

# National ou européen? Le cas des plateformes des partis politiques roumains pendant la campagne électorale de 2009 pour le Parlement européen<sup>1</sup>

Grigore GEORGIU\*, Mălina CIOCEA\*\*, Nicoleta CORBU\*\*\*

**Résumé :** Cet article analyse la relation entre la dimension nationale et la dimension européenne, comme structures identitaires juxtaposées des citoyens roumains ces dernières années. Le problème de l'identité européenne est devenu visible dans le contexte de la récente intégration de la Roumanie dans les structures européennes. Cet article propose une analyse textuelle des plateformes des partis politiques concernant les

identités nationale et européenne, d'une part. D'autre part, cette proposition porte sur l'analyse des modalités par lesquelles les sites officiels des partis politiques roumains ont présentés leurs plateformes politiques pendant la campagne électorale de 2009 pour le Parlement européen.

---

<sup>1</sup> This article is part of a broader project financed through a research grant by the National University Research Council, *Intercultural communication in the European context. The Construction of a conjunctive paradigm regarding the relationships between national cultures and the emergence of the European cultural identity.*

\* Professeur des universités dr. à l'Ecole Nationale d'Etudes Politiques et Administratives, Bucarest, grigore.georgiu@comunicare.ro

\*\* Chargée de cours dr. à l'Ecole Nationale d'Etudes Politiques et Administratives, Bucarest malina.ciocea@comunicare.ro

\*\*\* Chargée de cours dr. à l'Ecole Nationale d'Etudes Politiques et Administratives, Bucarest nicoleta.corbu@comunicare.ro

**Mots-clés :** identités, paradigme élections, plateformes  
conjonctive, européanisation,

\*\*\*

*National or European? The Case of Romanian Political Parties'  
Platforms for 2009 European Elections*

**Abstract:** This article addresses the issue of the relationship between national and European dimensions, as overlapping identity structures of Romanian citizenship in the last years. The problem of a European identity became prominent in the context of the recent integration of Romania into the European structures. This paper presents a textual analysis of political platforms

concerning European and national identities, as presented on the official sites of Romanian political parties during the 2009 European elections campaign.

**Keywords:** identities, conjunctive paradigm, Europeanization, elections, platforms

\*\*\*

**The Cultural Dimension of the European Integration**

Debates referring to the destiny and future of Europe have lately focused on themes such as the cultural dimension of European integration, European-national relationship, national cultures within Europe and the possibility of an emerging supranational European cultural identity.

Projections about European identity depend on the theories of national cultural identity, and on the meanings of contemporary processes such as globalization, development of new media, intercultural communication, hybridization of cultural models, etc. These debates involve at least two relatively distinct plans, which are still deeply connected. The first refers to the political legitimacy and democratic character of community institutions, and the second to the problem of Europe's cultural identity in relationship with national identities. Roger Scruton (2004) claims that in the background of the idea of national and modern nation-state we will discover a "prepolitical loyalty", historically forged, previous to the "social contract" between governing bodies and citizens. The modern nation-state, based on "territorial jurisdiction" and the concept of citizenship, on the representative democratic mechanism and legitimate governance, associated with citizens' rights

and duties, presupposes the existence of “a special type of prepolitical loyalty”, defined as a community of citizens who “share the language, the habits, the territory and common interests” in everyday life.

The question of cultural identity has become prominent and a constant source of inquiry and research in social sciences. Cultural identity has added a new layer to its multiple facets. As research shows (Straubhaar, 2008), people articulate a local sense of self and a national sense of self, as well as a social sense of self, or a religious sense of self, or an ethnic, linguistic, professional sense of self etc, and even a global sense of self. All these specific facets of cultural identity are highlighted in different contexts, where identity becomes visible and important. The idea of self is related to the cultural context; attitudes, beliefs, intentions, norms, roles, values are all aspects of the self (Corbu, 2009, p. 215).

The concept of “cultural identity” was developed based on the primary concept of “identity”, “a sociocultural construct that affects how people behave and communicate” (Shin, Jackson, 2003, p. 212). Identity is a key concept in culture-related theories, because it is the one concept that provides the necessary delimitation between the self and the others, between the group and the others, and is sometimes defined by “the capacity to exclude, to leave out, to render outside” (Hatcher, 2001, p. 12). Culture is a concept constructed upon the dichotomy “us”/“others”, including everything that is specific to “us” as opposed to what is not “us”, the “strangers”, the “foreigners”, globally “the others”. Identity is then the unit that explains the sense of self, and the sense of belonging to a group. Gudykunst and Kim (1997) argue that identities can be grouped under three broad categories: human identity (the views of self that people share with all other humans), social identity (the views of self that people share with other members of the ingroup), and the personal identity (what is unique to every human being and defines him/her as an individual personality). Cultural identity seems to be a broad term that includes the last two dimensions. Although aware of different layers of cultural identity, most commonly researchers consider cultural identity as mainly related to a particular ethnic group in their research (which sometimes is superposed with national group) (Hatcher, 2001; Ojha, 2003; Aldridge, 2004; Urban, Orbe, 2007).

