# Constructing Cultural Identities: Romanian Popular Music

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# ABSTRACT

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During the communist era in Romania, cultural activity was crippled by censorship. Any work of art, and especially literature and music (more accessible to the public) were examined and the officials decided what could be made available to the public. The fall of the communists brought cultural freedom and competition and it meant Romania's entrance in the context of globalization. This work examines the way in which the globalization of culture changes not only the relationships between different cultures and spaces but also between the nation state and cultural identities that are constructed and manifested on its territory. Also, it will be argued that globalization provides new grounds and custodians for the construction of cultural identities. One of these custodians is popular music, which is investigated here. The impact of globalization on local cultures, cultural identities and new strategies and processes of cultural identity construction will be analyzed through the case of four important trends in Romanian popular music.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# Introduction

Romania was a communist country for forty-two years. During this period the production of culture was censored, relationships with Western cultures were almost inexistent, and Romanian culture was altered unnaturally to fit with the communist regime and Ceausescu's cult of personality. Citizens lived in a sealed environment in which freedom of speech was non–existent. The fall of communism in December 1989 brought not only freedom and the opening of physical borders but also the opening of the Romanian culture to outside influences and cultural products, as well as Romania's entrance into the context of globalization. The revolution brought many changes rapidly but that does not mean that Romania also rapidly became a democratic state. The post–revolution period is one of transition from communism to democracy and this period of transition takes place in the context of globalization.

My main argument is that the globalization of culture changes not only the relationships between different cultures and spaces but also between the nation-state and the cultural identities that are constructed and manifested on its territory. Also, it will be argued that globalization provides new grounds for the construction of cultural identities. The impact of globalization on local cultures, cultural identities and the new strategies and processes of cultural identity construction will be analyzed through the case of four important trends in Romanian popular music.

Globalization is a complex blend of processes that are in a continuous interaction, constantly reconfiguring relations between place and space, culture and territory and

boundary and territory. It also brings flows of cultural products, people, technologies, currencies, images and values rendering borders permeable and cultures vulnerable to outside influences. It connects people previously separated in time and space, creating new cultures and allegiances. In other words, globalization has a deep effect on all levels of human interaction. While globalization has different dimensions, the focus of this thesis is on the cultural dimension.

Discussions on the globalization of culture mostly revolve around two extreme poles: homogeneity and heterogeneity. The homogeneity thesis assumes that globalization leads to a unique culture around the globe, that erases differences and dilutes the specificity of local cultures into a global and all encompassing culture. The heterogeneity thesis assumes that, although globalization involves homogenization processes and strategies, these are re-appropriated, reconstructed and indigenized, giving birth, not to a homogeneous culture, but on the contrary, to greater heterogeneity. This thesis will not focus on the two extreme poles, but on those theories that bring them together, providing a broader image of globalization of culture. It will be argued that globalization is not a unidirectional recent process which has only the effect of homogenizing or heterogenizing all cultures but is a complex condition that involves many different processes. Globalization is seen in this work as a terrain of interactions, struggles and negotiations between cultures, as a space of transmission of information and communication that has a deep impact on national and cultural identities.

Romania is a good example to use in analyzing the interplay of different processes brought forth by globalization for at least two reasons. First, Romania was a communist country for forty two years. As it will be explained in the third chapter, for

Romania, being under a totalitarian regime meant a disconnection from the western world and, also, a disconnection from its own past, traditions and beliefs which meant the reconstruction of cultural identities around new symbols and values that were imposed over the old ones in an unnatural way. Due to the fact that before the revolution Romania had limited (almost non-existent) relations with the western world, the Romanian culture had no influences from abroad. Thus, the impact of globalization on culture and cultural identities is easily observed. Second, while western countries (cultures) had time to adjust, negotiate and adapt to and into the context of globalization, Romania entered this context very abruptly and suddenly, without proper "tools" to deal with it. Thus, the impact of globalization is felt strongly.

The globalization of culture brings different processes that have a deep impact on the production of culture, cultural identities and their construction. Some of these processes have the tendency to standardize cultures, to reinforce the local cultures, to compress time and space. These processes cause a permanent negotiation, redefinition, reaffirmation, and reconstruction of cultures and cultural identities. The grounds for identification processes and different paths of identification are no longer provided, or constructed only by the nation state, since other sources emerge, and processes like regionalization and continentalisation provide different strategies and paths of identification. Popular music is understood here as expressing the negotiations (struggles) that take place in this context and the outcomes of these negotiations. Different styles of music will be analyzed as different types of negotiations and reconstructions of identities. In other words, they will be treated as active participants in the construction of cultural

identity as well as expressions of the struggles that exist in Romanian culture and in the construction of cultural identity.

This work is structured in four chapters. The first chapter will be an overview of a number of important theories of the globalization of culture. It will be structured in three sections. The first section will present the nature of globalization as a general process. The theories of Anthony Giddens and Roland Robertson will be used to explain what globalization is, what its dimensions are and how it will be understood in general terms in this thesis. The second will be an overview of the debates around the globalization of culture. These debates are mapped by Mike Featherstone around a few key terms such as homogenization, heterogenization, flows, compression of time and space. The focus will be on theories that combine these concepts, depicting a complex image of globalization of culture. The third section will cover the differences between these theories and their common grounds together with an explanation of how globalization of culture will be seen in this thesis.

The second chapter develops a critical understanding of theories on identity, outlining the connection between cultural identity and globalization of culture. It will be structured in three sections: general theories of identity, cultural identity and the link between cultural identity and the globalization of culture with reference to Romania. The general theories on identity will be discussed in the beginning of the chapter to give a sense of the complexities the concept "identity" poses as well as to explore its different dimensions. These theories, along with those on cultural identity specifically, will be used to explore the connections between cultural and national identity. The third section

of the chapter will provide an analysis of the impact of globalization on cultural identities with a specific discussion on Romania.

The third chapter is a historical overview of Romania from 1947 to the present. Although the economic and political transformations will be used to contextualize the problematic of the thesis, the focus will be on the transformations of culture. These transformations will be discussed in the context of globalization. This chapter will include three sections, one dealing with the communist era, one analyzing the revolution (with the changes it brought) and one discussing the current situation. The communist era is reviewed because it is part of the modern history of Romania, and without understanding that period and what it meant for the Romanian people and its cultural identity, the present context can not be understood either. The revolution is analyzed because it represents the moment of an important change in Romanian history and Romania's entry as an active player in the western globalized world.

In chapter four, popular music is analyzed in order to explain the transformations and construction of cultural identity and negotiations between local cultures and the globalization of culture. This chapter will be structured in three sections. The first section will outline the link between cultural identity and music and the second section will consist of the analysis of a four important trends of music present on the music scene of Romania. The third section will be an analysis of these styles as possible paths of identification, as representing and participating in the construction of cultural identities. Also, these styles will be analyzed as different strategies of negotiation, as reflections of the struggles that exist in a culture and in the construction of cultural identities in the context of globalization.

# Chapter 1: Globalization of Culture

"Each and every day, the Earth is becoming smaller and smaller. There is almost no frozen corner or small coral island lost in the ocean left unoccupied by man. The times when (as in Antiquity and Middle Ages) the states afforded to allow as borders between them large unoccupied areas are gone. These areas were such large portions of unoccupied land that they are called by some *"vacuums of humanity"*. Slowly these *"vacuums of humanity"*, the old borders, became thinner and thinner and today they are simple ideal lines, crossing sometimes through the middle of a city, or even of a building" (Conea, 1995 p 81).

This quote is from the theory of "shrinking borders" which was elaborated more than half a century ago. Though, it seems to keep its relevance in the current context of globalization. In today's context, borders seem to be lines that can be crossed so easily by so many means, physically and mentally. Frontiers do not mark only geographical space but also a nation's space, a culture's space, a tradition's space. If globalization really breaks frontiers, or at the very least, makes them permeable, it is interesting to see what happens with the spaces between them, more specifically with the cultures inside these spaces, and with the people that inhabit these spaces. The general intent of this chapter is to understand the dynamic relationship between these spaces and the cultural facet of globalization in the broader context of technological, political and economic shifts.

This chapter provides a mapping of a number of central theoretical approaches on globalization of culture. The first section will present the nature of globalization as a general process and the second will be an overview of the debates around globalization of culture. These debates are organized around a few key terms like homogenization, heterogenization, flows and the compression of time and space. The focus will be on theories that combine these concepts, depicting a complex image of globalization of

culture. The third section will cover both differences and common points of these theories while also providing an explanation of how the concept of globalization of culture is constructed in this work.

## The Nature of Globalization

There has been an ongoing debate in the social sciences about globalization of culture for a few decades. On the one hand, these debates refer to the origins of globalization and its nature (Giddens, Robertson), while on the other, they refer to its implications: homogenization (Mattelart, Ritzer), heterogenization (Appadurai, Morley & Robins), segmentation (Levitt), resistance (Featherstone), and so on[1].

One theory that refers to the origins and the nature of globalization is formulated by Anthony Giddens. In his view globalization, as we experience it today, started in the late 1960s, under the influence of new communication technologies. According to him, globalization is economic, political, technological and cultural, influencing (for better or for worse) every level of human life, with the help of the development of electronic communication technologies. Even if in the nineteenth century there was already a global open market, the level of world trade is a lot higher today than it has ever been. Through new communication technologies, currencies are moved around the globe with an incredible speed, different values (like gender equality) are diffused all over the world and information travels on all continents.

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[1] This mapping is not a history of the sociological understanding on globalization. Rather it is a mapping of different tendencies through which globalization of culture is theorized.

Giddens holds that it was often argued that globalization leads towards a homogenization of cultures and that it weakens the states control over local economies. While he recognizes that these arguments are true, he also holds that globalization creates pressure for local autonomy and brings reasons for the reinforcement of local identities and cultures. Roland Robertson, like Giddens, looks at the nature of globalization and sees it as a complex process.

In Robertson's understanding, the concept of globalization should be applied to a series of "developments concerning the concrete structuration of the world as a whole" (1992, p. 53). He argues that globalization should be taken as a given and studied accordingly. More importantly, globalization should be studied as a complex process that emerged from the interaction of many different factors. To theorize globalization only as 'imperialism' or 'civilization' is to take into consideration only one factor or process that led to the present global complexity.

> "Much of world history can be fruitfully considered as sequences of 'miniglobalization', in the sense that, for example historic empire formation involved the unification of previously sequestered territories and social entities. There have also been shifts in the opposite direction, as the case with the deunification of medieval Europe – although the rise of the territorial state also promoted imperialism and thus conceptions of the world – as – a - whole" (Robertson, 1992, p. 54).

Therefore, in Robertson's eyes, globalization is not a characteristic of the contemporary era but is a process that evolved throughout the history of the world. Yet, at least four main factors came into play in the creation of the *"global density and complexity"* (1992, p. 58) of the present times: 1. the emergence of the nation-state, 2. the regulated relations between states, 3. the conceptions of the individual, and 4. notions of

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human kind. The emergence of the nation state participated in the emergence of globalization because of the need to define it (the nation state) in terms that could be understood both inside and out. This need is explained through the need for legitimization, for its own citizens and for the other nations. This legitimization is possible if all nation states are defined in the same terms. The relations between these states led to the appearance of international laws, international agencies and institutions, international agreements and competitions. Through the recognition of the principles included in "The Declaration of Human Rights" as the guiding principles for any kind of interactions, the internationalization of the notions of the individual and human kind were established. This is seen as a factor in the process of globalization because all states have to respect and impose the same values and rules of behavior.

These are not the only factors that led to the global complexity of today's world. The globalization of capital and the development of fast communication technologies are also recognized by Robertson as important factors in the emergence of globalization as we know it today. "The minimal phase model of globalization" elaborated by Robertson, which places these factors along a historical path, puts in evidence the fact that the factors that led to the emergence of globalization are not only economic but also technological, cultural and political. This view is similar with Giddens' position, who argues that globalization is economic, political, technological and cultural.

From Robertson's and Giddens's perspective globalization is a complex process, not a one – dimensional phenomenon. This process includes features like: economic exchanges that take place at an incredible speeds and distances, as well as fast development of new technologies that have a deep impact on the nature of economic and

cultural exchanges as well as on the nature of communication, treaties signed between states regarding not only the economic nature of the exchanges but also the moral implications behind any kind of behavior (Human Rights, for example). All these are aspects of the cultural, economic, technological and political facets of globalization that show its complexity and the interaction between these different dimensions.

## Globalization of Culture

From this general perspective on globalization, this work aims to focus on globalization of culture. This is not to say that all other dimensions will be completely discarded but rather that the implications they have on culture and cultural identities will be the focus. The interplay of all these dimensions of globalization (economic, political, and technological) has direct consequences on culture and cultural identities. Similarly, culture also participates in this interplay, having implications on the other features. This is why the cultural dimension of globalization is analyzed here in the larger context of economic and political interactions.

Mike Featherstone begins the introduction to *The Global Culture* with the question of whether there is a global culture. In trying to answer this question he maps the debates around globalization of culture and points at its complexity. He argues that globalization of culture is usually discussed in pairs of reciprocally exclusive concepts such as: "homogeneity / heterogeneity, integration / disintegration, unity / diversity" (1990, p. 2). None of these concepts is rejected, rather they are used together to outline the density of processes brought by globalization as well as the difficulty of theorizing it.

He argues that because globalization brings together so many different processes, the answer to the initial question is a definite no. Featherstone holds that it is impossible to speak of a global culture; rather it is possible to speak about globalization of culture. A completely homogeneous culture, as a global culture would have to be, is not able to survive without the support of a nation state:

> "while we can refer to the process of formation of national identities and the role of the intellectuals in mobilizing the *ethnie* in attempting to develop a unified national culture, we are made painfully aware of the alternative traditions and histories, the layers of local cultures which are suppressed as a result of this project. It becomes impossible to talk about a common culture in the fuller sense without talking about who is defining it, with which set of interdependencies and power balances, for what purposes, and with reference to which outside culture(s) have to be discarded, rejected and demonified in order to generate the sense of cultural identity." (Featherstone, 1990, p 11).

Therefore, it is impossible to speak of a global culture due to the fact the different processes brought by globalization do not have the same effects everywhere because they interact with the specificity of each place and also because there is no system of reference for such a culture. Featherstone considers that a culture can exist only within a specific system of reference, as opposed to something else, or to another culture, based on a series of principles that have to be defined with a purpose. A global culture is possible only if a system of reference exists at the global level and if there is an outside to it so it can define itself against that outside.

Featherstone does not construct his own theory of the globalization of culture. Rather he maps the main concepts that are usually used in conceptualizing it and through the use of these concepts outlines a clear view of globalization as a set of processes that lead towards a great complexity. He considers the globalization of culture as a blend of:

"trans — societal cultural processes which take a variety of forms, some of which have preceded the inter — state relations into which nation — states can be regarded as being embedded, and processes which sustain the exchange and flow of goods, people, information, knowledge and images which give rise to communication processes which gain some autonomy on a global level" (Featherstone, 1990, p. 1).

This definition points out the complexity of globalization as a group of processes. The Globalization of culture is a multifaceted process that brings different flows and interactions that change, in turn, the nature of communications between states and cultures. These processes do not lead only to one of the consequences comprised in mutually exclusive concepts like homogeneity / heterogeneity but instead create a situation in which they work together and do not necessarily exclude each other. This view follows the same line of thinking as Robertson's and Giddens' theories because it sees, the globalization of culture as strongly related and influenced by political, economic and technological dimensions.

Featherstone argues that, through new communication technologies, globalization compresses time and space which led to the appearance of new processes and an enhancement of those that already existed. Due to these new technologies the spaces between places are reduced. Information and images travel now with an incredible speed from one side of the globe to the other. Distances seem a lot smaller. For instance, one needs only to think about how quickly one can virtually travel from one place to another on the internet. Morley & Robins also support this argument:

"Globalization is about the compression of time and space horizons and the creation of a world of instantaneity and depthlessness. Global space is a space of flows, an electronic

space, a decentred space, a space in which frontiers and boundaries have become permeable. Within this global arena, economies and cultures are thrown into intense and immediate contact with each other – with each 'Other' (an 'Other' that is not longer simply 'out there', but also within)" (Morley & Robins, 1996, p 115).

In this view, globalization not only compresses time and space through new communication technologies, but it is in itself a space. Inside this space, cultures and identities interact in new ways and with a new intensity. Due to the emergence of this new space, the relationships between space and place, culture and territory, boundary and territory are reconfigured. We can say that globalization transforms spaces into places, all the while adding new characteristics to the existing places. We can then argue that an existent place preserves its old characteristics and gets enriched with new ones. We can also argue that globalization transforms spaces into places because it brings knowledge. It is one thing to know that somewhere in the world there is a country named Romania, and another thing to know something about its culture. By adding images to a name, a space is transformed into a place.

In this new context of instantaneity and reconfiguration of interactions, Featherstone holds that globalization of culture creates or produces:

> "firstly, cultural homogeneity and cultural disorder, in linking together previously isolated pockets of relatively homogeneous culture which in turn produces more complex images of the other as well as generating identity – reinforcing reactions; and secondly, transnational cultures, which can be understood as genuine 'third cultures' which are orientated beyond national boundaries" (Featherstone, 1990 p 6).

In this view globalization creates connections between cultures that were separated; it creates a context in which cultures can interact. These interactions produce

cultural homogeneity and heterogeneity (which means that these two terms are not actually mutually exclusive) and new cultures. In this context different cultures not only interact to solve problems of domination and resistance but they also get to know each other better. Globalization brings "the other" into the self (or "the us") and this leads towards a better understanding of 'otherness' as well as of the self ("the us").

The debates on globalization of culture alternate between two extreme poles: homogenization and heterogenization. Homogenization of culture stands for the creation of universal symbols and values. It also represents the disappearance of the specificity of local communities. It means not only that the boundaries between cultures are permeable but also that they are dissolving, wherein cultures become so similar that you can no longer differentiate between them. There is a tendency to homogenize the cultures of the world. There are universal values (human rights for example) that are imposed on all states and cultures. There are universal symbols too (not only the dove for peace but also Superman, let's say, for good and any ugly demon for evil). These are usually spread through mass consumer culture, like movies and music. Homogenization (Ritzer, Tomlinson, Levitt) is usually seen in terms of cultural imperialism, which means the creation of a "proto – universal culture riding on the back of Western economic and political domination" (Featherstone, 1990, p. 2). So the creation of a homogeneous global culture is based on economic and political fights for domination on the global market. Levitt argues that:

> "the global corporation looks to the nations of the world not for how they are different but for how they are alike (...), it seeks constantly in every way to standardize everything into a common global mode", "they will search for opportunities to sell to similar segments throughout the globe" (in Morley & Robins, 1996, p 15).

Therefore, corporations are looking for what different cultures have in common so that they can produce something that can be sold on the global market. In this way, part of the local becomes global. However, I would argue, as Morley and Robins do, that through this strategy, corporations are not standardizing cultures, but are instead standardizing their products. Commercializing "the common" does not necessarily lead to the disappearance of "the different".

