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Doctoral Thesis

The Cultural Integration Model and European Transformation: The Case of Romania

PhD Series, No. 18.2006

Provided in Cooperation with:

Copenhagen Business School (CBS)

Suggested Citation: Samson, Ramona (2006) : The Cultural Integration Model and European Transformation: The Case of Romania, PhD Series, No. 18.2006, Copenhagen Business School (CBS), Frederiksberg,
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The Cultural Integration Model and European Transformation

The Case of Romania

Ramona Samson

PhD thesis

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“ ‘we are all postcommunist now’, not in the sense of ideological demobilization of what Habermas, as early as 1985, called ‘the exhaustion of utopian energies’, but in the sense that Europe, as well as the EU, are radically transformed by what has happened ”.

William Outhwaite and Larry Ray,
Social Theory and Postcommunism (2005)

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List of Abbreviations

CDA	Critical discourse analysis
CDR	Democratic Convention of Romania
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency (USA)
CNS	Szekler National Council
COMECON	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
CPM	Communist Party of Moldova
EC	European Community
EIS	European Integration Studies
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EU	European Union
FDSN	Democratic National Salvation Fond
FDGR	Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania
FSN	National Salvation Front
ICC	International Criminal Court
IMF	International Monetary Fond
IR	International relations theory
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PCR	Communist Party of Romania
PD	Democratic Party
PDSR	Party of Social Democracy of Romania
PNL	National Liberal Party
PNT	National Peasant Party
PNT-CD	National Peasant Party-Christian Democrat
PRM	Greater Romania Party
PSD	Party of Social Democracy
PSM	Socialist Labour Party
PUNR	Party of the National Union of Romania
UDMR	Hungarian Democratic Union of Romania
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USD	Social Democratic Union
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Acknowledgements

I would like to deeply thank the various people who, during the three years in which this endeavour lasted, provided me with useful and helpful assistance. Without their care and consideration, this project would likely not have matured.

First, I would like to thank my supervisor Michael Herslund, director of Centre for the Study of Europe and all my other colleagues at Copenhagen Business School, including Alex Klinge, Anette Villemoes, and Vivi Rønne for continuous back-up and encouragement. Second, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to my co-supervisor, Chris Rumford, University of London Royal Holloway, for his invaluable input, critique, and support throughout my study. Third, I am grateful to the *Groupe de Sociologie Politique Européenne* at Robert Schumann University in Strasbourg for the months I was part of their dynamic team. My thanks especially go to Didier Georgakakis and Niilo Kauppi.

I would also like to express my gratitude to various foundations, including Otto Mønstedts Fond and Dagmar og Joseph Samsons Fond, for their important financial support without which participation in international conferences and seminars would not have been possible.

Most important, a big *mulțumesc* to my son Robert – my other major achievement in the course of these three years - and my husband, Emil, for support and understanding and for having put up with a string of lost weekends and odd working hours. Last but not least, I should not forget my precious friend, Sylvia Oreifig who has been next to me at all times.

Needless to say, only I carry the responsibility for any shortcomings or mistakes in this work.

Ramona Samson
September, 2006

1. Introduction

What is the nature of transformation in Europe after communism? Until recently, the end of communism in Eastern Europe has been understood mainly as the opportunity for these countries to ‘return to Europe’¹. Two main assumptions have guided the bulk of literature on integration in Eastern Europe: on the one hand, the singularity of the integration model associated with the European Union (EU) and its institutions. On the other hand, the idea of convergence of the Eastern European countries towards the West. This idea of ‘transition’ has strongly informed the debate on European integration. Appliance of the existing institutional framework has been seen as the only feasible way to construct democratic societies and market economies, and theoretical approaches have often suggested a direct and predestined convergence of the ‘East’ toward the ‘West’. From this perspective, the process of European integration becomes a linear transformation from socially, economically, and politically backward Eastern European societies into advanced western European societies. Moreover, theorizing on the theme of integration in the context of an enlarged EU has for the most part been concerned with conceptualizing a state-centrist European order and the role of the EU institutions herein. By assuming this linearity and adopting unconditionally many principles of the conventional approaches to European integration and Europeanization, much research has avoided addressing the possible – and indeed observable - diversity of outcomes in the process of transformation.

Recent developments in the study of European integration have taken a step away from the dominant interest in the socio-economic convergence of Eastern European societies. Lately, some approaches (sociology of culture and cultural politics) have added a *cultural* dimension to European integration and thereby become more sensitive to the linkages between the ‘inside’ and the ‘outside’ of

¹ I use the term ‘Eastern Europe’ to denominate on the one hand the geographical region; on the other hand, I treat this part of Europe as “a fundamental *historical* difference in European development which is associated with the historical development of what we have come to understand as *modernity*” (Wagner, 2002: 219).

transformation, i.e. the dynamics within a given country and the dynamics of Europe. In doing so, some have indicated ‘the end of the transition paradigm’ (Pickel, 2002; Bönker *et al.*, 2002; Carothers, 2002), while others have resisted this tendency (Linz and Stepan, 1996; Mason, 1996). The general message is clear, however. As expressed by Delanty, enlargement “is crucially a matter of cultural transformation and therefore it differs from all previous dynamics of Europeanization” (Delanty, 2003c: 8).

Against this background, the critical argument of this thesis is that in most analyses of Eastern European transformation, integration and its role and nature have been too narrowly understood. The possibility of seeing integration in terms of culture has not been considered. Another critical argument derives from the fact that so far many researchers have seen the Eastern enlargement only “as a routine institutional operation that is unlikely to change the course and nature of European integration” (Zielonka, 2006: 2). One may add that the eastward enlargement expands the EU’s diversity of cultures considerably, and that this in itself supports the arguments for looking closer at the cultural dimension of integration. Although the cultural dimension of European integration has not (as yet) produced an obvious crystallization of a theoretical approach, recent sociological theorizing (Delanty, 2003c, 2006a; Soysal, 2004; Delanty and Rumford, 2005; Rumford, 2006a; Therborn, 2006) on the idea of Europe becoming increasingly postwestern and postnational offer, in my opinion, promising guidance for a more critical analysis of European integration.

In this thesis, I concur with the above-cited critique of the traditional approaches to European integration and move away from the ‘transition paradigm’. As indicated, I find the wider sociological debate on postwesternization and postnationalism to be a more efficient point of departure for studying and analysing the current transformations in Eastern Europe. I argue therefore that analyzing Eastern Europe properly requires four actions: first, a reassessment of the meaning of ‘European integration’ as wider than the EU integration; second, a move from a systemic understanding of integration towards a focus on the way Europe has reorganized itself to integrate the ‘East’; third, an understanding of culture as a socially constructed reality based on social imaginaries, i.e. socio-cognitive frameworks by which individuals imagine their social environment; and fourth, a

reassertion of Eastern Europe beyond postcommunism, transition, and the EU enlargement.

1.1. Main objectives of the thesis

There are mainly two aims of this thesis. One is to provide insights into the process of cultural integration from a social theory perspective. In this study I define cultural integration as the process of reorganization caused by social agents who seek to reconstruct an existing societal order on the basis of their specific understandings. For this purpose a theoretical and conceptual framework is constructed. The second aim is to develop a cultural integration model and apply it with a view to highlight and better understand developments in post-1989 Romania. The following overall research question will guide the thesis: *How to analyse the transformation of Eastern Europe in the context of the wider transformations taking place in Europe?* Working with a set of assumptions concerning the nature of transformations in Eastern Europe and the need to understand integration sociologically, this thesis proposes to construct a model which links ideas about integration as a process (and in particular the cultural dimension of that process), with postwesternization and postnationalism that connect internal developments of Eastern European countries to the wider context of transformations in Europe.

My immediate documentation and examples refer to Romania, which is my main subject of study. Yet, it is my modest hope that the applicability may be more general, touching other countries undergoing integration. What I hope to contribute with the case-study is an analysis of the way in which the on-going process of cultural integration influences the present day Romanian society. The study will not take into consideration every aspect of cultural integration, but focus on postwestern and postnational aspects that concern the societal transformation and the reconstruction of Romanian societal identities. I make the case that post-1989 transformation is the co-product of internal and external forces of cultural integration, namely postwesternization and postnationalism.

My analysis will not try to propose a new theory of integration or to incorporate the entire agenda set by the various contributors to the debate on European transformation (see for instance Delanty's formulation of a 'civilizational approach'). Nor will it deal with EU cultural policy as such. The purpose is to shed light on selected aspects of wider dynamics of transformation in Europe in order to

outline an alternative dimension of Europeanization. The most important shift is from a systemic understanding of integration (i.e. from forms of integration with a functional role²) to a focus on more complex socio-cultural forms of integration. This also reveals that societies should be seen distinct from one another. The realities after the end of communism fail to support the assumption that societies are converging. In order to show that the above argument is grounded, I will refer below to the different core assumptions that constitute the foundation of my cultural integration model.

1.2. Basic Framework and Core Assumptions

A qualitatively different theoretical explanation of integration has to start from a new set of basic assumptions. As Zielonka notes, “[w]ithout a change of paradigm we will be unable to comprehend the on-going developments, assess their implications, and identify proper solutions for addressing these implications” (Zielonka, 2006: 19). The overall assumption in this thesis is that cultural integration in Eastern Europe does not follow a predetermined path or process (a uniform progress towards final integration), but rather that cultural integration can best be understood as an open-ended transformation. This assumption induces a different dynamic to the relationship between Romania and the rest of Europe than when looking more narrowly at how Romania is becoming a member of the ‘West’ and what Romania needs to do along this path. At least five hypotheses can be derived from this assumption which will inform my approach to cultural integration: (a) cultural integration cannot be equated with EU integration or transition. Cultural integration goes beyond the EU integration and transition, and is not a form of *systemic* integration; (b) cultural integration is not a process which eventually leads to an integrated European society, but an open-ended process that works to reconstruct society and societal identities; (c) by looking at cultural integration in Eastern Europe, the emphasis comes on external discourses that influence and ‘empower’ the local understandings (i.e. diffusion) and the ‘double synchronicity’ of transformation; (e) last, but not least, cultural integration does not lead to uniformity of cultures.

Cultural integration concerns the transformative dimension of the Eastern European countries. This represents a break with mainstream integration theory which emphasises “the emergence and development of the institutions of economic

² Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 10.

integration in western Europe after the Second World War” (Rosamond, 2000: 1). Cultural integration should not be understood as solely linked to EU integration but as related to wider processes of transformation in Europe. Cultural integration – as an approach - uses social constructivism as terminology and notations to create a vocabulary for grasping the transformation of Eastern Europe. Cultural integration should be viewed as open to new interpretations and definitions.

1.3. Theoretical Sources of the Cultural Integration Model

Most literature dedicated to Eastern Europe’s 1989-development has examined how these societies integrate into Europe (i.e. EU enlargement). This has been done by applying the so-called political science approaches to European integration, e.g. intergovernmentalism. However, referring to Eastern Europe in a postwestern and postnational context, as done in this thesis, suggests that the rest of Europe – and not only Eastern Europe - is also undergoing changes. And that these changes are much more fundamental than the idea of ‘a moving target’. Therefore, as Borinski and Wagner argue, there is “a need to move away from the issue of ‘catching-up’ with a Western model of development in the study of the countries of the former Eastern Europe” (Borinski and Wagner, 2002: 372).

The analytical concept of cultural integration, I suggest, contributes to the existing literature on integration, in that it addresses the Eastern European transformation in the context of overall transformations in Europe. Moreover, the rethinking of the relationship between Eastern European countries and Europe, in terms of postwesternization and postnationalism, goes beyond the idea of transition and postcommunism and adds a new dimension to integration. My understanding of cultural integration takes as point of departure the work of Delanty and Rumford (2005), F. Peter Wagner (2004), and Habermas (1998, 2003).

Delanty and Rumford (2005) have recently formulated a theory of European society that understands social reality within the context of globalization. The authors define Europeanization as a theory of society beyond national societies. Two major transformations that require a new theory of *the social* are identified. First, a displacement of modernity as centred on the nation-state and reducible to class, rationalism, and technology by a much less certain and much less utopian modernity that exists with risk and relies on other symbols of belonging. “The pluralization of modernity can be equated to the decentring of Europe in the world”

(Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 187). As a consequence, political imaginary became fragmented and connected to the rise of multiple narratives of belief and loyalty based on ethnicity, religion, neo-liberalism, social movements, environmental awareness, human rights, ethno-nationalism, and a general mistrust of politics. Second, the displacement of the social imaginary of collective utopia, autonomy, and emancipation by an imaginary increasingly structured around diffuse politics of identity based on the rights, capacities and responsibilities of the individual. The second major transformation noted by Delanty and Rumford relates to the reorientation of Europe as a spatial entity no longer reducible to itself or to notions of the local, as a result of globalization. The rise of new spaces that transcend territorial boundaries across all areas of social life has diminished the distinction between the inside and the outside. This is not the same as saying that borders have disappeared. On the contrary, “they will continue to be important but will take a variety of forms” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 188).

While I concur with Delanty and Rumford’s formulation of Europeanization, my social theory approach to cultural integration does not emphasise the role of globalization and cosmopolitan Europe in shaping the transformation of Romania. Instead I look at the impact of postwesternization and postnationalism on internal developments in Romania, and place them within the broader framework of transformations in Europe. This choice has mainly been affected by the selection of Romania as my empirical study. Cultural integration has to be seen as a thorough rethinking of how Europe has reorganized itself in the aftermath of communism to integrate the East. Whereas Delanty and Rumford define Europeanization as a cosmopolitan reaction to globalization, my approach conceives cultural integration as a postwestern and postnational reply to Europeanization.

The theoretical framework underpinning cultural integration may be traced back to the general thesis of the ‘double synchronicity’ of the Eastern transformation, announced by F. Peter Wagner in ‘*Sonderweg Romania*’ (2004). According to Wagner, after the end of communism there has been “a reinvigoration of the historical ‘East/West’ borderline of development” (Wagner, 2004: 57). Based on a reassessment of the notion of transition, Wagner calls for an integrative approach in order to analyse Romania’s transformation. For Wagner, the theoretical value of the modernization perspective that has governed the debate on Eastern Europe, including Romania, has become highly questionable. In his own words, “the

very model that they are being asked to emulate in their reform course is something of an anachronism and cannot help but remain a rather elusive goal” (Wagner, 2004: 59). In particular, Wagner rejects the idea of linear transition used to make sense of transformation in Eastern European societies from dictatorship to democratic market economies. Wagner calls for an alternative transitional framework based on the central concept of ‘double synchronicity’, meaning the integration of Eastern European societies into a ‘Western’ order which itself is undergoing transformation.

I will base my own cultural integration model on the idea of ‘double synchronicity’. Looking at the shortcomings of the transition paradigm, Wagner argues for a rethinking of the East European process of transformation in terms of *Eigendynamik*. My approach concurs with Wagner that Romania’s ‘exceptionalism’ calls for a reassessment of the transition paradigm. Hence, my study expands Wagner’s thesis of ‘double synchronicity’ into a theoretical framework that places Romania in a postwestern and postnational Europe.

Habermas’s theoretical work on postnationalism is equally important to my study. In Habermasian terms cultural integration is about the postnational society. The making of a postnational society means identification with normative principles. Habermas emphasised that “the initial impetus to integration in the direction of a postnational society is provided by the substrate of a European-wide political public sphere embedded in a shared political culture” (Habermas, 1998: 153). To Habermas, postnational Europe refers to a shared identity that is not exclusively defined by the nation-state. In the sense that I will use in this thesis, postnational refers to a transformation of the existing forms of loyalty and identification beyond the nation-state.

According to Habermas, ‘constitutional patriotism’ is a deliberately shared sentiment among individuals according to which the country convincingly follows a certain regulative political ideal embedded in the national constitution. As he writes, “peoples emerge only with the constitution of their states. Democracy itself is a legally mediated form of political integration. It is a form that depends, to be sure, on a political culture shared by all citizens” (Habermas, 2003: 97-98). This identity is postnational in the sense that it is freed from all cultural attachments (and traditions) and based instead on shared principles informed by a universal constitutional-legal framework (Habermas, 1998). What is interesting about his position is that he places postnationalism both at national and global level. In my

view, there is a potential here for expanding postnationalism to Eastern European transformation. The increasing importance of international legal norms and the decreasing importance of national sovereignty give rise to new forms of identification beyond the nation state.

1.4. Description of the Cultural Integration Model

As it should be clear by now, the countries from Eastern Europe are in the middle of profound and, in many respects, unprecedented social and cultural transformations. It is suggested that existing models – especially the traditional rational approaches to European integration – are unable to account for more fundamental developments such as the reorganization of Europe to integrate the former ‘East’.

My cultural integration model is based on a social constructivist approach, drawing on Delanty and Rumford (2005). When related to cultural integration in Eastern Europe, the social constructivist account identifies the following as key dynamics: change based on continuity; cultural integration as postwestern and postnational transformation; and cultural integration as reconstruction of societal identities. One of the major claims made in this thesis is that a social constructivist approach is particularly pertinent to the conception of cultural integration, defined below.

Cultural integration is seen as the outcome of the following factors: institutions (the political field of the social agents), tradition (the influence of the past), and diffusion (the encounter with external models and ideas that are taken on, adapted and/or reproduced). By relating institutions and diffusion to tradition (socio-cultural aspects of integration), I try to transform a static model of (systemic) integration into a dynamic model of cultural integration. This further implies a shift towards a transnational societal perspective that allows for seeing Romania’s transformation less separate from European transformation(s).

I believe such a model of cultural integration retains its analytical value for three reasons: first, it provides a framework for rethinking the nature of Eastern transformation beyond the idea of transition and postcommunism. Second, a model based on the postwestern and postnational theoretical framework enables the researcher to see that Romania is changing at the same time Europe is changing. Furthermore, this model allows for an interpretation of both internal and external

dynamics of cultural integration. However, like all ideal types, mine depicts no society perfectly.

1.5. The Elements of the Cultural Integration Model

As mentioned in section 1.1., I define cultural integration as the process of reorganization caused by social agents who seek to reconstruct an existing societal order on the basis of their specific understandings. Cultural integration recasts the debate on Europe in terms of postwestern and postnational forms emerging from the new relation between former communist countries and Europe.

A substantial literature has appeared which reflects on the emergence of a so-called postwestern and postnational order (Eder, 2001; Habermas, 2002; Delanty, 2003c, 2006a; Delanty and Rumford, 2005; Rumford, 2006a; Therborn, 2006). However, the two dynamics are not often studied together. The basic idea behind these writings is that a postwestern Europe is taking shape and that this order “will be dominated less and less by the centre and for the first time the periphery will impose itself on the centre” (Delanty, 2003c: 14). From the viewpoint of these authors the focus on enlargement as a singular moment of change or crisis and the tendency to portray the dynamics of transformation as relying on the antagonism between nation-state and ‘super-state’ should be avoided. How are we then to theorise these dynamics? As we have seen above, we need a more comprehensive conceptualization of integration for the analysis of transformation in Eastern Europe. As Delanty argues, “enlargement is not just about getting bigger but is crucially a matter of cultural transformation and therefore differs from all previous dynamics of Europeanization that began with the Treaty of Rome in 1957” (Delanty, 2003c: 10). Cultural integration is an attempt to depict the complex nature of transformation as the main feature of an emergent order.

The notions of ‘postwestern’ and ‘postnational’ are neither fixed nor clearly defined concepts within the current research, nor certain or easy to observe empirically. For the purpose of this thesis these notions will be used to express the dynamic and *sui generis* elements of cultural integration. It is precisely these elements that can depict the complexity of integration: how Eastern European countries in the aftermath of communism are responding to the transformations of Europe while at the same time dealing with their own transformations.

Defenders of the idea of a postwestern Europe, to which the present author belongs, maintain that the enlargement of the EU with former communist countries has fundamental implications for our existing interpretations of what Europe is in terms of geopolitical, social and cultural space. This development also challenges notions of what is driving the processes of national and European identity formation; whether it is systemic or socio-cultural forces. Not only is the western part of Europe influencing the former communist East, including through ‘systemic’ integration. The enlargement - and the process that preceded and follows it - also imposes changes on the entire Europe, thus on the western part. The West is becoming less Western, as the East is becoming less Eastern. Furthermore, at the same time as Europe becomes more integrated, it also develops to be increasingly diverse. As a consequence, the East/West distinction – which indeed preceded the antagonism of the Cold War, even if enforced by it – gradually loses relevance. One implication of this is that Westernization and modernity are no longer synonymous. In this respect, the idea of ‘multiple modernities’ argues that individual societies are not converging into a single, universal modernity, but that they represent plural, cultural, and political projects. The ultimate test to the idea of postwesternization in the longer term is obviously the willingness and capacity of the EU to enlarge with Turkey and even beyond. One observable implication of a postwestern Europe, advanced by this thesis, may be that governments and individuals increasingly identify with objectives and values which exceed the European order.

The second term, ‘postnational’, refers to a transformation of the existing forms of loyalty beyond the nation-state which has accelerated in later years due to influences from globalisation and European integration. According to this concept, the Westphalian state-system, where jurisdiction and borders were largely congruent, has over the last decades gradually been giving way to a system of multilevel governance, including a European super-state. Not at all in the form of an omnipotent, Hobbesian *Leviathan*, but rather as a transnational, multi-centred regulator, which acts within confined policy-areas and remains highly dependent on decentred actors with regard to implementation. But the idea of postnational goes beyond mere legal affairs, and also relates to the development of a pan-European identity. An important implication, as described by this thesis, is a logic by which nation states increasingly act in accordance with norms that exceed the national order,

also when it comes to matters which have traditionally been regarded as ‘heart blood’ of the nation-state (e.g. border control).

1.6. Delimitation from the Existing Approaches to European Integration

The definition of cultural integration used in this study distinguishes this approach from the traditional integration theories, as well as from Europeanization, social change (the current-day ‘transitology’), and nationalist approaches to European integration. In the following, I will briefly delimit cultural integration from these four approaches.

Firstly, by conceiving Romania’s transformation in the setting context of transformations in Europe, cultural integration distinguishes itself from the traditional integration theories. Conventional theorising on integration, by contrast, has treated these transformations as framed by the enlargement and EU economic and political integration (Moravcsik, 1991; Molle, 1997; Putnam, 1988; Rosamond, 2000; Hooghe and Marks, 2001). Cultural integration is neither seen as the outcome of the EU project nor does it refer to a *harmonization* of cultures or cultural rights through technocratic support or through addressing cultural policy issues. Cultural integration is not just another form of EU integration, and cannot be reduced to only economic, institutional, or political transformations.

There are mainly four limitations of the traditional theories of integration: first, the inadequacy of these theories in explaining cultural change in pluralistic societies. Second, these integration theories seem affected by the ‘path dependency’ logic. Third, they propose a rather confuse notion of “the terminal condition of integration” (Rosamond, 2000: 87). Fourth, these theories based on the state-centred and multi-governance models were constructed to explain the economic and political dynamics of EU integration. As Rosamond admits, “the problem for integration theorists was that while terminal conditions had been advanced, they could at best be speculative ideal-types” (Rosamond, 2000: 87). Consequently, I find that ‘integration theory’ is not capable in dealing with important aspects of cultural transformation. I am not saying that the study of integration has ceased to be applicable. Only I am sceptical of the one-dimensional utilitarian concept of integration based on the assumptions of spontaneous reorganization and the transfer of democracy and institutions that dominates the analysis of transformation in Eastern Europe. Thus,

even if many of the concepts of the classical theories of integration have acquired significant descriptive power, I argue that they are no longer sufficient.

The second existing approach that I will differentiate cultural integration from is the political science approach to ‘Europeanization’ understood as domestication of the EU (not to confuse with ‘Europeanization’ as the ‘process of becoming European’, as I will return to further down). This approach emphasizes the political pressures and challenges for adaptation caused by European integration and often describes Europeanization along three alleys: institutions, political dynamics, and policies. Although both positions - cultural integration and ‘Europeanization’ in its political science form - consider wider fields than EU and European integration, when it comes to explaining transformation in Eastern Europe, Europeanization tends to neglect internal factors or treats them as a constant and unchanging background condition (see Diamond, 1993). In terms of its treatment of internal factors at least, I suggest that cultural integration offers a promising direction for a more unified or holistic analysis of Eastern Europe. In a minimalist understanding of Europeanization, it is argued that the consolidation of new societies is the result of Europeanization.

Based on a second dimension of the Europeanization concept - as the process of ‘becoming European’ - a cultural integration perspective understands Europeanization as a ‘two-ways’ traffic. In other words, Eastern European countries also have an impact on the West (Delanty, 2003c). This idea offers a more dynamic view on Europe after communism. Eastern Europe is being re-shaped in a postwestern and postnational direction, beyond mere convergence. A new definition of Europe cannot be based alone with reference to the West as well as one cannot define the East as a ‘residual’ (i.e. as the sum of those deviant elements which have not as yet transformed to become the western). The addition of Eastern European countries to wider Europe involves the process of cultural integration beyond Europeanization.

According to Borinski and Wagner, the end of the East-West division “can not help but to provide its own internal dynamic and momentum of development” (Borinski and Wagner, 2002: 376). All in all, when applied to Eastern Europe, the Europeanization approach reflects a limited interest in the historical legacies outside the Western heartland. I concur with Borinski and Wagner who acknowledge that “such a research effort necessitates transgressing disciplinary lines

as borders can be ‘internal’ and ‘external’, political and economic, based on a recourse to ‘history’ or some ‘ideal’, or proclaimed to be purely based on ‘interest’” (Borinski and Wagner, 2002: 376).

Thirdly, I distance myself from ‘social change approaches’ (what has also been termed ‘transitology’) which have dominated the debate on changes in Eastern Europe. Transition studies presume that postcommunist societies where political elites pursue a transition towards market economy and democracy encounter the same challenges and problems regardless of their distinctive character (see also van Zon, 1994: 6). This way to proceed, I find, has resulted in too much emphasis on the affirmation of the Western model (i.e. the EU) on the emerging democratic institutions and developing markets - at the sacrifice of attention to both internal and external dimensions of transformation. According to Steven Fish, “the experience of the first decade of post-communism subverts – or at least fails to support – most of the prevailing ideas and paradigms in the analysis of democratization and democracy” (Fish, 1999: 795).

The main critique of ‘transitology’ concerns its primary theoretical assumptions, in particular teleology and singularity. First, the study of transition can be criticised for reading history in a teleological way, as communism is seen as ‘a deviant period’ rather than a continuity in their past. Moreover, communism is widely assumed as an alien component, imposed on society. Hence, the build-in lack of interest in the communist past and the idea that the construction of a new society can start from scratch. A specifically weak point of transitology, I hold to be its reading history as “the evolving approximation towards an already known end-state, constituted by a single path or ‘one best way’”³. As such, these theories have approached Eastern Europe after 1989 disregarding long-term social processes and that the revolution itself was the result of a transformation process (i.e. the aggravating crisis of communism). The second rather simplistic assumption of transitology is the singularity prescribed to the Western model as ‘blueprints for desired change’ (van Zon, 1994: 8) for Eastern European countries. By emphasising the Western model as the only applicable model, little attention has been paid to historical diversity and the diverging ways and different interpretations of reconstruction.

³ Blokker, 2004: 39.

A cornerstone of this thesis is the suggestion that transformations in Eastern Europe are more complex than can be explained by transitology. Moreover, this transformation is not necessarily restricted to changes in a particular ‘prospective’ direction - from state socialism to market economy - similar to earlier occurrence elsewhere (e. g. Southern Europe). Understanding the transformation of Eastern Europe assumes an understanding of the whole process, i.e. including the peculiarities and history of the countries involved as well as the external dynamics of transformation (wider social, political, and economic context). What is at stake in Eastern Europe is not merely a process of ‘transition’, but a profound reconstruction of societies and societal identities. Transition studies are found insufficient to explain such transformations. Instead, a cultural integration approach takes into account the historical context of current change, the diversity, and the continuity with the past in order to explain and understand contemporary transformations in Eastern Europe.

Fourthly, this study delimits itself from the so-called ‘nationalist approaches to European integration’. These approaches reject the idea of the rise of a supranational polity and the decline of nation-state, arguing that the process of European integration has been staged for the rescue of the nation-state (Milward, 1992). According to this theory, nation-states created a Community after the World War II in order to safeguard the concept of nation-statehood and to evade any threat to the nation-state. This implies that nation-states have remained distinctive and secure, in that most initiatives towards European integration have served the interests of the nation-states (Milward, 1992: 443). Thus, Milward’s model of ‘Europe of nation-states’ sees European integration as strengthening the nation-state, rather than replacing or transforming it. ‘Nationalism’ in this sense - linked to intergovernmentalism – should not be confused with the populist, often xenophobe political platform of nationalism. Rather than seeing integration as another version of Europe of nation-states in which they can maintain their distinct existence, a cultural integration perspective discloses a more fluid postwestern and postnational Europe that reduces the importance of national boundaries.

1.7. Placing the Study in the Landscape of Existing Empirical Research

Above, I have briefly placed cultural integration among a number of important theoretical counter-positions. I will now turn the question of what a cultural

integration perspective signifies in terms of empirical research. In order to substantiate my theoretical approach, I will apply the framework of cultural integration to the case-study of a single (less researched) Eastern European country, namely Romania.

I first realized the need to think about European integration in a new way, when I was trying to understand the nature of Romania's transformation after the end of communism. Most research on Romania has little to say about the interpretations of integration from a cultural perspective. Even those approaches that look at the Eastern European transition as a rather unique phenomenon (i.e. path dependency and neo-classical sociology⁴) are inclined to move within the idea of 'transitional culture'. For instance, Michael D. Kennedy (2002) uses the concept of 'cultural formations' in order to explain the different outcomes of transition, without leaving the fundamental idea of convergence.

Likewise, discussions of Romania's relations with the EU have concentrated on Romania's compliance with EU membership commitments (Grupas, 2006). Romania constitutes for many researchers a rather 'exceptional' or 'negative' case. According to F. Peter Wagner, it is exactly this special statute as 'problem case' that "challenges some fundamental assumptions in the field of transition studies" and is "indicative of problems in theory building" (Wagner, 2004: 51-52). Yet, the empirical observations have not led adherents to transitology to essentially rethink their model as suggested by Wagner. Romania has almost acquired the privileged statute of 'the exception that confirms the rule'. In opposition, my study argues the need to fully break away with the 'transition' terminology in order to appreciate the nature of Eastern European transformations.

The existing literature and debates approach Romania in several ways. Similar to F. Peter Wagner's typology (2004), I will divide earlier research on Romania into three groups depending on its main focus point: the historical legacy of communism, the December 1989 revolution, and the postcommunist transition.

The first approach examines the historical legacy of communism, considered as partly responsible for Romania's problems along the transition path of development and consolidation of democracy (Deletant, 1989, 1998b, 1999; Gilberg, 1990; Tismăneanu, 1989b, 1990). For Gilberg, Ceaușescuism - defined as a blend of nationalism, chauvinism and Marxist-Leninism - has had a great impact on

⁴ Blokker, 2005.

Romania's modernization. Aside from the Securitate and the general fear, other legacies of the Ceaușescu regime include: mass depoliticization, corrupt bureaucracy, authoritarianism, an outdated industry, and the unsolved issue of minorities. These peculiarities are considered decisive for Romania's future development. To Deletant (1989), Ceaușescu's brutal regime (named 'dynastic communism') and its impact on the Romanian society represent the explanatory factors for Romania's lagging behind its neighbours in starting off the transition process.

The second empirical approach is centred around the overthrow of Nicolae Ceaușescu in December 1989 (Dahrendorf, 1990, 1997; Gilberg, 1990; Hall, 2000; Roper, 2000) and the economic, political, and moral causes of the revolution (Chiot, 1991, 1994; Tismăneanu, 1999; Eisenstadt, 1999). Gilberg perceived the violent overthrow of the Ceaușescus as an act "against the traditions of the Romanian nation. For this to happen the political and socio-economic situation must have become truly desperate" (Gilberg, 1990: 204). According to S. N. Eisenstadt (1999), in contrast to the 1848 revolution, the 1989 revolution did not have any ideology or contained any utopian visions of a new society. Rather the goal was to 'return to Europe'. By using Romania as an example, Hall (2000) examines the role played by mass mobilization in the collapse of communist regimes. Hall attempts to explore in detail the dynamic interaction between societal protest and regime response in the Romanian revolution.

The third approach that can be identified in existing research investigates Romania's attempts to 'Europeanize' (democratization and implementation of economic reforms). This approach often maintains Romania to be a laggard case of EU integration (Ionescu, 1992; Stan, 1997; Tismăneanu, 1998; Negrescu, 2000; Tang, 2000; Jackson, 2001; Light and Phinnemore, 2001; Kelemen, 2002; Cernat, 2002). In analysing Romania, Tismăneanu (1998) takes a closer look at the role of nationalism ('ethnocracy'), which remains present in the process of reinventing politics in Romania and addresses the difficulties encountered by Romania on the path of transition. Compared to other countries, Romania is underperforming in the transition to democracy and market economy. Before launching a critique of the before-mentioned approaches to the study of Romania, let me underline that the present contribution does not claim to *replace* any of the existing body of theory. The ambition is to *complement* the understanding of particular aspects of the current developments, which I find to be not sufficiently well covered by existing

approaches. In other words, I observe that the existing literature on Romania leaves some problems unaddressed.

A first critique concerns that many of the studies on the communist legacy and the 1989 events leave out of the analysis Romania's pre-communist history, and thereby regard the communist era only as a *deviant* epoch, and not as a period with certain continuities from the past carried on into the future. Likewise, the events of 1989 (most known for their violent character) have been quite well covered when compared to the post-revolutionary developments in the country. But the analysis of these events alone cannot convey the complex picture of the country as a whole or of the wide-ranging societal changes that have been taken place since the collapse of the Ceaușescu regime.

The second caveat relates to the rather instrumental understanding of change when examining Romania's transformation. Often built on some fundamental commonalities, transition studies do not offer alternative positions to those countries that do not follow this 'common ground' and thus get marginalized. While there is no doubt that in the case of Romania, for instance, the EU membership does frame the debate, there are in fact several competing conceptualizations of what integrating into Europe means. Furthermore, the EU enlargement is not the only factor generating changes in the Romanian society. The discussion of Romania's relation to the EU is often reduced to how Romania has proceeded on the 'road' to the EU, unless the debate has not already focused on the problems of offering membership to a country in which corruption, child adoption, and the situation of the Roma, are still perceived as unsolved. Analysing how Romania is being incorporated into the EU's institutional architecture is not the most prolific way of framing Romania's relation with Europe. The dynamics of transformation in Romania should be understood in broader historical, political, and cultural terms.

A key shift not addressed by the above approaches concerns the changing nature of transformation in Romania. And more importantly, what is missing in the current research on Romania is an analysis of the way in which the on-going process of cultural integration influences present-day Romanian society. No longer simply Romania is changing along a predictable trajectory (dictated by its communist past), but rather the dynamics of postwesternization and postnationalism need to be taken into consideration. To assess Romania's transformation it is necessary to move away from a specific trajectory of development suggested by the notions of 'enlargement',

‘postcommunism’ or ‘transition’ and consider the ‘double synchronicity’ of the process of transformation (Wagner, 2004). Additionally, these approaches emphasise the economic and institutional aspects of change.

These critical points in the existing literature on Romania give further impetus to a shift away from the transition paradigm in favour of a postwestern and postnational theoretically informed analysis. In order to overcome these shortcomings, or to go beyond this type of analysis, and understand more fully the place of Romania in contemporary Europe, I suggest a cultural integration model. Such a model is in line with the constructivist reading of transformation. Its consequence is a focus less on a certain path of development or on the institutional and economic spheres than on the openness and the ‘double synchronicity’ of transformation. A cultural integration perspective has many advantages. First of all, it goes beyond the EU enlargement when studying transformation. Second, postwesternization and postnationalism can help us understand Romania’s relation to Europe in ways which are not limited to the idea of transition or postcommunism; or to a particular path of development.

1.8. The Structure of the Thesis

In the attempt to improve the understanding of transformations of Eastern Europe - in particular Romania - through the framework of cultural integration, the thesis proceeds in the following overall parts. Immediately after these introductory notes, the first main part deals with different theoretical approaches to cultural integration. By giving attention to the more critical positions within Europeanization theory, I briefly start laying the groundwork for an alternative approach to integration that goes beyond Europeanization. This first part ends up with an outline of a social constructivist perspective on transformation. The second main part presents the elements of my cultural integration model. The purpose is to develop a *conceptual map*, based on the key notions of state, society, societal identity, recognition, and social agents. In the third part, the thesis analyses the process and consequences of cultural integration by examining the case of Romania. Initially this chapter deals with the historical background to Romania’s transformation. The chapter then turns to the post-1989 development and here emphasis is given to the postwestern and postnational context of Romania’s transformation. The fourth and final part draws up the overall conclusion and points out directions for further research.

2. Theoretical level: Integration through Culture

Outline of a General Theory of Cultural Integration from a Social Constructivist Perspective

This chapter lays out the theoretical framework of the thesis. The framework which aims to analyse the Eastern European societies and their socio-cultural dynamics will be applied in chapter three, *The Cultural Integration Model*. The idea is to indicate some general trends that apply to all societies from Eastern Europe. Despite differences, these societies are shaped not only by the impact of EU at the national level, but also by wider processes of transformation occurring in Europe.

The complexities and challenges of this chapter stem from the very nature of the post-Cold War European transformation and the particular conceptualisation needed to study it. In the approaches on transformation in Eastern Europe, the integration model related to the EU and its institutional structures has roughly been unproblematized. The different views granted by many current mainstream theories do not necessarily offer a profound understanding of the process of transformation and the particularities and separate histories of the societies concerned. Until recently, the discussion on transformation has been led by approaches that shared various primary assumptions on the general nature of transformation in Eastern Europe: the linear convergence of the East through transition and the EU enlargement; a teleological view on the process of transformation (towards democracy and market economy); a negative assessment of the past in general and communism in particular; a focus on systemic integration to the exclusion of issues related to society and societal identities.

In recent years some approaches (sociology of culture and cultural politics) have developed more interest in the cultural dimension of European integration and in the internal and external dynamics of transformation. Two key themes have emerged from this reassessment: the idea that Europe in parallel is becoming increasingly *postwestern* and *postnational*. A more profound understanding of the standing ‘inaccuracies’ embedded in the concept of integration thus is needed

for the eventual rehabilitation of the concept and for the establishment of a more critical analysis of European integration. This chapter develops these critical approaches towards the traditional theories of European integration with regard to the contemporary process of transformations in Eastern Europe.

Delanty (1998, 2000a) and Eder (2001) have argued that now we start adding to political, economic and social European integration, a cultural dimension. Delanty refers to the “culturally deficit project of integration” (Delanty, 1998: 3.2). In particular, “it is not surprising therefore that the concept of culture in European integration has remained extremely obscure and has frequently been seen as a spiritual idea, as it is suggested by works on the ‘spirit of Europe’, for instance, Jaspers (1947), Husserl (1965), Patoka (1973) and Kundera (1984)”⁵.

The chapter proceeds with the following steps. Firstly, an evaluation of the notions of integration and culture in the study of European integration. This will lead me to a reassessment of the meaning of both integration and culture. I then proceed with discussing some of the cultural perspectives in theories and other approaches to European integration including discursive approaches. Thirdly, I introduce ‘Europeanization’ as an alternative approach to understanding European integration. After discussing some recent approaches to Europeanization, I present some theoretical tools for a critical analysis of European integration from a cultural perspective. Finally I move on to my interpretation of cultural integration through a discussion of Europeanization theory and social-constructivism. The chapter will end up with a definition of ‘cultural integration’ as the basis for my model constructed in Chapter 3.

The use of Europeanization approach has the advantage that it places culture much more centrally than the traditional theories of integration appear to do. A constructivist conceptual framework will be developed which allows for a more sociological analysis of cultural integration as a trend towards the construction of an ‘imagined’ community. The social constructivist framework will also assist me in examining the social construction of reality⁶.

⁵ Delanty, 1998: 3.2.

⁶ The chapter avoids an exclusive emphasis on one specific country from Eastern Europe trying to focus widely on those societies found in the middle of the process of European integration. Nonetheless, I recognize that there are many differences among Eastern European countries themselves from a cultural, political, economic, and social point of view. One should look at each society in order to get a deep understanding of cultural integration.

2.1. The European Integration Process and Culture

Culture is usually not associated with integration. Castells (1998) and Delanty (2000a) distinguish three main historical phases in the European integration process, or as Castells put it, “three outbursts of political initiatives and institution-building” (Castells, 1998: 332): the 1950s, the 1980s and the 1990s. In all of these three phases, *“the goal was primarily political, and the means to reach this goal were, mainly, economic measures”* (Castells, 1998: 332).

According to Delanty, the first phase is the “the project of rescuing the nation-state”⁷. Or as Milward sustains, after the Second World War the European nation-states rescued themselves from collapse by promoting the European integration process through a new political consensus that actually strengthened their existence as nation-states (Milward, 1992). Originally European integration aimed to bring European states together with a view to prevent war and conflicts. This was a peacekeeping and an economic phase where nation-states were mainly concerned with pragmatic cooperation, i.e. finding practical solutions to common problems. European integration was born out of the Franco-German reconciliation after the Second World War and had its ancestry in the ideas of Robert Schuman and Jean Monnet. While preventing great powers from getting into armed conflict, the process was also meant to offer smaller states a democratic balance of power system.

