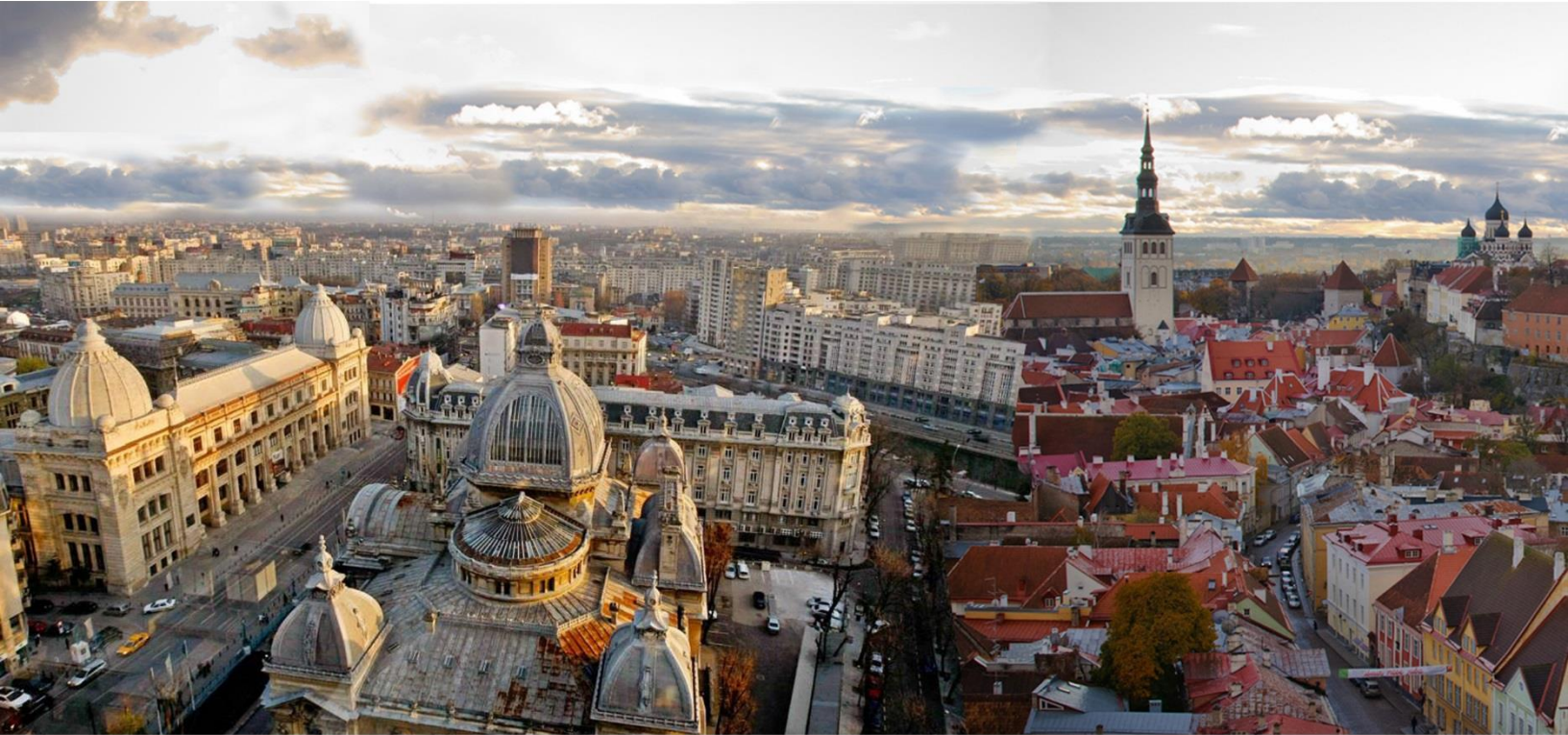


National Identity in the Post-Communist Era

A Comparative Analysis of Romania and Estonia



Master Thesis

April 2016

Human Geography

Europe: Borders, Identities and Governance

Nijmegen School of Management

Radboud University Nijmegen

By Laura Neijenhuis

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Preface and Acknowledgements

The Master Thesis now laying before you, is the final result of over a year of dedication and work. It is the final step to complete my studies of the Master in Human Geography at the Radboud University in Nijmegen. I chose the subject of geopolitical changes and their effect on national identities as it matches my future aspiration, to someday work for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands. During my internship at the Netherlands Embassy in Romania, where I conducted part of the fieldwork for this thesis, I already made the first steps towards this goal. This thesis continues where my Bachelor thesis stopped, and compares my findings in Estonia to those of another former communist country in Eastern Europe, namely Romania. The last years have been a journey full of inspiration, intensive studying and above all gaining valuable knowledge on the subject. I'm looking forward to continue this journey further after my Masters.

First of all I would like to thank my family for their continuous support and patience. Thank you for always supporting my decisions, facilitating all my travels, enabling me to make the best out of my studies and helping me accomplish my aspirations for the near and distant future.

Next I would like to thank my respondents in Tallinn and Bucharest, for their warm welcome in their countries, for their openness and uncensored opinions and ideas. This thesis would not have been possible without their personal stories and experiences, their emotions and their comments. This of course brings me to thank the experts who have helped me a lot with making sense of all those stories. I'm therefore very grateful to Miss Kristel Siilak, Professor Eiki Berg, Professor Rein Taagepera, and Minister Urve Tiidus, thank you for your critical remarks, your extensive knowledge on Estonia and of course our pleasant conversations. I want to express my appreciation for the Romanian experts, Professor Monica Heintz, Professor Sorin Pavel, Professor Bogdan Suditu and Dr. Radu Enache. Thank you for your insights into the Romanian society. And furthermore I would like to thank my interpreters, Raluca Apostu in Bucharest and Gert Zavatski in Tallinn.

I would like to thank my former Geography teacher, Bram Thielen, who introduced me to the subject of Human Geography and whose enthusiasm convinced me to start the studies myself. Thank you for taking a chance on me and believing in me right from the start.

Last but definitely not least, I would like to thank my supervisor Olivier Kramsch for his time and his constructive feedback. Without his guidance I would not have dared to take on this subject. Thank you for guiding me during this inspiring process.

Executive Summary

This research revolves around the concept of national identity and how geopolitical changes can have an effect on this identity. The countries of Estonia and Romania were chosen as case study, as these countries are a former-Soviet, and a former communist state which have been a member of the European Union since 2004 and 2007. This means that many geopolitical changes have occurred there in the last twenty-five years. These radical changes are therefore a perfect case study for this research. In this thesis the national identities of the countries of Romania and Estonia have been examined through the social theories of Bourdieu (1990) and Giddens (1984), and the theory of Feldman (2001) encompassing the discourses of “return to Europe” and “homeland”.

There are many similarities between the national identities of these two countries. The national identities of Estonia and Romania are both largely based on the language. The Estonian language is unique to the territory and is protected by the Estonian constitution, the same is true for the Romanian language. In these countries anyone who speaks it, is automatically included in the national identity and society. In Romania and Estonia there is also an important role for the religious and regional celebrations. Norms and values in these countries are rooted in the Christian (orthodox) religion. Another important part of the Estonian identity is the inferiority feeling relating to their small size, which causes anxiety amongst the Estonians that they might someday lose their identity to larger powers. This feeling of inferiority related to size is not shared by Romanians, however they do feel inferior to the rest of Europe as they perceive themselves as “uncivilized” and “just not European enough”. Identification processes in both Estonia and Romania seem to lie in their relatively short history as countries. Both countries have a strong rural history. This is a reason for both countries to have traditions and celebrations that are focused mainly on regions or villages. The element that brings the country together is language, which might be the reason for both Romanian and Estonian people to put so much emphasis on the importance of language. Regional and religious traditions are also key to national identification processes in these countries, where both have an orthodox Christian majority, but the Orthodox church also still plays an important role in society, especially in Romania.

The religious influences in the cultures of Romania and Estonia are visible through a variety of aspects of the national identity. The national Christian Orthodox churches have a significant importance to the people, which is reflected in the norms and values, putting focus on religion, work, family and education in both Romania and Estonia. These countries however differ due to the occupation of Estonia by the Soviet Union, during which time the religion and nationalism was strictly forbidden. “Religion and

language weren't pressed or forbidden in Romania, that's a very different case compared to Estonia" Dr. Enache explains. The Soviet occupation had further effect on Estonia. An expression used quite often during Estonian interviews was their 'double reality'. For many Estonians the double reality meant that because so many aspects of the Estonian culture was banned, they had to maintain their traditions behind closed doors. This caused what some people called the two levels of reality. In Romania there was no mention of a 'double reality' or 'taking independence for granted' like in Estonia, as the key difference is that there was no long term occupation in Romania, and no large Russian minority left after the fall of the Soviet Union. Even though communism was brought by the Russians in Romania, it was maintained by an internal dictator, which is why it is difficult to form a collective hatred towards a group or foreign country, like in Estonia.

After the fall of the Soviet Union, the independence of Estonia and the fall of communism in Romania, both countries have struggled with reforms. This is influencing their perspectives on the European Union and is reflected in the discourse of "Return to Europe". Even though this discourse is present in both Romania and Estonia, it is more important to Estonians. A reason for this may lie in how the countries identify themselves. Before 1989 the national identity was focussed on internal consumption, while after the fall of the communist regimes in both countries more importance was addressed to the external consumption. Estonia very strongly emphasizes their 'Nordic' background, while Romania views themselves as being 'Latin'. To the notion that the discourse of Return to Europe is less visible in Romania, Prof. Heintz places a critical note explaining "you should consider that you're interviewing people now, once they have gained integration into the European Union."

One may conclude that Estonia has a stronger feeling of belonging to Europe than the Romanians. This has had crucial geopolitical implications for them. The Romanians feel kept out, feel like they need to adapt to become more civil 'like the rest of Europe'. They seem to feel they are less European than the West of Europe, which they often refer to as the "Occident". Orientalism still seems abundantly present in the minds of Romanian people. This feeling is further continuously emphasized by the procrastination by the European Union in the Romanian accession to Schengen and the Eurozone, as was promised to them during the negotiations in their perspective. The European Union therefore has a strong influence on the national identity of Estonia and Romania. The second important discourse that was the notion of "Homeland". It positions the Estonian identity as only available to those who are 'indigenous' to the Estonian territory. Even though this narrative is visible in both countries, where Estonia places emphasis on language and place, Romania puts a stronger emphasis on language than on place of birth. The Russian minority might however contest this notion in Estonia.

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1. Introduction

“All our work and all of our finances are meant to protect these principles that are put down in the constitution. Keeping the language, supporting the culture, and supporting sports. To survive as a country, as a nation.”
Minister Urve Tiidus (in Neijenhuis, 2014).

The concept of national identity is important in any nation-state in the twenty-first century. The quote by Minister Urve Tiidus above, expresses how the former Soviet and current EU-Member state of Estonia still finds it important to protect this Estonian identity. In former Communist states there exists an even stronger urgency to protect the national identity, as many elements of nationalism had been forbidden during the decades of Soviet occupation or communist dictatorship.

The fall of the Soviet Union marked the end of communist regimes in Eastern Europe. Former Soviet Republics like Estonia and many others proclaimed their independence. Communism had been in decline for years, and during the end of the eighties and beginning of the nineties also communist regimes in non-Soviet countries like Romania collapsed. These geopolitical changes noted the start of the process in which these countries transformed to the current nation-states of Estonia and Romania. This independence was not a simple step: an entirely new strategy had to be set up by the new government. The post-socialist changes that needed to be implemented by these countries, need to be seen as more than simply establishing democracy and a market economy (Young and Light, 2001). It involved the entire reordering of peoples' lives and 'worlds of meaning', the production and reproduction of new cultural identities at a range of scales, including the national identity.

According to Young and Light (2001), these post-socialist or post-soviet national identities are not only redefined for internal consumption, but just as importantly for external consumption. Key is 'who are we?' and 'how do we want others to see us?' Common identities like national identities are often said to be construed from the collective shared experiences, traditions, memories and myths, in relation to those of other collective identities. They are in fact often created through opposition to the identities of significant other groups, creating an 'us' and 'them' (Frunzaru and Croby, 2012). Within the building of national identities in almost all of the countries of Central Eastern Europe, an important theme is the major shift from former eastward orientation towards the West. As Young and Light (2001) explain how these countries vigorously embracing the political and economic orthodoxy of Western Europe. Talk of a 'return to Europe' resonates through political discourse.

In this thesis the national identities of the countries of Romania and Estonia will be examined through the social theories of Bourdieu (1990) and Giddens (1984), and the theory of Feldman (2001) encompassing the discourses of “return to Europe” and “homeland”. Through these theories the national identities will be analysed, as their changes over the last twenty-five years. The focus will lay on the periods before and after European accession, which for Estonia was in 2004 and for Romania in 2007, encompassing the reforms that both countries had to implement.

A comparative analysis will be done of the changes in the national identities of these two countries, as these countries are similar however with a significant difference. Estonia has a strong narrative of this “return to Europe” as its inhabitants perceive the Soviet period as an occupation, which enables them to put the blame on a foreign country. This is the key difference with Romania as their communist period was not forced upon them by a foreign country, even though it was the Russians who introduced it there as well. Romania’s communist period was enforced by a dictatorship which was not of a foreign origin. The Romanians therefore do not have an outside force or nation to blame, like Estonia does. This difference might influence the way both countries have perceived the geopolitical changes, and in turn might have a different impact on the national identity. For this reason, this thesis will examine both regions and their identities. The comparative analysis that follows might gain new insights in the mechanisms at play in these countries.

1.1. Project Frame

The country of Estonia is an EU member state, encompassing 1,34 million inhabitants. Of this population 25.5% has the Russian ethnicity. In the capital Tallinn, which has a population of about 400.000 people, this percentage of Russian-Estonians is even higher: 38% in 2008. Since Estonia’s independence in 1991 this has caused problems with integration. Kirch (2001) explains that “Estonians and Russians experienced the disintegration of Soviet Union differently: Estonians as a subject-nation aspiring towards political self-determination and a nation-state, Russians as the dominant nation longing for the return of their previously balanced state.” Problems with integration in the new state occurred throughout the entire country. Due to the large number of Russian inhabitants in Tallinn, these problems were even more apparent in the capital. As Paasi (2009) has stated, the rise of a regional identity or consciousness has been a parallel tendency with the integration process.

The second country which forms the main case in this thesis, Romania, became an EU member state with over 21.6 million inhabitants as of the 1st of January 2007 (Dragoman, 2008). With a similar

history, however different from Estonia, the post-war Soviet occupation of Romania led to the formation of a communist "people's republic" in 1947 (CIA Factbook, 2015). After the final Soviet troops left in 1958, a decades-long rule of dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu, who took power in 1965, and his Securitate police state became increasingly oppressive and draconian through the 1980s. With the decline in trust in the communist system across Eastern Europe, Ceaușescu was overthrown and executed in late 1989. Former communists dominated the government until 1996 when they were swept from power. Romania joined NATO in 2004 and the EU in 2007.

Despite great public interest in the European integration as a hope for future opportunities, little has been done to thoroughly explain the costs of the membership. Dragoman (2008) explains that from nationalist point of view, European membership may be the end of the national project started by the national elites in the 19th century. It is not easy for many nationalists in Eastern Europe to accept that the national states hand over their national sovereignty to a transnational political entity not yet fully defined. The biggest issue in the cases of Romania and Estonia is that whereas most West European societies have already begun to see and accept themselves largely as multicultural and multireligious communities, where the cohesion is based on the essential principle of respecting the law and the constitution, East Europeans still see themselves as members of ethnically based states (Dragoman, 2008). It is still difficult for them to think outside the framework of the national state, as they inherited a long ethnic tradition that has a single aim, to put in place the romantic idea of a single people, a single language and a single state. The concept of national identity is formed by those aspects of culture that are unique for a nation or the aspects of culture that inhabitants of a nation identify with. In this research the definition by Kleiner-Liebau (2009) "the sum of collective conceptions and images shared by a nation (...) which is expressed in common cultural codes, value systems, beliefs and interests, stabilized and updates by institutions and symbols, and whereby nations identify themselves and legitimize their actions inwardly and outwardly."

National identity of Estonia has been subject to research in many cases over the past years. Berg (2002) has researched the post-Soviet Estonian national identity. He describes how globalisation is at the root of intensified contacts around the world, and how this contributes to the emergence of regional identities, sometimes encompassing several states. He names the Balkan states and European Union as examples of this. "But it has also encouraged competing visions, counter-identities and internal social groupings within the states to resist" (Berg, 2002). According to Berg (2002) this has been the case in Estonia as well, after the fall of the Soviet Union. Differences within a territory are magnified. Within

Estonia, some groups search for an ethnic or local identity, while at the same time searching for connections to the rest of the European Union, in the form of Europeanization. He explains that this process is a result of geopolitical changes, one of those changes being the 'return of Estonia to the world arena in 1991' meaning their independence after the fall of the Soviet Union. Although the geopolitical circumstances were somewhat different in Romania, where the state was not occupied by the Soviet Union (after 1958) but was ruled by their own communist dictator, the changes its society has gone through after 1989 are very similar. As both national identities have been studied before but in isolated cases, this thesis aims to make a comparative analysis of the changes that both national identities have undergone in the last twenty-five years, in a similar but different geopolitical context.

The other changes are the preparations for European Union accession, which started in 1997, after which came the Estonian admission in 2004. Berg defines two prerequisites for identity, namely territory and culture. "Geopolitics can be examined in relation to the territoriality of politics within national boundaries, as well as to the transnational flows and penetrations of different kinds of power, but the first expression of the geopolitical can be defined within the ostensibly inner-bounded realm of the territorial state. Geopolitics provides identity with its prerequisites: territory and culture." (Berg 2002). The period before Romania's accession in 2007 was also characterised by intense media involvement in the reshaping and the repositioning of a Romanian collective identity in relation to EU values and norms. Madroana (2012) states that "this active process of identity reconstruction, during which journalists embraced the public role of catalysts of the newly forged Romanian identity, became integral to the strategies of framing various EU-related topics". This overenthusiastic focus on national rediscovery should however be considered within the context of an absence of other types of efficient political action and measures, creating the perceived increased responsibility weighing on the journalists' shoulder to compensate for this lack.

Estonian identity is often linked with the historical settlement of territory (Berg & Oras, 2000). It also implies that those who have come relatively recently from far away have less right than the natives to claim Estonia as their home in a deep cultural sense. Feldman (2001) adds that Estonian identity is only available to those who are 'indigenous' to the Estonian territory. As Berg (2002) also described, the ethnic Estonians possess a unique relationship with the territory and that gives them a primordial moral right to that space. This same reasoning is found in the Romanian national identity, as will later be confirmed by the informant interviews. "In explaining the survival of Estonian identity, Taagepera (1993) has emphasised the difference of the language from most of its neighbours, geographical and

political isolation from linguistic kinfolk, and the major religious border, which all reinforce the distinct Estonian identity”(Berg, 2002). Berg explains that even in spite of all the previous nation-building efforts, Europeanization is responsible for the identity shifts within Estonia, even among the minority groups. Problems with integration of ‘Russophones’ caused resistance among ethnic Estonians in the first years after the independence of Estonia. Non-Estonians were perceived as a threat to the national identity, nation state and its territorial integrity. Similar shifts happened in Romania, where there exists a minority of Romani people. As Madroane explains, the issues around Roma in Europe reopened the issue of the status of Romanian citizens in the European Union and exerted unprecedented pressure on the Romanian authorities to protect their rights and to address the ‘Roma problem’ in a satisfactory manner. In the absence of an immediate, successful resolution of a most complex, deep-running crisis, Romanian society plunged into a climate of enhanced insecurity and dissatisfaction, incompatible with the hopes it had attached to EU accession.

Taagepera (1993) describes that: “Whenever Russia or Serbia consider adopting western ways they must go outside and give up parts of themselves. In contrast, when Estonia or its Baltic neighbours (Latvia and Lithuania) adopt western ways, they only have to reach deeper and actually recover parts of themselves.” Estonia therefore is described by Feldman (2001) to be the frontier of western values and principled. This is also viewed in the resistance towards the Russian minority in Estonia, which was also described by Berg (2002). The same western values can be found in the Romanians, which according to Madroana (2012) resulted in the process of reshaping and the repositioning of a Romanian collective identity in relation to EU values and norms. It had the same effect within the country that this occurred by simultaneously ‘othering’ an internal minority, in Romania’s case not the Russians (as there are essentially hardly present in Romania), but the Roma were scapegoated. Dragoman (2008) explains that Romanian romantic elites did their job of building a nation and a national state, but today settings are different. Successful European integration, ethnic cooperation and power-sharing depend on clarification of the contradiction between ethnic and civic aspects of citizenship. Both in Romania and Estonia a shift is necessary in the way their society and national identity are perceived. This research hopes to augment knowledge on the national identities of Romania and Estonia. It continues where the author’s bachelor thesis ended, and uses the information gathered in that research on Estonia and combines it with new information gathered in Romania to create a comparative analysis of Romania and Estonia. This comparative analysis will hopefully gain us more insight into changing national identities within the context of geopolitical changes. The two countries of Romania and Estonia have a similar background of communism (one with a dictator, the other under occupation), and gained independence

in the end of the eighties. They followed a similar path towards European integration and even though both became an EU member state, only Estonia became part of the Eurozone and the Schengen area. This similar but not identical path creates an geopolitically significant context for a comparative study, with deep implications for the future of this region.

1.2. Societal and Scientific Relevance

Central and Eastern European countries have been researched many times over the last decades. Especially Estonia has been a popular country for research on national identities. Research on the Estonian national identity has therefore been done extensively over the last twenty-five years, including the research by Neijenhuis (2014). The Estonian government values these researches as it gives them legitimacy for policies. The perspectives differ per research, for example for a religious or language point of view. The perspective that will be used for this thesis, namely the influence of geopolitical changes such as the European accession on both the intrinsic and external views of the national identities, has not been used before in relation to neither Estonia nor Romania. In the country of Romania national identity studies has most often been done from a 'nation-branding' perspective, not so much from the perspective of the intrinsic identity of their inhabitants. This thesis will therefore contribute to new insights into the influence of membership of the European Union on the national identities of these two former-communist states. The comparative analysis will hopefully contribute further to the knowledge on changes in these national identities and might form explanations for comparable changes in other Central and Eastern European countries.

This thesis is therefore not only scientifically relevant, but might also hold great relevance for the societies of Romania and Estonia. National identity is the most crucial binding factor for any society. Especially in the countries in Central and Eastern Europe which have had so many changes and reforms, the national identity is a stronghold for many people. Both Romania and Estonia might benefit from the new insights as the ministries of culture might find evidence for new policies. The comparative character of this research might change the way the people perceive themselves as a society and may form the basis for future research and policy. The value of the comparative analysis in this thesis therefore lies in showing there are geopolitical consequences for countries when comparing to how close to Europe they feel or are perceived. As the "Return to Europe" is expected to be easier for Estonia as Romania, this can have significant implications for their membership of not only the European Union, but Schengen and the Euro as well.

1.3. Objective and Questions

The goal of this thesis is to gain insight in the national identity in Estonia and Romania, and how geopolitical changes in these countries have an effect on that identity. This insight is necessary in order to fill the knowledge deficit existing in this subject. Both Estonia and Romania were part of the communist Eastern European states, until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the fall and execution of Ceaușescu. They followed a similar path and became a member of the European Union in respectively the year 2004 and 2007. Therefore in the last twenty-five years, the countries have had many geopolitical changes and have been forced to undergo major institutional reforms. Research on the national identity of Estonia has been done extensively and several discourses have been defined in these researches. On Romanian national identity however there has barely been any research, only from a perspective of nation branding, not from the perspective of the intrinsic feelings of identity of the Romanian people. The goals will be accomplished in this thesis through research on the national identity in Romania, and how geopolitical changes in the country have influenced this identity. Using the discourses derived from Estonian researches as a theoretical framework, the changes in national identity in Romania will be compared with those in Estonia. The research will consist of partly literature research on national identity theories and the geopolitical context. The second part will be empirical research. The fieldwork in Estonia was done in May 2014 in the context of the Bachelor Thesis, and the fieldwork in Romania was done in period between February to July 2015, as part of an internship at the Netherlands Embassy in Romania.

In order to reach the goal set out for this research, the main research question is defined as: *How have policies and geopolitical changes relating to fall of communism and the European accession of Romania and Estonia influenced their national identity?* Before this main question can be answered, one must answer the sub-questions listed below:

1. Which geopolitical changes can be identified in Romania and Estonia since 1989?
2. How can the national identity of Romania and Estonia be described?
3. How have the national identity changes Romania and Estonia been experienced by inhabitants?
4. How have the national identity changes been perceived by experts?
5. How have changes in the national identity of Romania differed from those changes in Estonia's national identity?

2. Theory

2.1. Theoretical Framework

As a framework for the analysis of the national identities of Romania and Estonia, and the changes in these identities, this research will be based on two sorts of theories. First two macro-level social theories will be used to describe the view on how identities are formed and change in general. These theories therefore position this thesis within the versatile world of social theory. These theories are the Theory of Structuration by Giddens (1984) and the Logic of Practice by Bourdieu (1990). Both these theories have been used in earlier research done on (constructing) national identities like Wodak et al. (2009) and therefore forms an interesting theoretical frame to use when looking at the cases of Estonia and Romania. Afterwards a closer focus will be applied, by using a 'micro-level' theory on national identity of Estonia, by Merje Feldman (2001), which provides several discourses that are present in the Estonian national identity, but might also give interesting insights when adapted to the Romanian case and comparing these two national identities.

The social theories are the Theory of Structuration (Giddens, 1984) and the Logic of Practice (Bourdieu, 1990). Giddens (1984) discussed in his theory that structure should not be interpreted on itself, but rather the process in which it is formed and it evolves. It is a changing and dynamic concept, and therefore the interaction between agents and structures change as well. Identities are a social construct which is produced and reproduced constantly. This last idea is shared by Bourdieu (1990). According to his Logic of Practice identities change, due to changes in structures and habitus. A habitus is adopted by agents who in their turn act upon it within certain fields. Not unlike Giddens, Bourdieu aims on the individual. The difference lies in the fact that Bourdieu defines certain social classes and which Giddens does not name as an important aspect, and these will not be taken into account in this research.

The Theory of Structuration (Giddens, 1984) is based on the idea that agents use their practical understanding and the resources of the social structure to construct a social reality. This process is based on the interaction between structure and agency, and is not a universal structure. An agent according to Giddens (1984) is not only a human individual, but can be any social unit that is capable of making a decision. Agency is the continuous flow of conduct and change. It is not an event that happens at a certain moment, but is the whole of events and changes in a frame of time and space. Structure

forms the rules and resources but also restrictions and possibilities. Therefore, there is an interdependence between structure and agency, and structure is the medium through which agency is produced. When Giddens' Theory of Structuration is applied to culture, it is the context in which it evolves and changes that has to be studied, not only the culture in itself.

The Logic of Practice (Bourdieu, 1990) encompasses the idea that "society is organized through unconscious internalization of structures which are constantly reproduced". Bourdieu (1990) proposes a kind of analysis consisting of structures, habitus and practices. In his theory habitus is a product of history and produces individual and collective practices, in accordance with the schemes generated by history. Social structures is both enduring patterns of behaviour by participants in a social system in relation to each other, and institutionalised norms or cognitive frameworks that structure the actions of actors in the social system Bourdieu (1990) describes that one has to look at social situations from a higher viewpoint in order to see the social structures, which can be representations or performances. "The theory of practice as practice insists, the objects of knowledge are constructed, but the principle of this construction is within a system of structured dispositions"; also called the habitus. The habitus is constituted in practice and is always oriented towards practical functions. To observe this one has to situate oneself within the activities, and figuratively speaking 'step down' from the overall viewpoint one first had. When truly wanting to understand the social structures, one has to return to practice, identify the objectified producer and the incorporated products of historical practice (of structures and habitus).

After constructing the position within the existing social theories, a theory on identity formation on a national level will be used to gain more focus. Merje Feldman (2001) researched the link between European integration and the discourse of National Identity in Estonia. In her work, Estonian identity narratives centre on the demarcation and protection of Estonian national identity, while simultaneously also focussing on the rapid integration of Estonia into supranational institutions. According to Feldman (2001), the national identity discourse in Estonia can be labelled under two categories: "Return to Europe" and "Homeland". In both dimensions, we see that the questions of culture are combined with those of geographical definition. This theory will be applied on both Estonia and Romania. Feldman (2001) explains that "it therefore reveals the territorial imaginations underlying identity politics. 'Return to Europe' is focussed on 'locating' Estonian culture on the European map, while the 'Homeland' narrative delimits Estonian identity in terms of nation-state, and links it to Estonian territory and Estonian soil." The Return to Europe narrative is based on the idea that Estonia has been part of

(western) Europe's economic, political and cultural life since the Middle Ages, or even before. When adapting the European norms and values according to Feldman (2001), it is not changing Estonia's identity. On the contrary, these 'western ways' are already embedded in the National identity, it only sank away over the centuries. Estonia therefore is described by Feldman (2001) to be the frontier of western values and principled. As part of that frontier imagery, Feldman (2001) explains that danger is among the central metaphor of the Return to Europe narrative, as Estonian identity is under a constant threat from the neighbouring alien civilisation, namely Russia. The narrative of Homeland positions the Estonian identity as only available to those who are 'indigenous' to the Estonian territory. It implies that immigrants that came to Estonia relatively recent, especially from far away, have less rights to call Estonia their home, in a cultural sense. This narrative therefore also sees European integration as a potential threat. The combination of these two narratives, Feldman (2001) concludes, contribute to the fact that the Estonian identity discourse contains numerous contradictions, as explained before. This thesis will hopefully gain more insight in whether and how these narratives can also be found in Romanian national identity discourses.

2.2. Key Concepts

Identity - Defined as “a sociocultural construct that affects how people behave and communicate”, identity is the one concept that provides the necessary delimitation between the self and the others, between the group and the others (Frunzaru and Corbu, 2012). Identity is the term that explains how people experience a sense of self, and a sense of belonging to a group. It is argued that identities can be grouped under three broad categories: human identity, social identity, and the personal identity. Therefore identity defines not only an in-group, but also one or several out-groups. Differently put, “our idea of who we are is usually framed as a response to some ‘other’ group” (Frunzaru and Corbu, 2012).

National identity – The concept of national identity is formed by those aspects of culture that are unique for a nation or the aspects of culture that inhabitants of a nation identify with. It is according to Kleiner-Liebau (2009) “the sum of collective conceptions and images shared by a nation (...) which is expressed in common cultural codes, value systems, beliefs and interests, stabilized and updates by institutions and symbols, and whereby nations identify themselves and legitimize their actions inwardly and outwardly.” Kolakowski (1995) adds that national identity can be characterized by five elements; the vague idea of a national spirit which expresses itself in cultural forms, a historical memory, anticipation and future orientation, national territory and a nameable beginning (e.g. legends of a founding event).

Geopolitics – “The state's power to control space or territory and shape the foreign policy of individual states and international political relations” (Knox and Marston, 2010). Geopolitics therefore encompasses the relation between population and territory, and its effect on the power of politics in a country. (Criekemans, 2007). Geopolitical changes as used in this research are therefore changes in borders, foreign policy and international political relations.

Culture – We understand culture as a system of rules and principles for proper behavior, analogues to the grammar of a language, which sets the standards for proper speaking. “In this sense, culture is not primarily defined by cultural product, it is not the behaviour itself, but rather the standards for behaviour” (Kleiner-Liebau, 2009).

Europeanization - The literature generally uses the term as to indicate ‘influence of the EU’ or ‘domestic impact of the EU’. “Domestic cultural understandings and informal institutions are key mediating factors for whether domestic actors engage in a social learning process through which EU rules redefine their interests and identities” (Sedelmeier, 2006).