The other extreme pole of the debate on globalization of culture, the heterogenization thesis (Appadurai), refers to the transformation of cultures under the impact of globalization. It refers to the way a local culture negotiates its specificity when it meets a different culture and to the processes of incorporation, integration, reappropriation, and indigenization. Globalization produces heterogeneity through the fact that, as it was argued before, it brings *"the other"* into *"the us"*, because it creates links and exchanges between different cultures. The reactions to these exchanges are different. Symbols and values are changed, transformed and assimilated in contact with other cultures and, through these processes, the culture itself changes. Heterogenization also refers to the fact that globalization enables the distribution of "local products" on the global market and the local appropriation of global products. The local - global relationship is not unidirectional. Cultural products (like movies and music) and the values, practices and symbols that are associated with them travel in all directions, not only one. Cultural imperialism is usually associated with Americanization but, while American cultural products have indeed the strongest representation on the global market, cultural products from other areas are also represented.

Besides the two extreme poles there is a series of middle ground positions. One of them refers to the creation of third cultures (Hannerz), mentioned by Featherstone as the second impact of globalization, and puts in evidence the interplay of the different aspects of globalization. These cultures appeared, Featherstone argues, as a product of the economic dimension of globalization:

> "The changes in the world economy which have taken place in the 1970s and 1980s, which some have referred to as a new phase of capitalism 'disorganized capitalism' or 'post – Fordism' (...), are generally represented as entailing the de – monopolization of economic structures with the deregulation and globalization of markets, trade and labor. The globalization of capital flows with 24 – hour stock market trading, which gained pace after the 'Big Bang' of October 1986, not only deregulated local markets and made local capital vulnerable to the strategies of corporate raiders, it necessitated new norms for the market too" (1990, p. 7)

These changes created the need for new categories of professionals that look toward global rather than local goals and work in a global instead of a local context (or space). Among these categories we can count international lawyers, financial advisers, specialists in film, music, television, etc. The globalization of capital broke the frontiers of the nation–state and created these new categories of professionals that work outside the confinements of a space. They are the ones that create the "third cultures" because they do not work only in a compressed global space outside any culture, but they move from one space to another, from one culture to another and they experience the problems of intercultural communication directly. These professionals, that move around the globe, interacting with different cultures and working in a transnational space, are called cosmopolitans by Featherstone. Another factor that led to the creation of third cultures is the fact that national legal systems were interconnected in such a way as to make possible

the functioning of the global market. The global flows of capital are possible only if the same rules and laws are recognized and obeyed by all states. This also shows the interplay between the different dimensions of globalization and the way they influence each other.

Another theory that sees globalization as a dialectical dynamic / process between the two poles is formulated by Arjun Appadurai, who argues that there are many different inter-related factors playing a role in creating global complexity. In his view "the new global cultural economy has to be understood as a complex, overlapping, disjunctive order, which can not any longer be understood in terms of existing center – periphery models" (Appadurai, 1996, p 32) This means that to speak of globalization only as homogenization, heterogenization or commoditization is to use an inadequate theory. Globalization implies not only strategies of domination but also processes of resistance, integration and "indigenization", dynamics that have to be taken into consideration when theorizing globalization.

In Appadurai's view, to explore the processes of globalization is to explore the relationship between five dimensions of the "global cultural flow: a) ethnoscapes, b)mediascapes, c) technoscapes, d) finanscapes, e) ideoscapes". The use of the common suffix 'scape' is showing that these dimensions are seen as "building blocks of (…) imagined worlds, that is, the multiple worlds which are constituted by the historically situated imaginations of persons and groups spread around the globe" (Appadurai, 1996, p. 33). This means that, depending on the historical and social context in which they find themselves, people form images about the world, not only about the one in which they live directly but also about those that are far from them. For example, while living in

Romania, I had an image not only about Romania but also about Canada. While maybe the image about Romania was based on clear facts, the one about Canada was formed using my imagination in compiling other images coming from other people and television, books, internet.

The ethnoscapes are produced by flows of people such as tourists, emigrants, refugees. People move not only from a small village to a big city but also to a different country or continent. When they move they take with them not only their culture (at least in the form of traditions and language) but also the images they have about their new home. The technoscapes are produced by flows of technologies, not only "mechanical" but also "informational". The distribution of technology is determined by relationships between money, politics and labor. A country can import and export components for a "technological configuration" as well as specialists. The finanscapes are produced by flows of money. Appadurai holds that: "currency markets, national stock exchanges, and commodity speculations move megamonies through national turnstiles at blinding speed" (Appadurai, 1996, p. 34-35). The rapid flows of money are made possible by new technologies, important amounts being transferred electronically in seconds. Also, the finanscapes influence the technoscapes (and the ethnoscapes) as people move around the world to make more money.

Mediascapes are produced by flows of images and information as well as flows of electronic capabilities to produce and distribute them. These scapes refer to the images and information produced and distributed by newspapers, magazines, television channels, film production studios, etc. It also refers to the "images of the world created by these media" (Appadurai, 1996, p. 35). These images involve complex variations, depending

on the mode through which they are distributed, their hardware and their audiences. A characteristic of the information provided by the mediascapes is that the images (related to the news, politics and commodities) are mixed, the boundaries between them are not clear. The further the audience is from the images provided by media, the more these images are likely to create a fantastical imagined world. Mediascapes provide only strips of reality or fictional narratives that help create fictional imagined worlds or imagined narratives of 'the other'.

The ideoscapes are also produced by flows of images but they have political connotation. They are often attached to the ideologies of states or counter – ideologies movements that aim to capture the state power.

> "These ideoscapes are composed of elements of the Enlightenment world – view, which consists of a concatenation of ideas, terms and images, including 'freedom', 'welfare', 'rights', 'sovereignty', 'representation' and the master term 'democracy'" (Appadurai, 1996, p. 36).

These images are heavily filled with deeper meanings that refer to beliefs, values, to the way people should live their lives, how they should be treated by their leaders and the rights they have. The fluidity of ideoscapes is problematic because every state translates these images, or terms, into a different political discourse. Also, audiences in different countries read these discourses in different ways, depending on their beliefs, the images that they have already created and their ethnic background, etc.

All these "scapes" are interrelated and they shape one another. People move around the world and interact with different cultures and different views or images about the world. Technology helps them keep in touch with their "homeland" or with people

they met in their travels. Also, in many cases technology is what brought them into a different cultural space (specialists, workers). Money is another reason people move to different places. So, the finanscapes interact with the ethnoscapes and the technoscapes not only because money is transferred electronically, but also because the technological development depends on finances and because specialists move around the globe in order to make more money. The mediascapes and the ideoscapes, as flows of images, are strongly related to the other three scapes because they distribute their images inside the ethnoscapes through technology, using money.

In Appadurai's view, the current global flows occur in and through the growing "disjunctures" between theses scapes. The flows are uneven because while most are open to export, just a few are also open to import. Some countries, such as Japan, are open to export of any kind, to some import and immigration, but they are closed to ideas of emigration.

Appadurai states:

> "globalization of culture is not the same as homogenization, but globalization involves the use of a variety of instruments of homogenization (armaments, advertising techniques, language hegemonies, clothing styles and the like), which are absorbed into local political and cultural economies, only to be repatriated as heterogeneous dialogs of national sovereignty, free enterprise, fundamentalism, etc" (Appadurai, 1996, p. 42).

If we do not take in consideration the dynamic of the relationships between the different dimensions of globalization we risk theorizing it as a linear process that will finally lead to a homogeneous culture around the world. We have to take into account the fact that even if instruments of homogenization are used in today's world, they are

integrated in the local cultures and modified or "indigenized". Also, the information provided by mediascapes and ideoscapes is translated differently, depending on the cultural and political context in which it is transmitted. Appadurai argues for a complex analysis of globalization, taking into consideration all the implications brought by the flows that take place between the different scapes and the disjuncures between them, meaning the images, people, technologies and finances that flow unevenly in many directions.

In the same line of reasoning as Appadurai, David Morley and Kevin Robins place themselves in between the two extreme poles (homogenization / heterogenization). In their view, as in Giddens' and Robertson's, one of the features that made globalization of culture possible has been the development of communication and information technologies.

In Morley and Robins' view a new spatial dynamic was created by developments in communication and travel technologies as well as by economic and political changes. They hold that there are two important aspects of this new spatial dynamic. One aspect is that the flows of cultures, information and goods leads to the appearance of new global image industries, to a homogenous global culture. The other aspect is that there has been an increase in the production and distribution of local cultural products. Therefore, for them, as for Appadurai, globalization brings not only homogenization but also heterogenization:

> "Patterns of movement and flows of people, culture, goods and information mean that it is now not so much the physical boundaries - the geographical distances, the seas or the mountain ranges – that define a community or nation's 'natural limits'. Increasingly we must think in terms of communications and transport networks and of the symbolic boundaries of language and

culture – the 'spaces of transmission' defined by satellite footprints or radio signals – as providing the crucial, and permeable, boundaries of our age" (Morley & Robins, 1996, p 1).

In this view, the nature of the boundaries is seen as changed due to the rapid developments in transport and communication. With the help of new technologies, physical borders are now crossed easily and with more speed than ever before. The new frontiers are now language and culture. This means that the territory of a country is not limited and defined by natural or physical frontiers anymore but by differences in language and cultural heritage. The world is seen as fragmented, not as much in geographical areas, but mostly in cultural spaces. New communication technologies render these new frontiers and spaces permeable because they have the power to cross and puncture them and to infiltrate images and symbols of other cultures inside.

Globalization of culture, Morley and Robins argue, was made possible by another feature; the economic and political changes that occurred with the deteritorialization of capital which started in the 1970s and 1980s. Historically "broadcasting had a dual role: serving as the political sphere of the nation state, and as a focus for national cultural identification" (Morley & Robins, 1996, p 10). The context had changed with the shift to the consumer society. Viewers and listeners are no longer seen primarily as political subjects but increasingly as consumers. Instead of being addressed in political terms they are instead addressed in economic terms. Morley and Robins argue, along with Featherstone, that the new phase of capitalism that started in the 1970s and 1980s, which is characterized by globalization of capital and markets, had a deep impact on the way culture is perceived produced and consumed. However, while Featherstone argues that

this new capitalism is a 'deregulated' one, Morley and Robins argue that it is actually

regulated by new imperatives:

> "during the 1980s, as a consequence of the complex interplay of regulatory, economic and technological change, dramatic upheavals took place in media industries, laying the basis for what must be seen as a new media order. What was most significant was the decisive shift in regulatory principles: from regulation in the public interest to a new regulatory regime – sometimes erroneously described as 'deregulation' – driven by economic and entrepreneurial imperatives" (Morley and Robins, 1996, p. 11).

Thus, for them, the most important change was the fact that media corporations and

businesses are no longer controlled by a 'public philosophy' concerned with national

identity, democracy and public interest; rather their main function is to answer to

consumer demand and to maximize choice. The new economic imperatives lead, of

course, to a new philosophy concerned with profit wherein corporations will try to sell

their product to the largest number of consumers possible. This leads in turn to the

expansion of these corporations outside the country of their origin and their entrance on

the global market.

Media corporations have three options to enter the global market: they can be

producers, distributors or delivery systems. The objective of any corporation is to cover

all three options. Corporations want to sell their products on a market as large as possible

and the largest possible is the global market. It is then natural for them to create goods

that can be bought by people coming from different cultures. In this context globalization

of culture merges with economic globalization because corporations not only operate on a

global market but they also create a culture that can be sold on the global market. On this

basis it is argued by some that globalization leads towards a hegemonic culture and the

disappearance of the national local cultures. As Morley and Robins hold, there is a tendency to homogenize culture which can not be denied. This tendency is translated:

> "in a belief in 'world cultural convergence'; a belief in the convergence of lifestyle, culture and behavior among consumer segments around the world. This faith in the emergence of a 'shared culture' and a common 'world awareness' appears to be vindicated by the success of products like *Dallas* or *Batman* and by such attractions as Disneyland" (1996, p.111).

This belief leads to the emergence of a new "electronic and cultural space" (Morley & Robins, 1996, p.112) that encompasses all these common symbols and this shared culture. This space is built by media corporations that target the shared lifestyles and tastes and bring them together to create a product that can be sold anywhere in the world. However, as it has been shown before, globalization becomes a terrain of negotiation between cultures because it brings universal values into the local cultures while also bringing the local on the global market. The flows of information, products and images, even if uneven, are not unidirectional.

> "Cultural products are assembled from all over the world and turned into commodities for a new cosmopolitan marketplace: world music and tourism; ethnic arts, fashion and cuisine. The local and exotic are torn out of place and time to be repackaged for the world bazaar" (Morley & Robins, 1996, p 113).

The 'local' is an important part of the global. "Local" or "national" cultures and specificities do not disappear, nor are they diluted in a global culture. Rather, globalization makes them stronger. Globalization is not about the destruction of specificity, but rather about attaching it to the rest of the world. Local traditions and differences become subject to market strategies while also being used as a way of

resisting the erosion brought on by globalization and their preservation is used to strengthen the local specificity. Facing a corporate culture, local communities try to preserve their traditions, symbols and values not only to maintain their status as different but also as a way to avoid losing their specificity and their status as a particular community. In today's world people are more and more attracted to the exotic, the 'authentic' and the 'romantic'. As such, local traditions and specificities become the symbol of this exotic, romantic and authentic. Therefore the specificity of the local is kept for two main reasons or by two players in the global context: by the local as a way of strengthening local identities and by media corporations that are trying to respond to the consumer request for exotic new products.

Morley and Robins argue that globalization is a 'nexus' of relationships between the global and the local, and a terrain of negotiation between the two. However the negotiation takes place on unequal terms because neither the local nor the global, as they argue, are associated with a territory and, while the global is represented by large media corporations, the local is represented by small communities which, not only lack the economic power of the big corporations but they also have to compete against each other.

Another theorist placed in between the two extreme poles, Garcia Canclini, sees globalization as a dialectical situation between homogenization and heterogenization. In his view, globalization not only makes different cultures look the same but it also reinforces the local cultures. Local artists can use the tools brought by globalization to make a better living, all the while maintaining their specificity. Globalization is seen in Canclini's work as a terrain of negotiation between the local and the global (or universal). When different cultural products, values and symbols arrive in a local cultural context

they do not readily annihilate the specificity of that place. The two cultures interact and none of them will remain unchanged. Globalization is a dialectical process/dynamic between the two poles because homogenization strategies are brought into local cultures but they are incorporated, reappropiated and transformed by this "local". These interactions between the local and the global, between standardization strategies and indigenous cultures have different results and produce hybridity or metizaje, meaning that local communities take part of what the global brings, incorporate it in their own culture and bring it to the surface changed and as being part of their own culture. This negotiation takes place on unequal terms because the local is not as strong as the global and it does not have the same power to disseminate its cultural products.

As it was argued before, globalization is a terrain where exchanges between cultures take place. Due to these exchanges none of the cultures interacting will remain the same. Symbols and ideas are transformed and integrated into local cultures on an unequal base. Garcia Canclini, along with Appadurai, makes the point that, when dealing with the contemporary transformations, some local communities are trying to preserve traditions as a way of strengthening their cultural national identities. Traditions can be seen as establishing a relationship with the past, as specificities of the local and their preservation can be seen as the preservation of the "local" culture. Furthermore, as Morley and Robins argue, keeping traditions alive is one way through which local cultures not only manage to remain distinct, but also enter and negotiate their place on the global terrain. Globalization brings universal symbols into the local but it also takes the local into the global or into other cultures, taking local symbols and traditions into the global cultural space.

However, in the context of globalization, besides the problems posed by the uneven processes of circulation and diffusion of cultural products, there are also problems of translatability. Within a culture, there are values that cannot be shared and symbols that cannot be understood by everybody outside that specific culture. Even if corporations are looking to find "the common" in all cultures and when they find it they distribute it all over the world, specificity still remains. Furthermore, specificity is also brought on the global market. As Morley & Robins argue, "tradition and heritage are factors that enhance the quality of life of particular places and make them attractive locations for investment" (1996, p 119). Can these specificities, traditions and values be translated so that they can be exported all over the world?

Translatability does not refer only to the question "is it possible to translate this cultural product?" but also to the question "is it possible to translate correctly the meaning of this cultural product?" It is not only a matter of the language but it is also a matter of the message. The meaning of traditions, songs, and various practices are embedded in the culture of a people. Can we translate correctly the original meaning of the symbols without loosing its subtleties? Furthermore, to bring the local cultural products into the global market means to manage to make those cultural products intelligible, appealing and marketable. If their meanings and messages remain hidden, they can not be exported out of their cultural context. However, they can still be sold as simple commodities, emptied of their meaning, as something that simply looks nice. They can also be sold as simple memories, reminders of a place you once seen. Even if the meaning can not be shared the product can. We can argue that, in the context of

globalization, products travel without their meaning and become forms without background because their history gets lost on their way to new places.

An example of the problems raised by translatability as well as by the interaction between the global and the local cultures is the myth of the vampire - Dracula. Since Bram Stoker wrote his book about Dracula, Romania is known as the home of the vampires. Vlad Tepes, Principe of Walachia (in the XV century) became the vampire Dracula. Almost every foreign tourist in Romania wants to visit Bran Castle, the so called "Dracula's Castle"[2]. How did a Romanian Principe become the symbol of evil? It is true that he used to impale people and he killed a lot of nobles and invaders during his rule. Nevertheless, it is also true that the people that were put on stakes were criminals and the nobles were corrupt, traitors or sold to the Turks. Thus, Vlad Tepes was cruel but just, having fought for the freedom of his country against the domination of the Ottoman Empire. Does his cruelty justify the transformation of his face into the "face of evil"?

What is interesting is that the myth of the vampire does not appear in Romanian culture. However, if you go into a souvenir store anywhere in the country, you will find different objects with Vlad Tepes's face wearing the name of Dracula. Thus, Romanian culture imported this symbol of evil and is selling it back as belonging to itself. The image of Vlad Tepes as the symbol of evil is an example of the problems posed by translatability of culture. Was Vlad Tepes a cruel person? The custom of putting people into stakes was not invented by him but was present even before the Roman Empire and the Turks were employing it too. Also, the people that were put into stakes were usually criminals. In this context we can not say for sure that he was a cruel man. His persona was taken out of its historical and cultural context and brought into the modern world.

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[2] Historically speaking Vlad Tepes set foot in that castle only for one day in his entire life

Also, the fact that he was a 'good' ruler for his country does not seem to matter and is not known outside Romania very well. Interestingly enough, the Romanian people are sometimes selling his image as the symbol of evil and not as one of its rulers. Is it just a matter of "if they want him, let them have him"?[3]

Garcia Canclini holds that "the negotiated reformulation of the [indigenous groups'] iconography and traditional practices are tactics that enable them to expand trade and earn money that will permit them to better their daily lives" (Canclini, 2001 p 39). Interpreted this way, the production of souvenirs with Vlad Tepes's face as Dracula is a negotiation between the traditional and the modern. People producing these souvenirs are adapting to the requests of the market. They are creating a product that can be sold to anybody and as such, borrowing a strategy (standardization) brought by globalization. This is an example of how globalization changes the local cultures and how strategies of standardization function.