As Kim (2007a, 238) defines it, cultural identity “is employed broadly to include related concepts such as subcultural, national, ethnolinguistic, and racial identity. Cultural identity also designates both a sociological or demographic classification, as well as an individual’s psychological identification with a particular group. Both sociological and psychological meanings of cultural identity are regarded as two inseparable correlates of the same phenomenon.” Therefore the term is interchangeable with other terms commonly used, such as “national”, “ethnic”, “racial”, “ethnolinguistic” etc. (Kim, 2007b). Cultural identity is based on

identification with a group that has shared systems of symbols and meanings and norms of conduct (Collier, 1997; Shin, Jakson, 2003). From a psychological point of view, cultural identity is defined in terms of “the subjective orientation of an individual toward his/her ethnic origin.” (Alba apud Kim, 2007a, p. 241)

The construction of the EU, a continuous process, raises the question of a supra-national cultural identity, which is perceived most of the time as the desired ideal of the European project. There are two different trends identified in discussing the European identity, the “doom and gloom” current, based on the widespread Euroscepticism and criticism of the enlargement process, which remains “concerned about the apparent absence of a European public sphere” (Trandafoiu, 2006, p. 91), and the optimistic approach, which discusses the construction of the European identity as a continuous process, whose existence is proven by different phenomena, such as migration, media coverage of different European issues, etc.

Although permanently reasserting its common system of political values (Hans-Gert Pottering, 2007), the EU faces a problem which is both anthropological and historical, feeding on differences between the cultural and mental substrata of member states. Initially “forgotten” or muted in the European project, this issue now comes back in force and is passionately discussed. Questions arise whether European identity will be a sum of like traits of different cultural identities, a fading, hybrid “synthesis” of these identities, or whether a new identity will emerge, of a different nature than modern cultural identities. Analysts warn that Europe is a mosaic of languages, cultures and traditions, and to talk about their “integration” would be a nonsense (Maurice Duverger, 1992; Smith, 1995). Cultures are results of creation; they do not integrate as economies or juridical and administrative systems. In fact, the Lisbon Treaty provides in its very first articles that the European Union will encourage Europe’s cultural and linguistic diversity, as a source of creativity and spiritual wealth, as well as the mutual acknowledgement of cultures (The Lisbon Treaty, article 2, part 3, paragraph 4).

Historically, the concept of European identity was launched at the European Community summit in Copenhagen, in 1973, as a counterpart to the lack of identity visible in the interpretative framework existent at the time, in a situation of “profound crisis in national economic government” (Strath, 2006, 439). Another important moment was 1984, when the European Council gathered in Fontainebleau and launched, under the lead of the Italian lawyer Pietro Adonnino, a campaign called “A People’s Europe”, “which aimed at building and further fortifying the European identity” (Tiryaki, 2006, p. 42).

European identity reveals itself as a two-face concept, built on national identity. Researchers have identified two different approaches on the relationship between national and European identities: on the one hand, there is a tension, some would

say even a conflict, between dual identities; on the other, one could imagine harmony between them, as people would be perfectly happy with multiple identities (Arts, Halman, 2006; Dufek, 2009), just as they are with local and national ones. One of the key questions in understanding these approaches is related to the nature of the European identity. Is it a merely cultural identity or rather a civic one? Michael Bruter (2007, 3) argues that European identity has elements of both components: “these components, referred to as civic and cultural, cover two important aspects of any political identity, based on citizen’s identification with a political system and a human community respectively”. However, when asked general questions about their European identity, people would respond rather in civic terms, “European” being associated primarily with EU citizenship. Other researchers (e.g. Hilson, 2007) also argue for a civic definition of European identity, based on the question of fundamental rights and supranational polity.

The traits or characteristics of the European identity as identified by researchers in social sciences are actually the commonalities emergent from Western societies, as they were integrated in the EU: “the life and structure of the European family; the dominance of industrial employment; the class system and the social fabric; the welfare state and the mass consumer society [...] to which Habermas adds the secularization of the egalitarian and individualist universalism that informs our normative self-understanding is not the least among the achievements of modern Europe” (Trandafoiu, 2006, p. 98). At the same time, being European is none the less discussed in more pragmatic terms, such as “shopping across borders, buying property abroad, handling a common currency, looking for work in a foreign city, taking holidays in new countries, joining cross-national associations and a thousand other actions facilitated by the movement accords.” (Kamhausen, 2006, p. 28)

In this context, the tension between national identity and European identity exists mostly in terms of the cultural dimension of identity and related to the commonly shared values, symbols, myths, etc. National values and symbols are an important part of local patriotism which can sometimes raise security and self-preservation issues at national level, especially in the context of a long historical tradition of the nation-state that emphasizes the perspective of national unity and independence (Strath, 2006, p. 427). At the same time, there are historical arguments (mainly based on common myths) that would support “a long-term historical foundation of European identity that cuts across religious-philosophical dividing line, incorporating also the mythical dimension” (Szakolczai, 2007, p. 47). Moreover, symbols and values, if properly disseminated by the media, can be an important source of the Europeanization process, aiming at the commonly accepted slogan “united in diversity”. “State-like” symbols, such as the European flag and anthem, banknotes, common currency (Marunowski, 2008), passports, drivers’

license, etc. have been proven important agents and builders of the European identity (Bruter, 2007).