2.3 Conceptual Model

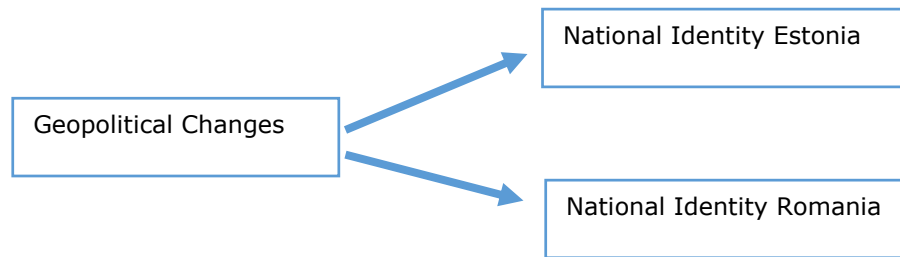


Figure 1: Schematic representation of Conceptual Model

In this conceptual model it is assumed that geopolitical changes influence national identity in both Estonia and Romania. The concepts of geopolitical changes and national identity were defined in the previous chapter. In this study the focus therefore lies on whether and how geopolitical changes influence national identity. In order to do so, the concepts are operationalized into dimensions.

Geopolitical Changes:

- Occupation versus independence
- Communism versus capitalism
- Economic and political relations with East versus West
- Membership of intergovernmental organizations

National identity:

- National traditions and celebrations
- National historical memory
- Norms and values specific to country
- Presence of national spirit and social cohesion

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Strategy

In order to reach the goal set out for this thesis and assure ability to answer the main research question, an in-depth focus is necessary. There has been chosen for a small-scale qualitative approach, focussing on both public opinion and views, and the views of experts. This research is not targeted to create a generalizable theory, but might establish a basis for further research connecting geopolitical changes and national identities in Central and Eastern European countries. By choosing a qualitative research method, it is hoped that in this research a complete image is created of the national identities and reasons for the (potential) changes. The research is formed by deductive data-analysis, due to the fact that literature and data from the previous thesis on Estonia is used as literature research, and this is applied to Romania. This is also the reason for the set-up of the research being a combination between literature research and empirical research. The lack of knowledge on the Romanian identity will be filled with interviews, both with the people in the street as with experts. This provides the foundation for a comparison of both case studies, Estonia and Romania.

3.2. Research Model

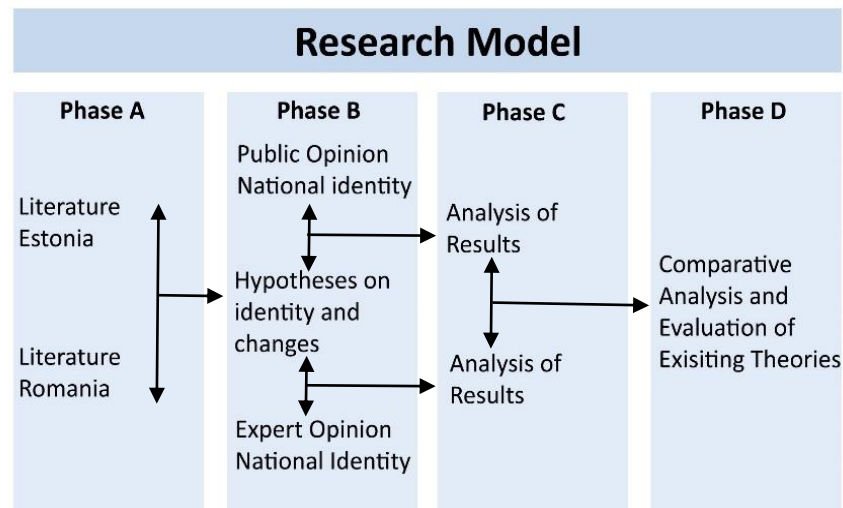


Figure 2: Schematic representation of Research Model

The goal set out for this research thus is to enhance our knowledge on the national identity in Estonia and Romania, and how geopolitical changes in these countries have an effect on that identity. Therefore we must first research the geopolitical changes in Estonia since 1989. The fall of the Soviet

Union and the Ceaușescu regime are relevant historical events for this thesis. The focus however will be on the changes and reforms afterwards, during the countries application for membership and resulting accession to the EU. Also, the main discourses on national identity in Estonia and Romania will be identified and described. These two steps form phase A of the research. The literature research will result in a set of hypotheses which then can be applied to the empirical research done in phase B. This will be done in the form of interviews. Qualitative methods (interviews) give the data that is necessary for this research as the goal is to create a description of how the national identity in both countries changed, and understand why these changes happened. This information would be impossible to retrieve from a research using only quantitative methodologies.

For this research question, other qualitative methods such as phenomenology or discourse analysis are less applicable as the different methods will not provide to data that is necessary to answer the research question. Discourse analysis is more applicable for literature research (so could be used in phase A of my research) but is not useful for analyzing interviews. Phenomenology is more applicable for studies of particular phenomenon and the changes that I research encompass more than one phenomenon. It is possible to use phenomenology for the research, however less applicable as it is more difficult to retrieve the data that is necessary to answer the research question. I therefore choose for grounded theory with interviews. In order to do interviews, many different aspects have to be taken into account. This will be discussed in the next paragraph. The critique for this method is that it will generate a lot of information, of which not all might be relevant. It will therefore be a lot of work to analyze and filter out the relevant information. In Estonia the empirical research was done in April and May of 2014. The empirical research in Romania will be done during an internship at the Dutch Embassy in Bucharest, from February to July 2015. The interviews are not only done with people in the streets of Bucharest, but also experts, like politicians, sociologists and others which is phase C in figure 1. After gathering the necessary information, the interviews will be analyzed. The result of this analysis will be a comparison of the two countries. After analyzing, conclusions can be drawn and evaluation of existing theory might be possible.

3.3. Research Material

In the first phase of the research will be focused on literature research. In this phase, further definition of the key concepts will take place as well as in-depth information research on these concepts applied to Romania and Estonia. Phase A thus contains research based on literature and documents, and the information will be accessed through two methods, namely search-systems (screening of the overall text) and for the important pieces also content-analysis. The literature that will be used in this study consists of existing researches on national identity in Estonia, national identity of Romania, geopolitical changes and other elements that might be important for the context in which the studied relation exists.

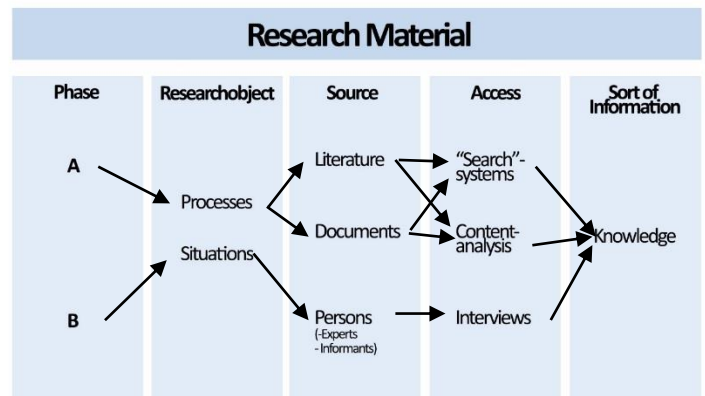


Figure 3: Schematic representation of Research Material

In the second phase of the research we will focus on people as a source. We will contact both informants, which will be people in the streets of Bucharest, as well experts like politicians, sociologists and others, as was done in Tallinn as well. Knowledge will be gained through interviews with these people. These interviews will be structured using interview guides, but different interview guides will be used for the people in the street – informants- and the experts. Experts might have more insight in underlying processes or background information, and therefore a different approach might be necessary. The interviews will be done face-to-face in Bucharest, Romania, as they were done in Tallinn, Estonia and will be done with the help of an interpreter, in order to avoid not having a representative sample, when only interviewing respondents who speak either English or German. The focus will be on people as a source, because in this research we want to enhance the knowledge on this identity, and there is no other way to get the information. It is a complex subject, and might also be sensitive for some people in Bucharest and Tallinn. The interviews will be recorded and transcribed, in order to make it possible to publish the raw data.

3.3.1. Interviewguide informants

Opening and aim

Good afternoon, my name is Laura and I am a student in the subject of Human Geography in the Netherlands. I am currently in Bucharest to work as an intern for the Dutch Embassy and to conduct my master thesis research. In short, the goal of my thesis is to gain insight in the national identity of Romania, and whether the membership to the EU has influenced that national identity. Can I ask you a couple of questions about your personal experiences and opinions? Do you mind if I record this conversation?

Buna ziua, numele meu este Laura si sunt studenta la facultatea de Geografie Umana in Olanda. In prezent, sunt in Bucuresti pentru a face un internship la Ambasada Olandei si pentru a face cercetarea lucrarii mele de master. Pe scurt, scopul tezei mele este de aprofunda problema identitatii nationale a Romaniei, in special, daca aderarea la UE a influentat aceasta identitate nationala. Pot sa va pun cateva intrebari despre experientele si opiniile dumneavoastra personale? Va deranjeaza daca inregistrez aceasta conversatie?

Questions/ Intrebari

Personal information/ Informatii personale

- (Note gender and age-group) (*Sexul si grupa de varsta*)
- How long have you lived in Bucharest? *De cat timp locuiti in Bucuresti?*
- (Where have you lived before?) *(Unde ati locuit inainte)*
- What is your occupation? *Care este ocupatia dumneavoastra?*

National Identity/ Identitate nationala

- Are there specific cultural celebrations in Romania?
Exista sarbatori culturale specifice in Romania?
- What traditions are typically Romanian?
Ce traditii sunt specifice Romaniei?
- How would you describe Romanian cuisine? Are there dishes that are typical Romanian?
Cum ati descrie bucataria romaneasca? Exista mancaruri care sunt specifice Romaniei?

- Do you think that there are certain norms and values that are specific to Romania? Can you name those?

Credeti ca exista anumite norme si valori care sa fie specifice Romaniei? Puteti sa le numiti?

- Are there important national symbols, which have meaning to everyone? (like the flag, etc.)
Exista simboluri nationale importante, care sa aiba o insemnatate pentru toata lumea? (de exemplu steagul)
- What makes you personally feel Romanian?
Ce va face in mod personal sa va simtiti roman?

Geopolitical changes/ *Schimbari geopolitice*

- How did you experience the first years after the fall of communism?
Cum resimtiti primii ani dupa caderea comunismului?
 - Do you think that in this period, Romanian culture changed? How? Why?
Credeti ca in aceasta perioada, cultura romaneasca s-a schimbat? Cum? De ce?
 - Can you name specific examples?
Puteti sa dati exemple specifice?
- What changes did you experience when Romania applied for membership to the European Union?
Ce schimbari ati experimentat dupa ce Romania si-a depus candidatura pentru aderarea la Uniunea Europeana?
- How did you experience Romania officially becoming a member of the EU?
Cum ati resimtit Romania ca devenind un membru oficial al UE?
 - Did the national identity change?
S-a schimbat identitatea nationala?
 - Do you feel an equal member of the European Union?
Va simtiti un membru egal al Uniunii Europene?
- Final question: How do you see the future of Romania?
Intrebarea finala : Cum vedeti viitorul Romaniei?

3.3.2. Interviewguide Scholar Expert Interviews

This interviewguide was used for the interviews with Professor Monica Heintz (Anthropology, Paris University), Professor Sorin Pavel (Geography, Timișoara University) and Professor Bogdan Sudito (Geography, Bucharest University).

- How would you describe the Romanian national identity? (Specific norms and values, celebrations, traditions)
- What makes a person truly Romanian?
- What makes you personally feel Romanian?
- How do you think that after the fall of communism this national identity changed?

- In the Estonian national identity, two discourses are important: 'homeland' (explaining that the national identity is based on being born in Estonia and speaking Estonian) and 'return to Europe' (the feeling of reconnecting with the European 'sister countries' after the fall of the Soviet Union).
 - During the interviews in Bucharest I heard many claims towards the discourse 'homeland'. How would you describe the importance of this to Romanians?
 - A 'return to Europe' does not seem to apply to Romanians. How could this be explained?
 - Do you think that Romanians have a different perspective on communism as it to them is linked to a dictatorship, but not linked to a long period of occupation in the way it is in Estonia?

- How has the Romanian national identity changed since the membership of the European Union?
- Why do you think, do many Romanians feel to be 'unequal members' of the European Union? (Is this due to 'othering' by the rest of the EU? Or do Romanians feel to be too 'Eastern European'?)
- How do you see the future of the Romanian national identity? And the future position of Romania within the EU?

3.3.3. Interviewguide Ministry of Culture

This interviewguide was used for the expert interview with Professor Enache, who works as a project manager at the Romanian Ministry of Culture.

- How would you describe the Romanian national identity? (Specific norms and values, celebrations, traditions)
- What makes you personally feel Romanian?
- What are the priorities of the Ministry of Culture?
- What elements of the National identity are most important to focus on for the Ministry?
- What kind of programs support the culture?
- Do you also support regional cultural traditions? How?
- How are the programs and priorities of the Ministry different now from under communist government?
- How do you think that after the fall of communism this national identity changed?
- How does the Ministry view the Romanian culture within European perspective?
- How have programs changed since the membership of the European Union?

3.3.4. Coding in Atlas.TI

To make the planned comparative analysis possible, the same codes were used as in the fieldwork in Estonia. These codes were found objective hermeneutics, however as these codes were already established these form the grounded theory with which the Romanian data is analyzed. The full list of codes are found below:

National Identity in Romania

- Celebrations ROM
- Legends ROM
- European Family
- Norms and Values ROM
- Significance language ROM
- Symbols ROM
- Taking Independence for granted ROM
- Traditions ROM
- Views on ROM

Geopolitical Changes in Romania

- Changes after COM
- Double Reality
- Negative Changes EU
- Negative Changes Post-COM
- Negative Experience COM
- Negative Experience EU
- Positive Changes EU
- Positive Changes Post-COM
- Positive Experience COM
- Positive Experience EU

National Identity in Estonia

- Celebrations EST
- Legends EST
- European Family
- Norms and Values EST
- Significance language EST
- Symbols EST
- Taking Independence for granted EST
- Traditions EST
- Views on EST

Geopolitical Changes in Estonia

- Changes after fall Soviet Un.
- Double Reality
- Negative Changes EU
- Negative Changes Post-COM
- Negative Experience COM
- Negative Experience EU
- Positive Changes EU
- Positive Changes Post-COM
- Positive Experience COM
- Positive Experience EU

4. Regional Overview

4.1. Geopolitical Changes in Estonia

Estonia has undergone many changes during the past twenty-five years, which are all related to geopolitics. An overview of these changes was composed by Neijenhuis (2014). Starting twenty-five years ago, in 1989 when Estonia was still part of the Soviet Union until its collapse that year. For understanding the political situation during this time, one must go deeper into history.

4.1.1. Soviet Annexation

The Soviet Union annexed the Estonian territory together with the other Baltic States during the Second World War. As Virkkunen (1999) explains, the new Red Parliament that came to power after the annexation of Estonia by the Soviet Union in August 1940, unanimously voted in support of a proposal of adopting the Soviet constitution. This constitution was written in 1936, following the beliefs and ideals of the current Soviet leader, Stalin. The aim of this was obvious, according to Virkkunen (1999), to redirect Soviet society towards a state where no economic or social inequalities existed. In order to steer the country towards these communist values, it was necessary to create and invent beliefs which would work as the basis to the Soviet territorial identity. This encompassed elements like cultural values, ideology and conception of history and territory. These were all seen as building blocks for the new Soviet society within Estonia. "Stalin related minority nationalism to capitalism and thereby legitimized his means of state building in non-Russian republics" (Virkkunen, 1999).

The policies following this constitution and these beliefs had large impacts on the demographics of Estonia. Next to the limitation by the state to freedom of speech, freedom of assembly and freedom of press, the government also started large-scale deportation of the indigenous population. According to Virkkunen (1999), "it has been estimated that between fifty and eighty thousand people, a full eight to ten percent of the total rural Estonian population, were deported from their places of origin in order to weaken the existing non-state activism, to promote the Soviet territorial ideology and to speed up both the social reconstruction and nationalization of the post-war Soviet state." He explains that those deported Estonians were replaced by non-Estonian workers which were perceived as more reliable, and were placed there from other parts of the Soviet Union. In the first years these people came mostly from areas close to Estonia, and were of Russian origin. Later also people from other areas of the Soviet Union, for example the Soviet states in the Caucasus, were placed in

Estonia. Not only Estonians were replaced by Russian newcomers, also Estonian national symbols like the flag, the coat of arms and the national anthem were banned by the Soviet authorities. This ban was strongly vindicated, as people could get sent to gulags in Siberia for singing the national anthem. As the Finnish anthem had the same melody, the Finnish radio kept playing the song at the beginning and end of the program, making sure that in Estonia it would never be forgotten.

When Gorbachev came into office in 1988, he saw the challenge which was posed by the decreased legitimacy and dissatisfaction of the public around the policies of the years before. He therefore started the reform politics, also known as Perestroika. He did not want any sort of social revolution, but started his reforms in the economic sector (Virkkunen, 1999). "The economic side of perestroika includes a reduction in the role of central planning, the decentralization of decision-making, an expanded role for market mechanisms, and increased opportunities for private initiative in services and production. The political side includes greater openness and publicity in the media (glasnost), greater 'pluralism' of opinions in the political arena, competitive and secret elections for state (and perhaps even Party) bodies, and an enhanced political role for workers in state enterprises through 'self-management' and employee selection of managers and directors" (Mason, 1988). This gave Estonia more freedom to decide over its own policies. One of the first steps taken in Estonia was to slowly restore the coat of arms in the public space. Due to these changes in the Soviet Union's strategy, the political atmosphere around freedom of expression became more positive, though some political statements might still have been found dangerous due to, according to Virkkunen (1999), anti-socialist, anti-Party or anti-state features. Still the positive changes Gorbachev introduced by the policies of Perestroika and Glasnost, were not enough to prevent this enormous nation from imploding virtually overnight. Explanations given to the event are according to Ward (2000) for example the "imperial overstretch", which is a term used to address the relationship between economic and political power. This might have contributed to the fall of the Soviet empire. Also Gorbachev is described as a catalyst to the ultimate downfall of the USSR. The leader's unavoidable and fatal mistake was to try to reform the entire Soviet system from within, through perestroika and glasnost. This gave the fifteen individual states that were part of the Soviet Union, including Estonia, a tremendous amount of power as explained before. However much literature has been written on the subject, the exact chain of events which led to the ultimate downfall of an enormous Union can never be fully comprehended.

4.1.2. On the path to Europe

After the fall of the Soviet Union, the Baltic States together worked towards their independence. The ideas from the late 1980's on a multicultural state were formed by taking over and restructuring the existing organs of power, according to Berg and Oras (2000). These existing organs were for example what was left of the Soviet Union. The result was a treaty in 1991 between Estonia and the Russian Federation, which established a mutual acknowledgement of the borderline. The official recognition of the new Estonian Republic however was not yet part of that treaty. The foundation for the current Estonian state were further laid in the coming years, between 1991 and 1994. According to Berg and Oras (2000): "The right-of-center political elite that came to power during those years declared the previous years of Soviet annexation and occupation illegal and against the will of the indigenous population. In founding constitution of community and renegotiating the state and citizenship boundaries, the Estonian political elite chose a restitutionist interpretation of independence, which included adopting in spirit (though not in form) much of the first constitution from 1922 along with claiming a right to some 2000 km² of territory that belonged to Estonia before WWII but was annexed by Stalin in 1944, immediately after the war front had moved westward." It therefore to the Estonians is not seen as the independence but the re-independence.

During the writing of this constitution and the forming of the new Estonian state, elements as the Estonian language and culture were, especially important tools for nation-building (Berg and Oras, 2000). The policy created in the period between 1991 and 1994 was focused on the complete restoration of Estonian independence, which included the Estonian-Russian border as it was established in the Tartu Peace Treaty of 1920. However, although there were sufficient legal arguments in favor of this goal, as stated by Berg and Oras (2000), only even the notion of this issue created in the rest of the world, the interpretation of the Estonian standpoint to be a claim on territories belonging to the Russian Federation. Most countries were not aware of the historical significance of the claim to Estonia, and therefore miscomprehended the situation. The mutual relationship between Estonia and the Russian Federation was only possible, after Estonia gave up its claim for the eastern territories in 1994 and agreed with the Russian Federation to not demand any aspects of the Tartu Peace Treaty in any future treaties or negotiations. This meant a shift, instead of the earlier used restitutionist geopolitics, Estonia changed its perspective to restorationist geopolitics. According to Aalto (2000), this restorationist geopolitics is not so much based on the restitution of the territories which were lost in 1944, but more about demarcating the Estonian State. The previous period of uncertainty and discussion was perceived

by many Estonians as a threat to their identity. The demarcating “has come to refer to the actually existing control line between the two states. It is not only about borders and the territory, but also about identity, as it forms a boundary between the Western Christian and Eastern Orthodox civilizations” (Aalto, 2000). However, Merritt (2000) explains that narratives of national identity also consider the border between Estonia and Russia as a marking-point for something that was a far larger issue back then, which was Estonia’s desire to “draw the line” against Russian interference, domestic and international. The pivot in restorationist geopolitics is the perception that Estonia’s Russian population is too closely connected to Russia. Perception of hostility is therefore due to external factors.

This pivoting role of identity politics and the politics of time and memory in post-Soviet politics, also was proven to have a leading role in the geopolitics of the expansion of the area of European governance. It has been argued that underlying the formation of geopolitical discourses is in many cases the perception of national identity, because states’ geopolitical visions should be understood as translations of national-identity concepts in geographical terms and symbols. Therefore the importance to Estonia to argue that it is not a new state, but has rather restored its statehood after a period of illegal occupation, is key to their vision in geopolitics in the nineties. Aalto and Berg (2002): “The technical details in the delimitation of the Estonian-Russian border agreed by 1997 and a draft treaty signed in March 1999. But the story has not come to an end. The Estonians and Western organizations are left in limbo, waiting for the Russian government to approve the treaty.” Meanwhile, Estonia is becoming more and more involved in the refugee, asylum-seeker and immigrant policies of the European Union, as part of the accession process to the EU. The Russian-Estonian border would become part of the external border of the European Union, therefore it was perceived to be a threat that a large mass of people and unwanted goods making their way to the rest of Europe (Aalto and Berg, 2002). According to Merritt (2000), after its independence it was one of Estonia’s top priorities was to face westwards, which meant that all borders towards the rest of the European Union should become more permeable, while the border with Russia would become as firm as possible.

However, at this time still no consensus was established on the issue of the border between Estonia and Russia. While chief negotiators proposed another border agreement in March 1999, the issues raised in the years before proved to be preventing a quick settlement (Neijenhuis, 2014). The issue of the border has become a thorn in the eye of both sides. As for Estonia it seemed to be the last step that would be necessary to confirm her “rightful place in Europe”, while on the Russian side, national pride and the growing anguish for the NATO-dominated Europe make these constant negotiations with

Estonia a special pain in the neck. Finally, at the end of 2002 the three Baltic States were given certainty on joining both the European Union and NATO, as they were invited to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in November and to the European Union in December, awaiting their full membership which would be official in 2004 (Miniotaite, 2003). It therefore can be seen as Estonia having finished the first stage towards their “return to Europe” as described in the narratives of national identity according to Feldman (2001). Miniotaite (2003) describes that Estonia’s identification with the West, meaning Europe, has been followed by the political, economic and cultural distancing from the East, in this case mainly Russia. This was a logical result to the geopolitical vision which was necessary to gain full membership to the EU and NATO. “Positive identification with Europe, with the Western community of states is accompanied by dissociation from non-Europe, with the emphasis on Russia’s threats. On the other hand, ‘Europe’ is conceived not only as an ‘element of us’ but also as an economic and cultural threat to national identity. Euro-sceptic groupings that emerged in all Baltic States in 1996–97 have been conceived as a response to this threat” (Miniotaite, 2003). This concludes the important framework of the geopolitical changes in Estonia in the past twenty-five years, on which the interviews with the informants are based. In the following paragraph a summary of the results of these interviews will be discussed and linked to the known literature on the subject.

4.2. Geopolitical changes in Romania

Like Estonia, Romania has undergone many changes during the past twenty-five years, overcoming a communist dictatorship and seeking the path towards membership of the European Union. This paragraph serves as an overview of these changes, starting over twenty-five years ago, in 1989 when Romania overthrew its communist dictator Ceaușescu. For understanding the political situation during this time, one must go deeper into history as, much like in Estonia’s case, the country’s communist history plays an important role in its national identity today.

During the Second World War, mid-1943 the leaders of Romania's semi-legal political opposition were in secret contact with the Western Allies and attempting to negotiate the country's surrender to Anglo-American forces in order to avoid Soviet occupation, according to Bachman (1989). Romania's foreign minister, also contacted the Allies at about the same time. A separate peace with Romania was however refused by the Western diplomats, without Soviet participation. The Soviet Union in their turn delayed an armistice until the Red Army had crossed into Romania in April 1944. On August 23 1943 King Michael, a number of army officers, and armed Communist-led civilians supported by the BND locked

Ion Antonescu into a safe and seized control of the government. The king then restored the 1923 constitution and issued a cease-fire just as the Red Army was penetrating the Moldovan front. The coup speeded the Red Army's advance, and the Soviet Union later awarded Michael the Order of Victory for his personal courage in overthrowing Antonescu and putting an end to Romania's war against the Allies. The Red Army eventually occupied Bucharest on August 31, 1944. In Moscow on September 12, Romania and the Soviet Union signed an armistice on terms Moscow virtually dictated.

After the Second World War, the Red Army occupied the Romanian territory for a short period. Soviet control handicapped the Romanian government's efforts to administer the country. Western diplomats feared that the Soviet Union would annex Romania outright (Bachman, 1989). In February 1947, the Allies and Romania signed the final peace treaty in Paris. The treaty reset Romania's boundaries, including Transylvania, as part of Romania; but reassigning Bessarabia and northern Bukovina under the Soviet authorities. The treaty also encompassed Romania's obligation to honor human and political rights, including freedom of speech, religion, and assembly. The Romanian communist government treated these commitments as dead letters from the start. The treaty also called for withdrawal of Soviet troops.

4.2.1. A Communist Dictatorship

The communist regime focused on nation-building and the consequences of this policy can be traced even after 1989, according to Dragoman (2008). By the end of the 1940's the Romanian Communists started rounding up the other political parties, arresting numerous opposition politicians and driving others into exile (Bachman, 1989). The Romanian Communist Party and one wing of the Social Democratic Party merged in early 1948 to form the Romanian Workers' Party, which ruled the country for the next decades. The regime determined to reform the social structure and inculcate "socialist" values. The authorities jailed teachers and intellectuals, introduced compulsory Russian-language education, rewrote Romania's history to highlight Russia's contributions, and redefined the nation's identity (Bachman, 1989). Dragoman (2008) explains how Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, the first leader of the Romanian People's Republic, had started to adopt policies independent from Moscow, although these policies were rather dogmatic imitations of the Soviet model. The new constitution that he introduced in 1952 however incorporated complete paragraphs of the Soviet constitution (Bachman, 1989). The Soviet troops remained present in Romania until 1958, when the last forces left the country. Gheorghiu-Dej started a nationalist campaign around the same time, by eliminating his ethnically

different rivals during the purges of the communist party in the early 1950s. This period is marked by a tolerance of ethnic minorities. Gheorghiu-Dej took Nicolae Ceaușescu under his wing as his protégé.

Bachman (1989) describes that soon after Stalin's death, Gheorghiu-Dej set Romania on its so-called "independent" course within the East bloc. Gheorghiu-Dej identified with Stalinism, and the more liberal Soviet regime threatened to undermine his authority. Despite its efforts to pull away from the Soviet influence, Romania joined the Warsaw Treaty Organization (Warsaw Pact) in 1955, which entailed subordinating and integrating a portion of its military into the Soviet military machine. During the sixties Gheorghiu-Dej ordered "de-Russification" and nationalistic "Romanianization" policies and measure, to drum up mass support for his defiance of Moscow and deflect criticism of his own harsh domestic economic policies. The Romanianization campaign ended political and cultural concessions granted to the Hungarian minority during early communist rule; subsequently Hungarians suffered extensive discrimination. In March 1965 Gheorghiu-Dej died and was succeeded by Ceaușescu, who by then had climbed to position of the party's first secretary (Bachman 1989). Even though communism had no roots in Romania before but was imposed by the Soviet Union, it ended in a fusion with the Romanian nationalist ideology under the rule of Nicolae Ceaușescu. Dragoman (2008) explains that the illiberal character of nationalism in Romania under Ceaușescu, can be traced back to the nation-building project adopted by the regime of Gheorghiu-Dej, which was an effort to reconcile nationalism with the universalist ideology of Leninism. During the early years of his reign, Ceaușescu presented himself as a reformer; purge victims began returning home; contacts with the West multiplied; and artists, writers, and scholars found new freedoms. Romania's progress along the path of "socialist construction" was acknowledged in 1965 when the country's name was changed from the Romanian People's Republic to the Socialist Republic of Romania. In 1968 Ceaușescu openly denounced Gheorghiu-Dej for deviating from party ideals during Stalin's lifetime.

According to Bachman (1989), in 1971 Romania joined the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, and in 1972 it became the first Comecon country to join the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, which broadened its access to hard-currency credit markets. This was again a step towards the western influence sphere, while internally Romania's policy tightened. The Eleventh Party Congress in 1974 signaled the beginning of a regime based on "dynastic socialism." Ceaușescu placed members of his immediate family in control of defense, internal affairs, planning, science and technology, youth, and party cadres. Soviet leaders used proxy countries, especially Hungary, to criticize Romania's nationalistic foreign and domestic policies. At the same time, Ceaușescu intensified

Romania's persecution of Transylvania's Hungarians and other national minorities, which further deteriorated the relations with its northern neighbour, and Ceaușescu's bad human rights record eroded much of the credibility Romania had won in the late 1960s through its defiance of Moscow (Bachman, 1989). During the cold winters of the 1980's Ceaușescu government banned automobile traffic, imposed military discipline on workers in the energy field, and shut off heat and hot water, even in hotels and foreign embassies. Shoppers queued before food stores. Although the Romanian people endured these hardships with traditional stoicism, a pall of hopelessness had descended on the country, and official proclamations of Romania's achievements during the "golden age of Ceaușescu" had a hollow ring. Bachman (1989) explains "Ceaușescu tightened his control of policy making and administration through the mechanism of joint party-state councils, which had no precise counterpart in other communist regimes. The appointment of close family members to critical party and government positions was a tactic of power consolidation that Ceaușescu employed throughout his tenure". In practices similar to other communist countries, and in direct violation of rights guaranteed by the Constitution, Securitate agents maintained surveillance on private citizens, monitoring their contacts with foreigners, screening their mail, tapping their telephones, breaking into their homes and offices, and arresting and interrogating those suspected of disloyalty to the regime. As Ceaușescu consolidated his power, he was able to pursue his own agenda in economic and foreign policy.

Ceaușescu's restrictive emigration policies seemingly conflicted with another of his primary goals--assimilation of ethnic groups into a homogeneous, Romanianized population. His treatment of ethnic minorities was only one of the sources of friction between Romania and the rest of the Warsaw Pact during the late 1980s. During this period, other events caused the Romanian president concern, as the peoples of Eastern Europe responded to Gorbachev's cues and demanded liberalization. As Bachman explains, from the Baltic to the Balkans, in 1989 strict communist regimes had to make way for a new generation of politicians willing to accommodate their populations' desires for democracy and market economies. Internally however, there appeared to be no serious internal threat to Ceaușescu's continued totalitarian rule. And Ceaușescu would never willingly yield to the forces of historic change sweeping Eastern Europe. His faith in the massive control structure so carefully erected remained stable. However discontent of the Ceaușescu regime slumbered among the population of Romania, and there was only one agent needed to galvanize the nation's hatred for the regime. A young Hungarian pastor in Timișoara became this person, who openly criticized the regime and his eviction was the incentive for the people to take the streets. As Bachman (1989) explains, the people of Timișoara were inspired by the democratic changes across the rest of Eastern Europe, and swelling crowds began calling for the end of

the Ceaușescu regime. Word of the Timisoara uprising spread to the rest of the country, thanks in large part to foreign radio broadcasts. A process was started that could not be contained by intimidation, as uprisings started in other places in Romania. Fighting was especially heavy near the Bucharest television station, which had become the nerve center of the revolt.

