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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE AND  
SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE POLITICAL CULTURE

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**Abstract:** The political culture of the digital age brings with it new challenges. On the one hand, we are exposed to a new dynamic and a change of perspective brought to political communication by the intervention of Artificial Intelligence and the increasingly significant role played by virtual space and social networks. On the other hand, the demands of the promoters of Cultural Intelligence and Spiritual Intelligence to remain in the main trend of local and global political practices are intensifying.

We analyzed the relationship between Cultural Intelligence, Spiritual Intelligence and Artificial Intelligence within political culture. The three forms of intelligence are convergent. With the development of communication technologies and social networks, Artificial Intelligence, even if it cannot act as a moral agent, determines a radical change in terms of the structuring of political communication, influencing strategies and mechanisms for generating content regarding values and meaning. Cultural Intelligence, understood as the ability to adapt effectively to multicultural contexts and diversity, plays an important role in the pluralistic and axiological practices of democratic society. Spiritual Intelligence, understood as the ability to reflect on the meaning of life, values and transcendence, to generate responsibility and moral legitimacy, can contribute to relationships based on authenticity in political practices. In the digital age, the convergence between Cultural Intelligence and Spiritual Intelligence contributes to overcoming ethnocentrism, fundamentalism and extremism, to recognizing the values of otherness and respect for diversity, to cultivating pluralism, dialogue and the common good in the practices of democratic political culture.

**Key words:** Cultural Intelligence, Spiritual Intelligence, Artificial Intelligence, political culture, diversity, otherness, political communication, communication technologies

## 1. Introduction

The growing importance of debates on Artificial Intelligence is accompanied by a greater prominence of theories and practices regarding other types of Intelligence, including Cultural Intelligence and Spiritual Intelligence. Thus, current attempts to draw the main lines of digital culture are accompanied by re-significations of culture in general and nuances in the understanding of political culture. What Marshall McLuhan (1994) expressed through the metaphor of the global village becomes a more vivid reality than ever with the development of social networks and Artificial Intelligence. Within the global village, new challenges arise regarding dialogue and coexistence, the transgression of borders and their nuance, respect for human rights, the rights of cultural minorities, those of religious minorities, the right to cultural modeling and redefinition of identity, including alternative identities, debates brought about by ecological issues, gender politics, ideological conflicts, etc.

We are witnessing a global phenomenon in which, in Romania, in various European countries and internationally, diversity policies are being called into question. Intolerance, anti-minority, anti-diversity and anti-pluralist policies tend to become part of the main trend of political discourses and practices. In this context, policies regarding the affirmation of pluralism, dialogue and diversity must be at the center of the concerns of political leaders, political and cultural communities, but also in the attention of each individual. Cultivating Cultural Intelligence and Spiritual Intelligence should facilitate a better understanding of the behaviors of individuals belonging to alternative subcultures, including those who identify with various digital subcultures, of the customs of ethno-cultural groups that configure particular identities and cultures, as well as the tendency of some people to assume the culture of a certain political party or the specific practices of a religious group.

## 2. Cultural Intelligence and Politics

Cultural Intelligence (CQ) is born in the field of economic practices of organizations operating in multicultural contexts of global relations. Individuals engaged in labor relations and social interactions find themselves in a situation of coexisting with multicultural, ideological, generational diversity, but also with the radical otherness of non-human entities represented by Artificial Intelligence. Cultivating Cultural Intelligence becomes a beneficial factor for professional relations and for a harmonious atmosphere at work. Building positive attitudes towards

otherness can manifest itself not only in the field of labor relations in economic fields, but also in the sphere of involvement in political communication and participation in political life. Thus, the beneficial aspects of interpersonal communication and coexistence with otherness can also be seen in terms of the practices of political organizations and their members, regarding political communication used as a factor for increasing success in political life and developing relationships specific to democratic society.

Such statements are supported primarily by the way Cultural Intelligence is circumscribed by theorists Christopher Earley and Soon Ang, who enshrine this concept in their 2003 work and develop it in subsequent research (Earley, Ang 2003; Ang, Van Dyne 2008; Earley, Ang, Tan 2006).