The second phase started in the 1980s when “in place of the exclusive priority of economic links and political cooperation, political steering now moved to centre stage” (Delanty, 2000a: 109). This stage increases legal and administrative integration. In other words, the question of interdependence based on legal and administrative integration took over the question of cooperation from the previous stage of integration. “Despite the growing influence of federalist ideas, integration was rarely seen as leading towards unification” (Delanty, 2000a: 109-110). Yet, this is also an integration phase where EU documents identify culture and identity as key dimensions of European integration⁸. Questions of culture such as shared history, common language, and religion came to the fore. During this stage of optimism, the globalisation of culture becomes a justification for the cultural integration of national societies. Societies experience a process of homogenisation but also differentiation

⁷ Delanty, 2000a: 109.

⁸ See Shore (2000) for a review of the EU efforts towards the construction of a European culture and identity since the 1970s.

within their national cultures which are subject to globalisation and European integration. To follow on Beck (2002), the local and the global became mutually constitutive.

The early 1990s brought a new stage of European integration. Formally, this phase emerged under the auspices of the European Union (agreed in 1992 under this name). The process now expanded from the spheres of economics and politics into social integration. “As a result of the increased volume of EU law and regulatory policy, a real social impact is now evident. With full monetary union and market integration, the social integration of the EU countries becomes even more pronounced”⁹. According to Delanty, currently the EU is somewhere between regulatory policy making and social integration. This is not the same as saying that the EU has reached a level of social inclusion as in a well-integrated state (even if an integrated social security system for migrants has been emergent). Social integration is still an incipient phenomenon. Social systems (e.g. welfare state, lineation of poverty, and employment) are far from being integrated at the same pace of development as economic integration. For instance, after the latest EU enlargement the single labour market and the free movement of workers (one of the four basic freedoms of the Treaty of Rome) has met the implementation of the so-called transitional arrangements which limit the movements of workers from the new Member States for a period of up to seven years.

Vis-à-vis this framework, Eastern European countries have existed in the shadow of the Cold War. Europe was mainly understood in economic and political terms by Eastern Europe. Yet, Europe remains even so characterised by cultural diversity. This cultural diversity is formed by a complex mix of identity and integration, transition, past and reconciliation with the present. With this historic outline in mind we can now concentrate on the role culture plays in the European integration process by reviewing the meanings of integration and culture and the ways in which they have mostly been associated.

2.1.1. The Meaning of Integration: Some Theoretical Approaches

Writing about what culture contributes to the study of European integration is a difficult task. Partly because the meanings of ‘integration’ and ‘culture’ remain unclear. Partly because integration is often used only in relation with the EU and its

⁹ Delanty, 2000a: 110.

formal institutions and treaties. In the following, however, I use the term of ‘integration’ in wider sense than EU integration. Diez (2001a) indicates that there are a number of competing meanings of integration, due to the “proliferation of names, and conceptualisations of what the name ‘EU’ means”¹⁰. These oppositions have led to the main debates between federalism and intergovernmentalism and between pro- and anti-Europeans. The competing visions of integration are attached to national contexts, and so far attitudes towards integration have been reliant on whether it serves the nation’s interests or not. According to Vogt, “different conceptualisations of European integration find support only through the national domain of discourse. Support for the integration process is formulated in terms of advancing the national interest and not in European categories of thought” (Vogt, 2003: 13).

Often associated with EU integration, the term ‘integration’ is mostly known as the concept of the 1950s and 1960s, used in the Cold War period to invoke images of European unity and for converting Europe into a political project (‘EU as a liberal bulwark against communism’). Paul Hoffmann, the director for the Marshall Plan, used for the first time the term integration to describe the process whereby states transfer their sovereignties to a supranational centre. Scholars have also defined integration in terms of international order and structures of governance. Karl Deutsch back in 1957 defined integration as the creation of peace zones and “the attainment, within a territory, of a ‘sense of community’ and of institutions and practices strong enough and widespread enough to assure, for a ‘long’ time, dependable expectations of ‘peaceful change’ among its population”¹¹.

Another theorist of integration, Ernst B. Haas (1958), defined integration as a *process* “whereby political actors in several distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities toward a new centre, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing national states”¹². According to Haas, integration is “the voluntary creation of larger political units involving the self-conscious eschewal of force in relations between participating institutions”¹³. Like Haas, Leon Lindberg defined political integration as “the process whereby political actors in several distinct settings are persuaded to shift

¹⁰ Diez, 2001a: 85.

¹¹ Deutsch *et al.*, 1957:2.

¹² Haas, 1958: 16.

¹³ in Lindberg and Scheingold, 1971: 4.

their expectations and political activities to a new centre”¹⁴. In the same line of thinking, Harrison (1974) referred to the role of institutions in the process of integration and therefore defined integration as “the attainment within an area of the bonds of political community, of central institutions with binding decision-making powers and methods of control determining the allocation of values at the regional level and also of adequate consensus-formation mechanisms”¹⁵.

A rather broad definition of integration is offered by William Wallace (1990). For him, integration is “the creation and maintenance of intense and diversified patterns of interaction among autonomous units”¹⁶. He does not specify these patterns as being cultural but rather “partly economic in character, partly social, partly political”. To him, the term ‘political integration’ implies “accompanying high levels of economic and social interaction”¹⁷. But Wallace excludes the cultural dimension of European integration: “Values, loyalties, shared identities are the stuff of political rhetoric and of intellectual and cultural history”¹⁸. However, he admits that “[they are] most difficult phenomena for social scientists to study. Economists prefer to exclude them altogether, substituting a model of rational man entirely motivated by calculations of interest. Political scientists and sociologists cannot take this conveniently reductionist way out”¹⁹. Further Wallace distinguishes between formal and informal integration. Formal integration is a discontinuous process consisting of changes in outcomes, institutions, policies, legislation and rules, perceived with every treaty, intergovernmental conference and regulation. The latter is a continuous process that refers to patterns of interaction without formal political intervention such as social change, communication networks, and private business. Ben Rosamond connects this distinction to Richard Higgott’s differentiation between *de facto* structural regionalization and *de jure* institutional economic cooperation (Higgott 1997). Michael Hodges (1972) defined very clearly integration as “the formation of new political systems out of hitherto separate political systems”²⁰.

¹⁴ Wallace, 1990: 19.

¹⁵ Harrison, 1974: 14.

¹⁶ Wallace, 1990: 9.

¹⁷ Wallace 1990: 9.

¹⁸ Wallace 1990: 16.

¹⁹ Wallace 1990: 16.

²⁰ Hodges 1972: 13.

From the above definitions one can easily deduct that the classical understanding of ‘integration’ is mainly economic and political integration. These definitions reflect mostly the existing realities of the EU institutions. Yet, in recent debates complex socio-cultural forms of integration have taken up a more prominent place. This must be seen against the background of the EU enlargement and the (though failed) Constitutional Treaty by which the EU becomes more and more diversified (Herslund and Samson, 2005). In view of all this, the critical argument is that in most analyses of European integration the concept of integration and its role and nature have been too narrowly understood. The possibility of seeing integration from a postwestern and postnational perspective has not (as yet) been considered.

2.1.2. Critique of the Traditional Approach to Integration

According to Erskine (2002), the crisis of meaning of integration is about defining a vision of European integration that is well-matched with ‘morally constitutive communities’. My understanding of integration is better deduced from wider processes of transformation currently taking place in Europe, conceptualized by three terms, constitutive to this thesis: Europeanization, postwesternization and postnationalism. *Stricto sensu*, I define Europeanization as a process of adaptation around conceptions of Europe and what it means to be ‘European’, but also as a process whereby national identity is re-defined. As to postwesternization, it refers to the transformation of the relations between East and West after the end of the Cold War. Briefly, postnationalism is concerned with loyalty towards pan national European forms of solidarity and guarantees of security rather than those relying upon the nation-state. I will elaborate on the first of these definitions below, whereas the last two concepts will be dealt with thoroughly in Chapter 3.

The concept of *cultural integration* is likewise central to the following analysis that, although it will be more thoroughly explored, a few central points must be raised here. As I will develop later, I use the term ‘cultural integration’ to distinguish the way Europe has reorganized itself to integrate the ‘East’ from more formal or *systemic* integration (political, economic and legal), that is “achieved primarily through states and markets, but also through law and technologies, and which have a functional role” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 10).

An obvious form of systemic integration at the European level is the convergence of Eastern European societies to the model of political democracy and

market economy labelled as ‘Western’. While the process of European integration has mainly been studied at system level, the process of cultural integration is related to wider processes of transformation currently taking place in Europe. I thus view cultural integration as a particular analytic orientation (beyond Europeanization and postcommunism) that, in my case, is applied to Eastern Europe. This leads me to evaluate Eastern Europe in a certain way: Europe is changing at the same time as Eastern European countries are changing and that induces the relationship with a different dynamic than when just looking at how Eastern Europe is converging with the West. I am less interested in ascertaining whether a specific EU path is followed. Rather, I ask how Eastern Europe is answering to the process of transformation of Europe and at the same time how Eastern Europe is dealing with its own transformation(s). Delanty and Rumford admit that “increasingly social integration is playing a greater role in Europeanization, but the nature of this particular form of integration is not simply a mapping out of systemic forms of integration” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 10). Furthermore, as will be shown, there is a lot to benefit from studying Eastern Europe from a postwestern and postnational perspective, i.e. a focus on the socio-cultural logic of integration²¹.

Three types of problems appear so far when looking at the existing body of literature on culture and European integration: the first one is that there is no clear definition of culture and - related to this - the relationship between culture and integration cannot be underpinned without defining the notion of culture. The second is that culture is almost never discussed inside traditional approaches to European integration. This questions the importance of these approaches in explaining cultural change in pluralistic postcommunist societies. Third, these integration theories are criticised for the limited insights they provide in the analysis of Eastern European societies, considered as deviating cases from the ‘path dependency’ logic.

Indeed, constructed around the EU, the integration theories are not able to deal with cultural transformation. Put in this way, the debate on today’s transformation of Europe looks similar to the debate on European integration that emerged in the post war era. Whereas conventional integration theories take an uncritical stance on the ‘West’ (the EU) model, the processes of transformation in Eastern Europe seen with the framework of cultural integration are neither the outcome of the EU project or its cultural policies. Cultural integration is not another

²¹ Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 10.

form of EU integration in the functionalist sense. Eastern European countries as they exist today are neither a reconfiguration nor have they emerged as a response to the logic of EU integration. The insufficiency of the traditional theories of integration has been expressed as early as in 1972 by Puchala:

our conventional frameworks have clouded more than they have illuminated our understanding of international integration. No model describes the integration phenomenon with complete accuracy because all the models present images of what integration could be or should be rather than here and now (Puchala, 1972: 276).

Partly as a result of important changes in the 'East' after 1990s and, possibly more importantly, as a result of wider processes of transformation in Europe, a shift occurred in the dominant paradigm towards integration (Delanty, 2003b, 2006a; Delanty and Rumford, 2005; Outhwaite and Ray, 2005; Zielonka, 2006; Therborn, 2006) in the direction of postwesternization and postnationalism (aspects in Chapter 3 which I will deal with).

But the EU can also be read in other ways and after the latest enlargement two important qualifications have shifted the core issues when dealing with the EU which "itself presents in its own development changing strategic commitments to ideas and ideals of European development" (Borinski and Wagner, 2002: 376). The first is the changing nature of the relationship between Eastern Europe and the 'old' EU as more complex for example "in the context of western disunity"²² with regard to transatlantic relations, e.g. Iraq war. The second is the place of the EU in a changing global order. The issues raised by the first point were dealt with by Delanty (2003c). According to Delanty, "the EU is thus at the decisive point of moving beyond postnationality to an encounter with multiple civilizational forms" (Delanty, 2003c: 10). That is, the multiplicity of cultural and political projects oriented towards self-transformation has become more central to the nature of integration after the last enlargement. Thus, the civilizational analytic can offer a more suitable theorization of transformation, in contrast with the passive perspective of Europeanization. Delanty's observation is that the enlargement "will involve new processes of social and system integration beyond the Western modernist project launched by Jean Monnet" (Delanty, 2003c: 10). The changing context of European integration has brought about the necessity of addressing cultural integration.

²² Rumford, 2006a: 2.

This critique of the traditional approaches will serve to further outline an alternative approach to cultural integration in the case of Romania. Cultural integration is an alternative way of thinking about integration which does not reduce integration to the technical process of integration (i.e. systemic integration). This dimension of integration allows for a rather more fluid theorizing of European integration. An obvious form of systemic integration at the European level is the convergence of Eastern European countries to the model of political democracy and market economy labelled as Western. While the process of European integration can be mainly found at system level, cultural integration is dealing with the societal level. Cultural integration is neither an end in itself nor an intentional process.

Cultural integration is not simply an alternative theory of European integration which puts culture at the fore (i.e. EU cultural policy) front rather than economics and politics. For example, economic integration theory will emphasise that the mutual advantage of nation states is enough to produce integration. Europe is according to this theory a purposive action that calls itself in an indirect way a 'community'. In this way, cultural integration differentiates from a whole raft of theories of integration (Rosamond, 2000). In this thesis, cultural integration is used to understand how Eastern European countries, more generally and Romania, in particular, re-organize themselves internally, after communism on the basis of a process of internalizing social actors' understandings. Contrary to the classical assumption of integration as a closed system based on a rational or functional consensus, the starting point of an explanation here is that cultural integration has more to do with how Europe has reorganized itself after communism to integrate former communist countries. The point of cultural integration is not to develop a theory of regional integration, but to explain how integration happens beyond the nation state and how affected countries are responding to this integration of Europe and to their own transformation.

As it will be revealed in my model of cultural integration this process relates to both the internal integration of individual societies, and these societies with wider Europe. The process of cultural integration is not to be understood as an end in itself. Cultural integration is neither an explicit process nor an intentional one. Cultural integration is an open-ended process that works to reconstruct society and societal identities. Cultural integration - as an approach - facilitates the separation between systemic forms of integration and more complex socio-cultural forms of

integration. The notion of culture obviously plays a central role in defining cultural integration, and therefore in the next section I will explore the meaning of culture.

2.1.3. The Meaning of Culture

If ‘integration’ is an unclear term, this is even more the case with culture. What is culture? This question becomes relevant as a result of the denial of the cultural in the mainstream integration theory and in the context of European integration. Culture, it has been suggested “is probably the broadest concept of all those used in the historical social sciences. It embraces a very large range of connotations, and thereby it is the cause perhaps of the most difficulty”²³. The concept of culture itself has made its way into EU documents since the 1980s as an important dimension to the process of European integration: “The cultural dimension is becoming an increasingly crucial means of giving effect to policies seeking to fasten a Union of the European peoples founded on the consciousness of sharing a common heritage of ideas and values”²⁴. One problem with this statement is that common history and cultural traditions are often going to be exclusive and incompatible in a definition of culture because parts of identity and history evolve in complex terms with neighbours. The result is that we often have incommensurable national stories and traditions²⁵.

Recent debates among scholars of European integration (Rosamond, 2000; Friis, 1997; Haas, 2001; Hix and Goetz, 2000; Hooghe and Marks, 2001; Jachtenfuchs, 2001) suggest that culture and European integration might have little in common. The term ‘culture’ often refers to institutions that promote culture (museums, libraries, universities, theatres). Much analysis of the cultural dimension of integration has therefore focused on the EU cultural policies (i.e. cultural industries) and on their dynamics and mechanisms of cultural policy-making (Meinhof and Triandafyllidou, 2006; McGuigan, 2004; Flood and Kevin, 2005). Culture as contained in the notion of ‘cultural integration’ differs from cultural policy

²³ Wallerstein, 1990: 31.

²⁴ Barzanti, 1992.

²⁵ Recognition of this lies behind e.g. the number of educational projects developed by the EU in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe, and the Balkans since the 1990s. “Several such initiatives include: the Baltic, Caucasian, and Black Sea history textbook projects; the Southeast European history teachers’ education project; and the projects on ‘history teaching in the New Europe’ and on ‘learning and teaching about the history of Europe in the twentieth century’” (Soysal, 2002: 270). These projects’ intention was namely to re-establish a positive collective past, and “bring about a *rapprochement* among former enemies” (Soysal, 2002: 271).

regulation, and especially from cultural inclusion. In all areas researchers have confronted each other in order to give a proper definition of culture. For a short review of different meanings of culture it is preferable to break up the analysis according to four meanings of culture: culture as a form of high culture and intellectual artefact; culture as a normative model; culture as medium of communication and culture as social construction.

Culture as a Form of High Culture and Intellectual Artefact

The meaning of culture as a form of high culture is close to the etymology of the term 'culture'. The term 'culture' derives from the Latin word *cultura* that was applied to mean 'cultivation'. It also included the training and care of the body. "Instruction aimed at increasing virtue chastisement, chastening from the evils with which God visits men for their amendment"²⁶. Before 1750 human cultivation was expressed in French, English and German by the notion of 'civilization'. Later in the Oxford English Dictionary (1805) it means 'the training, development, and refinement of mind, tastes, and manners'²⁷. Today this definition comes to explain what we call 'high culture'. This conception restricts culture to dissemination of fine art, opera, poetry, theatre and so forth. These are areas where one is supposed to need an education in order to be able to enjoy. In other words, high culture is culture associated with a learning process and a particular social class/status. A parallel can be made with the definition of culture as an intellectual artefact. This meaning describes culture as a process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development. It is noteworthy in this case to consider the link to civilisation. Close association to civilisation and aesthetic attainment adds a sense of elitism to the meaning of culture. Matthew Arnold (1883) depicted culture as the study of perfection. In other words culture exists at a very abstract level and includes values such as beauty, intelligence, and perfection. His definition is confusing from two points of view: firstly, the definition does not say much about what kind of 'perfection'; secondly, the author never questioned the social context. He is somehow prisoner of the initial definition of culture when he writes, "culture is to know the best that has been said and thought in the world" (Arnold 1883). The social anthropologist Edward Burnett Taylor

²⁶ *The New Testament Greek Lexicon*, <http://www.studylight.org/lex/grk/view.cgi?number=3809>.

²⁷ <http://www.wsu.edu:8001/vcwsu/commons/topics/culture/glossary/culture.html>.

defined culture ‘or civilisation’ back in 1871 as “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society”²⁸. It is very likely that Taylor thought of culture in terms of social evolution. The focus on culture meant concern with symbolic representations (e.g. language) that make us human. In this respect Taylor’s definition does not differ from what Melville Herskovitz calls culture back in 1948: “a construct describing the total body of belief, behaviour, knowledge, sanctions, values, and goals that make up the way of life of a people”²⁹.

This shift of culture onto groups opens the door to the study of *cultural integration* because, since societies are by definition groups, the culture metaphor can also be applied to societies. Although, for some (especially postmodernist) theorists, culture preserves its association with the intellectual and artistic, most theorists have emphasised the meaning of culture as a particular way of life among people or community. Raymond Williams’ essay *Culture is ordinary* (1958) marked a turn in the way culture was conceived. He brought down the high culture concept to a more ordinary one, “in every society and in every mind”. Indeed he defines culture as a whole way of life, arts and learning, a process of discovery and creative effort. Raymond Williams turns upon a more symbolic dimension of culture. In *The Long Revolution* (1961) he examines creativity in relation to our social and cultural thinking. The book is a reference when it comes to a theory of culture, where the culture considers education and press as cultural institutions and advances the idea of a strong relationship between literary forms and social history. Twentieth century is in his opinion just part of a long political, economic and cultural revolution.

Culture as a Normative Model

A second meaning of culture refers not to a national or supranational sphere but has to do with universal norms of democracy and rights, freedoms and universal human culture. This is a definition of culture as a normative model. “At the end of the twentieth century, human rights, democracy, progress, equality are everyone’s, every nation’s modernity – even when they organize their modernity differently and even when they fail to exercise that modernity.(...) This Europe does not exist against others” (Soysal, 2002: 274). This is what makes it difficult to find this definition of

²⁸ Taylor, 1958: 1.

²⁹ Herskovitz, 1948: 625.

culture ‘unique’ European. This definition of culture is somehow related to the notion of ‘civilization’.

Delanty (2000a) criticizes a definition of culture based on value consensus, arguing that culture is rather conflictual. Culture leads to fragmentation, understood as ‘the collapse of unifying ideologies of social order’. Delanty suggests an alternative model of culture that he calls cultural pluralization as opposed to cultural cohesion. That is a model contrasting to a pre-established set of norms and values and to a cultural consensus reflected earlier in many debates on integration. Increasingly “culture is becoming the site for new conflicts over identity politics and European integration is not leading to greater cohesion but to increased opportunities for contentious action” (Delanty, 2000b: 221). In other words, a model which would be more sensitive to cultural innovation, more adjusted to social and cultural fragmentation, and more attentive to the conflictual dimension to culture³⁰.

Culture as a Medium of Communication

Culture can also be seen as a medium of communication (Eder, 2001; Brague, 2002; Delanty, 2003a, Bauman, 2004), as something uncertain, non-fixed, and that keeps questioning. Put another way, culture is what we communicate³¹ through language and symbols whose meanings are learned and inherited from one generation to another. But this transmission of culture is not always the same. Culture changes and has its own dynamics depending on the society’s dynamics. For Delanty and Rumford culture is not “fixed or rooted in immutable principles, and is not defined by reference to territory, the state, an elite, a church or a party” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 104). On the contrary, culture is a flexible medium of communication, “rather than a form of integration” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 104). This is true if one looks at the role of the internet and other sources of information. This medium of communication is what defines us as cultural human beings. A mode of communication is a mode of expressing culture. Communication is a precondition for all social interaction. Social links are reproduced through this medium of communication.

Rémi Brague uses the term ‘cultural secondarity’ trying to convince us that “Europe has indeed this special feature of having, one might say, immigrated to

³⁰ Delanty, 2000b: 234.

³¹ <http://europa.eu.int/en/record/mt/title1.html>

itself”³². Culture influences the way people communicate. Yet even within the same culture people do not communicate in the same way. More fundamental differences are met within larger groups of people: communities, societies, nations, and civilisations. A parallel can be drawn with the concept of consensus. ‘Consensus transformed into dissensus’ as Eder (2001) noted, assumes a shared knowledge that can be contested. This is what Eder calls ‘culture’. This argument is justified. For “without dissensus we do not need to construct a shared world”³³. A study on social consensus does not need to go back to symbols, rituals and beliefs because such a cultural system is open to conflicts and inconsistencies.

Culture as Social Construction

The fourth meaning, culture as social construction is derived from Clifford Geertz’s definition of culture considered as the conceptual basis of a symbolic-interpretative approach: “man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretative one in search of meaning”³⁴. These “webs of significance”, the essence of culture, define meanings that people bring to their experiences in the outside world and meanings we make from experience. Yet, his assumptions are not always clear. What comes first: meaning or experience? Geertz claims that culture is a social legacy where the individual learns from its own group. Culture is learning and a cultivation process common to this group or society. Clifford Geertz sees culture in a societal context where values, ideologies and the way people behave differ from individual to individual. Society is defined here as any community of people with common interests, values and aims. And because this learning process and the society are in continuous dynamic, culture is also dynamic. Culture is “an incessant activity of drawing the world, fragment by fragment, (...) making the world an object of critical inquiry and creative action”³⁵. Like Geertz, Bauman (1973, 2004) argues for culture as praxis, but also for another kind of culture, that he calls ‘a silent culture’. This is culture “unaware of being a culture, (...) a repair workshop servicing the current web of human interaction called ‘society’” (Bauman, 2004: 12).

³² Brague, 2002: 122.

³³ Eder, 2001: 224.

³⁴ Geertz, 1973: 5.

³⁵ Bauman, 2004: 11.

This symbolic-interpretative approach starts from the assumption that cultures are socially constructed realities. In the words of Mary Jo Hatch “when speaking of culture as shared meaning, understanding, values, belief systems, or knowledge, keep in mind that a culture depends upon both community and diversity. It allows for similarity, but also supports and relies upon difference”³⁶.

This is close to Bourdieu’s (1972, 1988) concept of culture. According to Bourdieu, culture is constituted by what makes our symbolic universe: institutions, artefacts and practices are included. He also emphasizes the point that culture defined as both ‘way of life’ and ‘high culture’ is linked to politics without eliminating the role of human agents and the actions that shape their social world. Bourdieu (1972) refers to culture as a systemic social construction based on a competition between ideational, actionable, and material elements within society. Culture relates to the individual and is derived through social structures which are influenced by society’s overlapping sub-systems. The symbolic systems (arts, science, language, religion) that we are shaped of influence both our way of communication and the connecting process between groups or individuals and their institutions. In his book, *Homo Academicus* (1988), Bourdieu insists on how important hierarchies and academic authority are for cultural products’ reception in the academia. Even if Bourdieu did not particularly analyse cultural integration, he was concerned with how culture is structured between generations. His focus includes cultural consumption patterns and their meaning in contemporary societies. That is to say that social interaction and cultural integration can exclude or restrict individuals from cultural participation and from being cultural recipients of arts, education and ability to understand politics. The point made in Bourdieu’s approach is that culture constructs strategies of action. On the basis of this hypothesis Bourdieu draws the thesis that culture as a mode of using symbols (moral, of taste) is associated with the notion of ‘strategy’. This includes implicitly the assumption that is the medium of class-specific strategies of connecting with each other. Bourdieu calls these strategies *habitus*. These *habitus* distinguish between different classes of people.

It might be enlightening to compare Bourdieu’s definition of culture with Shore’s concept of culture. According to Shore, culture is not only a disputed concept but a disputed *space*, central to which are issues of language and power, and ideology

³⁶ Jo Hatch, 1997: 206.

and consciousness”³⁷. The next chapter will be devoted to a more detailed survey of these connections. In this respect Shore’s suggestion for culture is not different from Delanty’s perspective on culture³⁸. Delanty’s main assumption is that the idea of culture based on a common language and shared European values is wrong. Conversely, social integration does not stand for cultural cohesion. The icon of a European common cultural heritage at the EU discourse level gives expression to divisions rather than to frameworks of cultural unity. In other words, the consequence is that European culture becomes a cohesive set of norms, seen as homogeneous, and takes on essentialistic, pre-established proportions³⁹.

A promising approach to culture is the one chosen by Castoriadis (1987). Castoriadis takes the ontological status of society seriously looking for answers to the following questions: what is a society? what makes it change? His main assumption is that society has its own dynamics. Society is instituted, that is it creates its own reality. This ‘institution of society’ is personified in institutions made of ‘social imaginary’ significations. Since they are shared, these significations are social. Ideas, representations, acts are what embrace this social reality. Institutions draw their source from the ‘social imaginary’, that is the socio-cognitive frameworks that individuals use to imagine their social environment. Continually reconstructed, these frameworks play an important role in shaping the social reality. “This imaginary must be interwoven with the symbolic, otherwise society could not have ‘come together’; and have linked up with the economic-functional component, otherwise it could not have survived” (Castoriadis 1987: 131). Within this view of society, Castoriadis defines culture as everything in the institution of society that goes beyond its identitary dimension and that the individuals of this society positively connect as ‘value’ in the largest sense of the term: in short, the Greeks’ *paideia*.⁴⁰ For Castoriadis, social imaginary significations “cannot be related to a ‘subject’ constructed explicitly in order to ‘carry’ them – whether this is called ‘group consciousness’, ‘collective unconscious’ or whatever” (Castoriadis 1987: 365-6).

Having commented on the four different concepts of culture, a few additional remarks must be made regarding the view applied in this thesis. First of all, since this thesis is primarily concerned with cultural integration, a clarification of the

³⁷ Shore, 2000: 23.

³⁸ Delanty, 1999: 221-38.

³⁹ Delanty, 1999: 226-27.

⁴⁰ Curtis, 1991: 220.

concept of culture and its relationship to cultural integration must be made. Against the view of culture as common history and values, or as a normative model, I argue for a definition of culture which link to cultural integration is more opened and fluid. The concept of culture I propose is partly eclectic, but mainly influenced by the last meaning presented above. Hence, I define culture as a socially constructed reality based on social imaginary significations. This definition is relevant to my study because it indicates the reflexive components of culture. Culture in a societal context is not separated from the social; it is a concept which inevitably encloses the *content* of social relations as well as the construction of those relations. This strengthens the already mentioned idea of Europe as being culturally constructed. Wagner (1981) used this idea earlier when he suggested that “cultures are themselves culturally constructed through the very processes that purport to describe and objectify them” (quoted in Shore 2000: 23).

This theoretical framework provides me with a conception of culture that is useful when analysing the cultural dimension of Europeanization. Moreover, culture is a way of life created and maintained by social agents through shared significations. This is a constructivist definition of culture. The social constructivist⁴¹ approach is concerned with describing reality as socially constructed. In this respect, culture becomes a context for meaning construction and interpretation. Cultural meanings can only be encountered and understood from within the cultural system in question. Social meanings accompany social structures and provide them with imaginary significations defined by Castoriadis (1987) as the main sources of meaning in social reality. It is through social action that such meanings evolve. Culture involves the members of a society in a socially constructed reality. Social agents engage in constructing a new order on the basis of their own vision of society.

One needs to investigate the ‘social imaginary’, i.e. the way social agents imagine their project of social change, and try to find out their national understanding in order to hint its cultural significations. What is looked for is, if at all possible, the entire system of significations existing to the members of a society. There are of course a multitude of significations that represents the whole society in its full complexity. The aim is to put together cultural patterns that are identifiable to social agents, or at least to those who have been close to the reconstruction of the new societal project. But significations can be ambiguous; social agents can give different

⁴¹ also called social constructionism.

significations to the same idea as well as use different ideas to communicate the same significations. Interpretations are therefore socially constructed realities.

The social constructivist view used in this thesis will be nuanced by a fragmentation perspective which looks at the ways in which cultures are contradictory, ambiguous, and in a constant state of change. One key implication of this ambiguity and multiplicity is that identity becomes fragmented. The model of constructivism employed here presumes also that change in these significations is the subject of cultural integration. If this approach is linked to cultural integration, what becomes obvious is the importance of societal identity to the shape and nature of cultural integration. Societal identity provides the context from which societies develop towards cultural integration. It thus defines the framework from which cultural integration emerges at micro level.

2.2. Cultural Perspectives in Theories and Discursive Approaches to European Integration

In this section, it is my intention to focus on the extent to which traditional integrational and discursive approaches incorporate the notion of ‘culture’. I do not intend to give a detailed introduction to all approaches to the study of European integration⁴². Next to the theories, discursive approaches to integration have a lot to say about culture (Wæver, 2004). These approaches focus on explaining culture and European integration but do not refer specifically to cultural integration as a process of change. In the following, I shall outline some developments in the recent European integration theories which point to a new conceptualization of the cultural and which may be pertinent to my analysis.

2.2.1. ‘State of the Art’ – Culture in the Study of European Integration

How should we talk about questions of culture and European integration? To a significant extent culture has no clearly defined role in the study of European integration. However, the literature lately has started to debate whether we can include culture or not when discussing the process of European integration. In general, it looks like a fertile domain to research the relationship between culture and integration.

⁴² This has been done in Rhodes and Mazey, 1995.

In European studies scholars such as Castells (1996) and Melucci (1996) have become more aware of the need of association of European integration with culture as a matter of respect towards the diversity of European cultures. “European integration lacks a cultural dimension comparable to that of nation states”⁴³. Castoriadis (1987) argues that the cultural dimension is as important as the economic one for understanding and transforming society. This dimension expands to questions of identity (Garcia, 1993; Schlesinger, 1994; Smith, 1995; Wintle, 1996). For Soysal, “much of the debate on European integration and identity privileges the legitimate ‘actorhood’ of nation-states or intergovernmental negotiation and decision-making structures” (Soysal, 2002: 270).

In particular the fact that the notion of culture is a contested issue brings the question of integration frontward. Bekemans (1990) argues that economic reasons to develop the European integration are too narrow aims to put forward the process. Smelser and Alexander (1999) seem to suggest that culture is more integrative than some might think. Others (Offe, 1996; Ifversen, 2002; Kohli, 2000) have insisted that there is a crisis of identity and culture in Europe. This phenomenon comes partly from an ill definition of concepts such as Europe and European identity, partly from the disproportionate attention given to cultural aspects of European integration. Péter Balázs (1997) announces the last enlargement as the one that makes European integration step beyond its own cultural and geographical borders. I concur with Balázs’s suggestion and furthermore argue in this section that integration studies need to face qualitatively new cultural and conceptual challenges.

No or very limited existing literature and research considers cultural integration in terms of theory and empirics. Yet outlines of a debate on cultural aspects of integration have become visible in the sociology of culture and cultural politics. In international relations, the cultural dimension of integration is connected to minority cultures and their rights to cultural autonomy and heritage as stated in UN declarations. Generally when these aspects are discussed, they appear a legal framework. While many theorists of European integration neglect or ignore the cultural dimension (Deutsch *et al.*, 1957; Haas, 1958; Hodges, 1972; Wallace, 1990; Rosamond, 2000), sociological concepts of cultural integration can be found in debates on the idea of Europe, democratic culture, cultural citizenship and European identity (Delanty, 2000a, 2003a, 2004; Shore, 2000; Stevenson, 2001). De Witte

⁴³ Delanty, 2000a: 114.

(1990) was among the first to plead for no separation between economic and cultural spheres of European integration. He argues that “one must recognize that a separation of the economic and cultural spheres is becoming increasingly artificial” (De Witte, 1990: 205). One should therefore try “not to *prevent* the Community from entering the field”, but rather “to *steer* its policy into the appropriate direction”⁴⁴.

Aspects of cultural politics of European integration are covered in *Building Europe – The Cultural Politics of European Integration* written by Cris Shore (2000). The author is rather sceptical about the process of European integration and the existence of a common European identity among the peoples of Europe. According to him a European public hardly exists as a self-recognizing body – except maybe from small elites in business, politics and administration. Yet, Cris Shore offers a debate on cultural aspects of the integration process. The author concentrates mainly on the creation of a European state trying to answer the following central questions: what are the actual challenges we face with regard to further European integration, what ‘role’ does culture play in the process of integration and what are the consequences of creating a European *nation*-state. Using an anthropological approach based on ethnographic research among EU officials and politicians in Brussels, Shore deals with cultural aspects of EU integration such as the creation of the European *nation*-state, symbols of Europe, citizenship, single currency, the organizational culture of the Commission, and the key actors in promoting the vision of a common European consciousness and culture. In the end Shore argues that the goal of European federalism based on a shared identity is too far away. Nevertheless his perspective is too narrow for the purpose of this study since Shore does not move beyond the EU institutions to look at a wider Europe. However, while Shore is preoccupied with how the nation is integrated in images of Europe created by the elites in Brussels, my focus is on how ‘Europe’ has reorganized itself after 1989 to integrate former communist societies. I agree with Shore in the significance he attaches to the relations between societies and Europe. These relations are mutually enforcing, but they are not identical. According to Shore, “to reify an outdated idea of cultures as fixed, unitary and bounded wholes that is both sociologically naïve and politically dangerous”⁴⁵. To reiterate this, Europe is not a rigid idea but a rather

⁴⁴ De Witte, 1990: 205.

⁴⁵ Shore, 2000: 58.

dynamic idea, valid in a certain context, under continuous shape from history, culture and politics.

Also for Eder (2001) Europe is more than law and politics: “Europe has a cultural meaning”⁴⁶. Taking up the issue of ‘integration through culture’, Eder calls for a European consciousness and a re-invention of Europe based on historical memories, symbols, metaphors and a collective identity⁴⁷. His main thesis is that “to the extent that integration beyond the nation state continues, cultural factors become central to this process”⁴⁸. Considering the hypothesis that more culture in connection with the constitution of a society in Europe is needed, Eder underlines that “how much culture is needed to generate such a transnational social order, and whether the existing cultural repertoire is suitable for this constructive task is an empirical question” (Eder, 2001: 225). Exactly because of the role of culture in the integration process, “a reconstruction of cultural processes (...) is the key to the explanation of the formation of a European society”⁴⁹. This focus on the cultural dimension of integration is inspired by current debates in academic research, where concepts such as ‘culture’ and ‘Europe’ are “increasingly seen as non-essential discursively shaped categories in a permanent flux where boundaries are constantly contested and negotiated”⁵⁰.

2.2.2. Discursive Approach to European Integration

Discourse analysis constitutes less than a homogenous field. Different strands proliferated and the label ‘discourse analysis’ itself has been used with different meanings. The notion ‘discourse analysis’, usually used in humanities, has been inspired in political science mainly from the French post-structuralist tradition (Foucault, 1972, 1991; Derrida, 1974, 1980). While Foucault’s traditional discourse analysis tends to minimize the influence of the actor, Landwehr (2004) focuses on the interdependence between the actor and the discourse. He argues that discourses are being socially, historically, and politically rooted through actors. Researchers have also defined discourse analysis as a *system that adjusts the structure of statements* (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1982; Wæver, 1994; Bartelson, 1995; Torfing, 1999). In

⁴⁶ Eder, 2001: 245.

⁴⁷ Eder, 2001: 222.

⁴⁸ Eder, 2001: 225.

⁴⁹ Eder, 2001: 225.

⁵⁰ Malmberg and Stråth, 2002: 5.

other words, ‘discourse’ designates a number of statements created by the same pattern thus forming a discourse which is constitutive to the object of communication. Particular to discourse analysis is the assumption that language has a constitutive effect on meaning and reality. The ontology of discourse analysis rejects the existence of a reality outside language. When language is attributed a constitutive role, language is not just a medium for the actor to deliver his message. The actor is actually part of an interdependent relationship with language, and this relationship decides the frames of what it is possible to express.

‘Critical discourse analysis’ (CDA) is an interdisciplinary approach to discourse analysis which looks at micro-features of texts in order to reach the macro level and draw on more general debates (Fairclough, 1992, 1995; Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999; Titscher *et al.*, 2000). Within CDA various models of use have been propagated. For instance, Fairclough’s model of discourse analysis is revealing the obscure ideological relations between discourses and socio-cultural practices. Fairclough defines discourse in terms of “language as a form of social practice”⁵¹. In other words, linguistic phenomena are social, given that “whenever people speak or listen or write or read, they do so in ways which are determined socially and have social effects” (Fairclough, 2001: 19). Social phenomena are linguistic, because “language activity which goes on in social contexts (...) is not merely a reflection or expression of social processes and practices, it is *part* of those processes and practices”⁵². For Wodak (1996) discourses are multi-layered and discourse analysis studies power relations and ideological discourses in order to examine how they are embodied in cultural forms of life. Wodak uses the historical discourse method which emphasises that discourse is historical, i.e. linked to events that have happened and are still happening. This represents an important opening for my analysis as I point out the significance of precommunist and communist discourses in the understanding of Eastern European societies. Van Dijk (1993) notes that discourse analysis focus on how social agents influence social beliefs and values, and shape ideologies through the standards they set for what is and what is not overall accepted. Van Dijk’s model of discourse analysis examines the hidden power structures reflected by ideological discourses. For Van Dijk, common understandings of a group or society are conceived as the result of discursive interactions within that given group or society

⁵¹ Fairclough, 2001: 16.

⁵² Fairclough, 2001: 19.

(Van Dijk, 1997). Discourse analysis treats discourse as a societal practice and looks at the influences of social, political, and cultural contexts on discourse. The most significant, in any discourse is its own context and the process that makes its construction possible. Discourse analysis investigates the process of construction of meaning by looking at language as a social practice for the reproduction of meaning between actor and social context (Keller, 2004). Thus, discourse analysis aims at showing how meaning is created in a society, in other words it investigates categories of observation, meaning, and identity. Wæver (1994) refers to the societal and cultural structures and their influence on foreign policy, an important point for this thesis, as the case study will demonstrate how national perceptions and discourses define Romania's approach to the outside world.

In EU studies, discursive approaches have often been applied to constitutionalism, democracy, legitimacy and (collective) identity. These studies refer to a set of ideas such as: the way economic and political national interests influence the EU level decision-making (Hall, 1993; Blyth, 1997; Parsons, 2000); policy narratives, discourses, and frames that (re)construct actors' understandings of interests and structures (Radaelli, 1999; Doty, 1996; Milliken, 1999; Jobert, 1992; Muller, 1995; Muller and Surel, 1998); or national identities, values, norms, and collective memories that serve to shape interests (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998; Rothstein, 2000), and constitutional discourse in the EU (Shaw, 2000). Immigration and the 'politicisation' of migration is yet another favourite topic chosen by discursive approaches.

In European integration studies a discursive dimension to constructivist approaches has recently been introduced to address the changing nature of societal identities and of the nation-state within the process of integration⁵³. Through practice and meanings, discourses provide an insight into the dynamics of change. In this sense, a more 'moderate' constructivism has come "to occupy the 'middle ground' between rationalism and poststructuralism"⁵⁴. Such studies have, for example, investigated the structure of meaning in a given political issue⁵⁵, as well as the role of agents' multiple identities in national political discourses. The studies on discourse as an interactive process also cover policy construction issues that generate collective

⁵³ Stolcke, 1995; Neumann, 1999; Bellier and Wilson, 2000; Christiansen *et al.*, 2001; Diez, 2001a; Eder and Giesen, 2001; Delanty and Rumford, 2005.

⁵⁴ Wæver, 2004: 202. See also Risse (2004) and Wæver (1998).

⁵⁵ Wæver, 2004: 199.

action and identity (Haas, 1992; Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith, 1993; Hajer, 1993; Singer, 1990; Jobert, 1992; Muller, 1995; Jobert, 2001; Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998), or the discourse of political actors (Schmidt, 2000). It also includes studies on the use of ideas in public arguments (Mutz *et al.*, 1996), open public debates (Guiraudon, 2000), the democratic governance discourse (March and Olsen, 1995), national political discourses (Hall, 1989), or communicative action (Habermas, 1996).