As far as the media themselves are concerned, research shows that news have an important impact on the European identity in the long run (Bruter, 2007), they shape people's understanding of the world and their places within it, they "contribute to our understanding of what it means to belong to a cultural and political collectivity, such as Europe" (Inthorn, 2006, p. 72). Little attention has been shown so far to the new media, mainly due to their fragmentation and difficulty of investigation, as well as to the fact that they are less policy driven and elite led (Trandafoiu, 2006, p. 96). Discourse on current political debates can imprint cultural patterns that structure the perception of the European identity, as well as legitimate the discussion about national, regional, local cultural specificities as related to the European cultural dimensions (Mihalikova, 2006, p. 33).

We believe that nowadays the new media are in fact important agents of dissemination not only of information, but also of opinions and ideas, which can shape people's perceptions of their European identity. At the same time, recent research (Art, Halman, 2006; Bruter, 2007) shows that there are significant cross-national differences within the EU, and therefore there is constant need for local (national) research about the European identity, in order to reveal people's perceptions about their identities.

### **Approaches of the National/European Dialectic in Modern Romanian Thinking. Historical Overview**

In the context of the construction of European Union, the cultural identity of Romanians has acquired a new dimension, a superposition that can become the dominant layer in various circumstances. To understand the significance of debates on European identity in the Romanian space a short historical approach on this issue is required. Barely emerging as independent from centuries-long subordination to Eastern powers, Romania was shaped as a modern state during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and quickly headed towards modernization, skipping some stages on the way. At the crossroads of different civilizations, constantly tipping the balance, contradiction deeply embedded into their very identity (a Latin people of Orthodox religion), Romanians strove ardently to escape from Eastern influence and integrate into the European civilization, to which they belong structurally. Consequently, as early as the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Europe became a model for Romanians' modernization efforts and a reference system for their cultural creations. The generation that carried out the 1848 Revolution, animated by European liberal ideals, managed to "change the historical orientation axis of the Romanian people, from the East to the West" (Lovinescu, 1997, pp. 95-98).

All philosophic movements of the 19<sup>th</sup> and first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century problematized the relationship between European and Romanian culture. Romania's modernization and Europeanization was long interpreted through the paradigm of "contentless forms", laid out by literary critic Titu Maiorescu in a study in 1868. From a moderate conservative, still pro-European, perspective, he argued that institutional forms imported from the West do not have an appropriate "content" in Romanian economic and cultural reality. Consequently, the modernization program that the Romanian society had to follow should attempt to reconcile the discrepancies between forms and content, between the "legal" and "real" country. The achievement of national unity, following WWI, gave the politicians and the cultural elites an impetus to add depth to the modernization process and to connect the country to European civilization. It was against this background that Romanian elites could concentrate on cultural creation as such, after freeing themselves from the burden of unspecific tasks (Mircea Eliade). Indeed, the new generation of interwar period proved to be abundantly creative and gave birth in this short period of stability and calm, to competitive culture, synchronized with European culture, in terms of themes approached, spiritual solutions and stylistic formats. Well-known personalities from different fields (Henri Coandă, Brăncuși, Enescu, Iorga, Gusti, Mircea Eliade, Eugen Ionescu, Emil Cioran) raised standards in Romanian culture and gave a legitimate voice to its universal calling, making Romania effectively and competitively integrate into the rich, varied cultural movements of Europe. The public space, the press and the academia hosted ample debates on our national identity and the complex relationship with the European cultural model. Such was the context that made the following assertion possible: "Starting by being good Europeans, we will end up being good Romanians. The conclusion? You learn to love Romania by loving Europe." (Ralea, 1997, p. 151). When Ralea wrote this in 1929, he wanted to put the finishing touches to his long dispute with the traditional Orthodox movement of the interwar period. The cultural scene was then dominated by the confrontation between the representatives of traditionalism and Orthodox localism and those of esthetic modernism, promoting Europeanization. It was during that time that the "theory of synchronicity" of critic Eugen Lovinescu, a promoter of modernism, politically oriented towards liberalism, became highly influential. He encouraged European cultural influences and criticized traditionalist views.

Historical contexts have changed, but Ralea's assertion still holds true today, since it summarizes an array of problems that recent history has brought to life again and pushed to the foreground of political and cultural debates. The interwar period is of interest also because the themes and problems related to national identity debated back then were re-codified in the Communist times and found a place on the agenda, although in different wording, with ideological connotations, showing two confronting concepts at work: synchronicity versus exceptionalism. For over a century and a half, Romanian intellectuals have been divided and engaged in a

“conflict of interpretations” on Romanians’ cultural identity. This polarization of ideological attitudes and, in the background, of theoretical models, is reproduced under different forms today.

