go to Bucharest; **September 28**, The culmination and end of “the fourth visit” of the miners. After long conflict with the police the miners occupy the Cotroceni Palace and the building of the TVR. Their main request, the resignation of Petre Roman, is fulfilled by president Iliescu; **February 24, 1992**, In the Parliament senator Romulus Vulpeșcu urges to build concentration camps for Hungarians; **April 23**, With the occasion of the Easter Holiday King Michael visit Romania, more than one million people greet him. After this big event the Government prohibited any other kind of visit in the country, being afraid of the growing popularity of the king. **January 26-28, 1999**, The marching of the miners toward Bucharest, severe clashes with the police. Source: Mediafax, www.romania.ro, *Adevărul*, *România Liberă*, *Szabadság*, *Hargita népe*, *Ziua*, www.ziare.com, www.hhrf.org, Péter László.

because their mobility and structural role they are active participants of the public sphere and as a future intellectuals they form a reference group as opinion leaders of their community.

In the next part of my study I would like to make statements about the political culture of the “unfinished transition” based on three sociological surveys. I call the Romanian transition unfinished, because. 1. At the beginning of the overthrow of the “old”, communist regime there were no legitimate actors, which could carry out this major change in Romania. 2. The additional process of nation building and inbourgeoisement was not finished yet therefore the different nationalisms were/are flourishing after the change, which slowed/slows down the process of democratization. 3. Due to the slow development of the economic reforms the direction of the transition is not unambiguous. 4. This present state of the democratic formal institutional system does not fulfill completely the conditions of a stable democracy, although the institutional frames are given. 5. In the political sphere the dominant values are of a rather traditional, authoritarian nature (see Lamentowicz 1993; Linz-Stepan 1996; Nelson 1996; Tismăneanu 1997; Pásztor-Péter, 2001). With „unfinished transition” I mean essentially the condition, which is characterized by insufficient and inadequate political culture that should assure the optimal functioning of the political institutions. This can be modeled along three dimensions. On the level of the goals of the political actors: among the parties there is an important one, which is fundamentalist and he utilizes the rules and the resources in order to change the democratic character of the political system (the Great Romania Party). On the level of the behavior and attitude of the actors: the ambitions against democracy has a strong popular support, the GRP became the second largest political party in Romania after the 2000 general elections and his candidate qualified for the second run for Romanian presidency.²⁴ On the level of the constitutionalism the different political actors has different approach: the DAHR (Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania, the “ethnic Hungarian party”) - among others – has stricture with the passage of the declared national character of the state, the liberals complain about the lack of dispositions concerning the electoral system and private ownership, more other parties want to modify the function of the two Houses of the Parliament and the

²⁴ The Great Romania Party got 24 seats in the Senate while in the House of Representatives 65 seats in 2000.

role of the president. In this context the question of the political culture becomes significant. Out of this consideration in 1999 I initiated the carrying out of a public opinion survey,²⁵ which had as its focus the political culture. The survey was a part of a seminar activity connected to a series of lectures I held at the BBU having the topic “*Political Public Opinion and Public Sphere*”. Out of this initiative came to life the series of research called “*Civic Courage*” and some papers on this issue. With these researches I examined the state of the political culture among the Romanian and Hungarian students of BBU in December 1999, in January, March and November 2001. In the present study I will use three samples: one sample is representative for the ethnic Hungarian students, it consists of N=741 elements, and was recorded in January 2000, one which is representative for the ethnic Romanian students, it consists of N=793 elements and was recorded in March 2000 and finally one sample is again representative for ethnic Hungarian students, N=406 elements and was recorded in November 2000. The standard error is +/- 4,2% (P=0,95).²⁶

The notion of political culture (being aware that the shortcomings that are related to this notion) was operationalized as follows: on the axis of *knowledge – attitude – action*. Before getting into deeper analysis of the data I have to make one remark. From the perspective of social stratification, operating with the macro social parameters developed by Blau,²⁷ the BBU students form a fairly homogenous population. Blau differentiated two types of variables: the nominal and gradual variables. The nominal variables make a clear distinction between the social groups, distinguishing them according to race, religion, ethnicity, etc. The essence of the nominal variables is that the groups are not hierarchic. The gradual variables divide