4.2.2. The Romanian Revolution and the path to Europe

December 22, 1989 Ceaușescu took the balcony in his famous attempt to address the crowds pressing below. During this speech he visibly lost control over his country and his people, and he fled to a helicopter together with his wife never to return to Bucharest again. Several hours later they were captured and after a few days a “hastily convened military tribunal tried Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu for “crimes against the people” and sentenced them to death by firing squad. On Christmas Day, a jubilant Romania celebrated news of the Ceaușescu’s executions and sang long-banned traditional carols.” (Bachman 1989). The period after this was marked by failed elections, demonstrations and the threat of a potential second revolution. One thing was however certain; the first steps on the path towards democracy and freedom were taken, and this process would prove to be irreversible.

After new elections in the spring of 1990, a new government was established and brought more stability to the country. New policies were made while maintaining the institutions from the old regime. Dragoman (2008) explains how Romanian elites did their job of building a nation and a national state. Marcu (2009) identifies three important factors in the Romanian nationalism, like many other Eastern European nationalisms. “The ‘nationalizing state’, which is the aim of which is to build a nation-state and state loyalties, ‘national minorities populations’ which are historically situated on the territory of the nationalising state but do not belong to the majority ethnic group and ‘national homelands’ neighbouring countries to which national could refer to as ‘their’ nation-state. The dynamics between these three factors determines the shape of most nationalist manifestations in the border of Eastern Europe.”

In the rapid reforms pushed by the new democratic Romanian government, the nationalist agenda was critical in maintaining the people’s trust. This period was also marked by a process of diaspora coming back to the country, according to Dr. Bogdan Suditu. During the nineties when Romania was not allowed to enter the European Union and was clinging at the gates that didn’t work, Dr. Monica Heintz explained during the interview. “And when all the policies seemed to fail in Romania, because there also were terrible years in terms of economic growth. The Romanian media insisted very much on

the fact that that was due to Romanians; to how they worked, to the fact that they were not civilized enough, that they were not hardworking enough, etcetera.” Madroane (2012) explains that the period immediately before Romania’s accession in 2007 was characterized by intense media involvement in the reshaping and the repositioning of a Romanian collective identity, especially in relation to EU values and norms. This active process of identity reconstruction, during which journalists embraced the public role of catalysts of the newly forged Romanian identity, became integral to the strategies of framing various EU-related topics. The excesses in the national rediscovery in this case also need to be balanced against the absence of other types of (efficient) political action, explained through the increased responsibility weighing on the journalists’ shoulder to compensate for this lack. This situation remained until Romania officially entered the European Union in 2007.

Romania is in a difficult position being at the crossroads linking Eastern and Western Europe and Northern and Southern Asia, Marcu (2009) explains. The state serves as a ‘lid’ due to its position between larger powers being the European Union and Russia. Since the 1990s it has been a country of emigration that has had to overcome a number of obstacles on the democratic path and development towards European and Atlantic structures. Romania’s accession meant its borders becoming the last, or the new, eastern border and reinforcing its geopolitical configuration. It had to adapt its border interests to those of the EU and to its new condition as a community country, and witnessed an increase in tensions already experienced with Moldova, a region historically, ethnically and culturally Romanian on the other side of the Prut River. The enlargement of the EU invariably transformed the border into a dynamic and elastic phenomenon. Throughout this process, a temporal and spatial distance was created between “us” and “them”. As a consequence, a bridge feeling is only manifested in the cases of Member countries of the EU. For the other countries outside of the EU, the border forms a barrier, which enforces a strong exclusion by its border security, Marcu (2008) explains. This marks the geopolitical situation in which Romania finds itself today.

5. Results

5.1. Estonia's National Identity

In order to understand the differences between the national Estonian identity and the Romanian one, informants were asked several questions to form an image of the national identity. Aspects of national identity like celebrations and traditions, norms and values, legends and symbols were all addressed during the interviews (Neijenhuis, 2014). Common celebrations and traditions are expressions of social cohesion and therefore a significant part of national identity. In this paragraph sometimes the distinction is made between the Estonians and Russians. The latter group are Russians living in Estonia, of which many have been born in Estonia and have grown up there. However, to the population of Estonia this distinction is always strictly maintained, a Russian Estonian does not exist in people's minds, but one is either Russian or Estonian.

5.1.1. Elements of identification

According to Neijenhuis (2014), when asked about national identity many people immediately answer something related to the national celebrations. However, they will mention that they do not have a single celebration that is only celebrated in Estonia and that the celebrations are all international. Christmas, St. John's day, St. Patrick day, St. Catherine's day and Vastlaid, are all catholic celebrations which have taken root in the Estonian culture. Valentine's Day, Mothers' day and Halloween have only been adopted since after the collapse of the Soviet Union, as some say these celebrations were simply attractive to many Estonians and that was reason enough to adopt them. They explain that they have been influenced by many different nations in the past, which has had its effects on the celebrations and culture in Estonia. "This Estonia belongs to the Western culture sphere. Despite its non-Indo-European Finno- Ugric language and cultural background, the centuries-old Swedish and German cultural influences, law and administrative system, and Protestant work ethics predominate" (Berg and Oras, 2000). What does feel to be typically Estonian is something that every single person mentions: Laulupidu and Tantsupidu, the Songfestival and Dancefestival. These festivals are organized annually at the special Songfestival grounds just outside the Tallinn city center. The Estonians perceive themselves as a singing nation, as singing and dancing is a vital part of their national identity. Other national holidays are those of the Independence Day and the Regaining of Independence. Besides these celebrations there is also a third category, the days that were left from the Soviet times. Especially the Day of Solidarity of Workers,

the Women's day and the Victory Celebration. These last holidays are mainly still celebrated by the Russian inhabitants and not so much the Estonian, but are also seen as part of the national identity due to the mutual history. Therefore the celebrations can be distinguished into three different categories: the religious celebrations, singing activities and the politically connotative celebrations.

Estonians have many traditions that are important to them. Of course there are those which are linked to the celebrations named above, like the St. Johns' day bonfires, the gingerbread baking around Christmas. A lot of traditions are also taking place in other countries, for example in Germany and Latvia, and also Sweden and Russia, which according to some Estonians makes these traditions not typically Estonian. What is seen as typically Estonia, is having strong family traditions. An example is keeping the Sunday as a special day to spend with family and do something different than the rest of the week. Other traditions are to visit family often, grandparents especially. Around the midsummer's eve the Estonians have a couple of days off, on which it is tradition to go to the countryside, leaving the cities. There they go berry- or mushroom-picking, make bonfires, eat around the fire, and of course there is some room for dancing and singing. Traditionally the Estonians go to the countryside more often, for berry picking or hiking, and making their own jams afterwards. This was mentioned frequently as one of the important national traditions. Over the last decades the Russian population came to share these traditions.

When asking Estonians about their common norms and values, a wide range of characteristics will be brought to your attention (Neijenhuis, 2014). However, there is always one sticking out. Estonians think of themselves as closed people, who are not keen on opening up to anyone. A respondent mentioned: "If something is wrong, people are not afraid to talk about it. If something is good, they like to keep it to themselves." Closely related to the traditions mentioned earlier by Neijenhuis (2014) are the family values that many respondents mentioned. Also these family values encompass a wide range of requirements that Estonians feel to be valued by the family. An enumeration was given by a psychologist: "I think that our family values are quite strong. That in smaller places that you have to behave like you're expected to behave. We still believe that you have to go to university and get a high education. Otherwise you are not uh, a good son or daughter. That you have to marry one day. That you have to have children." All these elements are still believed to be important in Estonia, and can even be called 'norms' as the consequences of not living up to these standards is seen as being a bad son or daughter. The Russian population of Estonia shares these ideas as it strengthens Russian

pride when one does succeed living up to these norms. The pastor explains that these norms and values find their root in the Christian religion, which has been dominant in Estonia for over centuries.

Connected to the norms and values are the views that people have on their own country. Being a small country of only 1.3 million inhabitants, neighboring large countries, it gives them an inferiority complex. An entrepreneur mentioned: "Then maybe something that is typical to Estonia and Estonians, most probably due to the, because of the size of the country of the nation. It's, at least it seems to me that it is difficult to shake the feeling that we are small at one point. We position ourselves pretty low, even though we could position ourselves much higher when we talk to other countries. We have some kind of inferiority complex when it comes to big countries." More than once the imagery is used of a tiny boat floating on a big ocean. Estonians are afraid to lose their identity, simply due to the size of the country and population. They are afraid they might disappear in the crowd of larger countries. One of the reasons for this feeling is their constant feeling of threat from other countries. Since the Soviet threat is over, the Estonians feel that Europeanization of the country is mainly a good thing, but might also at some point become a threat to the national identity. Russians in Estonia tend to be more Eurosceptic.

Language is the key to the national identity, as many respondents mentioned. As Estonia has been a battlefield for many conquerors over the last seven centuries, many of its traditions and celebrations are influenced by either one of those conquering countries. However the Estonian language is unique and Estonians stress the fact that Estonia is the only territory in the world where this language is spoken. "Estonia is still singled out as the one and only Estonian-speaking territory in the whole world, which requires the special care and protection from foreign (i.e. Eastern) cultural influences" (Berg and Oras, 2000). Therefore anyone who can speak the language, is seen as part of the Estonian society and culture, and therefore is automatically included in the national identity. Now that English is slowly infiltrating the Estonian language, especially amongst the younger generations, this again feels like a threat to the unique national identity of Estonia. An employee of the Ministry of Finance, aged 33, explains this fear: "for example Estonian language is now under threat from English, many people perceive it as such. I even heard people say that the only thing that would save the Estonian language, would be another occupation. Otherwise we are going to lose it to English. I don't share that view, but I have heard it."

5.1.2. Experiencing Geopolitical Changes

In this paragraph the personal experiences of the respondents of Neijenhuis (2014) will be discussed, categorized in three periods, the Soviet times, the Independence and the membership to the European Union. Both positive and negative experiences will be stated and the changes people associated with either their national identity. The Soviet occupation brought both positive and negative aspects to the daily lives of many Estonians. Many people perceive it as part of their history and identity, therefore they also see the benefits of having endured such a regime and coming out stronger as a nation. There were three major aspects of the Soviet occupation that people mentioned; first of all the fact that one was not allowed to travel to European countries, the only travelling allowed was within the Soviet Union. One respondent explains a case when they did get the opportunity go to Finland: "There is something I remember, when I was nine, I think we went to Finland with our school, and we had to get these Soviet passports. And there was the sense like you are going through a wall and you arrive in Finland. I do remember that." The second thing that was mentioned a lot was that there was so little produce in shops. The pastor gave the example that he wanted to buy some new shoes and the only choices he had were a pair of brown, a pair of blue and a pair of black shoes, nothing else. The communication during those times was also an issue frequently discussed. On the one side, little to nothing was broadcasted on Russian television about the Western world, although of course in Tallinn and surrounding areas people did know about the west through Finnish television. On the other side, the information people did get from Russian media on the West was enormously one-sided information.

Of course not everything was bad during Soviet times, especially the Russian population of Estonia remembers it fondly. A few respondents explained that the education and health care was free, one could travel to the black sea and other outskirts of the Soviet Union for very little. Children were part of the pioneers; the children's movement which was part of the Communist Party. They went on summer camp for an entire month, which was almost completely paid by their parents' job, for example the factory that they worked in, and the government. Although people did not earn so much, they did not need to spend it either: the food was part of the ticket-economy and most other things were paid for by the state. A Russian respondent aged 56, stated: "We didn't have to use the money. What else? We were sure about what tomorrow brings. We lived very peaceful and secure. You know for sure that you will get in advance a smaller proportion of pay check before the next salary. And people lived a very happy relaxed life."

One respondent, a 41 year old entrepreneur, was able to explain exactly the way many Estonians feel about the Soviet period in Estonia, especially the Estonians that are in their thirties who are old enough to remember but only the positive times of the Soviet era. He explains the following: “I was privileged to have experienced the Soviet time most probably at its best. The reality of the period is not based on my own experience, but based on hearing what really happened from my parents, from my grandparents and combining it with my own experience. But if I only talk about what I experienced myself, I would just say it was a hell of an exciting youth. So it’s a privileged period of the regime, definitely. It ended just at the right time, so for me (...). It definitely made me, not a better person, but I have a valuable experience that helps to understand many things that are going today. So it’s a privilege.” (Neijenhuis, 2014). Especially the generation who were children or teens during the last decade of the Soviet times, have found it a valuable experience because they were not old enough to fully experience and comprehend the restraints that the Soviet Union maintained in Estonia. Many Estonians describe this double reality that they lived in, but of course many children did not fully comprehend this situation or even experience it the same way. For many Estonians the double reality meant that because so many aspects of the Estonian culture was banned, they had to maintain their traditions behind closed doors. This caused what some people called the two levels of reality. The first level was in public, where people were supposed to talk Russian, where many old Estonian traditions and celebrations were forbidden and one could not talk about the history or reality. Organizing Estonian events, or even celebrating Christmas was forbidden during those times. The second level was at home, where people soon realized that there was the only place where they could still speak Estonian, where they could uphold their traditions and celebrations, and where they were free to talk about what happened in 1939, 1944 etcetera. One could say that this double reality made it hard to still feel Estonian during those times, because people had to hide it. Still, many respondents explained the opposite, because having it forbidden makes people even more motivated to maintain their identity (Neijenhuis, 2014). Having celebrations and symbols banned from public space, inflames a kind of nationalism that non-former-Soviet states will find difficult to comprehend. A certain fanaticism in upholding traditions and celebrations at home. After the fall of the Soviet Union, the Estonians brought their culture back to the public arena and could finally fuse the two levels of reality back into one.

The collapse of the Soviet Union was a surprise to many, but in hindsight it is also perceived to be a logical step after the glasnost and perestroika. The first days were scary according to the respondents, because tanks rolled into the Old Town of Tallinn and everyone stayed inside. This was until on TV the official announcement came that Estonia was free. One respondent tells his personal

experience with this moment: “But when we went back home and I put TV on, there was nothing on. And suddenly this picture came on television and this man said like “Estonia is free!” It was in my head with like an echo, free Estonia free Estonia, free, free! It was like goose bumps. It was an amazing moment!” Others remember this moment with relatives, like grandparents and parents, who were crying when this announcement was broadcasted. It is seen as a critical moment in Estonia’s recent history. It was the start of many political and economic changes: the country radically changed their views from socialist and communist to capitalist. For many Estonians this change was incomprehensible. “For example people didn’t know what it meant to sell something. Buying from somewhere and to sell it with a margin that was actually criminal law, criminal act. And nobody actually knew what it meant. Of course we had some kind of bazar where you could get meat or some kind of handicraft, but actually nobody knew what the concept marketing was. Which is really a big problem if you step into this competitive market. It was quite big shock actually” explains an entrepreneur during the interview. A switch took place from a collective society as during the Soviet Union, to a more individualistic society where one has to think about how to develop themselves and become somebody. This created a feeling of pressure for many people, due to the high standards that are maintained by the aforementioned family values. At the same time, suddenly everything was open: even all the information and communication. This meant that people gained access to more information but also to new products like Hollywood films and series. Other products came into the stores as well. There were many changes going on in the country that enabled a new atmosphere in the city of Tallinn: the sense of growing, changing, building.

The positive process was further strengthened when Estonia started the preparations for the application to the European Union. Respondents explain how this change has been even more radical, even though the country started walking this path already after independence. Before, the entire economy and politics was only focused towards one direction, which now had to be shifted entirely towards Europe. When this happened, people explained that all the values and rules that were set out by the European Union, were collectively adopted by the Estonians. An employee of the Ministry of Finance explained that “there has been a graduate change since Estonia decided to go towards the EU membership. And all the values, all the rules that we have been taken. Everything had to change. All the cultural, the political culture, trade, was all geared towards one direction, so of course there have been many, many changes. I see them as overwhelmingly positive.” The results of these mental changes opened a wide range of new possibilities for many Estonians. Tallinn is said to have become international again, also in clothes, food and art. Even Russian inhabitants explain how the EU

membership has induced many positive changes. One respondent states that Tallinn “has become more European, not only Russia-oriented anymore. It is more Estonian culture than Eastern culture. The influence of Eastern culture has diminished now. It is good, it is nice.” This is supported by Aalto (2000) by stating that “The identification that the Estonian ‘self’ is located in the ‘West’ and is simply different from the Russian ‘other’ living in the ‘East’.” The membership of the European Union has not so much changed the culture in Tallinn is the consensus, however it did open up new opportunities for those who are active in the cultural sector. It created more opportunities to travel, subsidies were given to support the arts, and there were more possibilities created to export art and music. Especially the high culture in art, conductors and orchestras are welcomed in Tallinn. A few respondents named the concert of Dutch conductor André Rieu and his orchestra, which was planned in Tallinn a few weeks later. When Tallinn received the nomination for European Capital of Culture, this gave even more opportunities. Buildings were funded and other structural improvements were carried out in and around the Old Town. According to some respondents, this nomination had put the Estonian capital on the European map which made it a more attractive location for international events and international conferences.

The European Union is especially known for its structural improvements in Estonia. Houses which were old and in bad condition were restored. Free transport was made possible by European funding. One respondent explains that after European Union membership, “The public transportation started to renew; also to think of the physical environment, renovations started and other projects that were supported from different EU foundations. People started to make sports outdoors as well, the network of pedestrian roads improved, the Pirita promenade for example. Many new discussions about city life: like bicycle traffic, cultural centers and so on emerged. The most important I guess became the link to Helsinki and other plans to become more efficient transit city between North and South or East and West.” As said before, the visual aspects of Tallinn and the especially the buildings in the Old Town are very important aspects to Tallinn’s identity. When improving the physical environment, the European Union gave many Tallinners the feeling of positive change and therefore an intensified feeling of pride about their city. Also European projects involving the culture and art movement have enabled growth of this sector within Tallinn. It can therefore be said that projects in Tallinn funded by the European Union have strengthened the Tallinn identity.

The interviewed inhabitants of Tallinn have always seen Estonia as a closed society with old-fashioned norms and values, now name the opening up of Estonian culture and international influences as a positive process. Estonians identify themselves as part of the European family, and this feeling of

belonging is even stronger in the capital of Tallinn. Although Estonia wants to identify itself as a Northern European country, it is painfully aware that it is not viewed as such by the rest of their European family-members. A respondent states that “With west I think Estonia is living in a bubble. Even if I read articles they always trying to categorize as a Northern Europe. But I've been living in UK and Ireland since I left Tallinn in 2007 and for west it's still one Eastern Europe and has a bit of bad taste. I think Estonian government should work more on this. But mainly I think it's just way of thinking. Like I said above it takes at least another 50 years to change people's attitude and way of thinking.” Even though these steps towards the rest of Europe are perceived as positive changes to many Tallinners, some also express anxiety about the threat to their own culture. As the Estonian national identity is largely based on the Estonian language, the infiltration of English words and phrases into Estonian is perceived as a threat to their national identity. One respondent mentioned that “I even heard people say that the only thing that would save the Estonian language, would be another occupation. Otherwise we are going to lose it to English. I don't share that view, but I have heard it.” Miniotaite (2003) supports this claim, as there are more Eurosceptic Estonians: “However, besides the enthusiasm of the political elite there are also voices of the Euro-sceptics in the Baltic States: Are the Baltic States in danger of losing their newly established independence by joining EU? Will Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians simply dissolve in the pot of European nations? Are they going to become ‘second-class’ members of EU?”

Finally it is important to discuss the Russian contribution in the interviews. Many Russians of course remember the Soviet times fondly, but can also see the positive sides of the changes that took place in Estonia over the last twenty-five years. Although many of them still call themselves Russian, many do not officially originate from the country, but from Estonia itself or other regions of the former USSR. Their Russian-speaking parents and their Russian upbringing within Estonia, contributes to their Russian citizenship and therefore their identification as Russian people. However, they do all say that Estonia is their home, but their Russian nationality makes them incapable of identifying with the Estonian national identity. This forms an important paradox for many Russian citizens in Estonia, as they do feel Estonia to be their home, though many do not feel part of the Estonian nation. Berg and Oras (2000) explain this from a political context: “The current Estonian state idea has promoted two essential government policies on language and education, with the aim of giving a privileged status to the Estonian language and setting in motion a cultural standardization of people and regions. In their very essence the central policies have involved solely the cultural standardization and ethno-politics via ethnic domination and assimilation of the minority group. Estonian nation-building is a much more

complicated task given that, in the Estonian context, state and nation are not synonyms.” However, in Tallinn these Russian inhabitants do actually identify themselves with the Tallinn identity. This can be explained by the fact that, unlike the national identity, it is not based on language nor place of birth. The Tallinn identity encompasses the love and pride that people feel for the Vana Linn, the Old town, and all the events that take place there now and have taken place there in history. Even during the Soviet period this part of the city had a special status. This causes many Russian inhabitants to identify themselves with an urban identity connected to Tallinn, but not with the national identity of Estonia.

5.2. Romania’s national identity

5.2.1. Elements of identification

During the spring of 2014 several inhabitants of Bucharest were interviewed about their view on Romania, its national identity and the changes that have happened over the last twenty five years, since the fall and execution of Ceaușescu. Fifty-five respondents in total were interviewed during 43 interviews. Aspects of national identity like celebrations and traditions, norms and values, legends and symbols were all addressed during the interviews. Common celebrations and traditions are expressions of social cohesion and therefore a significant part of national identity. You can find the actual quotes in Appendix 1, where all the quotes from the interviews are categorized by family and code. People were encouraged to share their experiences both with regimes and policies, as well as with their personal identification with the Romanian national identity.

When asked about the national celebrations, many Romanians instantly link this to mostly religious celebrations. One respondent explains: “They are often related to the religious celebrations. For Christmas, we have the traditions of singing carols, ‘plugusorul’.” Celebrations of both Christmas and Easter are important in the Romanian culture, much like many other Christian countries in Europe. During these celebrations Romanians traditionally come together with family to enjoy impressive dinners consisting of several courses. Depending on the region, these celebrations have different traditions attached to them. Another respondent explains that it is however not only religious celebrations that are important to Romanian culture and identity: “I think we are one of the countries with the most cultural celebrations. Especially in the north of the country (Bucovina, Maramures, and Ardeal) are famous for their national costume. Some still go on Sundays at church dressed in the national costume. Besides the ones related with religion, even the family celebrations are important for

us (like the celebration of a family member)". There are many days especially dedicated to Romanian celebrations, such as "Martisor" and "Dragobete", to celebrate the start of spring. In Romania "Dragobete" is known as a day for lovers, rather than the more commercialized and Western Valentine's Day. Other typically Romanian celebrations are centered around important historical and cultural figures which were already emphasized in nationalist policies during Ceaușescu's regime, and were maintained by the democratic government after 1989 in effort of nation-building (Marcu, 2008). The birthdays of Eminescu (writer) and Enescu (composer) are examples named by the respondents. One of them reacts: "The popular poetry means a lot, it integrates all the history." Another respondent adds that they celebrate "the historical events or if we celebrate some personalities, but they take place in select circles, they are not for everybody." One of these historical events is for example celebrated on National Day, the first of December. The last category of celebration in Romania are several festivals dedicated to folklore. Like Sânzieni, the annual festival in honour of the fairies which is similar to Nordic midsummer celebrations. These celebrations are however regional, much like the celebrations of the Gaiia mountain ("The marriage festival from 'Muntele Gaiia'"), and "Mersul cu capra" which is traditionally celebrated on new year's day. "Romania relates a lot to Christianity, religion in general, tradition or music. We have a vast and varied folklore" a respondent explains.

When asked to describe the collective norms and values that Romanians share, it seems that many people are not exactly aware of their norms and values. They often find it hard to describe what are the central themes in their identity. A respondent explains that "each nation has its own norms and values. Honesty, nationalism, patriotism. These have rooted in our way of being. There are some things, like the education, you will always relate to things like traditions, religion." "Norms and values in Romania focus on two aspects; work and education on one hand, and family-values on the other side. These family-values have a central role in the Romanian society, as someone explains "First of all, there are the values related with the family and religion (we have specific norms from the birth, to the baptism and education of a child). Except for some current situations in which the children leave their parents to go abroad, there usually is this respect for the family." Family-values seem to be the heart of the Romanian identity as someone explains "The roots, the roots. The parents, the family, especially if you had relatives who fought or died in wars. Everyone who is away misses the country, and not only Romanians (other nationalities who were born or lived here too)". One person even states that "Romanians care too much for their children, they are traditionalists in a way". It is explained that Romanians simply give a lot of importance to families and family-life, they often feel they live with the responsibility of taking good care of the family. Others however find that this is not the same

everywhere in Romania. “There used to be a certain Romanian common sense, which still exists at the countryside or in the stricter families. We also have cultural values. I mean, every citizen desires a minimum of education, even if he doesn’t have the means to obtain it, he will find a way to get educated. They say we are hardworking, that we work much but it’s not a work of quality, we trick each other and we are conservatives in general.” Family-values are therefore also closely linked to the second pillar of Romanian norms and values; education and work. A woman explains that “for us are important the education and the family. The idea of following a strict path: like having a family, buying a house, a car...trying to make a decent living.” Someone described that “The Romanian peasant was honorable, and had a special devotion for working the land. We are hardworking”. Some people find that not enough effort is made to maintain the level of education, like one respondent says: “I think we don’t invest that much in education and we should put more emphasis on the moral values in school, to have a more effective religion class in school, not like this one that is made now. We have to learn how to behave in a society and how to respect the freewill of others”. Another element mentioned frequently during the interviews is the value of hard work, as someone explains that “Romanians are a hardworking people” and therefore find work particularly important.

Linked to education and work, is the significant role the Romanian language plays in the national identity and culture. Someone explains that the language is key to his identification as a Romanian: “I think the history, the fact that you are surrounded by people who speak the same language, then there are the friends and family who keep you connected with the country, and the specificity of the space.” Someone else added that: “We feel Romanian, the national identity is kept through language traditions, religion and other. The western countries lost their traditions, but we still have them.” It becomes vividly clear through the interviews that the Romanian language is seen as one of the main pillars on which the Romanian national identity and culture rest. “I am glad I know this language, and more important, that I understand the insides (underneath) of this language” another respondent explains. As he continues describing how ones mother language is the only language in which one can truly express themselves and understand every nuance. Someone else adds “I think the history, the fact that you are surrounded by people who speak the same language, then there are the friends and family who keep you connected with the country and the specificity of the space” are the most important factors for him to feel Romanian. The other interesting comment that a few respondents made, is that the Romanian language also brings them closer to the rest of European or at least the southern European countries. The Romanian language “which allows me to learn without any problem all the other Latin languages. Theoretically we are a poor country, but basically we are very intelligent and adaptable” a student

responded. The language is therefore not only an element of identification to Romanians, but is also to many defines how they place themselves in a wider European context.

Traditional food is plays a central role in the Romanian culture as they view many dishes as their own and these foods are often linked to specific traditions or festivities. The most often named dish are the “Sarmale” which are generally eaten, but not tied to a specific tradition. Sarmale are rolls of cabbage filled with either meats or vegetables. A respondent adds “we have ‘mici’ and our way of preparing the pork and fish. The rest of it is mostly imported, but we still have our ‘mamaliga’, ‘placinta’ and other.” Also other foods are named, such as ““Sarmalele”, “fasolea batuta”, “carnatii”, food especially from the countryside.” Important to the Romanian traditional food is that is rich in meat, often linked to specific celebrations, but most importantly linked to a specific region of Romania: “It’s very tasty if it’s well cooked and sometimes it can be heavy. Every region has its own traditional dishes. I grew up in Moldova, and there we have ‘poale-n brau’, ‘cozonaci’, ‘sarmale’.” Even though many Romanians consider these dishes to be part of their culture, some people are also aware that Romania has been influenced by other countries as well. Therefore the cuisine can not be seen as entirely Romania, as an interviewee explains: “I personally like it, but considering that we were under different occupations throughout our history (Ottomans, Russians, etc.), it’s normal we don’t have a specific cuisine entirely. For example, we say that “sarmale” are traditional, but they are actually Turkish. Other things we claim are traditional I think are “palinca” and other alcoholic beverages like this one.”

During the interviews many of the elements of the national identity were named, like cultural traditions and celebrations, language, norms and values and even the cuisine. When asking the interviewees about their national symbols however, it remained awfully quiet. The Romanians seem not to have many symbols that are valued highly at a national level, it seems they don’t play an important role in the Romanian national identity. A pensioned soldier does explain that “Of course, the flag has a very special significance, it is a symbol of unity. In the most dreadful battles in history, the last command was ‘Unfold the flag!’ It would motivate even the most coward ones.” The flag and the national emblem, together with the important historical figures like “Brancusi, Eminescu, Creanga, Enescu, Ciprian Porumbescu”, were the symbols mostly propagated under the dictatorship of Ceaușescu, and still people only name those when asked about national symbols. One respondent explains that “The flag and the national emblem are the first personalities that have to be respected. Unfortunately, there are a lot who don’t do that. Romania was a kingdom most of its time, so another symbol for Romania was

and it will remain the monarchy, the king.” Some part of the Romanian population still seems to be fond of these elements especially.

5.2.2. Experiencing geopolitical changes

The period during the communist dictatorship of Ceaușescu was difficult, it was a hard and harsh time to live in Romania. “It was a harder period for us. We were in our midst, we didn’t know what to expect from life, but it passed” a respondent said. The conditions under which the Romanian people lived were poor. ““We were quite small back then, but we can feel on our skin the effects now that we’ve integrated in the labor force and we’re making comparison from what we’ve heard. I mean, yes, I am convinced that it was worse then, from many points of views, but there were also good parts, like industry – even though it is said that he [Ceaușescu] invested in a lot of things that weren’t of prospect, but I don’t know what to say about that – We could have kept at least some things that were specific to our country and to still export them, and also some factories or jobs”. Still there were also some positive elements as an interviewee explains: “Back then, there were at least some festivals at which you had to participate, you had to learn either you wanted or not. The movies were better, now they are more superficial.” It seems that the cultural sector was thriving under Ceaușescu’s rule. Another respondent added that: “The communism, bad as it was, gave you free access to education, culture, museums etc. Only if you didn’t want to learn you didn’t learn, but other than that you had this opportunity.” Even though people said that life during communism was hard, without really underpinning this notion, they are able to see the good in this period as well. One might even say the majority of the interviewees was positive about the experiences during the communist times.

The communist period seems to form a paradox in the minds of many Romanians. Even though they are aware of how tough life was in those days, they can also see the positive aspects of those days. The culture, the Romanian national identity, was described by some respondents as being a form of resistance during the communist era. There was a heavy censorship under Ceaucescu, interviewees explain, and together with the lack of freedom of expression and the lack of information, culture was the only way to remain themselves. Though the ways in which culture could be manifested were limited, it became an important component of Romanian life under Ceaușescu and was one of the ways in which the national identity from before the Second World War seemed to be maintained. However, not everyone was as aware of the influence of Ceaușescu’s censorship and his influence on performances.