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[3] Last year there were debates in Romania about building a theme park called Dracula's Land. On one side of the debate, the Minister of Tourism argued that this park will bring a lot of tourists in the country and consequently money. On the other side, people working in the field of culture argued that this park should not exist because the vampire myth is not part of our culture. An interesting argument was brought forth by the Orthodox Church. Its representative declared that the construction of the park would create a false image about the Romanian people, as a people feeding on the blood of the others. This argument can be related to the fact that the park would bring money into the country (the blood of the others) unjustly. It can also be related to how the Romanian people see themselves and how they want to be seen. It is also a matter of how Romania, as a local culture, enters the global market. The myth of the vampire did not exist in the Romanian culture but now there is and the vampire symbolizes evil all over the world. If Romania enters on the global market using the construction of Dracula's Land Park, it will do so by using a universal symbol, not something specific and unique. The debates around the construction of this park show the struggles of finding a place in the global context and an image that suits the country, the culture and the people. They also show the resistance against foreign influences in Romanian culture

# The Complexity of Globalization of Culture

In Robertson's view, the concept of globalization should be applied to a series of developments that led to the construction of "the world as a whole". For him, globalization is a dynamic, unfinished process that has to be acknowledged as a characteristic of modernity. The fact that the world exists as a whole should not be understood in the sense that it is all the same, rather that the world is constituted in a complex net of relationships that have a deep impact on different facets of society. He also brings an interesting argument into the discussion about locality vs. universality. In his view the two are tied together in the "globwide nexus" and globalization is, "in its most general sense a form of institutionalization of the two fold process involving the universalization of the particularism and the particularization of universalism" (Robertson, 1992, p.102).

Although Robertson's and Appadurai's theories look similar because both acknowledge different aspects of globalization and different flows that influence culture, they are fundamentally different. This difference comes from the fact that Robertson describes the nature of globalization while Appadurai discusses its processes and implications. While Appadurai argues that the final consequence of globalization will be social chaos, Robertson sees the world as rationally structured. Appadurai's main arguments, as well as the relationships between the different scapes, are best expressed in his own words:

> "as mass mediation becomes increasingly dominated by electronic media (...) and as such media increasingly link producers and audiences across national boundaries and as

these audiences themselves start new conversations between those who move and those who stay, we find a growing number of diasporic public spheres (...) [which are] the crucibles of a post national order. The engines of their discourse are mass media (both interactive and expressive) and the movement of refugees, activists, students and laborers" (Appadurai, p. 22).

In this view globalization leads, if not to the disappearance of the nation-state, to allegiances across borders, allegiances that are not rooted in a national culture. In Appadurai's view, the new world order will be free of the restrictions of a nation. The world will not be a system of standardized parts (as the nation – states) but a system established on relations between diverse building blocks (professionals, for example). The problem is that these relations need to find values on which to be based, and these values should not be tied to the "liberal western" ones.

Appadurai, Morley & Robins, Canclini as well as Featherstone, argue that globalization is a dialectical situation, between homogenization and heterogenization. For them, globalization is a negotiation terrain between the two, and between "the local", "the regional","the continental" and "the global". Also, globalization assumes flows of information, images, and cultural products. These flows are neither unidirectional nor even. Even if all these theorists reach the same conclusion (that globalization is a complex process, which combines homogenization and heterogenization strategies, and a negotiation between the local and the global on unequal terms), they base their arguments on different premises. For Appadurai globalization of culture brings different flows and its main characteristic is the fact that these flows take place in and through the growing disjunctures between different scapes. In other words, for him, globalization brings flows

of people, money, images and technology but these flows are not going equally in all directions.

For Morley and Robins, globalization is a dialectical process because although corporations are using strategies of standardization and are creating a culture that can transcend all differences; they are also using the traditions and specificities of local cultures to extend the number of consumers for their products. Also, the local is trying to preserve its traditions as a way of resisting the global culture brought into their space by media corporations. So traditions and specificities are used by the local to strengthen local identities and by the media corporations to increase the number of consumers for their products. For Canclini, the interactions between the local, the regional and the global leads to a metizaje, a hybridity of cultures that comes form the fact that in the global context cultures negotiate their place and their specificity. When globalization brings new products into a space, these products are not just taken the way they are; rather they are incorporated, assimilated, reappropriated and changed by the local culture giving birth to new cultural products.

According to Levitt, corporations look for the common in every culture, so it can sell it on the global market. Taking this theory a little further, we can argue that through this strategy, corporations are creating a global space which can be recognized by anybody. This space would not feel like a foreign or frightening space, because on one hand it can be recognized as something familiar, something that belongs to the self. On the other hand, it does not put local cultures in danger of loosing their specificity, because it does not impose anything new on them. Furthermore, such a space leads to the recognition of the fact that the "self" and the "other" have something in common and that

this, in turn, can lead towards a better understanding and tolerance. Featherstone puts together all these concepts, and argues that they are all processes that make-up the complex context of globalization.

In light of these theories, in this work it will be argued that globalization is not a linear process that started recently and which has only the effect of homogenizing or heterogenizing all cultures but is a far more complex condition than that. Globalization is a terrain of interactions, struggles and negotiations between cultures that it, is in itself, a space of transmission of information and communication and that it has a deep effect on national and cultural identities. I would argue that globalization of culture is a net of wires that connect different places, creating highways on which information, products and people travel in all directions. This is not saying that the exchange of information and products is equal in all directions but rather that it is a complex situation. This net of wires can be seen as a space that enables different cultures to interact, change one another, struggle and negotiate. These connections puncture the frontiers between spaces leaving them permeable to outside influences. Are the frontiers of these spaces shrinking and finally disappearing because of globalization? Or is the nature of these frontiers changing? Maybe the geographical borders are easily crossed but the borders between cultures are still to be conquered. The differences in languages, symbols and traditions have always existed and they are still here. So the nature of the frontiers is still the same. Globalization makes these frontiers malleable, changing cultures and using standardization strategies. However, due to the uniqueness of each culture these strategies do not have the same effect everywhere.

Do these frontiers represent differences that need to be overcome by human kind or differences that need to be kept? The new national movements all over the world seem to support the second alternative. The movements of resistance against globalization show that locals negotiate to preserve their specificity and uniqueness. Globalization does not erase these differences; rather it brings the knowledge that there are similarities. The main direction might be towards standardization but, as Robertson argues, resistance against this standardization is also a part of globalization.

> "Europe and the whole world live today the day before a new order. New economic and political forms are prepared and tomorrow's world will wear them. When these forms will gain shapes and power of action the first word will belong to the Great Powers. However, small states are not less compelled to prepare for understanding these forms; willingly or unwillingly, these states will be integrated, with roles and functions, in tomorrow's new order" (Conea, 1995, p 86).

Conea's tomorrow may be our today. In this view the whole world is united (as in Robertson's view) but even if not all states have the same power, the local is not erased but rather integrated it in a new world. This new world can be united, even if composed of differences. Through globalization, the same symbols and values are spread around the globe but differences are also brought forth. Cultures fight to keep their specificity and this resilience is strengthened by globalization or it can also be seen as part of globalization. Struggles for specificity and uniqueness have always accompanied the history of human kind but now the enemy is not the more powerful neighbor who wishes to conquer a territory but a global culture that wants to integrate everything.

Globalization of culture is strongly related to cultural identity because cultures are preserved and passed forward through individuals, people and communities. Their views

about the world as it has been, is now and should be in the future shape the cultural domain. If local cultures are so strongly influenced by globalization, it is interesting to see also the influences it has on cultural identities. The following chapter will explore this relationship and these influences.

# Chapter 2: Cultural Identity and Globalization

My husband came to Montreal in 1999. When he went back to Romania he told me that he heard people speaking Romanian in the metro. I asked him if he spoke with them and he answered that no, why would he? When I came 2 years ago I was amazed at how many Romanians were here. When I heard them speaking on the street I felt somehow close to them and I wanted at least to give them a smile, to let them know that I am Romanian too. Why did I feel like that? Probably because I felt Romanian and I identified myself with them. The language made me think of all these people who will celebrate Christmas the same way I will, that have somewhere in the house a little object to remind them of our country. I saw us being friends even though I did not know anything about them. We probably have nothing in common except for the country of origin. I do not even know if they see themselves as Romanians the same way I see myself. The story above shows the complexity of the identification processes. Moreover, the possible elements upon which identity is constructed can also pose problems. The following case shows how some of these problems can appear.

On the territory where Romania is now, there once stood three different kingdoms. However, the people in these kingdoms all spoke the same language because they had the same ancestors, the Romans. In elementary school, in history class, I learned that in the year 1600 Michael the Brave (Mihai Viteazul), the ruler of one of the kingdoms, united them. The reason for this unification was the fact that the people from all three kingdoms considered themselves to be only one people because they had the

same ancestors, the same language and the same religion. The decision to unite was said to be based on the will of the people. The professor told us that this was the first spark of the idea of the nation-state, not only in Romanian history but also in the history of the world.

After the fall of the communists in 1989, I found a different version of this part of our history. Yes, the three kingdoms were united in 1600 under the rule of Michael the Brave but not willingly. There was no idea of the nation-state; rather it was a politically strategic decision. Michael the Brave realized that he needed a stronger army to protect his country against the expansive empires of that time so he decided to conquer the other two kingdoms.

With which version of our past do I identify? Am I a part of a very special people who always had dreams of unity and freedom or am I a part of a people which, like any other in that period had dreams of expansion? I tend to identify with that special people with dreams of unity and freedom because it gives me a reason to be proud that I am Romanian. What about the people I saw on the street, here in Montreal? Are they proud to be Romanian for the same reasons I am? Moreover, why do I identify with those people? What makes me feel that we have something in common, is it the fact that we speak the same language, that we come from the same country, that we have the same cultural background?

The example above is not given simply to express my own feelings or questions about my identity but to show how complex the problem of identity can be in general and especially in the context of globalization where people travel all around the world?. This chapter will discuss this complexity by looking at different theoretical definitions of

identity and cultural identity and will outline the connection between cultural identity and globalization of culture. It will be structured in three sections: theories of identity, cultural identity and the link between cultural identity and globalization of culture with reference to Romania.

## Collective and Cultural Identities

In the social sciences, the concept of identity has received different interpretations and meanings. This is put in evidence by Roger Brubaker and Frederick Cooper when they argue that the term identity as it has been theorized until now poses many problems. In trying to map out theories of identity, they established that there are at least five ways in which the term is used. "Identity" is understood: "as a ground or basis of social and political action (…), as a specifically collective phenomenon (…), as a core aspect of (individual or collective) selfhood (…), as a product of social political action (…), as the evanescent product of multiple and competing discourses (…)" (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, p 6 – 8).

As a "basis for social and political action" (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, p 6), identity is used to explain the ways in which individual and collective behavior is governed by self understanding, as opposed to interest (Cohen). As a "specifically collective phenomenon" (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, p 7), identity means sameness amongst the members of a collectivity. This sameness manifests itself as solidarity and can be seen objectively, as "in itself" or subjectively, as experienced (Melucci, Collins). As "a core aspect of the selfhood" (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, p 7), identity is used with

reference to different characteristics of the self, characteristics that have to be valued, recognized and preserved (Erikson). As a "product of social political action" (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, p 7), identity is the dynamic development of sameness within a group, the development of solidarity between the members of a collectivity. This solidarity is seen as the basis for political action (Calhoun). As the evanescent "product of multiple and competing discourses" (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, p 8), identity is seen as the fleeting, unstable and fragmented nature of the self (Hall, Werbner).[4]

As Brubaker and Cooper argue, the concept of identity has been used in many contradictory ways, to show sameness over persons and sameness over time, to portray the fundamental core of the self and to contradict such a core, to explain the gradual evolution of solidarity and to illustrate the fragmented nature of the modern experiences. While Brubaker and Cooper present most of the ways in which the concept was used, Stuart Hall is traces a history of how it evolved. In *Modernity and its Futures*, Hall historicizes the concept of identity and he argues that there are three phases in its development, and accordingly there are three different conceptions of identity: "those of the Enlightenment subject, sociological subject and post modern subject" (1996, p. 275). The first conception (the Enlightenment subject) places man at the center of the universe and considers human beings to be unified individuals that remain the same throughout all their experiences. In this conception the human being is born with an inner core that unfolds throughout his/her life but remains essentially the same.

The sociological conception sees the subject as "formed in relation to significant others, who mediated to the subject the values, meanings and symbols – the culture – of

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[4] Brubaker and Cooper argue that the concept of identity is overburdened and should be abandoned. However, I would argue that even if it was indeed used in contradictory ways and is overburdened, it can still be used if properly defined.

the worlds he/she inhabited" (Hall, 1996, p. 275). The subject has an "inner core" which is formed and develops in interactions with others and with the culture of the society (community) to which he belongs. Identity makes the connection between "the me" and the world and it "stabilizes both subjects and the cultural world they inhabit, making both reciprocally more unified and predictable" (page 276). Through identity, the "inner core" of the individual enters in dialog with the cultural world in which he/she lives. This dialog forms and transforms the "inner core". In this conception identity is the continuous negotiation between the individual's inner core and the cultural world he/she lives in. These conceptions of identity are identified by Brubaker and Cooper also. However while they see them as different uses of the concept, Hall sees them as evolving one from the other, as a progress from a simple to a more complex understanding of the subject.

Furthermore, Hall argues that the postmodern subject does not have a "coherent self" anymore; a person does not have a single identity, but several "sometimes contradictory or unresolved, identities" (Hall, 1996, p. 277) (this conception is also acknowledged by Brubaker & Cooper). In this conception, identity is in permanent transformation, depending on the social situation in which the individual is found. The 'one coherent' identity does not exist as the individual assumes different identities in different situations. For example, I am a student in school, I am a wife at home, I am a woman on the street, and I am an Orthodox Christian in church. I would argue that these are different aspects of the same identity, not different identities. These aspects can be seen as mediating the relationship between the inner core of the individual and the outside world.

Similarly, Schlesinger's writes:

"all identities are constituted within a system of social relations and require the reciprocal recognition of others. Identity ... is not to be considered a 'thing' but rather a 'system of relations and representations' ... the maintenance of an agent's identity is ... a continual process of recomposition rather of a given one, in which the two constitutive dimensions of self — identification and affirmation of difference are continually locked..." (in Morley & Robins, 1996, p 46).

This view is similar with Hall's definition of identity. Identity is seen as a process through which the individual enters into a dialog with its cultural world. However, Schlesinger's definition adds to Hall's conception as it specifies that identity has two different aspects: "self – identification" and "affirmation of difference". This means that identity is the tool through which an individual sees himself / herself as belonging to a group as well as different from others. In his view, identity is about inclusion as well as exclusion or affirmation. Self – identification refers not only to belonging to a group but also to the recognition of others as being the same as you. The affirmation of difference refers not only to the recognition of the fact that others are different but also it refers to their exclusion from a group. Also, this definition points to the fact that identity has an individual dimension as well as a collective one.

Although the concept of identity has different dimensions, my focus will be on the collective dimension and the inclusion and self identification processes, given that the interest of this thesis is to see how cultural identities are constructed *within* Romania as a space under the influence of globalization. More specifically I am interested in questions such as: what is the impact of globalization of culture on cultural identities in Romania? How do people define themselves as groups in Romania? What are the possible paths of identification in Romanian culture?

Morley and Robins look at the collective dimension of identity. For them, collective identity is a dynamic process:

> "based on the (selective) processes of memory, so that a given group recognizes itself through its memory of a common past. Thus, we can develop a dynamic view of identity, focusing on the ability of social groups continually to recompose and redefine their boundaries" (1996, p 46).

In this view, identity is based on the memory of a common past and constructed through relations with a world that is always changing, through interactions in which it must always redefine itself. In such a way, it becomes a dynamic process that involves adaptation to the changing world and reconstruction of the past. Therefore, through identity, communities recognize the "sameness" but also the difference. Identity is used not only to give cohesion to a group but also to differentiate it from the rest of the world. Due to the fact that our world is rapidly changing and interactions between cultures take place very often, identities are constantly negotiated and redefined. Morley and Robins also hold that "collective identity involves the achievement, by individual actors or social groups, of a certain coherence, cohesion and continuity. Such bonding will always be provisional and more or less precarious" (1996, p. 72). In other words, collective identity presupposes not only a shared memory of a common past but also shared beliefs and values. The cohesion provided by collective memory and shared values is only temporary and uncertain because of the interaction with the outside world. This uncertainty becomes greater in the context of globalization of culture when values, symbols and cultural products from the outside are brought within and relationships become more and more mediated by media.

In discussing memory and cultural translation, Gabriel Motzkin offers a similar perspective through the idea of a collective past. For him, identity is constructed through a collective memory which poses some problems. First, the past can be incorporated into a people's identity through a false collective memory:

> "a historical chasm or a sea change in the civilization of a descendent people may be such that the memory of the original group seems to be a prememory indicating a preconscious preidentity rather than an actual memory. Yet, in this case the group often does not want to admit its lack of connection to the past, preferring to expand its identity retrospectively to include a transformed memory of the past; the memory is assimilated to the group's identity through an artificial creation of collective memory" (Motzkin, 1996, p. 267).

An example of such an artificial creation of a collective memory is the way the Romanians see their ancestors as being the Dacs, or the Romans or both of them. Another problem posed by the construction of identity through memory is caused by the rise of historical studies. Motzkin argues that history as a discipline was used in forging national identities but it never took into account the living memories that people had about an event:

> "a hidden assumption of memory is that the continuing resonance of events is as important for the creation of a group identity as the events themselves. On the other hand, the development of modern historical consciousness affected the way in which living memory is experienced. Historical procedures introduced a new tension into the formation of group identity, for it meant that the task of forming group identity requires a critical self – understanding. Historical consciousness, by transforming the relations between memory and identity, also changed the structure of the relation between the self and the other" (Motzkin, 1996, p. 269)

Through this change, the responsibility of remembering an event did not belong to the people anymore, belonging instead to scholars and books, which also meant that

memory was no longer selective. Also, if the living memory of a people retains from an event only its "side of the story", or only its actions, history remembers also "the other" and its actions. With this change, identity started to be constructed not only through the memory of the self but also through the memory of the other. Two characteristics of this manner of constructing identities emerge. First, "memory makes other and self part of the same identity, denying otherness to the real other" (Motzkin, 1996, p. 272) and second, when "a gap in memory exists, or the conscious suppression of memory is a response to the inability to deal with memory, the memory of the other becomes necessary a bridge to one's past" (Motzkin, 1996, p. 272). To explain these two manners of constructing identity Motzkin uses the example of the Holocaust. He argues that the Jews that lived through it remember the experiences they had more clearly than they remember the Nazis. The central characters in their memories are them with the feelings they had and the Nazis are on a second plan, as those that put in motion the events that led to their suffering. They remember the Nazis as the "other" who inflicted pain on them. The generations that came after the Holocaust learned a lot about Nazism from books and from school. They have the direct collective memory of their ancestors as well as a mediated memory from what they learned. However, while the Nazis were "the other" for their ancestors, they become part of the younger generations' identity because they are part of their history and their direct and indirect collective memory. For the other manner of constructing identity through memory, Motzkin uses the example of the Germans whose collective memory tries to suppress the events that took place during the Holocaust. Due to this suppression, younger generations have to learn their past from books and from the collective memory of the Jews, who are "the other". So for Motzkin,

as for Morley and Robins, the collective memory of a common past offers a sense of identity and cohesion but, because this memory becomes more and more mediated and enters in interaction with "the other", this cohesion is precarious.