²⁵ The questionnaire has six main blocks of question, which were in close connection with each other. The first part consisted of identifying questions and of questions that point to the social situation of the students. The second part measures the media consuming. This part models the attitudes towards political and public news and sources of information. The third part is the actual hard core of the research, which deals with the elections, with the intensity of the expected political participation, with the preferences and the expectations. This part models the question of political culture and political activity: the political attitudes and the ideological views, the conception of the future. The fourth part measures the attitudes and expectations towards student organizations. The fifth part deals with the question of the Hungarian University”. The last part examines the contextual dependencies of the usage of language.

²⁶ In the analysis of the statistic data Pásztor Gyöngyi helped me. Here I express my gratitude for her help. I'm also thankful to the sociologists Magyar Tivadar, Roman Dzambazovic and Horváth István, and György Csepeli, who gave me useful pieces of advice during my work, as well as to Gail Kligman, whose person and the useful talks I've had with her had a significant influence on the perspective of my work. I'm also grateful to my ex-4th year students with the help of whom designed the survey and made the recognitions.

articulates the society members on the basis of hierarchy (such as income, property, education and power). Income and age are also a gradual parameter. The students belong to the same peer group, their income is also approximately identical (they possess between 1,5 – 2,5 million ROL, around 50-80 USD at the moment of surveys), and their socio-cultural background is similar. The 95 percent of the interviewed students went to high school or technical school), as well as they leisure, and they dispose of similar resources; partly because they are attend the same university. Due to the homogeneity the statements regarding the political culture could only be segmented by the ethnic variable (Romanian – Hungarian), therefore I will discuss some results in this comparison. I will only present the results, which are statistically significant.

In the everyday life individuals need knowledge and information to find their way in the social space and to fully satisfy their goals. A part of the necessary amount of information is assimilated by individuals during their process of socialization; as it part of there culture they became familiar with those typified forms of knowledge which functions as recipe knowledge in their world and guide the daily routine of the everyday life, and which not only make the world understandable, but there are also indispensable for the social actions (Berger-Luckmann, 1997). On the other hand in the constantly changing circumstances culture is not able to provide new and actual information, so the significant of continuing inquiry is increasing (Angelusz, 1995:9). The mechanisms of the process are similar as far as the political information is concerned. During the process of the political socialization individuals make themselves masters of the fundamental information about the functions of the political system and the objects of political nature found in their immediate surroundings, but their opinions and attitudes are more and more formed and realized on the basis of actual information (compare with Carey, 1995:384). Our survey has made an attempt to chart the problem of actuality and need of information in two direction lines. One of these lines measured up the intensity in inquiry for political news and information and identified the sources of these news and information, while the other line attempted to establish the levels of knowledge the students hold.

Political knowledge and action are not necessarily directly proportional to each other, but they are in organic connection with the political values and opinions, and in

²⁷ On social parameters se Blau: *Inequality and Heterogeneity*, The University of Chicago Press, 1973.

the same time it significantly influences the life conception of individuals about their social and political environment. The level of political participation is also determined by the by knowledge that influences the processes and praxis which help the individual to enforce and make their different interest conscious (see Hennessy, 1968:173). Thus it is not coincidence that 80,3 percent of the ethnic Hungarian and 79 percent of the ethnic Romanian students follow the daily political and public news.

A slight difference in to be observed between the information obtaining economy of the two ethnic groups concerning the most important sources of political information. Among ethnic Hungarian students the most important source is the ProTV²⁸ (34,40 percent) of them follow this source several times a day or a week, respectively the BBC bulletin broadcast by one of the local FM radio stations from Cluj/Kolozsvár (25,98 percent also several times a day or a week). The Duna TV follows these sources with its 23,5 percent and next is the Romania public TVR1 (18,9 percent) and Antena1 (17,5 percent). The weekly edited and free distributed *Perspektiva – Perspective*, a paper of the Union of Hungarian Students from Cluj/Kolozsvár -, as it was considered being a political one by the students obtains 33,6 percent. It is also worth mentioning that the written media falls far behind the order of rank, with an average proportion of 14 percent. Among ethnic Romanian students the news broadcast by the Romanian FM radio stations stand first (including the BBC World Service news bulletin) with 70,2 percent, followed by the ProTV news (47,4 percent), and the Antena1 with its high proportion (35,8 percent). Daily papers in this case have a low proportion (around 15 percent).