After the Anti-Communist revolution, the issue of joining Europe was inevitably contaminated by political allegiance and, consequently, interpreted within a disjunctive paradigm. The predominant thesis, coming in the limelight under the pressure of unilateral visions, claimed that European integration would be incompatible with the national idea and the promotion of national values. The operation of recovering the identity that had been disfigured in the Communist time was erroneously interpreted as anti-European attitude as well. Inevitably, disputes arose between those who believed that integration was possible only by downplaying or forgetting identity in the process of harmonizing legislation, institutions and economic system to answer EU requests, and those who claimed we could only integrate with specific cultural values, legitimating our very existence and identity. The latter standing, labeled by opponents as “moderate” or “decent” nationalism, can be illustrated by the assertion that there are no “Europeans from nowhere”, as Octavian Paler puts it, since being European does not cancel national allegiance (Andreescu, 1996). Extreme positions can now be identified either in the rhetoric of new cosmopolitanism, which downplays national values while praising excessively the virtues of globalization, or in narrow, non-Western nationalist attitudes, which denounce integration as a threat against national identity. The two extremes are fed by two utopias, equally active theoretically and at the level of representations.

Yet gradually, political parties, representatives of civil society, intellectuals and opinion makers in mass media have abandoned this disjunctive paradigm and promoted other representations on the EU, which go in line with a conjunctive paradigm. (Georgiu, 2001). Our study attempts to follow this change of perspective in the solutions put forward by political actors to reconcile the tensions between the integration project and the loyalties of the community.

### **Methodology**

To this end we monitored the discourses on European-national relationship of parties and candidates from Romania during the electoral campaign for the European Parliament in May-June 2009, in Romania. We believe that this analysis is relevant for raising awareness of the confronting tendencies regarding the problematical relationship between national cultural identities and the long-term objectives of the European project.



We will present a qualitative research, using textual analysis, which investigates how European identity is to be found as a theme in the platforms of the main political parties in Romania. The goal of this analysis is to reveal how (or if) European identity is integrated into the official presentations for the European parliament elections, and how this identity relates with the Romanian (national) identity.

The following parties were of interest to our research: PDL (Democratic Liberal Party) and PSD (Social Democratic Party) - PC (Conservative Party) Alliance, forming the coalition government since 2008 (70% support in Parliament), PNL (The Liberal Party), former ruling party in a minority government after breaking up the alliance with PDL (but supported afterwards by PSD), PRM (Greater Romania Party), which did not get any places in Parliament following elections in 2008, and UDMR (Hungarian Democratic Union of Romania), an opposition party for the first time since 1990.

During the electoral campaign we monitored the sites of these important parties, following: doctrines or electoral/governing programs; links from the main page to the sites of the EP group to which the Romanian party is affiliated and to the web pages of Romanian MEPs (chosen in the 2007 elections); declarations of Romanian party leaders/MEPs posted on the site. For factual information on elections we monitored the sites of national newspapers *Evenimentul Zilei* (EVZ) and *Cotidianul* and of news channel *Realitatea TV* and for comments on the European impact of EP elections, the site of *EU Observer*.

This is the first stage in monitoring 2009 EP elections in Romania. The intent of this article has narrowed our analysis to discourses on European-national relationship as depicted in Romanian political parties doctrines. The second stage will include the analysis of electoral messages, public discourses and TV debates during the campaign, following the treatment of this problematical relationship at the level of 'live' discourse, of a more vocal and explicit nature than institutional discourse. Monitoring is part of a 3-year national research project on intercultural communication in the European context, which will round off with the construction of a convergent paradigm offering a key to understanding the new relationship between national cultures and the emergence of European cultural identity.

### **The 2009 European Parliamentary Elections in Romania. Debates and Political Discourses on the National-European Relationship**

Analyzing European Parliamentary Elections in Romania highlighted specific themes and aspects that dominated the political debates and discourses. We will present the most important ones in the following sections.

#### ***The preeminence of national political agenda over European agenda***

The first striking element of the EP campaign in Romania is the absence of information on electoral platforms. For instance, PDL site includes only the Governing Program, and PSD site, the Political Governing Program of PSD-PC Alliance (and a translation of PES Manifesto). One explanation for this absence could be the fact that both parties form an extremely powerful alliance (which is in fact criticized for the very high percentage of parliamentary support, comparable with the situation in the early 90s). From the perspective of the Presidential elections to be held in November 2009, the absence of a discourse focused on European issues is quite significant: six months into the government, despite latent tensions between the two parties, the alliance is still powerful enough not to wish to test the electorate's expectations, a thing which would probably lead to breaking up the governing protocol. Although parties started campaigning for Presidential elections once the candidates for this position were launched, Euro elections were not considered relevant for testing campaign staff, electoral strategies or the importance of party locomotives in mobilizing the electorate. Much more significant, Euro elections do not seem to reveal any European calling of Romanian politicians.

On the contrary, opposition parties use these elections to make known a potential governing program. For instance, PNL posted "PNL MEPs Platform: Liberal Europe Works for Romania", and UDMR, for which solid representation in EP is vital, posted "The Framework Electoral Program of Hungarian Solidarity". For PNL the Euro campaign is an opportunity to spread its doctrine (PNL understands the importance of breaking loose, doctrine-wise, from former coalition partners, especially in the context of the revival of principles of moderate, highly regulated liberalism, against the background of the global economic crisis).

UDMR needs to gain a very powerful European voice if it wishes to obtain rights for the Hungarian community in Romania (such as territorial autonomy, a principle president Băsescu rejects from the start, by appealing to the article in the Constitution on the unity and indivisibility of Romanian territory). In UDMR's vision, obtaining rights via Europe is a way of compensating for "the weaknesses" of the Romanian juridical and constitutional system.