This theory is significant for the case of Romania because it raises such questions as: how will the communist period be remembered? and how will this memory influence the construction of identity in Romania? While there are theories that consider collective memory as the main factor in the construction of cultural identities (Morley and Robins, Motzkin) there are also theories that consider experience as the main factor. Such a theory is developed by Simon Frith. For him experience, not memory, constructs identity. He argues that identity is a process, an experience or a specific way of experiencing the social. He writes:

> "social groups [do not] agree on values which are then expressed in their cultural activities (the assumption of the homology models) but they get to know themselves *as groups* (as a particular organization of individual and social interests, of sameness and difference) *through* cultural activity" (Frith, 1996, p. 111).

What he suggests through this is that people as individuals identify with values that are put into practice through cultural activity. Also, collective identity is constructed when people recognize that they have the same interests, that they respect the same values and they like the same things. For example, a style of music represents the values and beliefs of a certain group but also articulates those values in such a way that they can be recognized by somebody who is not part of that group. That is, a person sometimes listens to a style of music because he/she is part of a certain group but also becomes a part of that group because he/she listens to that style of music. The implications of Frith's definition of identity will be explored further in the chapter on Romanian music.

## National Identity or Cultural Identity?

The theories of identity discussed above help me construct a general conceptual framework for this concept retaining such elements as: the processes that are involved in its construction (identification and affirmation of difference), its different dimensions (individual and collective) and the grounds on which it is constructed (memory and experience). I am interested in focusing on the identification processes on the cultural terrain, connecting these processes with globalization of culture. Therefore, a discussion on the concepts of cultural and of national identity is necessary because, as Stuart Hall argues, often we define ourselves as "English, or Welsh, or Indian" (1996, p. 291) or Romanian, which means that identity is strongly related to the notions of culture and nation, raising questions such as: is cultural identity the same as national identity? Is cultural identity part of the national identity? or, is it the other way around?

Stuart Hall argues that cultural identity is part of national identity; in fact he uses the term "national cultural identities" (1996, p. 291). For him, cultural identity comes from national identity because he sees the nation not only as a political organization but also as a "system of cultural representation" (Hall, 1996, p. 292). The nation-state created the national culture which constructs "identities by producing meanings about 'the nation' with which we can identify" (1996, p. 293). In his view the nation is an imagined community created through stories that represent the memory of a shared past and a connection between the past and the present.

Hall writes that a national culture tries to unify all members of a nation state, however different they might be, doing so through five main practices. First, it provides a set of stories, national histories, symbols, etc, that point out to a common past and experience which give meaning to the nation. Secondly, there is the importance of "origins, continuity, tradition and timelessness" (Hall, 1996, p.294). This means that the national culture provides a sense of a national distinctiveness that has always been there and will always be there, no matter what. The third practice is the invention of traditions, as Hobsbawm and Ranger call it, through which the national culture tries to create a connection with the past. Another practice through which the national culture is creating meaning for the nation is the "foundational myth: a story which locates the origin of the nation, the people and their national character so early that they are lost in the mists of, not 'real' but 'mythic' time" (Hall, 1996, p. 294 - 295). Finally, national identity is also often based on the idea of a pure, original people.

Thus, for Stuart Hall, the nation is created first and, afterwards, the nation creates the national culture as an instrument for legitimizing the existence of the nation-state and as a tool for providing a sense of unity and homogeneousness within it. Etienne Balibar also develops a theory that connects the nation state and culture. He argues that: "what is called cultural identity is constantly compared to and at the limit conflated with national identity, and nevertheless is in some sense sheltered from the empirical existence of nations, their borders, their politico-military history" (1995, 177). He also asks the question:

> "what if the notion of cultural identity is today nothing other then the metaphor of national identity? By metaphor we should understand translation, expression, representation, but also displacement, even acting out, expressing an at least relative

incapacity of national constructions to endow themselves and their nationals with an identity that is perfectly simple and univocal, and absolutely common and unified" (Balibar, 1995, p.179).

In this view, cultural identity is related to national identity, not as a part of it, but rather as an answer to its incapacity to create a sense of unity and homogeneity. Cultural identities become at the same time the answer and the response to the complexity of the world and the inability of the nation-state to deal with it. This is relevant, especially now, in the context of globalization, when nation-states are eroding and are no longer the main custodians of identities.

In this work national identity is understood as having a stronger relation to the political realm, or more precisely with the nation-state, while cultural identity is understood as having a stronger relation to the people as a community. The nation-state and the nation itself did not appear before culture. Rather, it was the other way around. The fact that people had similar beliefs and ideals led to the emergence of the nation and the nation-state. These shared experiences led to the creation of the national culture which is used to legitimize the existence of the nation-state. National identity is related to cultural identity because they are both rooted in the same cultural space. However, shared images about the world, values and experiences do not necessarily mean shared beliefs in the nation-state and its politics. Also these shared images are not necessarily constructed by the nation-state. Nevertheless, these shared images about the world, values and experiences, might lead to shared beliefs in national politics. In this work, the nation is seen as a space in which cultural identities are manifested, constructed and reconstructed. As globalization makes the frontiers between national spaces permeable and the spaces themselves more and more exposed to changes and outside influences, it is interesting to

see what happens with cultural identities that are rooted in these spaces, how they are constructed and maintained.

In this work, identity is understood as fragmented in the sense that it encompasses different dimensions, such as national, regional, and continental. These different aspects are not seen as different identities, rather as different aspects (fragments or facets) of the same identity. Also, cultural identities are understood as always reconstructing through relations with a cultural context that is permanently changing. Due to the fact that this context is always changing, people move from one dimension to the other, adapting to the circumstances in which they find themselves into. This view is similar with Mead's theory of the self (which encompasses different aspects and develops in interactions with the others and the community, through communication, learning roles and internalizing the attitudes of the group). However, the interest of this work is not the self, or the individual and how it develops internally, rather the interest is in the way different aspects of identity are constructed through culture and how identity becomes mobile, as well as on how people define themselves as groups, or members of a group, not as individuals or selves. Also, using the idea of fragmented identities from Hall does not mean that I adopt his whole perspective but that different fragments are understood as participating in the identity construction process. These fragments are not seen as different identities that are constantly switched but as different aspects of the same identity.

The emphasis here (in this work) is on how culture expresses and participates in the construction of collective identities in the context of globalization, and what happens inside the nation space under the influence of globalization. Also, in the current context,

as we have seen in the previous chapter, with the shift to a consumer culture and a consumer society, the construction of cultural symbols is not only dictated by a public national philosophy concerned with national identity, democracy and public interest, but it is increasingly dictated by economic imperatives and a philosophy concerned with profit.

As it was argued in the first chapter, globalization connects different cultures and places across time and space. Even if cultures were never completely independent from one another, and relations between them always existed, globalization brought new dimensions to these contacts. In the global context, the exchanges of images, values and cultural products (like music, movies and TV shows) are happening at amazing speeds and on distances which are difficult to imagine. Now, people with different cultural backgrounds can consume the same cultural products. These cultural products contain images about the world (or a certain culture), values, meanings and symbols. Thus, globalization takes these values, symbols and images from one culture and distributes them all around the globe, within other cultures. The deteritorialization of capital that gave birth to these processes has deep implications on the regulatory role of the nation-state and on its capacity to construct cultural products. Its power is weakened, on one hand due to the fact that corporations escape the control of the country of their origin through their strategies of producing abroad and on the other hand, because of new communication technologies it is impossible to control the flows of images, symbols and cultural products across national borders.

## Cultural Identity and Globalization

In Stuart Hall's, view globalization has three possible consequences on cultural identities: they can be eroded by cultural homogenization, they can be strengthened through resistance to globalization and new hybrid identities can take their place. The first consequence is brought by the time space compression. Due to the fact that cultural identities are constructed through representation the changing "time – space relationships within different systems of representation have profound effects on how identities are located and represented" (Hall, 1996, p. 301). These effects are so profound because the representations on which identity is based are rooted in a certain space in time. If the time space connection is changed, the representation of this connection becomes irrelevant.

Globalization can also erode cultural identities because it undermines the national cultures in which they are rooted. While national affiliation remains strong with respect to citizenship and legal rights, other kinds of affiliations (such as regional affiliations) become stronger. Globalization brings cultural flows and global consumerism, creating the possibility of shared identities as people situated far from each other, and separated in space receive and consume the same cultural messages and images about the world. The national spaces are bypassed meaning that the nation is no longer the only space in which cultural identities are constructed and manifested. In Hall's view, as well as in Morley and Robins', social life is more and more mediated by "the global marketing of styles, places and images, by international travel, and by globally networked media images and communication systems" (1996, p. 303). This leads to a disconnection of cultural identities from specific times and places, traditions and histories, leading in turn to fragmented identities. What this means, is that people now have at their discretion a range

of new technologies that provide them with new images, with chances to move around the globe, both physically and mentally (through internet or travel documentaries for example) and with the chance to choose from a range of identities provided by these images and places.

For Hall, the second possible implication of globalization of culture, namely the strengthening of local cultural identities, is based on three considerations. Firstly, globalization does not have only the tendency to homogenize cultures, but also it brings an interest in difference and otherness. Secondly, globalization is not erasing local identities; rather it changes the relationship between the local and the global, creating new global and local identities. Also, globalization is not evenly dispersed around the world, within regions and populations. The third consideration is that due to the fact that globalization implies unequal relations of cultural power, it seems like flows are mainly going in one direction. This relation is, in effect, between the "West and the Rest", the west being the center and the rest being the periphery. While people at the periphery were always the subject of influences from the center, the west started, through globalization, to receive images and representations from the rest. Therefore, if cultural identity is changing due to globalization, this change is stronger in the West than in the Rest. This argument supports Morley and Robins' affirmation that globalization brings the advertisement of local traditions and specificities all around the globe.

In *Consumers and Citizens: Globalization and Multicultural Conflicts*, Garcia Canclini also argues that globalization of culture leads towards the fragmentation of identities:

> "we can no longer consider the members of society as belonging to
> one homogeneous culture, with the corresponding single, distinct

and coherent identity. The trans – nationalization of the economy and symbols has eroded the verisimilitude of this mode of legitimizing identities" (Canclini, 2001, p 138).

As Hall, he sees this change as brought by globalization through the flows of people, information, technology and images. Cultural identity, even inside a nation space is not a homogeneous one because these flows create the chance to choose from a range of possible identities and also heterogenize the culture inside the nation space.

Globalization brings the transnationalization of symbols, economies and cultures, which makes the understanding of cultural identities difficult. An increased level of difficulty in their understanding is brought also by the European Union's attempts to build a "Europe without frontiers". This is important for the case of Romania because, besides the fact that it is geographically situated in Europe, it also wants to join the European Union which means that, as we will see in chapter three, Romania seems to be caught between different allegiances and pressured to take different directions. Morley and Robins argue that the European Union started to understand that new communication technologies and cultural industries could play a significant role in the creation of cultural unity within Europe. This cultural unity is thought to be created (or at least further developed) by the pan–European market in the audio–visual domain. There are two elements that have to be taken into consideration when speaking about the cultural unity of Europe. The establishment of an open European market for audiovisual products coming from European countries (spaces), as Morley and Robins hold, has two goals: to provide the European Union with enough economic power to become a strong player on the global audiovisual market and, second, to create a sense of European cultural identity. These two considerations are strongly related.

Morley and Robins see European cultural identity on three scales: continental, regional and national. To be European means to manage, or to set in balance, all these different scales. At the continental level, European identity is founded on allegiances based on European traditions and heritage, on "a common descent rooted in Greece and Rome and two thousand years of Christianity" (1996, p.19). Therefore, at this level, identity is based on a common history of all the European countries, common values (namely Christian values), and common cultural ancestry from the Roman and Greek cultures. At this level, European identity can be seen as the foundation for European cultural unity and the basis for an economy both large and strong enough to make Europe a powerful player on the global market. The creation of a cultural identity at the continental level also shows that the nation is not the only space for cultural identity anymore. At the national level, the European identity is constructed through allegiances to national cultures because the "European culture" is seen as a variety of different cultures. National identity claims difference and attachments to a certain distinct culture and European identity is seen as being constructed through these differences. At the regional level European identity

> "finds expression in the idea of a Europe of regions, cantons and small nations. Against more abstract or universalist claims, this marks a preference for particularistic sense of community. The rich pluralism of regional traditions, languages, dialects, and cultures is held up as the basis for a more meaningful experience of community" (Morley & Robins, 1996, p. 20).

Therefore, this scale, as the national one, is based on difference, particularism, and distinctiveness. At this level European culture is seen as being comprised of these

differences and the European identity is built through local identities, like eastern or western European, and Balkanic.

Morley and Robins argue that all these different scales of identity are different ways in which Europe is responding to the forces of globalization. The solution found by the European Union for building a sense of European identity is the creation of a pan–European market in the audio–visual domain. This market is seen as a space in which the continental scale of European identity, based on common cultural heritage and values, finds the means to express itself. The European Union is also taking these measures because it wants to penetrate the world market as a strong player and to maintain a position of power in the world. The maintenance of regionalism and the conservation of diversity at the level of national cultures are responses to the standardization and homogenization processes brought by globalization.

How can all three levels, which assume three different allegiances, work together? How can this diversity be translated into a coherent European identity? Cultural identity provides coherence, a sense of sameness and a sense of being different to a community that is always changing as a result of the interactions with other communities. Due to the fact that the community is changing and permanently negotiating its place in the world, cultural identity is also in permanent negotiation. Furthermore, as Morley and Robins hold, the European identity is "constructed against those – without and within – who appear to be non–European or anti–European" (1996, p. 21). This means that the European identity is built as "us" against "them". Since the fall of the Iron Curtain, Europe has to redefine what European means, because what European was, did not

include the eastern part of the continent. The question is: are all geographically situated countries inside Europe considered European or are they an "other"?

I would argue that these measures taken by the European Union to create continental cultural unity imply that Europe is becoming "a local" on the global scene. If the pan–European market is seen as a way of countering globalization, then Europe is using the same processes as globalization to fight it. Globalization is seen as standardizing cultures but the creation of a cultural European identity at the continental level, based on common values and cultural heritage, is also standardization. Also, the preservation of national and regional cultures and traditions as a way of resisting "standardization" is a process implied by globalization. I would argue that the pan–European market in the audio–visual domain and the creation of a homogeneous European cultural identity are part of the processes brought by globalization, even as a way of resisting to it. The cultural unity of Europe can be seen as continentalization, or regionalization, but these processes do not go necessarily against globalization, rather they are a part of it. Also, the creation of a European cultural identity changes the spatial borders for cultural identity; not only does it render them permeable, it also denies their existence. From the perspective of a European identity, the nation is not the only space where cultural identities are asserted, manifested and acted upon but the region and the continent gain also the same significance.

Therefore, the problem is not Europe against globalization, but rather, Europe and its countries in the context of globalization. If the European Union takes measures against standardization, or the Americanization of culture, it does so because its place as an economic and cultural power on the global scene is strongly diminished. These measures

imply that the struggle for European specificity is not fought for the sake of specificity, but rather for a tool which will help Europe to gain and maintain a place of power on the global scene. The European Union is concerned with its place in the context of globalization. The construction of a European cultural identity would provide solidarity for the various populations of Europe and, as a result of this solidarity and cohesiveness, "European culture" will be sustained and will become stronger on the global scene. In its quest to construct and consolidate a European cultural identity the European Union is replacing the nation state in providing cohesiveness.

## Romanian Cultural Identity in the Context of Globalization

The problems encountered by the European Union in building a sense of European identity are of particular interest for this thesis because they show that globalization brings into play various forces that push in different directions, one of them being the establishment of space allegiances. Romania is a good example to use in showing the play of these forces for more than one reason. First, Romania was a communist country for forty five years. As it will be explained in the following chapter, for Romania, being under a totalitarian regime meant a disconnection from the western world and, also a disconnection from its own past, traditions and beliefs. Second, while western countries (cultures) had time to adjust, negotiate and adapt to and into the context of globalization, Romania entered this context very abruptly and suddenly (you can even say over night), without proper "tools" to deal with it. Third, Romania, as a geographic and historic European country, is not yet considered a fully "modern European country",

so its territory is a battleground for the forces brought forth by globalization. More specifically, Romania has to find a place in the globalization context while constantly being pushed in different directions.

The debates that started in Europe regarding the possible war in Iraq and the tensions that appeared between different states show the fact that Romania needs to find a place in the new global context and it has to negotiate for a cultural identity that does not include only the three levels of the European cultural identity (national, regional and continental) but also a global one. These debates also support Morley and Robins argument that globalization reconfigures the relationships between space and place, culture and territory, boundary and territory and that this reconfiguration leads towards new senses of placed and placeless identity (1996, p. 121). These debates, and especially French President Jacques Chirac's and European Commission President Romano Prodi's reactions (on eighteenth of February 2003) to the fact that Romania and other European countries signed a letter of support for the United States of America, show the precarious position of Romania in the European and global contexts and the struggles for cultural identity that have to be faced. They are also strongly related to the reasons Romania is considered a good example in showing how the processes of globalization impact cultural identity.

I would argue that Chirac's reaction at the pro-American politics of the Romanian Government shows that Romania is not yet seen as part of Europe. He declared that if Romania and Bulgaria wanted "to diminish their chances of joining Europe they could not have found a better way"[5] (referring to the fact that they signed a letter of support for

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[5] Chirac lashes out at 'new Europe',
http://www.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/europe/02/18/sprj.irq.chirac.reut/index.html

USA regarding the war with Iraq). His reference to joining Europe clearly shows that entering the European Union, means re–entering Europe and adopting a European spirit or European take on things. Also, Romano Prodi declared that the candidates for entering the European Union did not realize that it is not only an economical union and that they have to understand that "sharing the future means sharing the future"[6]. However what does it mean to share this future? Does it mean to share a cultural identity based on shared values and a common history?

As it was argued before, the European Union is trying to build a sense of European cultural identity, based on common cultural heritage and values. On the base of this new identity European states are expected to act together as one. These debates show that this is not possible for the moment. However, even if Romania and other Eastern European countries are not part of the European Union, and are not seen as part of Europe, they are expected to take this European cultural identity and act upon it. Does the European identity, then, erase the national identity? It seems that no, because the states that are already members of the Union were not so strongly criticized. Only those that want to join the Union and Europe were supposed to act based on the solidarity they feel with other European countries.

The focus of this discussion is not on being for or against the United States, or being for or against Europe. Rather it is on the forces that impact cultural identity, processes brought forth by globalization. It can be noticed that the grounds, meanings and symbols of cultural identity are slippery and constantly debated. The creation of a European cultural identity, as it has been shown, is a response to globalization, or more

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[6] Chirac lashes out at 'new Europe',
http://www.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/europe/02/18/sprj.irq.chirac.reut/index.html

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specifically to the process of standardization brought by globalization, and at the same time a part of globalization, or a process brought on by it. Romania is in the middle of these processes. The struggle for identity appears in this context, because after being altered by communism, this identity needs to be redefined, while also handling the importation of cultural products from abroad, transnationalization of symbols, heterogenization, standardization of cultures and the pressure to adopt a cultural identity which is constructed against others, when Romania itself is seen as an other.