According to Wæver, “discursive approaches can be seen as either a methodology (‘discourse analysis’) and therefore compatible with quite different theoretical approaches, or as a theoretical approach that had been developed in other disciplines and has been applied to EIS in different ways”⁵⁶. By analysing discourse points on Europe, Wæver identifies some frequent themes: ‘not one Europe but many’ (Wæver, 1990; Stråth, 2000), EU seen in non-state terms, but rather as a “post-modern empire” (Wæver, 2004: 202; Diez 1997), and finally, European issues related to other matters due to the “relational nature of language, which means that concepts are valorized in relation to each other”⁵⁷ (traditions, and socio-economic divisions). Wæver (2004) discusses the values and limitations of discursive approaches by distinguishing among three bodies of work analysis: governance and political struggle, foreign policy explained from concepts of state, nation, and Europe, and the European project as productive paradox. The first two can be perceived as the ‘discursive manifestations’ of multi-level governance and intergovernmentalism, while the third approach refers to wider Europe and locates a few general discourses as describing the integration process.

Building on Giddens’ structuration theory (1984), Thomas Diez (2001a) used the term ‘linguistic structurationism’ to look at the way discourses exist and are reproduced. Diez identifies that “discourses do not ‘cause’ but *enable* (...). They set limits to what is possible to be articulated, but also provide agents with a multitude of identities in various subject positions, and are continuously transformed through the addition and combination of new articulations” (Diez, 2001a: 98). But that also implies that institutions “cannot be separated from the discourses they are embedded in”⁵⁸. For Diez, “‘Europe’ becomes a discursive battleground with ramifications (...) for the wider political debate” (Diez, 2001b: 6). Discourses, thus, have an effect on

⁵⁶ Wæver, 2004: 198.

⁵⁷ Wæver, 2004: 202.

⁵⁸ Diez, 2001a: 97.

institutions, social contexts, practices, policies and the way they are conceptualised. Actors use specific meanings to precede their interests, but in the same time language structures how actors understand and construct their milieu. This is the understanding of discourse that provides a starting point for Delanty's argument that "Europe can be viewed as a discursive strategy which is articulated by shifting signifiers in relational contexts" (Delanty, 1995: 8).

There are a number of crucial aspects in the discursive dimension to constructivist approaches that require special attention because they imply that social reality is shaped by social agents. Like Diez (2001b) and Delanty (1995), I seek detail explanation of how social agents recreate Europe based on their specific understandings. Furthermore, I share the importance of issues of meaning and interpretation for discourse analysis. However, my own perspective is closer connected to the constructivist approach's overall assumptions than to discourse analysis. The emphasis that constructivist approaches place on examining the linkages between societal identities, politics, and the issue of change has made them highly relevant to the study of contemporary transformation in Eastern Europe and to the conceptualization of Europe in general. I believe that a choice of constructivist rather than a discourse analytical approach allows me to reach a more comprehensive explanation of how processes of transformation may come about. Moreover, a constructivist analysis includes the possibility of transformation even in the absence of discourses. As Sine Just put it, "one can be a constructionist without being a discourse analyst, but the reverse is highly unlikely" (Just, 2004: 19). As a conclusion to the discursive approaches I mention one missing aspect they will have to cope with in the future, that is the separation from social constructivism and multi-level governance approaches. A more detailed explanation of the constructivist approaches' assumptions will be given in the section 2.2.5.

2.2.3. Social Change Approaches

Social change approaches (referred to as 'transition') have been widely used to make sense of Eastern Europe. The so-called 'transitology' (Przeworski, 1991; van Zon, 1994; von Beyme, 1996; Diamond *et al.*, 1997) has been mainly concerned with institutional democracy and market economy changes. The first generation of research on Eastern Europe, inspired by insightful studies, theoretical considerations and sometimes based on analogy with earlier transitions, has used the term

‘transition’ to cover the radical changes that occurred after the end of communism, indicating a shift from planned to market economy and from dictatorship to democracy. The past years have been marked by lively controversy among those who see signs of a decline or the disappearance of transition studies (Bunce and Csanádi, 1993; Burawoy, 2001; Carothers, 2002) and therefore believe that a radical rethinking of the transitology is necessary (Stark, 1993; Srubar, 1994; van Zon, 1994; Illner, 1999; Dahrendorf, 1997; Borinski and Wagner, 2002; Wagner, 2004), and others who advocate the continuing significance of transition (Offe, 1991; Sztopka, 1992; Balcerowicz, 1995; Linz and Stepan, 1996; Mason, 1996; Shleifer, 1997).

Two directions in transition studies have been used for to deal with Eastern European countries: the functionalist and the genetic schools of thinking. The functionalist school (the state model) has dealt with long-term socio-economic structural developments, i.e. the impact of structural factors over time and the economic preconditions for democratization (Pridham and Vanhanen, 1994; Pridham, 1995). On the other hand, the genetic school (the society model) has mainly been concerned with short-term political determinants of the transition process (Mason, 1996; Linz and Stepan, 1996). To cut a long story short, transition studies have been confronted with mainly three issues in order to describe and analyse the central and Eastern European countries after communism: breaking with the communist rule, building democratic institutions and the making of reforms based on a linear movement from a planned to a market economy.

Five main assumptions delineate the transition paradigm. The first, basic assumption is that any country in transition is moving away from communist rule to embrace liberal democracy and market economy. This assumption also implies that bringing together market economy and democracy is the most favourable state of development for any modern society⁵⁹. Kennedy sustains even that transition studies centre on the ‘making of modernity’ (Kennedy, 2002: 20) that is on the making of markets and democracy in the aftermath of communism. The conceptual tools of the transition paradigm came thus to analyse postcommunist societies (designated as ‘in transition’) in terms of the normative affirmation of the Western modern project (seen as a blue print for the Eastern Europe’s future) and a teleological view on their political processes. Or as Arnason put it, transition studies assume that “the current western constellation of capitalism, democracy, and the nation-state (allowing for

⁵⁹ See Fukuyama, 1989.

some differences of opinion on the relative weight of the last factor) represents a universal and definitive model on its way to global ascendancy” (Arnason, 2000: 90). By assuming the transition of the East after the Western model, the emphasis comes on uniformity and unanimity.

The second assumption is that transitional countries follow an alleged path made of three core stages: opening, breakthrough and consolidation⁶⁰. Deviations from these stages are defined in terms of the path itself (i.e., what Carothers calls ‘democratic teleology’). The third assumption is the idea that elections have a determinative role in the process of transition itself. As such the outcome of elections is considered to have a key role in generating democratic reforms. Transitologists believe that the elections will expand and deepen political participation among citizens. By emphasizing the dominant role of the political elites in the transition process to the sacrifice of civil society, the transition theory has been criticised for not being able to address developments in Eastern Europe (Ost, 1990).

The forth assumption refers to the fact that the internal conditions of the country in transition (economic level, political history, institutional legacies, ethnic structure, social-cultural dynamics) “will not be major factors in either the onset or the outcome of the transition process” (Carothers, 2002: 8). Yet, no transition can break entirely with the past because of the previous historical legacies and their impact on the national culture. This assumption seems to imply that market economy and democracy have an existence of their own. The fifth assumption of the transition paradigm concerns the institution-building processes or as Offe (1991) called them, the process of ‘copying of institutions’ which looks at the emulation of Western defined institutions. These processes precede at the level of organizations and institutions and are articulated by laws and strengthened by state power.

The critique of the transition paradigm concerns some of its assumptions. Firstly, the idea of transition stops at ‘postcommunism’. Taking its point of departure from the notion of postcommunism, the transition paradigm has imposed a simplified conceptual framework on Eastern European transformation. To focus on the idea of postcommunism (as a special case) is to accept that East has remained separate from the West. But this divide is more than a prejudice: it also declines the impact of Eastern European transformation on the transformation(s) in Europe itself. Postcommunist societies appear then as an offshoot of the communist world, further

⁶⁰ Carothers, 2002: 7.

marked by the East-West divide rather than by their own ‘responses’ to transformation. In other words, to talk about Eastern European countries as postcommunist countries is not enough. To move beyond postcommunism means not only to bridge the longstanding East-West divide, but also acknowledging that these countries have been shaped by wider processes of transformation. An adequate understanding of this complex theoretical issue requires a better understanding of the nature of political changes occurring inside the Eastern European countries themselves.

Secondly, not only is the general label and concept of ‘postcommunist’ society unhelpful, but transitology hardly offers an empirical tableau of the complex nature of Eastern European transformations. With the emphasis on a ‘certain’ path of development, theoretical approaches to democratic transition have avoided to address the major implications for how ‘transition’ is distributed in a society. By taking one-sided perspective on transformation (based on preconditions for democracy), the transition paradigm has neglected the interconnections between historical legacies, internal dynamics, and global contexts. It is however, possible to draw attention to some differences among Eastern European countries. Indeed, Eastern European societies have very little in common today besides the fact that they were once called communist. Therefore, analysts cannot assume that they are destined to follow identical trajectories. In the words of Carothers “the transition paradigm was a product of a certain time (...) and that time has now passed” (Carothers, 2002: 20).

Thirdly, transition studies have been deficient in accepting history as an explanatory factor. Indeed, countries from Eastern Europe have been defined in the literature on transitions more by where they are headed – towards open societies and democratic governance – than by where they come from. The prospect that Eastern European countries might generate their own version of modernity has not been considered. Drawing comparisons between these countries based on their future orientation and the ‘unfinished character’ of the transition appeared more useful than attributing their peculiarities to inherited legacies⁶¹ (other than communist). Extending the ‘transition’ model to a universal paradigm, these studies have ignored the many variations in the patterns of democratic change. Overlooking the causes, the nature, and pace of different trends across Eastern Europe, the transition approach has had its own interpretation of these patterns away from reality. As Thomas Carothers

⁶¹ Bunce, 1995: 158-59.

pointed out, it is more and more obvious that reality in Eastern Europe is no longer compliant to the model. This is not to say that important democratic reforms have not occurred in these countries or that the EU should discard efforts to promote democracy in Europe.

Recently, F. Peter Wagner has regarded postcommunist societies as a challenge for transition studies by using Romania as an example. In Wagner's view, transition studies do not identify the "differentiated development of underdevelopment in the countries of the former Eastern Europe" (Wagner, 2004: 52). Likewise, transition studies do not cover the aspect of "indigenous conceptualizations and leitmotifs" (Wagner, 2004: 52). I concur with this critique and argue that instead of 'transition' type of change, Romanian society experiences today cultural integration, seen as the 'transformative dimension' of the Romanian society.

Fourthly, these studies have underestimated both the internal and the external dynamics of transformation. Moreover, the reorganization of Eastern Europe after the end of the East-West divide cannot be accurately described simply as a transition from state socialism to market economy. Last but not least, transition studies do not place Eastern Europe within the more complex postwestern and postnational condition of Europe. A more adequate understanding of these issues requires new frameworks of analysis. Based on this critique, I argue that the analysis of transformation in Eastern Europe can benefit from a cultural integration approach. Below I will shortly turn to examine the state-centred, the multi-governance model, and social constructivism.

2.2.4. Nationalist Approach to European Integration

Another approach that I distance myself from is the nationalist approach, emphasizing that in the European integration process nationalism is the expression of the nation. The nationalist approach to European integration is related to the idea that nation-states remain distinct, unique, and secure (i.e. 'Europe of nation-states'). Cultural integration, I have suggested, does not seek to explain the link between nationalism and integration. The main changes occurring today in Eastern Europe under conditions of cultural integration support neither the end of nationalism nor the end of integration (associated with the EU) but the emergence of postnational developments. These developments refer to "the shifting of the nation code from the

state to new reference points which allow for different kinds of identification” (Delanty, 2000a: 95).

The main debates around nationalism and European integration are to be found in the work of Milward, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State* (1992). Milward’s main contribution is to have made an explicit link between the defence of the nation-state, the pursuit of national interests, and the acceleration of European integration. In other words, what has driven the integration process is not a sense of European consciousness but the national interests of the member states. Central to Milward’s argument is that, rather than replacing the nation-state by another form of governance, integration has been “the creation of the European nation-states themselves for their own purposes, an act of national will” (Milward, 1992: 18). According to Alan Milward, the purpose of European Community (EC) policies was not to supersede but to reinforce the nation-state. Hence, integration *has* sought to reconcile, on the one hand, “the reassertion of the nation-state as the fundamental organizational unit of political, economic, and social existence” and, on the other hand, “the surrender of some of its powers to the European Community” (Milward, 1992: 20). The key aspect of ‘the rescue of the nation-state’, Milward suggests, has been the peaceful “surrender of national sovereignty” (Milward, 1992: 7) in favour of the pursuit of national interests. However, this has not made the EC the ‘antithesis’ of the nation-state. The development of the EC, Milward suggests, “has been an integral part of the reassertion of the nation-state as an organizational concept” (Milward, 1992: 2-3). Thus, both nation-state and European Community have reinforced each other, not as separate and divergent entities, but within a process of mutual reinforcement.

It was obvious after 1945 that European nation-states could no longer exist in isolation. The ideological rhetoric of integration was in fact concealing the real political and pragmatic reasons. Put differently, the EC existed simply to ‘rescue’ the nation-state, and not to establish a European State. As Milward pointed out,

after 1945 the European nation-state rescued itself from collapse, created a new political consensus as the basis of its legitimacy, and through changes in its response to its citizens which meant a sweeping extension of its functions and ambitions reasserted itself as the fundamental unit of political organization (Milward, 1992:3).

In this light, the EU is merely an intergovernmental body, used as a tool by its member states to fulfil their own domestic agendas against the force of economic

liberalization and globalization. For Milward there is some evidence to emphasize the domestic rationality of European integration. Milward finds that integration has been pursued by the nation-state as “one way of formalizing, regulating and perhaps limiting the consequences of interdependence, without forfeiting the national allegiance on which its continued existence depends” (Milward, 1992: 19). According to Milward, European states have long pursued their political project of the European rescue of nation-state in order to overcome the absence of a system of global governance in Europe.

Inevitably, Milward’s thesis leads me to the idea that my cultural integration approach does not focus on integration as another version of Europe of nation-states. My cultural integration approach differs, then, from the nationalist approach to European integration which stresses the preservation of the interests of the nation-state as the main mechanism for integration. Cultural integration does not aim to analyse the framework within which nation-states articulate their nationalism in order to better advance their objectives.

2.2.5. Constructing Theories

In sum about theories of European integration: they derived originally from International Relations (IR) and became first popular in the 1950s and 60s. They are usually exclusively used as a framework of analysis in the study of the EU. The usual dichotomies used to label theories of European integration are: constructivism versus positivism, governance versus IR approaches (rationalist) and institutionalism (path dependence theory and supranationalism) versus structuralism (realism and intergovernmentalism). The question now is if they can grasp the realities of European integration when matters related to culture are included.

Researchers have generally avoided the issue of cultural integration and so far the literature has been rather negative and critical towards the use of culture as an explanatory factor for European integration. Rosamond (2000) foresees integration theory “as moribund; an interesting, but ultimately futile intellectual experiment” and argues that “there are serious problems involved in cordoning off ‘theory’ in EU studies”⁶². Even if Rosamond (2000) realizes a critical analysis of the theories of European integration, he does not touch upon a view of the cultural dimension of European integration as an eminent dimension of further deep integration.

⁶² Rosamond, 2000: 3.

In the following, I will shortly go through the rationalist approaches to European integration. To shorten a long discussion two models have dominated the rationalist approach. The first one is the state-centred model; the second is the multi-governance model.

The State-Centred Model

The state-centred model looks at the role of power and interest. The model is based on the ‘realist’ assumption that states are the major actors in the European integration process and regarded as mutually exclusive. This state-centred theory explains the context of intergovernmental conferences where the production of treaties is regarded as decisive steps in the process of integration and as reinforcing the role of the nation-states. The accomplishment of the integration process in the post Cold War multipolar order “is more likely to be a venue for conflict rather than cooperation”⁶³. States are driven by rational preferences. Bulmer (1983) offers an interesting theory of the formation of national preferences.

One attempt within this tradition to theorize European integration is Moravcsik’s Putnam-inspired ‘two-level game’. The pressure of domestic interests is seen as “the primary source of integration that lies in the interests of the states themselves and the relative power each brings to Brussels” (Moravcsik, 1991: 75). EU is viewed as a two-level game: national and intergovernmental (Putnam, 1988). The decisive elements in the interstate negotiation process are the threats of non-agreement, the threats of exclusion and the possibilities of compromises. The most powerful states are decisive. Here integration is accepted because it increases the control in domestic affairs but it neglects the integration dynamics. This theory provides only a limited explanation of European integration and characterises mostly political and economic bargaining among member states. Moreover the question about the future of the nation-state as the primary unit in the European politics remains untouched.

The Multi-Governance Model

In this regard the multi-governance model of European integration, propagated by the neofunctionalists differs. The theory argues that nation-states “are loosing ground in

⁶³ Rosamond, 2000: 133.

the face of growing transnationalization and regionalization of decision-making”⁶⁴. According to some proponents of this model, the multi-governance model is “the dispersion of authoritative decision-making across multiple territorial levels” (Hooghe and Marks, 2001: xi). The EU policy process is considered to be a process that occurs across multiple levels (supranational, national and subnational). This idea is a challenge to Moravcsik’s liberal intergovernmentalist theory. Authority has moved from the national towards the European level and therefore weakened the nation-state. The multi-governance model remains “an attempt to capture the complexity of the EU, but it also represents a clear denial of the idea that there can be a single all-encompassing theory of the EU”⁶⁵.

When dealing with Eastern Europe, the above models have emphasised the conditions either related to the EU enlargement or the EU economic and political integration. Moreover, in these models of integration, culture has been treated top down. When culture is considered it is as something that in a neofunctionalist sense would result from integration in other spheres.

Social Constructivism

In studying the cultural dimension of integration it is useful to turn from the traditional European integration theories to the latest approach to theorising integration that is social constructivism. A number of scholars have applied the framework of social constructivism to the European integration process. A special issue of the *Journal of European Public Policy* published in 1999 marks a major shift in this regard (Christiansen *et al.*, 1999; Rosamond, 2000; Risse, 2004).

A lot of confusion is found in European studies on what makes social constructivism relevant to the study of European integration. According to Thomas Risse, social constructivism “does not make any substantive claims about European integration”⁶⁶. Therefore, he claims that “social constructivism does not represent a substantive theory of integration, but an ontological perspective or meta-theory”⁶⁷. One could easily read for example intergovernmental negotiations or neo-functional spill-over effects (Haas, 2001) from a constructivist perspective.

⁶⁴ Kauppi, 2003: 775.

⁶⁵ Rosamond, 2000: 120.

⁶⁶ Risse, 2004: 160.

⁶⁷ Risse, 2004: 174.

What defines then social constructivism? Social constructivism is an approach to the study of social phenomena which emphasizes the importance of the idea that reality is socially constructed. Berger and Luckmann argue already in 1966 in their prominent book entitled *The Social Construction of Reality* that what creates social order is interpersonal communication and understandings made of shared history and experiences. Reality is socially constructed. Consensus and interpretation are important parts of this social order. Members of a society produce patterns of meaning that legitimate their actions. This social constructionist position asserts that the structure and culture of a society are invented and maintained by the ways of thinking of its members. In other words members of a society make a socio-cultural context of their own.

Another central claim of constructivists is the proposition that meaning is socially constructed. “Constructivism emerged as scholars entertained the problems and difficulties posed by empiricist and rationalist accounts of knowledge and other perspectives that maintained sharp separations between the knower and the known” (Mascolo and Pollack, 1997: 1). Constructivist principles are well embodied both across and within different cultural and intellectual trends. Some of these trends are postmodernism (Kaplan, 1988; Lyotard, 1986), deconstructionism (Derrida, 1980), feminist theories (Jagger and Bordo, 1989; Code, 1991), sociology and philosophy of science (Kuhn, 1962; Latour, 1993), sociology of power and language (Bourdieu, 1991) and even the reader-response criticism in literary theory (Iser, 1974; Fish, 1980). Postmodernist accounts of social constructivism argue that there is no ‘reality’, but a special kind of knowledge that creates the social reality. That is why one should ‘deconstruct’ this reality.

A variety of constructivist approaches has entered the sociology of science and technology. “In these theories, the constructive process cannot be reduced to agency or to structures, but occurs in a mediated context in which agency is embedded in structures that are at the same time the outcome of the action of social agents” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 13). It started with ‘scientific constructivism’ that conveyed that all science was constructed and that reality is artificial. The sociology of knowledge had proven the determinant role of social factors. ‘Radical constructivism’ represented by Luhmann, Ernst von Glasersfeld, and others is concerned with the everyday reality experiences and what lies beyond knowledge. ‘Radical’ “because it breaks with convention and develops a theory of knowledge in

which knowledge does not reflect an objective, ontological reality but exclusively an ordering and organization of a world constituted by our experience”⁶⁸. According to Luhmann, “knowing is only a self-referential process”⁶⁹. ‘Radical constructivism’ assumes that knowledge is in the minds of people; people construct this knowledge on the basis of their own experiences. In epistemology there has been a trend to move from a passive view of knowledge towards an active view.

In contrast to these versions of constructivism, social constructivism has become known as a form of the philosophy. Heylighen (1993) explains that social constructivism "sees consensus between different subjects as the ultimate criterion to judge knowledge. ‘Truth’ or ‘reality’ will be accorded only to those constructions on which most people of a social group agree”⁷⁰. It is through the writings of Nicholas Onuf, *The World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations* (1989) and Alexander Wendt, *Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power* (1992) that constructivism enters political science and contemporary international relations. Social constructivism in political science and contemporary international relations unites international theory with sociological concerns. The different versions of constructivism emerged can be described after the distinction positivist/post positivist. According to Ruggie (1998), Wendt’s modernist constructivism that is supposed to be a bridge between institutionalism and reflexive constructivism is rather related to neo-classical constructivism (Kratochwill, Onuf, Adler, and Katzenstein) and postmodernist constructivism (Ashley, Campbell, and Walker). Alexander Wendt (1998) argues that the fundamental nature of states is not given, but has changed over time, can change again, and, most essentially, can be changed. Structures, in constructivist analyses, are not described in materialistic terms. They are rather described as “shared understandings, expectations and social knowledge (...). Intersubjective structures give meaning to material ones, and it is in terms of meanings that actors act”⁷¹. In contrast to the rationalist perspectives, constructivism argues that states’ identities and interests are not given but construed within the international system. For this reason, institutions and structures are social

⁶⁸ Von Glasersfeld, 1984: 24.

⁶⁹ quoted in Delanty and Strydom, 2003: 437.

⁷⁰ Heylighen 1993: 2.

⁷¹ Wendt, 1998: 389.

normative constructs and agents' interests are influenced by norms, culture and identities⁷².

In European Studies constructivism has been viewed lately as an ideational transfer from intergovernmentalist and actor-centred approaches⁷³. Constructivist accounts arise from, and attempt to resolve, what Jan Ifversen has termed as "inter-relations between a cultural and a political field"⁷⁴. Ifversen's constructivist point of view relates culture to the process of accession into EU. This perspective cannot avoid the presence of political background and terminology. Any political process develops on the basis of a given yet cultural dynamic. Political decisions affect developments in the underlying cultural dynamics. This constructivist approach makes sense in the context of EU enlargement. It means that now that the Cold War is over, other forces, cultural ones are playing a dominant role. Ideas do not just re-produce themselves. They have causes and sometimes-collective ones. Political power takes place through collectiveness. Reality is constructed and re-constructed by social actors. Yet, constructivism, as a 'cultural' theory of European integration regards reality as a social construction and concentrates on the way conceptions influence actions. Classical theories only cover limited aspects of European integration. As to Enlargement, "they cannot account for the evolution of the enlargement process which itself is rooted in not just a densely institutionalised politico-economic setting but is also crucially underscored by normative understandings of what the European construction is about"⁷⁵.

Thomas Risse depicts constructivism as "based on a social ontology which insists that human agents do not exist independently from their social environment and its collectively shared systems of meanings ('culture' in a broad sense)"⁷⁶. In this case actors are seen as role players that take into consideration a 'logic of appropriateness': "Human actors are imagined to follow rules that associate particular identities to particular situations, approaching individual opportunities for action by assessing similarities between current identities and choice dilemmas and more general concepts of self and situations" (March and Olsen, 1998: 951). This logic is dependent on context and expectations on the decision-making process. Thus,

⁷² Palan, 2000: 576.

⁷³ Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 13.

⁷⁴ Ifversen, 2002: 23.

⁷⁵ O'Brennan, 2001: 186.

⁷⁶ Risse, 2004: 160.

actors base their resulting decisions in consequence. In this sense actors' identity and options are dynamic. For example, the response to the challenge of the EU enlargement is, in social constructivist terms to offer flexibility in decision-making. The constructivist approach highlights the importance of language and knowledge and refers to the understandings shared by the agents involved in the decision-making process. Constructivism can also offer an explanation for a shift in identity in national policies issues. The nature of postcommunist politics goes beyond the rational numbers of cost and benefit of the EU accession. According to Hoskyns, "social constructivist accounts deal particularly with identity formation, the process of socialization, and the importance of discourse in shaping and setting limits to what is achievable" (Hoskyns, 2004: 228).

I believe that social constructivism can contribute to my general theory of cultural integration in two ways. First, the social constructivist perspective emphasizes the interpretivist and the sociological turns in the social sciences. The interpretivist turn starts from the idea that every action is meaningful, and therefore open to interpretation. Reflexivity i.e., "the idea that modernity is undergoing a transformation"⁷⁷ is another aspect of this type of theorizing. Second, social constructivism also explains the main concern with 'identity' issues. The sociological turn entails that actions are perceived as social phenomena. This approach gives importance to the social context within which identities are shaped. In my view social constructivism is a meta-theory that has the following features: taking critically the social action and its cultural significances; using a subjectivist epistemology, knowledge is relative to the observer, depending on the social and cultural context; using a subjectivist ontology which highlights the idea that what exists is a social construction.

Moreover, constructivism offers a framework that entails the significance of values in the development of a common identity. This is something that otherwise would be overlooked by employing traditional theories of integration. Using a constructivist approach makes us better understand the motivations involved. Such an approach looks at identity as something dynamic and flexible from which integration is constructed or as a framework through which actors see themselves and thus define the relationship with their community. This approach is based on the assumption that actors' interests are derived from within social integration. The constructivist

⁷⁷ Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 14.

approach looks also at how decisions are made and on what base (beliefs, conceptions of identity, symbols, myths and perceptions) they are created. This approach produces a model that will allow us to analyse how identity changes over time. In the case of constructivism, cultural perspectives are more likely to gain some space and significance. Yet, what seems to be missing from the social constructivist arsenal is a theorising of culture.

As it looks now, social constructivist accounts appear to have more relevance in engaging with cultural integration. Social constructivism has the potential to confront the basic grounds of the integration process and depict its inherent challenges in a way that other theories do not. Following this outline, the conceptualization of Europeanization will be discussed in terms of its current usage. This will help outline a framework for how Europeanization is to be applied later in this thesis, and sets the scene for the cultural integration model in the next chapter.

2.3. The Conceptualization of Europeanization

Having discussed a number of traditional approaches to European integration, I now turn to Europeanization theory. Europeanization is the latest development in integration theory over the last five years. Any usage of the term Europeanization must discuss its definition first. Despite the popularity of the term among social science disciplines, Europeanization has no clear definition. This is a major obstacle to the closer analysis of the Eastern European societies and the process of social transformation they undergo in present-day Europe. One reason that the area has emerged very strongly in the last few years is that it contains wider fields than just the EU and European integration. Also, questions of culture and Europeanization have come to the fore partly because of globalisation and the crisis of the nation-state in the Western societies, partly because of the increased migration and the uncertainty after the end of the Cold War era. Klaus Eder and Bernhard Giesen (2001) argue that “Europe is also a symbolic space where projections and memories, the collective experiences and identifications of the people of Europe are represented. Europe has a cultural meaning”⁷⁸. For Borneman and Fowler (1997), the field of Europeanization needs new methods and theories of analysis. The contemporary debates concern the way European societies relate to the process of Europeanization in the wider context

⁷⁸ Eder and Giesen, 2001: 245.

of uncertain national boundaries and “societal transformation of modernity by transnational processes”⁷⁹. According to Vink, Europeanization has become ‘a major new agenda for research’⁸⁰. These developments and others have contributed to raising the issue of culture.

Europeanization as a concept has been applied with a variety of meanings attached to it. There exists no consensus on what ‘Europeanization’ really is except that normally it has to do with the idea that European integration has an impact on structures, national policies, and national governance. There are different variations. Some emphasize the way in which European level processes are actually being incorporated within national structures. In this sense, Europeanization seems to be a synonym with the traditional notion of systemic integration. Yet this is a rather simplistic definition of the term. Some might even state that some forms of Europeanization have very little to do with the EU and the dynamics of integration (see also Delanty and Rumford, 2005): “identities and interests change as a result of shifts in social norms, values and beliefs and these may occur in response to transnational or global pressures only loosely connected to the EU”⁸¹. This first interpretation falls within the study of European integration and refers to Europeanization as domestic change caused by European integration.

A second interpretation that I would favour - and which includes culture and identity - concerns the way in which Europe, especially Eastern European countries, are in the process of becoming more *European* and European self-aware. This interpretation is broader than the EU and the dynamics of European integration. Bauman (2004: 15) has recently termed Europeanization as the result of Westernization. To understand Bauman’s idea of Europeanization it is first necessary to appreciate the extent to which Europe has become a *fortress* continent. As Bauman points out, the Eastern European countries have ceased thinking of being ‘European’ as something adventurous and challenging. “No longer does the globe feel inviting and hospitable; neither does it look like an empty stage for countless heroic exploits and glorious unheard-of feats. It seems hostile and threatening now” (Bauman, 2004: 21).

⁷⁹ Delanty, 2003c: 472-473.

⁸⁰ Vink, 2003: 1.

⁸¹ Featherstone and Kazamias 2001: 5.

This interpretation opens up the question of what ‘European’ actually means. Where does Europe start and where does it end? What does it mean to be European? What is European identity? What is European culture? In fact, that these questions are at all being asked is an example of Europeanization because they indicate that Europe or Europeans reflect upon these questions and seek to define Europe for themselves.

In national political debates ‘Europe’ often enters as a dimension of national identity rather than a project of transnational unification.(...) Rather than ‘How shall Europe be united?’, the questions dwelt upon in public debate have been: ‘How European is our nation?’, ‘How shall we relate ourselves to Europe?’, ‘To what extent should we be European, something else or simply ourselves?’ (Malmberg and Stråth, 2002: 9).

This meaning of Europeanization is presently being investigated in what has developed into a new agenda for research.

Research in the area of Europeanization has followed several avenues. Researchers have analysed ‘Europeanized’ aspects of national politics (Cowles *et al.*, 2001), domestic structural transformation (Featherstone and Kazamias, 2001), policies (Kohler-Koch and Eising, 1999), or one country (Dyson and Goetz, 2003). Work by Marteen Vink (2003) was concerned with the new institutionalist approach based on the question of ‘how Europe matters’. A weakness mentioned by Vink is that “scholars on Europeanization run the risk of missing the bigger picture by over-emphasising differences in processes of change across European changes”⁸². Therefore, so far research fails to present a *comprehensive* overview of the interpretation to Europeanization as the way in which Europe as a whole, not just EU, is somehow concerned itself with the process of becoming more ‘European’. This approach to Europeanization is accepted for the use of this thesis. This also means that I do not see Europeanization as deriving from integration or as being dependant upon or secondary to integration.

2.3.1. Dimensions of Europeanization

This section introduces the main dimensions of Europeanization in the context of European integration process and argues that it necessitates a broad focus and a complex ontology. Without claiming to be exhaustive, Europeanization has mainly

⁸² Vink, 2003: 6.

three dimensions that can be expressed in an abstract sense such as: political pressures and challenges for adaptation caused by European integration (this dimension refers also to domestic change under European integration); daily cultural encounters between peoples of Europe; and Europeanization as the process of becoming more 'European'.

Political Pressures and Challenges for Adaptation Caused by European Integration

Europeanization in this approach is focused on the study of EU and its administration as well as the administrative adaptation by national states to EU membership. Early work by Shore (1993, 2000, 2001) was concerned with the idea of an 'ever closer union' concentrating mainly on the European identity and the role of EU bureaucrats in constructing it, the creation of a European state and culture at the EU institutional level and the actual challenges we face with regard to further European integration, the 'role' culture plays in the process of integration and the consequences of creating a European *nation-state*. Additional work by Herzfeld (1992), Wright (1994), and Börzel (1999) deals with the idea of EU having its own bureaucratic culture. Ladrech (1994: 70) has suggested that Europeanization is a process that has made EU shape and reorient the national politics of its member states and acceding countries. These challenges and pressures caused by European integration may evolve into institutional change, or in resistance from the national level and hence limited structural change. Even so, Europeanization should not be perceived as a synonym for European integration. Rather the focus is situated on the way European integration has led to redefinitions of conceptions, relations and structures of power, both at national and supranational levels.

Works by Hanf and Soetendorp (1998), Kassim *et al.* (2000) were concerned with an indirect perspective on the domestic level of European institutions via assessing the European sources of national politics. EU as a two-way process of policy-making and institution-building is the focus of Knill (2001) and Kohler-Koch and Eising (1999). The way European integration influences national politics is analysed in Cowles *et al.* (2001) and Featherstone and Radaelli (2003). Radaelli's definition of Europeanization refers to the process of construction, diffusion and institutionalization of EU decision-making procedures. Hirst and Thompson (1996) relate Europeanization to the consequences of globalization, while Garrett (1996) sees Europeanization as a regional reaction to globalization. This approach on

Europeanization has also focused on other aspects than national politics and EU administration such as citizenship, human rights and ethnic minorities (Checkel, 2001; Vink, 2001, Soysal, 1994), state – economy relationship (Mjoset, 1997), and widening of the EU integration process (Grabbe, 2001).

This approach to Europeanization takes also into consideration the ‘download’ and the ‘nationalization’ of EU public policies (Wilson, 1996, Börzel, 1999), the national meanings of EU symbols (Hofer, 1994) and the change in the identity of nation-states under EU influence. This view looks also at the implementation of EU directives, and from a wider perspective, change in the structures and identities of nation-states under pressure from EU level. This perspective addresses also the creation of national symbols, national consciousness and stereotypes in interaction with EU. For Hix and Goetz (2000) Europeanization is defined as a “process of change in national institutional and policy practices that can be attributed to European integration”⁸³. A critique of this dimension of Europeanization has been taken up by Vink who argues that Europeanization is more than Europeanization. The theoretical foundations of this argument are made explicit in Moravcsik (1998) and Caporaso (1999). The way European policies, rules and norms affect domestic politics and policies are explained by the theory of ‘neo-institutionalism’ which accounts as well for the emergence as for the ‘constructivist’ reproduction of institutions (Checkel 1998, Vink 2003). To Maarten Vink, Europeanization is a process of domestic political change. Vink’s central idea is that Europeanization comes to be perceived more as resource than a restraint. Ágh (1998: 42-45) wrote, in this vein, of Europeanization as the process of ‘joining Europe’. Essentially this type of Europeanization describes an accomplished process of transition and integration into the Western political, economic and security models.

Based on an insightful analysis of history and civic school books and public debates, Soysal depicts the way European public space and identity is constructed in the specific field of education. Soysal’s article ‘Locating Europe’ (2002) deals with empirical patterns of the Europeanization of identity from an institutionalist perspective. As it comes forward from her analysis, “European identity is a loose collection of civic ideals and principles, such as democracy, progress, equality and human rights” (Soysal, 2002: 265). Yet, none of these principles are specifically European. Domestically, European identity can be seen as

⁸³ Hix and Goetz, 2000: 27.

not replacing the nation but rather reinterpreting it “as another repository of the same ideals and principles for which Europe stands” (Soysal, 2002: 265). Soysal’s empirical analysis stresses on three modes of constituting Europe. These can be summarised as: cultural collectivity, individual subjectivity and institutional unity. Europe as a cultural collectivity refers to what obviously makes us Europeans and therefore has to draw upon broad hypotheses such as Europe’s past, civilizational legacy and distinctive cultural values. Europe as a category of subjectivity is concerned with the emotional field of what it means to be European that is “desires and sentiments, civic constitution, loyalties, and a distinctly ‘European’ sense and sensibility of self”⁸⁴. Finally Europe as an institutional unity has to do with “Europe’s prospects *vis-à-vis* the existing nation-states” (Soysal, 2002: 267) and with political identification at supranational level.

For Soysal, Europeanization (or ‘the creation of Europe’) happens outside EU’s institutional framework. According to Soysal the location of European identity takes place at two levels of analysis: first, at transnational level that is EU, “secured in commonplace symbols of statehood and cultural collectivity (flag, anthem, heroes, holidays)” and second, at national level “in individual citizens’ consciousness and dispositions as subjects”⁸⁵. For example in Germany the outcome is a “prudent representation of the nation and its history”⁸⁶ while in France “Europe becomes French”⁸⁷. This is the reason why “Europe is fuzzy, no longer historically unique and precise to perpetuate a coherent, homogenous collective”⁸⁸. This is, in Soysal’s perspective, what makes European identity broader than Europe itself.

Daily Cultural Encounters between Peoples of Europe

The second dimension of Europeanization deals with the study of daily cultural encounters between peoples of Europe and the politics of recognition. Here Europeanization refers to interaction in daily life, “where peoples of Europe engage in face-to-face encounters with each other” (Borneman and Fowler, 1997: 497). These encounters refer especially to increased transnational and intercultural relations and are a consequence of globalization and European integration. Harmsen and

⁸⁴ Soysal, 2002: 267.

⁸⁵ Soysal, 2002: 273.

⁸⁶ Soysal, 2002: 277.

⁸⁷ Soysal, 2002: 278.

⁸⁸ Soysal, 2002: 278.

Wilsen (2000: 18) suggest that “this form of Europeanization is about boundary maintenance and boundary crossing, in both the metaphorical sense of the borderlands of cultural and political identity as well as the more concrete sense of legal, political and administrative borders between and within states”.

This approach is to be found in the works of MacDonald (1995) and Fossum (2001). The focus here is on the study of interpersonal encounters in daily life in order to understand the way EU and its policies are perceived. In their own words, “the EU is not inherently composed (...) of any mosaic or patchwork of national cultures (...). It is composed of people who mutually construct their sense and boundaries of self through relations with others”⁸⁹. For Delanty (1999: 221-38), Europeanization is less a matter of social integration through cultural cohesion than a matter of institutional adaptation and cultural pluralization. In his opinion, the proposed model for European recognition is one that provokes a sort of exclusivist identity. Instead, there should be recognition of multi-identification among the peoples of Europe.

This interpretation of Europeanization is also discussed in the volume *The Meaning of Europe* edited by Mikael af Malmberg and Bo Stråth (2002). Their book seeks for a cultural-historical understanding of Europe and on the feed-back effects of the Europeanization process. Declining from any false characteristics to the idea of Europe, the book shows that “when European institutions and politics emerge, they transform the images of Europe. Since the 1950s, there has been, in this sense, an Europeanization of the nations, a Europeanization which during the Cold War meant images of a west European community of destiny, but which since 1989 has become much more open. Open means that the images of Europe lost orientation and confidence”⁹⁰. Europe in this context is understood as a discourse, as an ideological programme, and “as a carrier of certain values in national public life”⁹¹.

Europeanization as the Process of Becoming more ‘European’

The last approach deals with Europeanization as the process of becoming more ‘European’. This is the approach I find more useful for my purpose. A good starting point in looking for a definition of ‘European’ is Gerard Delanty. In a recent essay

⁸⁹ MacDonald quoted in Borneman and Fowler, 1997: 498.

⁹⁰ Malmberg and Stråth, 2002: 9.

⁹¹ Malmberg and Stråth, 2002: 9.

called ‘What does it mean to be a “European”?’ Delanty (2004) analyses the meaning of being ‘European’ in connection to the meaning of being ‘American’. The main differences in his opinion consist in the fact that unlike America, “Europe does not exist as a subject in the sense of a subject that has sovereign power. Europeans, then, are not like national subjects, who have, to varying degrees of political power, based on the subjectivity of the nation-state”⁹². This is the use of the term found mostly in anthropological research. Here, Europeanization concerns “the reshaping of identities in contemporary Europe in a manner which relativizes (without necessarily supplanting) national identities” (Harmsen and Wilsen 2000: 17).

Borneman and Fowler wrote an anthropological study on Europeanization where they propose dealing with Europeanization “pragmatically as a spirit, a vision and a process” (Borneman and Fowler 1997: 510). As a process, Europeanization “is fundamentally reorganizing territoriality and peoplehood, the two principles of group identification that have shaped modern European order”⁹³. According to them, there are two conceptions of what ‘European’ is: for some “the Real is Europe before World War I, a continent consistent primarily of competing national interests, without the internal divisions wrought by international working class movements. For others, there is a sense in which the Real itself is now haunted by a spirit yet to take form”⁹⁴. In other words Europeanization is not only about reshaping Europe, but also to influence the way people build their identities. Territoriality is also shaped: travelling around Europe has become much easier. Our idea of where the limits of Europe are, in terms of territory, is being re-shaped. According to Borneman and Fowler, “the relatively positive specter of an Americanization of Europe and the negative specter of a Sovietization of Europe are being replaced by the anxiety of Europeanisation” (Borneman and Fowler, 1997: 488).