Quite surprising for a party usually qualified as extreme rightist, PRM posted on the site its doctrine and not a Euro platform. One possible explanation would be the fact that, in terms of doctrine, PRM is expected to have the most solid arguments on the significance of Europe for Romania. Yet, from the perspective of PRM's repositioning (visible in declarations during the campaign), redefining the European-national relationship (the most important element of this repositioning) should have required explanations and arguments in a separate program.

*The synchronization with the European political parties' discourses*

The doctrine allegiances of the main parties in Romania are relevant for the way they depict the European-national relationship. In the absence of a consistent discourse on European issues, the role of EP groups (EPP, PES, ALDE, etc.) is to "export" such a discourse to Romania.

There are multiple causes for the inconsistency of the European discourse in Romanian politics. Historically, the rapport with the European space was an argument for underlining the historical continuity and synchronicity of national events with great moments of European history. After the adhesion, the discourse on Europe became, as was to be expected, integrative and justificatory. Integrative, by repeatedly asserting the imperative of synchronizing Romanian with European politics, economy, legislation, and justificatory, by using the argument of integration as decisive and sufficient for imposing European principles (mainly in the institutional environment, but not at the level of representations). In economy, for instance, many of highly controversial measures (such as privatization of important companies or banks, not always to Romania's advantage) were promoted under the slogan of European imperative. In more sensitive domains (such as legal or cultural, where synchronization with the European space supposes mutations in the national value system), the discourse assumed a rather justificatory tone, partly because the long-standing integrative discourse in cultural debates was considered sufficient for the social body to accept principles that contrasted with generally accepted patterns, without much questioning. Obviously, in the absence of harmonization, the subsequent tension is bound to maintain conflicting relations with the European cultural space.

In politics, discourse is mainly integrative rather than justificatory, a thing which is partially explained by the pressure exerted by European regulations and institutions, which makes a justificatory discourse (all the more a vindicative-nationalist one) useless. From this perspective, the inclusion of European themes in the nationally-produced political discourse is essential for counteracting its inconsistency. This inconsistency takes several forms. At a structural level, the

Romanian political discourse on Europe suffers from insufficient problematization and argumentation. In the presence of integrative, justificatory discourse, problematization and argumentation take lesser positions. At a discursive level, the appeal to European slogans and preference for an abstract, general discourse are not likely to build fine rhetoric effects. If we concentrate on the aspect of synchronization, we notice that great European issues are missing in the Romanian discourse, and there is no harmonization with the format and intent of debates.

In such circumstances, allegiance to European doctrines is an opportunity for the Romanian politicians not necessarily to make changes in the discourse addressed to the electorate (which discourse continues to be integrative and justificatory), but to use European themes to complement national ones. The discourse thus shaped preserves national themes, which are still given some emancipatory quality by being projected onto the European context.

Similarly, Romanian politicians use affiliations to EP groups to add ideological consistency to their own discourse. In a political environment characterized by circumstantial alliances and radical doctrinal reorientation (we have in view PDL's reconstruction), the political discourse seems to be drastically polarized between "rightist" and "leftist" policies. A large part of doctrinal clarification of Romanian parties seems to have happened after the adhesion, triggered by the fact that politicians had to think about veridical transnational alliances (from this perspective renaming the Humanistic Party as the Conservative Party makes sense). This tendency of using the EP group as a "doctrinal pretext" is evident in the reference Romanian parties make to principles guiding the action of EP groups (PNL, for instance, insists on the decisive role of ALDE in maintaining the balance in EP), in the use of the EP group victory as validation of national party strength (PDL), in the design of the national campaign in line with the strategy of the group (this variant is visible in the case of PSD, which not only translated PES Manifesto, but also used this framework as a starting point for campaign discourses).

#### *Aspects of the national-European relationship in the political parties' platforms*

In analyzing the party platforms/governing programs we concentrated on the following tracks that we considered relevant for depicting the attitude on European-national relationship:

- a. reference to the European and global context and its challenges in the economic, financial, political, cultural fields of action;
- b. treatment of points that invite explicit discussion of European-national relationship: external affairs, European affairs, national security, culture;
- c. weight of European/national themes in the program. This relationship is important since it embodies the very contradictions characterizing an MEP's

position and it includes philosophical and moral dilemmas of European construction. An MEP has double allegiance: a rooted one, towards the national idea, and a cultivated, cosmopolitan one, towards the European political structure. This double loyalty influences the type of discourse s/he delivers to the citizen: the MEP wins by virtue of this discourse, but, once in the EP, no longer represents Romania (or the citizens who gave him/her the vote), but a particular Romanian political vision. Yet, for the citizen called to vote, the political vision is relevant to the extent that it has an impact on national policies; consequently, loyalty towards a supranational structure will be felt as abstract in nature. Political discourse must find a way to mobilize citizens towards a national vote for a European idea; the difficulty of such enterprise can partially explain the low turnout. It is all the more difficult to include in a discourse the idea of yielding attributes and power to the EU, which subsequently work towards the national good, with the added value given by the EU.