The debates within the European Union and Romania's position in these debates supports, as it was already mentioned, the argument that globalization creates new senses of placed and placeless identity by reconfiguring the relationships between place and space, culture and territory and boundary and territory. Indeed, by trying to create cultural unity inside Europe, the European Union is trying to create a space without boundaries; eliminating geographical boundaries as well as cultural and political too. How will Romania integrate in this space? Will the Romanian people adopt a European cultural identity? If this identity is based on a common history and values, then how does one deal with the fact that Romania, as many of the Eastern European countries, has a very different recent history, compared with the Western European countries?

This history differs through the fact that Romania was a communist country for almost forty five years. As we will see in the next chapter, traditions, values, beliefs and history were changed by the communist party so they could fit with its ideology and political organization. Through these actions the cultural identity of the people was altered and constructed in an unnatural way. The fall of communism meant, for Romania, not only the opening of physical borders but also the opening of its culture to outside

influences and its entrance in the context of globalization. It also meant a shift in the construction of values and symbols as well as in the production of culture. The grounds for identification processes and different paths of identification are not provided, or constructed only by the nation state (which, before the revolution, meant Ceausescu and the Communist Party) anymore, as other sources, such as popular culture emerge free of censorship, and processes like regionalization and continentalisation provide different strategies and paths of identification.

The construction and maintenance of cultural identities seems difficult in these conditions, because it needs to take into consideration what culture became during the communist age, what it is now and what the context of globalization brings. I would not completely cast off the communist period because it would mean casting off the transformation or development of cultural identities in Romania. This is why an overview of the communist era and the post–revolution period will follow in the next chapter.

# Chapter 3: Romania in Transition

This chapter is an overview of the history of Romania from the beginning of the communist era (1947) to the present. Although economic and political transformations will be used to contextualize the problematic of the thesis, the focus will be on the transformations of culture. These transformations will be discussed in the context of globalization. This chapter will include three sections; one dealing with the communist era, one analyzing the revolution (and the changes it brought) and one discussing the current situation. The communist era is reviewed due to the fact that culture was at the core of political national propaganda and at the core of cultural identity. Without taking into consideration how culture and cultural identities were transformed during that period, the present context can not be understood. The revolution (the fall of communism) is analyzed because it represents the moment of an important change in Romanian history and Romania's entry as an active player in the globalized western world.

## The Communist Period

Romania was a communist country from the end of the Second World War until December 1989. In the period between the two World wars, Bucharest was called "Little Paris", not only for its architecture, but also because it was an important cultural centre. This period gave birth to great scholars, thinkers and artists, like Emil Cioran, Mircea

Eliade, Constantin Brancusi, and George Enescu. When the communist party came to power in 1947, most of them left the country. Those who remained, either joined the communist party, either were condemned to prison or placed under forced residence (such figures as Constantin Noica, Lucian Blaga, and Plesu).

The Romanian communist age can be generally divided into four different stages, each of them with its unique impact on the cultural life of the people and cultural identity. The first stage, started in December 1947 and lasted throughout the fifties, can be described as Stalinism. The second stage, during the early sixties, was a period of limited liberalism. The third stage started in 1964 with the successful affirmation of Romanian autonomy and ended in 1974 when a new political regime came to power. The last stage, which ended in December 1989, was dominated by Ceausescu's personality cult.

The first stage of the Romanian communism was dominated by the principles of economic and political Stalinism. The economic principles were: forced industrialization, with an accent on heavy industry, centralized and planed leadership of the economy, and "collectivization at any price" (Vlad Georgescu, 1995, p. 258). This meant that all private businesses (manufacturing plants, mines, banks, cinemas and production houses, pharmacies, small shops, etc) became state owned and managed. In agriculture the same thing happened, as the peasants were forced to give up their land to the state and work this land as employees. These economic principles were present throughout the entire communist period in Romania. The political Stalinism meant:

> "a proletarian dictatorship, a party that had a monopoly on power,
> a continuous 'sharpening' of the class conflict, the eradication of
> the old political and cultural elites and of any opposition through
> terror, including those inside the party, and all these in the name of
> the formation of a new human being and a new society"
> (Georgescu, 1995, p. 262).

In the name of this "new and better society" (in which the human being is supposed to enjoy all the good things brought by modernity without suffering its injustice) the leaders of the historical political parties were arrested, the priests of the orthodox church were put in prison or forced to work for the party, while other churches (religions) had a similar fate or even worse. As historian Vlad Georgescu argues: "we will never know, not even with approximation, the number of people arrested between 1944 and 1964, when the political prisons were closed down; however, it must be around half a million" (1995, p. 263).

Changes were also occurring on the cultural scene. Starting in 1944, the communist party tried to bring on its side known and already affirmed artists that could contribute to the creation of an appropriate culture for this 'new and better society'. A very well known writer and critic appealed to his colleagues this way:

> "The fact that the contemporary artist is also a citizen implies, from the social point of view, adherence to the work discipline. The artist is a highly skilled worker; it is his duty to produce. Collective happiness requires not only bread; men also have an intellectual hunger. Nowadays, alongside economic sabotage, there is such a thing as artistic sabotage, to wit a certain resistance among those who write for publication, apparently suggesting difficulties of work that in reality do not exist" (Calinescu, in Cretzianu, 1956, p.129).

The sabotage he is speaking about refers to the fact that many artists preferred to stop "producing" rather than to become instruments of the communist propaganda.

An example of how the communists were using prominent names for their propaganda is the case of an essay written by Mihail Sadoveanu. The author gave at some point a lecture with the name of *"The Light from the East"*. After a while, this lecture was

published by the communists under the name *"The Light Comes from the East"*. While the initial name implies that there is a light in the East, among others, the second name implies that all light comes from the East (Cretzianu, 1956, p. 130). Also, during this period, old books, or cultural products (musical compositions, paintings, sculptures) were censored on the presumption that they did not fit the "modern" context. However, artists (whose old "products" were banned) were forced to "produce", otherwise risking starvation or prison. Starting in 1948, nothing could be published outside the party control. Writers were forced to write at the command of the authorities and their works had to follow the doctrine of "socialist realism". There were some basic principles that had to guide all cultural activities, or cultural "production". These principles appear very clear in the next quote:

> "It is but natural that this transforming force [the working class party], which is stronger than the might of everything that for so many centuries seems petrified in backwardness and adversity, should constitute the principal hero of our present – day literature... For the writer who, in depicting the current life of our society, relies upon a deep knowledge of reality, in its revolutionary development, the reflection of the party's organizational force is not only natural, but also compulsory" (Gazeta Literara, septembrie 30, 1954, in Alexandre Cretzianu, 1956, p.132)

Thus, the writers were made to present reality as it was seen by the communist party. Their work has to be dedicated to the working class party, which also had to be the main character of any novel. The only reality that could be described by a writer was the life of the workers struggling with the classes that tried to dominate him/her and the victory of the working class party over everything that was 'wrong' in this modern

society. Furthermore, novels were not the only cultural products that were used as propaganda. Poetry had to use the socialist realism doctrine as guideline as well:

> "The works of the poets are called upon to contribute to increasing the love of our people for the achievements of the workers in the construction of socialism and to arouse an ever growing bitter hatred against the enemies at home and abroad of our fatherland, against the enemies of peace among the peoples, the British and American imperialists (…)" [and they are encouraged to have] "an increasingly lively contact with the Soviet literature, from which the poets can, to an ever greater extent, acquire the method of socialist realism" (Beniuc, in Cretzianu, 1956, p.133 – 134).

Hence, the main principles that had to guide any work of art were: praise of the working class party, encouragement for the hatred of the British and Americans and, thirdly, to do everything the way the Soviets did. Also, if a novel or a poem were situated in the past (ie: pre-communist era) the author had to accentuate the conflict between the dominator and the dominated. Play writes had to adhere to these principles as well, in that their plays had to have a strong ideological content and to present the life of the modern man. Of course, the modern man was the worker who was caught up in class conflict, emerging as a hero because he unmasked the enemy of the working class and punished him/her according to his/her crime. Due to the fact that plays like this had no success with the public, the actors (who were supposed to follow the example of their betters, the soviet actors in depicting class struggle as realistically as possible) started to change the content of the plays. After they had a few performances for the party activists, they would start to introduce new lines that were changing the plots, thereby transforming social dramas into satiric plays. This practice was ended, however, upon discovery and public disclosure by a journalist in 1954.

Circus, cinematography and music did not escape from their use as propaganda and the rigors of socialist realism. The performances of the clowns were supposed to be satirical tools in the education of the population on the class conflict. The chairman of the Cinematography Comity presented in 1952 the plan for 1953 – 1955 as follows:

> "The writers will complete forty – two scenarios representing the fight for socialist construction, fourteen with subjects illustrating the revolutionary struggle of the Rumanian people, and six for animated cartoons" (Niculae Belu in Alexandre Cretzianu, 1956, p.153)

The music that was suspected of having American or Western influences was highly criticized. The composers were encouraged to experience for themselves the life of the workers by working on collective farms or in industrial plants so they could express better the reality of the new life in their songs. The next quote illustrates very clearly the way in which music was manipulated by the working class party and how deep this party was involved in the creation process:

> "owing to the right policy of the working class party, music is increasingly becoming an asset of the people – an active factor in the construction of socialism in our country (…) Directed and constantly assisted by the party, making use of the admirable example of the soviet artists, our artist of today comes closer to the people (…)" (Sabin Dragoi in Alexandre Cretzianu, 1956, p.154)

Thus, we can see that this period was culturally dominated by Stalinism (socialism). This meant the drastic reconfiguration of the system of values and traditions of the Romanian culture. Marxist and Soviet (Russian) values were imposed over the old ones. A new type of identity started to be built through the rewriting of history and through the interchanging the love for the country and traditions with the love for Marxism and the Soviet Union. These new values were enforced, among others, through:

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a very tight control over the production of culture, the interruption of any cultural relation with the West, the closing of the Romanian Academy and the opening of a new one whose leaders were communist activists and the opening of different institutions whose main role was to confirm the strong connection that always existed between Russia and Romania. The educational system was also changed after the soviet model. As Georgescu holds:

> "the fifties, the years of complete cultural Stalinism, were without a doubt an extremely painful period for the Romanian culture. A lot of people working in the field of culture were physically exterminated and a lot more were intellectually sterilized. The traditional orientation, the only natural one, towards west, was replaced with a new one, forced towards east, a direction of which the Romanians always ran and were frighten of" (Georgescu, 1995, p. 268)

The emergence of the second stage of the communist era was facilitated by Stalin's death because the views of the Romanian leader (Gheorghiu Dej) on the economic development of Romania at that time were different from the views of Stalin's successor, Khrushchev. In spite of the tense relationships between Bucharest and Moscow, Khrushchev agreed, in 1958, to remove Russian troops from Romania. Once that happened, the Romanian government started to show more and more independence from Moscow. Economic relations with the West were renewed and more and more decisions were taken without Russian advice or approval. This reorientation in external politics was joined by a reorientation in internal politics. In 1960 most of the political prisoners were freed, the political prisons were closed down and a process of de-russification began. Institutions like the Romanian–Russian Museum and The Romanian–Russian Studies Institute were closed. Russian street names were changed over night and

the institutions closed in 1948 were reopened with scholars and technocrats that could not be hired before (because their political views were considered dangerous) once again finding jobs. Changes occurred in the field of culture through a 'de – russification' of all cultural products. Old values and traditions were brought back to life and books that were banned before started to be published. The rigors of social–realism were abandoned and artists were once more allowed to create freely. The main instrument used to bring back Romanian specificity was history. This period was characterized by anti–Slavism and by the rediscovery of the Latin origin of the nation.

In 1965, Gheorghiu Dej, the leader of the government that initiated these changes died, making room for another political regime. Although his character is contested because he was the one that enforced the politics of russification before the fifties and the one that enforced the de–russification in early sixties, what is clear is that he left behind a people that "learned to hope again" (Georgescu, 1995, p. 278). The third stage of communism in Romania (1965 – 1974) can be called the relaxation stage, as Vlad Georgescu names it, because in the external politics the country distanced itself from the Russians and came closer to the West while internally, the restrictive measures were no longer as harsh.

Gheorghiu Dej was followed by Nicolae Ceausescu as the leader of the party. Once in this position, Ceausescu started to remove all those who could potentially take his place, changing laws to gain more and more power until, finally, in 1974, he became the absolute leader of the country. However, in the beginning, Ceausescu gained the support of the population through a few decisions that led to internal "relaxation". Politically, he adopted a new constitution which did not accentuate the role of the Soviet

Union in freeing Romania. He rehabilitated the political prisoners that were left yet in prison by his predecessor and re–Latinized the name of the country (form Romînia to România). Economically he encouraged private initiatives and allowed the opening of small shops, restaurants and the construction of houses as private properties. Also, decisions to boost the industrialization of the country were taken. In the long run, these decisions were not the best but for the moment, they were creating jobs and relative economic stability for the population.

The effects of the new leadership were felt even more strongly culturally. The education system was modernized, the Russian language was no longer mandatory and other languages, like French, English and German, started to be taught in schools. In various cultural fields, writers, poets and composers were not forced anymore to respect the rigors of socialist realism which meant the reaffirmation of artists whose works were banned before and the affirmation of new talents. The relationships with the West were renewed, cultural products from abroad began to be allowed within and Romanian artists were given freedom to travel in non-communist countries as well as to create without restraints.

Externally, Romania was respected by the West for its liberal views and for some diplomatic decisions that were showing that it was distancing itself from the Soviet Union (decisions such as to remain neutral in the conflict with Yugoslavia and not to participate in the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968). Romania was even visited by important leaders from the West, such as de Gaulle (1968) and Nixon (1969). This new political orientation led to the reconfiguration of the economic relationships, with Romania becoming less and less dependent on the Soviet Union and more and more

integrated in relations with the West. However, in the early seventies, the consequences of heavy industrialization politics started to be felt, especially because only heavy industry received investments, while other branches were completely neglected (as it was for agriculture). Debts to different international institutions started to accumulate and Ceausescu assumed complete control over the country.

The basis for the forth stage of communism was: the more and more precarious economic situation of the country, and the visit the presidential couple made in China and North Korea in 1971. As Silviu Brucan puts it:

> "The Ceausescu's were immensely impressed with the welcome in Beijing and Pyongyang. The thousands of flag – waving uniformed children, the huge crowds cheering and applauding in unison in adulation of their beloved leaders, (...) and the many pageants, parades, and rallies – everything seemed to Nicolae and Elena worth copying. If they only could do the same thing in Romania!" (Brucan, 1993, p. 114).

This is how both the "mini–cultural" revolution started and the bases for the personality cult were built. Ceausescu became not only the prestigious member of the working class party but also a prestigious historical figure among the great kings of the past. He started to legitimize his right to leadership through a heritage that went as far as the land Romania is situated on. The propaganda went as far as proclaiming the discovery of the first European Homo Sapiens (named Australanthropus Olteniensis) near Scornicesti, the village in which Nicolae Ceausescu was born. He started to build a myth around himself, becoming a hero of the nation, a philosopher and a scientist. Also, the state control started to tighten, the cultural production started to be censored again and the western cultural products were banned.

Vlad Georgescu defines the personality cult as "a political regime with specific characteristics which is exerting power over the party first, and over the entire country after" (1995, p. 288). The characteristics of Ceausescu's personality cult are the creation of a myth around him and his family, the cadre rotation, and a complete distrust in anybody except the members of his family (which led to their rising in very high positions). Ceausescu became, as it was argued before, a philosopher, an economist, and a historian. He wrote books and took it upon himself to give advice in any field. His wife became an internationally renowned chemist with books published in all the languages of the world. The other members of their family followed their example and they all (including the presidential couple) became members of the Romanian Academy of Political and Social Sciences. The fact that Nicolae Ceausescu thought he knew everything had serious consequences over the national economy. His decisions to invest mostly in heavy industries, with no regard to the basic principles of economy led to a very low standard of living in Romania.

In the early eighties the agricultural sector went into crisis. The solution found to solve the deficiencies was to tighten the control over any aspect of the social life and production. The control over everything was centralized in the hands of a few, members of the Ceausescu family. The prices started to rise, not only for food, but also for electricity, public transportation and clothing. The crisis in which the Romanian economy found itself could not be solved only by raising the prices. Instead of reformative measures or a real reorganization of the economy, more restrictive measures were imposed over the population. Thus, electricity, hot water, heating and food were rationed. In 1981, the "program of rational alimentation" for 1982 – 1985 was made public. This

program prescribed the quantities of different products that could be consumed by a citizen. At the same time, "the scientific program" appeared and, with the justification that the population was eating too much, it prescribed the number of calories that were supposed to be consumed per day. On the basis of this program, the rationing of food was undertaken. Personal hygiene was not forgotten, as quantities of soap and detergent were prescribed as well. Thus, another characteristic of Ceausescu's personality cult was that he tried to control the life of the people in its most intimate details.

The field of culture suffered a similar fate. As it was argued before, Ceausescu's leadership started in a climate of relative, limited liberalism. At the beginning of his rule he advocated for freedom in the process of creation, but starting in 1974 that had changed. The relationships with the West were severed and the process of creation was once again under the party's control while many research institutes were closed. Due to the fact that the communist party and Ceausescu needed a legitimization for their leadership, they started to create a new cultural identity based on the origins of the Romanian people. Ceausescu became the direct heir of the Dacs and the Romans (the Dacs were the indigenous people that lived on the territory where Romania is situated and that were later conquered by the Romans), the father of the Romanian people, the "guiding light" and the one that was guiding the country in the "Golden Era". By elevating himself to the status of a national hero, the cultural identity was not actually based on the common origins, but rather on the recognition of Ceausescu as the symbol of this heritage. Ceausescu and his family became the symbols of Romanian culture; they were those that were giving meaning and importance to the life of the people. The Ceausescu family was the representation of all of the best in Romania and the Romanian

people needed their wise guidance. It was, therefore, natural for the artists to use them as the main characters of their works, to praise them and to use quotes from their books in all that was published. As Silviu Brucan states:

> "Ceausescu was surrounded by writers, poets, painters and musicians competing for his favors: ideal of the people, savior of the nation's independence – these were the major themes. But then he became the man of the 'vision thing', the apostle, synthesis of the Latin genius, or personification of the neo – Roman tradition, superman of dizzying simplicity and yet the genius of the Carpathians" (1993, p. 123).

Cultural production was centered on Ceausescu family and the communist party. Also, popular culture could not flourish due to the fact that the means to distribute it were almost non-existent, exemplified through the television programming that lasted two hours per day: in the evening, with one hour news (mostly from other communist countries and about the presidential family) and one hour reserved for communist propaganda.