But why should Europe become more European? Borneman and Fowler’s answer refers to both external and internal reasons. As to external reasons, Europeanization is a process that has its own dynamics. These dynamics affect societies’ space and demos. Now Europe is no longer caught in the middle between the United States and the Soviet Union power struggle. Therefore it has to get an identity of its own. One way of forming such an identity is often by contrasting

⁹² Delanty, 2004: 1.

⁹³ Borneman and Fowler, 1997: 487.

⁹⁴ Borneman and Fowler, 1997: 488.

Europe to the 'Other'. One such 'Other' is the Orient, "marked by an anxiety over the politically and religiously explosive Middle East and economic rivalry with the east, south, and Southeast Asia. Both of these Oriental phantasms are, of course, already embodied within Europe by persons, ideologies, images, and material goods from those other geographies"⁹⁵. For Said (1978), the question 'what is European?' makes us identify Europe with its power relations and the eternal negative sight towards the Other (Islam or the East).

The EU with its administrative apparatus is internally seen as "a means to realize some ill-defined community"⁹⁶. Primarily based on economic interests, the EU "is now a set of explosive and indeterminate effects of late-twentieth-century social and political processes"⁹⁷. Among other internal reasons for seeking to become more 'European' is the EU enlargement that brings domestic changes within the EU in terms of territoriality and its people. These two principles - territoriality and peoplehood – are appealed to in order to both "strengthen the ability of sovereign nation-states to organize space and to create a larger sphere of European space free of some of the costly national welfare state provisions" and "direct historical memories from both national and continental perspectives" (Borneman and Fowler, 1997: 489).

The present author agrees with John Borneman and Nick Fowler (1997) when they say that Europe is an unstable, non sovereign and non-autonomous entity but exists only in historical relations and fields of power. However, they focus on Europeanization as a strategy of self-representation and a device of power from a European centre. Thus in contrast to them, I focus on the cultural constructions of Europe in the ex-communist nation-states and the way they are influenced by the Europeanization force towards European unification. This view regards Europeanization as an independent process. In this respect my view differs from Borneman and Fowler's who assume that Europeanization orientates itself mainly towards individualism and market narratives (see also Milward, 1992; Wintle 1996). I argue that Europeanization is closely tied to categories of identity and culture and their historical links to the past of the nation-states.

Conversely for Malmberg and Stråth (2002) the Europeanization of nation states "is in part the outcome of deeply entrenched notions of nation and of

⁹⁵ Borneman and Fowler, 1997: 488.

⁹⁶ Borneman and Fowler, 1997: 488.

⁹⁷ Borneman and Fowler, 1997: 488-489.

Europe, which does not, of course, exclude that the view on Europe – as well as on the nation – is also deeply contested within the various national settings”⁹⁸. A parallel can be made to the argument of Fossum that “the quest for internal cultural unity would be pursued in conjunction with a similar quest for delineating the unique features of Europe so as to distinguish between Europeans and non-Europeans or ‘the others’” (Fossum, 2001: 1). As it will be discussed in the case of Eastern European societies, cultural Europe is rather marked by diversity than by coherence. The preceding dimensions of Europeanization are about aspects of political and social transformations of present-day Europe. As such the first two dimensions of Europeanization are attempts to understand European integration and the role of the EU. It is only the third dimension that moves beyond European integration. It evokes a much wider paradigm of change beyond the EU. Europeanization admits that important changes are happening at national and subnational levels. Europeanization thus recognizes diversification at various society levels. The concept of Europeanization is in this sense focused on identities and the way they are being reshaped. Europeanization adds with this new understanding more focus on cultural and societal contexts.

2.3.2. The Approach to Europeanization in This Thesis

This thesis examines the reshaping of Eastern European societies within the wider context of transformation in Europe and the reconstruction of societal identities within these societies. Emphasis will consequently be placed on social agents’ conflict over interpretations of the existing societal order highlighted through a social constructivist perspective. Based on the third meaning of Europeanization this thesis rests on a two-fold definition of Europeanization: firstly Europeanization as a process of adaptation around conceptions of Europe and what it means to be ‘European’. Europeanization is about ‘being and becoming more European’. Europeanization is also about defining the ‘other’ within Europe. Europeanization is an approach to the study of the current developments in Europe. Put differently, Europeanization is the process of the external becoming the internal. In other words, Europeanization is the construction of new boundaries between the external and the internal and more generally it involves processes of *re-bordering* (see also Delanty and Rumford,

⁹⁸ Malmborg and Stråth, 2002: 13.

2005). What are the consequences of this encounter? This is what attaches to the topic of Eastern European transformation such interesting aspects.

The second definition sees Europeanization as a process whereby national identity is re-defined. This is a rather socially re-constructed and inter-subjective process. It is about a society or a group of societies' place as it looks for answers to the questions: who are we and how do we relate ourselves to Europe. Overall my approach to cultural integration points to the idea that Europeanization has encouraged a rethinking of the relationship between Eastern Europe and Europe after the end of the Cold War. To understand the dynamics of Eastern Europe we need to move beyond Europeanization. Developing such an approach that places contemporary Eastern Europe in a postwestern and postnational Europe allows for a different object of study. In short, this interpretation looks at how Europe has reorganized itself after the end of communism. In this context, cultural integration is understood as a postwestern and postnational response to European integration.

In current research on Europeanization what is missing is a concern with the domestic factors of transformation in Eastern European societies. When dealing with domestic factors (as I will detail further), I suggest that cultural integration has more potential for a proper analysis of Eastern Europe. We need to move away from an understanding of Eastern Europe as the result of Europeanization. From this perspective, cultural integration understands Europeanization as a two-way traffic: not only the West has influenced the East but also the East has an impact on the West (Delanty, 2003c). Looking at Eastern Europe beyond Europeanization offers a more dynamic view on Eastern European transformation(s), thereby making Eastern Europe less dependent on Europeanization. This is an advance for seeing postwestern and postnational Europe in the 'East' as an emerging reality. On this reading, Eastern Europe is being re-shaped in a postwestern and postnational way. This is to say that cultural integration offers a more suitable approach for understanding contemporary Eastern Europe transformation(s). Particularly, cultural integration is not alone the product of Europeanization but also reshaped by postwesternization and postnationalism. As the discussion will move from theory of Europeanization towards cultural integration from a social constructivist perspective and then on to the cultural integration model (Chapter 3), keep in mind, that I define culture as a socially constructed reality based on social imaginary significations (section 2.1.3., *The Meaning of Culture*).

2.4. Cultural Integration

The above remarks point to some crucial aspects of an alternative approach to the transformations in Eastern Europe, and to cultural integration in a more general sense. Such an approach finds an effective point of departure in Europeanization approaches that underline Europeanization as a process of adaptation around conceptions of Europe and what it means to be ‘European’, something that forms the basis for the approach in the present study. The analytical concept of cultural integration, I suggest, adds to the existing literature on Europeanization, in that it emphasizes that Eastern Europe is being re-shaped in a postwestern and postnational direction. This section suggests how to analyse cultural integration and discusses the added value of such an approach.

2.4.1. The Conceptual Analysis

The changing context of Europe after the breakdown of the Iron Curtain and the redesign of Eastern European societies, diffusion resulting from the EU, and more generally from current processes of transformation in Europe, have all contributed to the emergence of new (culturally oriented) trends of integration, thereby challenging and transforming old understandings of integration. The post Cold War preoccupation with Europe’s ‘dynamics of openness’ (Delanty, 2003c: 9) has shifted the emphasis towards processes of societal transformation in Eastern Europe. The need for conceptual tools to grasp these transformations became necessary. I propose that in contemporary Europe, cultural integration is a necessary and useful concept in the debate around processes of societal transformation.

Cultural integration falls in the category of ‘essentially contested concepts’ (Connolly, 1983). In my case, both concepts ‘culture’ and ‘integration’ come into being through social constructivist articulation (Diez, 2001 b). The articulation of cultural integration, for instance, binds together a set of issues such as the reconstruction of an existing societal order and identities, the way social agents understand this process, and the wider situational context in which societal order and identities are reconstructed (external influence). As a process of change, cultural integration can be perceived over time in the cultural dynamics of these societies. But these dynamics are not clear and certain. In presenting the process of societal adjustment, the analytical framework of social constructivism represents a useful tool. However, since the thesis focuses on cultural integration and since there is a

great deal of disagreement on the meaning of the concept, I advance my definition of cultural integration as the process of reorganization caused by social agents who seek to reconstruct an existing societal order on the basis of their specific understandings. This meaning looks at cultural integration in Eastern European societies as a process reflecting domestic cultural change. Change takes place on the basis of “a multitude of co-evolving, parallel and not necessarily tightly-coupled processes” (Olsen, 1996: 271). In this context cultural integration is examined in terms of social constructions and cultural responses to this process. Cultural integration does not refer to a more integrated European culture (the extension of a national culture to a European culture has not been a success). Reflexivity plays a greater role in cultural integration than in other types of integration.

Following these considerations, another point in this section deserves attention. It is not enough to say that cultural integration is different from political, economic and legal integration. Further, one has to distinguish between cultural integration and systemic integration (Lockwood, 1964; Habermas, 1987; Delanty and Rumford, 2005). While systemic integration – as already mentioned- is defined in relation to the EU institutions, cultural integration refers to the dynamics of cultural change and societal transformation. What is the basis then for cultural integration? Cultural integration cannot have a communitarian basis since cultural integration does not aim at constructing a community or reproducing the nation-state model (see also Delanty, 1998). Can then the emergence of a postwestern and postnational society be the basis for cultural integration? In order to answer the question whether the emergence of a postwestern and postnational society can be the basis for cultural integration, I shall look into the emergence of a postwestern and postnational Europe in the East. Cultural integration emphasizes the emergence of a postwestern and postnational Europe and its major cultural transformation(s). The new definition of Europe can not relate itself to the West, as well as one cannot define the East with reference to the West. In the same line of thinking, the Cold War does not define the European social imaginary any longer. European modernity is not a product of Europeanization in the sense of transfer of the *acquis* from West to East. “The reshaping of the postcommunist societies by capitalism, democracy and national autonomy, a new geopolitical field has come into view characterized by a dynamic of openness” (Delanty 2003c: 9). The addition of former communist societies to wider Europe involves a new process of cultural integration beyond the EU and its systemic

integration. According to Delanty, this is a matter of cultural transformation that “differs from all previous dynamics of Europeanization” (Delanty 2003c: 10).

Instead of a ‘transition’ kind of change, Eastern European societies experience today cultural integration. The fundamental question is: how cultural integration is at all possible? In an article called ‘*Social Theory and European Integration: Is there a European Society?*’ (1998), Gerard Delanty, rejecting Durkheim’s thesis on the formation of a European society as a reproduction of the nation-state, introduces another interesting theoretical approach, closely related to cultural integration. According to Delanty, the central point is “how can European integration articulate a cultural integration model which would give expression to the reality of the social”⁹⁹. Or better, what is the cultural in so far cultural integration is concerned? Hence, as Delanty explains, “the debate on the social and cultural element in European integration – that is, questions pertaining to citizenship, identity, democracy, inclusion – have been hopelessly confused by borrowing the conceptual vocabulary of the nation-state”¹⁰⁰. My position here, close to that defended by Delanty, points to a possible model of cultural integration based on the idea of reorganization and the dynamics of transformation. This emphasises both that social agents are not completely autonomous, but constrained by their specific understandings and that the societal context is seen as supported by two visions of transformation: postwestern and postnational.

2.4.2. The Cultural Integration Model

There is no commonly agreed definition on the concept of ‘cultural model’. Indeed, a number of different senses have been used interchangeably and, as such, frequently conflated. First, in its most general meaning, the cultural integration model has been used to refer to certain commonalities in the cultural construction of Europe. Here, the European cultural model is regularly contrasted with the American model, each of them being characterised by distinct identities. The European cultural model in such a representation is conventionally characterised by Hellenic philosophical tradition, democratic freedom, Roman law, and the Judaeo-Christian tradition. Secondly, within the context of this distinctive European cultural model, a variety of rather more specific national cultural models have been identified (the British, the French

⁹⁹ Delanty, 1998: 1.9.

¹⁰⁰ Delanty, 1998: 1.9.

and the German model). Thirdly, more recent developments in the literature have identified a rather different sense of the ‘cultural model’. Here, in contrast to the similarities between national culture models within the European context, the development of a distinctive trans-national cultural model is emphasized. Finally in light of such development and with the reality of the EU enlargement, we might experience the emergence of a new cultural model, as former communist societies are incorporated into the process of cultural integration.

Before I proceed with the outline of the social constructivist standpoint on cultural integration, let me describe the cultural integration approach. The kind of sources that generate the dynamics of cultural integration will be a function of three clusters of variables: tradition, institutions, and diffusion. As I will show in my case-study on Romania, *tradition* (that is the influence of the past) matters in the analysis of cultural integration as it identifies the continuities and discontinuities in a given society and can inform about earlier encounter(s) with cultural integration. In addition, a sociological analysis of cultural integration in Eastern Europe cannot be separated from the analysis of *institutions*, which in themselves stand for cultural responses through rules and codes. Last but not least, the analysis of cultural integration cannot be completed without analyzing the encounter with external models and ideas that are taken on, adapted and/or reproduced, i.e. *diffusion*. Cultural integration can take different forms, and it is rather by the identification of particular constellations of actors and conflicts between social actors that the nature of cultural integration can be understood. By thus relating systemic integration (institutions and diffusion) to culture-building (tradition), I seek to transform a static integration model into a dynamic model of cultural integration. There are mainly two implications of this model: first, the shift towards a societal perspective. Cultural integration has something to say about Romania’s internal societal dynamics. Second, the analytical framework has to be construed as a move away from EU integration and Europeanization understood as harmonization, institutionalization, and politicization. Looking at Romania within the context of a postwestern and postnational Europe, the dynamics are different and therefore the object of study and the place of Romania are different.

Taking this model of cultural integration as my point of departure, I advance in the next section my examination of cultural integration through a social constructivist perspective. By applying a social constructivist approach I seek to

highlight the capacity of change of a society and stress the importance of the process of social construction based on significations mediated in cultural contexts. In the next pages the chapter implicitly refers to cultural integration as another dimension of Europeanization rather than an alternative approach to European integration. What is needed is a more postwestern and postnational interpretation of what political science research has called ‘Europeanization of Europe’¹⁰¹.

2.4.3. Towards a Social Constructivist Perspective on Cultural Integration

Before proceeding, it is important to note some observations concerning the social constructivist approach. My approach is inspired by Delanty and Rumford’s perspective on social constructivism. According to Delanty and Rumford, the social constructivist approach “highlights the transformative capacity of societies; it asserts the creative self-constitution of social realities; and it recognizes that imaginary significations enter into the on-going process of social construction”¹⁰².

The authors thus define four main features of using a social constructivist approach.

The first feature of using a social constructivist perspective is reflexivity that is “concern with the reflexive nature of social science as a self-questioning endeavour that recognizes that science is part of society” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 14). Delanty and Rumford relate reflexivity to Beck’s idea of ‘reflexive modernization’ perceived as “an attempt to re-capture the dynamic of modernity from the grasp of postmodern theory” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 15). Postmodern theory is one result of this reflexivity. The overall idea is that knowledge is fundamentally fragmented and therefore it is difficult to have an integrated and singular view.

Seen from a Lyotardian perspective, reflexivity is based on ‘grand narratives’ that try to give explanations to the existence of belief systems. Now instead of ideology we have language games defined as denotative statements about reality and prescriptive statements about what counts as a valid denotative statement. The concept of ‘grand narrative’ and in particular what Lyotard called the ‘emancipation narrative’, refers to the kind of ‘meta-narrative’ which sees events as interconnected, a procession of social systems that *makes sense* rather than just

¹⁰¹ Borinski and Wagner, 2002: 375.

¹⁰² Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 17.

isolated events in history and so on. Scientific discourse does not reflect but covertly constructs reality. The term ‘postmodern condition’ is used by Lyotard (1984) to depict the state of knowledge and the question of its legitimation in Western culture. These transformations are seen within the context of the epistemological crisis of the Enlightenment metanarratives or *grands récits* concerning meaning, truth and emancipation which have been used to legitimate both the rules of knowledge of the sciences and the foundations of modern institutions. Postmodern society has made the conception of real progress difficult to sustain, since its meanings are contested and fragmented.

There are transformations within the East European nations which alters the ‘state of their culture’. According to Lyotard, postmodernism deconstructs these *grands récits* by detecting that creating order or unity means also creating disorder. Therefore in order to replace grand narratives Lyotard appeals to mini-narratives that are “provisional, contingent, temporary, and relative”. Lyotard’s argument for the postmodern fragmentation of beliefs and values is meant to substitute Habermas’ proposal for a society unified under a ‘grand narrative’. The solution offered is deconstruction that is the act of condensing everything to basic suppositions. But deconstruction claims self-reflexivity, a way of understanding oneself and the contiguous world. The result of this self-reflexivity is that social agents cease having singular identities and start producing multiple perspectives on the changing world.

The second feature of social constructivism refers to the argument that “agency and structure are mediated in cultural contexts” (Delanty and Rumford 2005: 15). Social agents’ interests and identities are not given, but take place in interaction and are therefore socially constructed. This is related to ‘invention of tradition’ that emphasizes “the creative process by which reality is fabricated out of various elements in highly contextualized conditions”¹⁰³. This argument takes also into consideration the “relational conception of social actors and structures”¹⁰⁴.

The third argument is that “social reality is the product of a process of becoming and is open to new designs” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 16). The social constructivist view advocates the challenging opportunities offered by change. This is the type of logic that drove towards the fall of communism in Eastern Europe. However one should also consider the consequences of changing social reality.

¹⁰³ Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 15.

¹⁰⁴ Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 15.

Discourse is an important dimension to the constructivist perspective that is the way in which language constructs reality, and within this reality, identity. To follow Delanty and Rumford's exposition of Habermas's theory of discourse, this theory is "particularly useful in conceptualizing how social worlds are normatively created through deliberative reasoning (Habermas 1996)"¹⁰⁵. For example the use of terms 'East' and 'West' involves a social order with roles of dominance once the division is accepted.

Finally, Delanty and Rumford mention the socio-cognitive dimension. This dimension refers to the "creation of frames, imaginaries, worldviews and cultural models, which go beyond the immediate discursive context and express emergent forms of social reality" (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 16). This approach is related to the concept of 'social imaginary' as used by Cornelius Castoriadis and Charles Taylor. For Taylor (2004) the contemporary 'multiple modernities' need to be understood in terms of the 'social imaginaries' involved. The main differences among 'multiple modernities' consist in their 'social imaginaries' (defined earlier as the way members of a society imagine their collective social life). According to Taylor, the cultural formations that characterise the Western social imaginary are: the economy, the public sphere, and self-governance.

Each of these features depicts cultural integration under "a conflict of competing conceptions of political community and cultural models of society"¹⁰⁶. The underlying assumption of this model of society is generating a new conception of social reality based on normative models and imaginaries which "are not yet fully embodied in a political order or institutional framework"¹⁰⁷. Likewise, Castoriadis (1987) claims that the 'real' is made of human functions of 'social imaginaries' (i.e. the undetermined creation of figures, forms and images). It is from these figures, forms and images that we construct our significations. Castoriadis suggests community as being one of the first 'social imaginaries' of human society. According to Castoriadis, our contemporary society is in a crisis of culture. Through privatization, depoliticization, emptiness of values the contemporary society is dissocialising itself. One of Castoriadis's most relevant contributions lie in the idea that imaginary significations are the main sources of meaning in the social and

¹⁰⁵ Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 16.

¹⁰⁶ Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 17.

¹⁰⁷ Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 18.

cultural life; they can also be seen as the constitutive centre of cultural models. These imaginary significations endow also with frameworks for interpreting social reality and patterns of societal identity. Consequently, the focus when analysing an East European society will be put on a social constructivist perspective. Yet, it has been argued that social constructivism fails “to live up to its own publicly acknowledged standards”¹⁰⁸ and therefore the use of social constructivism came to an end. However, I see no reason why this should be the case, as there are at least four good reasons for the adoption of a social constructivist position in the context of this thesis.

The first reason is its theoretical qualities. Social constructivism has outstanding qualities in identifying general tendencies and conditions regarding former communist societies. In addition, the theory can be credited in other respects such as relevance and consistency. The second reason is the promising results based on previous use (Eder, 2001; Risse, 2004; Delanty and Rumford, 2005), and its relevance for the study of society and for conceptualizing my topic, East European societies and cultural integration. Research has shown that social constructivism works well in the case of European integration (Heikki, 1992; Diez, 1997; Christiansen, 1994, 1996; Checkel, 1997). By 1989, three social constructivist expectations seemed to have been proven convincing: (a) the Cold War was both real, and politically ‘constructed’; (b) the effects of the Cold War were the construct of the international system-society; (c) peaceful change was possible after the Cold War. These considerations are central to East European transformation and social constructivist theory (Guzzini, 2002). Consequently and aside from its suitability to my purposes here, the compatibility of these expectations with the consequences of 1989 shows that there are no a priori reasons not to adopt a social constructivist position for analysing former communist societies and cultural integration.

Thirdly, one may ask why social constructivism is preferred to other theories of European integration that include culture such as discursive approaches (Wæver 2004). Social constructivism is preferable for my purpose because it better outlines culture and change. Culture only exists in the act of being performed, and it can never stand still or repeat itself without changing its meaning¹⁰⁹. According to Eder (2001), this issue becomes dangerous when societies re-construct themselves. In a very real sense, understandings about Eastern European cultures have to take into

¹⁰⁸ Moravcsik, 1999: 670.

¹⁰⁹ Bauman, 1999.

consideration this varied and complex process of cultural integration, as both an internal and external process. Therefore, the European integration process alone proves to have insufficient tools to succeed if cultural dynamics and structures do not interact with it. Internal cultural dynamics are influenced by the external factors that can be found in the cultural system itself.

Fourthly, Eastern European politics relies on commonly shared cultural understandings. “These understandings include not just a spatial conception of what constitutes (or should constitute) Europe but also, crucially, ideas about common cultural traditions and historical experience, as well as the common evolution throughout Europe and distinctly Western constitutional and political principles”¹¹⁰. The end of the Cold War in itself is a ‘structural change’ because it evolves into a new ‘order’ on the European scene and lastly because it relates the concept of European identity to the integration process.

Finally, an additional reason for the usefulness of a social constructivist approach is its emphasis on the cultural integration of former communist societies as an important part of the approach to contemporary European society. In sum, the social constructivist position is taken as the point of departure for the argument below owing to the following pros of social constructivist theory: previous validity; post-1989 context; its nature and emphasis on society, culture, identity, and change; compatibility with the aim of outlining hypotheses concerned with general tendencies in the current Eastern European societies; and the assumption of culture as a social construction based on significations.

Social constructivist theory has of course limits which must not be overlooked. In particular, the prophecies it provides are of a general nature. However, social constructivism is a theory about culture, identity and change. In general, social constructivist analysis highlights the integration process and its implications. However, the analytical focus must be on the societal dynamics rather than on more specific integration issues such as cultural policies. Following the logic of the theory, a model for cultural integration points to a range of possible and probable outcomes: such outcomes should be found in Eastern European societies; these outcomes should describe major trends in these societies; and finally, the outcomes should be expected to have a ‘cultural’ content.

¹¹⁰ O’Brennan, 2001: 195.

2.5. Conclusion: Towards a Theory of Cultural Integration?

This chapter has given some suggestions on how to theorize cultural integration. Cultural integration (defined as the process of reorganization caused by social agents who seek to reconstruct an existing societal order on the basis of their specific understandings) as depicted in this chapter is based on a cultural understanding of Europeanization and social constructivism. This development is a challenge to the other approaches to integration. A theory of cultural integration at European society level, I argue, would begin with the meaning of culture and a broad notion of integration.

The cultural perspectives in theories and discursive approaches to European integration were then taken into consideration. The debate around the social constructivism was reviewed. The conceptualization of Europeanization and the outline of cultural integration approach were also discussed. The conclusion here is that a kind of synthesis between the cultural dimension of Europeanization and social constructivism was needed and that a cultural integration approach offers such a possibility. This chapter served to conceive a framework and is the theoretical basis for the next chapter: '*The Cultural Integration Model*'. The following chapter will detail on the process of cultural integration beginning with the depiction of the cultural integration model.

3. The Cultural Integration Model

Trends of Cultural Integration in Eastern European Societies

Based on the theoretical framework presented in the last chapter this part of the thesis outlines a conceptual framework for the study of cultural integration in Eastern European societies. Placing Eastern Europe in a postwestern and postnational Europe implies that Eastern Europe's and the wider European transformation are interdependent. In the present debate concerning Europe's future between integration, historical diversities and new forms of disintegration, the chapter aims to make a contribution to the development of the concept of cultural integration. Further, the chapter looks at the consequences of cultural integration on societal identities in former communist societies. I will focus my chapter on two dimensions of cultural integration: postwestern and postnational. My hypothesis is that it is possible to create common tools to analyse the discourses of cultural integration. It is only the content of these discourses and the social and political issues that change.

In this chapter I claim that East European societies are neither just new EU members, nor copies of them, nor a return to societies from pre-communism. Rather these societies are reproducing themselves in a new form. There are two reasons for this: firstly, because I consider that there is a 'continuum of changes' (Elias, 1992) in their development as societies and communism is just a part of this continuum. Not everything about communism was negative. Communism provided an egalitarian social system and a general education system that provided highly qualified labour force. Secondly, as Illner (1999) suggested there will be more differentiation among Eastern European societies than the development of an integrated European society.

This chapter defines the basic concepts through which the analysis of cultural integration is developed. The focus is on the relationship between cultural integration and societal identities in former communist societies. I take Delanty and Rumford, Wagner, and Habermas as points of departure and argue that in the post-

communist societies postwestern and postnational patterns emerge from the process of cultural integration. In this respect I believe the present work fills a gap in the existing debates. I see cultural integration as another dimension of Europeanization rather than as an alternative integrative approach to the question of European transformation.

Cultural integration and its consequences are crucial for the understanding of the Eastern European transformation. The social constructivist theoretical framework will help to explain how the dynamics of these societies are subject to continuous internal and external pressures. The communist model has been replaced but the new dimensions of the model are a combination of both old and new cultural patterns that influence the newborn societal order. This is why the cultural specificity of former communist societies will be looked at in terms of a ‘continuum of changes’ (Elias, 1992). In this chapter I shall also consider some of the more significant consequences of these tendencies of cultural integration on societal identities in Eastern European societies.

3.1. Conceptual Framework for the Study of Eastern European Societies

A preliminary stage is necessary before constructing a cultural integration model: the outline of a conceptual framework for the study of Eastern European societies. My presentation considers the concepts of state, society, societal identity, recognition, postcommunism, and social agents. These theoretical concepts will be drawn into the analysis of cultural integration in order to explain the (postwestern and postnational) forces of cultural integration. In the following, I aim to untangle the different explanations of the relationship between the four concepts. In so doing, I shall begin with a presentation of the concepts of state, then move on to society, societal identity, recognition, postcommunism, and social agents. The aim of these sections is to identify a conceptual framework in order to analyse on a general level the development of the societies from Eastern Europe, followed by a specific case-study in Chapter 4. On the other hand, the purpose of this conceptual framework is not directly to take on the challenge of explaining the process and dynamics of societal transformation in former communist societies. Nor do the following sections search to judge whether ex-communist societies have become postwestern and postnational and how. Such a task would require specific analyses of the involved countries. What

follows is an overview of the concepts that will guide the overall structure of the cultural integration model. I start by considering the notion of state under transformation. Then the concepts of society, societal identity, recognition, postcommunism, and social agents will be abridged.

3.1.1. The Notion of ‘State’ under Transformation

The concept of ‘state’ has always been at the heart of the social sciences. How should this concept, the state, be understood? Generally, Dunleavy and O’Leary (1987) suggest that not *one* definition can be given, but - as a result of the long-lasting debate on the subject - rather different categories of definitions. According to their terminology, the State can be defined either in *organisational* terms, as a set of institutions, or in *functional* terms, by its objectives and/or consequences on the social order of a given society. I will briefly return to this distinction below.

In the context of Eastern Europe, the concept of state has in recent years undergone a double transformation. Double in the sense that both exogenous and endogenous dynamics have influenced the idea and the actual role of state in these societies. As to the ‘exogenous’ dynamics, Eastern European states, along with other European states, are subject to fundamental changes these years due to European and global dynamics of integration. In the realist tradition, theories of international relations have tended to regard the State as the central actor and as having a quasi-monopoly of transformative capacity. This idea is currently being fundamentally disputed as the significance of other types of actors is being recognized. New approaches go beyond the traditional dispute between intergovernmentalists and neo-functionalists by adopting theoretical tools and frameworks that have not previously been used for the study of the EU, such as policy networks and policy analysis (Peterson, 1995).

Still in the making, no agreement as to the nature of the changes and their impact on the European state and state system has been reached. Yet, authors largely concur that developments have crucial impact on political structures and that governance is becoming increasingly *multi-layered* and *overlapping*, involving networks of public and private actors at local, sub-national, national, regional and global levels. The state becomes one actor among other actors, and it is not any longer regarded as an inevitable *checkpoint* through which all external influences flow. The notion of ‘*international*’ gives way to ‘*transnational*’. We are witnessing

the emergence of a European state (or super state). An order characterized by a multiplicity of centres, similar to Alain Minc's idea of 'nouveau Moyen Age' (Minc, 1993). New regulating mechanisms are replacing the Keynesian interventionist state (Majone, 1996).

This development has several consequences, of which I will stress in particular three: first, it challenges the traditional idea of the state as a unitary actor with a clearly delineated jurisdiction. Second, it also implies a move away from a state centric view on transformation. Third, on the one hand, new channels of influence open to (capable) citizens, while - on the other hand - power structures and legitimacy become less transparent with increasing use of unrepresentative forms of policy making.

In addition to these overall changes in the nature and perceptions of the state and the European state system, the Eastern European countries experience parallel internal transformations in the role of the state and the way the state is understood. The communist regimes were generally characterised by a de facto merger of the Party and the state. The state per definition worked for the ideology of the Party. A Party to which there was no alternative. At least formally, this model also had implications for the concept of civil society, since in a 'people's republic' it was not meaningful to separate the state from the people. Adding to this a state-run economy, the independent role of the 'market' – as the third leg of the liberal trinity of state, market, and civil society – the result was that the state in a sense was 'everything' (and that everything was the state). As I will elaborate in later sections, however, in reality a civil society – though weak – did exist during communism, as did an alternative economic system.

With the collapse of communism, a pluralist, liberal order has gradually emerged in Eastern Europe. Hereby, the state in terms of institutions and the state in terms power and ideology gradually become more separate. The state apparatus is at disposition of whatever political leadership the population decides to entrust with power. In fact, a shift from the before mentioned functional understanding towards a more organisational concept of the state. With the on-going re-installment a civil society and market, the state has no longer the monopoly on legitimate allocation of resources and values. Obviously, the relationship between the state and civil society is hereby changing. Civil society has its most direct expression in elections, where citizens have exchanged the role of subjects to the 'Party state' with the role of

legitimizers of power. Finally, the relationship between state and market is possibly the most radically changed, as the force of a liberalised economy in most cases have proven much stronger than the regulatory powers of the relatively weak, new states. Linked to this, the public perception of the state varies dramatically among different social groups in Eastern European countries. From regret and disappointment to accept and optimism.

In combination, these two interacting sets of dynamics – exogenous and endogenous – leaves us with a quite blurred picture of the nature of the state and how it is perceived. Democracy has overall led to a clearer, and more confined understanding of the role of the state in Eastern Europe, alongside with a revitalisation of the role of the civil society. However, at the same time the overall European trend toward multilayer types of governance results in a diffusion of power. This study overall concurs with the idea that the state's role as the sole agent of transformation is a far from accurate concept.

3.1.2. Society as Reconstructed Social Space

This section outlines the interrelation between various conceptions of society and Eastern European transformation(s). In a broad sense, society refers to interaction between individuals in ways that create a pattern on the basis of shared meanings. Society is frequently used merely to refer to something that exists 'out there', something beyond the individual (e.g. communist society). For the purpose of my analysis, I will define society as the social space reconstructed by social agents under conditions of cultural integration. This meaning has implications for the depiction of cultural integration in former communist societies. This idea of society rejects the assumption according to which the West represents the developmental model that can predict the future of other societies. Not so much convergence should be expected of former communist societies. As Latour (1993) argued, the breakdown of communism in Eastern European revealed the failure of modernity and that, actually, 'we have never been modern'. It will be suggested here that society is the co-product of internal and external cultural integration forces, namely postwesternization and postnationalism. My understanding of society reflects the 'double synchronicity' (Wagner, 2004) of transformation (Western as well as Eastern).

Recently sociologists have argued that society, hitherto understood as a set of processes of order and integration must now be envisioned of as a process of

change (Outhwaite, 1983; Touraine, 1999). Indeed, with the collapse of communism, Eastern European societies are not static but in a constant state of transformation: they change, adapt and respond to internal and external challenges. For Urry (2000), we should move beyond society and social structures and think instead in terms of flows and mobilities (of migrants, ideas, capital). Bauman (2000, 2002) discusses the question of society in the context of what he calls 'liquid modernity'. Bauman's thesis is that we have moved from a solid to a fluid phase of modernity, in which nothing keeps its shape, and where social forms are constantly changing at great speed, radically transforming the experience of being human. Eastern European society after communism is both a condition and a constantly reproduced outcome of action. Outhwaite and Ray stress how “the postcommunist experience, though beset by contingencies of all kinds, also demonstrates the importance of notions such as society or civil society and social structure”¹¹¹. More broadly, they suggest that “societies, still largely shaped according to the frontiers of the territorial national state, retain a substantial quality, a ‘stickiness’, which defies attempts at short-term transformation”¹¹².

The overall picture is uneven. Transformations in these societies after communism emerged from particular historical and cultural contexts. Thinking about Eastern European societies forces a rethinking of (prejudged) stereotypes about communist societies. Despite the fact that in the past they were ideologically linked to each other through the communist model, the main feature of Eastern European societies is diversity. However, even before the end of communism, societies from Eastern Europe differed from each other in most respects – for example, in the intensity, span, and effectiveness of the Communist Party, in the extent of public support or resistance, or in terms of reforms. As Outhwaite and Ray put it, “[t]he transformations of postcommunist societies in the context of an increasingly globalized but unstable world are crucial for our understanding of these very processes” (Outhwaite and Ray, 2005: 22). Crook *et al.* (1994) argue that contemporary societies from Eastern Europe undergo the same process of crisis and restructuring as Western societies: cultural fragmentation, state decentralization, economic privatization, gradual breaking down of the public/private boundary,

¹¹¹ Outhwaite and Ray, 2005: 5.

¹¹² Outhwaite and Ray, 2005: 5.

globalization¹¹³. Münch (1990) sees social differentiation as the only answer to the issue of social order under modernity.

It will be suggested that the transformations in Eastern Europe are not unproblematic to sociological theory: is there one European society or many? Is societal transformation situated within the borders of the nation-state? Where are these transformations heading to? The post-1989 experience challenges most of the prevailing ideas about social transformation. Outhwaite's definition of society as 'sociation' identifies both society in singular and societies (Outhwaite, 2006). For Outhwaite, an elaborate answer to the above questions has also been offered recently by Delanty and Rumford (2005) through the formulation of a (much needed) theory of society. In their theory of *the social*, they attempt to sketch out "a conception of Europeanization in terms of a theory of society beyond national societies" (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 1). Their theory of society emphasizes "the diverse ways in which the social is constructed under conditions that are not fixed or reducible to institutional structures" (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 2). The authors suggest that Europeanization is the most prominent way of bringing theorization of society back in the study of contemporary European transformation. Overall their theory of European society wishes to emphasise the diversity of social transformations that are currently shaping Europe. The features that Delanty and Rumford use to depict a theory of society could stand for the Eastern European societies as well. Firstly, they assume no relation between EU integration and a European society; in this perspective the authors believe that society is not an area covered by the EU project. Societies are in continuous transformation and becoming. In this context, Europeanization is a two-way process: it identifies with the dynamics of society while at the same time society is being shaped by Europeanization. Secondly, their theory of society situates Europe in a global frame. To understand the transformation of society necessarily includes understanding the global dimensions of society. European society cannot be envisioned without a global society. Thirdly, "the idea of society provides an important resource for both social theory and for thinking about contemporary Europe" (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 5). According to Delanty and Rumford, "society as a normative construct is the necessary social context for any debate on rights, justice, citizenship, belonging, and identity" (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 5).

¹¹³ quoted in Outhwaite and Ray, 2005: 21.

It will be beyond the aim of this thesis to establish here a theory of European society. Instead I draw my analysis of Eastern European societies on Delanty and Rumford's constructivist approach on the theory of society. Drawing on Delanty and Rumford, my social constructivist approach to study Eastern European societies looks at the way an existing societal order is constantly reconstructed. The reconstruction of this order should be seen, *inter alia*, as an unfinished and open-ended process. I assume, on the basis of the argument of the previous chapter that we can refer to a plurality of societies in Eastern Europe. As I have suggested in Chapter 2, there are many reasons to relate society to the cultural dimension of integration. Recent developments in Eastern Europe show us that integration does not take place in a vacuum. To put it briefly, system integration and cultural integration are analytically distinct. More importantly for this study, the nature of Eastern European societies needs to be rethought in postwestern and postnational terms. As argued earlier, this perspective focuses on cultural integration as the context in which postwesternization and postnationalism activate.

3.1.3. Societal Identity as Ideological Construction

Questions concerning societal identity have in recent years come to the fore. In particular, the deep political, cultural, and social changes taking place in Eastern Europe accentuate the issues of societal identity. Overall, sociological approaches to identity centre on the interaction between identity and social environment. Whereas nationalism theories draw on group relations, stereotypes and fears about the Other, social identity theory suggests that identities shape society and not the other way around. Aware of the different theoretical implications suggested by the notion of 'societal identity', I propose to use the term in a broad sense: societal identity will be understood as an ideological construction whereby individuals are contextually linked to their social environments through normative statements. This definition distinguishes societal identities from personal and collective identities. For instance, Romanian identity is a societal identity which contains the ethnic Romanian, the Hungarian, the Jew, the diasporic, and other ethnic groups' collective identities. My social constructivist approach sees the development of societal identity in Eastern Europe as deeply affected by postwestern and postnational forces of cultural integration. From this perspective cultural integration can be used to describe how open, uncertain and reflexive societal identity has become. As Castells writes, "how,

and by whom, different types of identities are constructed, and with what outcomes, cannot be addressed in general, abstract terms: it is a matter of social context” (Castells, 1997: 10). A closer look at societal identities in Eastern Europe indicates that they are in general not naturally given but reconstructed, and that such a reconstruction constitutes their basic contingent dimension.

For Delanty and Rumford, “the nation no longer fits into the sphere of the state, providing the latter with an identity and cultural legitimation (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 53). On this background, Delanty and Rumford announce that “[t]here are few national identities that do not contain critical, reflexive and cosmopolitan forms of self-understanding” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 54). According to Delanty and Rumford, “[a]ll national identities are becoming more like societal identities, that is, broadly defined cultural categories” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 53). Delanty and Rumford suggest that the nation has become a contested space where postnational forms of consciousness are emergent. Thus the particular configuration of cultural-national belonging is not something fixed but subject to transformation. Societal identities are thus becoming more fluid, unstable, and reflexive. One stimulus for this transformation has been the changing role of the nation-state and the dissolution of the official collective memory after the end of communism. Societal identities can be constructed and appropriated within multiple structures of interpretation. In Eastern Europe these structures of interpretation relate to wider postwestern and postnational issues.

Castells (1996, 1997, 1998) gives particular attention to the ‘plurality of identities’ to engage simultaneously with difference and community. In this sense, identity is dynamically defined as a “process of construction of meaning on the basis of a cultural attribute, or related set of cultural attributes, that is/are given priority over other sources of meaning”¹¹⁴. A more reflexive form of identity is part of what Castells calls ‘network society’. Castells looks at the fragmentation of identity and its changing boundaries in a network society. The transnational global culture and the changeability of European (geo-political and cultural) boundaries have had a great impact on identities, including identity formation. From this perspective, cultural integration could be seen as the result of the need for a new kind of national and regional identity reflecting and responding to the process of transformation in different ways. In Castells’s *The Power of Identity* (1997) individual identities are not

¹¹⁴ Castells, 1997: 6.

given for granted but have to be recreated and reshaped. This creates reflexivity and a permanent focus on identity. This reflexivity can both be a threat and a challenge to a cosmopolitan form of self-understanding. “People increasingly organize their meaning not around what they do but on what they are or believe they are. There follows a fundamental split between abstract, universal instrumentalism and historically rooted particular identities” (Castells 1997: 3 and 22). Castells examines the idea of a new reflexive modernity in which cultural identity challenges traditional forms of the construction of identity. Cultural, religious and national identities are source of meaning and experience for individuals. But in the context of the network society identities become more and more isolated and societies become more and more individualized.