Cultural Intelligence adds to the debate on the need to develop different forms of intelligence with the increasing importance of social networks and Artificial Intelligence in concrete situations of personal, organizational and public activity. If we consider that Cultural Intelligence refers to “a person’s capacity to adapt to new cultural contexts” (Earley, Ang 2003, 59), we see its importance within the phenomena of globalization, the growth of cultural, spiritual, religious and ideological diversity, the diversification of lifestyles and practices of everyday relationships.

Recent studies show that people with high Cultural Intelligence adapt more easily to the challenges of diversity in general and political cultural diversity in particular. However, theorists have not established the existence of a correlation between Cultural Intelligence (CQ) and General Intelligence measured as Intelligence Quotient (IQ). If we look at this issue from the perspective of political communication and practices, we cannot establish a correlation between the level of General Intelligence (IQ) and democratic policy options, even if we can say that people with more developed Cultural Intelligence have a greater tendency to orient themselves towards the practices assumed by democratic political culture (Li 2020).

From a study applied to cultural contexts, we learn that a person’s General Intelligence, in the sense of IQ, does not play a significant role in choosing a political ideology or identifying with a particular political party. It is not the level of IQ intelligence, but rather social and cultural values that are decisive. At the same time, the authors of the study reveal that the most intelligent people are not always the ones who promote the best democratic policies, which entitles them to conclude that intelligence and wisdom are not the same thing (Bell et al. 2020, 7). Given that Cultural Intelligence (CQ) involves practical and efficient adaptation to contexts in which a multitude of forms of ideological, racial, religious, social, organizational diversity, etc. are manifested, there is the premise that people who have cultivated this type of intelligence are more open to

democratic options characterized by diversity. All these aspects become significant in interpersonal relationships, but especially in communication on social networks. It is in the logic of a culture of diversity that individuals' preferences are influenced by institutionalized religious frameworks, by the spirituality of the community, by the way different generations relate to diversity. These influences are also found in terms of political orientation and preferences in the diversity of their manifestations, even when discussing the unitary construction of a political culture (Livermore 2010).

Today, there is talk of shaping a new global order. The importance of Cultural Intelligence and intercultural communication in international political practices is obvious. In both domestic and international settings, multicultural diversity management skills can ensure good relationship management, confidence building and the development of effective policies. As a strategic political resource, Cultural Intelligence brings with it the recognition of multiple identities, the reduction of polarization, the understanding of the cultural codes that accompany diplomatic language. It plays an essential role in international negotiations, in reducing conflicts, in streamlining the activities of economic organizations, in amplifying cultural interactions and in multiple strategies of global governance (Ang and Van Dyne 2008; Sen 2006; Dinu et al. 2025; Mammadov, Wald 2025).

### 3. Spiritual Intelligence, Artificial Intelligence and Politics

In our analyses of Spiritual Intelligence, we usually use as a starting point the reflections proposed by Danah Zohar and Ian Marshall (2011, 2004), but also those of other authors such as Robert A. Emmons (2000) or Frances Vaughan (2002). Because here we discuss in a context of the valorization of Artificial Intelligence, we preferred a definition offered by ChatGPT: "Spiritual intelligence is a person's capacity to understand the deeper meaning of life, to reflect on values, purpose, and connection with something greater than oneself (which may be God, the universe, nature, or one's inner self). It involves the use of awareness and reflection to guide thinking, emotions, and actions in an authentic and meaningful way" (OpenAI 2026).

As can be seen from this definition, Spiritual Intelligence is about the practical dimension. As with other authors, we have the idea here that Spiritual intelligence refers to the ability of the human being to solve problems related to the meaning of life, ultimate reality, to assume the sphere of values, to live in accordance with them, to use spiritual resources to solve problems, as well as a reflective dimension that involves connection, inner balance and understanding the mysteries of existence.