## The Revolution

The question that rises is why did this totalitarian regime last this long? One possible explanation is the 'cadre rotation' procedure. This procedure was started by Ceausescu in 1976 and it consisted of the periodic rotation of people within different functions. Different civil servants, ministers, even the Prime Minister were changed constantly, moved from one position to another, from one area of the country to a different one, from one institution to another one. Nobody was in one position for too long, which led to the inability to create a power centre anywhere. No one could build a

base for opposition because no one was working with the same people for a period of time which would permit the construction of a relationship of trust. Another reason for the longevity of the regime might have been the terror that was institutionalized by the internal secret service (Securitatea) through its net of informers and through its well known practices of disinformation and persecutions. It was well known that the members of any movement of dissidence were disappearing very fast.

Why did it fall? Silviu Brucan holds that the reason is that communist states could not fit, or find a place in modernity. He argues that communism was based on three suppositions formulated by Marx. First, the working class will start to govern the political domain due to the process of industrialization and of the fact that it will continually grow in numbers. This working class will attain the power and will put and end to capitalism. Second, because of the ever increasing size of the working class the population will become more homogeneous. Third, the communist party will be the most powerful political force of society because it represents a social class that characterizes the most developed productive procedures ever (Brucan, 1993, p. 127-129).

However, the developments in science and computer technologies rendered these assumptions impossible to apply. Due to the scientific–technological revolution, the number of industrial workers was reduced and heterogeneity was created instead of homogeneity (because workers specialized in different fields appeared). Also, the computer technologies were never applied in Romania (as in any other communist country) because it would have meant losing control over information. In these conditions the communist party could no longer represent the most advanced productive forces, thereby losing its legitimization.

Another reason for the fall of communism might have been the simple fact that the population was at the point where it could not stand poverty and hunger, anymore. I would argue that the revolution was not mostly anti–communist but most of all anti–Ceausescu. He himself based the legitimacy of the regime on his image. Ceausescu became communism and totalitarianism. From the savior of the people and the 'guiding light' he became the symbol of all the oppressive measures, the symbol of everything that was wrong in the country and, ultimately, the symbol of a regime that needed to be overthrown.[7]

Whatever the causes, the communist leadership fell in Romania in December 1989. How exactly the revolution occurred is still subject to a number of debates. However, this is not the concern of this thesis. What is clear is that the Romanian people was poor, underfed and under constant fear of the secret police (Securitatea). In December 1989 the people had the chance to change all that and it took it.

The revolution in Romania was the only violent overthrowing of the communist rule in Eastern Europe. While in other countries the change occurred peacefully, Ceausescu clutched to power. He saw himself as the savior of socialism in Europe. The first signs that his leadership was not accepted anymore appeared in the city of Timisoara on the 17th of December 1989, when people gathered to protect a pastor of a Reformed Church who was supposed to be evicted. The manifestation turned into an anti–communist demonstration that was suppressed with gun fire by the secret police and the army. On December 21st, Ceausescu organized a rally in Bucharest to criticize what

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[7] It must be also mentioned that changes were occurring all over Eastern Europe and even if information was scarce the people knew what was going on.

happened in Timisoara and to blame it on foreign insinuations. However, this rally ended in an anti-Ceausescu demonstration as well.

On the 22nd of December down-town Bucharest was filled with people manifesting against Ceausescu and communism forcing the Ceausescu couple to flee Bucharest in a helicopter. The moment of their flight meant a victory against them and communism. The national television was assaulted by revolutionaries announcing the victory. At that time a group created in 'the heat of the moment' (FSN – The National Salvation Front) started to claim authority and to take decisions. The events that followed are presented by historian Florin Constantiniu as follows:

> "when the night started to fall rumors about imminent terrorist attacks against the television, radio and Central Committee started to be spread. When the night came the first gun fires started to be heard. The most bizarre war in the history of Romania was waged for the next three days. The army, in many places surrounded by a mass of people hysterically called by the television to defend institutions against 'terrorists' (nobody asked the question how some civilians, even with guns – but what and from where – could fight better that the army) fought with 'hostile forces', that remained invisible until today" (2002, p. 511).

In the same day, the Ceausescu couple was caught and arrested. With the reason that the terrorists were attacking because they wanted to free the presidential couple, a trial was organized very quickly. On December 25th 1989, the trial took place and Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu were executed. This marked the end of communism in Romania.

## The Post–Communist Period

During the communist era, the production of culture was controlled and therefore homogeneous and supportive of the national regime. Everybody lived in a sealed environment in which freedom of speech was non – existent. Information and cultural products from abroad were not available for the public. The revolution and the fall of communism meant the opening of the physical borders and also of new horizons (political, economic and cultural). This change also meant Romania's entrance in the context of globalization.

First, the political system changed drastically. In the new context, not only were you allowed to say anything, but your opinion gained power through the vote. For the first time in forty five years, Romania had democratic elections for parliament and the presidency. The Romanian political system changed from a one party rule to a multi party system. The historical political parties were restored and many other parties appeared. Most of all, this change brought freedom to the Romanian people, not only to choose its leaders but also freedom of speech, of principle and of conscience, freedom to travel, to publish and to create. The revolution brought also the recognition and implementation of human rights.

The economy gained a new dynamic too, through the transition from the centralized socialist system to the market economy. Unlike the other East European countries, Romania started the period of transition with a good economic situation because, during the last stage of communism a policy of heavy export led to the payment of all foreign debts and a budget surplus. However, theses advantages disappeared by May 1990 due to the fact that no real economic reform was implemented. The economic

and political scenes are very strongly related because the economic decisions were used as political capital in the first years after the revolution. To outline the influences between the economic and political scenes, a short history of the post-revolution period will be presented. Also this history will help contextualize the changes that occurred and still occur in Romanian culture.

First of all, it should be mentioned that during the revolution, a National Salvation Front (FSN) was created to take care of the political and economic problems that could arise until elections were organized. As Steven D. Roper argues: "the original members of the FSN Council included intellectuals, army officers, and students, but the most prominent members were former communist officials" (2000, p. 66). However, a lot of intellectuals and students left the front after a few weeks. Initially, FSN declared that it would not participate in elections because it is not a political party, it is just a movement created in a crisis situation when the country needed somebody to deal with different problems. Also, FSN was organizing the elections so they could not participate without a conflict in interests. Nevertheless, in January 1990, the movement transformed into a political party and announced its intentions to participate in elections. The conflict of interests was solved through the creation of an organizing committee formed from the members of different parties.

On May 20<sup>th</sup> 1990, Romania had its first democratic elections in a very long time. Seventy – three political parties participated and FSN won with an overwhelming 66% for Senate, 68% for the lower house of the Parliament (Assembly of Deputies) and 85% for president (Roper, 2000, p. 67). Roper argues that:

"the FSN electoral success was due primarily to the lack of any real opposition, the manipulation of the mass media and the violent

nature of the country's transition. Ironically, the FSN, as a former communist party, benefited the most from Ceausescu's cult of personality and use of the secret police, which undermined any opposition movement or underground media" (2000, p. 68).

While I would not call FSN a former communist party, Roper makes a valid point. FSN was formed mostly from communist party activists, had relations with the secret police, seized power during the revolution and it inherited a highly centralized system (which meant that it had the whole media under its control). All these were tools they used to win elections. The fact that they won, when the people knew that they were party activists, supports the argument that the revolution was first anti–Ceausescu and second anti–communism.

In 1992, there were elections again and FSN, now PDSR (Party of Social Democracy in Romania) because of a rupture in the initial party, won again against a coalition formed from the historical parties, a few organizations and civic organizations (CDR – the Democratic convention of Romania). This victory was based on the use of the economy as political capital. No real economic reform was made, or as Roper sates, a "stop and go" policy was applied. In trying to gain popularity, FSN, and after that PDSR started to reform the economy but as soon as a segment of the population started to complain about some changes the reform would be stopped. By 1996, when new elections took place, the economic situation got worse due to the lack of economic reorganization. PDSR lost the elections not only because of the feeble economic situation but also because their electoral program was not about what it will do for the country but rather on how inept the opposition was. Also, they lost control over the mass media as private newspapers, radio stations and TV channels appeared. CDR (whose electoral

program was called Contract with Romania and contained clear statements about how different problems would be solved) won the elections and promised that real economic reform would be accomplished.

However, due to the fact that CDR was a coalition, problems and difference of opinions appeared during their administration. While their victory raised hopes, with everybody thinking that things will finally start to get better, they applied the same stop and go policy as the previous government. Although they inherited a very poverty-stricken economic situation, the restructuring of the economy was very slow mostly because of the fights within the coalition. As an acknowledgement of the fact that the Contract with Romania was not fulfilled, the President declared, near the end of his mandate that he would not participate in the next elections in 2000. In these elections, PDSR won again but the surprise came from the fact that the party with the largest representation in the Parliament after them would be Grater Romania, a strongly nationalist, anti–Semite and xenophobic party. In the second stage of these elections, the head of this party and the head of PDSR (who won and who is a well known communist party activist and who was already president for two times) were the only options.

This situation can be explained by Katherine Verdery's argument that communism did not manage to create a homogeneous identity based on the socialist values but rather it created a negative identity, as 'us' (the people) against 'them' (the leaders). She continues by arguing that the revolution produced a crisis of identity and this crisis was resolved by finding a different 'them'. Therefore, the same type of identity was maintained after the revolution, the difference being that 'the us' is now the Romanian ethnic population and 'the them' are the other ethnic groups in Romania. This

can explain why a strongly nationalist and xenophobic party almost won the elections. However, if we take into consideration that during the same period nationalist parties had a lot of success in elections, not only in Eastern Europe but also in Western Europe (France and Italy for example), the situation is not so black and white anymore. I would argue that one of the reasons is the integration of Romania in Europe and the Western world. The post-communist period is one of transition and reintegration. In this transition Romania needs to find a distinctiveness which can be kept in its integration into the global context. In the same line of reasoning, the success of the nationalist parties in Western Europe might be a response to the attempts of the Eastern European countries to reintegrate, attempts that can be seen as dangerous (culturally, economically and politically). The integration of Romania in Trans–national organizations, such as the European Union, has implications on the cultural terrain due to the fact that Romania's frontiers are opened to influences from abroad.

Thus, the post-communist period is a period of struggles. These struggles are not only internal but external as well. During this stage of transition, the main discourse is the reintegration of Romania in Europe and in the Western world. This means that the political and economic decisions that are taken have to fall under some criteria that are imposed from abroad. The push in the present times is towards integration into the world as a whole, as Robertson names it.

This is the context in which the Romanian culture manifests itself today. After two cultural revolutions during the communist period (the russification and the de–rusification) another one took place in December 1989. I would argue that the latter was a cultural revolution, not only a political one, because the Romanian culture took a turn at

that time, was freed from restrictions and gained the liberty to manifest itself freely. Also, even if we do not take into consideration the two cultural revolutions during the communist era, still a deep change occurred then through the fact that the cultural borders were opened and they generously allowed other cultures to get in.

From a cultural point of view the revolution can be seen in at least two ways. First, it can be understood as an interruption of history, as a breaking point in it because it provoked changes overnight. The change from a totalitarian regime to a democratic one was not natural and gradual but abrupt and violent. After Romania was isolated from the rest of the world for such a long time it hastily entered into a context characterized by integration, free flows of information and cultural products, instantaneity and trans–national relations. What does it mean for Romania to enter so abruptly into the globalization milieu?

While other countries had time to adjust and adapt to the globalization process, Romania rushed right into it. I would argue that the Romanian culture did not have the tools to deal with the violent rupture or with the new context. Due to the thirst for information and the natural curiosity after such a long period of isolation, the Romanian frontiers were wide open for the outside cultures, without any protection for the inside. Foreign music, movies and shows started to bombard the public while Romanian artists were abandoned as any other part of the communist era. While other countries had laws determining the percentage of foreign cultural products that could be broadcast, Romania had none. Foreign cultures were savored with thirst while Romanian culture was discarded as a relic of the socialist past. Thus, the period of transition is difficult for the Romanian culture for at least two reasons. First it needs to redefine and reaffirm itself

after the deep scars left by the communism and second, while doing so, it needs also to fight the pressures from outside.

The revolution can also be interpreted as the ending of a period of interruption in history. The communist era can be seen as the interruption because that regime was imposed over a democratic culture. It can be argued that for Romania, history did not follow a natural course because of an imposed totalitarian regime. The forty five years of communism can be seen as a fracture in history and the revolution as the suture point between the past and the present. This is what Silviu Brucan suggests through the title of his book: "*The Wasted Generation: Memoirs of the Romanian Journey from Capitalism to Socialism and Back*". This would mean that the Romanian culture needs to go back in time, rediscover its 'authentic' values and bring them back into the contemporary world. These rediscovered values, traditions and symbols can be used as tools in dealing with the global context. However, to do this would be, as in the first interpretation, completely discarding a whole historical period that (by force or not) had a deep impact on the Romanian culture and its values. Denying this impact would mean denying not only a part of the Romanian history but also a part of the Romanian heritage.

I would argue that the revolution can be seen as a rupture and a suture at the same time. It is a rupture because it completely differentiates the communist past from the post-communist present. At the same time it is also a suture, a bridge between the two because it signifies the change, or movement from one to the other. It is also the starting point of a new historical age. The revolution brought changes overnight but that does not necessarily mean that Romania became a democratic state in that moment. The post–

revolution period is one of transition from communism to democracy and this period of transition is taking place in the context of globalization.

Through the revolution, the frontiers of Romania and its culture were unlocked and made permeable. It is true that Romanian culture did not have the tools to deal with this situation but I would argue that this is why this period is one of transition. This transition is a battle fought on two fronts. On one side, Romania is struggling to restructure and reform its political, economical and cultural domains and on the other side, it is struggling to integrate into the world. These sides are strongly related because the internal fight is waged within the larger context of reintegration. Romania needs to redefine itself so it can fit in the context of globalization which means that while doing so, it needs to accept processes brought by it and at the same time to develop tools to remain distinct.

Romania was a communist country for almost forty five years. This had two major implications: the ties with the western world and Western Europe were severed and the cultural identity of the people was reconfigured. As we have seen, the communist ideology and the personality cult that dominated a major part of the communist era reconfigured histories, traditions, images and symbols of the Romanian culture so they could fit the communist organization of the state, to create new allegiances and to provide support for the totalitarian regime. This reconfiguration of cultural symbols and values severed the link with the past and, in turn, altered the cultural identity of the people. This change was not the result of a negotiation with the new and foreign. Rather, it was the result of the imposed new symbols, values and meanings. It can be argued that a new cultural identity was imposed over the old one. This is not valid for the generations of

people born and raised during the communist era which were not old enough when the revolution occurred to realize the truth about the lives they were living. These new symbols and values were all that they knew.

The identity of the Romanian people was already altered by communism. After the revolution, Romania had to redefine itself in a context in which the influences are very strong, because of globalization. How do you reconstruct cultural identity when your link with the past, traditions, and values is severed and your cultural space is permanently invaded by new images, values, and symbols? The fall of communism and the opening of borders meant, for Romania, a shift in the construction of values and symbols as well as in the production of culture. The grounds for identification processes and different paths of identification are no longer provided, or constructed by the nation state (which, before the revolution, meant Ceausescu and the communist party).

I would argue that an analysis of Romanian popular music would put these new paths of identification in evidence. While right after the revolution the Romanian culture was bombarded with foreign cultural products that were generally preferred over the Romanian products, the situation has changed in last few years. Starting around 1997–1998 the Romanian music industry started to be increasingly appreciated and local artists started to have as much success as the foreign ones. I would argue that once the initial euphoria was over, and the thirst for the new and maybe even the exotic was satisfied, a need for something to give a sense of a more intimate belonging appeared. The different styles of music that flourished in this period are seen as struggles to redefine and find a cultural identity, as different strategies to create cultural identities and maintain the

distinctiveness of the Romanian people as well as negotiation strategies through which a

place in the global context can be found.

# Chapter 4: Romanian Popular Music and Cultural Identity in the Context of Globalization

As I have argued in the previous chapter, popular music can be understood as a field of negotiations for cultural identities. The context in which these struggles take place is globalization of culture. This context is not seen as passive but as an active rearrangement of relationships between different cultures and identities. Popular music is understood here as expressing the negotiations that take place in this context and the outcomes of these negotiations. Different styles of music will be analyzed as different types of negotiation and reconstruction of identities, in other words, as active participants in the construction of cultural identity as well as expressions of the struggles that exist in Romanian culture and in the construction of cultural identity (in the context of globalization).

The first section of this chapter will set the stage for the analysis of different music trends as possible paths of identification by emphasizing the link between popular music and identity. The second section will be the actual analysis of these trends and the last section will focus on showing how they can become representations of different identification strategies and direct participants in cultural identity construction.

Popular music was chosen in order to analyze these negotiations due to the fact that it is a site of expression of cultural identities as well as a direct participant in their construction. Exploring the field of popular music is sociologically relevant due to the fact that popular music not only illustrates cultural identities but also plays a part in their formation. Due to the limited scope of this thesis I chose to focus on four important

trends. The analysis of some of these music trends was made difficult by the fact that back in the Romanian sociological tradition of research on popular culture, music is not addressed (and some of these trends are part of the Romanian music scene only). However this fact makes this topic more interesting and pertinent because it leads towards a better understanding of cultural identities and the way they are constructed in Romania in transition. The styles I will focus on in my analysis are: Hip–Hop, Manele, Traditional Music and Ethno–Dance. These trends were chosen because they are among the most popular styles present on the Romanian popular music scene. They will be analyzed through theories of globalization of culture and cultural identity presented in the first two chapters. Hip–Hop, Manele and Ethno–Dance were selected because they are styles that emerged after the revolution, when Romania entered as a participant in the global context. Traditional music is a style that resisted during communism and is still present on the Romanian cultural scene. I argue that these styles can be understood as concepts such as: form without background, metizaje, hybridity and authenticity, concepts that are most often used in the debates on globalization of culture. Hip–Hop music is analyzed as a form without background, Manele as a form of metizaje, Ethno– Dance as a form of hybridity and Traditional music as a possible authentic cultural product. Music is seen as a text that can be read and analyzed. Both style and content will be generally examined to better understand and explain the changes and negotiations that are taking place in the Romanian popular music. This chapter looks at these four trends generally, trying to understand the significance of each of them for cultural identity construction. In other words, the analysis of these trends is showing how music provides different ways in which we can position ourselves into the social. Also, analyzing each

style (not song or repertoire of a band) as a whole, as a cultural product, shows how each of them offers different grounds in which cultural identities can be embedded.

## Music and Identity

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the production of culture was censored in communist Romania and used as political propaganda. Cultural identity was constructed around a culture specifically produced to be used in the interest of the communist party. While during the communist period the sole custodian for identity was the nation state, after the revolution, other sources for cultural identities emerged. One of these sources is popular music. What is the relationship between popular music and cultural identity? In what follows I will try to answer this question and give an idea of the way this relationship is seen in this thesis. Abner Cohen argues that: "music can be seen as an instrument for the development and maintenance of a social collectivity, with its network of interpersonal relations of amity" (1993, p. 95). This means that music is a tool that creates and maintains unity in a group. Also, music enables relations within a group. Through music people recognize that they are in a way the same, and not only discover that they belong to a group but also through music their relationship with that group is maintained. Thus music creates and maintains a sense of identity and participates in the construction of cultural identities.