As a way to highlight a more relevant constructivist line, I propose Castells’s theory of identity formation as a starting point. Castells assumes hypothetically that “who constructs collective identity, and for what, largely determines the symbolic content of this identity, and its meaning for those identifying with it or placing themselves outside of it” (Castells, 1997: 7). The cultural construction of the identity is based on cultural dimensions of the community. Cultural integration emphasizes on cultural continuity as the key to identity-formation. In a theorization, whose main lines I share, Castells states that *resistance identity* is “generated by those actors that are in positions/conditions devalued and/or stigmatized by the logic of domination, thus building trenches of resistance and survival on the basis of principles different from, or opposed to, those permeating the institutions of society” (Castells, 1997: 8). Indeed, it makes sense to speak of the societal identity after communism as a “defensive identity in terms of the dominant institutions/ideologies”¹¹⁵. Given Castells’ cultural-driven assumptions, the answer to this issue be it empirical or historical “determines whether societies remain as societies or else fragment into a constellation of tribes, some times euphemistically renamed communities” (Castells, 1997: 9). Cultural integration is most likely to lead to more diversified and flexible forms of cultural identities crossing national boundaries.

My understanding of how identities come into being follows a constructivist view. From a constructivist perspective identity is a ‘cultural construct’ (Cederman, 2001; Eder and Giesen, 2001). This means that identities can be multiple,

¹¹⁵ Castells, 1997: 9.

internally changing over time and dependant on environment rather than on inheritance of genes. A constructivist view on identity separates personal from collective identities – “the identities of individuals and the identities of social groups”¹¹⁶ - since they have different functions and developmental purposes. According to Eisenstadt (2001), collective identities are formed through the cultural construction of boundaries, which makes the difference between those who belong and those who do not. The most important feature of collective identities is their multiple and changing nature.

The recognition of the difference between individual and collective identities should not, however, lead to denial of the intrinsic relationship between individual and collective identities that – all useful divisions apart – is one of the main defining features of both concepts (Just, 2004: 40).

The idea of reconstruction suggests that societal identities are both flexible and open categories for the subject (social agent), “legitimated by the state in order to facilitate the integration and democratic government of an increasingly fluid society” (Dressler, 2002: 6). In this context, societal identity will be reconstructed by social agents out of the existing cultural capital (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 51). When referring to the Romanian societal identity, for example, I will look at the national identity that Romanians subjectively consider being their identity, and which they imagine to be shared by the entire national community. This will be my narrower focus. Yet, this identity cannot be constructed separately from the social reality of Eastern European countries, namely the situational context in which this identity is reconstructed. Looking at the different ways of reconstructing identity and the nature of transformations at social and political level enables an understanding that what is changing in Eastern Europe happens at the same time as in the rest of Europe.

What we are witnessing in former communist societies is unstable and reconstructed identities that have lost the ‘significant Other’ (Taylor, 1994). Following Outhwaite and Ray, I would like to note one more aspect of societal identity that is especially relevant for my study: “[t]he postcommunist condition is one of increasing instability, with multiple forms of social identification and rethinking of a past that was often subject to official controls” (Outhwaite and Ray, 2005: 196).

¹¹⁶ Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 52.

On the basis of these theoretical considerations, a few points can be made with regard to the reconstruction of societal identities after communism. First, there is no national identity without social agents reconstructing it in an on-going process within a certain institutional structure and a given historical-social context. Second, societal identities are articulated within a particular historical pattern of a given nation. This pattern offers a basis for how to rethink or articulate national belonging which both facilitates and confines the reconstruction of the existing national identity. Third, to a great extent, societal identities are open to wider situational context in which these identities are reconstructed. This situational context refers to the socially determined conditions and widespread ideas and norms that affect a given national context. There are mainly two discourses on societal identity, not necessarily convergent, taking place at the same time. There is the nationalist (in the sense of neonationalist) discourse that regards societal identity as defined by shared ethnicity, culture and language. This discourse defends the past which becomes a political tool regardless of the changing circumstance. But apart from and alongside this discourse is the Western discourse promoting change inspired by the western democratic Europe and a break with the communist societal identity. This also means a reassertion of the Romanian identity in integrational terms with Europe as the main reference point. From this perspective social agents have an important role in constructing a reliable and meaningful societal identity and in applying existing ideas and available historical codes on Europe and the EU.

3.1.4. The Concept of Recognition

Questions concerning the politics of recognition are central to the context of the cultural integration. Each society relates to the process of cultural integration in ways that reflect its own culture, that is to say that all societies rise on what Delanty and Rumford (2005: 21) call ‘order of recognition’. The concept is internal to the dynamic process of cultural integration. Former communist societies need recognition, i.e. “demands for the equal status of cultures” (Taylor 1994: 27) which is related to the identity of the community or nation.

As already suggested by Bourdieu (1984), Taylor (1994) Honneth (1995, 2002) and Bauman (2000), the concept of recognition is related to both society and identity since individuals and cultures struggle for recognition. Bourdieu speaks of ‘capital of recognition’. The lack of this form of capital brings about

misrecognition. In Bourdieu's usage, misrecognition symbolizes not a simple lack of awareness of the objective reality of a particular cultural practice but a strategic misconstrual of practice as other than what theoretical knowledge makes it out to be. Misrecognition (of what people think, or do, or value) is not simply imposed on the dominated, but is a condition of the action of the dominators. In Bourdieu's own words, "I call *misrecognition* the fact of recognizing a violence which is wielded precisely inasmuch as one does not perceive it as such" (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1996: 167-168).

Taylor (1994) distinguishes between two kinds of recognition: unconditional (given to individuals by virtue of their standing as citizens) and conditional. Conditional recognition refers to expressions of approval or status or prestige. Like Bourdieu, Taylor understands terms such as misrecognition and non-recognition through relation to 'damaged self-identity' as well. For Taylor recognition is a source of the modernity itself. Taylor pointed out two poles of recognition: a pole of 'dignity' (recognized by state institutions and others) and a pole of 'authenticity' that refers to cultural esteem.

Like Bourdieu and Taylor, Axel Honneth argues that individuals have two types of needs: respect and recognition. Respect refers to dignity and the way we want to be treated by others. Recognition, individuals want to be treated as singular. Recognition is based in 'affective needs and the reciprocation of social esteem from concrete others'. Our self-trust is based on recognition, states Honneth. A negative remark on our national origin does not only refer to us as individuals but also to our collective culture. Honneth finds three levels of recognition: legal (recognition by law), of love (recognition by singularity) and of the state (that in theory should mean both universal and singular recognition). Honneth argues, that a purely universalist moral order is not enough. Our contemporary societies need a principle of solidarity based on recognition as much as redistribution (respect, dignity). In other words, recognition must be incorporated into the changing moral order of society. This is close to a cosmopolitan perspective on recognition. Honneth regards recognition not as given for granted, but "created through social struggles, the moral grammar of social conflicts"¹¹⁷. Drawing on Honneth's concept of recognition, I want to move from the recognition of the individual to the recognition of the culture that facilitates this singularity. Thus recognition of the individual involves recognition of culture the

¹¹⁷ Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 22.

individual belongs to. I argue though that recognition speaks insufficiently of issues of change. Therefore, it is difficult to grasp the reality of recognition. What Honneth contributes to our study is his normative view on struggles for cultural recognition.

Zygmunt Bauman (2000) writes about the contemporary ‘great war of recognition’. ‘Liquid modernity’ means no longer domination but mobility and the ability to ‘dis-engage’ that makes individuals powerful. Zygmunt Bauman argues that we live in a post-recognition age where the master-slave type of recognition no longer prevails. Hence recognition in liquid modernity is a great war, consisting of constant ‘reconnaissance battles’. As Bauman argues, recognition is fine for global elites as long as it does not imply material redistribution.

In an article dealing with the politics of recognition in the search for a European identity, Fossum (2001) perceives recognition as a precondition for identity formation. In his opinion, all members of a society – be it ex-communist or not – are searching for recognition. I concur with Fossum’s suggestion for using the framework of recognition, “both regarding recognition of *uniqueness*, as well as recognition of *equality* and of *equal value*” (Fossum, 2001: 2). Societal identities in Eastern Europe are looking for the recognition of their distinctiveness. Individuals in these societies hope that the EU will recognize the different identities in Europe. This also means that the thesis of an overarching ‘primary’ European identity is a challenging one. Fossum says that this “deep diversity of culturally and nationally distinctive groups and communities” (Fossum, 2001: 16) is seen as a ‘plurality of ways of belonging’ (Charles Taylor). EU becomes then poly-ethnic and multinational. This seems the scenario that recognizes as equal all national identities of the member states. This scenario is more likely to promote recognition in the case of societal identities in Eastern Europe. The question is of course whether the outcome of it will support deep diversity. Fossum shows that “nationally based difference is generally held to be a source of deep diversity. In the EU the Member States also have retained the main institutional levers through which they have socialised past generations into loyal bearers of each country’s national identity and culture”¹¹⁸. This can also mean “weakening of national identities and the emergence of a novel form of identity in the EU, one of a post-national kind”¹¹⁹.

¹¹⁸ Fossum, 2001: 18.

¹¹⁹ Fossum, 2001: 20.

The notion of recognition refers somehow to the postwestern condition of our times. It is likely to think that the entire problematic of recognition is under threat after the Eastern Enlargement. The process of recognition is not automatic, but depends upon culturally variable conditions. The act or recognition means assessment of difference. Fraser (1995, 1997) notes that the politics of recognition is linked to notions of difference and is mostly concerned with cultural issues. In order to understand the struggle for recognition in the context of the ex-communist society, we therefore have to go beyond the matter of recognition to the question: recognition for what? It is not only about power: the dominant would not be the dominant unless it would have access to the valued goods. Recognition is rather about identity esteem and about crossing moral boundaries.

3.1.5. Beyond Postcommunism

To ensure that my discussion of cultural integration is conceptually clear, I need to describe the extension of the concept ‘postcommunism’. Postcommunist societies have represented in the last decade and a half an object of research and theoretical reflection. Recently, research on Eastern Europe transformation has been concerned with processes produced at societal level. These processes include assumptions, premises, and understandings that influence the societal identity. These transformations are created spontaneously, but develop as practices of social life, protected by what it has been called the ‘folkways and mores’ (Summer, 1906) or ‘habits of the heart’ (de Tocqueville 1945). Dahrendorf (1997), Sakwa (1999), Staniszkis (1999), Kennedy (2002), Tismăneanu (2002), and others have already debated some of the elements of postcommunism in Europe and the democratization transition: end of the communist ideology over politics, economics, and society; emergence of relatively weak pluralistic societies; uneven introduction of market economy into highly bureaucratized economies that encourage corruption; change in class structure; the “incomplete nature of the transformations, marked by the strong institutional, cultural and social imprint of the state socialist period on the postcommunist order” (Sakwa, 1999: 5); the emergence of new institutions and practices although, but with an old *modus operandi*; “various facets of identity politics, including national, ethnic and cultural questions accompanied by the tension between ‘nativist’ trends and ‘cosmopolitans’ who define the transition in terms of ‘rejoining world civilization’” (Sakwa, 1999: 6).

Postcommunism has been depicted as a time of crisis for state, bureaucracy and ethics (e.g. corruption), of impoverished citizens, a time of uncertainty and of identity crisis. The process of cultural integration which breaks down the boundaries within which all traditional forms of identity were constructed intensifies this identity crisis. Indeed cultural integration challenges the (formation of) societal identity and its traditional structures.

Although significant residues of the past remain, the scope of transformation has been unprecedented: monolithic societies are being converted into pluralistic ones, economies are being reoriented towards the market, new nations are being born, and states are rejoining the international community that is itself being recast (Sakwa, 1999: 6).

For Sakwa (1999) the term ‘postcommunism’ defines “an epoch that claims to have moved beyond the ‘extremism’ of ideological politics and its associated ‘metanarratives’ towards a more open and ‘discursive’ type of politics”¹²⁰. Another scholar, Cristian Joppke had defined postcommunism as “the vindication and recovery of already established nationhood against a regime whose purpose had been to wipe it out” (Joppke, 1996: 19).

According to Tismăneanu (1992), the cultural perspective demonstrates how continuity and change interact and how Eastern Europeans adjust positions and re-interpret phenomena in new circumstances. Another influential description of how culture forms social and political change in former communist societies is given by Michael D. Kennedy in his *Cultural Formations of Postcommunism: Emancipation, Transition, Nation, and War* (2002). What Kennedy labels transition is the ‘epoch with two mantras’ (Kennedy, 2002: 1), that is from plan to market and from dictatorship to democracy, but also a “culture of power with its own contradictions, contentions, repressions, and unrealized potentials”¹²¹. His approach is a cultural sociological one based on the assumption that “transition’s virtues can be strengthened, and its tragedies ameliorated, by making culture more explicit”¹²².

Staniszkis’ book, *Post-communism - The Emerging Enigma* (1999), is devoted to the analysis of two theoretical problems meant to theorize postcommunism: the end of communism (its causes and mechanisms) and the reasons

¹²⁰ Sakwa, 1999: 1.

¹²¹ Kennedy, 2002: 7.

¹²² Kennedy, 2002: 7.

for deviation in different regions of the communist bloc. According to her, communism ended due to internal contradictions (ideology, collective property, monopoly on power, dependence on Moscow), on the one hand, and to globalization (that is dependence on the global capitalist system), on the other. Staniszkis' theory of postcommunism is based on the theory of communist regimes. This also means that her theory detaches features of the postcommunist regime coming from the communist legacy from other 'new' factors. Since she looks at three main areas where communism ruled (central and Eastern Europe, Russia and China), her main assumption is that general features of postcommunism should not be confused with local cultural conditions. However, unlike most work on postcommunism, Staniszkis claims that the nature of postcommunism varies according to the epistemological assumptions of the culture that influenced how the idea of change was perceived and implemented. This assumption makes her question the democratic nature of postcommunist regimes.

The transformation processes to which the phrase 'postcommunist societies' (as defined above) refers is not compatible with my framework of cultural integration (i.e., postwesternization). Cultural integration, in the way I develop it, goes way beyond the simple notion of 'postcommunism'. Thus, rather than restricting my view to 'postcommunism' that refers to newborn societies that come into being after a communist past, I propose to use the terms 'Eastern European' that makes these societies geographically distinctive, rather than ideologically. I also disagree with another politically influential distinction between those countries that are believed to be better at making the transition and others that are lagging behind. As Pickel pointed out, these fine distinctions "have been put in the service of an exclusionary regional politics" (Pickel 2002: 108). For me the notion of 'postcommunism' limits itself to the relationship between these societies' present and their past. Eastern European societies exhibit a lot of differences. Therefore, they must be seen as highly differentiated both internally and from each other. While one can not contest that they come after a communist-type state and society, they are nonetheless new and different from the past. Furthermore, the term 'postcommunism' makes reference to a certain socio-political context; that of a *transition* from one economic and political order to another. As argued earlier, this teleological conception of postcommunism as transition (to the Western model) should be called

into question. I will refer instead to the term ‘transformation’ that implies an open-ended process of change.

However, my argument is that postcommunism as a meaningful concept in cultural integration is not enough. This is not the same with saying that something is wrong when talking about postcommunism. Especially in the way Outhwaite and Ray (2005) have used it recently. Outhwaite and Ray understand by the term ‘postcommunism’ “the geographic European and Asian region of former communist states but also the wider postcommunist global condition” (Outhwaite and Ray, 2005: 22). This postcommunist condition refers to “the complex political, social and intellectual transformation brought about by the collapse of the ‘socialist’ alternative to capitalism” (Outhwaite and Ray, 2005: 22-23). In other words, the term postcommunism does not only refer to the fall of the Iron Curtain but also to a more general change caused by the end of the bipolar order. Understanding this postcommunist condition is important for interpreting the main directions the European society will follow. The premise that the authors follow in their book is that “we are all postcommunist now, (...) in the sense that Europe, as well as the EU, are radically transformed by what has happened” (Outhwaite and Ray, 2005: 24). Moving beyond the EU enlargement and transition, Outhwaite and Ray assert that postcommunism concerns not only Eastern Europe but the whole of Europe. A similar argument is presented by Castells (1996) that argues that the second industrial revolution “has led to a major restructuring of the economies and social structures of the European societies bringing about new relations between centres and peripheries across countries as well as within them”¹²³. This widening of the meaning of postcommunism emphasises the idea that Eastern Europe cannot be viewed in isolation. Another way of interpreting this premise is that Europe has eventually come to terms with postcommunism. Such an understanding excludes the ‘convergence’ thesis that reduces Eastern Europe to a narrow meaning.

3.1.6. Social Agents and the Reconstruction of Society

I define ‘social agents’ as a diverse group of decision-makers whose specific understandings have a determinant impact on the reconstruction of the new societal order. Put more simply, social agents have the ability to impose their views on transformation. This also implies that social agents influence the forces and dynamics

¹²³ in Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 44.

that put forward the process of transformation thus making a contribution to the construction of a new societal order. In the Romanian context, for example, the significant social agents include anyone who is directly involved in the process of political transformation. These social agents unintentionally use some theoretical ‘knowledge’ – more or less well-founded, more or less refined – as they try to put in practice political programmes, economic agendas, and ideologies. An important continuity in Eastern European societies has been that the attempts to promote integration through elite-driven projects, i.e. they have been carried out by quite small groups of individuals that were able of setting off projects of transformation (see Higley *et al.*, 1998; Eyal *et al.*, 1998). Although it is difficult to say what defines such an elite at different stages in time, social change theories take into consideration certain groups in society that seek to promote their own understandings of society. For instance, in classical modernization theory these groups consisted of urban bourgeoisie as the agent of modern society. In transition theory, ‘change agents’ or better ‘functional elites’ that will construct a new societal order on the basis of Western institutions are identified with radical reformers on a political level.

According to Eyal *et al.*, “if you create the proper institutions, they will shape the individuals that occupy them so that individual behaviour will conform to institutional constraints and imperatives” (Eyal *et al.*, 1998: 8-9). In this transformational context there is a need for citizens and ‘change agents’ who are able to deal with the (re)production of the new order. The deficiency of satisfying social forces is perceived as the need to create these social agents, partly to justify the new societal project, partly to create agents that actually sustain the right vision of society (e.g. the working class during communism). Whereas the role of the ‘change agents’ is of a transitional kind, social agents have a significant role in the emergence of the societal new order. Stark and Bruszt in particular reject the idea of taking the Eastern European civil societies as the main agents of transformation as a critique to the postulation that a singular ‘right’ integrative agent can be acknowledged (Stark and Bruszt, 1998: 15-6). Rather, they suggest an interactionist approach in which they focus on relations between different agents and the fluid perceptions on their opponents’ strategies. They point that “these capacities, perceptions and strategies are fluid rather than fixed... [T]he political organizational identities of major social actors change as they react to and interact with other competing strategies in the political field” (Stark and Bruszt, 1998: 16). Indeed diverse constellations of actors

play the role of elites in a new society. These constellations can differ at different moments in time and in different societal contexts. To identify one specific a-historical transformational agent seems a rather provisional exercise. Moreover, this does not strengthen the idea of new societal order as being an open-ended and interpretative process. In this sense, the social agents are those agents who possess the culture or knowledge, thereby including technocratic-intellectual elites, to cope with the emergence of a new form of society. My focus therefore will be on the autonomy and reflexivity of social agents that put forward on a political level a more or less coherent project for some kind of societal order according to their own understandings. In this sense, social agents produce meaning by way of their particular socio-cultural background and through their contingent interpretation of the key mechanisms of the process of reorganization – thereby creating variety and divergence or as Therborn (1995) put it, ‘different routes to and through modernity’.

What makes social agents (e.g. political elites, intellectuals, and civil society) central to the process of reorganization is their intention to reconstruct a new societal order (as ‘initiators’ of the project) that goes beyond an existing societal configuration. Whereas political elites are central to the process of reconstruction on the basis of their key role in decision-making, intellectuals’ role is important in that it provides legitimation to the former group of social agents. As to civil society, I consider it as a “symbolic construct deployed in political argument”¹²⁴. Yet, it is difficult to differentiate these three groups of social agents in the real world as their social roles partly cover each other and as conflicts may rise between them. In the new context of societal transformation, social agents control the society which thus becomes “an object of active reconstruction by human beings” (Eisenstadt, 1999: 41-2). In this sense social agents are extremely political in that they put forward a project of reconstruction of society which they argue answers better to the needs of the members of that society. This project of reconstruction is attached to the ‘indigenous’ context (traditions, culture, and identity) and biased interpretations of the new order, however not without producing tensions and exclusions that are most likely to generate counter-reactionary forces. In order to study cultural integration one therefore needs to take into account these forces and their alternative version of reorganization. Cultural integration is finally about the conflict over its understandings, embedded in local significances. As noted earlier (Chapter 2, Section

¹²⁴ Verdery, 1996: 14.

2.4.), these understandings are themselves the product of an interpretative process, which is delimited by: (a) *institutions* (the position of social agents in the political field produce meanings as well as counter responses); (b) *tradition* (existing multiple understandings seen as a common good of the community); and (c) *diffusion* (external discourses that influence and ‘empower’ the local understandings). Cultural integration is the outcome of these factors. They may reinforce each other but may also exacerbate contradictions and incongruence. It is this incongruence between systemic integration and culture-building that produces the dynamics of cultural integration.

A cultural integration approach emphasizes the variety and diversification in the development of a societal order. This societal order can historically be understood in multiple ways, depending on historical conditions, existing traditions and societal context, as well as the particular way in which social agents understand the dynamics between the ‘external’ and the ‘local’. Blokker (2004) uses the notion of ‘transnational discursive paradigms’ to define “the dynamics between extraneous ideas/models and perceptions of local modernising actors”¹²⁵. Blokker stresses the importance of these paradigms in the reconstruction of local programs of modernization as local political actors “do not simply reproduce but also re-interpret and adapt universalistic models to the local context”¹²⁶. This is why it is difficult to depict cultural integration without contextualizing the process itself. Cultural integration penetrates the local not only through the dominant nature of ‘transnational discursive paradigms’ and the appeal they offer to ‘later newcomers’ but also by means of the creation of a direct response by the adoptive society.

Touraine uses the word *subjectivation* to define the individual’s effort to become an agent in the middle of multiple processes of change, “to act upon his or her environment and thus to create his or her own individuation” (Touraine, 1998: 169). In other words, the individual is in a continuous search to construct his or her own unique story. His argument “we are all equal in the sense that we all seek to construct our individuation” (Touraine, 1998: 170) makes sense. Delanty takes further Castells’ idea of network society in order to explain the dynamic of social change. Network society, as Delanty argues, is the basis for social integration. “The present model of change is one that is best termed ‘transformation’; it is less one of

¹²⁵ Blokker, 2004: 60.

¹²⁶ Blokker, 2004: 61.

historical or epochal ‘transition’ than of the multidirectional flows of information”¹²⁷. As such, Delanty considers ‘knowledge society’ – defined as “the ability of society to cognitively interpret itself”¹²⁸ to be a suitable model of social integration. Knowledge can now be seen as becoming a ‘medium of cultural experience’.

3.1.7. How Are the Concepts of State, Society, Societal Identity, Recognition, Postcommunism, and Social Agents Interrelated?

Let us submit to Castoriadis’s argument before I refer to the way these social concepts are related to each other. “What is wrong with the society we live in”, said Cornelius Castoriadis “is that it stopped questioning itself. This is a kind of society which no longer recognizes any alternative to itself and thereby feels absolved from the duty to examine, demonstrate, justify (let alone prove) the validity of its outspoken and tacit assumptions”¹²⁹. The following is a presentation of the theoretical conceptualization of the interrelation between state, societal identity, society, recognition, postcommunism, and social agents in the context of cultural integration. Thus, I shall set up the position I follow here, and will come back to it at the end of the analysis at which point I will explain its respective illustrative potential and normative authority.

The academic debate of cultural integration in the context of Eastern European societies finds its root in the question how do we analyze their transformation from a societal point of view. The debate about Eastern European society in the context of cultural integration asks for a theory of society as it has been described by Delanty and Rumford (2005). While the preceding introduction of the concepts relied mostly on issues related to the normative conceptions of state, society, societal identity, recognition, postcommunism, and social agents the theoretical perspective presented here develops mainly from Delanty and Rumford’s theory of society. This issue is connected to the discussion of the relationship between societal identity, society, recognition, and social agents because cultural integration is the expression of a rethinking of these conceptions. In the debate about Europeanization, Delanty and Rumford represent the constructivist promotion of such a process. Delanty and Rumford argue in favour of a normative theory of society

¹²⁷ Delanty, 1998: 6.2.

¹²⁸ Delanty, 1998: 6.4.

¹²⁹ quoted in Bauman, 2000: 22-23

because they believe this would facilitate understanding the process of Europeanization, the major social transformations of our modernity and the emergence of a postwestern and postnational social order. They accept the constructed character of identities and argue that such a construction is created in action and that identities “express not an underlying consciousness or essence, but the self-understanding and self-recognition of the social actor” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 51). In my opinion, Delanty and Rumford argue their theoretical case convincingly. They provide a good explanation of the need of a theory of society but their theory lacks adaptation to the current Eastern European reality.

As it has surely emerged from the previous presentation, my personal predilection is towards the social constructivist conceptualization of state, societal identity, society, recognition, postcommunism, social agents, and Europe. This thesis is moving away from a state centric view on transformation. I presume that societal identities refer to national identity that individuals subjectively consider to be their identity. I wonder if some form of recognition is not a precondition for cultural integration. The social scientific study of cultural integration is primarily concerned with explaining the general conditions that enable cultural integration. The constructivist understanding of societal identity takes the individual as its starting point. The creation of societal identity cannot be separated from the specific context in which cultural integration occurs. Having established the conceptual framework in Eastern European societies, I can now turn to the introduction to the actual theoretical sources of the cultural integration model. Accordingly, the next section will present the theoretical framework of the cultural integration model.

3.2. Approaching the Cultural Integration Model: Theoretical Sources

The following is a presentation of the social theory framework within which my cultural integration model is coming from. That is the ‘double synchronicity’ thesis as well as existing theoretical conceptualizations on the postwestern and postnational dimensions of integration. I shall establish the positions here and shed light on their explanatory potential. The theories that will concern the analysis directly are conceptualisations of the process of cultural integration. The purpose here is not to give an exhaustive elaboration of these theories’ attempts to reformulate the transformation(s) of Europe, but to show that new elements have been embodied or, at least, reflected upon in the study of the new Europe.

Deprived of a clear-cut theoretical approach in the existing literature on cultural integration, I am forced to broaden the theoretical sources of my analysis. Do more general theories provide me with a tool in understanding the current trends of change in Eastern Europe? The answer is definitely affirmative. The key explanation, as this section will argue, is found in the fact that we are dealing with a relatively new area in European studies. One could indeed take the analysis one step further arguing that studies on postwesternization, postnationalism, and former communism Europe is an underdeveloped field.

Due to the complexity of the issues of postwesternization and postnationalism the rest of this section shall be organized as follows: first, I give a short overview of the theoretical sources; then I describe the cultural integration model. By carrying out such a deconstruction of the cultural integration process, I hope to provide a clearer picture of the overall process. Due to the substantial overlap between the theoretical sources, the different perspectives will both be split-up by themes and by researcher. The issue of transformation has been approached differently by Delanty and Rumford, F. Peter Wagner, and Habermas. These three theoretical accounts represent clusters of views rather than clearly delimited and mutually exclusive positions.

3.2.1. Gerard Delanty and Chris Rumford: Europeanization and the Transformation(s) of Europe

The theoretical work of Delanty and Rumford (2005) represents perhaps the most forceful contemporary restatement of Europeanization. I will mostly be concerned with three aspects of their work: modernity, the emergence of postwestern and postnational Europe, and Europeanization.

The first aspect relevant to my study of cultural integration is Delanty and Rumford's debate on modernity. Delanty and Rumford argue that the term 'modernity'

signals a condition of self-confrontation, incompleteness and renewal in which the localized past is reshaped by a globalized present; it expresses self-confidence in the transformative project of the present time as a liberation from the past; modernity is the belief in the possibility of a new beginning based on human autonomy, the belief that the world can be shaped by human agency; and above all it is the consciousness of global or world cultural concepts (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 41).

Further, Delanty and Rumford argue that, modernity is a process in permanent construction which can be found in all types of societies. Delanty and Rumford depict modernity no longer in Western European terms, but cosmopolitan. Modernity is “neither entirely singular nor plural, universal nor particular, but an ongoing process of transformation that arises in the encounter of the local and present time with the global. This is why modernity cannot be equated with globality as such; it arises when the particular – the local – encounters globality” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 41). According to Delanty and Rumford, postcommunism may not represent the fatigue of modernity, but rather a fresh beginning.

Delanty and Rumford explain ‘modernities’ not as articulated and static units, but “in a constant process of change due to the nature of the particular forms of interaction, selection, combination, adaptation and processing of cultural codes, resources, imaginaries etc”¹³⁰. Further, Delanty and Rumford argue that European modernity is both multiple and hybrid: “[t]here is not one single societal model of modernity, but several which can also be seen in civilizational terms” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 42). One claim made in this context is that modernities have undergone major social transformations and this may lead “to a reconfiguration of the European civilizational constellation” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 43). Delanty and Rumford make the specific claim that “one expression of this is a new modernity based on cosmopolitanism” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 43). New models of modernity have emerged after the end of communism, beyond the EU enlargement and the new dynamics of Europeanization. According to them, the EU enlargement is about a re-shaping and reconstruction of modernities.

The second aspect refers to the emergence of postwesternization and postnationalism now that a new East is shaping Europe. It is around the ‘revival of the East’ that postwestern Europe comes into being. Europe “is no longer based on a singular, Western modernity, but multiple modernities” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 49). The role of the EU in Eastern Europe and with more enlargements to come means that “Europe is becoming more poly-centric, with more than one centre and also more than one historical origin” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 49). Moreover, Delanty and Rumford illustrate that “the identity of Europe will become more and more ‘post-western’” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 47). This does not mean “anti- or non-western, but a condition defined increasingly by the legacy of an earlier

¹³⁰ Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 42.

modernity which will have to be negotiated with other modernities” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 47). This is especially evident in new questions concerning the identity of Europe raised by the latest Eastern Enlargement. As Delanty and Rumford put it, “in this case is not just about getting bigger. It is also about a very decisive kind of cultural transformation in terms of both the identity of Europe and in terms of the rise of new kinds of symbolic conflicts over identity and belonging” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 47-48). Delanty and Rumford argue that there “there is no underlying European identity that makes this impossible, that there is no foundational European identity that prevents Europe from adopting a more inclusive kind of identity” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 191).

Delanty and Rumford seek to account for the emergence of postnational forms of loyalty. That is loyalty towards principles or pan-European forms of solidarity and guarantees of security rather than those entirely defined by the nation-state. According to Delanty and Rumford, there are two options facing contemporary Europe: postnational and cosmopolitan Europe. To them, the postnational model of Europe has some deficits. According to them,

while post-national trends are in evidence, a post-national political entity is ultimately confined to a limited number of societies and ones that are at a similar level of development in terms of social, cultural and political structures and values. It does not lend itself easily to the current situation of a large-scale polity composed of very diverse societies (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 190).

Moreover, the lack of “secular, liberal and post-cultural forms of identification” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 190) in a postnational Europe might have difficulties in dealing with conflicts concerning belonging and identity. Delanty and Rumford suggest that “the viability of this model – which assumes a European people can be called into existence by a constitution – has been called into question by the current enlargement of the European Union and growing post-liberal anxieties” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 190). The introduction of a postnational Europe takes them back to the West and its values that “must be defended by Europe” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 190). The reorganization of Europe can be read in Habermasian terms as “opening up post-national possibilities in which communicative forms of social integration may be possible” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 49). Much in ex-communist societies is indeed made of postwestern and postnational openness, contributing to the perception of these societies as belonging to a ‘Europe beyond the nation’. A postwestern and postnational East has emerged as a renegotiation of its

role within the context of the post-bipolar order. A postwestern and postnational East places itself in a new relationship to wider Europe.

The third facet of Delanty and Rumford's work concerns Europeanization. According to them, Europeanization is a "process of social construction rather than one of state building and one in which globalization, in all its facets, plays a key role in creating its conditions" (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 6). From a social constructivist perspective, Europe's current transformation is "one of self-creation" (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 49). Their social constructivist approach pays particular attention to globalization and the historical process of modernity as the context for Europeanization. Although I fully accept the constructivist agenda on Europeanization, cultural integration contrasts with the Europeanization argument offered by Delanty and Rumford. This includes most notably the emphasis on the role globalization and its cosmopolitan currents play in the process of transformation of Europe. Delanty and Rumford take a global perspective on Europeanization, placing Europe and the EU within a global frame. This means that the explanatory force of their cultural integration model can possibly be affected by the chosen case-study of Romania and that this would lead to a difficulty in understanding the way Romania's transformation might fit in the global scenarios.

Basic to the difference between Europeanization, as defined by Delanty and Rumford and my cultural integration model is the way they understand change. Whereas Delanty and Rumford argue that the dynamics of transformation are global rather than European, the perspective I offer sets enlargement within a wider context of transformations in Europe. Cultural integration encourages us to re-think the relationship between Romania and Europe. Placing Romania within the context of a postwestern and postnational Europe, allows for a different object of study. With the main focus on the "the impact of global forces in Europe and the emergence and development of global dynamics" (Delanty and Rumford 2005: 9), the notion of Europeanization as defined by Delanty and Rumford offers a different perspective on the nature and dynamics of the process of transformation. Furthermore, Delanty and Rumford see Europeanization as shaped by global processes, including the "lack of boundaries between Europe and the world" (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 9). Whereas Delanty and Rumford see Europeanization in "a wider context of complexity" (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 12) and as linked to globalization, I look at how Europe has reorganized itself after the end of communism. Likewise, whereas

Delanty and Rumford see Europeanization as a cosmopolitan response to globalization, I see cultural integration as a postwestern and postnational response to European integration. In this sense, my cultural integration approach takes on a different perspective. Delanty and Rumford look at globalization as the context for Europeanization. In contrast I look at postwesternization, postnationalism and Europeanization as the context for cultural integration.

My cultural integration model is therefore different from Delanty and Rumford's cultural integration model seen as a particular response to globalization and within the global frame of globalization. Alternatively Delanty and Rumford could be read as advocating a rewriting of the narratives of European integration with a view to opening new analytical paths. In my view, cultural integration is a perspective which is better adjusted to analyse social and cultural fragmentation. Cultural integration offers an alternative model of culture that emphasizes the contrasting dimension to culture seen by Delanty as cultural pluralization (Delanty, 1999).

3.2.2. F. Peter Wagner: the Thesis of 'Double Synchronicity'

F. Peter Wagner has formulated a general thesis on Eastern transformation which I believe is equally important to my general theoretical model. Wagner's thesis, announced in *'Sonderweg Romania'* (2004), amounts to a conceptualization of Eastern transformation as 'double synchronicity'. As Wagner notes, "the integration of the former 'Eastern Europe' into the former 'West' is not a one-way process – meaning the alignment of one system 'East' to the other system 'West' – but rather concerns both sides" (Wagner, 2004: 59). The thesis of 'double synchronicity' as used by Wagner describes the integration of Eastern European countries' internal transformation into the wider European and global context which is itself transforming, deeply affecting all aspects of their societies. On this basis, the East's 'great transformation' (Polanyi, 1944) cannot be sufficiently explained by using the convergence and transition' theses.

For this reason, it has been commonly assumed that the influence of European integration increases with time, rather than at the outset of transition which is short-lived anyway (Pridham, 1991). For Wagner, the transformations of Eastern Europe societies are equal to the construction of as many societal projects. In this way, Wagner links the discussion of 'double synchronicity' to politics:

In the case of the East European process of transformation, the ‘political steering of society’ (the politically initiated and controlled makeover of society) animates the entire process. Politics, thus, do come first. Yet by the same token, politics cannot be reduced to the creation of institutions in the narrow sense of the term, or to the implementation of a particular set of economic measures, exclusively labelled ‘reform’, and set to make up ‘the transition’ (Wagner, 2004: 59).

For Wagner “the consequences of historical-structural, international, and regional context of ‘post-state socialism’ therefore present, in each case, an *Eigendynamik* grounded in the challenge to conceive and construct a *new societal identity*” (Wagner, 2004: 59). Wagner stresses the importance of “the idea of an *Eigendynamik*” when ‘coming to terms’ with Romania’s ‘special case’, “perhaps thereby aiding us at last in accepting ‘development’ as a common question after the demise of state socialism (Wagner, 2004: 59-60). In an earlier study, Borinski and Wagner (2002) argue that the transformation of the East is about creating new societies. According to them, this gives a new meaning to Europe after the end of the Cold War.

However, in his ‘double synchronicity’ model Wagner does not situate Romania in a postwestern and postnational Europe. Yet, scholars point to the increasing role of these ‘transformative’ dimensions of the contemporary Europe (Eder, 2001; Delanty, 2003b, 2006a; Delanty and Rumford, 2005; Outhwaite and Ray, 2005; Therborn, 2006; Rumford, 2006a). While I agree with F. Peter Wagner’s thesis, this chapter goes further and sustains that Eastern European societies have to reconstruct themselves to adjust to a postwestern and postnational Europe which is itself under ‘great transformation’ in the wider context of modernity. Europe is redefining itself in a global era with all its overwhelming influences and implications for the new societal identity.

3.2.3. Jürgen Habermas: the Postnational Europe

Habermas (1998, 2003) argues in favour of a postnational constellation and a ‘European demos’ as the subject of a postnational democracy which is imagined in terms of an ‘extended closure’ of national democracy. In his book, *The Postnational Constellation* (2001), Habermas’s social theory explores among other issues the future of democracy in the wake of the nation-state age. Habermas holds for a ‘postnational’ Europe where shared identity is connected to nonterritorial values of constitutionalism and democratic rights. In his opinion, the dynamics of globalization speak of the declining significance of the nation-state. While elaborating on the

dilemmas and uncertainties of modernization, Habermas writes that democracy might not necessarily survive such a postnational order. Habermas's work moves then from a local historical perspective to more theoretical formulations on postnational constellation. This postnational constellation answers the current crisis facing a universal communicative order produced by the inequalities of capitalism. The new constellation must be taught how to reallocate burdens, rather than simply sharing risks. Habermas refers to the postnational constellation as a global condition. He writes, "we will only be able to meet the challenges of globalization in a reasonable matter if the postnational constellation can successfully develop new forms for the democratic self-steering of society" (Habermas, 2003: 88).

Although not concerned with a theory of society or with Eastern Europe, Habermas provides a normative political philosophy on society. Drawing from Kant, Habermas has argued that 'constitutional patriotism' is a successor to nationalism.

The political culture of a country crystallizes around its constitution. Each national culture develops a distinctive interpretation of those constitutional principles that are equally embodied in other republican constitutions – such as popular sovereignty and human rights – in light of its own national history. A 'constitutional patriotism' based on these interpretations can take the place originally occupied by nationalism (Habermas, 1998: 118).

Habermas's main argument is that any cultural particularism is precarious and ought to be replaced by universal categories. Even if the end of the Cold War, understood as 'self-domestication of nuclear powers', is a positive outcome of the twentieth century, under globalization this outcome is endangered. Globalization has led to a postnational constellation, a condition defined as the relative incapacity of the state to control its consequences.

According to Habermas, constitutional patriotism rests on human rights and democratic participation. Habermas understands constitutional order as a "political order created by the people themselves and legitimated by their opinion and will formation" (Habermas, 2003: 65). This constitutional order does not necessarily demand the existence of the nation. Habermas argues that there is a sense in which the achievement of postnational democracy is both a conceptual desideration and a real option. In Habermas's own words,

any political community that wants to understand itself as a democracy must at least distinguish between members and non-members. The self-referential concept of collective self-determination demarcates a logical space for

democratically united citizens who are members of a particular community. Even if such a community is grounded in the universalistic principles of a democratic constitutional state, it still forms a collective identity, in the sense that it interprets and realizes these principles in light of its own history and in the context of its own particular form of life. This ethical-political self-understanding of citizens of a particular democratic life is missing in the inclusive community of world citizens (Habermas, 2003: 107).

Habermas applies his idea of constitutional patriotism to the transnational context of the EU. The development of some kind of postnational solidarity is needed. “It is neither possible nor desirable to level out the national identities of member nations, nor melt them down into a ‘Nation of Europe’... But positively coordinated redistribution politics must be borne by a European-wide democratic will-formation, and this cannot happen without a basis of solidarity” (Habermas, 2003: 99). Habermas presents a more philosophical argument that is his belief in the potential of communication. Through communication, he argues, individuals are re-discovering sources of solidarity. For Habermas, globalization is not a threat but an opportunity for learning and taking further steps towards higher civility and a more rational closure. This means that the link between the nation and the state must be broken in favour of ‘postnational democracy’.

Habermas is ambivalent about the possibility of securing cosmopolitan democracy. However, he argues that this postnational transformation has to come from individuals within nation states. For Habermas, the transnational political community equals the nation-state in the contemporary age of postnational constellation. Habermas perceives the EU as a new democratic nation-state, with a binding constitution, an elected parliament, rule of law, an active civil society and so forth. For Habermas, the term ‘postnational’ refers to something located at the global or transnational level. Habermas is a defender of the postnational project as opposed to a national driven political project. He defends this project by stating that this is a response to the contemporary political and social change; the postnational idea is at the same time a necessary stage in the development of the nation-state (where the idea of the nation is considered false). Last but not least, this idea is a response to forces of globalization. According to Habermas’s view on a postnational vision, Europe ought to have a constitution in order to create a European demos. This constitution would raise constitutional patriotism and postnational forms of loyalty. In Habermas’s view, Europe appears as the owner of cosmopolitan values that are

neither East nor West, as a universal nation able of endorsing the democratic attainments of the nation-state at a postnational level that is beyond the limits of the nation. Most significantly, although, he admits the failures of Europe's history, Habermas rejects the division between Eastern and Western Europe. His social constructivist approach takes only what is good from the past and forgets the rest.