The main difference between the two populations lies in the language of the information sources and the place of origin: the ethnic Hungarian students naturally (for them) marked as sources both the media in Romanian and Hungarian, while the ethnic Romanian students follow only the Romanian language media, having the radio as the main source. The first group inquires from polycentric media construction where the news reception of media of different nature appear with the same specific weight, while the second group obtains their information exclusively in Romanian

²⁸ The most popular TV station in Romania started its broadcast on 1st December 1995 this constituting an alternative to the public television, TVR1 being in monopoly situation until then. Antena1 is also a commercial TV station having close connection with the present government. The news bulletins in Romanian language of the BBC World Service broke into Romanian towns at the same time with the appearance of commercial FM radio stations. Duna TV is a Hungarian language TV station which broadcasts for the Carpatian Basin.

language and mostly from local FM radio stations. The common element in the intelligence pattern is constituted by the slight significance of the written media.

The source of information is at the same time a political socialization establishment due to the procedure of news selection, the type of offered information, their tone and philosophy (compare Hennessy, 1968). That is why it is not enough to examine the order of ranks of cognitive sources of political socialization by itself. It is necessary to measure up the degree of attainments of factual knowledge about politics, too. Formulating the questions²⁹ regarding the internal establishments and the functioning of the university (students rights and possibilities), as well as the Romanian and Hungarian state politics I followed the hypothesis that the praxis and techniques of knowledge acquisition is connected to the admitted system of values. The specific literature distinguishes between two categories of political knowledge: factual and background political knowledge, that is the knowledge of political facts, events and persons, respectively the owning of more complex and abstract knowledge and connections - notions, ideas, conceptions, doctrines, ideologies, that presumes the information of deeper relations. These two types of knowledge mutually presume each other: they are based on information and reference readings. During the political socialization – regularly in every cycle of life - approximately 20 percent of the political knowledge is coming from school and family, the rest of them comes from different sources of mass media.³⁰

The proportion of the right answers given for the above-mentioned knowledge is represented in the next table:

²⁹ The questions were drowning up before accomplishing the survey, during two focus group discussions, with participation of students.

³⁰ See Zaller J.D.: The Nature and origin of Mass opinion, Cup, 1994 and Janda-Berry-Goldman:Public Opinion, In The Challenge of Democracy, 2nd edition, Houghton-Mifflin, Boston, 1992

Table Nr. 1. The Proportion of the Right Answers

Statements		The Proportion of the Right Answers	
		Hungarian Sample N-741, 2000 January	Romanian Sample N-793, 2000 March
Regarding domestic politics (Romania)	<i>The name of Foreign Minister</i>	25,1	77,1
	<i>The name of major opponent party</i>	59,9	88,7
Regarding foreign politics	<i>The number of EU member states</i>	23,2	39,9
	<i>The means of OSCE</i>	13,5	39,0
Regarding political issues in relation with Hungary and DAHR	<i>At least two DHAR fractions</i>	31,7	-
	<i>What happened at 11 of December 2000</i>	17,7	18,2
	<i>The name of major opponent party in Hungary</i>	21,6	25,9
	<i>Number of Ministers held by DAHR</i>	34,5	-
Regarding to academic rights	<i>The Charta of BBU</i>	37,5	35,7
	<i>At least two student union</i>	39,4	43,3
	<i>The number of exams</i>	38,2	86,7