Simon Frith also draws a connection between music and identity arguing:

> "first, that identity is mobile, a process not a thing, a becoming not
> a being, second, that our experience of music – of music making or
> music listening – is best understood as an experience of this self in
> process. Music, like identity, is both performance and story,

describes the social in the individual and the individual in the social, the mind in the body and the body in the mind" (Frith, 1996, p. 109).

Hence for Frith, identity is a continuous development of the self, an experience or a way of experiencing different things. Also music comes from experience, offers experience and, through style and story participates in identity construction. Although it is not Frith's intention to show how music represents people and identities but rather to show how music creates identities, I would argue that his theory can work both ways. If identity is an experience and music comes from and creates experiences, then music not only produces identities but also comes from identity. If identity is the experience of a developing self and the music created through this experience creates in turn experiences, then music not only produces identities but it also represents them. This representation comes from the fact that music describes the social, as Frith writes it, describes ways of experiencing the social and describes identities.

I would also argue that if "music describes the social in the individual and the individual in the social" (p. 109), as Frith holds, music creates identities not only through the production of an experience but also through the fact that people can recognize these experiences as already lived. The experience described by music can exist already, it does not need to be produced by it, but through music people can recognize that they experience the world the same way as others, thus identifying with the music and with all those who feel the same way as they do (the manifestation of this feeling is the creation and listening of a certain type of music). Looking at it this way, music does not only create experiences and identities, but also represents them. In the same line of thinking, different styles of music can be seen as representing different ways to experience the

world and the social. They are different ways of making sense of the same world, of negotiating a place in the social as it is experienced. Also, there is not one simple relationship between music and identity construction because people do not listen only one style. In other words, there is not only one style with which people identify or that participates in constructing cultural identities. People select different elements from different styles, elements that fit (?) with one of the facets of identity, as Frith argues:

> "whether we are talking about Finnish dance halls in Sweden, Irish pubs in London, or Indian film music in Trinidad, we're dealing not just with nostalgia for 'traditional sounds', not just with a commitment to 'different' songs, but also with experience of alternative modes of social interaction" (Frith, 1996, p.124)

Thus, different styles of music provide different experiences and different ways of experiencing the social. This does not mean that everybody chooses only one of these modes, rather that a variety of ways of dealing with social interaction can be grasped from a variety of styles and one person can identify with elements from different styles.

## Traditional Music

One style present on the Romanian music scene is traditional music. This type of music tries to keep the authenticity of the Romanian culture and spirit intact. Usually the songs have unknown origins, and are gathered from all corners of the country. These are old songs, preserved and passed on vocally from generation to generation, until a researcher or a singer finds, collects and records them. The composers of traditional music keep all the elements that are considered part of the tradition, the songs are composed to respect the old traditional form and rhythm specific to different areas of the

country. This music is seen as representing the real, authentic Romanian spirit, although this can be questioned and contested, as we will see later. Generally, it is considered and referred to as the treasury vault of the Romanian culture and as containing the Romanian way of seeing the world with everything in it.

Variations in style appear depending on the geographical origins of the song, but not depending on time. This style seems unchanged mostly because all those who sing it try to keep it as authentic and as close to the old songs as possible. The themes are diverse, and there is no single predominant discourse and they address all aspects of Romanian life. To add to the note of authenticity, when the singers perform, they are always dressed in the traditional costumes of various areas of Romania.

Singers like Margareta Paslaru, Irina Loghin, Benone Sinulescu are known to anybody in Romania. The most famous singer of this style is Maria Tanase who is referred to as the "Enchanted Bird" and "Maria of the Song". Even if she died forty years ago she is still recognized as the best folklore singer in Romania. At her initiative, and with her help, a few Romanian folk songs were translated in French, which were interpreted by her. These songs, along with a few others were edited, after her death, into a disc called "Le chant du monde" which was awarded in 1965 with the "Grand prix du disc", by the Charles Cross Academy in Paris.

Traditional music is usually considered the music of the Romanian people, music without influences from outside and an authentic Romanian product. This genuineness is seen as being inherent in songs mainly because they are usually anonymous and gathered directly form the Romanian people who created them. I would argue that looking at music this way is adopting a somehow naive view because the possible influences are

completely overlooked. Yes, most of these songs come from the experiences of the Romanian people, are old and contain symbols, values and traditions but they were not created into a perfectly sealed, closed environment. Even if the contact with the outside cultures was reduced (in the case of old songs for example) it still existed. Thus, the concept of authenticity or authentic Romanian music poses problems because it assumes that there is a Romanian specificity that is not altered by the contact with other cultures or by time, it supposes that there is a Romanian spirit or essence that remains unchanged no matter what and that traditional music is the illustration of this essence, the illustration of the Romanian spirit and culture.

The concept of authenticity also poses problems because it can refer to different things. In *Global Pop*, Timothy D. Taylor identifies three types of authenticity: authenticity as positionality, as emotionality and as primality. Authenticity as positionality refers to the fact that the cultural product, in this case music or a song, is judged on the base of the origins of its creator. "Consumers at the traditional metropoles look toward the former margins for anything real, rather than the produced. They want 'real' gangsta rap musicians – black, poor, from the hood – not middle class ones, and certainly not white ones" (Taylor,1997,p.22). From this point of view the authenticity of music comes from its creator and performer. The second type of authenticity (as emotionality) refers to the fact that music has a spiritual dimension that creates an emotional experience. Therefore, the traditional music, as a creation of the people, is authentic if it stays true to the spirituality of the Romanian people. This would mean that it has to create the experience of being Romanian. Authenticity as primality refers to origins also. In this view authentic music should be rooted in that "timeless, ancient, the

primal, the pure" essence of a culture (Taylor, 1997, p. 26). From this perspective, there is a Romanian specificity which can not be altered by time, interactions with other cultures, which stayed unchanged from the beginnings of the country and traditional music is authentic only if it is rooted in that ancient, untouched essence or specificity.

I would say that in a certain way this music can be considered authentic. Even if it has influences from other cultures, so it is not pure, even if it changed over time, so it is not everlasting and ancient and primordial, even if the singer altered it somehow, so it is not true to the feelings of the original creator, it can still be recognized by any Romanian as Romanian traditional music. It can still be recognized as containing Romanian values and symbols, or it can actually be seen as a symbol for the Romanian culture. It is not pure? It does not represent an unchanged eternal essence? I would argue that this is part of what makes it authentic. It stays true to the fact that there are influences in the Romanian culture and it stays true to the fact that this culture evolves in time. Traditional music is recognized by every Romanian as an authentic Romanian cultural product and everybody knows it. Even if not everybody buys it, I would say that the audience of this style is large and covers all ages because many people listen to it at least at certain times of their lives (holydays and weddings for example) in combination with other styles.

As we have seen in the first chapter, in today's world, there is a fascination with the exotic, different and the authentic and there is also a need for a traditional/authentic form of culture. Traditional music answers both fascination and need through the fact that it provides, on one hand, something different and maybe exotic for the outside and, on the other hand, something known and specific for the inside. Both fascination and need for that one authentic traditional music appear as implications of the homogenization

processes brought by globalization of culture. The preservation of traditional music in Romania is not only a way of resisting these homogenization processes but also a way of strengthening local cultural identities. In a context where flows of images and cultural products constantly invade the space of the Romanian culture, traditional music represents a path for identification processes because it gives a sense of an unbroken relationship with the past and it is a part of the collective memory of the Romanian people.

## Ethno-Dance

Another trend present on the Romanian music scene is ethno-dance. This style appeared around 1996 when different pop bands like Class and Proiect K-1 started to include in their repertoires old and well known folk songs, adding to them new instruments and new sounds. The first band that committed their work entirely to this style is Ro–Mania. Their motto is "the real values have to be searched in the roots of our nation"[8] and they affirm that their main hope is to take the Romanian hora (traditional dance) abroad. Ro-Mania was soon followed by other bands like Etno (Ethno), Rustic and Autentic (Authentic). As it can be observed all names imply a relationship with tradition, old, and authenticity.

This type of music combines two different styles: traditional (folk) music and western techno music. The songs of this style are processed and modernized folk songs. Some of the traditional instruments are substituted with electronic devices and the songs

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[8] http://www.cat-music.ro/home.php?identifier=romania

are (re)mixed in the studio. The discourse and themes are the same as in the traditional music, the rhythms are kept but combined with new dance ones. Even the clothing of the singers is a combination between traditional costumes and modern style. These songs are an attempt to bring the traditional music in the modern context, as well as an attempt to deal with the homogenization processes brought by globalization. They are a hybrid between the old and the new as well as between the inside and the outside. Of course, Ethno-dance is not the only style characterized by hybridity but is the only one that presents this interesting mix between two forms of hybridity.

Ethno-dance can appear as a hybrid or a negotiation between the old and the new because it combines the traditional old music with the modern rhythms of dance music. Through the use of new technologies to modernize an old form of culture, while still keeping its specificity and values, the bands that adopt this style bring the traditional music into the current context and to the attention of those who are open only to new forms of culture. Also, it can be seen as such a negotiation because it brings together the values of old and new forms of cultures, it shows that the old and the new can live together, and not only that but they can work together to enrich the Romanian culture. It becomes enriched because the combination between old and new gives birth to a new form of culture, which even if is a hybrid is a new addition to the Romanian music scene. Also, because of this combination, the audience for this type of music is formed from people of all ages.

Ethno-dance appears also as a hybrid between the inside and the outside because they combine the specificity of the Romanian folk music with western techno music, which is a product imported from abroad. Ethno–dance can also appear as a negotiation

between 'the us' and 'the other' because it seems to recognize the strong homogenizing strategies brought forth by globalization. It can be argued that through the adopted techniques (of combining traditional music with dance music) this style is trying to keep the Romanian specificity alive. At the same time, while struggling with these homogenizing strategies it might be attempting to bring this specificity in the global context (or market) by making it sound closer to a type of music which can be recognized around the world. An example for this attempt is the hope of the Ro–Mania band to take this music outside Romania. The ethno-dance songs can be seen also as points of resistance to globalization of culture because they are trying to keep the uniqueness of the Romanian culture in a context in which the major tendencies are those of uniformity and similarity. The fact that this style is a negotiation between the within and the outside is what it makes it different from metizaje because, as we have seen, metizaje brings forth the tensions between different cultural heritages within the Romanian culture.

I would argue that this type of music is the outcome of globalization of culture for all the reasons mentioned above. It is a result of the standardizing strategies because it is a form of techno western music, which is a type that can be recognized everywhere in the world. It is a result of the homogenization strategies which, as we saw in the first chapter, are indigenized by the local cultures and give different results, because it is a combination between the global dance music and the Romanian traditional music. Also, even as a point of resistance to globalization of culture, this style can still be seen as a part of globalization due to the fact that resistance is brought by globalization. However, even as an outcome of globalization ethno–dance is still a strategy of dealing with the rapid changes that are occurring in the contemporary context and a representation of the

struggles that are taking place in this context. It is an illustration of these struggles and strategies because it shows the attempts of Romanian artists to keep alive what they consider valuable in the Romanian culture, to maintain the specificity and uniqueness of the Romanian people in their music while trying to fit in the current global context.

## Manele

Another style present on the Romanian music scene is "manele". This style also appeared after the revolution. However, its roots seem to be in an older style, the fiddler music. The first well known band is Albatros (which recorded until now twenty four albums), as it is mentioned on a website dedicated to this style, and they started to sing right after the revolution. Other prominent names are: Adrian Copilul Minune (Adrian the Wander Boy) and Costi Ionita. Sub – categories also started to be developed, as manea – dance (with representatives like L.A., Minodora la Maximm, Elegance, Kosovo) and manea – hip – hop (Verdict). The name of the style comes from the gipsy language and it means "music for the heart". This type of music is a combination of Serb, Gipsy, Turkish, Tartar, and Romanian folk rhythms. Manele is often described as music for parties, for drinking, for dancing and for having fun. I would argue that its roots are in the fiddler's music for a few reasons. First, the fiddler's music was always considered drinking music, for parties, weddings and for having fun. Second, it has the same influences as the manele. Third, most of the manele singers started as, and some still are fiddlers, and fourth, manele is slowly replacing the fiddler's music at most parties. This trend is an

interesting mix between style and content, due to the fact that on one hand, it has traditional roots, and on the other hand its content is commercial.

The main themes of the songs are: money, success, jealousy and love. The clothing of the singer seems to be important for completing the discourse of the song. The main character of the songs is usually very successful, loved by every girl (at least on the surface), envied by other guys for his success and has a lot of money that he/she spends with his/her friends. The singer usually wears elegant clothing, often made of shiny materials (that symbolize the financial well – being) and a lot of jewelries. Also, in video – clips the expensive car is always present as well as the girls (they are present in concerts on the stage also).

I would argue that the influences present in this music are not necessary foreign and coming from the outside. The Gypsies (or the Romms), the Tartars and the Turks are some of the ethnic minorities in Romania, thus these influences are from within, not from the outside. I argue that this music is a metizaje because it combines rhythms from different cultures that exist within the Romanian culture. As William Rowe and Vivien Schelling argue, metizaje presumes a mixture of cultures where none is removed completely. Manele is a metizaje because it brings together all these rhythms, as a remainder of the fact that the Romanian culture is not a homogeneous one. This music brings forth the struggles for the assertion of difference within the Romanian culture, the struggles for the affirmation of different heritages. These tensions surfaced after the revolution because the new context favors the affirmation of difference, unlike the communist era when everybody was supposed to be the same. The communist regime tried to even the population socially, economically and culturally and besides the

traditional music, it allowed only one other style of music to be broadcasted on the TV channel and on the radio.

Manele is not erasing the differences; on the contrary, it brings them together. It combines different heritages into a new cultural product. The popularity of this style can be explained exactly through the fact that it is a metizaje, it can bring together people with different cultural heritages. It can be argued that manele surpasses the differences as anybody can recognize something familiar in this music. Indeed the audience of this style is formed from people of all ages and from all ethnic backgrounds present in Romania.

As for the content of manele, as it was presented earlier, the main themes refer mostly to money, love, jealousy etc. People who listen to this music speak of it as being what the pop music is in the United Sates, "music for the people", a universal style of music that is comprehensible for everybody. While it is a metizaje, manele is a commercial one. This music can provide a path for identification processes not necessary through recognition of similar experiences but also through the desire to have similar experiences. This style assumes that everybody has a material dream and would want:

> "To have a villa with a pool
> And a new Ferrari at the front door
> And Schumi as my driver every evening
> To play Basketball with Jordan in my village"
> (Sing Sing BB, Aoleu Inima Mea / Oh, My Poor Heart)?

It can be argued that manele contains 2 levels of metizaje: one between the different rhythms existent in this music and one between the music and its content. While the music can be seen as describing the tensions between different cultural heritages within the Romanian culture, the content is commercial and without any noticeable ethnic background.

The popularity of this music has generated many debates in talk – shows on TV and radio stations, and in newspapers. The manele phenomenon, as the great success of this music is called, is a topic of discussion for journalists working in the field of music or not, and for critics in all fields (culture or others). These debates contain mostly critiques to this type of music. The critics generally argue that this style has a poor quality (not only the music but also the text), it contains foreign influences and the success it has is not justified considering this poor quality and influences. Usually the conclusions of these discussions were that this phenomenon will pass in maximum one year, and that it is just a short-lived trend that will be replaced by another one very soon. However, at least three years have passed since those conclusions were formulated, and manele still enjoys a great success.

Hence, Manele is popular as a music trend and as a topic of discussion. The big controversy around it gave birth to new expressions in the Romanian language. For example, those who sing and those who listen to this music are called "manelisti". This term started to be used also in a derogatory way, meaning a person without education and without good manners. Also, the name of the trend, manele is used in the same way, depicting an unpleasant situation or an action that should have never been taken. These new expressions are not used only in slang (?), but also in newspapers referring to different situations or even political decisions.

# Hip-Hop

Hip-hop, which appeared a short time ago in Romania, is a style that expresses and participates in constructing cultural identities. Hip-hop appeared in US a few decades ago and this is what it was originally:

> "hip–hop is an Afro – diasporic cultural form which attempts to negotiate the experiences of marginalization, brutally truncated opportunity and oppression within the cultural imperatives of African–American and Caribbean history, identity and community" (Rose, 1994, p. 71).

Hip-Hop emerged as a response to two major changes that started in the New York in 1970s. The first change was the fact that due to new urban projects entire blue collar communities, and mostly African–American, Caribbean and Hispanic populations, were physically moved in certain areas of New York and their communities were almost completely destroyed. The second change was the direction the urban economy took in that period with a redirection towards services in the situation in which the industrial work was mostly computerized. This way a lot of workers qualified in a certain field remained without jobs. In these conditions, when entire communities were put in very poor neighborhoods with very small chances to get out, the hip–hop culture was developed. Hip-Hop emerged in New York, but it spread really fast. Marginalized Afro-American and Hispanic communities from other major American cities developed their own hip–hop scenes. What seems to me to be important about these scenes is the fact that they:

> "link various regional postindustrial urban experiences of alienation, unemployment, police harassment and social and economic isolation to their local and specific experience via hip – hop's language, style and attitude" (Tricia Rose, 1994, p. 84).

I find this important because it shows that hip–hop has a political and social discourse expressed in certain ways, which can be understood by certain people. In this sense hip–hop is provides a sense of identity. The discourse present in this music contains references to segregation, unequal chances, poverty and discrimination. However, hip–hop, as many other music styles, was commercialized. The popularization of hip–hop led to the appearance of bands whose songs do not necessarily have a political discourse. So, for part of the hip–hop scene the initial social and political background is lost.

A Romanian hip-hop scene has emerged in post revolution Bucharest, around 1993–1994. This style did not exist before the revolution because of the communist censorship. The Romanian hip-hop scene is mainly Romanian. American hip-hop is present but it is less popular than the Romanian one. The first and most prominent Romanian hip–hop bands are BUG Mafia (Black Underground Mafia), Parazitii (The Parasites) and La Familia. As the members of BUG Mafia declare on their official website, they started to sing first in English because the words of their songs were offensive and this way they were avoiding censorship. However, around 1996 they started to sing in Romanian and this led to a bigger audience. These three bands are considered the propagators of hip–hop in Romania and they are the most successful bands of this style. Their audience is formed of teenagers from all areas of the country, urban or rural environment. Recently, a lot of debates started in Romanian media on this type of music. The Romanian National Commission for Broadcasting banned the broadcast of two hip–hop video clips because of the vulgarity of the images and the

words. This decision sparked debates on the right for free speech and the freedom of mass media, as well as on the quality of this style and the influence it has on youth.

Romanian hip–hop bands sing about how hard life is in a certain neighborhood, about how being the member of a gang is the only way to survive. They also speak about gun fights among members of different gangs and between gangs (or the 'boys of the neighborhood') and police. The police is described as oppressive, aggressive and unfair while the 'boys of the neighborhood' are smart, strong and always one step ahead the law enforcement. The neighborhood is usually described as a battlefield and home at the same time. The street becomes family and home because it teaches the young inexperienced boy or girl how to survive, how to become a man or a woman and how to deal with life. Poverty, crime and permanent insecurity are described as the main characteristics of certain areas in Bucharest.