- d. treatment of integration as modernization. The theme of Romania's modernization by synchronization with Europe has for centuries fed the discourses of elites in our country. If joining NATO in the 90s was declared a strategic imperative, EU adhesion launched varied discourses, ranging from those seeing it as a compensatory measure for an infamous Communist past which could be partly blamed on great powers, to the skeptical discourse underlining the economic rationale of assimilating a large market such as Romania, to the nationalist discourse, highlighting the superiority of values proposed by Romanian culture. All these discourses developed against a framework given by a subdued discourse debating the presence or absence of a Romanian development pattern. The main discourse noted the frailty of this pattern (from its guiding principles to the energies feeding it) and saw in integration the trigger of forced modernization, which largely brings about the obligation to redefine principles and mobilize energies. This particularity of vision on Europe led to the creation of a paradigm where Europe is both a "hiding screen" and compensation for one's own shortcomings.

a. Romanian parties constantly refer to the EU in their doctrines/governing programs/electoral platforms and highlight the importance of respecting commitments and the reality of yielding some attributes to the EU. Most identify Europe as a space of freedom and prosperity, but only PNL makes reference to Europe's identity (thus setting European issues against a global scale) and the regional dimension of Romania's actions. However, in the absence of a proper discussion on the reality of global flows and networks, the reference to the economic crisis and its effects remains a mere cliché.

On this first dimension the analyst can notice the orientation of Romanian programs towards the European, rather than global context, which may suggest that

Romania is still trying to build a European/regional identity and has no propensity towards the global scale (not even at the level of political theories).

b. As regards the themes approached by doctrines, susceptible of triggering a discussion of the European-national relationship, one can notice that the discourse does not include direct reference to the inherent tension between European and national plans/principles/directions. In the case of PDL, PSD, PNL, yielding sovereignty attributes in fields such as external affairs or national security is not regarded as impinging on national character. For these parties acceptance of the European dimension of Romanian politics comes with no prior problematization. In principle, the analyst expects that in a space recently become European (by integration in the EU) the European-national relationship should still be fiercely debated, scaled, disputed, in view of finding that balance which is a necessity for society. Paradoxically (considering the on-going debate about the imperative of modernizing Romania), the moment of integration appears to have marked the closing of the debate on this relationship. The EU seems to be an ineluctable state you merely adjust to, and the consequences of integration are not debated, but accepted as rules coming from the outside. While states joining the EU in the first waves still carry on a debate on strengths and weaknesses of adhesion (on specific issues related to energy dependency, agriculture and so on), Romania does not even host debates in principle about the implications of integration, which would normally pertain to a new member. Romania has not only a right, but also an obligation to be naïve and tempestuous at this point, since this debate would be a step towards conceptual clarification. In the absence of such clearing, political Romania might go on having quite an immature vision of Europe.

As was to be expected, it is the very parties which might be accused of a certain ideological immaturity (PRM and UDMR) that more poignantly refer to the European-national relationship – the former, by arguing with some consistency on the importance of meeting the national interest, the latter, by adding a third variable to this relationship, the regional scale (by virtue of the fact that ethnic minorities do not generally resonate to references to the “national”).

For UDMR, the fact that the state yields regulatory rights in favor of the EU is an advantage. In the Hungarian politicians’ vision, the EU can be used as the final argument in obtaining rights for the minority. Since UDMR considers the Romanian state’s policies on cultural and territorial autonomy as deficient, it employs a compensatory strategy. This principle is slightly different from the idea of EU as a “hiding screen”: while the other parties employ the integrative and justificatory discourse mentioned above (policies must be implemented since these are EU’s requests), UDMR sees EU as a referee in solving the conflict between the majority and ethnic (political and institutional) structures.

The spectacular repositioning of PRM not only nationally, but Europe-wide (the second winner of an MEP mandate for PRM declared that the party wished to join EPP, triggering the immediate negative reaction of UDMR, a member of the group) is evident in the effort of underlining the importance of following national interest while implementing European policies. The party doctrine declares support for EU integration and compatibility between “enlightened nationalism” and democracy (by virtue of the fact that Romania has always had European calling). On condition that EU remains “Europe of the Nations” and understands to follow principles that are fundamental for strong nations, this political project can be supported.

c. In what concerns the weight of European or national issues, one may notice that problems are debated at a national, rather than European, scale. In PDL's and PSD's governing programs, Romania-EU relationship is regarded as ruled by the principle of government's responsibility in relation with European institutions (PDL) and the principle of obedience towards European regulations (PSD). PNL builds a discourse which is closer to the idea of promoting Romanians' interests in the European context, and underlines the idea that Romania-EU relationship is a two-way street, with meanings, advantages and added value travelling both ways. UDMR insists on regional themes, and in this context asserts that, more than “a Romanian model for defending minorities' rights”, Hungarian Solidarity can offer the EU a “Hungarian model from Transylvania”, which could enrich the European policy on minorities, still in the making. In PRM doctrine the relationship between European and national themes is permanently negotiated, with Romania and the EU as equal partners, and yielding and gains reciprocal.

d. The most interesting dimension is probably that of integration as modernization. We asserted above that Romanian discourse on Europe is not sufficiently mature. The parties' programs insist on the idea of gaining advantages as a EU member state, pushing the idea of the European role of Romania in the background. The image of “EU as a protectorate” (Baconsky) triggers the thought of forced modernization. EU rarely appears as a “facilitator” encouraging the design of an organic development model, by establishing a solid framework and development principles.