After the fall of Ceaușescu and the Romanian Revolution there was an overall feeling of relief among the population. One person even described it as being “like an unchaining, especially regarding the freedom of expression”. Romania was finally ready to open up, which to many respondents was a positive development, as one explains. “Of course it [the national identity] changed. We took more things from other cultures, which can be a good thing”. Another respondent adds that Romania has evolved as a nation, and having more access to information abroad, the people raised their standards and developed themselves. “Well it changed, because we had more freedom of expression, more access to information from abroad, but lately it’s been the globalization that made our culture change” another respondent explains. Opening up to the rest of Europe therefore is seen as a blessing, but at the same time people believe that it has changed their culture and identity as Romania is no longer protected by this censorship but is open for other influences.

The fall of communism however was not seen as a positive development by everyone, as one interviewee explains “we had many hopes, but only for a short period.” Another respondent even thinks the Romanians are worse off now, as he explains: “I don’t remember them, we feel the consequences now though. Economically speaking, it’s worse, and I talk about the unemployment rate and the fact that you can’t find a job, and that’s mainly because of the bad governance, who acts in the name of democracy. I remember the beginning of the 90s that it was a miserable poverty, people didn’t work and nothing was moving. My parents worked in factories, so they were affected the most, like the rest of the population, about 80% of it. So because of what happened then, we suffer now. You saw that 3 millions of people work abroad just so they can support their families from here. Not that we accept the communism, don’t get me wrong, but at least you had that stability in your life, you had a job and a decent salary and you could afford things; now, you don’t know if you’ll find a job or for how long you’ll keep it.”

Soon after the Romanian Revolution, the new government started pushing reforms, especially towards their goal of becoming a member state of the European Union. On one hand many Romanians were keen on becoming a member, as they hoped it would bring security and economic stability. Not all expectations could however be met, especially due to the high hopes Romanians held. One respondent stated that “there were some changes, some expectations were fulfilled, but there are also some negative aspects. A good thing was the freedom of circulation between European countries and a certain ease of finding a job abroad. A less positive aspect is the economy of the country, which worsened since we are in the EU.” The changes that were made by the government in order to gain membership

are viewed as necessary, but it also gave people the idea that they were not developed enough. Now, many people mention that they do “not feel European enough”, are treated as “unequal members” as they are kept out of the Eurozone and out of Schengen.

These statements are not only based on economic frustrations, but are also deeply rooted in the feeling ‘different’. The ‘othering’ that is connected to the European agenda in their policy towards new member states might have a crucial role. One respondent explained this feeling of being a ‘second level member’ in Europe, by stating that :“The thing that we are in EU and NATO is a big realization, it brings us closer to the civilized countries. The justice is improving and corruption also decreases. We are heading off in the right direction, but “with snail steps”. The overall feeling among the respondents is that the process went incredibly slow. A women explained that: “I felt the process of adherence being a little bit slow, on the other hand, I realized we are not ready yet for this adherence. Well I have worked with people from all over the country, so I understand what’s in their head and I tell you, democracy is not for everybody to understand or to accept. If it was for me, I would have made this adherence process even “stronger”. Ok, the EU gave us the set of democratic norms and values that we should adopt and we shouldn’t have waited for every “moron” to understand them, you waste time this way. That’s why we are where we are.” Their idea of still having to develop further to come to the European standard is wide spread. People explain that it’s a good thing, the fact that Romania is now obliged to follow the rules that all the “civilized countries follow”. A respondent states that they still have a long way to go, as “I thought was a good thing but the EU was and still is a challenge because we are expected to develop at an European level and we weren’t prepared, since we lost our industry and all that after the 90s and we were taken by surprise by the European market and we abandoned our production of lots of things. We should have kept our local products.”

Many people do express high hopes for the younger generation in Romania. The European Union presents them with many possibilities, as one respondent explains: “I know they say the power is in our hands, the young ones, but I don’t think it’s going to be our generation. The next generations will integrate in this European Union.” The Romanians believe that the youth are more emancipated by going abroad and work or just interacting with other cultures. During one of the interviews, a women stated “My optimism makes me think that yes, Romania has chances, but the mentality has to change and it will change along with the generations. But very important, the authority of the institutions has to be restored, the law- wrong as it is- has to be applied. But my profound belief is that Romania is on the right path and the new generations will help this.”

5.3. Comparative analysis of Romania and Estonia

In order to gain more in-depth knowledge on the stories which were heard from informants, interviews were done with a total of four experts per country, on the subject. In the case of Romania the first expert was Prof. Monica Heintz, who is specialized in economic anthropology of Eastern Europe and has done much research on Romania. The next expert is Prof. Sorin Pavel who is a Professor of Human Geography at the University of Timisoara, and his colleague Prof. Bogdan Suditu, Professor of Human Geography at the University of Bucharest. Finally Dr. Radu Enache was interviewed who works as Project Manager at the Romanian Ministry of Culture, and did his PhD research on the Romanian National and Ethnic Identity. In Estonia the first expert was Ms. Kristel Siilak, a PHD student at Tallinn University in the field of Urban Sociology, where she is concluding her research on “Social Construction of Home Identities in a Cross-Cultural Experience.” Prof. Eiki Berg was also interviewed, whose work has also been used in the literature research of this thesis. He is Professor of International Relations at the University of Tartu. His research focuses on critical geopolitics, in particular the studies of borders and border regions. The third expert in this field, whose work was also used to construct the literature research of this thesis, to be interviewed was Prof. Rein Taagepera. Professor Taagepera is now a Research Professor of Political Science at the Tartu University, but also works at the University of California in Irvine. As candidate for President of Estonia (1992), he received 23 % of popular votes. He was founding chair of a new Estonian party (2001-02) which later supplied a prime minister. And finally, the current Minister of Culture Urve Tiidus was interviewed. She is a member of the Reform Party and former journalist. She has also served as the Mayor of Kuressaare on Saaremaa. The transcripts of all the expert interviews conducted in Bucharest can be found in Appendix 2, those transcripts of the Estonian experts can be found in Neijenhuis (2014).

During these expert interviews, the findings from the fieldwork were discussed and the experts explained the reasons for these finding from their perspectives. Their insights are used in this chapter to underpin the comparisons made between the findings of the research in Estonia and Romania.

5.3.1. National Identities

The basis of the national identity of Estonia, according to the informants, is the Estonian language. It is unique to the territory of Estonia and speaking the language includes one in Estonian society. “The basis is language. Estonians accept almost anyone as Estonian when they speak Estonian” Professor Taagepera explains. The same value of language has been detected in the Romanian context.

Dr. Monica Heintz explains this importance of language in both countries: “The history of this entire Central and East European region was a history of empires until 1918, basically. And the only way that these people and ethnic groups had to distinguish themselves one from the other and build their countries was language. The whole Central and Eastern Europe was based on language. That is basically what defines you as being Hungarian, Romanian, etcetera. It’s not a history of... Well there is a bit of a history of territories of course, but frontiers changed a lot. So they changed at some point according to how many Romanian language speakers were on the territory. So that’s why people define themselves through language. Being born in Romania, even this; it’s a bit less important, because you probably know that there are a lot of Romanians who are outside the territory of Romania.”

Identification processes in both Estonia and Romania therefore seem to lie in their relatively short history as countries. Both countries have a strong rural history, even though the process of urbanization started in Estonia many years before Romania. Though noting this fact, it is still visible in the cultural traditions that both countries have a rural background, which is underpinned by Dr. Enache; “you see Romania was between the Communist countries along with Bulgaria, the most underdeveloped countries in the Eastern Europe. Eastern Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Estonia or Latvia, were countries where industry was quite well-developed in 1948 let’s say, when the Second World War ended and peace treaty was signed. And almost all the population in these countries was educated, was living in cities, had a high standard of life. In Romania and Bulgaria about the 80% or even more were village-inhabitants.” This is a reason for both countries to have traditions and celebrations that are focused mainly on regions, and every village or province has their specific culture. The element that brings the country together is language, which might be the reason for both Romanian and Estonian people to put so much emphasis on the importance of language. Regional and religious traditions are therefore key to national identification processes in these countries, where both have an orthodox Christian majority, but the Orthodox church also still plays an important role in society, especially in Romania.

The religious influence in the culture of Romania and Estonia are visible through a variety of aspects of the national identity. The national Christian Orthodox churches have a significant importance to the people. The strict religious practices have led to religious traditions becoming part of their national identities, even though the people are aware that these traditions aren’t truly Romanian nor Estonian. Also in the norms and values the religion is reflected, putting focus on religion, work, family and education in both Romania and Estonia. These countries however differ due to the occupation of

Estonia by the Soviet Union, during which time the religion and nationalism was strictly forbidden. “Religion and language weren’t pressed or forbidden in Romania, that’s a very different case compared to Estonia” Dr. Enache explains. This might be a reason for the Romanian Orthodox church to still be more involved in society compared to the Estonian Orthodox church.

The Soviet occupation had further effect on Estonia. An expression used quite often during Estonian interviews was ‘double reality’. For many Estonians the double reality meant that because so many aspects of the Estonian culture was banned, they had to maintain their traditions behind closed doors. This caused what some people called the two levels of reality. The first level was in public, where people were supposed to talk Russian, where many old Estonian traditions and celebrations were forbidden and one could not talk about the history or reality. Organizing Estonian events, or even celebrating Christmas was forbidden during those times. The second level was at home, where people soon realized that there was the only place where they could still speak Estonian, where they could uphold their traditions and celebrations, and where they were free to talk about what happened in 1939, 1944 etcetera. One could say that this double reality made it hard to still feel Estonian during those times, because people had to hide it. In Romania there was no mention of a ‘double reality’ or ‘taking independence for granted’ like in Estonia, as the key difference is that there was no long term occupation in Romania, and no large Russian minority left after the fall of the Soviet Union. This is an important discrepancy between the national identities in Romania and Estonia, as well as how they changed over the last decades. Even though communism was brought by the Russians in Romania, it was maintained by an internal dictator, which is why it is difficult to form a collective hatred towards a group, like in Estonia. Even though Ceaușescu’s regime was tough, however it was not a foreign enemy. This might explain why there is no mention of this double reality amongst the Romanians.

After the fall of the Soviet Union, the independence of Estonia and the fall of communism in Romania, both countries has struggled with reforms. These reforms were necessary for them to become Member of the European Union. Since their Membership, Estonia perceived to have grown stronger and were soon added to the Eurozone and Schengen. In Romania many people feel they have only become weaker, and are still kept at a distance. This is influencing their perspectives on the European Union and is reflected in the discourse of “Return to Europe”. Even though this discourse is present in both Romania and Estonia, it is more important to Estonians. A reason for this may lie in how the countries identify themselves. Estonia very strongly emphasizes their ‘Nordic’ background, while Romania views themselves as being ‘Latin’. Ms Siilak explain that “Estonians have, because of history, more similarities

culturally with Sweden and Denmark, Finland even. These countries have even influenced the Estonian traditions. Estonia and Russia were two completely different and unrelated cultures. Estonians kept their national identity during the Soviet times but it was more hidden because they could not show it in public.” To the notion that the discourse of Return to Europe is less visible in Romania, Prof. Heintz places a critical note explaining “you should consider that you’re interviewing people now, once they have gained integration into the European Union. The discourse of ‘return to Europe’ was of course before. Once they got into Europe and there was no way back, I mean, for the past ten years that has changed because of course they have met with some frustrations. Economic frustrations mainly, but also in terms of employment, etcetera. But if you take it as a dominant of the last twenty-five years, every decision that was taken by the government and every opinion that was supported by the press was within this idea of returning to Europe and distancing from Russia.”

From both the interviews as well as the literature one may conclude that Estonia has a stronger feeling of belonging to Europe than the Romanians. The Romanians feel kept out of things, feel like they need to adapt to become more civil ‘like the rest of Europe’. This might be explained as they feel they are less European than the West of Europe, which they often refer to as the “Occident”. This feeling is continuously emphasized by the procrastination by the European Union in the Romanian accession to Schengen and the Eurozone, as was promised to them during the negotiations in their perspective. The European Union therefore has a strong influence on the national identity of Estonia and Romania during both the period before membership as well as now. Their policy of Europeanizing countries before accession has had a significant impact on how these countries view themselves, as well as how they view themselves in a wider European context. The reforms pushed upon them were all based on the idea of raising their levels. Like Prof. Heintz explains: “There were too many restrictions, too many uhm, trade was limited because some of the products were not conform to the European Union standards. So there is lots of frustration and this frustration allowed to, allowed people to re-center around their national identity. So, yeah it changed. There was a return to a notion of national identity while before it was very much centered on the claim of being Europeans. Now..”

The second important discourse that was heard frequently among respondents was that of the notion of “Homeland”. The narrative of Homeland positions the Estonian identity as only available to those who are ‘indigenous’ to the Estonian territory. It implies that immigrants that came to Estonia relatively recent, especially from far away, have less rights to call Estonia their home, in a cultural sense. This narrative therefore also sees European integration as a potential threat. Even though this narrative

is visible in both countries, where Estonia places emphasis on language and place, Romania puts a stronger emphasis on language than on place of birth. This is explained by experts due to the borders of Romania have changed extensively over the last centuries, especially compared to Estonia, but also many Romanian babies are now born abroad because their parents have moved to for example Italy or Spain to work there.

5.4. Evaluation of existing theory

In the beginning of this thesis two social theories and one theory on the Estonian identity were introduced to form a theoretical framework for this research. These theories have constituted to the approach of this thesis and were used as a basis for the interview-guides of both the interviews with informants as the experts. Now it is important to review whether the results support these theories.

As explained before, the Theory of Structuration by Giddens is based on the idea that agents use their practical understanding and the resources of the social structure to construct their social reality (Giddens, 1984). This process is based on the interaction between structure and agency, and not on a universal structure. When looking at identities from the perspective of Theory of Structuration, identities are a social construct which are continuously produces and reproduced. They are subject to agents which construct and therefore changes identities. Identities are therefore fluid structures which change over time. Identities are being influenced by the structures, such as unions, family. According to Giddens, you internalize the structure and translate it into your own actions as agent. The national identity of Estonia and Romania are constructed by the inhabitants of the countries. The changes in this national identity can come from both ways, either the agents have changed their actions, so the Estonians and Romanians change their way of perceiving the national identity, or the structure has changed. In these cases change seems to be formed by a combination of both sides, as the structure has changed due to the geopolitical changes over the last decades. Examples of the changes are the bans of the Soviet Union on national symbols, traditions and celebrations in Estonia, and the same bans in Romania under the Ceaușescu regime. The perception of the double reality during these times, and afterwards the feeling of freedom, independence and unlimited possibilities is crucial to how Estonians perceive themselves and their culture today. As Romania was no longer occupied after 1958, these perceptions of double reality and independence are absent, however the feeling of freedom and possibilities after the fall of Ceaușescu are visible as well. Therefore it is not only the structure itself that changed over the last twenty-five years, but also the agents have changed their perception of this. Both of these countries portray that changes in national identity are rooted in the geopolitical changes. These

have caused changes in both the structure and agency, and therefore the social construct of both the national identities have changed. Therefore the Theory of Structuration can indeed be applied to the changing identities in Estonia and Romania.

The Logic of Practice by Bourdieu (1990) was used in this thesis as a guideline for the interview-guides and therefore the interviews. In chapter 2 the explanation of the Logic of Practice encompasses that “society is organized through the unconscious internalization of structures which are constantly reproduced.” In the theory of Bourdieu the habitus is a concept which is the product of history and produces practices which are either individual or collective. Applying it to the national identity and local identity, “Bourdieu’s theory of habitus allows us to see people’s attachment to nation as learned and habituated; being open to modification and reconstruction through reflexive agency and educational practices.” (Lillian, Bourdieu also defines an important difference between social classes, and suggests that people that have a higher socio-economic status, will be more likely to accumulate more cultural capital. However, the latter was not defined as a part of this research. The way in which people define their national identity is therefore habitus, and habitus is created largely by the upbringing. In Romania and Estonia the changes over the last twenty-five years have changed the habitus, as in how people perceive their national and local identity. Just like according to Giddens theory, due to the geopolitical changes in the countries, the structure in which identity takes place has changed. This causes Estonians and Romanians to adapt to those changes, and therefore adjust their habitus. As Estonians and Romanians have a different habitus than the national minorities in their countries, due to a difference in upbringing, the Logic of Practice explains how these minorities do not perceive the national identity as a part of their own identity. The geopolitical changes that have occurred in Romania and Estonia in the last twenty-five years have changed both the structure as the habitus of the inhabitants on both a national and regional level. Therefore the Logic of Practice does not contradict the results of this thesis either.

The final theory which was discussed in chapter two of this thesis was Merje Feldman’s theory on the construction of the Estonian national identity. She explains that the Estonian national identity narratives can be labelled under two categories: “Return to Europe” and “Homeland”. ‘Return to Europe’ is focussed on ‘locating’ Estonian culture on the European map, while the ‘Homeland’ narrative delimits Estonian identity in terms of nation-state, and links it to Estonian territory and Estonian soil. The “Return to Europe” is based on the idea that Estonia has been part of (western) Europe’s economic, political and cultural life since the sixteenth century and therefore the Estonian identity encompasses

those western values. When adopting to the European norms and values during the application to the European Union, Estonia only had to reach deeper inside themselves and did not have to change their national identity (Feldman, 2001). In this thesis the comparison has been made between Romania and Estonia, and the discourses of Feldman's (2001) theory have also been sought in Romania. The discourse of "Return to Europe" was more visible before the accession than it is nowadays, because Romanians are not satisfied with the position they currently have. They feel 'not European enough', because they are still not a part of the Euro- nor Schengen zones. The discourse is however very much visible in both Romanian and Estonian identities. This has been supported abundantly in this thesis, by both informants as the experts who were interviewed. Estonians and Romanians not only feel to be part of Europe, but also through their norms and values, traditions, celebrations and religion are part of Europe.

The second part of the theory of Feldman (2001), was the narrative of "homeland". This narrative poses the Estonian identity to be something only available to whom is 'indigenous' to the Estonian territory. It implies that immigrants that came to Estonia relatively recent have less rights to call Estonia their home. This is reflected by the statements of both informants and respondents about the Estonian identity being based on the language, and one who does not speak this language is excluded. In Romania a similar narrative is found, as also language seems to be key to belonging to the Romanian society. Being born on the territory and speaking the language provides one with rightful claim to identify with this national identity it seems. However there is also an exception for the new generation, as especially for Romania's case, many children are born outside the country as their parents have migrated to for example Spain or Italy for work. Therefore the notion of being born in the country is less important to Romanians than it is to Estonians. Both countries have problems with integration of national minorities, as these are seen as not part of the same national identity due to both their background as well as their language.

The Russian-speaking minority in Estonia however seems to contest the notion of "homeland", as their identification with Estonia is limited while they strongly identify with the city of Tallinn. This new form of identification can be described as an 'urban identity' which is strongly based on the physical surrounding such as the historical buildings and the seaside, as well as the historical events that took place there. This layer of identification might form a future solution to break the pattern in this country and those countries like it, as cities and urban surroundings can be an alternative form of identification. If this has the same value in forming one of the main social structures that unite a society, it might bring

an end to internal struggles of countries in similar positions as Estonia. Even though people seem to find their way within the system described by Feldman (2001), this minority seems to break the structures.

6. Conclusions

Now that all the different sides of the story have been heard, from both Estonian and Russian informants and from experts, it is now possible to draw conclusions based on their statements. The main research question of this thesis: *How have policies and geopolitical changes relating to fall of communism and the European accession of Romania and Estonia influenced their national identity?* In order to answer the main question, first the different sub-questions will be addressed.

The first sub-question which was define at the beginning of this thesis, was: *Which geopolitical changes can be identified in Romania and Estonia since 1989?* In the fourth chapter entitled 'Regional Overview' the geopolitical changes in Estonia and Romania over the last twenty-five years was described. In this conclusion only the most important aspects will summarized. After the Second World War both Romania and Estonia were occupied by the Soviet Union. The Romanian Communist Leader Ceaușescu however was able to negotiate the retreat of Soviet troops already by the end of the Sixties and continued to rule over the country as a communist dictator. Over the decades that follow Estonia was however still under Soviet rule. During the last decades of the Soviet Union, Gorbachev tried to reform the Soviet Union by his policies of Glasnost and Perestroika. In the Baltic states including Estonia this meant tremendous more autonomic power. Many see this is the catalyst to the downfall of the Soviet Union. After its collapse in 1989, the years began in which Estonia worked towards independence, which brought an insecure time for the Estonians. They officially claimed their re-independence in 1991, and soon after that the country together with the other Baltic states, started working towards the application for membership of the European Union. Around the same time that the Soviet Union collapse, unrest started in Romania as well. The people were no longer approved of the status quo and were inspired by the events in other neighboring countries. This led to the Romanian Revolution in 1989, resulting in the overthrowing and subsequent execution of their dictator Ceaușescu. Now Romania and Estonia had gotten rid of their communist leaders, they opened up towards Europe and started to process to become member of the European Union. This required strict reforms and 'Europanization' of these countries. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were officially invited to both the NATO and the EU by the end of 2002, and gained their full membership in 2004. Romania later joined

and was officially granted membership in 2007. These are in short the most important geopolitical changes which have occurred in Estonia and Romania over the last decades.

The second sub-question which was posed in the beginning, was defined as: *How can the national identity of Romania and Estonia be described?* The main finding of this thesis is that there are many similarities between the national identities of these two countries. The national identities of Estonia and Romania are both largely based on the language. This Estonian language is unique to the territory and is protected by the Estonian constitution, the same true for the Romanian language. In these countries anyone who speaks it, is automatically included in the national identity. National celebrations in Estonia can be categorized in three sections; celebrations based on religion, singing-activities and regional celebrations. In Romania there is also an important role for the religious and regional celebrations. Norms and values in Estonia and Romania are closely related to the norms and values in the rest of Europe, as they are rooted in the Christian religion, which is dominant in the entire continent. Another important part of the Estonian identity is the inferiority feeling, of being a tiny boat on a large ocean. This inferiority complex causes anxiety amongst the Estonians that they might someday lose their identity. This feeling of inferiority related to size is not shared by Romanians, however they do feel inferior to the rest of Europe as they perceive themselves as “uncivilized” and “just not European enough”.

How have the national identity changes Romania and Estonia been experienced by inhabitants? This was the third sub-question posed. The double reality that many Estonian-speaking informants described was especially strong in Tallinn, due to the fact that at home they could watch Finnish television and listen to the Finnish radio. Therefore they had the reality in public where they had to speak Russian and where many Estonians celebrations and national symbols were banned. The second level of reality was at home, where they could celebrate in secret, maintain their culture and language, and keep in touch with the rest of the Western world via Finnish media. After the collapse of the Soviet Union this two realities could finally merge into one again. After the collapse, the Soviet people suddenly lived in another country. It is therefore very hard for them to identify with the Estonian national identity. The Romanians did not have this double reality, but however view the fall of communism as a relief. The Romanians have been able to open up to its neighboring countries as well as the rest of the European Union, however still strongly identify with elements of identification such as traditions, celebrations and symbols which were propagated by the Ceaușescu regime. Tallinners perceive the city as a corridor between the rest of Estonia and their European family. The European

roots are also important to the national identity of Estonia, according to the informants, but the connection to the rest of Europe is felt even stronger in Tallinn itself. The Romanians still feel far away from Europe, but are confident they are on the right path. The fourth sub-question was on *How have the national identity changes been perceived by experts?* This was a crucial step to take during the research, as they emphasized the statements of the informants, but were also able to explain to why the public would think so.

The final sub-question asked was *How have changes in the national identity of Romania differed from those changes in Estonia's national identity?* It therefore relates to the comparative analysis between the two cases. To answer this sub-question also results in an answer to the main research question, as the main research findings are now to be discussed. From the data retrieved through this research one can conclude that the Romanian and Estonian national identities have many similarities. Both countries have a relatively new national identity, meaning younger than 200 years. The discourses of "Homeland" and "Return to Europe" were visible in both Estonia and Romania. Although both countries have their own traditions and celebrations specific to their country and history, the essence of these identities are both based on regional and religious traditions, with a strong role of the church in their norms and values, and being Romanian or Estonian is strongly linked to speaking the language. Being born in the territory, as part of the 'homeland' discourse, is however only emphasized in the Estonian national identity, and is of a lesser importance to the Romanian national identity. The key differences in how their national identities changed over the last few decades are especially a result from the occupation. As Estonia has been occupied by the Soviet Union for a long time, they have demonized the Russians and have constantly lived in a double reality. They remained European in their own homes, while pretending to play by the Soviet rules outside. Romania was only occupied for a short period and has had to endure a long communist dictatorship, which has enforced propaganda based on a mix of Romanian nationalism and Soviet communism. Where Estonia could change back to itself after the fall of communism, Romania had to deal with their own selves being part of the communism. The theories of Bourdieu, Giddens and Feldman were not contradicted by these cases, and these theories therefore support the conclusions of this thesis.

The value of the comparative analysis in this these is therefore in proving there are geopolitical consequences for countries, in the case of Romania and Estonia, when comparing to how close to Europe they feel or are perceived. As the "Return to Europe" seems to be easier for Estonia than Romania, this has had significant implications on their membership of not only the European Union, but

Schengen and the Euro as well. Estonia had a relatively small bridge to cross, to reunite itself with Europe. This was awarded by their inclusion in the Schengen Treaties and the Euro-zone, while Romania has despite its EU membership not yet seen these steps being taken for them. This has further strengthened the orientalism in the Romanian people's minds, and this process of "othering" by the European Union has underpinned their perception of being "just no European enough" (yet). The conceptual model described in the methodology chapter was used to conduct the research, however following the conclusion of the research, the model should be changed for future research. It seems an intervening variable has been found, the "Return to Europe" discourse, which influences the effect of geopolitical changes on both national identities.

7. Reflection

7.1. Critical remarks

While reflecting on the research and its results written down in the previous pages, some critical notes must be taken on order to comprehend the limitations and imperfections of this research. When interpreting the results as well as the conclusion of this research these limitations must be taken into consideration.

When the empirical research was conducted, only a small amount of respondents could be interviewed. The interview-guide as drafted before the trip to Tallinn and Bucharest, was supposed to result in interviews with a duration of about ten to fifteen minutes. The interviews however lasted between 30 and 90 minutes. In total 28 interviews with informants could be conducted in Tallinn, with in total 33 respondents. In Bucharest there were 43 informant interviews conducted with in total 55 respondents. As the results and conclusions chapters are written on a fairly generalized manner, the limited number of respondents should be taken into account. There was only a very short time between the informant interviews and the expert interviews. This caused the situation that the expert interviews had to be prepared and conducted, before the informant interviews were actually fully analyzed. Of course the general outcome of the informant interviews was clear, however in retrospect more information could have been derived from the expert interviews if the analysis had been finished. This was however impossible in the time that was available for this thesis research.

Three theories were used as guidance throughout the entire thesis, could have been more extensively evaluated in the last paragraph of the results chapter. However due to limitations of time, this was the best possible solution under the conditions. Especially after returning to the Netherlands, finding a full-time job in the field as made it difficult to finish this thesis in time.

Many interesting and sometimes even emotional stories were told by the informants. Due to the approach of this thesis, the irrelevant information was not reviewed in the results of the research. However, for some stories another platform should be created to reveal the personal experiences of the people of Tallinn and Bucharest, in other European countries. Therefore an article or blog might result from the empirical research for thesis.

7.2. Recommendations

In the previous paragraph a reflection on the points of improvement for the research and the process of it were thoroughly discussed. This thesis is a result of the optimum use of the time that was set for this bachelor thesis. However, many recommendations can be given as many to this research related subjects still need further research and investigation. In this paragraph therefore some of these recommendations will be further addressed.

Keeping focus on the country of Estonia, but also other Baltic states, the issue on the distinction between native-speaking and Russian-speaking inhabitants must be further addressed. As many people find it a natural distinction, this causes problems with integration. Every four years the Ministry of Culture conducts a survey amongst the Estonian population, however this is always a quantitative monitor. In order to make a change in Estonian society and someday maybe even unite the different minorities of Estonia, a more qualitative research. This research is necessary to not only find the simple numbers on how inhabitants feel, but to also gain in-depth knowledge on the 'how' and 'why' behind every story. In order to bring future generations together, the division in society must be erased from people's minds.

The Baltic States have always been special as they have shown the most growth of any former-Soviet state. Large contributions to this might be addressed to the membership of the European Union. The comparison with Romania was an interesting one, but other comparisons might still be possible. In other former-Soviet states the geopolitical changes of the last twenty-five years have not been handled as professional as in the Baltic States, and many more problems in economic, political aspects and society are still occurring. The developments in Ukraine have brought this back to light. More investigations, compared to this thesis, would be interesting to be conducted in these other former-Soviet states as well.

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Appendix 1: Quotes of informants in Romania

Ap 2.1 National Identity

Code: Celebrations ROM {56-0}

- Besides the Christian celebrations, we have the National Day on the 1st of December, it used to be on 10th of May. Also, the National Day of the Flag.
- Yes, there are. The marriage festival from "Muntele Gaiina".
- The ones that celebrate personalities and the ones that are specific to certain regions of the country.
- The birthday of Mihai Eminescu, which I know is celebrated.
- "Martisorul" (1st March), I never heard of this holiday in other countries.
- The Easter traditions.
- Yes. There are, but more in the North-West of the country.
- Mostly the religious ones. Traditions for Christmas, Easter.
- The celebration from "Muntele Gaiina". Depending on the region, there are different celebrations for Easter or Christmas.
- Yes, I think so. "Dragaica", "Sinzienele", "the birthday of Eminescu"
- It's too general the question. They are often related to the religious celebrations. For Christmas, we have the traditions of singing carols, "plugusorul".
- There are, of course. The festival from Sighisoara, the film festival "Anonimus"
- Yes. Like the Independence Day, 1st of December plus other peasant traditions, depending on the region.
- The birthday of Eminescu; they are often related to the religious ones.
- The Christmas or Easter are celebrated as they were a century ago. We also celebrate the New Year's Eve
- I think we are one of the countries with the most cultural celebrations. Especially in the north of the country (Bucovina, Maramures, and Ardeal) are famous for their national costume. Some still go on Sundays at church dressed in the national costume. Besides the ones related with religion, even the family celebrations are important for us (like the celebration of a family member)
- There are few, The day of Eminescu (15th January and 15th June) and that's almost all.
- Maybe the celebration of some personalities or the 1st December
- The national day.
- Yes, the historical events or if we celebrate some personalities, but they take place in select circles, they are not for everybody.
- Some traditions are religious, others are the national celebrations like the National Day
- Easter or Christmas traditions from the countryside.
- Absolutely, the "Martisor" for example.
- "Dragobete" and others
- Every nation has its own specific cultural celebrations, depending on the region.
- Of course there are, just that I don't know them.
- I think so, why not? I don't know them because I never participated, so I don't know what to say.
- Theoretically yes, basically not so many. I think only the old ones celebrate these cultural celebrations. The rest of them became commercial, like Valentine's Day instead of "Dragobete"
- Yes, I guess there are.
- Yes, of course. The Woman's Day, the Earth Day, "Dragobetele", Day of Enescu [composer]
- There are few. I know about the Must [young wine] Festival, some celebrations on Easter and Christmas and that's pretty much all I know.
- There are, there are. 1st of May, 23rd of August...you know what the situation was.
- The tradition of Easter, the birth of Jesus Christ, and there are the national celebrations.
- Yes, we have festivals and all sorts of celebrations.
- First of all, there are religious traditions, then are the cultural ones, which actually descend from the first ones, so we find them mixed somehow.
- It's possible there are.