The proportion of the correct answers in both samples is below 50 percent (Romanian sample – 45,45 percent, the Hungarian sample – 31,12 percent, the average is 38,26 percent). At the same time we can state that the informational baggage of ethnic Hungarian students falls behind: ethnic Romanian students dispose of more correct information, which is highest regarding the Romanian state politics, but surprisingly remains highest even regarding the Hungarian state politics, too. This can be explained with the divergent and convergent nature of the already mentioned intelligence economy: the ethnic Hungarian students inquire information from many sources but with ‘weak bounds’ (less concentrated), while the other group obtain their information with “strong bonds” (one major source, more concentrated). The above-mentioned argument is supported by the nature of the Hungarian language media in Romania and public sphere in general³¹. (The baggage of information does not correlate with either identifying variables – age, gender, specialization, material situation). Besides the information issue (as a direct content of political socialization) cultural environment pay a significant role in the formation of political-ideological attitudes, the latter having a mutual relationship with the former, and it serves as a frame of the political socialization. Interaction is a two-way process. The two-way of

³¹ See Magyari Tivadar: *The Hungarian Media in Romania*, Médiakutató, 2001/1.

the mutual relationship consist in the fact that the individual can oppose or negotiate between the alternatives offered by his/her environment; this is how mental habits, attitudes toward political values, sentimental identification with significant others, and ideological preferences are formed (Dancu, 1999; Verba, 1996; Hennessy, 1968). I used a constructed scale characteristic to the main ideological types (“socialist” – “liberal”-“conservative”) to find out the political-ideological affinities.³²

The results of analysis are presented in the following table.

Table Nr. 2. A. The political attitudes of the Hungarian students / BBU Cluj/Kolozsvár

Factors N-741, 2000 January	Items	Weights
1. “Collectivist” and “social-liberal” attitude (24,2%)	In society the order and the unity must prevail.	0,808
	In the good society all members has to partake in wealth and appreciation according their merits and capabilities.	0,636
	The state has to provide for everyone the social and medical assistance for free.	0,624
2. “Individualist” and “quasi-attetativist” attitude (18,4%)	The lower the role of state in economy the better.	0,734
	In the good society all members are equal in wealth and merit.	0,623
	In society the differences among people are right so the ones has are legitimate rule .	0,616

Table Nr. 2. A. The political attitudes of the Romanian students / BBU Cluj/Kolozsvár

Factors N-793, 2000 May	Items	Weights
1. “Liberal” attitude (23,9%)	The lower the role of state in economy the better.	0,808
	In the good society all members has to partake in wealth and appreciation according their merits and capabilities.	0,708
2. “Corporatist” attitude ” (21,56%)	The state has to provide for everyone the social and medical assistance for free	0,769
	In society the order and the unity must prevail.	0,749
3. “Pro community and equality” attitude (17,20%)	In society the differences among people are right so the ones has are legitimate rule .	-0,721
	In the good society all members are equal in wealth and merit	0,787

³² My attention was directed to the problems of measuring up the political-ideological attitude by the fact that during the focus group discussion students were not able to place themselves an a left-right scale. The following statement is exemplary: “I am by no means a communist” ME, student in the first year. So we asked our interviews to express their degree of agreement a regular liker scale from 1 to 5 with the listed statements.

The factor analysis confirmed the hypothesis that the students cannot be placed on one certain point of left – right continuum scale, that there are no “clear” types. Apparently we can state that there is a kind of perceptible difference as far as the political-ideological attitude of the ethnic Hungarian and Romanian students is concerned. In the former case students can be divided into two segments with almost the same emphasis, while in the latter case three segments are distinguished with mostly similar weight. The attitude of ethnic Hungarian students form the *collectivist – social-liberal* and *individualist – quasi-antietatist* clusters along the concepts of 1. *order, merit* and *equal and free access for services* and respectively along the concepts of 2. *weak state, equality* and *free competition*. In this respect the two clusters at first sight can reflect a double segmentation present in the Hungarian’s ethnic minority public life and in public discourses – along the moderates and radicals, along the modernist and traditionalist wing of DAHR.