There are two critical points to Habermas postnational thesis: firstly, Habermas fails to break away from the conceptual framework of the nation-state; secondly, he does not succeed in describing the necessity of the transition from the national to the postnational level. In Eastern European societies, 'postnational' is a part of their 'post' enlargement condition. Habermas's imagines postnational constellation as a stage of social and political life after nationalism, overlooking that postnationalism can actually coexist with the nation-state.

3.2.4. Summing-up the Theoretical Conceptions of Cultural Integration

Common to the above standpoints is that whether they promote or not a purely postwestern or postnational position with regard to cultural integration, they all understand the legitimation of transformation through a social constructivist perspective. They all invoke culture, society and transformation. To clarify the postwestern and postnational trends which take place in Eastern Europe, I make use of Delanty and Rumford's ideas on postwestern and postnational Europe, although I do share the same perspective on Europeanization. Whereas Habermas urges the creation of a postnational constellation and suggests that constitutional patriotism should be its basis, Delanty and Rumford propose that Europe should base itself on individual cultural entities. Individuals should be free to choose their loyalty. Alternatively, Wagner's thesis of double synchronicity suggests that Eastern European internal transformations are part of wider transformations. Based on the theoretical approaches presented above, I believe the two integration types, postwestern and postnational, provide the best framework for integration from a cultural point of view.

Drawing on these theoretical sources, I sustain that while cultures, institutions and incommensurable versions of history bring in a lot of diversity and differences between these societies, it can be argued that the majority of ex-communist societies are affected fundamentally by the type of social construction that I call 'cultural integration'. The point that I share with Delanty and Rumford is that

the world taking shape around us has to be increasingly understood in cultural terms. In other words, the transformations caused by cultural integration are *meaningful*, around conceptions of Europe, becoming more European and the new borders of Europe. Fundamental conceptions change. In this sense what it is characteristic to Eastern European societies is not only the amount of information and technology that individuals cannot grasp, but also a new set of concepts that people have to deal with on a daily basis.

If I agree to the idea that a postwestern and postnational European society may exist or is in the process of formation, then this implies that features of this emergence are already to be found in Eastern Europe. To accept that a postwestern society emerges in Eastern Europe implies that cultural integration is based on recognition and cultural diversity. The question is of course, what potential impact this would have on former communist societies and on my view of social constructivist? This type of integration puts more emphasis on the dynamics of becoming and belonging which are otherwise difficult to grasp. A similar point could be made about cultural integration which is a continuous process that has its own dynamics. The result is that former communist societies are more and more part of the global space and affairs. While complex internal threats that “could affect the emergence of united Europe as a political, economic and cultural entity”¹³¹ still exist, it is too early to declare the failure of cultural integration in Eastern European societies.

Since it is generally agreed by the social constructivists that society is socially constructed, an obvious place to begin my analysis of cultural integration is by considering the social construction of Eastern European society. Indeed the social constructivist aspect of the theory of society as formulated by Delanty and Rumford has much in common with my theory: ex-communist societies are not going to be seen as concrete and bounded in and of their states; they are rather contingent historically and contextually specific. Having sketched out, in general terms, the conceptual positions with which I am concerned, I shall now discuss in more detail the cultural integration framework.

Theorizing cultural integration is problematic since there is a difficult balance to strike between generalised abstraction, such as a theory of transformation, and historical thickness, where general processes risk being lost from view. No

¹³¹ Tismăneanu, 2002: 87.

matter what theoretical approach I choose here is likely to be a tension between universal claims on the one hand and giving proper attention to local detail and specificity on the other. Is Eastern Europe's transformation to be termed cultural integration and if so, what exactly is meant by this?

3.3. Cultural Integration in Eastern Europe

As mentioned earlier, in this thesis I look at integration from a cultural perspective as a distinct type of integration that I name 'cultural integration'. As already noted in Chapter 2, I use the term 'cultural integration' to distinguish the process of reorganization caused by social agents from systemic integration (political, economic and legal integration). On this basis the thesis can be advanced that a traditional European integration approach is inadequate to account for developments associated with cultural integration. Understanding Eastern European societies necessitates a focus on society and culture, more than on economy or politics.

Since I have defined the 'cultural integration' concept as a process of reorganization, the link to the constructivist theory reviewed in Chapter 2 should be obvious. Societal transformation in ex-communist societies has been a major focus of interest in the social sciences. Early research has been focused on challenges for transformation, often in analogy with earlier transitions in Southern Europe (Ash, 1990; Dahrendorf, 1990; Offe, 1991; Stanizskis, 1991). Some of these 'transitological' studies included empirical research and date-based knowledge on transformation. Recently, societal transformation in Eastern European societies has brought about a new research agenda, not predicted by 'transitologists', which asks for explanation. First, the process of transformation that started in Eastern Europe in the early 1990s has proven to be more complex than originally predicted. Secondly, Eastern European societies are constantly in search for a balance between integration and differentiation (Delanty and Rumford, 2005). The present societal changes in postcommunist Europe (in a postwestern sense) seen within the post-Cold War period ask for new answers to this challenge. According to Delanty (2003c: 16), former communist societies are concerned with four main transitions: from political authoritarianism to democracy; (b) from state socialism to market economy, from industrial culture to postindustrial/postmodern culture, and from a national to transnational order.

Following these considerations, a number of features of cultural integration in the case of Eastern European societies are worth mentioning. Firstly, denial of former existing political and societal order opens up for social agents' claim of reconstructing a new order on the basis of self-produced understandings of such an order. The moving away from conventional understandings makes possible the development of alternative visions of how the new society should be shaped. This means that cultural integration is very dependent internally on social agents' assumptions about its meaning, as well as on their discursive contexts and concerns. Secondly, the emphasis is set on social agents, i.e. the carrier agents of cultural integration as subjects able to understand cultural integration and perform on these understandings. This supports the idea that society is fluid and that social agents can therefore reconstruct society based on their own visions. Thirdly, the new ideas and programs promoted as visions of a better society (as distinct from that of the past) are mainly future-oriented.

The choice for a (cultural integration) generalizing approach to Eastern Europe is based on the following assumptions: (a) there is a certain geopolitical established historical and cultural commonality among these societies that makes them all Eastern European; (b) there are structural and cultural resemblances among these societies given their communist past; and (c) cultural integration brings more or less the same factors. Nonetheless, I argue that each society has a specific historical and cultural context. Leaving aside a singular, teleological model and favouring instead the existence of multiple patterns of cultural integration, my sociological approach will take into consideration (Chapter 4) the historical formation of a particular modern society, Romania, its specific encounter with communism, and the contingency of transformation after communism as context of the cultural integration project. These all inform the approach and add a theoretical dimension to it.

The particular features of building a new societal order on historical legacies (and particularities) and in interaction with European dynamics has not (as yet) been considered. Following an approach which does not emphasise the convergence of the East into the West but instead the unique response of later integrated societies to wider transformations of Europe, cultural integration can be seen to entail 'multiple responses' inherent to the project of reconstructing an existing societal order. A focus on particularities rather than commonalities creates the insight that "historically different beginnings bring about different modernities, and different

contexts do not permit modernizing states simply to imitate the Western model of modernity” (Kaya, 2004: 31). The lack of comprehension for national specificities and historical particularities may entail a major obstacle inside Europe.

Illner (1999) suggests that the postcommunist transformation ought to be analysed in a broader perspective than the post-1989 period or the years of communism alone. Eastern European transformation should be analysed “within wider sociocultural space than the individual societies” (Illner, 1999: 242-243). For Illner the proper time scale is the whole modern history of Eastern Europe, within which the communist rule is just a small component. As to the socio-cultural scale, Illner suggests that of ‘civilizational orbits’ established by shared cultural and political experiences (i.e. religion or after ‘belonging’ to supranational units like Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman or Russian). I concur to Illner’s proposition, and look in the next chapter at the process of cultural integration currently taking place in Romania from a wide historical perspective.

After more than four decades of communist rule radical changes took place in East European societies. All states have experienced a socialist type of economic and political system. The social changes in the region during communism included nationalization, the collectivization of agriculture, raw material oriented industrialization, the annihilation of rural communities or the peasant society, increasing the convenient working class, and massive village to town migration. As it applies to former communist societies, cultural integration evolved most directly out of the events of the late 1990s as these unfolded in Eastern Europe. After the 1989-1990 revolutions, the research on cultural transformations in Eastern Europe has focused mainly on the downfall of communism, the transition to democracies and from industrial to post-industrial societies. With the collapse of communism, a new Europe seemed to have opened to the peoples of Eastern Europe. After the removal of the communist system, societies have been struggling with questions of ‘belonging’ and ‘becoming’ European often understood in the sense of losing their unique Eastern features.

Cultural integration forces have been interacting with the legacy of communism and pre-communism to create a new reality that is different both from Western and pre-communist situations. Communism has had a significant impact on social networks, idiosyncratic patterns and the cultures of Eastern European societies. There is a continuous interaction with forces and models transferred from Western

democracies, the communist heritage, the more distant past of Eastern Europe and the innovative solutions called for the way out from communism. It is still early to predict the final form these societies will take as a result of many often contradictory pressures presently being exercised. Their development choices are open and the ending may prove difficult to consider under any of the known societal types. The emerging societies may be as specific as it is the process of cultural integration itself. The societal development in Eastern Europe is complex and contradictory.

As analysts have often announced a ‘sudden, radical break with the past’ (Sztompka, 1992: 11), the influence from the past has widely been ignored. However, there has been a ‘continuum of changes’ (Elias, 1992) of both cultural and structural nature. Sztompka (1993) wrote about ‘civilizational incompetence’ as the trap for East European societies emphasizing the cultural heritage from the past. Apart from communism, and on a deeper level, the process of cultural integration seems to be influenced by long-range factors from pre-communism. Such legacies, ‘frozen’ during communist decades have been re-triggered after the end of the regime. So far, the long distance of this continuum has been neglected, the research focusing mainly on the handicaps inherited from the communist society. Both pre-communist and communist era legacies co-determine the post-1989 space for transformation. Perhaps, one common feature to all former communist societies is their timing with regard to modernization and the beginning of the communist rule. We have, on the one hand, the countries which did not experience any sign of modernization before communism or whose modernization was not finished by that time. These societies’ modernization was completed by the communist regime as part of the ‘building socialism’ project. Even awkward, communism did play a role in the modernization process in these societies, and the benefits of modernity are associated with the ‘golden era’ of communism. On the other hand, we have countries that had already been modernized before communists came into power. In these societies the process of modernization has been disrupted by the socialism, this fact having a damaging effect on the process.

The process of internalizing external influences is an important aspect of cultural integration. Cultural integration process is dependant on the external constellation of cultural influences. Delanty and Rumford argue that transformations shape Europe continuously. Within the contemporary order, these transformations are “taking on a post-western orientation in which a new East has emerged to shape

Europe” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 24). In their view, the Iron Curtain “has been more of a hard or closed border and has served to define the edge of Europe; an absolute line of demarcation, rather than a point of intersection between two territories” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 32). Their conclusion is that “the plurality of Europe is more than a diversity of cultures and nations, but extends into its very civilizational nature. In other words, as a geopolitical entity Europe is as much eastern as it is western” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 35). After the end of the Cold War, the East has been reinvented, losing traditional reference points (Delanty, 1996). It is difficult to predict the outcome of the present changes in the Eastern Europe, but it is possible to suggest what kind of future trends are implied by different understanding of cultural integration.

The Basic Propositions of Cultural Integration

Having outlined the theoretical framework guiding this analysis, I will now proceed to summarise the basic propositions of cultural integration in Eastern Europe. There are at least four reasons that are in favour of a cultural integration analysis of ex-communist societies. Firstly, the rapid and radical nature of Eastern European societies’ transformation of society and identity speaks in favour of cultural integration. Secondly, the notion of cultural integration connects this study to social constructivism more firmly than do other terms. Thirdly, cultural integration can explain society changes and cultural dynamics. Last but not least, it recognizes the importance of the cultural dimension of integration and a growing interdisciplinarity in the study of Europe. Such propositions have obvious connotations as to the persistence of an exclusively cultural model or, indeed, a variety of distinctly cultural models. In the context of such generalizations it is suggested that cultural integration serves to undermine the distinctive European cultural model (if there is one). Consequently, if I am to disclose the mechanisms that advance cultural integration in the contemporary Eastern Europe, it is essential to examine the ‘constructed reality’ of such a model.

3.3.1. Components of the Cultural Integration Model

Cultural integration as it has occurred in Eastern Europe is, without arguing, significant and complex. Faced with wider processes of transformation, ex-communist societies have been marked by two trends: first, engagement in approving

nationalism/autochthonism (inward oriented – a traditionalist and conservative tendency based on national specificity by accentuating its national specificity, traditions and values: ‘we are better than many other Europeans’, but also based on xenophobic and racist attitudes towards minorities); and at the opposite, an intensification of all signs of modernity and Europeanism (orientated towards the outside Europe and towards European integration). These internal trends can not be seen isolated from European transformations. In fact, they coexist with postwestern and postnational dynamics of cultural integration emerging from the new relationship between Eastern Europe and Europe. Transformations in Eastern Europe has been dominated by two forms of cultural integration, on the one hand postwestern (i.e. interaction with the *new* East and the global), and on the other the postnational (i.e. recognition of the status of minorities). These dynamics touch upon the complex issue of the construction of the *new societal identity*, so crucial to former communist societies. As indicated earlier, a combination of several interrelated factors that link structural and historical-institutional legacies to transnational (external) discourses has contributed to direct cultural integration.

The first factor refers to the influence of the past which continues to generate inertia. Tradition matters in the analysis of cultural integration as it identifies the continuities and discontinuities in Eastern European societies. The post-1989 development of Eastern Europe points to a persistence of historical-institutional legacies (precommunist as well as of a communist type). Continuity is evident in political terms, i.e., in the election and even re-election of former communist elites. Particularly, in the way political elites have interpreted the reconstruction process (e.g., old discourses of particularism and nationalism are set in motion). The framework of specific understandings has had a strong impact on the process of transformation and has defined the potential directions of the Eastern transformation. This is however, not to say that historical-institutional legacies have a deterministic role on the present. The conceptions of domestic *reorganization* of the major social agents of transformation are conditioned by locally shaped discursive legacies. As I will show in the historical analysis of precommunist Romania, to the westernist discourse, a form of autochthonism or particularism (nationalism) has been opposed. Looking at the legacy of these two dominant discourses offers a better understanding the reconstruction of the new societal order. This dual legacy has been placed at the

structural level in that they remain the main indigenous sources for societal reconstruction discourses.

The second factor refers to structural and institutional legacies, i.e. the persistence of centralised and unitary state structures. The post-1989 political project of reconstruction of the new societal order has been conditioned by these legacies (Shafir, 2001: 91 and Gallagher, 2001). At the institutional level, social agents partly reproduce the old tenets of the dominant discursive traditions; partly combine them with transnational elements. For instance, the state and its institutions are still perceived (like the communist state) as the main agent of reorganization and as the symbol that identifies the necessities of the society. For Sztompka, “*culture-building* and ‘*civilizing process*’ (...) do not proceed by design, but as emergent, learned responses to the conditions in which people live, the entire context of their ‘life-world’” (Sztompka, 1999: 206).

An example from the institutional sphere: although institutions are adopted after the Western model, political culture manifests indigenously through suspicion towards those in power, non-participation in public life, electoral absenteeism, and lack of what Weber (2002) called the ‘spirit of capitalism’.

Third, one of the chief factors of transformation has been the encounter with external models (i.e. diffusion) and ideas that are taken on, adapted and reproduced. With the fall of communism Eastern European societies have become open to transnational governing discourses which are most likely to be adopted and integrated into the local discourses. This also means that the indigenous discourses are endangered by diffusion. This is mostly evident in the analysis of cultural integration in the domestic political field.

Cultural integration has evolved under the auspices of these internal (institutions, tradition) and external (diffusion) forces. These forces may reinforce each other but may also exacerbate contradictions and incongruence. It is this incongruence between systemic integration and culture-building that produces the dynamics of cultural integration. Cultural integration can acquire different forms and it is rather by the identification of particular constellations of social agents and conflicts between them that the nature of cultural integration can be understood. The incongruence of institutionalization and cultural integration makes for yet another ‘duality of synchronicity’ (Wagner, 2004).

3.3.2. A Social Constructivist Approach to Cultural Integration in Eastern Europe

It is from a constructivist perspective that the process of cultural integration will come to be understood as a transformation from an existing societal order (i.e., the communist type of society) to a *new* societal order. A social constructivist approach to cultural integration in Eastern Europe has following as main dynamics: change based on continuity (a factor for transformation dynamics); postwestern and postnational transformation; and reconstruction of societal identities.

Firstly, cultural integration as a theory of change based on continuity. The main reason for choosing a social constructivist approach is the interest that has been growing lately in the process of transformation. As a theory of change, social constructivism identifies the following key dynamics in the social construction of Eastern Europe: (i) cultural integration as a process of continuity; Eastern European societies are becoming more and more diverse. Continuity as a factor for transformation dynamism; (ii) cultural integration as an open-ended process; (iii) transformation of society and identity; (iv) reaction to challenges coming from cultural integration (ambivalence). When dealing with cultural integration one of the questions that the theoretical model must address is whether it can explain society transformation and cultural dynamics.

The famous notion of ‘continuum of changes’ (Elias, 1992) is close to the emphasis on transformative elements within a certain society. Elias declines any sort of self-sustaining logic of development. Instead he concentrates on the historical and institutional conditions through which political-cultural premises are rendered as meaning systems. In other words, meaningful cultural and political claims are informed both by a significant past and a present which is continuously being transformed. On this view, the past shapes the present order and the legitimacy of claims. According to Elias, we cannot look at the political culture of a society from the perspective of the present. What matters for the present (social constructivist) argument is that the ‘long continuum of changes’ and the cultural integration process are no longer entirely linked to the *space* of the nation-state but to its transformation.

Secondly, cultural integration as postwestern and postnational transformation. A social constructivist perspective draws attention to the emergence of two axis of cultural integration: postwestern and postnational. I will not deal with the question whether or not these forms of cultural integration can be an idealistic

model for Eastern European societies. It will suffice to mention that cultural integration does not refer to a fixed cultural model, to a rigid cultural perfection. My aim is to introduce an explanatory theoretical model for cultural integration by presenting some hypotheses on the cultural dimension of European integration.

Thirdly, cultural integration as reconstruction of societal identities. Another particular aspect of cultural integration to which is given considerable attention in the study of Eastern Europe is the changing nature of societal identities. I assume that the social construction of reality is attributed meaning in on-going processes in which each individual takes part (Searle, 1995). The process of cultural integration refers to the process of reconstruction of societal identities in former communist societies. Self-images are reconstructed according to specific needs for meaning in a given time and place. The cultural integration model explains how historical views change and societal identities emerge by focusing on processes of social construction. Cultural integration does not mean reproduction of existing cultural models; rather it is re-adaptation of ideas so that they fit their *carriers* (Stråth, 2000), that is to give meaning. This can explain why the process of cultural integration has as its point of departure the construction of 'here and now' by *carriers* who search for meaning within their own culture (Schutz and Luckmann, 1989). When old ideas and meaning no longer serve their agents, these elements are re-adapted, but always within a specific social context. The cultural integration model refers to the dynamic interrelation between the culture of *carriers*, existing societal identities and the social context in which the process of cultural integration takes place. The next sections will deal with the cultural integration model and its impact on the interpretation of societal identities from a social constructivist perspective.

3.4. Unpacking the Cultural Integration Model: Towards Postwesternization and Postnationalism

To begin with, a model should make complex processes and structures easier to understand. My aim is to explain central aspects of the on-going changes with the help of two dimensions of the cultural integration model: postwestern and postnational.

Whereas recent research on Eastern European societies replaces the concept of transition with the concept of transformation (Illner, 1999; Sztompka, 1999), older research deals with transition towards a Western European model and

democratization (Dahrendorf, 1990; Habermas, 1990). The new theoretical approach towards understanding how Eastern European countries are responding to the transformation of Europe and at the same time how they are dealing with the reconstruction of their own societal order has been for some time now in the making (Delanty, 2003c; Wagner, 2002, 2004; Delanty and Rumford, 2005; Rumford, 2006a; Therborn, 2006). Theorists have become much more aware of the complexity of integration, Europeanization, and postcommunism (Borinski and Wagner, 2002; Outhwaite and Ray, 2005). As argued in the previous chapter, the study of integration requires a different, more open, and decentred cultural model. Such a model will be developed further.

Given the focus of this chapter, it is crucial to establish whether the process of cultural integration in Eastern European societies reflects the development of a trans-national cultural model or contributes to the creation of a distinctively new cultural model. Finally, one may also consider the compatibility of such an emergent model with the already existing cultural models at national level. Some may argue that the problem with the notion of cultural model is that it is static whilst the process itself is dynamic. If used imprudently, then, it may serve to reify, and therefore to prejudice. Yet, as a heuristic term it does have some advantages reminding us that, while there has been, and remains much difference between national cultures throughout the post-1989 period, there are some overall cultural trends affecting these societies.

Some preliminary remarks are necessary. Firstly, while it is precarious to use the broad sense of a common ‘cultural model’ for all former communist societies (from Beck's perspective I would be guilty of ‘methodological nationalism’¹³²), used cautiously the term may provide a useful heuristic. Methodological nationalism gives rise to particular theoretical and methodological difficulties when dealing with post-1989 transformation. Given my focus on cultural integration and in order to show how postwesternization and postnationalism shape the on-going transformation process in postcommunist societies I suggest joining Beck’s ‘methodological cosmopolitanism’ (Beck, 2002). This methodological concept helps me surmount methodological nationalism and build a framework of analysis for the dynamics of

¹³² The term ‘methodological nationalism’ “can be defined as the by explicit or implicit assumptions about the nation-state as the container of social processes and the national order as the key to the understanding of major social, economic and political processes” (Beck, 2001: 182-183).

cultural integration. On this view, the local (that is culturally specific) and the transnational are mutually constitutive. From this perspective development is rather seen in terms of transformation.

This section looks at a cultural integration model which is not to be reduced to a certain nation. As Delanty suggests, “cultural models are embodied in institutional frameworks and are related to particular forms of material life that have evolved over time” (Delanty, 2003c: 15). The mission of ‘belonging’ and ‘becoming’ European takes two main directions in former communist societies: postwestern direction, on the one hand, and postnational direction, on the other. To follow Michnik’s exposition of postcommunism, this part of Europe is facing a great conflict of two spiritual cultures.

One of these cultures says, ‘Let us join Europe’ and respect European standards, while the other says, ‘Let us go back to our national roots’ and build an order according to our national particularity. They are spiritual, rather than political, camps, and they express themselves as a dispute over culture, not politics (Michnik, 1990: 4).

Looking at the cultural core of postcommunist transformations, Sztompka notes that there are mainly three cultural traditions in Eastern Europe: the first one is what he calls a ‘bloc culture’, “based on a philosophy of dependence instead of self-reliance, of all-embracing collectivism and conformity, of rigidity and of intolerance”¹³³; the second is formed by the national culture; and the third one refers to the existence of a Western culture (even if repressed under communism, its main features survived).

The changes in ex-communist societies raise the question of cultural integration in several ways, in particular whether these societies are to become like the rest of Europe or whether they are changing in different ways from the western Europe, or whether they move in a direction of postwestern and postnational integration along with the rest of Europe. An important claim of this chapter is that both at European level and within the individual Eastern European societies we find tendencies towards postwestern and postnational integration, and these apparently opposing trends co-exist at the same time. These integrative trends are especially pronounced around societal identities.

While the final analytical ambition is to examine both models in the context of former communist societies, the analysis will also be dependent on the

¹³³ Boje *et al.*, 1999: 17.

general theoretical understanding of these two directions. When analyzing the process of cultural integration one should consider the dynamic interrelation between four elements: the social agents that are the *carriers* of a societal identity, the social context in which *carriers* apply such ideas, the existing ideas on Europe and the available historical codes for societal identity. These issues can only be answered analytically and this is a key purpose for the development of the cultural integration model.

The postwestern and postnational visions with regard to the cultural integration model will be depicted below. These sections will answer the following questions: What are the specificities of the postwestern and postnational types of cultural integration? And which are the consequences of such specificities on societal identities? May we better understand Eastern European societies by considering that it is going through a double sided integration? That is, on the one hand, systemic integration which includes the adaptation of the EU rules at national level, and, on the other hand, the most obvious change (at societal level), towards becoming increasingly postwestern and postnational. Let us proceed.

3.4.1. Postwestern Integration

Based on Delanty and Rumford's conception of postwestern Europe, it is very tempting to develop the argument of postwestern integration as a *cultural model* in which a postwestern society comes into existence. From the perspective of postwesternization, Eastern Europe is changing at the same time Europe is changing. Postwesternization brings Eastern Europe and Europe closer and not necessarily because of the EU. Against the East-West distinction, Eastern Europe and Europe have become one. The term 'Western' has ceased to divide Europe, civilization, cultures and values. We can no longer speak of Europe as synonym for the West. Particularly the latest enlargement is the evidence that the EU balance of power is moving eastwards. "The enlargement of the EU towards Euroasia (...) will bring with it a reconfiguration of politics and the shaping of a post-western Europe" (Delanty, 2003c: 14). Former communist societies are fully absorbed in the European reality. I suggest that rethinking Eastern Europe along the lines of the postwestern integration model sheds light on the process of change and clarify our understanding of its dynamics. The view of the new postwestern culture as a 'patchwork' of European and local adjustments, in a constant redefinition of meanings may help redefine the

emerging societal identities. Or as Göran Therborn put it, “[a]ny dialogue today on the traditional conception of East and West cannot escape the decisive Cold War transformation of it” (Therborn, 2006: 2).

Linked to postwesternization is the theme of ‘multiple modernities’ (Eisenstadt, 2000; Therborn, 2003; Delanty and Rumford, 2005). The idea of multiple modernities suggests that modernity can no longer be theorized as a singular path of transformation. This understanding of modernity moves away from conceptualizing ‘postcommunism’ as merely a historical intermezzo, where further progress entails a rapprochement with the ‘main pattern’, i.e. the Western model. Moreover, the reality that emerged after the end of the Cold War fails to sustain the ‘convergence’ of the Eastern bloc. These societies should be seen as distinct from one another, with their own specific interpretations of ‘imaginary significations of modernity’ (Castoriadis, 1987). From the perspective of ‘multiple modernities’, each society has its own specificity and its own projects of modernity.

The underlying conception of ‘multiple modernities’ is much more flexible and sensitive to societal transformation than the singular view on modernity. For Eisenstadt, the idea of multiple modernities assumes that “the best way to understand the contemporary world – indeed to explain the history of modernity – is to see it as a story of continual constitution and reconstitution of a multiplicity of cultural programs” (Eisenstadt, 2000: 2). There is not one project of modernity but several and this allows for greater diversity and differentiation among Eastern European societies. Most of all, the perspective of multiple modernities should enable us to see that modernity can no longer be read as a homogeneous progress towards final integration. This makes modernity more open to interpretations. This observation sees modernity as a condition under which conflicts and tensions among social agents are at stake. The concept of ‘universalization’ of societies according to a unique pattern must be rejected in order to elaborate on the idea of postwesternization.

According to Delanty and Rumford, the making of a postwestern Europe will lead to “a reconfiguration and reconstruction of modernities” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 49) where former communist societies will play a major role in shaping them. Delanty and Rumford argue that the “dynamics of fragmentation versus autonomy suggests that Europe is not necessarily becoming more unitary or cohesive” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 26). Apparently, Eastern European countries,

no longer dominated by the West, have started to develop a global and a 'new' orientation towards the east. Seventeen years ago these things were difficult to imagine.

Postwestern integration is not an articulated kind of integration. The idea that Europe is becoming postwestern (Delanty, 2003c, 2006a; Delanty and Rumford, 2005; Therborn, 2006) refers to the encounter between the (former communist) local and national with the European. If I agree to the idea that a postwestern European society may exist or is in the process of formation, then this implies that the model that can explain cultural integration in Eastern Europe is postwestern integration. Postwestern integration can be understood as a reflexive relation between Eastern European societies and Europe. As I will argue in the case of Romania, postwesternization (in the sense of postwestern dynamics of cultural integration) is likely to have rather different impacts upon culturally specific national models. Particular constructions of postwesternization still vary in line with different national environments.

The postwestern dimension of Eastern European societies reflects their dynamics. The obvious transformation of Eastern European societies does not mean some overall cohesion or uniformity. The idea of European modernity is linked to the postwestern integration model. "With the new inter-civilizational encounters, major shifts in modernity occur. This is precisely what is happening today: major social transformations in modernity are leading to a reconfiguration of the European civilizational configuration" (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 43). However difficult it is to reconcile 'post-Eastern' tradition with postwestern forces, postwesternization in Eastern Europe will eventually lead to recognition of the cultural diversity of Europe. There is no doubt that after the downfall of communism, Eastern democracies suddenly found themselves without the Other and in need of new and resurrecting sources of legitimation. In the era of postwesternization these sources allow them to create justifications for embracing other goals than 'we are Western' or 'against communism' and fill in the vacuum of institutions with a postwestern assignment. After reviewing the ways in which cultural integration and postwestern vision on Eastern European transformation are typically associated, next section looks at the emergence of a postnational type of integration.

3.4.2. *Postnational Integration*

I shall situate my analysis of the postnational vision on cultural integration with presumptions about borders, modernity, and reflexivity (Beck *et al.*, 1994). I start by engaging with some of the theoretical debates on postnationalism. To analyse the emerging postnational society in meaningful terms, I have to define what postnational is and elaborate on its role in shaping the current process of transformation. As Curtin argues persuasively, “the ‘post’ in ‘postnational’ is meant to express the idea that democracy is possible beyond the nation-state: what is being left behind in terms of political identity is the link with nationalism in the sense of cultural integration” (Curtin, 1997: 51).

In the most general sense ‘postnational’ is about separating cultural traditions (i.e. nationalist ideology) from political institutions (i.e. constitutional norms). Postnational integration in Habermasian terms is not separated from loyalty towards discursive principles of democracy. ‘Postnational’, then, implies a commitment to the discourse of civil and human rights. Habermas talks explicitly about ‘postnational constellation’ that is a sort of constitutional nationalism where the loyalty is not simply towards a nationalist ideology or a territory, but towards the civic values which are embedded in the constitution and in a shared political culture. Habermas has put this concisely, “the initial impetus to integration in the direction of a postnational society is not provided by the substratum of a supposed ‘European people’ but by the communicative network of a European-wide political public sphere” (Habermas, 1998: 153).

It is useful to distinguish between different aspects of postnationalism: first, the institutional dimension. In the case of Eastern Europe, this dimension of postnationalism comes mainly from being incorporated into the EU and other European normative systems. Indeed, Eastern European countries’ membership to the EU becomes particularly significant within this postnational framework as they will have to meet the demands of becoming a member and submit to regulatory policy making. But there is also a second dimension that has to do with the nature and structure of communities. In the sense, that community issues should be depicted politically in plural rather than singular terms. Furthermore, one should not neglect the transnational linkages between the new member states, increasing mobility, networks and flows enable new forms of identification to develop and point all in a postnational direction. For Deirdre Curtin, “[w]hen one refers to a postnational

context, we must think of the link between the new means of communication offered by cyberspace and the exercise of imagining ‘communities’ where borders are irrelevant” (Curtin, 1997: 60). In other words, ‘postnational’ articulates the idea that “the link implied by nationalism between cultural integration and political integration can be prised open” (Curtin, 1997: 51). The new communication technologies can ease imagination beyond national borders, thus constructing postnational identity. This is potentially the modern way of integrating, leading to imagined communities.

As such, postnationalism has emerged as a response to global and transnational transformations in Europe. As Jo Shaw (1999: 587) has suggested, postnationalism is an attempt to recuperate and rethink some of the central values of nationalism (i.e. the negative sense of exclusion). There is much to suggest that there are enough developments to warrant the label of postnationalism (e.g. the declining significance of the nation-state, the changing approach to interethnic relations and to minority rights). The transition from a communist order to a postnational order brings about the coexistence of the nation-state society with the postnational society. In this light both postnationalism and nationalism can be seen, not as essentially opposed to each other, but as co-existing. Postnationalism expresses the idea of transformation in relation to the nation state because of changes *within* the nation-state.

The question of postnational order cannot be ignored, particularly in the new democratic societies which are constantly threatened by their own past. Indeed, this is what Tismăneanu (2002) illustrates by stating that the threats of postcommunism are part of the Eastern democracy. Tismăneanu sees as relevant the following threat factors that can obstruct the road to an open society in Eastern Europe. The first threat factor follows the Marxist idea that all new societies cannot ignore their origins in terms of habits, mores, visions and mentalities. In other words, ex-communist societies experience the confusion and uncertainty of the reinvention of their politics. “We are witnessing the explosion of a long-obsolete model of liberal democracy that can no longer accommodate our dynamic, complex societies with their sophisticated electorates of vast diversity and highly differentiated interests” (Tismăneanu, 2002: 87). The question is, if this phenomenon is exclusively Eastern European? It does not seem so if one looks at the waves of xenophobic populism in i.e. Austria, Switzerland, and Denmark.

The second threat factor refers to the influence of the past. This argument refers to certain signs of disillusionment such as: intellectual stupor, moral

disarray, frustrations and yearning for the ‘magic saviour’. What was left after 1989 was a cultural chaos in which old precommunist and communist cultural constructs re-emerge often irrationally. With the failure of the communist political culture, political commitments and affiliations are fluid and unstable. Many established values and ‘icons’ have dissipated. Social memory has become discontinuous. There is very little or no public trust and only a vague appreciation of the need for a shared vision of the public good (Tismăneanu 2002). For Martin Palous, “the most important and most dynamic factor in post-totalitarian politics has to do with the way people in postcommunist societies perceive and conceptualize the social reality and political processes they are a part of”¹³⁴. Radical tendencies inherited from communism such as intolerance, exclusiveness, corruption and the search for charismatic leadership still exist in certain countries, including Romania. This tendency is also linked to an increasing nostalgia for the communist regime. This trend is especially exploited by radical nationalist parties, e.g. the Greater Romania Party.

The disintegration and instability of most of the political parties as result of the crisis of values and authority represents the third threat factor. For example, Romanians are regretting not Ceaușescu as a leader, but rather the predictability and the stability of communism, when the party-state was taking care of everything. This threat refers to the fragility of the political class. This is, according to Tismăneanu, the consequence of weak and corrupted political élite that has no definite values, and no clear programmes. An example is the short existence of most political parties in former communist societies¹³⁵.

From a postnational perspective, norms and values are fragmented and the role of state has been weakened. This might led to the formation of postnational societal identities. As it is best depicted in Delanty and Rumford’s work, “national identities are increasingly taking on a postnational form; they are compatible with multiple identities and require identification only with the limited values of the demos” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 105). Moreover, the claims for the necessity of a post-national integration stems from the fact that the nation has been “overcome by a post-national order” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 92). In other words, the nation-state has outlived its role; as a consequence, societal integration has to be conducted

¹³⁴ Palous, 1993: 162-3.

¹³⁵ For example, in Romania from seventy-three parties in 1990 (Roper, 2000: 67), there were only fifty-one (including eighteen ethnic-minority parties) registered as of February 2006 (www.gov.ro).

in a ‘postnational constellation’. After the enlargement Europe “has been troubled by rising xenophobia and cultural backlashes, fuelled by fears of immigration (Holmes, 2000)” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 29). These developments have raised the issues of culture and identity, “as to the cultural form of Europe” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 29).

The fragmenting effects of nationalism lie at the heart of the debate on postnational integration. The first level of such a postnational transformation is recognition. “To recognize the Other is (...) to acknowledge that, while we act in different situations, we all make the same efforts at combining instrumentality and identity” (Touraine, 1998: 172-173). This postnational recognition requires institutional preconditions, “without which the individual would be unable to construct him or herself into a Subject (Touraine, 1998: 173)”. It is thanks to the recognition of diversity and reconciliation of conflicts that Eastern Europe has become postnational.

3.5. Consequences of Cultural Integration on Societal Identities

In this section, I will be concerned with the way societal identities in Eastern Europe relate to the process of cultural integration. The section emphasises the social construction of identity and analyses the consequences of cultural integration on societal identities. My hypothesis is that the driving forces of cultural integration are postwestern and postnational and that identity formation takes place under constant influence from these forces.

Today former communist societies are in a state of change. Societal identities are struggling to find a balance between pre-communist and communist heritage and the realities of the twenty-first century. The question is: what kind of societal identity are these societies adopting? To answer this question, one needs to look at the social imaginary (i.e. the way social agents imagine their project of social change) of these societies. The historical locus of this imaginary has often provided one of the means by which national identity has been constructed. Maybe it is the place to note that to these societies the term ‘Eastern Europe’ is perceived as rather discriminatory, as a loss of identity. The 1989-1990 revolutions rose not only for economic reasons, but also for a historical recognition of their societal identity (Tismăneanu, 1992). There is of course a trend of integration into the European framework of political and economic standardization. But culturally these societies

remain fragmented. For the moment, having escaped the constraints of a false ideological unity, the Eastern European countries are in search of new societal identities.

My analysis refers to the two constructions of societal identity: postwestern and postnational. The first one, postwestern, refers to the construction of a societal identity around the process of reviving the ties to the new East (e.g. Moldova, Ukraine). In their search for a (new) postwestern societal identity, former communist societies have overcome the identity-crisis about the East. This identity has a postwestern vocation even if sometimes the shaping of such an identity seems more a target than a reality. There is a strong link between these two sides of identity (national and postwestern) in that the former has consequences upon the latter. Liberated from Soviet ideology and communist community, it was easy to foresee that the newly Eastern European democratic states would be looking for a societal identity of their own. It is not difficult to foresee from this perspective the emergence of a postwestern identity “embodied in the pluralized cultural models of a societal identity rather than as a supra-national identity or an official EU identity that is in a relation of tension with national identities” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 23). A second reconstruction of societal identity refers to the postnational societal identity. This societal identity is constructed around the normative identification with democratic and constitutional norms which has been suppressed by the communist regimes. Postnational identity is the expression of a ‘legal identity’ (Habermas, 1998) based not on national or cultural traditions but on normative principles of diversity.

The process of cultural integration shatters the boundaries within which all previous and traditional forms of identity were constructed. Indeed postnational integration (in a Habermasian sense) challenges societal identities and their traditional structures. Living in an open society whose boundaries are disappearing, challenges the traditional social structures and forms of collectivity. Postnationalism challenges also the cultural independence of societal identities. A lot of individuals have difficulties in accepting the new postnational identity as determinate. The majority of those who do not win from the resources of economic transformation see postnational integration as an external threat. Cultural integration makes them feel insecure. One issue that concerns many ex-communist societies, including Romania, is whether taking part in the cultural integration process will allow preservation of the

Romanian societal identity and traditional values which make Romanians differentiate from other societies.

An ideal society is one where social cohesion includes all members and gives equal opportunities. The space where societal identities develop contains central values of society. There might be claims that these societies are highly corrupted in a negative sense, but people have experienced that it made sense to bribe for less waiting time at the doctor or to get a better position; then corruption becomes the public norm. As Eisenstadt has written, there is a lack of critical thinking and participation that would help to organize the public space more harmoniously (Eisenstadt, 2001). There is also a lack of self-reflection in their identity, as Giddens (1991) pointed out. This lack of reflection makes identities fragile and not aware of risk and its consequences.

3.5.1. Postwestern Identity

Research into societal identities in ex-communist societies suggest that identities actively drive social change and influences the appearance of new social structures and relationships which reflect the desires and efforts towards what individuals want to become. Individuals today in Eastern Europe want difference, change, and individualization. The meanings of the traditional social structures and the pressure from major groups such as class and nation are forced to withdraw. It might be said that societal identity is moving in a postwestern direction of development. For them culture, ethnicity, nationality and state no longer stigmatise their societal identity. Rather, they are non-compulsory forms of association which individuals choose for themselves.

When analysing the emergence of the postwestern identity, the issue of European identity cannot be avoided. This section makes a distinction between European identity and EU identity. This division is as important as between European integration and Europeanization. Members of Eastern European societies might feel they belong to Europe, but not to the EU. “European identity is not a given or falls from heaven; it is a specific construct in time and space whose content actually changes depending on the social and political context in which it is enacted” (Risse, 2004: 171).

Through a cross-country data¹³⁶ analysis concentrated on several cultural dimensions such as language, religion, and popular culture, David D. Laitin (2000) argues that Eastern European societies share a pan-European identity. This identity is complementary to their national identity. Therefore Laitin concludes that “the incorporation of the East European states into the EU, from a cultural point of view, has a greater potential for the deepening of European integration than for its erosion” (Laitin, 2000: 2). He links this outcome with the idea of postwesternization of European cultural modernity. In his opinion, the tensions of peripheralization will encourage East Europeans to support a deepening of European integration process.

According to Schöpflin, the emergence of an Eastern European identity is “a viable way of re-Europeanizing the area (...) of recovering some of the values, ideals, aspirations, solutions and practices that were eliminated by the Soviet-type systems”¹³⁷. In parallel, Tamás Hofer, from a Hungarian perspective develops a notion of common European identity from the idea of Europe as a single cultural whole, with a diversity of links that even the Cold War years could not dis sever (Hofer 1994). Hofer argues for the Western orientation of Eastern Europeans and for the association of Eastern Europe with Western values and liberal democracy, distinctive from those of Russia. Similarly, Garton Ash highlights on the preservation of “major elements of western traditions (western Christianity, the rule of law, separation of powers, constitutional government and civil society)” (Ash, 1989: 250) although included at different times in Austro-Hungarian, Prussian German and Russian empires.