Nowhere in the programs can one find the idea that the frailty of the Romanian development model could impinge on the European model itself. If we follow EU or EP groups' documents, we will notice that, whenever the frailty of European construction is mentioned, this is rather a result of global threats. The Romanian discourse acknowledges somewhere in the background the weakness of its own model (especially when touching on development gaps, deficient infrastructure, or challenges of institutional harmonization) without reaching the logical conclusion of the negative impact of this weakness on the European construction. In the absence

of problematization (and resolution) of European-national relationship, one cannot expect a more discriminating discourse on Europe as opportunity (and not obligation) for development.

### **Conclusions**

The national-European relationship was a theme that dominated the social thinking in the modern period, but took centre stage after the 1989 Revolution, becoming prominent in the political and cultural Romanian debates. With the perspective of Romanian integration into the European structures in 2007, the whole perspective on this topic has been reevaluated and offered countless confrontations and debates in the public space. References to Europe as a modernization model and to European standards, as well as the necessity of promoting Romania's image and its cultural values in the European space have been constant topics in the 2009 European Parliamentary Elections. In this context, political discourses have emphasized mostly the European dimension of Romanian identity and the convergence of interests and values as premises for achieving European standards. The approaches presenting the opposition between national and European identity have been marginal and have not resonated with voters. For the moment party discourses warn against the danger that Romanians should be perceived as "second class European citizens" (without any explanation on the rationale behind this inferior classification). Reference is explicitly made in PSD and PNL discourse; UDMR insists on autonomy and minorities' rights and does not tackle the issue of European identity foundations, while PRM follows the line of the representativeness and uniqueness of the Romanian model.

Since Romanian identity was created on cultural foundations, imagining an identity fed politically, civically and economically means experimenting a new paradigm. Neither is cultural discourse on European identity sufficiently consistent (we have shown in another article – Ciocea, 2009, how cultural policies did not manage to resolve the contradiction between the traditional model of cultural homogeneity and "imported" European model of unity in diversity). The conceptualization of citizenship on any other foundations than cultural and on a higher European level is all the more difficult. Proclaiming the ideal of European civic citizenship risks to become just another slogan taken over by Romanian politicians without discrimination.

In conclusion, Romanian political discourse has not evolved towards full ideological and conceptual maturity in respect of European-national relationship. Rather than resolving tensions inherent in the integration project, it merely takes over conflicting visions which have long characterized the representations of Romanians on Europe. In the absence of political solutions to reconcile such



contrasting forces, the Romanian cultural space is bound to take more time to build a convergent paradigm on the European project.

### **Bibliography**

- ALDRIDGE, G.M., 2004, "What Is the Basis of American Culture?" in F.E. Jandt (ed.), *Intercultural Communication. A Global Reader*, Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications.
- ANDREESCU G., 1996, *Nationalists, Antinationalists... A Polemic in Romanian Journalism*, Iași, Editura Polirom.
- ARTS, W. et HALMAN L., 2006, "Identity: The Case of the European Union", *Journal of Civil Society*, vol. 2, n° 3, pp. 179-198.
- BACONSKY T., 2009, "Each and Everybody's Europe", *Cotidianul*, 11 June.
- BRUTER M., 2007, "Symbols, Media, And The Emergence Of A Mass European Identity In Six Democracies", Paper Presented at the *American Political Science Association Annual Meeting 2007* in Chicago, pp.1-38.
- CIOCEA M., 2009, « Comment communiquer le modèle des valeurs nationales? Un défi pour les politiques culturelles » [*How to Communicate the National Values System. A Challenge to Cultural Policies*], in C. Beciu, I. Drăgan, D. Popescu-Jourdy, O. Riondet (coord.), *Cultures et communication. Regards croisés sur les pratiques*, Bucharest, Comunicare.ro.
- COLLIER M.J., 1997, "Cultural Identity and Intercultural Communication" in L.A. Samovar et R.E. Porter, *Intercultural Communication: A Reader*, New York, Wadsworth Publishing, pp. 36-44.
- CORBU N., 2009, « Personalitate de brand și determinare culturală în publicitatea la automobile » [Brand Personality and Cultural Determination in Automobile Advertising], *Revista Română de Comunicare și Relații Publice (Romanian Journal of Communication and Public Relations)*, vol. 11, n° 1, pp. 213-226.
- DUFEK P., 2009, "Fortress Europe or Pace-Setter? Identity and Values in an Integrating Europe", *Czech Journal of Political Science*, vol. 1, pp. 44-62.
- DUVERGER M., 1991, *Europa de la Atlantic la Delta Dunării [Europe from the Atlantic Ocean to the Danube Delta]*, Bucharest, Omegapres.
- ELIADE M., 1990, *Profetism românesc [Romanian Prophetism]*, vol. I, Bucharest, Editura Roza Vânturilor.
- GEORGIU G., 2001, *Identitate și integrare. De la disjunție la conjuncție [Identity and Integration. From Disjunction to Conjunction]*, Bucharest, Institutului de Teorie Socială al Academiei Românie.