The case of Romanian student in this respect forms the *liberal, corporatist* and *pro community and equality* clusters along the concepts of 1. *Weak state* and *free competition*, and 2. *equal and free access for services, order* respectively 3. *refusal of meritocracy based on difference* and *equality*. In the case of ethnic Romanian students there is to be observed the more craggy liberal demand, respectively the demand that is socialist but at the same time supporter of the order, and finally the paternal demand for social equality. In the case of the ethnic Hungarian students the two segments only apparently form independent clusters. We can in the case of each cluster that their “identities” are somehow different but they don not form classical attitudes (at the same time fragmented along them, inside) in its classical/canonical sense (except maybe the consistent liberalism of some Romanian students). That is to say the values of left and right³³ side appear in the attitudes mixed at the same time.

If we compare our analysis with the attitude toward different establishments the similarity between the two samples becomes more obvious and the drawing of boundaries between different clusters becomes more problematic. Those belonging to every cluster have a positive opinion about popular traditions (with average values of 4,09 and 3,88 points – the lower the better opinion - of Hungarian and Romanian students) about Churches (3,68 and 3,84 points), labor unions (3,17 and 3,18) namely

³³ Obviously we are aware of the methodological problems and difficulties of other nature of the political left and right side division. We have made an attempt to model up the ideal typical attitudes

about the institutions expressing traditional authority. At the same time they have bad opinion about the Parliament (2,65 and 2,23), politicians (2,26 and 1,91), about the most important requirements of democratic pluralism (the opinion of students belonging to different clusters about the above mentioned institutions shows the same division). Some form of the function of the state is significant in each of the above-mentioned clusters. The attitude of Hungarian students in the collectivistic-quasi-antitaxistic cluster is only partly hostile towards state establishments. The minority from Romania functions as a quasi-society. Some authors talk about Transylvanian Hungarian society (see Bíró, 1993), where a strongly ethnicized para-state exists, having the role of the state: the DAHR.

The “refused state” is the Romanian state, towards which the minorities give evidence of a hostile attitude (Csepeli-Örkény-Székely, 2000), but the competencies are taken over by the para-state DOHR, so this cluster also contains paternal and mainly ethnicized elements. The role of the state appears mingled in the clusters, too. According to the literature referring to this, in the individual-state relationship we have to take into consideration two significant interpretations. One of them is the individualistic-instrumentalist model that can be traced back to Locke, having its roots in liberalism, standing on the grounds of natural law; the other is the Aristotelian communitarian Ethical interpretation of state theory. In the former case the individual opposes the state in the role of a membership laying the foundation of the legal condition, and the individuals are external to the state, they contribute to its reconstruction with votes and taxes, in exchange they are provided union services. Individuals considered as private persons wish to enforce their interests opposed to the state. In the latter model individuals integrate into the political community through belonging to an ethnical-cultural community as parts of the whole, in a way that allows them to develop their personal and social identities only within the frames of the common traditions and acknowledged political establishment, this being actualized within the practice of the collective self-definition, taking notice of the authorial and economical differences and at the same time accepting them (Habermas, 1993, 4). In the attitudes of students all these elements are mingled, this argument being supported by the fact that the division of party preferences Romanian students do not correlate with the character of clusters.

The votes of students belonging to different clusters do not follow the ideology of their attitude. In the case of Hungarian students the question of party preference does

not mean a sociological problem, but it supports the above-mentioned elements: 90% of the votes are ethnical votes, and they are collected by DAHR³⁴.

The political ideological attitude of students and their attitude towards political establishments can be interpreted in a “might led” diffuse model. This state can be best characterized by the notion of the “hybrid political culture”. Tismăneanu considers its explanation to be in the (communist and pre-communist) cultural and political inheritance of the past (Tismăneanu, 1997, 406). The hybrid state signifies a low public activism and a intolerant attitude toward others (traditionally towards minorities, but also towards any kind of culturally different group), respectively paternalism, and being against the state and solidarity at the same time.