- The traditions of Christmas, Easter, you know, our traditions...
- There are, like the one from Gaina Mountain.
- Hmm I don't know, we have few specific to our country, they are religious mostly.
- Yes, 1st of May, Woman's Day...I don't remember others.
- Dragobete, 1st of May, although this is not specific to Romania.
- "Sinzienele" (this is only in Romania), "floriile", the national days?
- Yes, like "Rusaliile", which is actually related to religion.
- "Mersul cu capra" and others from Christmas, Easter...there are plenty.
- The national day (1st of December), some celebrations on the 1st of May
- Different Christmas and Easter traditions (Capra, colindele)
- Yes, the national day, "mucenicii" and others.
- 1st of December, the celebration from the Gaina Mountain and others I don't know probably.
- "Calusarii", which I don't know when it's celebrated, but in general the traditions for Christmas and other religious holidays.
- The national day.
- Well yes, 1st of December, 24th of January, 1st of May.
- Enescu festival [Romanian composer], the celebration from Gaina Mountain.
- I don't know, I would say "Martisorul", but that's also in Bulgaria. The traditions of Christmas and Easter at the countryside
- There are, "Martisorul" for example, the historical celebrations also.
- 1st of December, "dragobetele" [Romanian version of Valentine's Day], birthday of Eminescu [poet]
- The tradition of St. Andrew for example.

Code: Double Reality {0-0}

- X

Code: European Family {44-0}

- Do you feel an equal member of the European Union?

A1 - "Yes" (ironically)

A2 - No.

- Yes, but on the other hand, not all the countries from EU are economically equal. Still, it was necessary this union, because disunited as Europe was, we were prey for other superpowers like USA who tries to seize everything and China who is knocking at the global authority's doors.
- No. EU and NATO accepted us because we are close to the border of Russia, we are a buffer state.
- No. It will also weight more if you are French, or English or other nationality.
- Do you feel an equal member of the European Union?
Not really, not really. Romania has to prove more honesty and maybe in 10 years we will be equal. But we have to change our mentality first, and it is not easy to change that. It will come along with the next generations.
- I personally do, but Romania as a nation I doubt feels equal. We are a hybrid people, and you know how much we endure because of every Romanian that is embarrassing us abroad.
- I was already retired. I will give you an example. In 1949, it was introduced the law of nationalization of private property and goods. It was a pilferage basically which happens even now in the EU [I'm sorry, but I don't see where he's getting with this example]. Geopolitically speaking, they needed Romania. We didn't fill all the requirements at first, but after a while they accepted us thinking that we will improve our politics.
- I wouldn't say that. The lady [you] knows very well that Holland is one of the countries that opposes Romania becoming part of the Schengen zone.
- The thing that we are in EU and NATO is a big realization, it brings us closer to the civilized countries. The justice is improving and corruption also decreases. We are heading off in the right direction, but "with snail steps".
- Yes, I think so.

- We should be, but we're not. We are seen inferiors. It's true we had our minorities that contributed to our negative image, but we have our values for which we should be appreciated. We are sometimes ashamed that we speak Romanian abroad.
- I don't think so. I didn't feel this inequality myself, but the fact that a Romanian worker from Italy is paid less than their own citizens is a proof. But the Romanian, because is hardworking, is satisfied even with 4-500 euros.
- Very high expectations. Me and my wife were very happy when we found out that we started the negotiations for become a member of EU.
- Unfortunately, even now the expectations were not fulfilled. Romania was always considered like a "second hand" country, especially because the EU or our political elite didn't know how to protect certain key points of the national economy, thus, some Romanians are now even more poor than they were before. I know it's up to us first of all to make this change and we should stop feeling discriminated.
- No, unfortunately, no. for example, the attitude of some countries towards our integration in the Schengen zone is unjustified as well.
- No, it can't be changed. Nothing changes, only that we are more interconnected. But as I said before, the French stays French, the German, German and the Romanian, Romanian.
- Well, not really. We are not yet in Schengen, which is a little bit frustrating. I know it's a difference between the standards of living, but it still feels like we are inferior.
- very nation has its own norms and values, but we are way behind the European norms and values that we should share.
- How can we feel equal when the salaries are not equal?
- I personally feel as an equal member, but the elite is not able to represent us properly and that's why some would say we're not an equal member of the EU.
- I don't think we are equal but I restrain myself.
- No and I don't even think we actually are.
- As a state I don't think we will still exist in 50 years, as a nation, we will always be. I understand that the tendency is towards a more accentuated integration, thus, a loss of sovereignty, we will probably exist more as provinces.
- Do you feel an equal member of the European Union?

Me personally, yes.

- Do you feel an equal member of the European Union?

No. I think you are not surprised to hear this.

- I was indifferent.
- Absolutely not [laughing]
- We are equal as human beings and I haven't been travelling that much to feel if we are seen as equal or not, so I don't know.
- To be honest, I always stayed away from politics, it disgusts me so I don't know if we're equal or know. I think that we are treated equally, just that we don't know how to behave.
- No, never. We will never be treated like the others. They watch for their own ones. If you go as a tourist you are welcomed, but if you go for work or as other than tourist you are very bad seen.
- No changes, but I felt like we are going to be part of Europe finally.
- Yes, I think so. I think the Romanians feel more equal with the Europeans. I think we don't feel valuable and I think we are wrong here.
- Yes. I had some contacts, I was in Hungary and I didn't feel inferior or something. They were very respectful.
- I understood there are some restrictions and that means we're not that equal. I mean the Schengen zone, the UK's work conditions.
- No, never. We will never be equal, they will always be above us. Maybe we are equal only if we're talking about work.
- Since we have all these rights as the other EU countries (even if there are some discussions with the Schengen and the rights for work in UK), I feel an equal member, yes.
- Do you feel an equal member of the European Union? I personally do, yes.
- So so, but I prefer to think we are equal.

- Clearly not, because of the cultural differences and the racism that exists in in West.
- No, because a lot of EU members don't consider us as being equal and that's why many are discriminated abroad.
- No. Maybe we have the same rights, but the same privileges, no.
- No, I think we are a poor member, so that's why we're unequal and disadvantaged.
- At the moment, no. I think there are too many discrepancies between our economy and the others'.
- Yes, especially now that we have the right to work in Holland, before it was strange to live there and not having this right.

Code: Legends ROM {7-0}

- The popular poetry means a lot, it integrates all the history
- In rapport with the communism, yes. We had really big writers, we had Sadoveanu, Eminescu and others. It was lost somehow, we had good movies back then, I don't know. Of course, we also have a few writers now, like Cartarescu.
- The ones that celebrate personalities and the ones that are specific to certain regions of the country.
- It's good that at least we have Neagu Giuvara (historian)
- If you're looking back at videos and images with people who accomplished something, yes, you can feel the pride, but now it is gone. You don't have things to be proud of anymore.
- I don't know. Everything. The ancestors, the traditions, the land. I was away a long time and I started to miss even the rocks. It's something I can't describe, it's from the depths of my being.
- Of course. We have lots of scientists who made important discoveries. Just the other day I was watching an interview with a famous Romanian neurosurgeon who had to sell this apartment in order to afford to publish his book.

Code: Norms and Values ROM {50-0}

- Yes, I don't really know what norms and values have the youngsters nowadays, but for us, the old ones, the popular poetry means a lot, it integrates all the history. We also are an intelligent nation, with a beautiful and harmonious country and beautiful women.
- The Romanian culture is great, sublime but is missing entirely at this moment. We had some values, we still have but we mocked everything we could have had to define us as a nation and our national identity.
- Stupidity, indifference. There are also positive values, but they are under the shadow of the negative ones.
- I never thought of this question before, I don't know. I was simply just born here, that's why I think I feel Romanian. I also feel proud that I am Romanian, when I hear someone accomplished something great recognized internationally.
- Each nation has its own norms and values. Honesty, nationalism, patriotism. These have rooted in our way of being.
- There are some things, like the education, you will always relate to things like traditions, religion and I like it.
- I think we have evolved as a nation, and having more access to the information abroad, the people raised their standards and developed themselves.
- We always had valuable people, but now they are more valorized and supported.
- There are too many to be enumerated in a phrase. The historical, artistic values etc.
- Romania relates a lot to Christianity, religion in general, tradition or music. We have a vast and varied folklore.
- I don't think so, they are general norms and values.
- Yes, there are. Our natural values, like the mountains, the waters or our cultural values.
- The Romanian peasant was honorable, and had a special devotion for working the land. We are hardworking, I remember in the 20's the Italians were coming to build houses here, now we are going to work for them.
- I don't think so. I didn't feel this inequality myself, but the fact that a Romanian worker from Italy is paid less than their own citizens is a proof. But the Romanian, because is hardworking, is satisfied even with 4-500 euros.

- The national culture should be more valued and the state should invest more in the education.
- Of course there are, every nations have. First of all, there are the values related with the family and religion (we have specific norms from the birth, to the baptism and education of a child). Except for some current situations in which the children leave their parents to go abroad, there usually is this respect for the family.
- No. We are not different from other humans, we have general norms and values.
- Every nation has its own norms and values, but we are way behind the European norms and values that we should share.
- Oh God, the real values of Romania, because the Romanians are honest, hardworking, hospitable, but they have degraded.
- I don't think so.
- No, we are not too different.
- They say the Romanian is very hospitable and that he cares a lot about his home and family.
- There used to be a certain Romanian common sense, which still exists at the countryside or in the stricter families. We also have cultural values. I mean, every citizen desires a minimum of education, even if he doesn't have the means to obtain it, he will find a way to get educated.
- They say we are hardworking, that we work much but it's not a work of quality, we trick each other and we are conservatives in general.
- I restrain myself.
- Romanians care too much for their children, they are traditionalists in a way. If you noticed though, the young ones don't think about the future anymore, they just live the moment and that's it.
- I think we don't invest that much in education and we should put more emphasis on the moral values in school, to have a more effective religion class in school, not like this one that is made now. We have to learn how to behave in a society and how to respect the freewill of others. [She's talking about subjectivity, objectivity, the theory of unpredictability...]
- It's good that we are in the EU because it imposed some norms and values that we didn't have before, but the negative part is that we had to align the prices with the European ones and it was not fair for us, considering our economy and salaries. There are some changes, but not visible for the ordinary citizens.
- I don't know if we have. Maybe the laziness is our value.
- We have important religious values and norms and we relate a lot to traditions and religion at the same time.
- The Romanian is very patriotic, hospitable, joyful...
- We respect the religious norms and values in general. Now they changed a little bit. In the communist era, we had norms and values for education, everyone had to be educated. [She's talking a lot of how the daily life was before '89, how they had to stay for hours in line to buy food, how everyone was working every day and how the salaries good, how every child had to go the school etc.]
- The country related to the traditions and experiences of the history it has been through. The foundation is religious because the school was made by priests.
- The roots, the roots. The parents, the family, especially if you had relatives who fought or died in wars. Everyone who is away misses the country, and not only Romanians (other nationalities who were born or lived here too)
- We relate a lot to work and family.
- I think every nations relates to certain values. Our value could be hospitality, we are hospitable and communicative.
- I don't know, I think we give a lot of importance to our families. We live with this responsibility of taking good care of our family, but I think this is in every country.
- From my point of view, we still have legionary norms and values, unfortunately.
- I think Romanians are very hardworking, so work is very important to us.
- My mother who always reminds me [laughing]. I don't know, the language and the family.
- It's not a norm or a value, but Romanians give a lot of importance to money and career.
- If you look back at our history, you'll see that we were mostly a peaceful nation, we didn't attack other countries and we also sacrificed, so from there we have some norms and values.
- Yes, the Romanians relate a lot to family and religion.

- I think we are obsessed with the image and family, we care a lot for our families.
- The food, which is not a norm. But we give a lot of importance to family dinners. The religion I guess is a value for many.
- For us are important the education and the family. The idea of following a strict path: like having a family, buying a house, a car...trying to make a decent living.
- Yes, especially at the countryside where the traditions are still intact. For example, you will still find there that the integrity of a woman, especially, is extremely important (for example, it's still desired that a girl to be a virgin when she gets married, that kind of stuff). Of course, now there are few who still demand that from their daughters. Other than that, we still value the work, the land, the faith and we are quite nationalists.
- We value a lot the religion, the religious events and so on.
- I think we care a lot about traditions and we are a bit conservative.
- I think we are patriotic (many say Romanians are the best)

Code: Significance language ROM {16-0}

- Now all the movies are in English, we don't make movies anymore
- EU wants to be a sort of USA. The USA managed to form this way because they speak the same language mostly [He's now speaking about the history of America...]; we don't speak the same language [Now he's talking about the crusades...] and we are different therefore. The national identity can't be changed that easily. We still feel Romanian, the national identity is kept through language, traditions, religion and other. The western countries lost their traditions, but we still have them. [Now gossiping about his neighbors]
- It's not only the language that tells us we arrived home, but also the family, friends. The fact that we belong to a certain region and we are used to it.
- First of all, people don't sing in Romanian anymore. Everything is in English.
- What makes you personally feel Romanian? The language, what else?!
- I'm really glad that I was born here. I am glad that I know this language, and more important, that I understand the insides (underneath) of this language. A foreigner has to spend lots of years to get to learn this. We also have a beautiful nature, so these are the good parts of the country. The bad part is that this common sense started to disappear.
- Plus the language, which allows me to learn without any problem all the other Latin languages. Theoretically we are a poor country, but basically we are very intelligent and adaptable.
- The language, the popular costumes. The Romanians are very smart, we have academicians all over the world.
- My mother who always reminds me [laughing]. I don't know, the language and the family.
- The language, the belonging space [not sure of the translation: the feeling of belonging to a particular space] and the education probably.
- The language, the space, the culture, the traditions.
- The language, that's all.
- The language, the familiarity of the places and people
- Oh that's nice. There is a strong attachment for the local space which makes me feel like home. The language, as well, the fact that I try to do my best in this society and system; you don't want to give up after that.
- The language, the geography, the mentality of the people around me, the family; these basic things.
- I think the history, the fact that you are surrounded by people who speak the same language, then there are the friends and family who keep you connected with the country, and the specificity of the space.

Code: Symbols ROM {44-0}

- Of course, the flag has a very special significance, it is a symbol of unity. In the most dreadful battles in history, the last command was "Unfold the flag!" It would motivate even the most cowardly ones.
- Some food.
- National anthem and national flag.
- The flag, and a negative one – the gypsies (laughing)

- The flag has to be recognized everywhere. The map was associated with a flower bucket. The colors of the flag. The president should represent a symbol, and now, with the new change of president in 2014, yes, I try to see him as a symbol.
- I think the flag, and I see a return to these symbols, especially from the youngsters. And finally I can see the new president as a symbol.
- The flag and the national emblem are the first personalities that have to be respected. Unfortunately, there are a lot who don't do that. Romania was a kingdom most of its time, so another symbol for Romania was and it will remain the monarchy, the king.
- There are. The flag, the national emblem, the institutions.
- The flag, the "tricolor", the language which we find even in the Cadrilater [Southern Dobruja] or Moldavia after years and years of occupation. Even the religion, the architectural "Brâncovenesc" style are symbols for us.
- The flag is a symbol, but now people stopped appreciating these values. Only now with this fake traditionalism, the youngsters started to wear traditional blouses. Long time ago, the traditional costumes were a true symbol to Romanians.
- The flag
- First of all, the flag. Then the national emblem and the national anthem. Andrei Muresan composed a truly exceptional song, everyone feel shivers on their spine when they hear the anthem at the Olympics for example.
- The flag, no, not really. We're not like the Americans to fly the flag from the windows or wear it outside.
- The flag, the national anthem, which changed a few times and now I think it's quite tendentious.
- The flag.
- The flag with the National Day of the Flag and others.
- The flag, I think it's the only one with a meaning to everyone.
- Yes, absolutely, except for these historical symbols that were altered by the communism.
- There are, for example: the flag, the statue of Decebalus, the House of People (Parliament)
- Yes, unfortunately there are big discussions about these symbols. The flag and national anthem were modified. The national costume is a symbol to us. My nephew is from Bistrita, where traditions are still preserved for example.
- Besides the flag, I don't know other symbols.
- Except for the flag, I don't know what to tell you more.
- The flag and the national anthem. If you will meditate on the lyrics of the anthem you will understand everything. If you'd had to show some foreigners something Romanian, you would show them "Babele" and "Sfinxul" from Bucegi mountains for example or the traditional gates from Maramures.
- Brancusi, Eminescu, Creanga, Enescu, Ciprian Porumbescu [Romanian personalities]
- The flag of course, but there are other symbols. You usually relate to the historical events.
- Except for the flag, we have the symbols from tourism.
- I think there is still the flag. I don't think they should have changed the lyrics of the anthem, when I hear the actual one I don't feel much.
- It used to be the 10th of May, now is 23rd of August, the flag.
- They begin to vanish, unfortunately. We wish to still have them, but now with this confusing times, it's hard.
- The anthem (the eagle)
- Probably the flag.
- Well yes, the flag, the anthem, the emblem.
- The emblem, the flag, the tricolor and maybe the king for some still.
- The flag, what else?
- Used to be the communist ones, but now you can say the symbols are the flag, the tricolor, the anthem, and the emblem.
- I think the flag.
- The flag, the anthem, some important athletes like Nadina Comaneci or Hagi or the poet Eminescu.
- The flag, I don't know.

- The flag. I don't know, give me examples. Maybe some cities can be symbols, like Timisoara [where the revolution of '89 started] or Alba-Iulia [also with a historical meaning]
- The eagle from the emblem and others.
- Yes, Mihai Eminescu [poet], the national day, the flag.
- The flag.
- Yes, the flag, but this is in every country.
- The flag, the emblem.

Code: Traditions ROM {80-0}

- We have our traditions of unity, even though we now are a little bit disunited
- "Sarmale" which are generally eaten, we have "mici" and our way of preparing the pork and fish. The rest of it is mostly imported, but we still have our "mamaliga", "placinta" and other.
- Christmas traditions. Mostly in Moldavia and Bucovina.
- The traditions of Christmas, "Capra" or "Ursul" for example.
- I work, I don't know to do something else. There are some, like "Calusarii"
- Everything is typical Romanian. I mean, there are some that have a similar cuisine to ours, like Hungarians, but exactly like this there is none.
- "Sarmale", these are traditional. There are more.
- Sarmalele, "fasolea batuta", "carnatii", food especially from the countryside.
- It's a fabulous cuisine and we have typical dishes also for sure.
- They are mainly related to the religious ones and again, they differ depending on the region. People dress with the different national costumes and they have specific ways of manifesting themselves.
- Very good. We have "sarmale", "mici" and others. Of course we have.
- Romania relates a lot to Christianity, religion in general, tradition or music. We have a vast and varied folklore.
- You see, the history of these territories (and the knowledge of it) was always a feature that has to be assumed by every citizen.
- It's too general the question. They are often related to the religious celebrations. For Christmas, we have the traditions of singing carols, "plugusorul".
- Hmm it's good, but we rather have Balkan dishes, not Romanian.
- Traditions are in every village, every region, like the celebration from "Muntele Gaina"
- I like it, but it has oriental influences. Even the "sarmale" are "imported" from the Turks. There are some in the Bran area that they are used to say that they have traditional Romanian food: eggs, milk and cheese. Come on, no way.
- In the North of Moldavia or Bucovina there are a lot.
- There are "sarmale", even though I don't know if they are truly Romanian, "mamaliga cu branza" etc.
- The Christmas or Easter are celebrated as they were a century ago. We also celebrate the New Year's Eve
- "micii", "sarmalele", "pftia"
- There are, but not necessarily singular. The Romanians, with some doubts lately, love very much their country, their traditions, their history and they have the reasons for doing so.
- They are woven with the religious traditions, that's the truth. We still have traditions thanks to the church. We were under Turks occupation for hundreds of years, and the church managed to preserve these traditions. Plus, where were the first books published or who were the first professors? The church and the priests.
- It's extraordinary. I've been in all Europe but I would say there is no one like ours. Even Prince Charles appreciated our cuisine. We are unique in Europe. Jams, cheese, the dishes made from pork.
- Not really, they are Balkan traditions or Hungarian traditions in Ardeal which we imported, they are not typically Romanian.
- Yes, yes....there are, of course. Not only the "sarmale", but different traditional dishes especially in the countryside regions. But then again, they have influences, there is no pure locally cuisine.
- There are, of course, but not many, because our history was always dictated by others.

- We keep bragging with our “sarmale” or “cozonac”, but they are not actually Romanian. Every country has their own cuisine somehow, but it’s not purely autochthonous. Maybe only the British you can say they don’t have their own cuisine.
- Yes, it’s better than other European countries’.
- It’s a heavy cuisine, not favorable to humans. We have lots of traditional dishes.
- It’s good but I don’t think the dishes are actually traditional, we find them in other countries.
- Rusaliile”, “Sfanta Maria”, they are usually associated with the religious ones.
- It quite heavy for me, but yes, we do have traditional dishes.
- Hmm I don’t know now, but there certainly are in the countryside regions.
- I like it and yes, we have traditional dishes, like “sarmale”, “ciorba de burta”
- Folklore in general or the dancing traditions.
- It’s very good. There are typical dishes, especially in Bucovina, Moldova, even in Ardeal.
- The religious ones, “the cleaning before Easter”
- It’s good, but way too heavy. Yes, we have the traditional soup with beans; “sarmalele” are not traditional.
- I think we have only 20% left of the traditions we had. Now people go on vacation abroad for Easter or Christmas, they don’t need these traditional things anymore
- Of course there are, we don’t know them all. Some say that “micii” and “sarmalele” are Turkish, some say they are typical Romanian...who knows?! Let’s say there are typical Romanian dishes.
- Romanian cuisine? Are there dishes that are typical Romanian?
- It’s perfect. I’ve been around and there’s no one better than ours.
- The culture is based on traditions, history, folklore, and since these elements almost disappeared in Romania, there’s not much culture left. There are no more cultural events, just some music concerts organized by the city hall, maybe during some election campaigns.
- I think “dragobete” and more in Ardeal and Maramures, usually for Easter and Christmas, like “Stropitul”
- We say that “sarmale” and “mamaliga” are Turkish, but I don’t know...we have traditional dishes and they’re good.
- The religious ones. On Christmas, New Year’s Eve.
- Every nation has its own specific cuisine. I think it’s tasty.
- There are some: traditions, the celebrities (the writers, the athletes)
- The religious traditions, “Capra”, “Plugusorul”
- Very tasty. We have “sarmale”, “mici”, “mamaliga”...
- Generally those on Easter.
- It’s very tasty if it’s well cooked and sometimes it can be heavy. Every region has its own traditional dishes. I grew up in Moldova, and there we have “poale-n brau”, “cozonaci”, “sarmale” (but I heard those are Turkish actually)
- It’s good. We have “carnatii cu usturoi”, “mamaliga cu branza”
- We have the folklore as value in general.
- In my opinion, it’s the best. Everyone was here, so we have a lot of influences: mediterranean and oriental, so it depends on the regions you’re in (Dobrogea, Ardeal etc). We have traditional dishes, but with their influences, like I told you and not too many (the rest of them are exaggerations)
- It’s good. We have “cozonac”, “mamaliga cu branza”
- There are, there are... I don’t know.
- It’s one of the best. We have “sarmale cu mamaliga”, “mamaliga”.
- There are the traditions of birth, marriage, death and so on which exist in different forms in every other country.
- I personally like it, but considering that we were under different occupations throughout our history (Ottomans, Russians, etc.), it’s normal we don’t have a specific cuisine entirely. For example, we say that “sarmale” are traditional, but they are actually Turkish. Other things we claim are traditional I think are “palinca” and other alcoholic beverages like this one.
- They are generally orthodox traditions, and we celebrate them at Christmas or Easter.
- I would say it’s borrowed. As far as I know, only the cabbage meals are traditional.
- The traditions of marriage, birth, death, we have tons of traditions and very different also.

- Very heavy. Until now I thought "sarmale" were Romanian, but now I found out they are Turkish, even though it's not actually the same thing, since they are not cooking them with pork.
- The traditional dances in particular or the traditions from the countryside mostly.
- It's good, I like it. The dishes became typical Romanian in time, even if they were adopted or copied. Not even the "mamaliga" is Romanian, I know it's Swiss.
- It's poor, we don't have many typical dishes. Only the soup from Moldavia, that is really typical.
- Very tasty. Yes, we have "sarmale", "mici", "toba", "caltabos" etc.
- The tradition of "capra" for Christmas, "busuiocul".
- It's quite heavy. Yes, we have "sarmale" and "mamaliga"
- It's heavy. Yes, after they were imported. "sarmalele" or "mamaliga" are not Romanian, but they've become in time typical.
- The popular dances, there is a traditional game similar to baseball, called "Oina", the Christmas carols, the traditional meals for holidays.
- Very rich and original somehow. It's much appreciated abroad. We absolutely have traditional dishes, like "sarmale", "mici", "carnatii" etc.
- There are some specific traditions for all the major events of life, like birth, wedding or death.
- It's very delicious, especially the one from the countryside, just that it's quite heavy (depending on the region). I think the cuisine is one of Romania's specific elements; every tourist has something to say about our food. I think there are some typical dishes, maybe "coliva", "mamaliga" (but I'm not sure), "cozonacul", "pasca".
- Yes, especially at the countryside where the traditions are still intact. For example, you will still find there that the integrity of a woman, especially, is extremely important (for example, it's still desired that a girl to be a virgin when she gets married, that kind of stuff). Of course, now there are few who still demand that from their daughters. Other than that, we still value the work, the land, the faith and we are quite nationalists.
- Horrible, I think it's too heavy. "mamaliga" is typical Romanian.
- The orthodox traditions mainly, which are still preserved at the countryside, but also among urbans.
- Pretty simple, it focuses on some main dishes. I think we have, even if some are imported, they became traditional after a while.
- Very good, especially now that I don't live in Romania anymore, I appreciate it more. I don't know because many claim that "sarmale", "mamaliga" and other dishes are not purely Romanian.

Code: Views on ROM {112-0}

- I was born here, here is where I want to die, and here is where I served my country. This is the land of my country, I like this country, I always paid my obligations, my taxes, yes
- My optimism makes me think that yes, Romania has chances, but the mentality has to change and it will change along with the generations. But very important, the authority of the institutions has to be restored, the law- wrong as it is- has to be applied. But my profound belief is that Romania is on the right path and the new generations will help this.
- The Romanian culture is great, sublime but is missing entirely at this moment. We had some values, we still have but we mocked everything we could have had to define us as a nation and our national identity.
- We didn't. Romania is not in the EU yet.
- Do you feel an equal member of the European Union? A1 - "Yes" (ironically) A2 - No.
- I'm sorry for you, young people... We took a very long road, let's say, we are in the wrong direction. If someone will give us a good direction, maybe, but maybe in 30-40 years. During the last 5 years I had a big, big wish to emigrate.
- If you're looking back at videos and images with people who accomplished something, yes, you can feel the pride, but now it is gone. You don't have things to be proud of anymore.
- I never thought of this question before, I don't know. I was simply just born here, that's why I think I feel Romanian. I also feel proud that I am Romanian, when I hear someone accomplished something great recognized internationally.
- No. EU and NATO accepted us because we are close to the border of Russia, we are a buffer state.
- No. It will also weight more if you are French, or English or other nationality.

- If we will not be involved in a war, I think the same as now.
- Do you feel an equal member of the European Union? Not really, not really. Romania has to prove more honesty and maybe in 10 years we will be equal. But we have to change our mentality first, and it is not easy to change that. It will come along with the next generations.
- I don't know. Everything. The ancestors, the traditions, the land. I was away a long time and I started to miss even the rocks. It's something I can't describe, it's from the depths of my being.
- I personally do, but Romania as a nation I doubt feels equal. We are a hybrid people, and you know how much we endure because of every Romanian that is embarrassing us abroad.
- From November since (elections), I started to be more optimistic about it.
- You see, the history of these territories (and the knowledge of it) was always a feature that has to be assumed by every citizen.
- EU wants to be a sort of USA. The USA managed to form this way because they speak the same language mostly [He's now speaking about the history of America...]; we don't speak the same language [Now he's talking about the crusades...] and we are different therefore. The national identity can't be changed that easily. We still feel Romanian, the national identity is kept through language, traditions, religion and other. The western countries lost their traditions, but we still have them. [Now gossiping about his neighbors]
- You see, right now there is an international conjuncture related to Russia, which dominates the economic situation of the countries neighboring it, including us. [Other neighbors being gossiped]. I think Romania will have a better future, but you [youngsters] are the future, even though the birth rate is dropping in Romania. Anyway, the road is good, but we're moving very slow.
- The thing that we are in EU and NATO is a big realization, it brings us closer to the civilized countries. The justice is improving and corruption also decreases. We are heading off in the right direction, but "with snail steps".
- The space, even though you define yourself better abroad.
- I can't tell, it's too general. Of course, if you are an optimistic person, you see it in a positive way and if you're a pessimist, in a negative way. I am optimist, especially after becoming a member of the EU.
- It's not only the language that tells us we arrived home, but also the family, friends. The fact that we belong to a certain region and we are used to it.
- I don't think so. It well preserved.
- We should be, but we're not. We are seen inferiors. It's true we had our minorities that contributed to our negative image, but we have our values for which we should be appreciated. We are sometimes ashamed that we speak Romanian abroad.
- I don't see it. We, the simple citizens, are not able to influence the future, so I don't know.
- I feel Romanian because I had many occasions to leave the country and I chose to stay, I said "this is who I am, this is where I was born". Probably I wouldn't feel good if I would leave somewhere else. There are studies made by an American doctor showing that you should live where you were born. I had a friend living in America and he had a disease that couldn't be treated, so the doctors told him to go back where he lived his first 20 years. So here in Romania, he recovered. It's the same thing with the products, which are most favorable to your organism if they are from the region you were born.
- I'm afraid it changed due to the politics. The politics is a "bitch", excuse me for the word used.
- If we will manage to be truthful, let's not forget that during the reign of Carol II, we were a great agricultural and industrial power. We had great scientists, we made planes, we don't make them anymore, and we had a great industry. We made pieces for USA, now it's all sold [he's talking about Ceausescu's affairs] we are very hard working, too bad that nowadays the youngsters party like this at nights, they should study more.

We will accomplish things after all, but slowly, maybe in 20 years. If I could be the president of Romania, I would be more like Switzerland, so that I wouldn't have to do what other tell me to.

- There are, but not necessarily singular. The Romanians, with some doubts lately, love very much their country, their traditions, their history and they have the reasons for doing so.
- Because I was born here, because a grandfather of mine was killed at Plevna for the independence of the principalities, because my father was wounded in the battle of Marasesti in the First World War and

because this is my country. I can't conceive to live somewhere else, not because I don't like strangers, but because here I feel at home.

- The national culture should be more valued and the state should invest more in the education.
- The state should encourage more the national culture. Now you have to pay in order to have your book published in most of the cases (like I did), before '89 the publishers did that
- I see it in an optimistic way. We had many crucial moments in our history, but the Romanians always found a way to get through them and survive. The EU and NATO as well is for us the only solution and a great opportunity. It's up to us before all if we will know how to use this opportunity in our interest, and I think we will eventually.
- The family bounding, first of all. This is where I was born, I was raised. Here I feel like home. I travelled a lot and I like the other cultures, but I would never leave my country. Other people have their own values, their own way of thinking, you can't totally integrate. Some are really frustrated because of this and have depressions; you have to be very strong for this, otherwise you won't adapt. There is a bounding between our soul and the land on which we were born, here I know the language, I'm used to everything, it's different. But we were educated this way, maybe you have a different type of education. You can consider this Europeanisation in which the borders or the national identity almost disappear to be a different sort of education. And the youngsters being educated this way, maybe yes, they can integrate easily in other countries and they can feel good in Germany.
- No, it can't be changed. Nothing changes, only that we are more interconnected. But as I said before, the French stays French, the German, German and the Romanian, Romanian.
- Hard question. If we continue to be led by these thieves, the future will not be too good. We remain with the hopes but with lots of question marks. Plus it's this international context with Russia and Ukraine and I don't see it very well... I don't know, we'll see.
- Not necessarily in a good way. It globalized, it Americanized, and it's not a profound culture anymore.
- No. Depends on people that will return in Romania and how will they influence this national identity.
- Here I was born, here I worked and here I retired. I lived a while in France because of my job, but here I like it better. I like the nature, the country, except the people. That one of Romania's problems: the lack of civilization.
- No, this will persist. We barely formed this 200 years ago.
- We still have a lot to do.
- That we are different from the rest.
- It changed and now it seems to return to what it used to be.
- I didn't actually, but I think we should make our presence more felt in Europe.
- I don't think the national identity can be change that fast, it usually takes hundreds of years to change a national identity.
- I personally feel as an equal member, but the elite is not able to represent us properly and that's why some would say we're not an equal member of the EU.
- I don't think we are equal but I restrain myself.
- I don't have big hopes at my age but with these new elections, a lot of people hope for better things. It is too soon though.
- What makes you personally feel Romanian? I don't know. This is what I am, this is how I feel.
- On short term, not very pink, on long term it's possible we some improvements.
- What makes you personally feel Romanian? I don't know, the fact that I am.
- As a state I don't think we will still exist in 50 years, as a nation, we will always be. I understand that the tendency is towards a more accentuated integration, thus, a loss of sovereignty, we will probably exist more as provinces.
- The beauty of this country.
- I'm optimistic and I think it will be better. Hope dies last.
- I'm really glad that I was born here. I am glad that I know this language, and more important, that I understand the insides (underneath) of this language. A foreigner has to spend lots of years to get to learn this. We also have a beautiful nature, so these are the good parts of the country. The bad part is that this common sense started to disappear.