Postwestern integration involves a very distinct mode of construction of the boundaries of societal identities than simply western. Since an important element in the construction of these identities has been the self-perception of Western society, the making of a postwestern identity is linked to reconfiguration of politics after the end of the Cold War. The major issue here is not how much Eastern European countries have caught-up with the West, but the impact of the centre-periphery relations on their societal identities. From a postwestern perspective, enlargement means a major transformation not only for Eastern Europe (which can not be viewed as a periphery any longer), but for Europe as a whole. With the assimilation of

¹³⁶ The cross country data for language and religion are based on surveys conducted by the International Social Survey Program (ISSP); full details are available at <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu>.

¹³⁷ quoted in Neumann, 1993: 354.

Eastern Europe into the EU, it has become more problematical to preserve the project of a 'Fortress Europe' (Delanty, 2000b).

The end of the East-West division has brought about a rethinking of former communist relations to the East and of their own role in the world (i.e. the transatlantic relations). With the reopening of the traditional Eastern border, Eastern Europe has experienced a new stance of openness, this time towards the new East and the global. However, it has not always been an easy task to reconcile the changes produced by the new conditions of openness with the internal cultural traditions (i.e. nationalism). Anxieties, hesitant approaches, ambivalence, and antinomies have also featured the making of a postwestern societal identity in the former East.

The postwestern articulation of the societal identity conveys itself within, and beyond national identities. The assimilation of Eastern Europe into the EU requires recognition of difference (Habermas 1998). According to Thomas Risse (2004), there are three ways of conceptualizing the relationship between European identity and other identities. The first way is to conceptualize this relationship as *nested*, "conceived of as concentric circles, or Russian Matruska dolls, one inside the next" (Risse, 2004: 168). My identity as a Romanian is nested in a national one which is nested in my European one. Then Risse suggests that identities can be *cross-cutting*; this means that members of one identity group can be member of another identity group. The last way, is represented by the *marble cake* model of multiple identities. This model refers to the fact that "various components of an individual's identity cannot be neatly separated on different levels"¹³⁸.

The European dimension of various societal identities in Eastern Europe is to be seen in the competing conceptions of Europe and identity present in the political discourses or within their political cultures. It is these cultural and political dynamics created by integration that allow changes in the societal identity, even if this identity is rooted in collective memory and a self-defined community. Delanty's idea that societies are being converted into more and more diversified and less and less territorialized entities is also valid in the case of former communist societies.

National identities

are becoming more decentred, liquid and reflexive in their awareness of their limits, and through societal cross-fertilisation more and more mixed. The European space has grown to the extent that it is no longer possible to say what is

¹³⁸ Risse, 2004: 168.

national and what is European. In Europe today, there is no national identity that exists on the level of a simple collective identity, i.e., an identity that is underpinned by a particular social group. All national identities are becoming more like societal identities, that is, broadly defined cultural categories (Delanty 2003a: 78).

The relationship between the former communist nations – partly constructed and imagined - and Europe is much more complex than in perspectives that see it as based on the European market. One example is Mary Fulbrook (1992: 10) who imagines a possible scenario according to which postsoviet national identities would be transformed into a European identity. In this sense, identity refers rather to aspirations and images. In the context of Eastern European societies, Europe is a real space where they have always belonged to but European identity is imaginary, found only at the level of ideal. The ideal of a postwestern identity leaves enough room for optimistic assumptions. By looking too much at the differences between the old and new Europe, one runs the risk of making unclear the fact that the basis of their societal identities is still European. In many ways Eastern European countries regard themselves as the preserver of the traditional European culture.

According to Castells, there is no European identity (Castells, 1998: 353). He adds though, that European identity “could be built, not in contradiction, but complementary to national, regional, and local identities” (Castells, 1998: 353). Castells concludes, however, that “European unification, in a long term perspective, requires European identity” (Castells, 1998: 353). Likewise, Eder (2001) sees the search for a European identity as “an example of the attempt to create a common concern out of the interest-based relations of citizens” (Eder, 2001: 231). The problem with constructing a unified notion of European identity comes from the lack of cultural integration that could determine the claim for dealing with issues of identity. For Eder, this “explains why a common language has been so important in the construction of national identities” (Eder, 2001: 231). In the context of European integration, though, a common culture cannot function as an integrating mechanism, since a common language is missing. The issue of the enlargement has led to the innovation of the notion of ‘symbolic borders’ (Eder, 2001: 232).

To summarise the argument so far, the notion of postwestern identity has emerged after the end of the Cold War both in the former East and West and it has involved a rethinking of the relations between Eastern Europe and the new East. This has contributed to a major shift in the centre of gravity of Europe and in the centre-

periphery relations. At the same time, the new conditions of openness have redefined the new societal identities by reference to the global. One might go so far to suggest that the meaningful construction of a new kind of postwestern governance has been a means to exert influence on the global and regional level, but also a way to accomplish recognition – and thereby escape the complex of inferiority.

3.5.2. *Postnational Identity*

My analysis will refer to a specific context, the rise of a postnational society. A sociological insight into Eastern European societies shows that transformations caused by cultural integration have a fundamental impact on societal identities. “Society appears as incessant, perpetual movement (...) any fact turns out to be an event; any agent resolves into action; any state is only a phase in an ongoing process” (Sztompka, 1993: 190, 232). The dynamics of postnational identity in this context can be better understood by Habermas’s characterization of identity. To follow Delanty and Rumford’s exposition of Habermas’ argument, “the identity of a ‘postnational’ society can be based only on cultural forms of commonality that accept certain basic principles – e.g. procedural rules for conflict resolution, communicative solutions, and the limited patriotism of an identification with the constitution (a ‘constitutional patriotism’) – rather than on territory, cultural heritage or the state” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 55-56). The introduction of postnational identity is closely related to the division between cultural and political identities. The term ‘postnational identity’ is meant to express not only the partition from the nation-state, but it also implies a more normative notion of society than implied by traditional social theory.

Postnational integration is strengthening the civic dimension of societal identities. Eastern European societies cannot simply exist on the basis of cultural politics of ethnicity or politics of national patriotism. Following Delanty, I argue that there are three postnational kinds of governance at work in Eastern Europe: regulatory policy making; new networks of communication; and discourses of human and minority rights. Unlike in the past when nationalism prevailed, “today it is forced to live in a world in which many identities exist” (Delanty, 2000a: 144). Common denominators which smooth the progress of postnational integration include an enforced civil society, human rights, and democratic values. For instance, Romanian societal identity since the collapse of the communism has moved from nationalism to a diversity of forms of identity and to new forms of civic collectivity.

One could also say that from the rise of communism in Europe till today's nationalistic orientations in European societies, identity has been built on fear and denial of the Other. The 'mécontentement' of the present, this modern wish of always planning for better living, for the future comes also from denigrating the present. Communism during its existence in Eastern Europe has tried to completely restructure identities and convert them according to a machiavellic plan; to reiterate this, "communism's ambition was to seize the hinterland and build steel towns from nothingness, inhabited by a new breed of Homo Sovieticus" (Joppke, 1996: 20). However, cultural traditions and nationalist ideology have been put into question after the end of the communist rule. The postnational perspective would argue that cultural traditions cannot survive the postcommunist condition of Europe.

This is related to Cederman's position (2000). Cederman's constructivist perspective on the process of identity-formation entails manipulation of cultural symbols. Cederman centres his analysis on the notion of 'bounded integration'. 'Bounded integration' emphasizes the 'staying power of nationalism' (Cederman, 2000: 14) and "explains *why* a corporate identity is indeed unlikely to form on the supranational level" (Cederman, 2000: 27). His assumption is that "the modern nation constitutes an abstractly and categorically constituted 'imagined community'"¹³⁹. Even 'imagined', national identities "take on an objective character often quite resistant to change" (Cederman, 2000: 14). Cederman's constructivist approach to political identities concentrates on the demos debate, even if, in principle, his 'bounded integration' concept does not leave out the possibility of identities being "bounded and 'sticky' without being based on ethnic principles" (Cederman, 2000: 21).

For Joppke, the postcommunist problematique is to redraw state boundaries so that they include historical nations. However, such an assessment ignores two facts. The first is that not only Eastern European countries are continually changing but Europe is also under transformation (Wagner's concept of 'double synchronicity' describes best these dynamics). Or as Outhwaite and Ray applied the idea, 'we are all postcommunis now' in the sense that the end of communism affects us all. The second fact is the role of their history: coming into terms with the past, as we shall discuss later, is one of the main characteristics of postcommunism (see also Sakwa, 1999: 4). Their societal identity has suffered

¹³⁹ Cederman, 2000: 14.

essential conversions since 1989. Identity-building has been as much conditioned by the legacy of communism as by the legacy of precommunist nationhood, but also by identification with democratic norms that are not longer confined to the nation-state. For instance, human and minority rights are no longer left up to the nation-state issue in these societies, but they have moved beyond the nation-state. This also implies that postnational identity “is compatible with multi-identities, since constitutional patriotism requires identification only with normative principles of argumentation” (Delanty, 2000a: 115).

The 1989 Revolutions constitute the most dramatic, and presumably the most successful attempt in contemporary history to put into practice on a macro-societal scale the postnational vision of Europe. Central to these events were the ideal of a united Europe and the emancipation of eastern societies from the restraints of traditional political and cultural communist authority. Such a process required several dimensions: first, reflexivity; second, dynamic re-construction of society. This integration encouraged also a strong participation of all members of society in the creation of social and political order. As Sakwa put it, “postcommunism is a multifaceted, heterogeneous phenomenon shot through with paradoxes while at the same time revealing the underlying paradigmatic shifts, not only in theory but also in reality, of our times”¹⁴⁰.

3.6. Concluding Remarks on the Cultural Integration Model

The above propositions have drawn attention to those features of cultural integration that, I believe, have emerged lately in Eastern European societies. As a constructivist process, cultural integration can be seen as a form of “reflexive creation in which the entire process produces its very own terms” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 12). Understanding the complexity of the process, the link with the recent as well as with the more distant history of these societies, awareness of the open-endedness of transformation as well as of its irregular path in different countries should all add to a more partial and constructivist analysis of what is taking place in Eastern Europe. Cultural integration in Eastern European societies does not refer to cultural uniformity. The contemporary postwestern and postnational trends of cultural integration augment cultural pluralization and make it particularly important to

¹⁴⁰ Sakwa, 1999: 7.

develop the ability to accept the Other and to co-operate across national and cultural borders. The question is: can the two models co-exist? The answer is yes. Postwestern and postnational forms of integration are not exclusive but intertwined. A distinction should be made at this point: postwestern and postnational are theoretical perspectives and not daily terms that social agents operate with. These perspectives are most likely unknown to the social agents. My argument has been that postwestern and postnational integration did not entail the disappearance of nationalism and westernization.

The chapter has also argued that it is useful to analyse Eastern European transformation from a constructivist perspective. Social constructivism provides an appealing framework as it consents to make connections between Europeanization and cultural integration by looking at the consequential effects on societal identities. Constructivism places much more emphasis on ideational factors than other theories of integration. However, it is worth writing that no theory can fully confine the complexity of Eastern European societies. These societies remain indebted to their past ‘social imaginaries’ and orientations that have developed after the revolutions of 1989. As Tismăneanu positively noted, “the good news is that the ongoing transitions take place simultaneously with the reinvention of Europe, and that the ideal of a united Europe is one of the most contagious and magnetic models these countries have ever dealt with” (Tismăneanu, 2002: 96).

Finally the chapter looked at the cultural integration model and its implications for the societal identities. Cultural integration is reinforcing domestic conditions, national cultures, traditions, and politics, but is also changing them. Another important consequence of cultural integration is that Eastern European countries are being brought into new relations with each other and with Europe, creating new alliances and enmities, and recreating themselves under the new context. All in all ex-communist societies have witnessed major changes in their societal identities. These changes remain indebted both to their past and orientations that have developed after the revolutions of 1989, but also to wider transformations (i.e. globalization). The question is whether the traditional ethnic, national and cultural boundaries of identity can be expanded without losing the cultural features of their national communities. The conclusion is that no mechanistic answer is possible. The more fragmentary and fluid societies become the more difficult it is to grasp their realities and fit them into models.

The attempt to create the so-called cultural integration model is an effort to conceptualize transformation beyond national boundaries of the Eastern European societies. It is also an attempt to begin to challenge existing conceptions. The framework of cultural integration developed in this chapter goes beyond the idea of postcommunism in the sense of cultural identification with communism. As such cultural integration is a model applicable to the whole of Europe. Whereas postnational dynamics of integration refer to, broadly, identification with transnational normative principles, postwestern dynamics suggest that Europe's territorial borders have started to lose their significance internally and externally. These trends co-exist with more traditional tendencies (Western and nationalist). Of course, much of what I have proposed has hypothetic nature and must be documented in the case-study on the Romanian society. As Bauman (1994) argues, it is still too early to produce ultimate conclusions since the main feature of these transformations is open-endedness.

The preceding chapter has dealt with the depiction of a cultural integration model. Although I did not make an explicit argument about linking this model to the specifics of a country's societal dynamics transformation, my discussion implied that two elements of cultural integration were formative: postwestern and postnational integration. The framework I offer to analyse these transformations cease to characterise Europe in terms of the 'East' and 'West'; indeed its applicability to Romania in the next chapter is already diminishing the usability of traditional approaches to integration. Nevertheless, I believe the model I presented is appropriate to analyzing cultural integration in Europe. In what follows I will apply the cultural integration model to the case-study of Romania.

4. Case-Study: Romania and Cultural Integration

The Forces of Postwesternization and Postnationalism

Moving from the cultural integration model elaborated in the previous chapter, this chapter offers a specific country perspective on the process of transformation as a concrete operationalization of the model. Based on the theoretical framework, I will interpret developments in Romania, trying to depict the internal dynamics of cultural integration. In the case of Romania mainly two forces of cultural integration have come forward after the swift demise of communism. Emerged from the new relation between Romania and Europe, these forces may be termed ‘postwestern’ and ‘postnational’.

Political events will serve as the empiric basis for this case-study. It is against this background that broad trends of cultural and social development will be measured. What makes political elites central to the process of reorganization is their intention to reconstruct a new societal order (as ‘initiators’ of the project) and their key-role in decision-making that goes beyond an existing societal configuration. As the ‘clock of the citizen’ Dahrendorf (1990) lagged behind the institutional development, the adaptation to the process of self-identification with Europe proved rather problematic. The rather narrow link between Romania’s internal dynamics, Europe’s transformations and cultural integration in previous literature on Romania leads me to the central purpose of this chapter. That is the concern with situating the Romanian process of cultural integration within the context of a postwestern and postnational Europe and evaluate its consequences for Romanian societal identity. I argue that Romania is integrating itself into a European order, which is itself undergoing major transformation. These transformations, subject of intense academic debate (Delanty, 2003c, 2006a; Delanty and Rumford, 2005; Outhwaite and Ray, 2005; Rumford, 2006a), I argue, are crucial in shaping Romanian society and identity. By looking at Romania from a cultural integration perspective the relationship between Romania and Europe gets a different dynamic than simply defining Romania in terms of a (linear) process towards EU membership.

Romania is in a continuous process of reconstruction. Its reconstructed nature implies that Romanian society can no longer be conceived in terms of the 'East'. Moreover, this reconstruction can not be restricted to EU integration or Europeanization (understood as convergence in terms of harmonization, politicization, and institutionalization). Debates have until recently been dominated by Romania's undergoing transition to the Western European model after the period of communism (Ionescu, 1992; Pasti, 1997; Stan, 1997; Negrescu, 2000; Smith, 2001; Light and Phinnemore, 2001; Jackson, 2001; Cernat, 2002). In fact, it is no longer possible to define Romania exclusively in terms of transition and adaptation to Western political, economic, and legal institutions. Rather, it is argued that Romania's transformation can only be identified within the context of postwesternization and postnationalism. As they relate to Europe as a whole, these open-ended processes go beyond EU integration and Europeanization.

My overall purpose in this chapter is to interpret the process of cultural integration from a social theory perspective. When looking at cultural integration from this perspective I refer to what F. Peter Wagner (2002: 233) calls the 'larger societal problematic'. That is I try to look beyond the mere problems of transition from a state-led command economy to a free market economy – the subject of 'mainstream' studies of Romania – and seek instead to grasp Romania's distinct experience with postwesternization and postnationalism. Linked to this problematic is the process of *societal identity-formation*. In a theorization of which I share the main lines, Wagner states that "the consequences of historical-structural, international, and regional context of 'post-state socialism' therefore present, in each case, an *Eigendynamik* grounded in the challenge to conceive and construct a *new societal identity*" (Wagner, 2004: 59). *Eigendynamik* is understood here as the unique process of change that characterises societal identity formation in the Romanian case as opposed to the "linear" understanding usually applied in transition studies. Referring to Anderson's statement that "communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined"¹⁴¹, I take this *new societal identity* as an important element in the process of cultural integration, intrinsically related and constructed by the 'imagined community', understood as the social space shared by the majority of individuals from which social reality emerges.

¹⁴¹ Anderson, 1983: 6.

That is, the identity that provides meaning to the real existence of its social carriers and which exercises demands and constraints on each member of society.

In order to study how the new societal identity is being shaped by cultural integration, this chapter proposes – as mentioned - to focus on how Romania is responding to the process of transformation of Europe and at the same time how Romania is dealing with the reorganization of its own societal order. Cultural integration is highly complex as it operates on multiple levels and involves a *double dynamic*: both reorganization of the existing societal order and its integration into the wider European context which itself is under transformation. This main idea helps us examine the particularities of the Romanian case, but also to place Romania in a wider European context of transformations. This chapter looks at the process of societal identity-formation as carried out by social agents in the Romanian national context.

Romania is an example of society where the contemporary debate on Europe is in many ways defined by ideas, debates and processes that antedate current events. Thus, I argue that Romania's transformation is best understood when studied from a long historical-sociological perspective. History is a necessary precondition but not sufficient to explain cultural integration in present-day Romania. History will serve as a guideline, rather than amounting to a culturally deterministic assumption for the future¹⁴². The purpose of the historical-sociological preamble is not to offer an alternative account of Romanian historiography. Rather it looks at a partial reinterpretation of the dominant features of modernization in order to search for a Romanian specificity, by focusing on particularities rather than on commonalities with Western modernization.

In this chapter, I study Romania's political transformation, which can reveal much about a society's self-image and political culture. After examining precommunist and communist stages of political transformation, I will argue that after the end of communism Romania's development is less determined by a 'classic'

¹⁴² In this sense, my analysis does not use 'path dependence' theory to explain Romania's transformation and does not consider Romania's historical 'path' as a key condition for change. In other words, I do not explain fundamental changes within Romanian society by using arguments about 'path dependence' and the constraining power of context. In my opinion, the 'path dependence' argument preserves historical determinism at the expense of admitting the creation of new forms of change and the prospects for fundamental transformation (only accepted as opening new paths of transformation). Thus, I consider 'path dependence' only partly satisfactory and ultimately self-negating for the purpose of this case-study.

nationalist-Westernization logic of integration; Romania's transformation is better understood through the ideas of postwesternization and postnationalism.

The analysis is inspired by the latest developments in Europe as well as by theoretical and empirical research on Romania (Srubar, 1994; Van Zon, 1994; Illner, 1999; Wagner, 2002, 2004; and Blokker, 2004). In particular, the ideas expressed by F. Peter Wagner on the transformation in Romania have been useful in this regard. Wagner has argued that there is no single path of development and that the thesis of '*double synchronicity*' of the Eastern transformation is more appropriate than what has been termed 'transitology'. While I concur with F. Peter Wagner's thesis, in this chapter I support a different interpretation of these transformations, namely that Romanian society has to reconstruct itself to adjust to a postwestern and postnational Europe which is itself under 'great transformation' (Polanyi, 1944) in the wider context of modernity. Europe is redefining itself in a global era with all its influences and implication for the new societal identity.

There are five inter-related arguments that will be developed in my case-study. First, I argue that the case of Romania can only be viewed as a challenge to existing studies of post- 1989 transformation. As the second argument, I will advance the thesis that the roots of today's dynamics of cultural integration can be traced back to the Romanian past, including the communist era. According to this thesis, the process of reorganization caused by social agents is on-going and is influenced by social agents' already existing understandings. This is not separated from the wider situational context which might need re-adjustment based on a rethinking of no longer meaningful patterns. Third, I will show how the external dynamics of the process of cultural integration encounter internal dynamics in postcommunist Romania and explore the consequences of this encounter on the Romanian *societal identity*. Fourth, I argue that looking at cultural integration from a postnational and postwestern perspective provides a unique opportunity to see Romania 'in the making'. To illustrate this I will analyse a number of concrete examples. Applying the cultural integration approach places the relationship between Romania and the EU in a different light. Cultural integration makes Romania less separate from the rest of Europe. Finally, and based on the preceding four points, it is argued that cultural integration can better explain the complex nature of post-1989 transformation. I demonstrate the usefulness of cultural integration and argue thus that the approach offers a relevant lens to analyse European transformations.

This chapter attempts to add to the debate on what constitutes the *new societal identity* by examining the complexities and the contradictions inherent to the process of transformation. The following case-study argues that cultural integration has significantly reshaped national identity during the transformation years after communism in Romania. To sustain this argument the first part of the case-study develops the *prerequisites* for cultural integration in Romanian history since the construction of the Romanian nation state. The second part of the case study investigates the various forms of cultural integration that have emerged after 1989 in the Romanian society (i.e. postwestern and postnational). The third part considers the effects of cultural integration on the Romanian societal identity. Taking all these developments together the concluding section of the chapter reflects on the future of cultural integration in Romania.

As will be unveiled below, the case-study on Romania asks for an accurate re-evaluation of the conceptions and frameworks that have insofar been used in the study of both Europeanization and postcommunist transformation. Against the main view of the Eastern European transformation as a process of transition, the present analysis draws attention to the fundamental *reconstruction* problematic that the Romanian society has been faced with since the end of communism. If this is sustained, it has wider implications for the analysis of Europe and asks for a more general perspective on the process of integration. As this case-study will demonstrate, without taking cultural integration as a societal problematic, with its indigenous and external context, no rewarding explanation of the forces, dynamics, and outcome of cultural integration can be attained. Thus, as argued in the previous chapters, the analysis of cultural integration demands an analytical framework that goes beyond classical approaches to the study of integration and Europeanization.

4.1. Second Thoughts on Transformation

The fall of communism, which also implicitly meant the failure of the communist type of societal organization, has created a certain ‘condition of openness’ (Wagner, 2002: 370). What is at stake in Romania is not only the process of transition as such but the whole reconstruction of the Romanian society and its implications for the societal identities. As noted in Chapter 3, section 3.1.4. on *Postcommunism*, the importance attached to transition in explaining the process of cultural integration in Eastern European societies is generally on the decline. There has been an active

debate about the significance of transition, but those who defend the continued usefulness of transitology usually do not challenge the idea of ‘declining significance’ (Offe, 1991; Sztompka, 1992; Mason, 1996; Linz and Stepan, 1996).

Much of the previous literature on Romania has looked at the problems of making a political transition to democracy and an economic transition to market economy (e.g. Light and Phinnemore, 2001). The fundamental premise is that the ‘democratic market society’ is ‘universally applicable’ (Bönker *et al.*, 2002). This perspective has been subject to rising criticism, especially on the basis of its central theoretical assumptions (i.e. teleology and singularity). Recently, critics (Wagner, 2002; Borinksi and Wagner, 2002) have focused on the a-historical nature of these approaches (i.e. integration, Europeanization, social change theories), as they ignore the diversity in historical-institutional legacies. This critique constitutes my main point of departure in the analysis of Romania’s particularism and divergence in the process of transformation.

Romania has been referred to in transition studies as a “problem case”, and rather a negative example for the other Eastern European societies. According to Wagner (2004), a number of problems in the case of Romania threaten to undermine the transition studies framework. In particular, these problems include social tensions, partly due to increasing inequality within the Romanian society and massive migration to the cities, but is also linked to corruption, insufficient public services and rising unemployment as thousands of workers have been laid off in the reform of the state-owned sector, while agriculture still displays huge structural under-employment. Problems which to some extent can be found in all former communist countries, but which are particularly present in Romania. Secondly, the transition studies framework is not an adequate approach in the case of Romania due to the precarious nature of Romania’s political development after 1989 and its internal dynamics, including the role of politics and its constructions. Moreover, the transition framework cannot grasp the nature of a conflictual society – and the Romanian society is highly conflictual today. On the one hand a desire to ‘go postwestern’ and integrate into the new European context, and on the other, traditional nationalism. Again, counter acting forces which are present in all the transforming societies, but which are notably manifest in Romania.

As already mentioned in Chapter 2 (sections 2.1. and 2.2.), existing approaches to integration need to be enhanced as they fail to fully capture the unique

characteristics of former communist societies. Since these societies' transformations are multi-dimensional processes, created by entangled components (political, economic, social and cultural) cultural integration cannot avoid considering them as mutually conditioning both in theory and in the empirical world. According to Illner, "there are no such things as purely 'economic', 'constitutional', 'political' or 'social and cultural' transformations, the real process is always multidimensional – sociocultural, economic and political at the same time" (Illner, 1996: 158). While I agreed in my theoretical analysis that these components can be separated analytically, empirically they are mutually supporting for the simple reason that they occur at the same time and are parts of the same transformation process.

I will give attention to the societal changes and connect them to the construction of the *new societal identity*, thereby attaching the Romanian process of transformation to the theoretical framework of cultural integration. One should keep in mind this framework as a central part of the general argument. In view of these considerations and in the light of the cultural integration process today, a *social constructivist* approach seems an appropriate choice. As Wagner has pointed out, "in sustaining the West as a model of development, the transition framework refuses to reflect upon its own categories, upholds an East/West divide, and is therefore unable to integrate the former East into the new, post-Communist European, international, and global context(s)" (Wagner, 2004: 52).

At this point I need to make an additional note on the so-called 'social agents' as major carrier of societal transformation. What is meant by 'social agents'? In the case of Romania, social agents refer to a group of decision-makers whose specific understandings on the reconstruction of the new societal order play a determinant role. Put even more simply, social agents have the ability to inflict their views on transformation. For example, in precommunist Romania social agents had an important role in putting forward the project of creating Greater Romania, but also in imposing their views on modernization in Romania. As to communist period, the social agents belonging to *nomenklatura* adapted well Romania to the new conditions according to their own understanding of modernization. Likewise, in present Romania political groups – who often have their roots in the communist regime - influence the forces and dynamics of transformation thus making a contribution to the construction of a new societal order. In Romania the newly created institutions "had

to be integrated into a new ‘self-understanding’ of the actors (people) involved”¹⁴³. According to Borinski and Wagner, “[i]t is in this dynamic that we find, among other things, the roots of the return of ‘history’, i.e. nationalism, as a powerful means of self-clarification” (Borinski and Wagner, 2002: 371). Difficulties in promoting reforms and democratic culture were exacerbated by conflict over social agents’ understandings of transformation. Conflict came about over the rhythm of reforms, their aims and the adoption of the social model and societal identity for Romanians.

By choosing Romania as a case-study, one is theoretically challenged. As pointed out, Romania is rather the exception than the rule. What then explains my choosing Romania as case-study? Firstly, Romania is one of the least known and least researched societies from Eastern Europe. Yet, with Romanian accession to the EU in the near future, the need to enlarge understanding of its particularities will increase. Not least because Romania, due to its size, will be a relatively large player in the EU’s institutional setup (in any case, the largest of the new coming member states after Poland). Secondly, Romania has been perceived at as a ‘hard case’ (Borinski and Wagner, 2002). According to Wagner, Romania "has become something like a special case in the field of transition studies" enjoying a “position of peripheral specialization” (Wagner, 2002: 219). Thirdly, Romania has displayed various peculiarities (such as the violence used to get rid of the totalitarian regime or the election and re-election of old communists to lead the country) and the large difficulties in complying with EU membership conditions. Last but not least, since it is my native country, and having experienced the Romanian communist society till the age of fourteen, I find Romania to be of particular interest, because I hope to make Romania’s problematic post-1989 development more accessible and more comprehensible for the outside observer.

F. Peter Wagner’s recent work examines Romania and the process of transformation after 1989 in two prolific studies, *‘EU, NATO and Romania: Beyond “Sultanism”* (2002) and *Sonderweg Romania?* (2004). These studies are centrally concerned with the links between integration, Romanian society and postcommunist transformation. The first article, *‘EU, NATO and Romania: Beyond ‘Sultanism’*, sheds light on the complex interaction between the external pressure on Romania and the bases of the Romanian domestic politics. Taking his concept of ‘Sultanistic regime’ from Linz and Stepan (1996), Wagner’s work explores the reasons for

¹⁴³ Borinski and Wagner, 2002: 371.

Romania's failure in transition politics and policies through analysing the reinvention of politics after communism and the role of the external forces in these changes. It is the ambiguity of such a problematic case as Romania that makes Wagner re-examine the conceptions and frameworks that have been used in the analysis of the process of change in postcommunist societies.

Wagner questions openly the modernization perspective that has dominated the contemporary debate on Romania.

Modernity and modernization are not anymore, if they ever truly were, self-understood, nonproblematic notions, they themselves have become highly problematic, the centre of concern and investigation... Western scholarship has found in Romania an exemplary test-case for the analysis of the development of underdevelopment, or the development of a periphery (Wagner, 2004: 58-59).

Particularly, Wagner questions the Western model of political and economic development, arguing for a reinterpretation of some fundamental assumptions in transition studies. This also means that the categories by which Romania has been analysed are rather tricky. Wagner believes that the case of Romania "challenges the basic idea behind transition studies: the *idea* of a transition" (Wagner, 2004: 51), that is a linear movement from a stage *A* (communism) to a stage *B* (Western model of development), which itself is under profound transformation. Wagner suggests instead an alternative transitional framework based on the concept of '*double synchronicity*' to define the dynamics of transformation.

The present case-study on Romania will proceed as follows: I will start with a historical-sociological analysis of the path taken by Romanian society in the process of cultural integration; this path can be summed up chronologically in a precommunist and a communist Romania that can be considered as prerequisites to Romania's transformation. Subsequently, the precommunist period can be divided in terms of four great themes: the construction of the modern Romanian nation-state; the early process of integration into Europe; the emergence of nationalism; and civil society. Likewise, the depiction of the communist period for analytical purposes can be subdivided into four elements: the emergence of Romanian communism; the nature of Romanian communism; the communist version of Romanian nationalism, and civil society in communist Romania. These highlighted elements of Romania's early modernisation then serve as points of reference when – in the second part of the case study – I analyse the transformation of contemporary Romania emphasizing the postwestern and postnational aspects of this development. By so doing, I want to

stress upon the challenging nature of integration as such, as well as contest the hypothesis of convergence often applied by conventional transition studies.

4.2. Historical Background of Romania's Transformation: Precommunist Society

Even though ideas concerning the unification of Romanians within one state autonomous from foreign rule were circulating in the eighteenth century, these ideas became a well defined political project only in the first half of the nineteenth century. In the course of the suppression of the Romanian principalities by the Ottoman and Habsburg Empire, ideational currents like humanism, the Enlightenment and liberalism inspired political writers to form a vision of independence and unification of the Romanian principalities against foreign dominance. The young generation (the so-called 'pașoptiști') stemming from the middle and lower strata of the native nobility (i.e. the liberal nationalists), often educated abroad, formed the major intellectual and political force in the Revolution of 1848. Their nationalist and liberal projects built around modern ideas of national consciousness, self-rule, and a common history and culture (Georgescu, 1971: 51-3) was shared by higher layers of nobility and the economic bourgeoisie (i.e. the liberal conservatives).

The relatively limited success of these ideas can partly be explained by the insignificant number of representatives of this social group in the Romanian principalities and by the foreign provenience of the middle capitalist classes who sought to maintain their privileges and oppose any reform (i.e. the conservatives who were against the project of social and political change). Hence in Romania liberalist ideas were mainly defended by two major political groups, the Walachian and Moldavian National Parties (*partida națională*). These Parties represented the upper and middle layers of indigenous nobility's ideas of independence from Ottoman rule, institutionalization of local political power in state structures, and the formation of the Romanian nation-state.

4.2.1. The Construction of the Modern Romanian Nation-state

The Romanian nation state as it exists today is the result of a 'complex construct',¹⁴⁴ that evolved in three stages. In the first stage, the principalities of Walachia and

¹⁴⁴ Wagner, 2002: 222.

Moldavia secured their autonomy and united (1859). In the 1860s the Romanian nation state took the name of *Romania*, settled its capital in Bucharest, and adopted a new Constitution proclaiming Romania a constitutional monarchy. Romania's independence from the Ottoman Empire was recognized by the Treaty of Berlin (1878).

During this first phase, two political parties were formed, which would play important roles in Romanian politics up until 1914: the National Liberal Party (*Partidul Național Liberal*) which represented the bureaucrats, the urban bourgeoisie, and the capitalist middle class¹⁴⁵; and the Conservative Party (*Partidul Conservator*) which represented the antireform landowners¹⁴⁶. By promoting the national idea of sovereignty as well as wider universalist ideas such as Western-type institutionalization and social equality, the Liberal Party became the political voice of the peasants. Likewise, the Conservative Party, guarding the economic interests of upper nobility, did so by calling upon national traditions and by reference to the newly created (not least 'invented') national identity. Their culturalist doctrine should not be read as antiwestern, though. Its western educated leaders associated with a modern-style conservative doctrine, favouring the solid synchronization with the Western model while at the same time preserving national particularities¹⁴⁷. Already at this early stage, one observes the contours of the institutional and ideological pattern of modernization that led to the founding and strengthening of an independent nation-state.

The second stage in the construction of modern Romania was the creation of the Greater Romania Union (*România Mare*) in 1918. The Old Kingdom (Moldavia and Walachia) was merged with Transylvania, Bukovina, and eastern part of Banat (all from the Habsburg Empire) and Bessarabia, annexed from Russia. The international treaties, which reconfigured large parts of Europe after the First World War, acknowledged the unification of these provinces into one single state. Greater Romania was founded on the idea of a union of all ethnic Romanians. In this sense, related to the German concept of nation based on ethnicity, history and culture. On the other hand, the founders of the Romanian state preferred the French model, a highly centralized political and administrative system with little consideration of

¹⁴⁵ See also Rădulescu, 1998.

¹⁴⁶ Hitchins, 1994: 22, 92; Iacob, 1995: 228-39.

¹⁴⁷ Călinescu, 1988: 352-3.

cultural as well as the remaining ethnic diversity between the different composing parts. Moreover, the new state comprised four regions that had for a long time been politically separate. This, as I shall demonstrate in a later section, would eventually have abiding effects on the socio-cultural orientation of the Romanian society. Not least challenging the meaning of national identity.

The third and so far final stage in modern Romania's geographic genesis coincides with the end of the Second World War. Bessarabia (present-day Republic of Moldova) and Northern Bukovina became part of the Soviet Union while a part of Dobrogea was lost to Bulgaria¹⁴⁸.

Modern Romania – like other South-Eastern European states – has mainly been shaped on the basis of an ethnic principle, but also historical and geopolitical criteria have reigned. Hence, the symbol of the historical space 'Dacia' – dating back to the Roman Empire - and the Romanian language (derived from Latin and hence distinct in this otherwise Slavic corner of Europe) has continuously taken up a prominent place in the nation building discourse.

A note should be made on the features that link the just presented premise to the analytical part on post-1989 transformation and to the model of cultural integration. Firstly, one can observe the diversity of large groups of territorially concentrated minorities, which will challenge the national idea and the answer to the remaining question 'what does it mean to be a Romanian'. This would, as we shall later see, lead to the emergence of Romanian nationalism. Secondly, in terms of identity, from this period Romania inherited weak ethnic identities. With these features of nation building in mind, in the next premise of my analysis I will look at the emergence of early nationalism in the Romanian public discourse. In the following, I will avoid an exhaustive chronological history of institution building¹⁴⁹, looking instead at the autochthonous understandings of reconstructing the Romanian modern society.

¹⁴⁸ As a result of the second Balkan War, Bulgaria ceded (1913) Southern Dobrogea to Romania. The Treaty of Neuilly, signed in 1919 between Bulgaria and the Allies of World War I, gave all of Dobrogea to Romania. In 1940, however, the German-imposed Treaty of Craiova forced Romania to transfer Southern Dobrogea to Bulgaria.

¹⁴⁹ For a detailed history of institutions in nineteenth century Romania see Hitchins, 1994 and Treptow, 1997.

4.2.2. The Early Process of Integration into Europe

Another theme closely related to the formation of Romanian nation-state and identity is the early process of integration into Europe. This process both aided the national integration project and was itself transformed and strengthened by it. In looking at this process of cultural integration in the period between the mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth century, I will approach it in its political and cultural context, while working with a broad definition of cultural integration, as the process of reorganization caused by social agents who seek to reconstruct an existing societal order on the basis of their specific understandings (as elaborated in chapter 2, section 2.4. on *Cultural integration*). I will attempt to understand the concrete ideological conditions of cultural integration as it developed in Greater Romania.

The early approach to Western Europe can be dealt with in two stages: first stage coincided with the creation of the nation state in 1859. The second stage, devoted to the synchronisation with European culture, started with the achievement of the Greater Romania union in 1918 and continued during the interwar period.

Signs of the process of cultural integration were evident already in the nineteenth century in Romanian society, under quite different conditions than today. Romania's early west-bound integration (before 1918) seems to have consisted of two consecutive phases that – for analytical purposes - I label 'negative integration' and 'positive integration'. The first phase, 'negative integration', was a *differentiation* from the Eastern civilization. Initially anti-Greek attitudes manifested partly because the Greeks were the symbol of the East, partly because of the Phanariot regime; then came the demarcation from the Ottomans who "introduced into our [Romanian] ethnic soul the seeds of corruption and idleness, which cause peoples to degrade and degenerate" (Drăghicescu, 1995: 262). After Greek and Ottoman, the Russian/Slav model was opposed when after 1830 Russia increased its protectorate over the economy and administration in Moldavia and Walachia. The second phase of this early integration was the actual adaptation to the Western models (French and German), hence the term 'positive integration': first in the form of the idealized French model (between 1830 and 1848 and during the interwar period); later, the German model from the mid-nineteenth century up until 1914.

Although weak and fragmentary, the process of 'becoming European' started around 1830, a period marked by the end of the Ottoman suzerainty on Moldavia and Walachia, the core of modern Romania. The first consequence was that

the two principalities made significant socio-economic progress, entering the international economic and political order dominated by Western Europe. This period, where Romanian society underwent an evolution from a predominant agrarian society to a partly urban and industrial society, is also characterized by high population growth especially in urban areas. Also culturally it was a time of important discontinuities, as the Roman alphabet replaced the Cyrillic, the urban bourgeoisie started wearing Western style clothes and a strong influence from French realism made its way in Romanian literature. Moreover, the idea of the ethnic nations in Eastern Europe took shape during this period. Being surrounded by Slavs and Hungarians, Romanians felt different from their neighbours. Their religion was orthodox, they spoke a language derived from Latin and they were proudly aware of their Roman ancestry. This made Romanians look both West and East for inspiration.

In the beginning, the process of cultural integration evolved only among the elite groups. The ideology of elitism in Romania started with the *1848 Generation*, the first important intellectual movement involved in the modernization process. In the view of its intellectuals, Romania needed emancipation and synchronization with Europe, but mainly as a nation, and not with a view to give freedom to its individuals. A conception which eventually had important negative consequences for the development of the society. Even so, the Romanian national movement of 1848 meant a shift towards Europe and the Western model of civilisation. Modern ideologies were imported and adapted according to the autochthonous realities by the educated bourgeoisie (*boieri*) who returned from their studies abroad. According to Hitchins (1996: 3), the new elite developed a new conception of community which influenced the evolution of modern Romania. Indeed the new elite or avant-garde assumed the task of building the united Romania and bringing it into Europe. The great challenge was to transform a dominant rural society into a modern capitalist and democratic society. Between 1860 and 1900 the Romanian state borrowed widely from other European systems: the constitution, the Parliament, the legal codes, the education system and so on.

However, the mentality of the majority remained largely untouched in a society, where more than 80 percent of the population was rural at the start of the twentieth century. Rural Romania was in clear discrepancy with the Western orientation of the urban bourgeoisie, of which many were of ‘non-Romanian’ origin. According to Boia, “this suggests a traditionalist and anti-bourgeois sensibility; a

mental brake that delayed, even if it could not block, the modernization of Romanian society” (Boia, 2001a: 36). In my opinion, it was therefore during this period that Romania experienced the founding a resistant dichotomy between on the one hand, the traditionalists/autochtonists, who argued that the process of cultural integration was not entirely compatible with the Romanian society and, on the other hand, the modernists/Europeanists - advocates of synchronization with Western culture.

After the unification of Greater Romania in 1918, the new state speeded up the adoption of the Western model. Diverse reforms, universal suffrage and new Constitution were introduced in the early 1920s - creating a democratic framework and paving the way for a better though slow economic development (the industrial output doubled between 1923 and 1938)¹⁵⁰. Politically Romania was dominated by shifting coalitions of the three ‘moderate’ parties: the People’s Party, the National Liberal Party and the National Peasant Party. Extremist parties - the Romanian Communist Party and Codreanu’s Iron Guard - were banned during the twenties and thirties. During this second phase of modernization the attachment to the Western models developed into a fundamental reference point for the Romanian society. But the reverse reaction should not be undervalued, either. The tension between the Western model, promoted by the pro-Western elite, and the widespread rural-indigenous mentality continued during this phase.