- GUDYKUNST W.B. et KIM Y.Y., 1997, *Communicating With Strangers. An Approach to Intercultural Communication*, San Francisco, McGraw-Hill.
- HATCHER C., 2001, "Cultural Identity: Past, Present, and Future", *World Communication*, vol. 30, n° 1, pp. 12-16.
- HILSON C., 2007, "Legitimacy and rights in the EU: questions of identity", *Journal of European Public Policy*, vol. 14, n° 4, pp. 527-543.
- INTHORN S., 2006, "What Does It Mean to Be an EU Citizen? How News Media Construct Civic and Cultural Concepts of Europe", *Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture*, vol. 3, n° 3, p. 71-90.
- KAMPHAUSEN G., 2006, "European Integration and European Identity: Towards a Politics of Differences?", *International Issues & Slovak Foreign Policy Affairs*, vol. 15, n° 1, pp. 24-31.
- KIM Y.Y., 2007a, "Ideology, Identity, and Intercultural Communication: An Analysis of Differing Academic Conceptions of Cultural Identity", *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, vol. 36, n° 3, pp. 237-253.
- KIM Y.Y., 2007b, "Intercultural Personhood: Globalization and a Way of Being", *Conference Papers -- International Communication Association, Annual Meeting*.
- LOVINESCU E., 1997, *Istoria civilizației române moderne [History of Romanian Modern Civilization]*, Bucharest, Minerva.
- MAIORESCU T., 2005[1868], *În contra direcției de astăzi în cultura română [Against Today's Direction in Romanian Culture]*, in *Opere [Works]*, vol. I-II, Bucharest, Editura Univers Enciclopedic.
- MARUNOWSKI K., 2008, « "United in Diversity": Inscribing a European Ideal », *China Media Research*, vol. 4, n° 3, pp. 53-62.
- MIHALIKOVA S., 2006, "Changing Identities in the European Enlargement Process", *International Issues & Slovak Foreign Policy Affairs*, vol. 15, n° 1, pp. 32-40.
- OJHA A.K., 2003, "Humos: A Distinctive Way of Speaking That Can Create Cultural Identity", *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, vol. 32, n° 3, pp.161-174.
- PÖTTERING H.-G., 2007, « De la viziune spre realitate. Pe drumul spre unificarea Europei » [From Vision to Reality. The Way to European Unification], *Ziua*, Bucharest.
- RALEA M., 1997, *Fenomenul românesc [The Romanian Phenomenon]*, Bucharest. Albatros.
- ROGER S., 2004[2002], *Vestul și restul. Globalizarea și amenințarea teroristă [The West and the Rest: Globalisation and the Terrorist Threat]*, Bucharest, Humanitas.

- SHIN CHANG IN and JACKSON RONALD L., 2003, A Review of Identity Research in Communication Theory. Reconceptualizing Cultural Identity, in STAROSTA, WILLIAM J. and CHEN GUO-MING (eds.), *Ferment in the Intercultural Field. Axiology/Value/Praxis* International and Intercultural Communication Annual, XXVI, Thousand Oaks, Sage, p. 211-242.
- SMITH A.D., 1995, *Nation and Nationalism in a Global Era*, Cambridge, Polity Press.
- STRĂTH B., 2006, "Future of Europe", *Journal of Language and Politics*, vol. 5, n° 3, pp. 427-448.
- STRAUBHAAR J.D., 2008, « Global, Hybrid or Multiple? Cultural Identities in the Age of Satellite TV and the Internet », *NORDICOM Review*, vol. 29, n° 2, pp. 11-29.
- SZAKOLCZAI A., 2007, « In Pursuit of the 'Good European' Identity: From Nietzsche's Dionysos to Minoan Crete », *Theory, Culture & Society*, vol. 24, n° 5, pp. 47-76.
- TIRYAKI S., 2006, « European Identity 2006 », *International Issues & Slovak Foreign Policy Affairs*, vol. 15, n° 1, pp. 41-52.
- TRANDAFOIU R., 2006, « The Whole Greater than the Sum of Its Parts: An Investigation into the Existence of European Identity, Its Unity and Its Divisions », *Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture*, vol. 3, n° 3, pp. 91-108.
- URBAN E., ORBE M.P., 2007, « 'The Syndrome of the Boiled Frog': Exploring International Students on US Campuses as Co-Cultural Group Members », *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, vol. 36, n° 2, pp. 117-138.
- Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community, at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:C:2007:306:SOM:EN:HTML>.
- [www.pdl.org.ro](http://www.pdl.org.ro)
- [www.psd.ro](http://www.psd.ro)
- [www.pnl.ro](http://www.pnl.ro)
- [www.prm.org.ro](http://www.prm.org.ro)
- [www.udmr.ro](http://www.udmr.ro)
- [www.evz.ro](http://www.evz.ro)
- [www.cotidianul.ro](http://www.cotidianul.ro)
- [www.realitatea.net](http://www.realitatea.net)
- [www.euobserver.com](http://www.euobserver.com)