- Did the national identity change? No, no. We are conservatives enough [suggesting you where to travel in Romania]
- Neither very ugly, nor too bright. I think step by step, with some sacrifices, we will get where we're supposed to. It's something about this people and this land that I'm sure will help in this process.
- It's so easy the questions and yet I don't know the answer. The problem is that you don't want to feel Romanian.
- Russia. I know they say the power is in our hands, the young ones, but I don't think it's going to be our generation. The next generations will integrate in this European Union.
- Even worse. Maybe only if the aliens come, otherwise you can't trust anyone. You'd better go and live abroad, here is not ok. You study hard to work after 15 hours per day and be underpaid, can't you see?! Only if you work in IT maybe, but even so you work too much to afford a car or a house. Plus the educational system and the healthcare system...what can you do?!
- I love my country, here I where I want to die. Plus the language, which allows me to learn without any problem all the other Latin languages. Theoretically we are a poor country, but basically we are very intelligent and adaptable. What it's said about Romanians abroad it's just the ignorance of some people. Plus, it's the idea of not giving up in accomplishing something here and to become a role model for the others.
- No. it will never change. The Romanian will remains Romanian.
- I talked about unpredictability...so I don't know. It's not up to us, because even this adherence in the EU has its own objectives
- Only the fact that I was born here.
- Did the national identity change? I don't think so, no.
- Hard to say [laughing] wonders don't happen by night. After the fall of communism we all expected changes immediately, 25 years passed and as you can see, not much changed.
- Not really, maybe we lost some of it, but I think we will return to our national identity one day.
- I hope it will get better and better. There are too many problems, economically. We still leave from things were made in the communist period (some still have houses given by the communists). I hope for you will be better, but it takes time (25 years is not much).
- The language, the popular costumes. The Romanians are very smart, we have academicians all over the world.
- Yes. We are appreciated now.
- I hope it's going to be better with the new president. He puts the "thieves" in jail. [Talking about her daughters...]
- I don't know if there's something special that makes me feel Romanian. The amiability, hospitality and serenity of Romanians.
- I think it changed.
- I hope it will be fine, even if we are very slow in progress. God forbid if a war starts. That's why is good that we are in the EU and NATO, we are more politically protected. I don't know what would have happened if we weren't integrated there. We should have kept the same political line, we were considered traitors by Germans and Russians. Our team spirit is missing, we should be more united. [She's talking about how she intends to write her memoirs, about corruption, about our apparent problem with drinking...her professional background ...]
- The fact that I was born here in this country, that's all...everything else disgusts me.
- I see it better. After this government falls [he's telling me the history of the actual Ponta government, where his son works and then a long story about one time when his "drunkard" coworkers made false declarations that he talks bad about the Party and he almost went to jail for that, but the situation was fixed after he sent an intimation to Ceausescu]

I see it better now that we're in EU and NATO. Who's with the Russians should leave the country or go to Russia.

- You have to change the structure of population in order to change the identity. Populations change, but we didn't change like others, so we still have our national identity.
- What can I say? The fact that I was born here.
- I see it in the EU [laughing], I think it's the only future. It depends of the people and the help we receive from EU.

- The fact that I like to live here, that I couldn't live somewhere else.
- No, this never changes.
- No, the culture doesn't change. It remains the same.
- Somber. We don't see major changes. Maybe not even in 50 years we will be equal with the others. Even Bulgarians are in front of us, because they have other mentality, that's my opinion. We hope better times for our children, we caught communism and today. It's good now that we have products, not like during the communism, but now we don't really have money...
- I think the national identity that I have created, because I live here, because my family is here and because I was born and raised under Romanian traditions.
- No, and I don't think a national identity can change, because it is built up from traditions, mentalities and other things that don't change easily.
- I see it prosperous. I think this country will have something to say eventually, but of course everything depends on us and the leadership.
- The fact that I speak Romanian, that my family and friends are here, and we all share the same history somehow.
- I can't image it at all. Like I said, there are many factors involved and the people are very unpredictable, so I can't say.
- I don't think it changed, but I think for those who were not so educated, they rather leave this national identity, because they don't feel like it helped them too much.
- Not so well. I think it will be a country with old people eventually, because everyone will go abroad to work if the economics don't improve.
- The language, the belonging space [not sure of the translation: the feeling of belonging to a particular space] and the education probably.
- I don't think there is much of this identity left today. I don't think people feel they are Romanian and that will do anything to keep it this way.
- I hope we will develop more economically soon and we should appreciate more our national values because I think we won't exist as a nation in the future; we will be integrated in something bigger. Or there will be someone in 10-20 years who will want Romania and that's it.
- The language, the space, the culture, the traditions.
- Interesting, let's be optimistic and say we will develop and have a brighter future, hopefully.
- The fact that I was born and raised here; here is "home".
- No, I think it's the same, even though a bit unclear for me.
- I don't know, I see it changed in a good way thanks to the new generations to come.
- I think we will emancipate, but slowly, as up until now.
- The language, the familiarity of the places and people
- Well, I think we will manage to develop eventually.
- The fact that I can enjoy the beauty of our geography, of which I'm very proud of. So the familiarity of the space.
- I think a good one. Lately we've been having some protests, especially among youngsters, which is a good sign and there are more and more debates and discussions about the civic duties that we share. So maybe the new generations will make a difference, but first we have to get rid of the last traces of communism that still exist in many public institutions.
- Oh that's nice. There is a strong attachment for the local space which makes me feel like home. The language, as well, the fact that I try to do my best in this society and system; you don't want to give up after that.
- I don't think so. I think the Romanian society was always quite limited, we want the change but we wouldn't do anything to obtain it, so I don't think the national identity will change because of EU.
- That's a hard question. There are 2 options, first is the one in which we remain corrupt and the second where someone will eventually [president] make a change, because Iohannis [the actual president] doesn't seem to do much or there will be some reforms to change our mentality, like a governmental PR. I think it will be eventually a brighter future if I look at my generation, who seem to be very open minded.
- The language, the geography, the mentality of the people around me, the family; these basic things.
- I think better. I don't know why, I think we will develop and make some progresses.

- I think the history, the fact that you are surrounded by people who speak the same language, then there are the friends and family who keep you connected with the country, and the specificity of the space.
- It depends a lot if our generation will change something or not, maybe if not all of us will leave the country we would have a chance.
- I am proud of our geography, we have a beautiful country, the food is very good and also I like the traditions and all of these things I guess makes me feel Romanian.
- I think the economy will improve and the market will evolve. I mean I think we will have more multinationals coming in Romania, so more job opportunities.

Ap 2.2 Geopolitical Changes

Code: Changes after COM {13-0}

- We were quite small back then, but we can feel on our skin the effects now that we've integrated in the labor force and we're making comparison from what we've heard. I mean, yes, I am convinced that it was worse then, from many points of views, but there were also good parts, like industry – even though it is said that he [Ceausescu] invested in a lot of things that weren't of prospect, but I don't know what to say about that – We could have kept at least some things that were specific to our country and to still export them, and also some factories or jobs
- It changed in the way that it doesn't really exist anymore
- We didn't really invest in it that much after the 90's.
- You know, there is a Romanian saying "Aceeasi Marie, alta palarie" [Another Mary, different hat] in other words, we thought it will be better, but it was the same after all. We had other communists coming to power.
- Of course it changed, 25 years have passed. Some things appeared, other disappeared, I don't know, we haven't set a direction yet.
- I was too little, and what followed next, I felt it like a normality.
- It's hard to say, it was interesting. I lived in both periods, then and now.
- Very hazy, and it's not too different now
- It didn't change much. I didn't see something extraordinary.
- I don't know, I think all the culture in general, I can't say just one part of it changed.
- I don't know, the fashion, the way of working in an office, the food partly (like the fast foods)
- Yes, I think it changed, and I think this happened to all the weak cultures that tried to copy the western ones. This happened even before the fall of communism, we were copying the French culture and this habit remained after the '90, only that it wasn't necessarily the French model. So I don't think we reinvented something national.
- The culture changed I guess, especially in the last 10 years and since we are in the EU.

Code: Negative Changes EU {18-0}

- Yes, yes. We don't know each other, but I'll tell you honestly. What communists tried to do then, EU is trying now. I'm referring to the association; union and making the national identities change and disappear. It didn't change much EU, back then we had commands and instructions coming from Moscow, now we have coming from Brussels. Historically speaking, sure, communists were right and EU is also right, but methodologically speaking they are both imposing their politics. We are told what to do. We had this new fiscal code, they told us it's not good; but let us experience ourselves. It's just an example, but it can be offensive sometimes.
- For us there is no more national identity, but not because of the EU, but because we have degenerated as a nation.
- As a change I only saw those projects financed by the EU. We could do more with these projects, but there is a lot of corruption.
- Everything that happens in mass media is a disaster.

- I was already retired. I will give you an example. In 1949, it was introduced the law of nationalization of private property and goods. It was a pilferage basically which happens even now in the EU [I'm sorry, but I don't see where he's getting with this example]. Geopolitically speaking, they needed Romania. We didn't fill all the requirements at first, but after a while they accepted us thinking that we will improve our politics.
- I wondered if I will get to pay everything in euros. It will be very, very hard for us if we're going to adopt the euro.
- Did the national identity change? I'm afraid it changed due to the politics. The politics is a "bitch", excuse me for the word used.
- Unfortunately, even now the expectations were not fulfilled. Romania was always considered like a "second hand" country, especially because the EU or our political elite didn't know how to protect certain key points of the national economy, thus, some Romanians are now even more poor than they were before. I know it's up to us first of all to make this change and we should stop feeling discriminated.
- No. Only this, that now everything is more superficial.
- The salaries are still smaller than the European ones, the production is down to rest of the Europe, so not too many changes, no.
- I don't see changes yet.
- There were some changes, some expectations were fulfilled, but there are also some negative aspects. A good thing was the freedom of circulation between European countries and a certain ease of finding a job abroad. A less positive aspect is the economy of the country, which worsen since we are in the EU.
- No, I don't think so. We assimilated some things from abroad, and that's why some may have lost parts of their national identity.
- I felt the process of adherence being a little bit slow, on the other hand, I realized we are not ready yet for this adherence. Well I have worked with people from all over the country, so I understand what's in their head and I tell you, democracy is not for everybody to understand or to accept. If it was for me, I would have made this adherence process even "stronger". Ok, the EU gave us the set of democratic norms and values that we should adopt and we shouldn't have waited for every "moron" to understand them, you waste time this way. That's why we are where we are.
- I don't see any radical changes now, except for what I said before. I can't say for me it was better.
- Maybe, because of the bad economy people had to go abroad to work, live or study and these things distanced them from the national norms maybe they had. So maybe they don't stick to the identity their parents had.
- Yes, due to globalization, I guess some things got lost.
- Yes, if there is anything left to be changed. I don't know if we have a national identity.

Code: Negative Changes Post-COM {42-0}

- In rapport with the communism, yes. We had really big writers, we had Sadoveanu, Eminescu and others. It was lost somehow, we had good movies back then, I don't know. Of course, we also have a few writers now, like Cartarescu.
- Now all the movies are in English, we don't make movies anymore
- The Romanian culture is great, sublime but is missing entirely at this moment. We had some values, we still have but we mocked everything we could have had to define us as a nation and our national identity.
- We lost what we have and we didn't gain much culturally.
- There is still some culture in which is invested. But that culture has its own target, it's not for everyone.
- Hmm... Frustrations, scams, then the collapse of our hopes. 25 years of life wasted. It is another crime what happened after, even though partly it was tried a reshaping of the society and an emphasis of the positive values that we had, from the simple worker to even the intellectual.
- It changed but in a bad way. The communism didn't have only the "hammer and sickle", it had its good parts. Who is now still going to the opera? To the theatre?
- People were going very often to the opera, to the theatre. Everyone had to go to school, the people were more educated and the children had more respect for the old ones. The cultural manifestations are missing, and the school abandonment is increasing now.
- I was barely in high school. It was a chaos, I don't remember something else.

- I don't know, I think so, even if the mentalities didn't change
- We still have good actors, but they are few.
- It changed, we used to have a more meaningful culture before the 90s.
- First of all, people don't sing in Romanian anymore. Everything is in English.
- If we will manage to be truthful, let's not forget that during the reign of Carol II, we were a great agricultural and industrial power. We had great scientists, we made planes, we don't make them anymore, and we had a great industry. We made pieces for USA, now it's all sold [he's talking about Ceausescu's affairs] we are very hard working, too bad that nowadays the youngsters party like this at nights, they should study more.
- We will accomplish things after all, but slowly, maybe in 20 years. If I could be the president of Romania, I would be more like Switzerland, so that I wouldn't have to do what other tell me to.
- With a lot of hopes, but a lot of disillusion. Because the liberty was misunderstood, or used in a mistaken way. Because the wealth of the country wasn't kept and we are now today without an industry or agriculture as we had or have the capacity. The rate of tax evasion and corruption is unacceptable. There were a lot of expectations that were unfulfilled.
- We were very enthusiastic and had big hopes and it was a scam. We were demonstrated then what the KGB can really do, along with Mister Iliescu. And they showed it to an entire nation of stupid and naïve people, who believed with all their hearts that it will be a truly change. Everyone thought this, from the most uneducated to the most educated man that it will be a change. It was a huge philological maneuver through the mass media. Now we see it as a tragedy. Some things changed, but too little and the price we paid was too big (the lives we lost in the revolution). Of course, in the first instance, the ones who acceded to power were actually the old ones, just that they were not called Ceausescu.
- It changed in a bad way in my opinion and then it started to change with a rapidity with which we weren't prepared. We didn't know how to take from outside what was beneficial to us.
- First of all, we didn't write or read books as much as before. Back then, the book was accessible to everyone and they were extremely cheap or if you couldn't afford to buy, you could take they were taken from you next salary. Everyone was going to the theatre, opera, movies. How going now? Very few, the tickets are expensive and so on. Plus this modern art which I think it's a degradation. There are some cineastes and good movies, but they are an exception. The communism, bad as it was, gave you free access to education, culture, museums etc. . Only if you didn't want to learn you didn't learn, but other than that you had this opportunity. Now it's a little bit harder because everything started to cost and we don't have money for it.
- Transition period that it's not yet over. Anarchical and destructive period in which we managed to ruin everything that was built in two generations. Let's not forget it was the second era of modernization of Romania, after Carol I. Everything was over in 10 years. Why? I don't have an answer for this question.
- Not necessarily in a good way. It globalized, it Americanized, and it's not a profound culture anymore.
- The first years were a disarray. There were huge destructions of the industry, I don't know why (they said it was not competitive enough). Nowhere else people destroyed the history and the industry. We destroyed everything.
- Yes, I think it changed in both ways, good and bad.
- I was 14, but I thought they were hazy.
- I was way too optimistic at the revolution, I wasn't however shocked of what followed, because I had lived before in other countries, like Libya because of my job and I got to hear different things on the radio. I wasn't that isolated like the others who lived in Romania. I felt them like a change, but then I realized it wasn't the best change, or the changed we hoped for. This change was not actually possible because we had to adjust our mentality first, and that's the hardest to do.
- Yes, it changes, because now people have learn through different medias and the valuable things are lost.
- People don't appreciate that much the books or the theatre
- Hmm I don't know. I think that if they had a culture, they lost it.
- A useless joy. At least then you had money to buy things (even though you had to have relations to get some products), but now even if you have lots of choices, you don't have money to buy them.
- I think it changed, in a good and bad way at the same time. Depends on what every person chose.

- I don't remember them, we feel the consequences now though. Economically speaking, it's worse, and I talk about the unemployment rate and the fact that you can't find a job, and that's mainly because of the bad governance, who acts in the name of democracy. I remember the beginning of the 90s that it was a miserable poverty, people didn't work and nothing was moving. My parents worked in factories, so they were affected the most, like the rest of the population, about 80% of it. So because of what happened then, we suffer now. You saw that 3 millions of people work abroad just so they can support their families from here. Not that we accept the communism, don't get me wrong, but at least you had that stability in your life, you had a job and a decent salary and you could afford things; now, you don't know if you'll find a job or for how long you'll keep it.
- I think we don't invest that much in education and we should put more emphasis on the moral values in school, to have a more effective religion class in school, not like this one that is made now. We have to learn how to behave in a society and how to respect the freewill of others. [She's talking about subjectivity, objectivity, the theory of unpredictability...]
- The culture is based on traditions, history, folklore, and since these elements almost disappeared in Romania, there's not much culture left. There are no more cultural events, just some music concerts organized by the city hall, maybe during some election campaigns.
- I think it worsen, unfortunately.
- I think it changed in a bad way because it lost parts of its identity, but maybe we were educated differently.
- We copy without filtering the culture from abroad. It's more superficial, but it's a transitional period, it's understandable.
- We hoped that the next to come to power will be different and have that common sense that the communists didn't have but we were wrong. In the absence of law to hinder scam, we were fooled. Ok, they stole, but at least they could have made projects of quality (like constructions and roads). The industry disappeared after the 90s. It wasn't all good, it's true, but still, we shouldn't have kill all the industry and now we're not even an industrial or agricultural or touristic country, we have nothing left. The only thing that is now encouraged in Romania is the IT. I also have kids working in this field and they are better because they are exempt from paying income taxes even if they are still underpaid comparing to the programmers from other European countries.
- We had that festival "Cantarea Romaniei", which was politicized unfortunately, but still, it promoted some traditions and Romanian customs. For example, children today don't know who to knit their own popular costume or how to cook traditional food (when I was little I had to) [Talking a lot about how teachers don't know how to gain their respect in front of the students and about her experiences from when she was a teacher...] The relationships between people changed. Now they are not sincere anymore, you can't trust anyone. After the 90s, the old ones were "hunted" in order to be removed from the systems (I'm talking about jobs, even if some, old as they were, had a great work experience)
- They were harsh. We thought it will be different, but it was as we expected.
- I think it degenerated, for the people are now more distracted because of the mass media and all the technology, so I think there is no more interest for culture because they don't have time for it.
- People don't read anymore, don't listen to good music or go to cultural events.
- It changed, initially in a bad way, but now it recovers. Right immediately after the fall of communist it was chaos, a high rate of corruption, so everyone was distracted, the culture was not a priority.
- The education is very superficial today, and because it is the essential pillar of development, we have other problems today. I think in the communist era, the education was stricter.

Code: Negative Experience COM {6-0}

- The fall? It felt like a liberation, but very disorganized. We had all the conditions to get better out of communism, like Germany (GDR), Czechoslovakia, inclusively Bulgaria but it wasn't well prepared before. It all came like a wave, and brought up the worst of society to the surface and mixed it together.
- We had high hopes at that time. High, useless hopes. Right now, I don't remember. If you want to find someone more cynical than me it will be hard.
- We were very enthusiastic and had big hopes and it was a scam. We were demonstrated then what the KGB can really do, along with Mister Iliescu. And they showed it to an entire nation of stupid and naïve

people, who believed with all their hearts that it will be a truly change. Everyone thought this, from the most uneducated to the most educated man that it will be a change. It was a huge philological maneuver through the mass media. Now we see it as a tragedy. Some things changed, but too little and the price we paid was too big (the lives we lost in the revolution). Of course, in the first instance, the ones who acceded to power were actually the old ones, just that they were not called Ceausescu.

- I was too little.
- It was a harder period for us. We were in our midst, we didn't know what to expect from life, but it passed.
- I remember until I was 7 there was a lot of poverty everywhere, people were very scared and disoriented.

Code: Negative Experience EU {17-0}

- Well, not really. We are not yet in Schengen, which is a little bit frustrating. I know it's a difference between the standards of living, but it still feels like we are inferior.
- I thought of it as a normality but not very beneficial for the ordinary citizen. This European Union is more like a theory, because for the population weren't that many changes.
- I don't know. No one asked us if we want it or not.
- I think we became a member of the EU because of its own roving and searches.
- No. We have that well known image abroad and they invent all sorts of things about us. For example, the Europeans criticized us and told us to treat better our gypsies, but when they went abroad to work they didn't want to integrate or educate them. Plus, I don't think we should be equal, we have different economic status, but still, some countries want to be "more equal" than the others, see the pride of the French people who won't speak other than French.
- They said that they correlated the Romanian salaries at a European level, but it's not true. We saw an increase of multinationals in the country, there is more import and export but as a whole it didn't change much the fact that we are now in the EU. Maybe the only advantage would be this freedom of circulation.
- In these times we are leaving now, we don't feel anything anymore. Only lies, money invested for nothing, loses and so on. We don't know how to escape from here.
- What do you think EU brought us? Can't you see? Everything is made under their command. I think that was the idea from the beginning, to dissolve the communists. My daughter studies medicine, where will she work after? At a small cabinet where she will be underpaid. What to do in Romania? Nothing. They say freedom of circulation, but we don't have money to travel...
- This is very artificial. There are many Romanians seen differently, it depends what you do. If you go to work and you are honest of course you will be seen good, but if you'll go to bag, not so good
- I feel like we are a burden for the EU but I don't know to tell you why, it's just a feeling.
- don't know what to tell you honestly. I was little, but I remember a general chaos and agitation.
- No. Maybe we have the same rights, but the same privileges, no.
- No, I think we are a poor member, so that's why we're unequal and disadvantaged.
- I don't remember much, just that it was a chaos and everything was made in rush in order to meet the conditions in 2007, so everything was something temporary.
- I don't see much of a difference now, I think everything it's just a manipulation. The money we're supposed to receive didn't end up in the right pockets. I guess that's why, we as regular citizens don't experience in any way this membership, even the contrary.
- o be honest, no. You know, the same old discussions about the discrimination and the bad image we have abroad.
- At the moment, no. I think there are too many discrepancies between our economy and the others'.

Code: Positive Changes EU {48-0}

- I didn't feel much, just a sort of satisfaction. I thought that it will change the way of travelling, that we will travel much easier.
- We are traveling only with identity card, without passport in the Schengen countries. That's pretty much all.
- We travel more easily.
- I thought of the free circulation more.

- We were quite indifferent, we saw some changes after that.
- It affected us (Romania) just that our company got involved in these European projects.
- As a change I only saw those projects financed by the EU. We could do more with these projects, but there is a lot of corruption.
- I have more easily access to other countries and is simpler to connect with others. For me that I work in publicity, the EU brought in Romania a lot of new multimedia. It was urgently and necessary. I also think the political relations improved.
- I don't know, even though we had to implement some things in order to be accepted, some changes were visible only after the adherence.
- I think it's a good thing the fact that Romania is now obliged to follow the rules that all the civilized countries follow.
- What changes? Only that you can travel without passport, other than that, we don't count that much in the EU.
- We were happy.
- The liberty of circulation, more cultural exchanges.
- I don't think so. We became more open and we saw that we can do things in other ways.
- I think it's beneficial that we can travel freely.
- Informational exchanges, the freedom of circulation, which are good things. I think it's an evolution for us that we are a member of EU. I couldn't leave the country for years and years, and now I finally can and it's great.
- No, it can't be changed. Nothing changes, only that we are more interconnected. But as I said before, the French stays French, the German, German and the Romanian, Romanian.
- Just that we can travel abroad without a passport, that's all.
- I was already abroad for studies and personally I didn't have any benefits immediately out of this because I was already having a visa with which I could travel anywhere in Europe, but for the rest, I think this was the most interesting benefit of all.
- I think it changed economically more.
- The only thing that changes is the fact that we can travel more easily.
- There were some changes, some expectations were fulfilled, but there are also some negative aspects. A good things was the freedom of circulation between European countries and a certain ease of finding a job abroad. A less positive aspect is the economy of the country, which worsen since we are in the EU.
- It's exactly what we needed, we just need people to understand this. It's not enough just for the political elites to take decisions, we also have to participate. It's about reciprocity, we all need each other and we have to understand this. Like an employer, you have to know that you both need each other, not just him.
- It's good that we are in the EU because it imposed some norms and values that we didn't have before, but the negative part is that we had to align the prices with the European ones and it was not fair for us, considering our economy and salaries. There are some changes, but not visible for the ordinary citizens.
- For me personally, the best thing it's the freedom of movement and information.
- It's good that we can travel now and it's good that we pay some taxes and we can be more confident in keeping our borders.
- I thought was a good thing but the EU was and still is a challenge because we are expected to develop at an European level and we weren't prepared, since we lost our industry and all that after the 90s and we were taken by surprise by the European market and we abandoned our production of lots of things. We should have kept our local products.
- I was glad we will finally be part of the Occident and we will no longer have to deal with Russia and the east. The EU and NATO are very benefic, they protect us.
- Maybe the mentality of some changed. The old communists are still drugged by the history.
- Yes, yes. It changed. Romania is seen differently, is supported more and protected now.
- I told you, it's very good we are in the EU, we are protected now and we have certain advantages.
- The youngsters emancipated by going abroad and work or just interacting with other cultures, it counts.
- A vague change. They [Romanians] caught some habits and European standards.
- I saw some changes, the country is cleaner now.

- Well, I felt changes in the sectors I was directly involved, like education. You know that at first we didn't meet the conditions, so we were had to improve some things.
- I really felt like there were some changes after. First of all, we were given more importance in the international community, we accessed some funds for different projects (in education, infrastructure etc.) We had more opportunities of asserting ourselves. Oh, and then, it's the advantage of traveling without passport or visa between the EU countries.
- I saw an emphasis on compliance with law, some anticorruption norms that were adopted and I think we are taken more into account in Europe.
- I think the EU is trying a higher integration or an assimilation, but I can't tell if this will change our national identity or not, I don't know.
- The freedom of movement, the access to information and also we developed a little bit economically.
- I don't really see with what is the EU helping us. I can only see this facilitation of traveling, you travel more easily and faster in the EU countries.
- The only thing that I benefited directly was the fact that I can travel without passport, other things I don't know.
- I don't remember, but I think my parents had a salary raise, so I guess it was one of the measures adopted back then.
- I know only that we can travel more easily and some cities were modernized (we have more buses from the Germans)
- I had different educational opportunities (like Youth in action, Erasmus +) and I could travel without passport.
- It's hard to answer, I wasn't paying too much attention when I was little, I guess people are more open minded, the cities look better and better (for example my city) , politically I don't know what to say and economically I think we regressed but I'm not sure.
- I think the level of informing is higher. Like I said, this open-mindedness and also the traveling is easier, and even the food is more diverse I think.
- Well I saw an improvement in the educational system, we have more advantages as students (like the European youth projects)
- I have more advantages as a student abroad, I had more tuition fee reductions.

Code: Positive Changes Post-COM {37-0}

- I thought they were necessary, important and I felt freer. For many it was like a new positive start.
- I think we have evolved as a nation, and having more access to the information abroad, the people raised their standards and developed themselves.
- We always had valuable people, but now they are more valorized and supported.
- Before, there was no possibility for the culture to develop, everyone was working in factories all day long. It existed, but not as much as after the 90s, when it exploded
- People started to write more, to access information from outside and so on.
- Like an unchaining, especially regarding the freedom of expression.
- It changed and now it seems to return to what it used to be.
- We had many hopes, but for a short period.
- Starting with the publishing of books. In the communist era, you didn't find where to buy books from. There were mainly books with political themes. Now you can easily have your own library at home. Then the music, the theatre developed. We had many foreign artists coming on tour. So, yes, the culture developed, only that the artists are still underpaid.
- Yes, I think it changed in both ways, good and bad.
- I felt freedom and that's pretty much all.
- Yes, of course it changed. We took more things from other cultures, which can be a good thing.
- I think it changed, in a good and bad way at the same time. Depends on what every person chose.
- I though God came down on earth, but only in the first years [laughing]. Then I chilled out.
- I hope it changed in a good way. I think it's more valuable now, every night I watch "5 minutes of history" with Cioroianu, on TV. It's very interesting.
- There are more books written, especially historical books.

- I felt that we are free. I felt we are no longer under the supervision of the security (everything you said or do was monitored). The communism was a plague upon Romania.
- It partly changed in a good way.
- The liberty of expression, which didn't exist before. Now you can decide for yourself, you can think whatever you want.
- The culture was a form of resistance in the communist era. Now we begin to restore the National Theatre or the National Library. Those are symbols of culture.
- We were very happy and they were good years, but only at the beginning.
- Yes, of course it changed. After the '90 they tried democratization and a modernization of the society and this allowed an evolution and an alignment with the western cultures.
- I don't know, I was too little to analyze this, but I think every sector of the culture changed in a way. For example, the contemporary art is very developed here, but I don't know if this is relevant.
- It think it changed in a way, but I don't know, it became more disorganized. I think people no longer agree on the same values and that's why it seems confusing to me.
- Well it changed, because we had more freedom of expression, more access to information from abroad, but lately it's been the globalization that made our culture change. Plus the people that went abroad to study and came back also influenced the culture.
- I don't know, it could be anything: art, literature. I think every part of the culture changed.
- The culture is in a constant change. The difference now is that we are not so conservative as before and that's also because of the freedom of expression and creation that we have had after the fall of communism. Some traditions disappeared, people become interested in other things, it's a permanent change.
- I think every part changed.
- I think it changed once with the lift of censorship and the access to other cultures and information in general
- The music changed very much, the movies lost their specificity, we imported a lot of foreign brands
- Yes, besides the freedom of expression that made the culture change and improve, now there are more different ways for culture to be manifested, it's more diverse.
- The mass media, the press, for sure.
- Yes, first of all, the mass media caused this change. And because of mass media we relate differently to culture now, so I don't know. I can see a modernization and an urbanization of the country, people are more open minded. I think the traditions will always remain though.
- Yes, it's very Europeanized because of the mass media, EU, globalization and it was normal this change once you get rid of the limitations of communism.
- The mass media in general, the art evolved very much for example.
- The capitalism changed the culture, it's normal. It's more adapted to the consumerism and globalization present nowadays.
- Everyone was influenced by these social changes- the passage from communism to capitalism, so art, literature, music...all is changed.

Code: Positive Experience COM {5-0}

- Back then, there were at least some festivals at which you had to participate, you had to learn either you wanted or not.
- The movies were better, now they are more superficial.
- I wouldn't ever imagined that I can live without communism. That's how we were educated. I can't complain that I lived badly back then, but I also didn't have the courage to go in the street [at the revolution] like the others.
- The communism, bad as it was, gave you free access to education, culture, museums etc. . Only if you didn't want to learn you didn't learn, but other than that you had this opportunity.
- I don't remember them, we feel the consequences now though. Economically speaking, it's worse, and I talk about the unemployment rate and the fact that you can't find a job, and that's mainly because of the bad governance, who acts in the name of democracy. I remember the beginning of the 90s that it was a miserable poverty, people didn't work and nothing was moving. My parents worked in factories, so they

were affected the most, like the rest of the population, about 80% of it. So because of what happened then, we suffer now. You saw that 3 millions of people work abroad just so they can support their families from here. Not that we accept the communism, don't get me wrong, but at least you had that stability in your life, you had a job and a decent salary and you could afford things; now, you don't know if you'll find a job or for how long you'll keep it.