When we talk about Spiritual Intelligence, we have in mind a broad, cultural sense of spirituality. It can involve religion but is not strictly dependent on it. Spirituality can exist outside of religion, even if it is often linked to religious contexts, and sometimes we use the terms spirituality and religion as if they were interchangeable. It is most appropriate to conceive of the two terms as complementary. Religion considers a system of institutions, practices and beliefs through which man perceives the manifestation of the sacred in the world (Durkheim 1995; Stăniloae 1986), while spirituality is based on inner experiences, on introspection, on the search for meaning in relation to an ultimate reality, it claims authenticity and inner transformation – sometimes assuming the mystical triad: purification, enlightenment, deification (Zsolnai, Flanagan 2019; Guenther, Li, Scheidt 2025). The two are different, but they are in a continuous state of dialogue in the search for transcendence and in the practice of moral values. Religion can provide the general and institutional frameworks of the construction of meaning and symbolic consciousness, and spirituality, without necessarily having a confessional dimension, can fill the personal and community structure of religion with content and lived experiences. The appetite of contemporary man for spirituality must be understood in direct relation to the metamorphoses that religion undergoes with postmodernity. It becomes more internalized and reflects the individual's concerns to build a meaningful existence starting from the personal self. Religion is not eliminated with the secularization brought by the modern world. It remains important especially from the perspective of personal religious experience, it becomes more reflexive, internalized and configured around the individual self (Taylor, 2007).

Deep transformations are taking place with the digital age. Artificial Intelligence brings major challenges to religion, spirituality and Spiritual Intelligence. It determines profound changes in the way in which the human being thinks about his values, the meaning of life, the relationship with transcendence.

Although Artificial Intelligence, as part of robotic technologies, is technological, and Spiritual Intelligence, as part of human intelligence, is metaphysical and axiological, although they belong to different registers of the understanding of intelligence, they interfere at the level of personal assumption, of the way in which ethical dilemmas are problematized or at the level of essential practices for the human being.

In discussing the relationship between the two types of intelligence, the dominant tendency is to highlight that while Spiritual Intelligence targets the inner world, with its capacity for existential construction based on meaning and values, which implies the symbolic, reflective, relational and ethical dimensions, Artificial Intelligence must be perceived at a functional level, at the level of efficiency in acting on the basis of an operational rationality for data processing, for solving problems, achieving objectives based on algorithms, offering remarkable instrumental

capabilities, but being devoid of subjective experiences, interiority and personal values (Russell, Norvig 2022). The fact that human beings resort to technology to solve problems at a cognitive level does not mean that we can attribute a type of existential reflection to Artificial Intelligence, which generates automatic, coherent and rapid answers for us. Formulating answers on cultural, ethical, spiritual or religious topics does not transform Artificial Intelligence into a spiritual mentor (Cole-Turner 2025). Using Artificial Intelligence to predict and improve spiritual outcomes does not transform it into a specialist in methods of spiritual improvement (Kumar, Uchoi 2025). It remains only a valuable tool for humans. Although it offers remarkable technological tools, we cannot speak of Artificial Intelligence as technologies of the self in the philosophical sense of the term (Foucault 2004). Artificial Intelligence cannot have Spiritual Intelligence (as human beings have), because this presupposes moral responsibility, axiological orientation, interiorization, reflective consciousness and intentionality, including intentionality towards communion. Nevertheless, Artificial Intelligence brings essential transformations regarding the construction of meaning and the way in which human beings construct their identity in the digital age. Just as, in turn, we expect Spiritual Intelligence, as a specifically human competence, to play an important role in the responsible development of technology and the ethical use of Artificial Intelligence.

From the point of view of political communication, we are today in a privileged moment in which, as Aurel Codoban noted, “we never cease to marvel at the wonders of the digital: the best emblem of the late twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century is the internet, ever growing, from text to images and from e-mail to the many social networks. And the recently emerged artificial intelligence promises to change our lives in ways unimaginable until now. For more than a year, everyone has been talking a lot about artificial intelligence and changes are anticipated, with advantages and dangers, in terms of jobs and the economy, communication between people and political campaigns” (Codoban 2025, 9).