The hybrid political culture, as the alloy of the leninist past and the undertaken elements of the nationalistic trend, with the primitive forums of pluralism, can be defined in the search of the third way (Tismăneanu, 1997, 406). According to the typology devised by Almond-Verba, the hybrid political culture is a special combination of the dependent and the participative political culture, where parochial elements also have their roles. In the case of subjective, dependent political culture the orientations of individual focus on the whole of the political system, respectively on its decisional and implementation aspects, but at the same time they are characterized by a low level of reluctance of interest enforcement of individuals and communities. In societies, whose members are characterized by participative political culture, citizens dispose of basic knowledge about their political surroundings: about characters, roles, about the political system, they are aware of their own interests, and they have political demands in accordance with this, realized in public. Their participation is based on a well-articulated set of information, on a reluctance of communication, a reluctance accepting different opinions. In our case students being characterized by a hybrid state show the characteristic of the political culture allowing the passive-parochial and the passive-participant character as well that is to say they are interested only in local politics, their activity is reduced to the participation in elections within the weak local and the strong central institutional frames, having ambivalent opinions about them.

It is doubtless that there are some relations when the students can be mobilized (see details below), but in this case the participant character is the passive/dependent

³⁴ About the students of the BBU who do not vote on the DAHR, see Gál László's study, *The Electoral*

parochial culture. This is supported by the fact that the appropriate informational baggage of students is of medium level, the personal communicational coarsest are cut short (communication does not break through ethnic boundaries, during their free time activities they establish face-to-face interactions with members of the same ethnicity in a percentage of 95, and they discuss political problems with members of other ethnicities in a slight percentages), and the degree of tolerance is also low. The tolerance-index³⁵ of Hungarian students towards Romanian students on the scale measuring social distance is 3.40, in the reversed situation is 2.62, the index of the distance towards Roma is 5.53 and 4.92 points (from the students of Hungarian and Romanian nationality). To support the above-mentioned arguments we will examine the student's strategies of interest enforcement, the direct participation in politics and the union membership.

We measured the problem of interest enforcement with the different levels of the reluctance shown in assistance at signature collection for communal purposes. We ask our respondents to place themselves on a scale with the following degrees: would collect signatures, would sign, not interested, disagree, distrustful of its success. According to the results Hungarian students would actively participate in a signature collection in a percentage of 11.38% and 77.2% of them would sign a petition. In the Romanian pattern the percentage distribution is 12.26% and 46.28%. After the factor analysis of the question groups applied for the measurement of interest enforced the following picture has become distinct: Hungarian students can mostly be mobilized in the interest of political rights, while Romanian students can be mobilized for rights of social nature. In the case of Hungarian students the explanation is due to the above-mentioned ethnicized public life. This state is in close connection with the conception about the situation of the Hungarian minority from Romania, with the national-communist character of the former system, with the confrontative conflict management of the post-Decembrist transition in Romania, and with the public debates on this theme as well.

The former communist system applied an assimilating homogenizing policy with minorities (Nelson, 1992; Kligman, 1998; Roth, 2000), which caused a kind of isolation and distrust among minorities. Due to the change in 1989 the official policy

Preferences of Ethnic Hungarian Students in BBU, manuscript, 2001.

³⁵ On a scale from 1 to 6 where 1 is the lowest social distance (Bogardus scale), the average value.

of the Hungarian community was characterized by the demand of the satisfaction of the demands on minority right and amends as well as the fight for civic rights, sometimes with nationalistic tones. “The fight for political rights” has become a norm in the climate of the media effect realizing the ethnical discourse of minority elite (for details see Magyari, 2000). The fact, that factors do not correlate neither with the respondents gender, material situation or union membership, supports the high reluctance of interest enforcement of the Hungarian pattern shown for political purposes. The difference between the two patterns is dependent of nationality; this is the factor that explains the discrepancy between the aims of interest enforcement.