Code: Positive Experience EU {20-0}

- I'm glad we are in EU, we are also in NATO, we have security warranties now, and it's good.
- Yes, but on the other hand, not all the countries from EU are economically equal. Still, it was necessary this union, because disunited as Europe was, we were prey for other superpowers like USA who tries to seize everything and China who is knocking at the global authority's doors.
- It's not easy to be a member of EU, but I thought it's a good thing.
- Because of my age, I didn't have the courage to apply for some European fund to open a business, but I also don't have children, so I'm good with what I have.
- I thought it's a good thing, absolutely.
- I thought it was good thing, unquestionably. But this adherence was going to be made with great economical sacrifices from Romania's part. No one accepted us for free in the EU, but that's it.
- I didn't actually, but I think we should make our presence more felt in Europe.
- I think I considered it beneficial.
- I can't say I was against, maybe I felt a little bit proud.
- I was extremely optimistic and proud that we are going to be part of the EU. I was very idealist, but now I saw it's not really like that.
- I was glad, I thought it was a good thing, but I didn't feel any changes.
- Yes, of course. My conscience is clear since we got rid of the bolshevism. It made us suffer for years and years. After we returned from the battle field we thought we are going to start a new life, but it wasn't going to be like that, the Russians were here and we couldn't do anything we wanted to after.
- Me and a friend of mine who worked for the White House wrote a letter to Madeleine Albright asking whether Romania will become a member of the EU or not. And the answer was yes. We were very happy. That's how much we wanted EU and NATO, without them we would be lost. No one expected communism to be like that, we were expecting the Americans, not the Russians. [He's telling me about the communist ideology, from Marx and Angles...]
- I was happy, I thought it was a positive thing, I don't know if I noticed changes before become a member.
- The opinions are divided. I think it's a good thing. The EU is a good thing, it's about that European fund with which countries can be helped.
- I wasn't paying too much attention, only in the last few years, so I can't say, but now we're in the EU I see the differences.
- Yes, like I said about the educational opportunities I had or we have, then I think we are equal. Other than that, I can't tell
- I don't know what to answer, I think I feel equal.
- I think it changed a little bit, but not dramatically enough to make someone say he's European instead of saying he's Romanian.
- Yes, especially now that we have the right to work in Holland, before it was strange to live there and not having this right.

Code: Taking Independence for granted ROM {0-0}

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Appendix 2: Transcript of Expert Interviews

Ap 2.1 Interview Dr. Monica Heintz

Q – *My first question is how would you describe the Romanian national identity?*

A – “Okay... I didn’t hear your questions.”

Q – *Oh sorry, how would you describe the Romanian national identity?*

A – “I don’t know. It’s quite complicated. I don’t know how to answer, this question is too big. You have to cut it in pieces otherwise I can’t handle it. How can I describe, I don’t know. It’s a recent identity, in a way because it was formed like two centuries ago. People still stick to it, it’s quite strong in the sense that people identify either positively or negatively with this. So they basically have an idea, a strong idea on what is national identity. What it really is, I have no idea.”

Q – *Okay, and for example specific norms and values?*

A – “I’m sorry but I just can’t hear you. It’s very strange. We should try to call back maybe”.

---- re-connecting----

A – “Okay, let’s try, maybe this is better?”

Q – *Yes, is this better?*

A – “No not really actually but well anyway.”

Q – *Okay, o I asked you, do you know specific norms and values for Romanians?*

A – “Uh, there was a big talk in Romania about the Romanian mentality and there have been quite a number of books that talk about this. It is... One circulated in the media, they are images of the Romanian norms and values that circulate. I personally wrote a book on criticizing this idea and saying that this completely constructed. So I just can’t tell you I believe in the Romanian mentality. But of course there are common norms and values depending on... well... It’s very large, also as a question. You need to be more specific about this and also things change so we can’t talk about norms and values, that would be the same for centuries.”

Q – *No that’s true, that’s true. But I’m sort of trying to form an image of the norms and values that are common for most Romanians, and specifically how these would have changed since the communist era or whether they have changed.*

A – “Well they did change from the Communist era, because there has been really a very big change and different generations are going to give you different answers. It’s all depending on what are their norms and values. You can imagine that if you ask people this way, they never tell you ‘my norm or my value is a negative value. So they are always going to give you very positive things, the ones that they expect that you expect them to say. So unfortunately with such a question you can’t really get the right answers, if I may.”

Q – *Yeah I understand. But I must say that during the interviews that I did in the streets, there were also a lot of people that were criticizing the current generation and how...*

A- “Well they do, as I told you, the identification with the Romanian national identity is very much then on the negative note. Which is... I mean we blame ourselves for basically everything that happens to us. It’s a very much ‘blame the victim’ attitude in many cases, so yes that doesn’t mean... I mean people are going to keep you in principle to completely different views. Some of them are going to tell you that Romanians are great, they are hard-working, they are nice, they are friendly, they are hospitable, etcetera. And others are going to go to the other extreme and they are going to have a pessimistic view and say they are just stealing, they are just doing superficial work, they are just... How do you say? The actual answer is in between of course.”

Q – *I actually had that experience as well, indeed, that it can go both ways either people are very enthusiastic or people or they are very negative.*

A – “Yeah, well, yes.”

Q – *But what makes you personally feel Romanian, if you would have to pick something?*

A – “Myself? I have no idea, you know when you do research on this issue, you get yourself to a certain distance. And I have also personally, I have been living outside of Romania for the past twenty years or more, so. It’s very difficult to interrogate how I, myself, putting aside the social scientist that I am, feel about the fact of being Romanian. I mean, I think the only thing I feel quite grateful in a way, is not to have belonged to any of the colonial countries. I think that is to only thing.. It’s kind of stupid and it comes to me because I’m living in France and I see all the problems that they have with their colonial past. “

Q – *Do you have an idea of how you could explain how the national identity might have changed since the fall of communism?*

A – “I think the national identity was created before through an internal discourse. It was a discourse for internal consumption, especially, and a bit for external consumption. After 1989, because of the opening of the gates towards the West especially, people are producing an idea of the national identity for external, international consumption. And that has changed a lot, that’s makes for big change. It’s wanting to define yourself regarding what you do and another thing to change yourself or to define yourself regarding to how the other look at you. That has really changed and it’s very well explainable by the fact that before 1989 Romanian were really... Were not allowed to travel, they were not allowed to have information from abroad, not to meet with strangers, with foreigners, so because of that they were confined to defining their national identity in internal terms. Also, well that, I take the opportunity to tell you this now. I saw in your project proposal that you are astonished that there were so many less discourses about the national identity in Romania after 1989. One of the reasons you can find it by looking at a book published by Katherine Verdery on ideology under communism. I don’t know whether you have heard about this?”

Q – *No not yet... [9:00]*

A – “Well this is a book that explains you, that explains you very much why there are so few discourses after 1989. It’s because there was so much before that. The Ceausescu regime was based on a nationalist discourse. So, yeah people reacted negatively after 1989 against this.”

Q – *To continue on that, because for my thesis I am sort of trying to compare the Romanian and the Estonian national identities. And in the Estonian national identity there are two discourses that are very important. One they call ‘homeland’, which explains that the national identity is based on being born in Estonia and speaking the Estonian language. And the second discourse is ‘Return to Europe’ which explains the feeling of reconnecting with the other European countries after the fall of the Soviet Union. Because, of course, they were occupied so that is a different situation from Romania. And actually from the first discourse, about homeland, I heard a lot of claims towards that during the interviews here in Bucharest as well. Would you be able to describe how or why this is important to Romanians: the fact of being born in Romania and speaking the language?*

[10:43] A – “I didn’t hear everything, why it was so important to be born in Romania and?”

Q – *And speak the Romanian language.*

A – “Ah, stick to the Romanian language. Well I think... What you probably know is that the history of this entire Central and East European region was a history of empires until 1918, basically. And the only way that these people and ethnic groups had to distinguish themselves one from the other and build their countries was language. The whole Central and Eastern Europe was based on language. That is basically what defines you as being Hungarian, Romanian, etcetera. It’s not a history of... Well there is a bit of a history of territories of course,

but frontiers changed a lot. So they changed at some point according to how many Romanian language speakers were on the territory. So that's why people define themselves through language. Being born in Romania, even this; it's a bit less important, because you probably know that there are a lot of Romanians who are outside the territory of Romania. There is a special department Romanians abroad that exists within the Romanian government. And they take care of them. And the only criteria of recognition is the fact that they speak the language. And what you said about Estonia; yes you're right about the two discourses. In Romania the discourse of the 'homeland' didn't really exist as such, couldn't really exist as such. It is more centered about language as you noticed. 'The return to Europe' yes of course this discourse we had it fully for the past twenty-five years."

Q – And do you think that the 'return to Europe' also applies to the Romanians? Because what I heard in the interviews was that people mainly feel an unequal member of the European Union and feel like they're too Eastern European...

A – "Yes, but you should consider that you're interviewing people now, once they have gained integration into the European Union. The discourse of 'return to Europe' was of course before. Once they got into Europe and there was no way back, I mean, for the past ten years that has changed because of course they have met with some frustrations. Economic frustrations mainly, but also in terms of employment, etcetera. But if you take it as a dominant of the last twenty-five years, every decision that was taken by the government and every opinion that was supported by the press was within this idea of returning to Europe and distancing from Russia."

Q – Do you think that if Romania would become member of also the Eurozone and Schengen area would that strengthen this idea?

A – "Well, it's very difficult to talk about that right now, when there are all these problems with Greece. All of a sudden everybody says 'oeh, we are going to have the same fate as them, so maybe it is not so wise to get into the Euro-space'. No I have no idea whether that will strengthen the idea. I think that what people expect is that first the economic level of Romania reaches the level of the other European Union member states level. Once this is done, then of course there will be no more feeling of being second-hand citizens and then it will be absolutely normal to be part of the Schengenzone and Eurozone, etcetera. But before that, I think that people now are much more realistic and they realize that getting into the Schengen space would not bring them any better economic standard."

Q – Do you think that Romanians have a different perspective on communism, because to them it's only linked to a dictatorship but not to a period of occupation like in Estonia?

A – "Uhm, well it is obvious that in Estonia you have a very strong idea that that was occupation and they are right. But you also have it in Romania. I mean, in Romania it is very well asserted that what communism brought was the Russians. And that was not a personal or national claim, or aim. So, in a way Romania considers that it has been occupied in a way also, so I don't see... Yeah, there is a distinction between how Estonians feel about that and how Romanians feel about that, but if you look at how reluctant they are to have relations with Russia, how much they hate Russians, it's quite close to the Estonian position in a way."

Q – Okay, 'cause I actually had the feeling that Romanians have a more position view, in hindsight, of communism. [17:00]

A – "It depends when you ask people and it depends on to what generation they belong. It's as simple as that. It's also the question of whether they link communism systematically to Russia or not. But in general you have this discourse which is quite strong, 'Russians brought communism, we didn't want it.' But then you also have people who benefitted from, socially benefitted from communism and they are not ungrateful. They are going to tell you that communism has good aspects. And especially now you have in Bucharest developing a new leftist trend which is much

more in this line of the indignados and they, yeah, they are going to revalue communism in a way.”

Q – How do you think that the Romanian internal discourse on a national identity has changed since the membership of the European Union?

A – “Uhm, well. Of course there was disappointment, economic disappointment first when Romania entered the European Union. There were too many restrictions, too many uhm, trade was limited because some of the products were not conform to the European Union standards. So there is lots of frustration and this frustration allowed to, allowed people to re-center around their national identity. So, yeah it changed. There was a return to a notion of national identity while before it was very much centered on the claim of being Europeans. Now, how can I say? If you read Katherine Verdery’s book you can see that amongst intellectuals there were two lines of intellectuals. Some of them were Europeanists and others were very nationalist and were also asserting very strange historical claims that actually what counted in Romania was not the Roman past but the Dacian past, etcetera. Well this sort of line reappeared since five years or something like this. So some things that have been completely, this historical line that was banned in 1989, the Dacian line, has sort of reappeared and I have the feeling that this is really due to... So it was a reaction to the integration of Romania into the European Union, all of a sudden you have this sort of counter discourse from the Dacians. I don’t know if you have met these people, who had this sort of claim. Whether you had them in interviews?”

Q – Yes a couple of them actually. But also some people who referred back to the time when Romania was still a monarchy and were proud still of that.

A – “Yeah, that’s also because democracy came with many good things but with very bad things also. So the monarchy seems to have been able in a way to keep quiet all these contradictions and parties that want different things. And probably a bit afraid by so many directions of thought, confronting each other.”

Q – Okay, I only have a couple more questions actually. So I heard a lot that people feel unequal members of the European Union. Do you think that this is formed by this internal idea, or do you think that it’s caused by a process of ‘othering’ by the rest of the EU?

A – “It is very much an internal perception, because the inequality comes from the economy and normally the economy is not proliferated by the EU. I mean, it is not like the European Union said that Romania should stay poor and all the Romanians should stay poor. It’s nothing like this. And in the term of strict legislation normally there are large differences. However, I saw the case here in France a few years ago, when Sarkozy decided to send back, to kick out of the country Roma. And everybody protested, because normally you are citizen of the European Union so you shouldn’t be able to do this, you shouldn’t be. Then it was quite clear that not everybody is ‘as equal’ in the European Union, some citizens from the European Union are stereotyped and other are not, and some are more desirable than the others. So I think that this idea of second citizenship which has been strengthened by the media in Romania, comes from the experience of migrants. And comes from, well... Romania was in the European Union in 2008, when the prices spiked, and there was an equal treatment of economic problems throughout the European Union, depending on the country to which you belonged. So at that time, all of a sudden, countries that were strong were able to protect their citizens, so they repatriated money etcetera. And that was causing some reasons for Central and Eastern European countries which discovered that there was a ‘last came, last served’ or so, in terms of economic protection.”

Q – Yeah... But I also have the idea that it’s also focused on norms and values. Because a lot of people said that being a member of the European Union was a good thing, because now they would adapt more

civil norms and values, and that kind of discourses. Where does that come from? Is that because they feel like they are Eastern European and therefore not as European as the rest, or?

A – “Yes, again this is something that has developed very much since the nineties when Romania was not allowed to enter the European Union and was claiming at the gates that didn’t work. And when all the policies seemed to fail in Romania, because there also were terrible years in terms of economic growth. The Romanian media insisted very much on the fact that that was due to Romanians; to how they worked, to the fact that they were not civilized enough, that they were not hardworking enough, etcetera. So there was this discourse of blaming the victim in a way, which sort of penetrated the way people think about themselves. They sort of integrated the fact that they are not civil enough, they don’t behave well enough, that’s why they have what they have; which is a country which is less economically developed basically, because that’s the problem. So they integrated that very much into themselves, but if you look throughout the literature, in Romanian literature, this idea that we are not yet as good as them and they are much more civilized and we should be more European is not that new actually. You have it even in books from the nineteenth century also.”

Q – *That’s good to know. So how do you see the future of this Romanian national identity? Will it go further towards a European identity, or?*

A – “It really depends on what happens. If you, I mean, if in five years Romania are facing a problem like the one in Greece, you are going to get towards a very strong national identity and against a European identity. If what happens is that Romania is going to progress in economic terms and because of that, Romanians would be much better viewed when they travel abroad or they are not the poor migrant, of course you go towards a much more European identity. It really, unfortunately, it really all is linked to standards of life and economy.”

Ap 2.2 Interview Prof. Sorin Pavel

Questions were answered through email, so there is no audio file available.

Q - *How would you describe the Romanian national identity? (Specific norms and values, celebrations, traditions*

A - Romanian identity is a fluid synthesis of diverse traits. Romanian identity is strongly influenced by history, geography and social structures and cultural evolutions. For me, the most powerful element of identity is Romanian language - a language of Latin origin in a space dominated by Slavic languages. Romanian traditions and norms are heavily influenced by the geographical context in which it is Romania. Exists few elements of original identity which is not present and the other nations of Central Europe or the Balkans. In public discourse there are several elements of Romanian identity, but in my opinion they are not specific only to Romanians: “Miorița” folk Ballad (a parable of the resignation that is specific the Romanians), but it is present and the other peoples of the Balkans; national poet Mihai Eminescu (1850-1889) (but national romantic poets appear about the same time as in other Central European countries); “Hora” (a traditional Romanian dance), but it is present in other forms to other nations in the region. In geographical discourse three elements define the identity of Romanian space: Carpathians, the Danube and Black Sea. In conclusion, the Romanian identity values are not much different from the European ones.

Q - *What makes a person truly Romanian?*

A - In my opinion a true Romanian is not ashamed that he is Romanian and that Romania is poorer than other countries in Western Europe.

Q - *What makes you personally feel Romanian?*

A - Personally it makes me feel Romanian national flag, anthem and longing Romania when I left Romania.

Q - *How do you think that after the fall of communism this national identity changed?*

A - The fall of communism has not radically affected the Romanians identity. It added that new element the Orthodox Church and the feeling that we are a poor country.

Q - *In the Estonian national identity, two discourses are important: 'homeland' (explaining that the national identity is based on being born in Estonia and speaking Estonian) and 'return to Europe' (the feeling of reconnecting with the European 'sister countries' after the fall of the Soviet Union). During the interviews in Bucharest I heard many claims towards the discourse 'homeland'. How would you describe the importance of this to Romanians?*

A - Speech about homeland is not very consistent in Romania. It dates from the modern period (after 1848 Revolution) when he appeared notion of Romanian nation. Romanians patriotic sentiment is attached territory, not the family. In Romanian language, the word "țară" (country) comes from the Latin "terra". The word "patrie" (homeland) is borrowed from the French language in the modern period ("patrie" - from the Latin "pater")

Q - *A 'return to Europe' does not seem to apply to Romanians. How could this be explained?*

A - Inclusive in the communist period, the Romanians did not have the feeling that they left Europe. During the communism in Romania listening to occidental pop music, was read European literature and in schools teaching French and English. Up to a certain level the opening to Europe of the communist regime of Romania was much higher comparative to the other communist countries.

Q - *Do you think that Romanians have a different perspective on communism as it to them is linked to a dictatorship, but not linked to a long period of occupation in the way it is in Estonia?*

A - Yes it is true! I think this is the reason.

Q - *How has the Romanian national identity changed since the membership of the European Union?*

A - National identity has not changed very much after EU accession. It was stressed sense of belonging to a dynamic and competitive space.

Q - *Why do you think, do many Romanians feel to be 'unequal members' of the European Union? (Is this due to 'othering' by the rest of the EU? Or do Romanians feel to be too 'Eastern European'?)*

A - Romanians have a historical experience in which European powers decided sometimes to their disadvantage (eg Yalta in 1945 after the end of the Second World War). And now there is the feeling that Romania is not treated equally by the rich countries of the EU (eg sine die postponement of Romania's accession to Schengen, although the accession criteria have been met). Romanians have a saying in this regard: "never a poor man cannot sit at the table of the rich!"

Q - *How do you see the future of the Romanian national identity? And the future position of Romania within the EU?*

A - Perhaps the Romanians' national identity will evolve due to globalization. Already the younger generation no longer so attached to national values. It has been emphasized lately concern for individualism. National sentiment is increasingly more connected to individual prosperity. More and more Romanian say: "my country is where I feel the best"!

Ap 2.3 Interview Prof. Bogdan Suditu

Q – *How would you describe the Romanian national identity?*

A – “I think that the Romanian national identity has a very diverse definition, very composite, because Romania actually, the actual Romania, the actual frontier, it’s a very young state. 1980, less than 100 years, and I think inside is very difficult, or is too simple to say one identity. I think it has a multi-identity. And I feel, even the constitution talks about the Unitarian nation, nation, nationality, state unitary, etcetera. I think inside, regional or local, still exists some local identity, regional identity. For example, if you talk with people from the South of Romania or the Eastern side of Romania, they feel that Romania is ‘our county’, Romania it’s our language, our poets, it’s our novelists and our historical facts. But actually I think it’s very important to recognize the reality, the identity realities from Banat, from Mara-Mures, from Transylvania. It’s very different. And I think it’s a very- it’s a big mistake for the official expert politicians, scientific writer etcetera, to talk about one single Romania. In my opinion it’s several Romania’s with one territory and I think this identity is very diverse so I couldn’t ask short what is the identity of Romania.

Q – *No that’s true. When I did the interviews in the streets I asked a lot of questions about celebrations and traditions and that kind of stuff. Actually many people said that most celebrations are either religious or very regional.*

A – “Yes, you know for example even the religious facts; in Romania we have several official religions, between for example the Romanian people it’s catholic, orthodox-catholic, Greco-catholic, after that we have the Musselman, we have a lot of protestants, a lot of Hungarian catholics, German protestants, some Jew, so a lot of catholic Polish in the North side of the country. So the religion is very important but I think if Romania wants to develop an idea of identity, it’s maybe better not to reduce to ‘Romania is orthodox’, I think it’s better to multiply; Romania is multicultural, multi-ethnic, multi-confessional areas. I think this is a big rich thing of Romania, this mix and this mix which survives in calm for a long time. If some people want to clarify, to identify the identity of Romania, I think they make a big mistake.”

Q – *But also I got the feeling that people didn’t want to see Romania as being a multicultural country.*

A – “I worked in several places in Romania, I travelled a lot for work in Romania, I have some opinion about Romania. And I think the people who are the most aggressive, more convinced Romanians who say “this is my Romania”, are the people that never met the others. And I think the people, for example the people from the South, the people from the East but especially the people from the South, where the multi-ethnic, multireligious is not very developed. They’re maybe the most patriotic, they are the most convinced that Romania is orthodox, Romania and me. For example, I lived sometime in the Western part, and for example in the small village, in the corner of the village, the neighbors could be a Romanian, Hungarian (Hungarian catholic and Hungarian protestant), and a Romanian orthodox or maybe a German catholic or protestant. And in my opinion there, the idea of developing an identity it’s about ‘we are several types, but we live in Romania’. So all this is a rich thing, because it’s not uniform. And the people from the South, they are scared maybe because sometimes the media and the politicians send the wrong message; ‘the diversity is dangerous’. I think diversity is a very rich thing.”

Q – *I agree. But then what makes you personally feel Romanian?*

A – “So, I’m from the South but I’m not very proud of my village, of my neighbors, of my historical community. And I think if Romania and the identity of Romania is similar to the identity of the village where I was born, that would be a very poor identity. So, I think for me Romania has long and diverse history, long economic and social diversity and a lot of influence from the Turkish, from the Serbs, from the Austro-Hungarian, from the Russian, from the

French... And I think this mix in Romanian culture, in Romanian history of art and Romanian type of construction of the territory of the city, I think this is rich. Of course it is very rich and very francophone, and very attached to this side of the identity. It is however necessary to repeat, Romania is francophone not because of the French were (as they never were), but because the Russians were here. I think if I told that to somebody from my village, the Russians made the Romanians francophone, I think the people would say that you are crazy, that you are Doctor in Science but you don't understand nothing. In my opinion sometimes we build an official identity, using the nationalist reasons, but if you were sincere I think it is important to understand that the diversity is the main issue of the Romanian identity. I think this diversity.” [8:24]

Q – When I asked this same question to people in the parks and in the streets, the most common answer that they gave was the language. Apparently many Romanians feel that the language is the core of being Romanian.

A – “For a lot of... The policy of identity said the language it is the most important tool to build a community, to build an identity. Of course if two people don't speak the same language, they don't live as well in one territory. Yes language it's one of the tools but if the others also speak other languages, I think it's better for us and not to limit the Romanian to the identity of the language. There is a joke in Timisoara, in the West, 100 years ago they talk about in Timisoara even the dogs bark in four languages (...). The idea is that everybody in Banat, knew a minimum of some words in the language of the others. If I meet the neighbor of my family of Banat, I would speak some words in Hungarian (...). It is necessary not to know all, but to know a minimum, just as a sign of respect to the others, contact with the others and interest for the others. If we talk only in Romanian and your native language is not important ' please speak the Romanian language', I think it's not a good position.”

Q – How do you think that the Communist period here influenced the national identity?

A – “ The communism... Of course each new country, each new state, new nation, tried to build some pillars of identity. In the thirties there was the first propaganda for the idea of a national identity. I think that communism was very aggressive, very limitative and very official point of view of identity. And it's a lot of people from my generation, older people like me, who still understand the Romania of now in the context, the framework of the identity obligations of the communist period. So, if everybody talk for example about Mihai Viteazu, who in 1601 made the first unification of the provinces of Romania, who made this unification for several very short times. [11:50] He was just an official, not recognized by anybody, because of the philosophy of the feudal state was different, and Mihai Viteazu is very important for the people of the South. He created a lot, for example he made peasants into slaves, people from the rural areas. But because for three days he made the unification, we forget that for the previous century he made people into slaves. So, you know, but during the communist period Mihai Viteazu was very important. I think this was a propaganda, the communists choose who were the good guys and the bad guys and what is the most important thing for our history, and forget a lot of very important things. Or even cover up with a fake history prepared by the communist propaganda. Yes, I think Romania still lives in this communist propaganda. Carol the first king of Romania, the German, was an amazing personage in my opinion. Okay, there are a lot of streets in Romanian cities which are called after Regele Carol I al României. But I think in general people don't know too much about him. I think this could be a very good example to build an identity, because Carol build the country. When in 1866 Carol came to Bucharest, both Bucharest and Romania as a whole a very poor country and poor city. And forty-eight years later it is a very different European country. Sometimes we are too sensitive and sometimes we are not too much, sometimes we are very rational. Sometimes it is important to be sensitive, but I also think that

sometimes it is important to be rational. Before I continue about communism, what I think what happens now for example, which is in my opinion a prolongation of the communist period, we multiply the same short list of identification personages, facts etcetera. For example, before 2007 when Romania entered the European Union, Romania was obliged to make new legislations concerning the urban and rural street names. This meant that all streets in all villages needed to have a name. Before there were vernacular names, for example in my village everybody called the streets the first, the second, the third, so it was very American like. Or in my village we would call the street in relation to the name of the owner of the first house in the corner. 2007, in three months, many villages, ten thousand villages, were obliged to give the street names. And this was very simplified and very propagandistic and official names in all the villages. Even Mihai Viteazu, Mihai Eminescu, or other writers who didn't link with something from there, every village got these street names. And not too many villages used to local actors, to local identity and identity personages. So I think that our identity sometimes is very simplified, because we forgot the local people, we forgot the local facts, and we use only the official national personages, facts, etcetera. It is necessary to have some unification of the urban toponymy. For example last year there was a new law, all the Romanian cities were obliged to have a avenue called after the date of unification. Yes, this was the date when Romania became one huge state, I agree with that. But I think for some cities without a Romanian tradition I think this could be an aggressive opinion. [17:14] It's official, but it is not specific for that area. So in my opinion sometimes it is not necessary to oblige the local identities to assume some hard decision like that, but I hope after this interview I won't lose my Romanian citizenship. (...)

Q – The next question I want to ask you is, do you think that after the fall of communism that people continued with that nationalist idea that the communists brought, or that they reached back to what was before?

A – “ This was a different situation. The end of the communists it's the end of official propaganda on what is important in our history, this is very good. But there are a lot of people who prefer the reality of propaganda proposed by the communist period, and even now there are a lot of people who say ' no, it is wrong to talk about 1989 in these terms' for example. No, 1989 is our most important point in time, 'nobody, everybody' –this is communist propaganda- 'everybody from Transylvania wants the unification'. After the fall of the communists I read a lot of books and for example the Mayor of Banat said ' We didn't want to make a unification with a poor country like Romania'. So he went to jail. (name), very important writer generally from Transylvania said ' It's not a good idea to make a unification. Maybe a federal state with Romania but it's important for Transylvania because the economic and social differences.' He went to jail as well. And actually this was in 1980. (...)

“Many people still prefer the communist propaganda about identity, but I think there are a lot of people who look for other facts of identities. In Banat for example and Transylvania, I feel the people develop the local identity, which means rediscover the former. Like the old writers, the important personages for the local history. This is not the case in the South or in the western side. So I think it's very difficult. In the Eastern side, in Moldova for example, it's very difficult to rebuild a real urban identity. Because if we are sincere, the 19th century and the first half of the twentieth century the main city of Moldova was minimum half Jewish. The most important cultural personages were Jews and if we want to give the name for example in that area like Solomon something, then I think the people will say like ' no, no, no, who is that person? He is not from our religion'. But maybe 100 years ago he was very important for the cities. It is very difficult because the people want to know the history of the place, but wants to choose just some parts of the history. Just the stuff that fits. Maybe in twenty years it's possible, but for now I don't like that. I am very happy because some important, Romanian important personage

become to be recognized by the local authorities. You know Elie Wiesel won the Nobel Peace Prize, he is a Jew who is originally from Sighetu Marmăției, Romania (Transylvania). And we have a street named Elie Wiesel there. [25:02] But in my opinion it's important to have also streets named Elie Wiesel in Bucharest, in a former Jew neighborhood. We don't have the Jews in the neighborhood anymore, but I think it's important to build an identity even with the facts from other places. Romania is still at work, Romania is still a young country. The Communists mixed a lot of ideas, a lot of people say 'I do not know what is the good and what is bad.' I understand that because it is very difficult. So, communism was very redactor, very propagandist identity and I think a lot of mistakes in the history of the identity."

Q – Well I actually did some research in Estonia last year, so I'm trying to make a comparison between the two countries and in Estonia there were two important discourses. The first one they call 'homeland', and it's sort of based on the idea that national identity, you become a part of it if you speak the language and are born within the territory. The second discourse is called 'return to Europe' and is the idea of Estonia being European, but being occupied by Russia for so long and now finally being able to return back to their European family, so to say. And during the interviews that I did hear a lot about the homeland discourse...

A – "Well because Romania was independent, so it is not the case of Estonia, but is independent, we couldn't use these facts. But, in 1990 for example when a lot of Romanians from diaspora came back to the country and give the license, so talk about what is necessary to do. It was a political discourse, and very much appreciated by the public; you are not in a better position to talk as a diaspora representative, because you left the country and you didn't stay here to suffer as the others. And in 1990, the beginning of the post-communist period, the people from outside (diaspora) don't have too much importance because the nationalistic discourse of the post-communist you know very good. It is important to understand and to involve in the policy discourse, the public or actually only the people who were in Romania during the entire communist period. But a lot of history of Romania was lost in the communist period, all the representatives of the historical families were either imprisoned or exiled during the communist period, as there was a segregation. If Romanians talk about the historical families we have just a few representatives left, the others are outside. So the idea that Romanians are the people who live here is, in my opinion is not the case for Romania."

Q – I heard that as well. Most people are more focused on the language and if you speak the Romanian language that means that you're Romanian, even if you have lived in Spain or Italy for a long time. Being born in Romania is not that important.

A – "Exactly. There are a lot of people who were born outside. You know, maybe there are not so many people born in the actual territory, but were born when some territories were Romanian. It's very difficult."

Q – And for example from the migrants that went to other countries, if they have children and these children speak Romanian, they are still viewed as being Romanians and not as Spaniards or Italians.

A – "I think for these people it is very difficult, because they are very Romanian but the child visits Romania as a foreign country. And I think that the cut between the generations is very significant. Of course the young people in this case don't speak Romanian very well, so I don't think they are considered Romanian. It's in the papers, it's in the mind of the parents, but for the children Romania is a foreign country. [30:40] I don't know how the others feel about whether the Republic of Moldova is Romanian or not. Sincerely, because many times Moldova (Bessarabia) was part of Romania. I think if we question the Romanians from Romania if the people from Bessarabia are Romanian or not, I don't know this could be the surprise. Sometimes people know the short history, and identity is also very short. Somebody gives the input; you are

Romanian, language is Romanian, common history, community etcetera. So it's very interesting."