We must not ignore the fact that, in cultural practices, religious communities maintain complex relationships with the internet, social networks and Artificial Intelligence. Positions are nuanced, from rejecting the negative effects of these technological developments to instrumentalizing them for precise and restricted purposes, in order to achieve specific objectives, with a religious or spiritual purpose, of the group (Zur 2024). Such gestures and attitudes, doctrinal and social in their own way, always have a political dimension. It is important to highlight the importance of Spiritual Intelligence in this horizon of debate, because, while religion envisages an institutional relationship in the configuration of politics, it targets the individual, with his or her capacity to participate responsibly in the reconstruction of the political community.

We are in the midst of building a digital culture in which political communication must capitalize on Spiritual Intelligence understood as the ability to act and solve problems based on deep values, meaning and ethical awareness (Zohar, Marshall 2004; Emmons 2000). Such an attitude takes us to the area of authenticity and moral responsibility in which political communication is re-signified from the perspective of influencing by resorting to a construction of personal and community meaning within the horizon of political culture.

#### **4. Convergent Skills: Cultural Intelligence and Spiritual Intelligence**

The globalization of communication confronts us with a cultural pluralism in which the convergence of Cultural Intelligence (CQ) and Spiritual Intelligence (SQ) becomes an important factor in overcoming egocentrism and ethnocentrism, despite fundamentalist, extremist or sovereignist tendencies to annihilate natural integration in global networks. Understanding otherness, intercultural interactions, the ability to transcend immediate experience, the perspective of a universal ethic based on the understanding of human nature lead to a holistic identity open, equally, to diversity, anchored in deep values, community profiling and preserving individual authenticity (Earley & Ang, 2003; Livermore 2011, Emmons 2000).

Cultural Intelligence (CQ) and Spiritual Intelligence (SQ) promote two distinct but complementary perspectives. The former focuses on otherness and diversity, the latter is oriented towards universality, transcendence and the ultimate unity of existence. The two types of intelligence combine intercultural empathy with the universal consciousness of interconnectedness, adaptation to diverse cultural contexts with an ethic of responsibility oriented towards the common good and coexistence. They ensure a harmonization of multicultural identities with the idea of an integrated identity based on the human condition and the idea of transcendence, making it possible to work together between personal and universal values, in a synergistic action on an intercultural and existential level. At the same time, they lead to the development of a symbolic consciousness characterized by cultural cooperation, social solidarity, pluralism, interdependence and cohesion (Zohar, Marshall 2011; Earley, Ang 2003; Vaughan 2002).

#### **5. Cultural Intelligence, Spiritual Intelligence and Political Culture**

A good understanding of how we conceive the action of Cultural Intelligence and Spiritual Intelligence in the sphere of political culture can be revealed by appealing to several elements of the definition of culture

proposed by Clifford Geertz. The anthropologist associates culture with a series of mental and behavioral structures that are transmitted historically and that are used as symbolic tools with the help of which individuals communicate their values, shape a vision of the world and cultivate symbolic and ritual attitudes through which they put into practice their perspective on existence, in personal and community life (Geertz 1977). These elements of symbolic thinking are relevant to political culture.

We consider political culture as it becomes functional in the writings of Gabriel Almond, Sidney Verba and Bingham G. Powell. This allows us to identify different levels of understanding and knowledge of political life by members who assume the values of the community to which they belong. As a system of beliefs and attitudes, a system of values assumed by a person for a good understanding of political life, political culture can function, on the one hand, as a barometer of diversity, and on the other hand, as a set of models of individual attitudes that can be identified as being assumed by individuals in a subjective register and that can serve as a foundation for political action. The relationship between what is personal and what is communal must always be kept in balance, given that the individual relates subjectively to politics, but is often marked by the beliefs, symbols, and representations of the community to which he belongs (Almond, Verba 1996; Almond, Powell 1966).

It is generally recognized that the religious values of a community and national cultural values have a great impact on Cultural Intelligence and Spiritual Intelligence.

Investigating the impact on Cultural Intelligence, Mazlum Çelik and his collaborators find that there is a strong relationship between the cultivation of cultural values and Cultural Intelligence. Therefore, solutions must be found for these values to be shared as widely as possible. The positive impact is mainly due to the role that socio-cultural values have in shaping personality in various contexts of assuming national culture (Çelik et al. 2021, 456).