The words and the tone of the Romanian hip–hop songs are usually vulgar (as hip–hop usually is), aggressive and often enough, instigating crime as a way of resisting oppression. The main point of most of the songs are that certain areas in Bucharest are stricken by poverty and insecurity, that the population in these areas is oppressed by the police and discriminated against. An example of such content is the next quote from La Familia's song, *Family Problems:*

> "Do not judge me to hard mother
> I am not the ideal son, but I am not a hooligan
> I do drugs and mugging to the sunrise
> I am not home when you wake up in the morning
> The fights never stop, I can remember
> You threw me out of the house
> I never thought I will ever come back
> But there is no problem; my house is on the street
> With my friends, with the thugs, with the boys that are there for me
> Father, where the f**k are you now

Where the hell are you, I wanted to tell you my pain
It would have been better if you were with me
Mother managed without you
We have family problems and I am sorry
That you didn't stay to feel them with your son."
(La Familia - Family Problems)


I argue that the Romanian hip–hop music should be understood as a form without background for more than one reason. The theory of forms without background was written by Titu Maiorescu in 1868 and it refers to the fact that those who were going abroad to study different arts and sciences, when coming back into the country would start reproducing what they saw, hoping that this way the Romanian culture will be raised at the level of the western ones:

> "unprepared as our youngsters were, and still are, amazed at the great phenomenon of the modern culture, they saw only the effects, but never searched to find the causes, they saw only the outer forms but never understood the deeper historical background which produced these forms out of necessity, and without which their existence would not have been possible. And this way, limited in a fatal superficiality, with their minds and hearts full with fire, the Romanian youth comes back into the country determined to copy and reproduce the appearances of the western culture, with the belief that very quickly they will create literature, science and art, but most of all freedom in a modern state" (Maiorescu, 1978, p. 125).


I would say that this theory can be applied to the Romanian hip–hop music because while importing the style, attitude and discourse, it completely ignores the historical and social background of the hip–hop culture. The discourse of this music has no roots in the Romanian urban context and has no relevance exactly because the background is ignored. However, as it will be explained further, the roots can be transplanted into the Romanian culture and a background can be formed around them.

Romanian hip–hop music is a form without background because it is a cultural product created on the basis of an imported form (style) that does not fit with the Romanian urban context. Unlike the American hip–hop artists, the Romanian ones are not part of a minority or a certain community which is discriminated against on social class (?) or racial bases. Also, hip-hop was a form of re-appropriation of urban space and was used as a way of empowering a certain life style. The context in Romania is different because, as a heritage from the communist period, the neighborhoods in Bucharest are composed of mixed population. Due to the nationalization or demolition of houses and entire districts of the city, people from all social classes were moved by force in all areas of Bucharest. Thus, you can not speak of certain neighborhoods as being poorer or richer than others (except the areas reserved for high ranking party members, which are now inhabited by different dignitaries). They offer the same level of safety and access to different institutions to any inhabitant, whatever his / her social class or ethnicity. Another reason I would call the Romanian hip–hop music a form without background is the fact that the style that was appropriated by the Romanian singers has already lost its social and political background. The hip–hop that arrived in Romania was the commercial and the popular one, not the one that was created and performed in the poor neighborhoods of New York–South Bronx. Some of the Romanian artists integrate this commercial form of hip-hop, continuing to promote it as a commercial brand (an example is the band BUG Mafia through starting their own hip-hop clothing line). This is an example of how globalization transports and changes a cultural product. Hip–hop is a form that traveled without its background and was appropriated in the form it arrived.

A peculiar phenomenon takes place; a background for this music is built by fans that are starting to act like their lives are as those described in hip–hop songs. A new kind of behavior is formed around this type of music. Teenagers do not only dress like the singers but also act like them. This is an example of how music participates in the creation of cultural identities. Identifying with this music can make sense for some people for a few reasons such as: it might fit with their situation, it might represents western values some people adhere to and it might represents something "cool" that is appreciated by youth. Also, life in the urban context, as it was created by the communists (everybody forced to live in apartment buildings, in small spaces, with the street the only playing ground available) can be also seen as a factor of identification. Thus, even if hip-hop music initially appeared as a form without background its roots get transplanted in the Romanian urban context and a background is created for this style.

Hip-hop provides a new path for identification processes through the fact that it interpolates people who live in certain conditions (i.e. harsh, urban), it offers new ways of experiencing the social and also a very strong link with the world outside the Romanian frontiers. I would argue that this style strengthens global cultural identities because it is a worldwide youth trend that makes connections possible between people living in different countries but in similar conditions. Even if hip-hop travels without its social and historical background, the form can connect people that live in comparable conditions, can create new grounds for identification processes not only locally, but also globally. Also, as hip-hop became a youth phenomenon, not an urban one, it provides people with new ways of positioning themselves into the social, not only for those who live in certain conditions but also for those who want to experience the social in a different way (for

example youth in suburbs listen to hip-hop not because they live in certain conditions but because, on one hand it has an element of coolness and, on the other hand, because it provides new experiences and a new way in which the world around them can be seen or understood).

## Romanian Popular Music in the Global Context

In the beginning of this chapter it was affirmed that different styles of music will be analyzed as different strategies of negotiation, as reflections of the struggles that exist in a culture in the context of globalization and also as direct participants in the construction of cultural identities. Romania had to confront not only the processes brought forth by globalization, but also the communist regime. The identity of the people was already altered by communism. After the revolution, Romania had and still has to redefine itself in a context in which the influences are very strong because of the new technological and market shifts. I would argue that all music trends described above can be seen as different strategies of dealing with the modern context characterized by rapid changes, permeability of borders, flows of information and cultural products because music can be seen as an intermediary, as a mediator in the relationships between people (or social relations?).

As we have seen, hip-hop music is an imported form that has no background in the urban social context of Romania. However, globalization has very strong homogenizing strategies hence the Romanian hip-hop can be seen as an example for such strategies. Also, the fact that some people identify with this type of music shows that the

social context is changing. As the differences between social classes become more obvious, people start to move, so some neighborhoods will probably become poorer than others. Also, the new urban planning that proposes the construction of new residential areas at the peripheries of Bucharest (these areas will be suburbs or gated enclaves), will also lead to an increased number of movements from the center. Thus a background for this music is created. It can be also argued that youth identifies with this type of music because it might fit with their situation (they can be very poor, they can be part of an ethnic minority and, for a reason or other feel discriminated or simply because they live in an urban context). This style is not only an exemplification of how cultural forms travel without their social and historical background but also an illustration of how such a form is transformed and adapted to a different context, of how a background is built around such a cultural product and how it can participate in the construction of cultural identities. Hip-hop also illustrates the social changes that are taking place in the period of transition, when the differences between social classes become visible and it provides a new path for identification processes, a path that fits with the new social context.

Manele, even if contested a lot, shows that there are tensions within the Romanian culture and that negotiations between different cultural heritages started to occur. I would argue that this style became such a phenomenon because during the communist period these negotiations were not possible. No matter how much communism tried to standardize the Romanian people and culture, these differences were never erased. Probably manele is such a contested style not only because of its poor quality but also because these differences were never resolved. Different cultural heritages did not have the chance to negotiate their place in the Romanian culture until 1989. People can

identify with this style because they belong to one of the ethnic minorities whose cultural influence can be observed in this music. Also, this trend can participate in the construction of cultural identities as it reveals the social through a different perspective and creates new experiences. Through the debates on this style, different cultural identities are also debated. The various rhythms existent in this trend can be seen as symbols of different cultural heritages which are the base on which cultural identities can be constructed. Manele shows not only the tensions that exist between these different cultural heritages but also the fact that Romania is going through a period of transition, not only economically and politically but also culturally.

Ethno–dance, as it was already argued, is a negotiation between the old and the new and between the Romanian culture and the foreign influences. It is a hybrid, in two ways, on one hand because it combines an old form of culture with a new one, and on the other hand, because it combines the within (traditional Romanian music) with the outside (techno western music). Globalization of culture, through the new media technologies, provides different new images, symbols, values and ways of positioning ourselves in the social and creates new allegiances over borders. Through its hybridity, ethno-dance represents and participates in the cultural identity construction because, on one hand, it enforces the local cultural identity and, on the other hand, it strengthens other levels of identity, such as the continental or global. Ethno-dance also illustrates the struggles that exist in the period of transition, when the grounds for cultural identity are shifting from a national repressed culture to a democratic one, in a context that renders this culture permeable to foreign influences.

The preservation of traditional music can be seen as a strategy of negotiation between the local and the global, a way of resisting to the standardization processes brought by globalization and also a way to enter the global context on a unique position. Traditional music becomes important more than ever in the context of globalization, when Romanian culture becomes vulnerable and permeable and when allegiances over borders are created through new media technologies. In this context, this style can be used as a tool for strengthening not only the local culture, but also local cultural identities. Traditional music correlates cultural identity with national identity through the fact that it is seen as authentic Romanian music that comprises and preserves Romanian values and symbols with which any Romanian can identify. Also, the fact that any Romanian listens to it at certain times and can recognize it shows that traditional music is part of the collective past and memory of the Romanian people, which, as we have seen in chapter two, provide a ground on which cultural identities are constructed.

Due to the process of globalization Romanian music became more diversified. There are new styles and new rhythms that coexist with the old ones. Even if a part of these new styles have no support in the social context of Romania, even if a part of them are just trying to copy foreign singers, they can be considered new additions to the Romanian culture. They can remain unchanged or they can be influenced by the Romanian specificities and become completely different and new styles that do not exist anywhere in the world. Globalization, as Garcia Canclini argues, is a dialectical situation between homogenization and heterogenization. It does not only make different cultures look the same but it also reinforces the local cultures. It creates heroes or rhythms that can be recognized in the whole world but it also allows for the distribution of one culture

around the world. Yes, a type of music can be understood in any part of the world but also this universal music becomes influenced by the local cultures. The diffusion of culture does not have only one direction but many. Globalization also reinforces the local cultures and identities through the fact that it creates movements of resistance to its influences and standardizing strategies.

The different trends present on the Romanian music scene provide different paths for identification or different strategies through which people define themselves as groups. This is not to say that only one of them is necessarily chosen by someone over the others, rather that they represent different possibilities to position ourselves individually or collectively in the global context and in Romania in transition. People can identify with elements taken from various trends; they can listen to different styles and take something from each of them. Also, as we have seen in the second chapter, globalization creates fragmented cultural identities through the fact that it creates allegiances over frontiers. A concrete example is the creation of the European cultural identity, which encloses three different levels: national, regional and continental. Each of the music trends analyzed above can enforce one or more of these levels, thus they can be brought into play in different combinations.

Traditional music provides a ground for cultural identities through the fact that it gives a sense of an unbroken relationship with the past and it is a part of the collective memory of the Romanian people. It expresses the need of authenticity brought forth by homogenizing strategies and at the same time it is an answer to this need. In this sense, traditional music reinforces national cultural identities. Ethno-dance reformulates (rewords) an old form of culture in a new way so it can speak to younger generations and,

at the same time it is a negotiation between traditional Romanian music and global techno music, in other words a negotiation between the local and the global. This way, ethno-dance reinforces, on one side national identities and, on the other side global cultural identities. Manele expresses not only the tensions between different cultural heritages present in the Romanian culture, but also the freedom to articulate these tensions and allegiances with a different culture besides the traditional Romanian one, so it reinforces regional and continental cultural identities. Hip-hop reinforces global cultural identities through the fact that it is a world wide trend that bypasses national frontiers. It mediates relationships between people situated in different spaces, offering them a common ground in which cultural identities can be embedded.

As it was argued before, these different styles are often listened to together and they do not exclude each other. They provide different perspectives and images about the world, offering various symbols and giving people the chance to choose from a range of cultural identities constructed through these images and perspectives. As the grounds for identification processes and different paths of identification are no longer provided or constructed only by the nation state or the communist party, through the emergence of other sources, such as popular music and these new styles, new ways of constructing cultural identities emerge also, as well as new allegiances, or new identities.

Moreover, after the revolution the borders of Romania were open to processes like regionalization, continentalisation and globalization. These processes provide different strategies and paths of identification also. As we have seen, some of these styles enforce such regional or continental cultural identities through the discourse they provide. National, regional, continental and global cultural identities do not exclude each other.

Rather, they operate together as different levels or allegiances of the same cultural identity. In the same way, different styles of music are listened to together, or as a mixture, due to the fact that they enforce these different levels and allegiances. More concretely, applied to the styles already analyzed, I argue that traditional music represents and participates in the construction of national cultural identities through the link with the Romanian traditions and past, ethno-dance, through its hybridity, participates in the construction of national and global identities, manele, through its metizaje provides grounds for regional, and hip-hop, through its global circulation, offers grounds for global cultural identities. These styles can be listened to in combination due to the fact that, in the context of globalization, cultural identities encompass all these levels.

In the current environment, which for Romania means not only globalization but also transition, when flows of images, values and cultural products influence the local production of culture these trends represent not only struggles for the affirmation and preservation of the local specificity but also different grounds in which cultural identities can be embedded. Globalization of culture brings not only different flows but also reconfigures the relationships between cultures and spaces. The nation state increasingly loses its position as sole custodian for identity and gradually becomes a space in which different cultural identities are affirmed and manifested. These different styles are illustrations of these various cultural identities, as well as direct participants in their construction. In the context in which different custodians for cultural identities emerge inside the space of a nation state, popular music becomes an important field of research due to the fact that it represents not only a field of expression of cultural identities but also one of these new custodians.

# Conclusions

Globalization is a complex process, with different dimensions (economic, political, technological and cultural) that are in a continuous interplay, influencing human life at every level and constantly reconfiguring the relationships between identity spaces and cultures. While other countries had time to adjust and adapt to the globalization process, Romania rushed right into it without the necessary tools to deal with the violent rupture from its communist past or with the context of globalization of culture. Due to a thirst for information and a natural curiosity after a long period of isolation, the Romanian frontiers were wide open for outside cultures, without any protection for the inside. Foreign music, movies and shows started to bombard the public while Romanian artists were abandoned as being a part of the communist era. While other countries had laws determining the percentage of foreign cultural products that can be broadcasted, Romania had none. Foreign cultures were savored while Romanian culture was discarded as a relic of the socialist past.

The fall of communism meant, for Romania, not only the opening of physical borders but also the opening of its culture to outside influences and its entrance in the context of globalization. It also meant a shift in the construction of values and symbols as well as in the production of culture. The grounds for identification processes and different paths of identification are no longer provided, or constructed only by the nation state (which, before the revolution, meant Ceausescu and the communist party), since other sources, such as popular culture emerge free of censorship, and processes like

regionalization, continentalisation and globalization provide different strategies and paths of identification.

In the current cultural context (which, for Romania, means not only globalization but also transition) when flows of images, values and cultural products influence the local production of culture, these trends represent not only struggles for the affirmation and preservation of the local specificity but also different grounds in which cultural identities can be embedded. Globalization of culture brings not only different flows, but also reconfigures the relationships between cultures and spaces. The nation state increasingly loses its position as sole custodian for identity and gradually becomes a space in which different cultural identities are affirmed and manifested. Different styles of music are expressions of these various cultural identities, as well as direct participants in their construction. This is not to say that only one of them is necessarily chosen by someone over the others. Rather it is that they represent different possibilities to position ourselves individually or collectively in the global context and in Romania in transition. Romanians can identify with elements taken from various trends; they can listen to different musical styles and take something from each of them.

The analysis of Romanian popular music brings a better understanding of how globalization impacts culture and cultural identities. It also shows how different strategies of negotiation and identity construction function in the current environment of high global complexity and how other grounds for cultural identity, besides the nation-state, provide different paths for identification processes in the period of transition in which Romania now finds itself. This analysis also shows the struggles and negotiations that exist in this period of transition; negotiations not only between the Romanian culture and

the regional, continental or global culture but also negotiations between different cultural heritages from within.

As we have seen in chapter four, the various trends analyzed reinforce different aspects (levels) of cultural identity and also provide new strategies for identity construction. They also show how processes such as regionalization and continentalization impact the local cultures and cultural identity construction. More precisely, traditional music represents and participates in the construction of national cultural identity through the link with old Romanian traditions and through the fact that it gives a sense of unbroken relationship with the past. Through the fact that it is an old cultural form, traditional music answers the need of authenticity brought forth by homogenization strategies, providing a ground for cultural identity construction at the local (national) level. Ethno-dance reinforces, on one side national identity and, on the other global cultural identity. It participates in the construction of both levels through the fact that it is a hybrid between traditional music and western techno. It reformulates an old form of culture in a new way so it can speak to young generations and at the same time it is a negotiation between the Romanian authentic culture and a global form of culture. Through its hybridity, it provides two different discourses, participating in the construction of two different levels of cultural identity. Manele expresses not only the tensions between different cultural heritages present in the Romanian culture, but also the freedom to articulate these tensions and allegiances with a different culture besides the traditional Romanian one, in doing that reinforcing regional and continental cultural identities (it provides a ground through which cultural identities can be shared by people with the same cultural heritage but situated in different areas on the globe). Hip-hop

reinforces global cultural identities through the fact that it is a world wide trend that bypasses national frontiers. It mediates relationships between people situated in different spaces, offering them a common ground in which cultural identities can be embedded. The analysis of these trends shows not only how different processes (such as continentalization, regionalization and homogenization) impact the Romanian culture but also how these processes provide new strategies for identity construction, facilitating the emergence and enforcement of different levels and aspects of cultural identity.

The existence of these trends on the Romanian popular music scene, as well as their implication in cultural identity construction offers Romanians new and multiple ways in which they can define themselves as groups and position themselves in the social. They show not only that the Romanian culture becomes more diversified due to the different processes brought by globalization but also that cultural identities in Romania become more complex and adaptable to an ever changing context. The fact that these different styles participate in cultural identity construction shows that Romanians can choose now between various strategies for identification.

In contrast with the communist period when cultural identity had only one custodian, the Romanian nation-state, in post-communism other identity construction strategies emerged. These strategies are not provided only from inside (state controlled or not) but also from outside. In these conditions the relationships between the Romanian state and the cultural identities that are constructed on its territory are reconfigured. This is not saying that the nation state is loosing its role as custodian for cultural identity, but that it is negotiating it with other cultural identity construction strategies. In the context of globalization, where there is a high tendency of integration in different international

organizations and where various processes have a deep impact on culture the Romanian people has to manage different scales of cultural identities. This context is also in permanent change and reconfiguration, thus cultural identities are constantly reconstructed. Also, processes such as regionalization and continentalization are changing the relationship between spaces and cultural identities, as people situated in different countries relate to each other, bypassing borders. In the specific case of Romania, this means allegiances not only on the territory of Romania but also with Eastern Europe, as a region or Europe as a continent.

Deeper inquiries into the nature, origins and evolution of globalization might lead to a better understanding not only of globalization itself but also of the period of transition Romania is going through and of the way in which cultural identities are constructed and negotiated on its territory. Moreover, an analysis of other trends present in the Romanian music scene and of different other cultural products, such as theater and movies, can provide a clearer image of this period of transition and adaptation to the context of globalization. A follow up of the development in time of the music trends already analyzed can prove to be interesting because different aspects that might have been overlooked may become visible.

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