Table 3. The student’s reluctance of interest endorsed – signature collecting and assistance. Hungarian Sample

Factors	Items	Factor weight
Political right enforcement (46,4%)	Romanian student unions for the student’s representation in the senate of University	0,861
	UHSC for the Hungarian representation in the senate	0,751
	Feminists for the representation in the Parliament	0,606
Social right enforcement (17,4%)	Student Unions for the improvement of the social situation	0,540
	Greens for combines polluting the environment	0,486

Table 4. The student’s reluctance of interest endorsed – signature collecting and assistance. Romanian Sample

Factors	Items	Factor weight
Social right enforcement (29,4%)	Student Unions for rights similar of those from Bassarabia	0,659
	Student Unions for the improvement of the social situation	0,592
Political right enforcement (20,2%)	Feminists for the representation in the Parliament	0,464
	UHSC for the Hungarian representation in the senate	0,458
	Student Unions for the improvement of the social situation	-0,526

The purpose of the political participation is to make acceptance of political decision easier for the individuals, and at the same time it “increases the commitment of the people towards community, as well as it makes them conscious of the boundaries between the private and the public”(Paterman, quoted by Lánçzi, 2000:206). Anthony birch distinguishes between levels of political participation: voting at local and national elections, participation and plebiscites, assistance of candidates in campaign, active membership of a party, active participation as the member of an active group, participation in political meetings and demonstrations, the practice of a form of civil

disobedience (e.g. the refusal of tax-paying), participation in the council of the government, participation in different communal actions (e.g. contribution to the local environmental problems) accepting voluntary help in the work of other organizations for the protection of consumers and interests. (Birth, 1993:81). Adopting this model the degree and intensity of participation could be measured.

Table Nr. 5. Forms of public protest, percentage distribution

Forms of protest	Participation of students, Hungarian sample	Participation of students, Romanian sample
Signing a petition	25,7	47,2
Drafting a petition	16,0	14,1
Writing an article	7,9	30,1
Writing to a member of Parliament	0,3	1,8
Participation in a meeting, protest	9,9	4,8
Going on strike	38,6	1,4
Participation in a traffic blockade	1,6	0,6

Table Nr. 6. Degrees of political participation, percentage distribution

Activism	Hungarian sample	Romanian sample
I'm not interested in politics, so I don't vote	5,7	16,9
I'm not very interested in politics, but I vote	77,1	67,9
I vote and I participate in meetings	7,7	3,4
I've already participated in protests and / or signing out posters and / or collecting signature	6,5	1,0
I've already organized political meets or protest	0,1	0
I take an active part in politics but I do not have a charge	2,2	0,8
I have a charge in political organizations	0	1,0
I am the leader of a political party / group	0	0,4

The two populations in this case show some differences, for example depending on the “strength” of the forms of protest they would enforce their interest by different means (most of the Romanian students would rather adopt peaceful measures – petition, article – and compared to Hungarian students, they would participate in meetings, protests, strikes or traffic blockades in a lower proportion). However they give preference to forms of protest demanding little implication (petitions, meeting, strike) contrary to personal manifestations. At the same time both populations “remain” within the frames of the hybrid political culture, that is to say there is to be observed a relatively intense disinterest in politics, even if most of them accomplish their duty to vote.

In respect of the union membership 63.4% of the ethnic Hungarian students and 16% of the Hungarian students answered that they were the members of some organizations. The difference is big at first sight, but 79.7% of ethnic Hungarian students disposing of union membership are the members (mostly passive members with 66.9) of the UHSC³⁶.

Conclusion

In my study I have made an attempt to establish some assertions in respect of the Romanian transition, with reference to the political culture of the students of the BBU from Cluj. The hypotheses – namely that the present political culture is significantly determined by the different traditions – are verified by the data. Both patterns are characterized by political passivity, political reduced to voting, social intolerance and hybrid political culture. The general passivity can be interpreted as a traditional method compensating the present feeling of surrender of the political culture of the period before 1989.

Based on the surveys, we can assert that the trust towards democratic systems of establishment is lower than the feeling of emotional closeness, towards establishments characterized by traditional authoritarian patterns, it is lower than the degree of affective identification: the popularity of the army, popular traditions, the Church and the popularity of labor unions are high. Political participation and civil activity on the level of actions are reduced to the signing of petitions initiated by civil organizations and different alternative movements, they can be hardly mobilized for the enforcement of their own interest, they give assistance in high proportions to the role of the state managing the equal share of goods – parallel to the lack of knowledge of procedures and techniques connected to citizenship, enforcing civil interests. In Riesman's usage of notion the state of political participation can be described with the indifferent type: the intensity of activity is low, competency is low and negative because of the inaccurate knowledge of the political system, or the affective relationship with political events is ambivalent (Riesman, 1950:505).