Regarding political culture, interventions can be carried out at the individual, group and community levels with the aim of contributing to the formation and consolidation of political culture. Culture in the digital age involves a new context, with new types of interactions determined by the development of social networks and Artificial Intelligence. The new context brings with it the location in the virtual space and the need to relate to non-human entities assumed by the development of algorithms and robotic technologies, especially communication technologies. A new subculture emerges with great challenges that Cultural Intelligence is called upon to take into account. Artificial intelligence appears as a form of radical alterity, more difficult to integrate into the system of human relations when it is perceived as an agent that can manifest itself as an active subject in the relationship.

The new context of digital culture facilitates the development of skills necessary for working in multicultural teams, of capacities for action in order to solve the challenges brought by cultural diversity, of competences regarding the promotion of adaptation strategies based on inclusion and diversity (Moslehpour et al. 2024, 90; Jose, Navdeep 2024, 76).

A new horizon of manifestation of Cultural Intelligence and Spiritual Intelligence is opening. Mamychyev Alexey Yurievich and his collaborators believe that the new relationships brought about by the presence and intervention of algorithms and robotic technologies imply the need to build both socio-cultural relations and socio-political frameworks in the spirit of a digital culture. The new political sphere is based on a convergence between digital, cultural and political. On the one hand, it leads to an adequate environment of political communication and a good presence and manifestation of socio-political organizations in the virtual environment. On the other hand, the profound change in political dynamics is perceived as a profound crisis in social and political terms. A crisis determined by the loss of the dominant position of traditional structures of political identification and communication, by the change in normative frameworks, by new ways of understanding integrity, by the great influence exerted by online communication and virtualized spaces, by the need to integrate digital trends and forms of life into political life (Yurievich et al. 2019, 26-27).

Kerri Anne Crowne notes that not all individuals have an adequate level of Cultural Intelligence. We can say something similar about Spiritual Intelligence. Therefore, its cultivation must be part of a constant educational process that includes, in addition to participation in training programs and exchanges of experience, travel and even activities associated with entertainment, but which have an important component in terms of understanding diversity and accommodating it. The development of new communication technologies can be capitalized on in this context. In addition to face-to-face meetings, the mediation offered by social networks can be used to put people from different cultural backgrounds in contact. Of course, putting together the two types of experiences, that of physical presence and that mediated by technology, can maximize the results of understanding cultural, spiritual, social and political diversity in the global world (Crowne 2008, 395).

As with Cultural Intelligence, recent research highlights the importance of education for acquiring a high level of Spiritual Intelligence. Educational programs can be a cost-effective solution for maintaining better mental health, to promote the development of people with a high level of tolerance, to develop resilience, spiritual health, emotional intelligence, to cultivate social behaviors and communication strategies (Pinto, Guedes, Pinto, Nunes 2024).

People with more developed Cultural Intelligence and Spiritual Intelligence can more easily enter into cultural exchange relationships, can interact better with people who have different spiritual options, as well as act more creatively in terms of increasing the degree of trust, acceptance of otherness, dialogue in multiple ideological and political contexts (Jurásek, Wawrosz 2024, 193). Positive correlations between adaptation to multicultural contexts and Cultural Intelligence and Spiritual Intelligence can also be established in terms of the influences that ethnocentrism exerts on the construction of personal identity in the context of global culture. We can see that ethnocentrism and nationalist ideologies lead to an emphasis on one's own culture, religion, spirituality, ideology to the detriment of those brought by the different groups with whom we interact in a global context. The development of communication technologies today makes possible a more adequate encounter with otherness, so that cultural and spiritual mediation facilitated by Artificial Intelligence can blur prejudices, feelings of insecurity, anxieties in the face of the unknown, can lead to the avoidance of conflicts and the initiation of cultural and spiritual dialogue (Jurásek, Wawrosz 2024, 195).