Q – *The second discourse that I described, the return to Europe, I didn't really see that in Romania.*

A – "Because Romania was part of Europe and all the people even in the communist period, the discourse and politics was targeted at the distance with the Soviet Union being significant. Even though we are communist, we are still a European country. In my opinion the link with Europe is strong and has been for a long time. It is not very new like in Estonia. For Estonia it is an interesting new position because to be part of the Soviet Union for so long is very difficult. But for us, if we talk about Romania, we were in the same position in the sixties and beginning of the seventies. Because in 1958 the Red Army left Romania, the distance between Romanian communism and Soviet communism increased from 1963-64 and became more important. Romania began the new relation with the oxidant, or the Western part of Europe. I think the Estonian position today, is more or less the Romanian position in the end of the sixties."

Q – *Do you think that because Romania hasn't been occupied after 1958, that they have a different view on communism and on this view on return to Europe then Estonia does?*

A – "You know even the Soviets were here, the Red Army was here and the Soviet politics was here. The Romanian communism was build using the Romanian model and resources so it is not something under Moscow coordination. And even when Romania was occupied, it could conserve some administrative models, combining those with the Soviet models. But, in 1968 it became entirely the Romanian model. I think the difference with Estonia is the russification, a very hard policy for forty years in which many Estonians were displaced, moved to Azerbaijan or other Soviet countries, while a similar population of Russians were placed in Estonia. This is was not the case in Romania."

Q – *Even in 1945 to 1958 that didn't happen?*

A – "In the beginning of the communism there was a displacement of some categories of Romanians, the Germans in Banat for example and the rich people in villages in the West, but this was all only temporary; twenty years. The Russians didn't occupy the place of these moved people, I think this is crucial. For example in the beginning of the fifties when the Soviet army and politics was present in Romania, around 30.000 Russians were in Bucharest. But ten years later, only a few stayed in Romania and most went back to the Soviet Union. So it is not a similar situation compared to Estonia. There is a difference between being occupied and being more or less sovereign. The power and the main political line was set out by Moscow, but locally you could use your own resources."

Q – *Do you think that, after Romania became member of the European Union, that that had an effect on the views on national identity?*

A – [37:00] "Romania has a great European tradition. Europe is historical facts and religious facts (Christianism) and I think that Europe recently for Romania is not a political family but is a factor of regulation, a gendarme of the Romanian politics and economics. Europe today is a standard, a superior standard of evolution, culture, etcetera. I think Romania wants to upgrade her standards. Even sometimes the propaganda and policies talk about nationalism and being proud to be Romanian. Look at the slogans of the socialist party during the last elections, it was 'proud to be Romanian'. If you talk with Romanians they are never proud of themselves, they look up to the Germans and French, even to the pride of Hungarians. If you make this comparison and always conclude that the other is better, this means you are in an inferior position in my opinion. So, Romania is not very proud, but there is still time to develop and to upgrade and Europe was a solution for this. (...) If we are all together we are strong, but if we lose a part of the population we are weaker. In Banat during the Communist period the German population was punished, they were segregated and had a bad position in society. Romanians had the

better position. Sometimes however when Romania looks at how the Germans work and build things, they can learn from this. During communism however most Germans went back to Germany and this knowledge was lost. Now, the German villages are now only Romanian or gypsy villages. And the people say 'our village is not the same because the Germans are not here.' Why I told this story, we have the Hungarians now and people do not understand why the Hungarians remain to speak their own language. They seem to isolate themselves from Romanian society in this way. (...) I think we are not very proud of our nationality, we there is still room for improvement, but we also stay critical of others."

Q – I heard a lot of things from people the same way, like that now that Romania is member of the European Union, the Romanians can adopt more civilized norms and values for example.

A – "Two more examples. Because we are very focused on who are our friends and our models. Do you know who was the neighbor of Romania who commits more crimes than Romanians? Not Hungary, while if you would ask Romanians they would all point in that direction. Not the Germans, but the Bulgarians and Serbs. In the 1990s there was a terrible massacre in Bulgaria and if you ask Romanians nowadays, nobody knows about it anymore. Some might even say these are wrong facts. But if you would ask the same question about Hungary, they would all answer yes, yes, yes! [43:00] So it was the propaganda to erase some criminal facts and to give more importance to other facts. Europe is a very nice place to exercise our identity. And I don't know, we didn't lose this identity, we are twenty million people so that would be very difficult. I think to change the standards, to change the opinion, to facilitate the contact with others would be a very positive line for Romania."

Q – What I also heard a lot is that people don't feel equal compared to the other members of the European Union. That they feel like a secondhand citizen.

A – "Something of the conscience. If you are proud of yourself, you feel equal, but if you do not feel proud of yourself you will always feel less than others. Myself, I now have twenty years of experience in academic work, but twenty years ago I felt inferior in comparison to others in terms of knowledge and also compared to colleagues from other countries like France. But now I am confident of me and I'm able. The problem was not in France, the problem was in me. I think this is the same thing. It's very easy to say that the history was hard etcetera. Sometimes the poor people have the inclination to see only problems and do not find things to be proud of. It is important to build a national identity based on a confidence in herself and not in comparison with the others."

Q – Also a lot of people said that they were proud of other Romanians that were successful in other countries, not so much the successful Romanians in Romania but when someone gets famous abroad. That makes them more proud in some way.

A – "I like the idea of being proud of somebody who has successes outside. I'm also proud of those people. (...) I think it is important to increase, to use the example of the success of the people, but to understand that one example is not enough. And if somebody has success outside, do not see that as a reason that you could not do something similar. I don't want to work. It's good to have an example though."

Q – I actually only have one more question. So, how do you view the future of the Romanian national identity, especially within the European Union?

A – "You know, I don't feel the European Union as a new identity who cuts the local or national identities. I think the EU is a framework, but a European identity is only one line. Yes, I feel European, I agree understand the history of this continent. But I think more and more, the local identities could be developed. Because if the people from my village still think in terms of Mihai Eminescu, they forget the local personages and facts who help develop this local community, this would create a gap between the national identity and Europe. And in my opinion, I hope

step by step the local identity could become reinforced, but within the main line of Europe and principle. Romanian will be Romanian even in 200 years, maybe more European in terms of ethnicity for example or religion. But I think it is important to learn the diversity, because when Romania becomes too Romanian, the people become very nationalistic and forget about diversity. I don't know if Romanians would accept a Muslim mayor, like in Rotterdam. It's amazing, it means a recognition of the changes of the population structure and agreement of the idea that even though we're different, we live in the same place. But, two years ago, if somebody would ask if a president from one of the minorities would be possible in Romania, I think 99% said that it was necessary for the president to be a Romanian. But now, we have a German president."

Q – But I think in the Netherlands we have a different perspective on that anyway, because we have a lot of Turkish and Moroccan people, and since a few years also a lot of Polish people. Once they come to the Netherlands and learn at least the basics of Dutch and work in the Netherlands, then we view them as being Dutch. And then, Dutch with a Moroccan background, or Dutch with a Turkish background, but they are in fact Dutch. So, the fact that we have Parliamentarians and Mayors that are migrants, that's because we no longer view them as being a different nationality.

A – "Yes but you have a tradition of immigration of over 300 years, and Romania is not a country of immigration, just of emigration. The small communities of Chinese and Arabic Turks, recent migration of the last twenty years, is still not very integrated. So there is still work necessary. We are a beginner in this field, but I think this is the future, because Romania is losing the population. In the actual statistics predicted in 2055 the Romanian population will only be 16 million. So, we lose again 3 million in the population. And many of the people left will be old people. It will be necessary to work long to maintain the country and I think Romania in twenty years will be a country of emigration. Not only from Moldova, but it will also be the Russians, the Turkish, the Syrian and Afghan, so Romanian identity needs to be prepared to adapt to new diversity. For the moment we talk about diversity looking at our past, but it's necessary that diversity is also understood in the future. Romanians are leaving for the West of Europe, but I don't know many Western Europeans want to come to Romania. Some French might visit the country and like it, but will return back to France."

Q – Because a lot of people said that the free circulation of people in the EU is a positive thing, but I think they only view it from the perspective that they as Romanians are able to travel outside, and don't consider think about the fact that others can also come back.

A – "Not all the people. We are very proud because of the Prince Charles, he is a very nice ambassador for us. Because Prince Charles buys a lot of houses in a Transylvanian village and developed the idea for other British to do the same. But if the Turkish would buy a house in a traditional village, I don't think this would be viewed the same. (...) Our position is still linked with the past."

Ap 2.4 Interview Dr. Enache

A – "Laura, Mihai did not tell me a lot about you and your interests, so I'm listening.

Q – Well I've been working at the Embassy here as an intern for six months now, and I've also been doing my master thesis research here. Which is about the national identity of both Romania and Estonia. I went to Estonia before this, and I'm actually trying to see how national identity changed after the fall of communism and if there are similar patterns in Romania and Estonia. So that's basically what I've been busy working on. So, I'm here to ask you some questions about the different programmes that the Ministry of Culture has, what are the priorities, and that kind of questions.

A – “Well, I hope.. I’ll.. First of all, my English is quite poor, in order to understand the exact meaning of what you are thinking. Why am I here to speak with you? Because I’m an old man, I’m almost sixty, and I lived a lot of time of the communist period, I was thirty-three when Ceausescu fell. And I had quite the peculiar career, because basically I am a chemical engineer and I worked in chemistry and industry for about ten years. Then in scientific research in chemistry for another ten years, and then I’ve switched my career. I started again at the Faculty of Communication and Public Relations, and I was involved in politics. First of all I was communication counselor of the former president of Romania, Emil Constantinescu between 1997 and 1999. And then I walked in the political communication agency for about 10 years. During this, I became a teacher at the Faculty of Communication and Public Relations, and then two years ago finally I’ve finished my PhD thesis which was about a possible national identity of the Roma people [5:16]. I’ve read some literature about national identity, Mihai told me about you and I said to them, well maybe I could help her. But it is not my personal experience that matters as my relationships which maybe could help you more than myself. So I’ve told you shortly about me, and now I... Excuse me I have to remember the words.

Q - *That’s okay.*

A – “Well okay, then ask me.”

Q – *Well my first question is, how would you personally describe the Romanian national identity?*

A – “Well, the first point is to define the national identity in abstracto. Because my personal theory is that national identity, not as ethnic identity, national identity I say it is not a natural identity. It is a constructed one, more than that. You maybe know that there are two great theories that essentially is constructivist and the other is identities. But when speaking on national identity, we must have institutions, people as a collection of individuals can’t afford a national identity to any community ever. The identity of that community can evolve until the ethnic identity but not more. The institutions are essential and then after some... Once the institutions are established it is necessary to finance the national identity. The national identity is a kind of human activity that needs a permanent financial effort. [9:31] I underline the word financial because it is first of all about money, not only money, but first of all money. That means again that national identity is a thing (...) being related to the nation. It is a modern construct. You can’t speak about national identity before the nineteenth century. So, after drawing a sketch of this definition of national identity, this is my theory. You may not agree with this definition, but after all that I said, let’s go back to the case of the Romanian national identity.

There is some discussion centered on the occident, the occident is the space where modernity appears and where the public’s fear and industrial revolution and all kinds of phenomena began. And all these phenomena pushed the political constructs that were in the late 18th century; kingdoms and so on, to forge some identity that is more effective than a local identity and local loyalties. You see, people had to be loyal to a concept, a principle, a value, which was to be larger than any other civil value. So, England, France, the Netherlands, at the first time became nations. After that, this construct was effective in terms of economy and government foreign relations, this concept went out of this first circle. Other people became at times new nations. Germany, Denmark, Spain and Russia and this is a moment at the half of the nineteenth century (about 1898) this idea exploded. So, many peoples were vernacular people and went at that moment sovereign and independent, had intellectuals who (...) began to struggle for emancipation of their people. First of all there were people who had an interesting history in the middle ages, let’s say Poland and Hungary. [17:09] (...)

[21:20] But these countries were occupied by their powerful neighbor, for example in the case of Estonia, first of all Sweden, Russia, and in the case of Estonian principalities the Ottoman

Empire and Austria. So, half of the nineteenth century these countries had first of all to build a national mythology. All they had was folklore; the stories, the legends the powerful poetry which was reserved during the centuries from mouth to mouth, and from parents to children. The building of this mythology was a peculiar enterprise because it was first of all done by intellectuals, many poets and writers, it was a very romantic period, you'll see. And, beside the intellectuals there were state institutions who acted in this directions; the army, the administration, the school, the church. All these countries had in that period quite a national church, even if Estonia which is protestant and the Protestantism is very different from orthodoxy, all these institutions converted into building this mythology, and this mythology became until the half of the twentieth century the main body of the national identity. [27:10] Because I told you about the first level of nations in Europe, one can think that even these old nations in the continent have had a similar process further in history. Like one Count was killed by the Spanish troops in some war, from which the Netherlands got their independence. At that moment, the people were constructing this mythology, but it was more natural. The means by which that mythology was build, were more soft, more natural than the means of the institutions in the last half of the nineteenth century when this process was in the Eastern part of the continent. Am I boring you?"

Q – (Laughs) No not at all! But I'm just wondering how or where does Romania fit in to this whole story according to you?

A: [29:40] "Well, shortly: Romanians are curious people. The very first, there is a lot of evidence of the Romanians inhabiting these lands from the late Roman empire. I don't know if you know. We are Latin people, are language is Latin, and some of our habits are also Latin. We feel at home in Italy and Spain. So this part of the continent was occupied by the Roman empire only about 170 years, between 106 and 271 AD. It was a very short period, too short to arrange a complete Romanization of the population here. But that's the evidence. There were a lot of theories which said that the removal of Roman troops from Dacia, that was the name of the province in 271, led to a severe depopulation of the zone. And many centuries after, this area was repopulated by people coming from the South. There is no evidence for these theories, but from about the third century to the eighth or ninth century there is many evidence of funerals, graves, some villages. The people here was poor and hadn't had solid material civilization. Their houses were wooden and their occupations were agriculture and something like that. There were no towns, only villages, and so there is a poor evidence of real life and real ethnic life here. The peoples around here were more lucky because Bulgaria first in the seventeenth century, then Hungary and then Serbia and also in the nice century Kievan Rus ('Kievskia Rus'), the first political state of the Russians. They had quite history between the 7th century and the thirteenth century [37:44]. (...) [44:40] The consequences was that first of all, the language was very well preserved without other influences in the vocabulary. As was, speaking about Estonia when they were under the Swedish or Russian occupation. Then there was an agreement between the Princes of the two principalities with the Ottoman Empire, that no mosque was to be built in these principalities. Treaties from 1538, they were correct towards us as there came no mosque here. Religion and language weren't pressed or forbidden, that's a very different case compared to Estonia. On the other hand, this principalities were in a corner of Europe, there was no important events for centuries. [47:00] Life was poor, miserable but nothing happens dramatically. Netherlands, you know that, have suffered much many wars and disasters between the fifteenth century until the seventeenth century. But the Dutch were builders of ships and were merchants and were very active people. Romanians were agricultural." "When speaking about national mythology, as I said, mythology the building of a national mythology is the main point in constructing a nation. Romanians had a very late start in this

process. There is also an advantage in this late start, because the core of ideas and concepts was very genuine. Excuse if I'm not correct, but in Netherlands there were many forces which were crossing there. There were merchants coming along the Rhine from Italy, there were merchants coming from the Baltic Sea, and coming from England [50:00]. There were Spaniards coming from Spain of course, so Dutch national mythology is an amalgam of influences. Well, influences are everywhere, but the process was very intense in the Netherlands and from a very early period you see. Let's go back to Romania. So, at the middle of the nineteenth century the Romanian principalities were weak populated, the population had a low culture and folklore. There were only two or three cities in the whole country and the rest were villages. There were no schools, there were no institutions. Of course some of the young aristocrats studied in the Occident, in Paris mainly, or in Vienna. And they came back with the Romantic and very positive ideas. But the main point is that founding Romania is a result of the interests of the occidental powers. In that period, the Ottoman Empire was declining and the Russian Empire was getting more powerful. This situation was worrying to especially England and France. The interests were economic, because here in Romania there was a lot of land, fertile land, and many cattle. It was a period between 1830 and 1870 when the central Europe was very interested in importing cattle. The price of cattle was high and the Ottoman Empire forbid the Romanian principalities to export anything outside. The economic relations of the principalities were only with the Ottoman Empire. In this landscape you may see the Danube, in that period Austria especially was interested in securing the navigation on the Danube in order to have a main commercial corridor from the Black Sea to the center of the continent. So, the first point was that Russia attacked Turkey and Turkey had at that time an arrangement with England and France and so began the War of Crimea. Very interesting... [55:00] (...)"

"After the Ottoman Empire collapsed, the two principalities joined together and so Romania was founded a state. I've told you all this in order to understand that the formation of the nation in Romania was from top to bottom. People were not involved in this process. There were not opposite, but they don't care. So, after this founding of the state, and the founding of those institutions that I said like the national army, is a very important thing for the national identity in Romania. Then the Church, one of the first important events after the Union of Wallachia and Moldavia was the proclamation of the autocephaly of the Orthodox Romanian Church. That means it became independent from the patriarchy in Constantinople. Then the school, these were the main institutions that forged the elements of the national identity in Romania and the elements that contributed alongside with the intellectuals to build that national mythology. It was in large the same process which took place in Serbia, Bulgaria or even Hungary, if I say that Hungary is another level of national consciousness. Or in Estonia, Lithuania, Ukraine, and so on. But, Romania had another good luck after the first World War, because two of the Empires of that period, the Austrian and Russian Empires, collapsed after the First World War. And so Romania in 1918 became twice as it was before the war. It was a great Union year when Transylvania and Bessarabia were incorporated. [1:00:00] This moment corresponded with many important moments seen compared to the global situation. Because between the World Wars, Romania was not only quite big but was also quite wealthy. Why I say this? A state, a nation, is important in the global balance of power when it has main resource for export. That main resource may be as in Netherlands high technology, Phillips let's say, or maybe like in England a financial city and banks and so on. (...)"

"In that period, Romania was the main exporter of oil in Europe. (...) The only oil available at low prices and with good quality was here in Romania [1:02:30]. So, Romania attracted much capital from Europe and America, developed its industry and developed its towns, its universities, its intellectuals. It was from this point of view from where Romania could take off. (...) We can't

idealize that period, there were enough problems and wrong things here, still it was a good time. Unfortunately the Second World War came and Romania had committed two mistakes. First of all Romania renounced the Anglo-French guarantees against Germany and dropping those guarantees aligned Germany in the war against Russia. The second mistake was that during the war against Russia, Romania had not a vision to what will come. At the end of the war, it had to give up to the Russians. Russians came and put here a communist government. Being one of the few European nations which were considered at the final of the war 'defeated nations'; Germany, Italy, Hungary and Romania in Europe. Italy had a very special status, because in Italy the Mussolini government was thrown out in 1940, quite early, and so Italy went alongside the United Nations in the war against Germany. And Romania became a guilty nation. So Russians came here and changed everything, quite as in the revolution in 1917 in Moscow and St Petersburg. All the intellectuals, all the elites were thrown into jail and many of them died there. All that national mythology which was until then constructed was demolished by the communist counter mythology. The communists, well I lived that on my own, I was young pupil in school in 1962, it was very harsh sentiment of Russian occupation here even if it was not as harsh as in Estonia. So, a counter mythology was build. The government then, between 1948 and 1964/65 said that Romanians and Russians are brother people and so they have many common features and so on. After Ceausescu came to power, there was a thing that happened in 1958, Nikita Khrushchev was the Head of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union, came to visit here. It is quite a folktale, but I think it's about 90% truth. [1:10:00] He came here, fellow Romanian 'comrades' gave him a very good party and gave him drinks and he drinks and he drinks and drinks. And the last one of the Romanian communists leaders said to him "Comrade Khrushchev, you see how fine drinks in Romania are made!" [laughs]"

"Romania had no frontier with the Western states. We had frontier with Soviet Union, with Hungary, Bulgaria and with former Yugoslavia which were all communist countries. Why maintaining here soviet troops, because we have no threat here. So Russia signed the retreat of Soviet troops in Romania. You see that when you have no foreign troops in the country it is quite interesting to have an independence. So Ceausescu developed a policy of independence. Independence and this had also a climax in 1968 when the Soviet Union with the other communist countries invaded Czechoslovakia. You maybe know that the government in Prague began there some reforms which were not well seen by the Soviets and so Brezhnev ordered to invade the Czechoslovakia, maybe the first single communist country which hadn't anticipated that. Ceausescu criticized severely that invasion. That position gave to Ceausescu a huge reward from the United States and the Occident. There were about ten years, from 1968 to 1977, when Ceausescu was very appreciated for this independent policy towards the Soviet Union. This gave Ceausescu a strange position, it wasn't occidental but it wasn't even Soviet. So he wasn't a very well educated man, he had about the first four classes and that's all. But he had the natural cleverness, he had an instinct of policy, but because he wasn't educated he became a dictator. [1:15:20] He wasn't able to explain but he used an order. On the other hand he didn't understand in 1987/1988/1989 wat was happening around Romania and that's why he was thrown down by the Revolution. Returning to Ceausescu, he began to rebuild a national mythology. In those years, from 1965 to 1985, about twenty years of a new age of national mythology which was something anti-order. It was a mythology conceived under his ideas, Ceausescu's ideas, and his ideas were those of a young pupil from the twenties who learned only four classes. So, that's why after the Revolution, many Western intellectuals who came in Romania named this reality 'national communism', because it was a very strange hybrid of some elements of national mythology of the nineteenth century and some features of the

communism that Ceausescu learned in Moscow immediately after WWII. Now, I stop now and I expect new questions.”

Q: Yeah okay! Well to go on about the communist time, because I’m actually interested in what were the priorities in the field of culture for the Ministry of Culture during the communist time. And how is that now?

A: “Uh, well it’s a difficult question. It’s hard to answer [1:19:00]. As a matter of let’s say definitions; during the communist time there were wasn’t a Ministry of Culture. It was a so-called ‘Council of Culture and Socialist Education’, it was at the rank of the ministry but it hadn’t the title of ministry. That meant that it was a little under the serious ministries. It is interesting to say that during the communism the percent of the gross domestic product let’s say given to the culture was consistently bigger than now. It was about 2% and now it is only 0.06%.”

Q: Wow, that’s a significant difference.

A: “Yes and that’s a pity, because now culture would be a factor of development and it can’t be because there is no money. In the communist period the main spend sum was to written culture, that means there was a fabulous editing and publishing activity. In that period every home in Romania had a little library about the tenth of volumes, it was even in the worker’s homes and even the people who aren’t usually reading. Because during the communists we didn’t know what to do. It was good literature, there were classics all around the world which were translated and were also modern authors translated. It was of course a sort of censorship, the right winged authors weren’t translated or were translated only in the less representative works. But generally it was a country where an intellectual could read many authors and works. And also it was a period when many Romanian authors were published. Well, looking at that period there are few of the Romanian authors that are resisting as an astatic, or literary or political value.”

“But enough, what I want to emphasize is that the communist party fueled a consistent segment of the population in this domain of culture and arts. That’s why the main opposition at least the communist regime, was from the cultural domain, from the poets writers, philosophers and so on. We hadn’t had in Romania Unions like in Poland to strike down or to have a harsh struggle against the regime. It’s not the national weakness, it’s another explanation. Because you see Romania was between the Communist countries along with Bulgaria, the most underdeveloped countries in the Eastern Europe. Eastern Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Estonia or Latvia, were countries where industry was quite well-developed in 1948 let’s say, when the WWII ended and peace treaty was signed. And almost all the population in these countries was educated, was living in cities, had a high standard of life. In Romania and Bulgaria about the 80% or even more were village-inhabitants. Analphabetism was reaching about 80% in Bulgaria and 70% in Romania, it was likely better here but not significantly. And the standard of life was as in Western Europe at the end of the eighteenth century. No water, no electricity, no toilets, no nothing, you know. These countries, and also Ukraine and I think also in Lithuania, communism was a real improvement of life for large part of the population. You see, now it’s very trendy here in Romania to be anti-communist and of the right wing opinion, but I think it’s a mistake because critic inside of the period must see the good and the evil. [1:30:30] And the evil was many people were brought by the communist from the villages to the town, there were factories and plants build, and people were put to work for an 8 hour day for a good salary. And after a day get home in the new blocks of flats where they had the water and electricity and there were millions and millions of people who met this step from the village where they had nothing to the town where they had everything in their vision of course. After the work they didn’t have to work again. They went to the cinema, to restaurants, to football matches and quite a good period between 1960 to 1980, life was quite fair here in Romania for these masses,

not for the intellectuals. (...) To many people, communism had brought them good things, an improvement of life.”

“Only in the last eighties of the twentieth century, communism couldn’t give them more, and then looking also.. We need also a global vision, television had played a tremendous role in the Romanian Revolution. Not only during the Revolution but also in the years before. [1:34:30] Because Ceausescu was very firmly decided to pay all the debts of the country. He was kind of in fact, no discussion, he himself he loaned credits from occidental banks in the late sixties, but the great oil shock in 1974 had turmoil all the Romania industry because there were some plants and factories built on predicted oil price only. Because the oil price got some ten times bigger, oil the Romanian industry began to work in debt. So, that accumulated and suddenly in about 1977 Ceausescu decided to not to have any other credit from the occident and to pay of all his debts. The period from 1978/79 until the Revolution, that was the harshest and the blackest period of the people in Romania. Because it was a crisis, actually the salaries were kept at the same level but we hadn’t anything to buy with the money because all the shops, all the stores were empty. Even for the very banal things like bread, eggs, milk. People managed to survive, because many have relatives in the villages and the people had to the cows or chickens or something. But that was the very hard period.”

“In that period people began to revolt against communism, even in these terms and the Revolution, the majority of the people thought that, and I can swear that, it is not written in the official history, the people then didn’t want to give up communism. They wanted just Ceausescu out, because of course they hadn’t imagined what means communism. Living in communism so many years, you can’t know what is not communism, but that was the point. In these late years Ceausescu cut down the spending on culture, stopped spending on TV. The TV programs in Romania in let’s say in 1975 were quite normal program for those times in many parts of Europe, there were, of course it was only the state television not the private television [1:40:30]. But, there were two programs on the state television, it were both during about twenty hours a day. From 6 am to let’s see 2 am the next day. The program was quite diverse, news, entertainment, movies and as in the rest of Europe, people in the seventies in that period are watching the TV as the main activity after work. It’s quite difficult to understand why, Ceausescu began to cut the program, cut the content..”

Q: Can I ask something? Were these all Romanian shows? Or were these also Russian, for example?

A: “No, no, no, no... It were occidental movies, and documentaries and also shows. It was a time when the Romanian television used to retransmit direct football matches, Eurovision, San Remo Festival. It was in that period it was the most occidental television in the Eastern part of Europe. [1:43:10] So, he began to cut. And he cut first the contents, because you know when you sign a contract with FIFA or whatever to retransmit football match you have to pay. And being preoccupied to pay his debts, Ceausescu said, what are the expenses? Well, cut it.. And the he began to cut the program in length. So at the end of that period, 1989, the second program of the national television was cut off entirely. The first program had only during the week days, only two or three hours of emission. The program started at 7 in the evening, it was a huge news program about what did Ceausescu on that day. (...) And then folk program, and at 9 it was over. Only on Saturdays and Sundays the program was from let’s say 4 in the afternoon into 11 at night. And also it was full of Ceausescu, it was a joke then, man and his wife were at home and turn on the television, saw Ceausescu. Turned it off, turned on the radio, Ceausescu. Ironing the shirt, turn it off and see Ceausescu on the iron. (laughs). You see, we were full of Ceausescu, he was everywhere. Well, that’s about communism and culture. Well very important domain of culture in Ceausescu’s period was theatre. Because theatre can’t be easily controlled, there were many theatres in Bucharest, there were about 8 theatres, of course state owned, no

private theatres. But the repertoire was very good, there were foreign and occidental authors and there were great directors. Many of them escaped in the occident from time to time. Theatres were full of people, actors had a larger liberty and they modified the text from one presentation to another. So it was very exciting to go to the same play and see it twice or thrice. It was something new every time. Also, it was an important deal with visual arts, there were some and there still are in life and working great painters. Because visual arts weren't so strained by the official censorship or propaganda [1:49:30] and just an example... (Shows a painting). (...) Also it's in music, it's not about the pop music because here it was a warning for Ceausescu. We've had a very popular band in the seventies 'Phoenix', which had a tremendous success among the youth. And they sang not quite the pop style but not far from. And in that period the Beatles or Rolling Stones were also available in Romania. Young people were very excited about that. But the members of that band, Phoenix, fled in the occident and after they fled the censorship on that domain of music were very harsh. But, when the high level music, the classical modernist music, which had no audience or not a great audience, some tens of auditors, but the Romanian composers won very appreciated prices abroad. Many of them are even today recognized composers of that kind of music, nobody here listens to it, but it was as I said a niche to escape from the..."

Q: Can I just ask you a couple more questions? Because we are running out of time... Is that okay with you? You know so much. It's difficult to filter out the thing, but, what I wanted to ask you. How did the, or how are the priorities of the ministry now? [1:54:00]

A: "Oh, well when you had this percent of the GDP you can't have a real priority. The real problem is the block, the wholes, not the thing. Well, it was a mistake for the Romanian negotiators, when Romania became member of the European Union. Because you see, you know, there is a lot of money, structural funds, who are offered to the new members to adjust their economy and culture to the European standard. During the negotiations, nobody thought that culture really is and deserves an operational program dedicated to it. So delegations negotiated a program on transport, on rural development, on agriculture, on human resources and so on but not on culture. So, that would be good source of money for culture but unfortunately nobody thought of it. Now, there are some programs with the funds that are offered by Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein. You know in order to access the European market these countries which are not member of the European Union have to pay something. But these programs are let's see, not quite well calibrated to the real necessities of Romanian culture. There are calls for projects on some up-to-date themes, promotion of diversity in Europe and so on, of course it very fine diversity and minorities and so on... But here in Romania we have no majority. We aren't aware of our national identity. If you ask an average Romanian, what are your national identity features, I doubt you will have a good answer."

Q: I actually did, that was part of my research as well. (...)

A: "I'm glad Laura. I'm glad. What do you want to do after your thesis is done? (...) Do you have another question?"

Q: Uh, let's see. How do you view the Romanian culture developing in the next years? If there would be available funds. [2:07:00]

A: "Culture is cleverer than individuals. The next period of 5 to 10 years, it will be a period which will put the question of not the national identity but even the ethnic identity for Romanians. Because you see after the fall of the communism all the Romanians gave up their traditional way of life. It was so exciting, out of the borders, people went and traveled and the main topics of the Romania average families was where they go on holidays, this year in Croatia, or Germany or another country. [2:09:02] What are you cooking for the weekend, we are doing sushi or something else. It was, there were a couple of decades which were dominated by the curiosity

of knowing what's around Romania. I think that it is necessary to have a period where the people here ask, well what are we, Romanians? Many of the people answered this question formally, a few clichés of the former education. Well, Romanian means to have sarmalle and the finish the (...) and Georghiu Enescu and something like that. If you ask them more, no one knows, and no one listened to Enescu and very few know what are really the origins of sarmalle. So, after a long period we have to rebuild, to start rebuilding the national identity, after the mid-nineteenth century, after the communist identity, after destroying the communist identity. You see. Excuse me for my English."

Q: Thank you for all the answers. I'm a lot wiser now again, so thank you. Is there anything else you would like to add?

A: "Well, I have a lot of things to tell you, but I think it's better if you have any other question to write my email address." (...)