³⁶ On the UHSC (Union of Ethnic Hungarian Students from Cluj) and its membership see Pásztor Gyöngyi: The Political Action Patterns of Ethnic Hungarian Students of the BBU from Cluj, 2001, Sapientia Study, Cluj/Kolozsvar, manuscript, being published

After the survey I have come to conclusion that the connection between the political socialization practice before 1989 and the present situation is closer than it was thought. This connection can be structured along two co-ordinates: the (formal) frame of the political socialization, before 1989 and the reaction upon it respectively the inherited content, where the attitude towards authoritarian establishments is a significant element. The communist system from Romania set itself as an aim to build a society with no social classes and material differences through the establishments of the direct political socialization, an aim that presumed a new civic model. The “new men” presumed a socialist man characterized by a qualitatively other morality and worth³⁷. In the praxis of developing the “new man” the family became opposed to the other political socialization agents, and switched on to a reactive, defensive socialization practice, which “made him be the scene of prohibitions and negativisms” (Szabó, 2000:45), because in totalitarian systems the political system directly penetrates into the communicational process of the family and parents do not expound nonconformist opinions because of the possibility of unintentional treason” (Verba, 1996: 326) to avoid the morozovian cases.

The family has become the scene of political distance, where avoiding political conflicts has become a norm. In the process of double socialization³⁸ the role of the family is surpassed, “while all domains of life have been submitted to homogenization by power” (Kligman, 1998: 34). In the interest of forming the “new man” the individual was integrated with strong pressure into the frames of such establishments as the party, the communist youth unions, professional unions which attempted to accomplish the reconstruction of nation through the spending and enforcement of the extreme forms of dependent political culture³⁹ (see Kligman, 1998). The other significant elements of the political socialization process before 1989 are the indirect contents. In this respect the cultivation of attitudes towards authoritarian power centers is a problem of special importance. The oppressed “role of authoritarian forms has always been present in the Romanian political culture” (Gilberg, 1996:95), not only during the communist period between the First and Second World Wars, besides

³⁷ The codex of the new morality was The Code of Principles and Forms of Work and of Communist Life In. Ethics and Social Fairness

³⁸ On double socialization see Szabó Ildikó's study: The Nationalization of Men, Glance, 1991 or in The children of the Party State, 2000, Új Mandátum, Budapest

antidemocratic. Practically, since 1938 neither the political systems has been democratic in Romania until 1989 (royal dictatorship between 1938-1940, fascist-militarist dictatorship during 1940-1944 and the communist dictatorship since 1947).

The social embodiment of authoritarian dominant conditions have structural antecedents in Romania, which can be traced back to “the great psychological distance that separated the everyday man from local administration and central political power” (Gilberg, 1996:87) and this resulted in the individual’s life operating on two levels on one hand on the level of the family and the local communities, and on the other hand on the level of political power – the discrepancy between them being surmounted by “nationalism and ethno-chauvinism” (Gilberg, 1996:88), the reaction of the minority being an aversive nationalism arisen from minority neurosis. (Further elements of this attitude are anti-urbanism and anti-intelligentsia). These traditions were passed on by the communist system, preserving its nature in the form of the mentioned national-communism.

One of the attempts to surmount the local-central tension was “cynical of the everyday man trying to draw a line between to two levels, constantly breaking it, and following the norms that were important for them to survive” (Gilberg, 1996:87). This generated the praxis of selective keeping/ breaking of the formal-normative frames; “organic” relationship with the central power is also due to the attempt to surmount the distances. That is why both ambitions and attitude towards the state are present (sometimes at the same time) in the hybrid political culture of the unfinished transition, independent of ethnicity.

³⁹ The Falcons of Our Fatherland, the Pioneers, the ODEUS, FEDEUS...

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