Highlighting the role that Spiritual Intelligence (SQ) plays in the development of political culture leads us to the relevance of identity, legitimacy and authenticity, to the role of values, meaning and ethical awareness in political life. First of all, its role in affirming the abilities to solve problems in the social and political sphere by appealing to spiritual resources, as well as the integration of political identity into a broader existential perspective, which is based on an axiological reflection located beyond doctrinal differences. In the legitimacy of political culture, a central place is occupied by values, especially moral and spiritual values that can support political cohesion, dialogue, tolerance and mutual recognition. (Bellah et al. 1985; Taylor 1994.)

For a better understanding, we should return here to the difference between religion and spirituality. It is important because the involvement of religion in the political sphere can have a bivalent effect. The positive impact depends on the authenticity of the integration of spiritual values and religious practices into the culture of the digital age. If the intervention of religion is built on pluralism, tolerance and interreligious and interconfessional dialogue, then it can play a positive role. If a certain religion wants to institutionalize itself as a privileged instance of shaping the political sphere, then there is a risk that this will lead to forms of intolerance specific to religious fundamentalism and extremism (Frunzã 2016). In contrast, in the case of Spiritual Intelligence, the risk of negative intervention is lower because it does not impose a particular doctrine but seeks to implement values recognized as universal and serving the common good, in an ethical and inclusive political culture. Even in secular societies we notice that the spiritual dimension is significant at an

axiological level, with all the transformations that secularization entails (Casanova 1994).

Digital culture involves a sustained effort by politicians and political organizations to adapt their discourse according to the social networks they use, and the audiences present on them. Political communication takes place in multiple identity, cultural, spiritual and ideological contexts, it must adapt to significant constructions both online and offline, taking into account the fluidity that characterizes the construction of digital identity (Bernardi et al. 2022; Karlsson, Åström 2017; Larsen 2008).

Regarding the importance of using social networks and Artificial Intelligence in political communication, a comparative research conducted by Delia Cristina Balaban, Xenia Farkas and Mihnea S. Stoica, in multicultural contexts, is convincing. The authors analyze a series of data that can be extracted from Facebook as a tool of political campaigns. By extrapolation, we can reveal that the entire logic of contemporary political communication is being redefined at the intersection of social media and digital tools. A large number of posts on social media can increase visibility and engagement. Facilitating direct communication with voters, targeting messages, adjusting, personalizing them, and profiling lead to increased efficiency of political communication. Communication technologies are no longer just a channel for broadcasting political messages, they are also becoming a strategic framework that can decisively influence the architecture of political competition and its results (Balaban, Farkas, Stoica 2024).

## 6. Instead of conclusions

The construction of a democratic political culture in the digital age cannot ignore the value of otherness and diversity. The development of communication technologies and Artificial Intelligence allow for a generalized connection of individuals. At the same time, a profound transformation is taking place in terms of political discourse and the specific modalities of political communication. Artificial Intelligence not only changes the structure of political discourse but also becomes a strategic tool for gaining political influence.

In this text, we have left aside the use of Artificial Intelligence in the context of international relations for negative purposes, including the interest shown by some states in using it as a means of political propaganda or as a privileged instrument for conducting a hybrid, informational war (Bordiuk, Shevchuk, Shevchuk 2025). Viewed in a positive light, the intervention of Artificial Intelligence facilitates and streamlines the presence and action of Cultural Intelligence and Spiritual Intelligence. The two types of intelligence integrate into a symbolic

consciousness of the human being of democratic society, for whom accepting otherness and cultivating pluralism and diversity represent an intrinsic value.

From the perspective of current debates on digital culture, the importance of the intervention of Artificial Intelligence in political culture is not given by the technological performance itself, but by the way in which algorithms and social networks are used in the integration of Cultural Intelligence and Spiritual Intelligence in the architecture of political communication. The complementarity between digital skills and cultural skills is beneficial for political communication and political culture. In its great complexity, political culture involves the interference between technological neutrality and the affirmation of values related to diversity, pluralism and otherness. It functions as a symbolic space based on trust, cooperation, inclusion and the management of otherness. The convergence between Cultural Intelligence and Spiritual Intelligence opens to political practices of balance regarding unity and axiological diversity, to philosophies of life in which the recognition of the value of pluralism provides a solid ground for the assumption of universal values and the affirmation of respect for human dignity.

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