This early process of cultural integration was without problems, notably because in the Romanian case it was not accompanied by any substantial economic modernization. While Romania integrated itself in the Western cultural space, economically Romania failed the process of industrial modernization. “State-induced and state-led growth, or in other words, forced industrialization, became the chosen strategy by the Romanian ‘Westernizers’ to integrate Romania into the new, industrial Europe in order to make it (and them) partake in the wealth and industrial society was promising to provide” (Wagner, 2002: 226).

The above section has sought to explain the process of modernization and the changes it entailed for Romanian society between 1860 and 1930. Notably, three aspects should be retained for my further analysis: first, cultural integration first emerged as a differentiation from the Oriental models and only later took the form a conscious adoption of the Western model; second, a persistent cleavage between a

¹⁵⁰ Per capita national income reached 94 USD in 1938 as compared to Greece (76 USD), Portugal (81 USD), Czechoslovakia (141 USD), and France (246 USD) in <http://www.romaniaunog.org/>.

pro-Western elite and a large traditionalist majority was instituted during this period; third, the transformation did not create significant economic progress in the predominant agrarian country; and fourth and related hereto, this later created propitious cultural and economic conditions for the consolidation of the communist authoritarian regime.

4.2.3. The Emergence of Nationalism

Nationalism emerged in the Romanian principalities at the end of eighteenth century and as such it was connected to the elite's imperative of the unification (i.e. 'nationalism of elites'), driven more by political and cultural motivation rather than economic interests. The starting point is marked by the petition, sent in 1792 to Emperor Leopold II of Austria by the Uniate and Greek Orthodox Church leadership by which they asked for the recognition of the Romanians as a nation and for equal political and religious rights with other ethnies of Transylvania. In Transylvania, Romanians did not have political rights, as membership of the Transylvanian diet was restricted to the three 'nations' of the Magyars, Szekels and Saxons. By acknowledging the importance of these nationalist responses to shape the later Romanian nation-state, Breuilly (1993: 135-6) labels this early type of nationalism as 'separatist nationalism'.

The unification of Greater Romania marked an important shift in the Romanian national ideology. Before 1918, there were Romanians outside the state borders whose interests had to be defended against discrimination by other national groups. After unification, practically all Romanians were contained in a single state within which they, along with a certain number of non-Romanians, were oppressed by their own leaders. As pointed out by Verdery (1991), "[a]n ideology that had been developed for several centuries as a way of gaining rights for Romanians now became the ideology of a social system that had its own fundamental inequalities"¹⁵¹. As such, the national discourse in the interwar year did not only represent the consequence of these general causes but also served to consolidate the social position of intellectuals in a society under fundamental change. Hence, the intellectuals became important carriers of a widely appealing nationalist discourse turned against the various imbalances in the transforming society:

¹⁵¹ Verdery, 1991: 70.

[t]he tensions of localism and centralism, the fragility of the new borders, the efforts of the left to create an international working-class movement hostile to the Romanian state, the disproportions of national minorities in occupations of high reward, and all the other exigencies of nation-building gave pre-eminence to the idiom of the Nation (Verdery, 1991: 45-46).

The 1848 revolutionary elite was guided by the overall idea of the restoration of ‘Daco-Romania’, that is the creation of a nation-state including all those of Romanian ethnicity. Questions of individual liberty and equality were less prominent in the national discourse. The main obstacle was therefore encountered when the question arose of how and by whom the reconstruction of society on the basis of self-rule was to be performed. By avoiding the issue of the collective representation, political rights were to be granted on the basis of social and economic criteria. Only after 1859, the issues of political representation and extensive political rights arrived at the centre stage of a political struggle between Liberals and Conservatives. Yet, only a nationalism based on claiming external territory (irredentist) could mobilise all Romanians. Popularly speaking, everybody could agree to enlarge the cake. Difficulties occurred once it came to decide how to share it! Hence, governments of the period turned irredentist nationalism into policy, and - as Sugar suggests - it “became the slogan with which the bureaucracy justified its actions and omissions and its condemnation of all opposition as unpatriotic” (Sugar, 1994: 175).

Eventually, as we have seen, “a ‘nation’ state”¹⁵² was created in 1881 under the name Old Kingdom. However, the identified absence of a coherent national vision - other than irredentism – soon made its influence in this new context where “nationalism acquired a popular basis only in the form of anti-semitism” (Breuilly, 1993: 137). The early twentieth century witnessed the emergence of various strands of nationalisms (i.e. peasantism/populism, nationalism and ‘progressive conservatism’) that although they looked with scepticism at the industrialization and democratization processes, failed to propose a coherent alternative to the project of liberal nationalism. Hutchinson sees this type of nationalist project as a distinct species of nationalism, that he calls ‘cultural nationalism’. A type of nationalism that “seeks a moral regeneration of the community”¹⁵³. This is different from political

¹⁵² Breuilly, 1993: 137.

¹⁵³ Hutchinson, 1994: 41.

nationalism that “has as its aim autonomous state institutions” (Hutchinson, 1994: 41).

The formation of the Romanian state in 1918 granted the occasion for a ‘national redefinition’¹⁵⁴ in order to fit the conditions and opportunities created at the end of the World War I. Romania and what it means to be Romanian had to be reinvented in order to legitimate the idea of a single nation. In spite of historical, cultural and linguistic ties among the ethnic Romanians, the Greater Romania union brought also socio-cultural and economic challenges and tensions.

Institutional and legal homogenization, the replacement of foreign elites, the recruitment and expansion of national elites, the fight against regionalism, and the implantation or nurturing of national consciousness among uneducated and educated strata that had lived for as long as anyone could remember under foreign rule (Livezeanu, 1995: 19),

were just a few of the tasks that the newly created nation-state had to cope with. John Breuilly aptly describes the problems of coping with all these tasks in the interwar Romania as those of ‘reform nationalism’. This form of conservatism is, according to Breuilly, “an attitude of mind rather than a distinct political doctrine” (Breuilly, 1993: 288). As such, it emerges in an already existing nation-state and “takes its position from the given situation and then develops, in a cautious and pragmatic way, piecemeal policies designed to secure a basic stability” (Breuilly, 1993: 288). Indeed, the ‘shaping’ process was not easy for Romania, as a latecomer to nation building and industrialization. According to Livezeanu, in Romania “the reconstitution of the nation within its newly enlarged boundaries brought opportunities for national redefinition as well as profound social and cultural crises, and that these two aspects were intricately linked to each other” (Livezeanu, 1995: 7).

The achievement of Greater Romania implied that large minority groups (often more urban and educated than the average Romanian) had to be integrated. Not a tensionless process. In Livezeanu’s words, the union “inaugurated ground-breaking cultural transformations, policies, and politics rather than the return, envisaged by Romanian nationalists, to an idyllic, natural, primordial state of the Romanian community” (Livezeanu, 1995: 18). This explains partly why the application of the ‘Western’ demands for equal rights of minorities - the dominant international discourse in the years around the Versailles Treaty - were largely perceived as alien,

¹⁵⁴ Livezeanu, 1995: 7.

illegitimate, and suspicious. It is worth reminding that minorities' struggle for rights has been perceived as a threat to the national unity in the Romanian space.

Table: The population of Greater Romania by ethnicity in 1930¹⁵⁵

	Number (in mio.)	Percentage of total
Romanians	13.0	71.9
Hungarians	1.4	7.9
Germans	0.7	4.1
Jews	0.7	4.0
Ukrainians	0.6	3.3
Russians	0.4	2.3
Bulgarians	0.4	2.0
Roma	0.3	1.5
Others ¹⁵⁶	0.5	3.0
Total	18.0*	

*hereof 79,8 pct. rural population

In the territories annexed in 1918, Romanians had mainly belonged to the rural population. The elite of the new Romanian space was therefore often Russian, Hungarian, German or Jewish, rather than ethnically Romanian. A situation which incited to tensions between the Romanian peasants (4/5 of the total population) and the ethnic minorities. Interethnic struggles were recurrent, in the attempts of Romanian individuals to dislodge the 'foreign' elites and their place for centuries in the urban areas in order to safeguard the legitimacy of Great Romania, 'the' Romanian national state. The issue of minorities, perceived as the 'other', was the basis for regular conflicts in Romania after 1918. These feelings came to dominate Romanian politics and society between the two World Wars. However utopian, the ideal of a unitary and 'pure' Romania kept feeding both the state policies and the programs of the radical nationalist movements. One could say that this was an answer to the ethnic fragmentation of the Romanian population as well as to the general confusion that characterized the transforming society.

¹⁵⁵ Source: Institutul central de statistică, *Anuarul statistic al României 1937 și 1938*, pp. 58-61.

¹⁵⁶ Refers to nationalities that each constitutes less than 1 percent of the population: Turks, Tatars, Gagauz, Greeks, Armenians, Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes.

In this historical context, nationalism became the overall ideological framework for Romanian politics. The assimilation of the new provinces and their minorities was made through cultural and educational policies that required national mobilization. Not surprisingly the minorities – whether on Romanian territory before 1918 or ‘created’ by the unification - came to feel uncomfortable in Greater Romania, as they often had even less rights than during the imperial rule. At the same time Romanians felt disadvantaged and discriminated against by the new urban environment. The urban – i.e. ‘modern’ - economy was mostly funded by foreign Jewish, German or Magyar capital. Changing governments were perceived as serving the interests of the ‘foreigners’. A situation which gave birth to widespread anti-Semitism and a nationalism of elites who reminded their compatriots of their origin and the injustices afflicted on the ‘innocent’ Romanians. This *double-alienation* was an insurmountable obstacle to the instauration of a coherent and democratic society.

Notwithstanding these fundamental problems, the trend of integration into the wider Europe continued with land reforms, intensification in literacy, and involvement in cultural exchanges as important catalysts. However, as noted by Breuilly (1993), now the elites were not as enthusiastic about this development as before 1900. A possible explanation is that the integration process in the meantime had acquired its own dynamic, which left the elites in a position of less control. An autochthonist reaction did not fail to show up. Especially after World War I, where it became part of mainstream political discourse, also among the democratic forces. National authenticity had to be conserved, recognized and integrated harmoniously with the European model. Politically speaking, being nationalist had a better pay-off than being pro-Western. Hence, also *after* unification, the discourse on unity, the national identity and Romania’s exceptional destiny continued to be the scene for ardent declarations on the fear of being torn apart by the Great Powers menacing the national construction (what actually happened in 1940). Masses were more appealed to by this nationalist discourse, which manipulated them through the label ‘democratic’. Yet, there is little doubt that the Romanian nationalist ideal of unity favoured totalitarianism in full concordance with the European trend at the time.

Political life in Romania in the interwar period was characterised by growing instability: regular changes of government, corruption, fragmentation of political parties and political migration. The democratic parties – still caught up in the nationalist discourse as described above - failed to deliver efficient and broadly

accepted answers to the large internal challenges that Greater Romania was facing. The way for instauration of authoritarian regimes lay open.

Radical right nationalists, known as ‘the Iron Guard’, with Corneliu Zelia Codreanu as their charismatic leader, did not hesitate to seize the opportunity. The overall fascist programme included strong ideas of revolution and construction of a fundamentally new order based on a pure, ‘authentic’ Romanian spirituality (i.e. with emphasis on the orthodox religion). This ideology was blended with nationalism to such an extent that it is difficult to draw the line between them. The old order was criticised for being artificial and for having failed to install their modern liberal project. ‘Reform nationalism’ became a broadly accepted response to Greater Romania’s both internal and external threats. From domestic social problems to the potential spread of Bolshevism from the eastern neighbour. Moreover, behind the political nationalist focus and socio-economic reforms, the Iron Guard could offer an additional factor. Codreanu proposed an alternative indigenous model of progress tied to the idea of resurgence of the Romanian nation by the elite. According to this model, “the elite would be Christian (...); it would enjoin a pure life upon its members; it would make any sacrifice, including the supreme one of eternal damnation, for the national cause” (Breuilly, 1993: 303-4). His ideas started a significant movement. The ‘new’ Romanian state should not only represent the ethnic nation but also its essential elements. As the spiritual mentor of the Iron Guard, Nae Ionescu, claimed: the essence of being Romanian was being Orthodox (Ionescu, 1937).

Nationalism and ‘orthodoxism’ turned out to be an appealing political cocktail. The orthodoxist ideology – which in a way *relinked* Romania to the East - strengthened the Iron Guard’s discourse on ‘ethnocracy’. According to its leader, Codreanu, a singular form of rule (i.e. totalitarian) that would embody the unanimity of the nation was needed to construct a ‘new’ Romania. This new political order would represent the essential Romanian value of eastern Orthodoxy by uniting the political leaders and the people under a single leader. In Codreanu’s own words, “the leader is not anymore a ‘master’, a ‘dictator’ that does what he wants and rules according to his own will: he becomes the expression, the incarnation of this invisible spiritual state, the symbol of this enlightened condition that underpins the entire national community” (quoted in Blokker, 2004: 209).

The well-thought ideological construct paid off. And echoing the bigger European picture, the fascists gained significant ground in the 1937 elections, when they became the third biggest party after the Liberal Party and the Peasant National Party¹⁵⁷. Yet, it is worth noting that semi-nationalist rhetoric adopted by the latter more mainstream parties, probably kept the fascist from cashing in their full electoral potential. Despite winning 15 percent of the votes, the Iron Guard however was kept from formal powers, as King Carol II intervened and formed a minority government. The following year, Carol II established a regular personal dictatorship not meeting significant opposition. Nevertheless, far stronger geopolitical forces were at play outside Romania, which would soon deprive the King of any political legitimacy. Thus, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1940 implied loss of most the territory gained just two decades earlier. With Greater Romania crumbling, Carol soon gave up his powers in favour of General Antonescu. From then on Romania was a satellite of Nazi Germany. In a paradoxical way, a seemingly very effective move – if only short-lived and short-sighted – towards integrating with what was then core-Europe (or ‘Neuropa’ in the Nazi terminology).

As I will sustain below, although popular among a large section of the public, the nationalists encountered strong resistance from the promoters of the cultural modernism imported from the West as a way of synchronizing Romanian culture with European culture. However, during the interwar period, nationalism achieved wide popularity, due to its gifted initiators and outstanding scholars. They succeeded to give nationalism a cover of universality.

In this section I have attempted to look at the emergence of nationalism as an expression of the elite class interest to obtain and use political power. Nationalism has played a major role in the pursuit of these objectives. Three factors are, as I will later demonstrate, of particular importance for nowadays’ Romanian transformations: first, nationalism has been used to control politics or to seek or exercise state power. This gave way to the debate on the Romanian identity and the invention of a national discourse which aimed at promoting a cohesive national vision. Second, it is worth retaining that most parties, also the moderate ones, adopted certain elements of the nationalist discourse. Third, nationalist (rural) values, the religious Romanian spirituality embodied by Christian Orthodoxy, and the question of belonging to the

¹⁵⁷ Bărbulescu *et al.*, 2002: 350.

Romanian nation have added new features to nationalism, forming the ideology in the years prior to communism.

4.2.4. Civil Society in Precommunist Romania

Retrospectively seen, the interwar period (1918-1938) seems to have been the most favourable to the emergence of civil society in Greater Romania¹⁵⁸. At first glance, many aspects of daily life signified the existence of a ‘vigorous’ civil society:

an abundance of agricultural and consumer goods as well as a number of important rights and freedoms: people then could travel as far as their financial means allowed them; rather than one party there were several; a richly varied and free press thrived; writers published their works without censorship; and elections in which candidates from opposing parties ran against one another were the rule (Livezeanu, 1995: 310).

Nevertheless, and in spite of these apparently favourable conditions, the development of civil society in the interwar Romania proved rather problematic. Previous contributions (Focșeneanu. 1992; Livezeanu. 1995; Popescu, 1998) have highlighted three main causes that led to the development of a weak civil society. First, the weakness of civil society has been attributed to the negative effects of structural changes. Thus, in a country where ethnic Romanians formed an overwhelming rural and illiterate population (Mungiu, 1996: 335), the social equilibrium has been troubled. This disorder provoked anti-Semitic and xenophobic attitudes on the geo-political, territorial and socio-economic scene and in the ‘Romanisation’ discourse of the time. More specifically, Irina Livezeanu stresses upon the way the policies of unification (aimed at nationalizing and homogenizing the country) have undermined the development of civil society. For the author, the project of ‘remaking’ Greater Romania “had its own logic of undoing previous civil social traditions”¹⁵⁹. As a reaction to the grant of formal citizenship to non-Romanian elites, “the state and its radical nationalist opponents joined in attempting to try to demote these ‘foreigners’ to non-elite status, in order to replace them with educated ethnic Romanians or peasant stock who mostly lacked a previous – civil – tradition” (Livezeanu, 1995: 311-12).

¹⁵⁸ Livezeanu, 1995: 310.

¹⁵⁹ Livezeanu, 1995: 311.

In addition I see the insufficient development of the middle class – in part due to the lack of economic development - as a second cause that led to an inconsistent and fragile civil society. Indeed, within civil society, tensions were created through the concern with the ethnic composition of the middle class. The ‘Other’, mainly perceived in negative terms (i.e., as belonging to a different *ethnie* or religion) was not only considered an outsider but also a potential enemy. Moreover, the autonomous sphere of voluntary actions had only existed in their earliest phase, and consisted of a relatively small number of individuals. Consequently, ‘nationalism against democracy’¹⁶⁰ (i.e., against minorities’ rights) emerged. As mentioned, these minorities, mainly Hungarian, but also German and Jewish, were often better educated and more advanced in the process of social modernization than the ethnic Romanians and occupied important positions in the country’s economic and political structures. Since these inequalities were not perceived as the result of different historical evolutions, but rather as the effect of democratic conditions which granted equality to all citizens independent of his/her ethnic origin, a strong trend of public opinion emerged demanding for a revision of these rights and a guarantee for the dominant position of ethnic Romanians.

What was not developed in terms of civil society in the interwar Romania was even more difficult to accomplish after 1938 with the new Constitution that mostly referred to the *duties* of the citizens rather than to their rights¹⁶¹. Civil society could not develop either under the legionary authoritarian regime (which acknowledged only one party, the Iron Guard), under Antonescu’s military dictatorship (1940) or during World War II when Greater Romania was an ally of Hitler’s Germany. After the removal of Antonescu’s regime, the communists gradually took over power meaning a (continued) limitation of citizens’ rights and, indeed, the dismissal of all opposing segments of civil society.

4.2.5. Concluding Remarks

The above sections highlighted Romania’s precommunist past through four major themes, necessary to properly understand Romania’s transformation: the formation of the Romanian nation-state, the early attempts of entry into Europe, the nature of nationalism from the end of the nineteenth century till the first half of the twentieth

¹⁶⁰ Badrus, 2001: 61.

¹⁶¹ Focșeneanu, 1992: 70-75.

century, and the emergence of civil society. These themes bring together the specificity of Romania before communism. The presented premises do justice, I hope, to the complex nature of the Romanian society. The historic conditions of the construction of the Romanian nation have been far from unproblematic but rather conflictual with borders being shifted, and identities and ethnies in constant dispute over recognition. It should be clear already by now that major problems faced by contemporary Romanian society are problems, which have their root in pre-communist Romania (i.a. the question of minorities and the compromised industrialization).

4.3. Romanian Society under Communism

The last premise of transformation in post-1989 Romania is logically the development and impact of communism itself. Romanian society was transformed in the post-World War II period in response to the changing global constellations. The exhaustion of both liberal and fascist projects and the atrocities of the war made the internal political, cultural and social realities particularly vulnerable to external interference. At the ideas level, Romanian communism was featured by a synthesis between the specific Romanian understanding of the nation, on the one hand, and Stalinism on the other. The Romanian experience was, as I will try to demonstrate, a particularly interesting example of the relation between the structural logic of the communist model and the internal power struggles. These power struggles entailed the particular path that societal change would pursue. This is why I will concentrate on the dominant role of the party elite and the effects of their understandings of societal order on the Romanian society. The nature of Romanian communism was based on two elements: the emergence of radical nationalism and the rather abnormal continued loyalty to Stalinism. In the following, I will sketch out the emergence of Romanian communism, analyse its nature, the civil society issue and depict the communist version of Romanian nationalism.

4.3.1. The Emergence of Romanian Communism

Communists came to power in 1944 as a result of a ‘revolution from above’, openly activated by the Soviet occupation of Romania. With Soviet support, the party gradually consolidated power and sought to extend its base of popular support. Even if initially communism was externally imposed, gradually “it had become

indigenous” (Arato, 1993: 134) and along the way a particular Romanian pattern of communism emerged. The reorganization of society concerned the concentration of political, economic, and ideological power in one party (i.e. the Communist Party) which progressively enclosed both state and societal fields “as it infiltrated society at large, undermining autonomous, alternative centres of power outside of the state” (Blokker, 2004: 123).

The communists soon gained control over the existing, democratic parties. In 1948, it merged with a wing of the Social Democratic Party to form the Romanian Workers' Party. Four years later, however, almost all social democrats had been replaced by communists. The People's Republic of Romania was formed in 1947 under the Soviet occupation following Second World War. Due to his very strong Stalinist principles, the Soviet influence circles chose Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej to take power in 1953¹⁶² and let him carry on with the Stalinization of Romanian politics. Eager to rule over the Romanian political scene and by revealing nationalist attitudes, Dej was proceeded to cleanse the Communist Party of its ‘cosmopolitan’ leaders and eliminate the old elite. Loyal to Moscow in the beginning, the Romanian communists gained some independence after the death of Stalin in 1953. For Wagner, this explains “why Romanian Communism began to take a different trajectory from the rest of Eastern Europe, and, indeed, from the Soviet Union” (Wagner, 2002: 228). The first signs of ‘exceptionalism’ in pursuing the national communist path came when Dej contested COMECON’s goal to transform the Romanian economy into its main agricultural provider. This path allowed him to confront changes in the reforms in the Soviet bloc and maintain a fairly independent and nationalist rule. He then pursued the development of the heavy industry. While other Eastern European countries were going through a de-Stalinization process, Romania under Dej’s rule resisted it, gradually becoming more Stalinist than the Soviet Union itself.

After Dej’s death in 1965, Nicolae Ceaușescu took the leadership and continued the Stalinist path traced by Dej. On the surface, however, some visible change took place. The name of the party was changed to the Romanian Communist Party, and Romania was re-baptised from the People's Republic of Romania to the Socialist Republic of Romania. On the external scene, Ceaușescu condemned the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. All this plus a quasi-relaxation in internal

¹⁶² This is the year when Gheorghiu-Dej is named president of the Council of Ministers (Roper, 2000: vii).

repression gave a positive image both internally and in the Western world. As a form of recognition, the Romania became a member of the Bretton Woods institutions and was granted the status of a ‘most favored nation’ by the United States. Making new friends - based on the Cold War logic of ‘the enemy of my enemy is my friend’ - Ceaușescu during this period made state visits to USA, France, and UK, where he stayed as a Royal guest at Buckingham Palace as late as in 1979. Not least, Romania was the first country of the eastern Bloc to have official relations with the European Community. Blinded by Ceaușescu’s apparently *East-defecting* foreign policy – and notwithstanding the paradox that opposition to Soviet control was mainly determined by the unwillingness to de-Stalinize - the West did not give attention to the fact that Ceaușescu was creating a new form of ‘anti-Soviet Stalinism’¹⁶³.

In parallel to his seemingly west friendly policy, Ceaușescu was also fraternizing with the Far Eastern communist regimes. Thus, in the early 1970s the Ceaușescu couple visited China and North Korea and got inspired by the personal cults of Mao and Kim Il Sung. These visits marked a change in his leadership style, from totalitarian to a sultanistic type of regime that “made the Romanian regime very resistant to any form of nonviolent transformation” (Linz and Stepan, 1996: 349). As Linz and Stepan argue,

in sultanism, the private and the public are fused, there is a strong tendency toward familial power and dynastic succession, there is no distinction between a state career and personal service to the ruler, there is a lack of rationalized impersonal ideology, economic success depends on a personal relationship to the ruler, and, most of all, the rule acts only according to his own unchecked discretion, with no larger, impersonal goals (Linz and Stepan, 1996: 52).

In 1974 Ceaușescu calls himself President of Romania in a ceremony imitating a king’s coronation.

In the context of cultural integration, it is worth noting that the Ceaușescu regime – which in hindsight is often described as introvert - in a sense searched and adapted inspiration from both East and West. Yet, contrary to earlier and later cases of deliberate interaction with the outside world, it was not inspiration sought with the view to promote transformation, but rather an instrumental search for means to preserve the existing order.

¹⁶³ The expression is borrowed from Linz and Stepan (1996: 348).

Against Ceaușescu's 'independent' and creative foreign policy, Western leaders by the late 1970s turned against a regime that had become increasingly harsh, arbitrary, and highly repressive internally. Moscow's reformist line under Gorbachev was perceived as betrayal. The economic growth, which willing foreign credits had allowed Romania for some years, gradually gave way to national austerity and severe political oppression. Ceaușescu was successful in making what Wagner calls a 'double regime': "while the national Communist bureaucracy, party and ideological apparatus remained in place, a personalized regime was erected alongside this apparatus which availed itself of the resources and capacities of that apparatus without actually being part of it" (Wagner, 2002: 231).

However, Ceaușescu did not succeed in keeping either the "hope of plenitude, harmony, and happiness" (Todorov, 2003: 18) his regime created, or the promises his communist project was based on: to construct a better Romania.

To serve the Party's interests, Ceaușescu manipulated both the future and the past. The future because it is not yet; the past was manipulated since "knowledge of the facts may lead a person to dangerous thoughts"¹⁶⁴. From the communist regime's point of view, ignorance of the past offered more than any knowledge of it: it brought about obedience, stability, previsibility and constructive thinking. A letter from March 1989 written by six former officials of the Communist Party and addressed to Ceaușescu stated that "Romania is and remains a European country... You have begun to change the geography of the rural areas, but you cannot move Romania into Africa"¹⁶⁵. This letter was about to preview Romania's immediate future: by Christmas that year, Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu's regime was overthrown and they were executed in the most violent of the 1989 Revolutions.

4.3.2. The Nature of Romanian Communism

Overall, Romanian communism seems to have gone through three phases. First, a 'Soviet' phase, where the ideology of the Eastern ideal was more or less uncritically adopted. Second, Romanian communism entered a 'nationalist' phase, where Romania became ideologically as well as politically more self-reliant. And third, a

¹⁶⁴ Heym, 1997: 82.

¹⁶⁵ This letter was signed by Gheorghe Apostol, Alexandru Bîrlădeanu, Corneliu Manescu, Constantin Pârvulescu, Grigore Răceanu, and Silviu Brucan.

‘terminal’ phase, where the Ceaușescu regime became gradually more isolated, draconian – and absurd.

When looking at the specificity of Romanian communism, it is worth noting that it was only from 1944 that it gained a broader social basis¹⁶⁶. Before the war, when nationalism had been the dominant ideology, the membership to the Romanian socialist movement was dominated by minorities who searched a revolutionary, internationalist dogma in opposition to a centralized Romanian state. Ethnic Romanians, on the other hand, repudiated the idea of supporting an (ideological) alliance with their ‘historical enemy’ Russia which was rather for the undoing the newly created Greater Romania¹⁶⁷. Moreover, Romanian communists were unpopular domestically because “[their] party championed ideas and slogans with minimal appeal to the class it claimed to represent, portraying Romania as a ‘multinational imperialist country’ and advocating the dismemberment of the Romanian nation-state brought into being by the Versailles and Trianon treaties” (Tismăneanu, 2003: 24). By the end of World War II, the Communist party had only about 1,000 members.

This soon changed after 1944. Under strong Soviet pressure, Romanian communists were prearranged a central role in the government formed in March 1945, and by October 1945 approximately 240,000 new members had joined the party (mainly workers and peasants – but also intellectuals, including members of the Iron Guard)¹⁶⁸. The victory of the Romanian communist alternative emerged as a reaction to the economic and social deficiency that came with capitalism, the economic crisis in the 1930s, and the harsh experience of the Second World War.

Early Phases of Romanian Communism: From ‘Soviet’ Communism to ‘Nationalist’ Communism

Communism was imposed in Romania ‘from above’ as a entirely alien and – initially - antinational ideology. As a consequence, the early phase of Romanian communism had the form of an abstract and inflexible framework. The Romanian communist leadership lacked historical traditions, political confidence and not least an indigenous embedding, something which would probably have allowed the

¹⁶⁶ Tismăneanu, 2003: 37.

¹⁶⁷ Shafir, 1985: 21-9.

¹⁶⁸ King, 1980: 63.

Communist Party to approach all levels of society by other, more fundamentally persuasive means than repression. Backward, rural Romania was not the natural home for theoretical communism as a basically internationalist ideology.

The early phase of Romanian communism followed closely the Soviet ideal. After a short transition period new structures and mechanisms of society replaced the old ones. The remaining elite was persecuted and sent to prison or remained in exile. The peasantry - considered the foundation of the ill-seen pre-war Romania - was dissembled by a forced collectivization process. The urban space was heavily industrialized and a new working class took the role that peasantry played before 1944, that of a leading class and the new elite, the proletariat, needed for the communist party's propaganda and ideological utopia. Tradition was disintegrated. According to the communist ideology, the past had a meaning insofar as it kept open the promise of the 'radiant future' and the creation of the 'new socialist man', a very intentional project that included totally new ways of constructing the person. The 'real' history of Romania started and ended with the Communist Party. The Romanian relations with the Europeans were replaced with the Romanian relations with the Slavs, from the beginning of the Middle Ages to the liberation event on 23 August 1944, by the Soviet troops. Latin Romania belonged as the 'Latin island in a Slav sea' and it was there that it should return. The past was reconstructed in communist terms. The union with Bessarabia, for example, became an 'imperialist intervention against the socialist revolution in Russia' and likewise the 1918 union with Transylvania was reinterpreted as an 'imperialist intervention against the revolution in Hungary'. Communists re-invent the language of politics: national solidarity becomes 'class struggle', while nation and national spirit became class and class spirit. Meanwhile, Romanians were forced to reassess their hopes and dreams with regard to Europe, and to convert them into a united image of Romania through the construction of a progressive European 'Other'. The role of the church and religion in history was significantly reduced. In full concordance with the Soviet model, the communist regime of Romania raised the secularization of the Romanian national history. Moreover, during this first 'Soviet' phase of Romanian communism, a certain openness towards avant-gardism and innovation especially in arts and science can be registered. Later, the communist regime showed a more rigid and conservative attitude towards any 'transformative' initiative. A new culture was born, a Romanian version of the Soviet culture.

By the late 1950s - at a time when de-Stalinisation was under way in other countries of Eastern Europe - a shift also occurred in Romania. But the Romanian reorientation of communism was different. Main features of this 'new' Romanian version of communism became its militant atheism, devotion to Stalinism and strong nationalist elements, including the revival of such as the myth of the homogenous nation and the Dacian roots of the Romanian nation¹⁶⁹. Most members of the powerful Political Bureau came from the rural areas, and were easily aware of autochthonism and its appeal to the masses: the Slav elements and the internationalism ('antinational') were hereafter replaced with a nationalist discourse with a much broader appeal. In parallel, the state accelerated the social protection of Romanian citizens, covering generously pension, sickness, and maternity leave. Education and medical assistance were for free for all. Ambitious housing projects were implemented. As part of the rehabilitation and reintegration of the Romanian national values in Romanian 'official' culture, a few intellectuals were allowed to travel to the West and participate in European and international seminars. Some interwar ideological works were even if rehabilitated, manipulated and republished. This should not however be confounded with liberalization; it was a very limited practice, closely controlled by the *Securitate*.

Eventually, the 1960s and early 1970s - the passage from the 'Soviet' to the nationalist version of communism - became a period of relatively less tension between the Romanian society and the political elites. With nationalism reintroduced, the link between the state and the population had again been relatively reinforced.

Late Phase of Romanian Communism: Degeneration and Collapse

In the late phase of Romanian communism, from around 1980 till the 1989 Revolution, Ceaușescu heightened his authoritarian regime by isolating Romania from the rest of the world and by exercising cultural megalomania. His nationalist discourse became the ultimate political and historical argument:

As a political instrument of legitimization and domination, nationalism gained advantage from the amalgamation of the authentic nationalist tradition and the specific aims pursued by the communist dictatorship. It seemed like recuperation, when in the first instance it was actually a *manipulation* (Boia, 2001a: 77).

¹⁶⁹ Tismăneanu, 1993: 316-317.

Characteristic for the period is the paradoxical parallel emphasis on the virtues of the interwar Romania and the virtues of overthrowing the interwar system. Ancient history was re-analysed and became an even more useful tool than the contemporary history. All commemorations of the Communist Party followed the same pattern: it would start with the glorification of origins, highlighting continuity and unity of the Romanian people and end with the celebration of the dictator era. In this way, history itself was eradicated.

From a cultural integration point of view, an important consequence of Ceaușescu's isolationist policy and strong emphasis on the 'unity of the Romanian people' was a seemingly new process of mythologizing the image of the *foreigner*. The image of the *foreigner* created by the Romanian communist regime was different from the same image in the nineteenth century. The symbol of the West became as banal as a 'Toblerone' chocolate bar and 'Kent' cigarettes. The 'Other' became a broad notion, the definitive materialization of the West.

The political circumstances had a strong impact on economic development, but not in the positive way argued by the Marxist theorists celebrated under early Romanian communism only decades earlier. In the case of Romania, Ceaușescu developed his ambition of a multilateral, independent economy that had to produce everything inside the country. The Five-Year Plans created for the need of economic growth and high productivity became one of the distinctive features of the social imaginary in most Eastern European communist societies. This will be explored further in the next section, dedicated to the communist version of Romanian nationalism.

Needless to say, lop-sided emphasis on heavy industry, along with strained export to cut Romania's external debt and reduction of the imported goods was far from the medicine needed for successful economic development. The resulting shortage of even the most basic needs of ordinary Romanians undermined any remaining legitimacy of the system, and eventually triggered the Revolution.

4.3.3. The Communist Version of Romanian Nationalism

As noted in the previous section, deficient of indigenous traditions, the communist regime in Romania established itself by means of oppression. In this context the only basis the regime could draw on to construct a new *societal identity* was certain elements of traditional Romanian nationalism.

Strengthening his power late 1940s, Dej took power and started promoting his own version of communism. In an attempt to raise popularity and to give expression of the anti-Soviet feelings of many Romanians, Dej readopted nationalism as a legitimizing ideology. Under Dej the Party advanced national concerns for two reasons. First, nationalism was an ‘easy’ way to increase the popular support for the party. After purging the ‘foreign’, internationalist communists, Dej rediscovered himself as a national communist (Roper, 2000: 29). As an example, in 1958 Dej insisted on carrying on with industrialization despite COMECON’s plans for Romania to remain mostly agricultural in the intersocialist *division of labour*. This, on the other hand, did not imply that Dej gave up the Soviet model and developed a more individualistic model of communism. On the contrary, his domestic politics revealed faith and uniformity the Soviet ideal. In Gilberg’s words, “the [industrialization] policies that were implemented were Stalinist in form, content, speed, and thoroughness” (Gilberg, 1990: 113). Second, nationalism was used by the Party as a way to reduce dependence on the Soviet Union. By relying on support from the masses, Dej would need less support from Moscow.

Dej’s pattern of nationalism has been differently perceived by scholars. Stephen Fischer-Galati argued that the “postwar mass opposition to Communism cannot be characterized as an overtly anti-Russian phenomenon. It was anti-Russian only by identification of Russia with Communism” (Fischer-Galati, 1966: 129). But opposition to the implementation of the COMECON’s (abstract) development reforms was not enough to make the Party and its ideology more popular among Romanians. More was needed to convince the population of the necessity to construction a new society after the Soviet model. Roper suggests that “[u]nder Gheorghiu-Dej, nationalism took on a historical element. He linked the 1952 purges with the 1944 coup. He made the coup the starting point of Romanian communist nationalism. He blurred the realities of the coup to increase not only the role of the home communists but also the party’s popular support” (Roper, 2000: 29).

As part of his agenda, Dej put into practice a series of cultural policies whose aim was to emphasize the role of the nation. Chen enumerates some of these policies: “The Romanian Academy was abolished and replaced by a new one whose members were selected by the party, all history research was put under party control, the press and publishing houses were nationalized, and the state took education into its own hands” (Chen, 2003: 182). The role of the Orthodox Church was weakened

by deprivation of its right to engage in educational and charitable activities, the Uniate Church was dispersed and numerous campaigns of atheism and pro-Slavic orthography were promoted.

As mentioned, Dej resisted the de-Stalinization process, which was underway elsewhere in the communist world after 1953. Partly because there was no will neither from the Party leadership (de-Stalinization candidates, like Ana Pauker, had already been removed) and from lower levels who were concerned about their newly-won positions, afraid “that the population would interpret de-Stalinization as de-communization” (Roper, 2000: 30). Instead, the regime launched the nationalist strategy to appeal to both the national intelligentsia and the wide population. In an interesting analysis, Roper argues that “Gheorghiu-Dej was able to blend nationalism and Soviet ideology turning issues that challenged his authority to political advantage” (Roper, 2000: 41). From the identity view point, it is worth noting that this nationalist turn had important consequences for the minorities, which from then on were met with more clear assimilation policies, especially after the Hungarian Revolt, when Dej’s regime became less tolerant vis-à-vis relative cultural autonomy.

Indeed, after becoming the leader of the party in 1965, Ceaușescu expanded that use of Dej’s nationalist rhetoric and symbols. Adding as we have seen a strong interest in history and creating his own cult of personality, communism under Ceaușescu was reinterpreted as ‘national Stalinism’. Obviously, communism had also an internationalist version of nationalism in the sense that there was an international ideological model of what communist nation-states should look like. Communism, as a global ideology, forecasted a world order of interrelated communist nation-states. From this perspective internationalism was associated with nationalism in terms of the need to construct nation-states that sustained this anticipated order. This ‘internationalist nationalism’ was different from national communism which manifested mainly as a critical reaction against the Soviet imperialism, being innovator and flexible and even encouraging intellectual creativity. Conversely, national Stalinism was methodically against liberalisation, reactionary and closed, using unlimited political power and exclusivism.

In an analysis that I share, Tismăneanu’s argues that the ideological options of the political elites were to a large extent determined by the preexisting particularities of the Romanian society:

national Stalinism emerged as a continuation and improvement of a certain subculture within the Leninist revolutionary political culture, i.e. one based on historical anxiety, insecurity, marginality, archaic nostalgia and mythological resentments. It is the result of a political and intellectual syncretism which reunites a perspective on the world as rationalist programmatic (scientific socialism) and a set of semi-mystic beliefs, deeply rooted in the infrastructure of the national political cultures in the under-developed (dependent) agrarian societies. Thus the national Stalinism, especially in its Romanian version (...) was the synthesis of a fervent nationalist rhetoric and of a semi-religious adulation of the leader (Tismăneanu, 1990: 28).

Contrary to what some might think, rather than leading to the decline of the communist system, it seems the recovery of nationalism marked the start of a symbiosis where tradition and communism became mutually underpinning and reinforcing. Ceaușescu's effort to merge communism and nationalism seem to sustain this thesis. During his regime, a new form of communism¹⁷⁰ emerged from two simultaneous processes: 'communization of nationalism' and 'nationalization of communism' (Romanian communism and nationalism). The arguments were 'pragmatic' on both sides: reduced to a simplistic nationalism, two different concepts ('communism' and 'nationalism') associated with different (even opposing) ideologies could co-exist. Communism accepted nationalism for pragmatic reasons. First, distancing himself from Moscow and proclaiming himself as the *carrier* of national tradition, Ceaușescu hoped to obtain more internal and external legitimacy. Second, Ceaușescu hoped to take advantage of the people's anti-Soviet sentiments and at the same time mobilize some of the population's latent nationalism. This way a "certain solidarity between leaders and those led - otherwise difficult to obtain"¹⁷¹ was achieved.

Up against the initial, pro-Soviet form of communism, the nationalist communism took advantage of an image improvement: communism seems deliberated from its horrors and crimes (blamed on Russians) and present itself as a continuator of national tradition; and nationalism, through tradition and xenophobia, seems less unpleasant when it is associated to an ideology which is by definition transnational, as communism is. Botez concludes, "in their strange marriage, both nationalism and communism seem more appealing than nationalism and communism taken separately; in couple, both seem more diluted, less dogmatic and more

¹⁷⁰ Termed 'pharisaic nationalism' in Botez, 1993: 37.

¹⁷¹ Botez, 1993: 40.

pragmatic – and thus even humanized” (Botez, 1993: 43-44). But instead of humanization, according to Botez, in the case of Ceaușescu, “communism and nationalism degraded each other in their strange marriage: communism remained at the Stalinist level of the 1930s, whereas nationalism remained at the aggressive level of the 1930s, their alliance strengthening the role of the leader, who combines the communist cult of personality with the principle of the messianic nationalist leader” (Botez, 1993: 44-45). Moreover, in their simplistic form, it seems that communism and nationalism complemented and strengthened each other in such a way that extreme left and extreme right dictatorship could exist in parallel within the same totalitarian structure – in the same person. Indeed, because of the West’s incorrect evaluation of Romanians separation from Moscow, Ceaușescu’s regime enjoyed a lot of appreciation both internally and externally. This experience confirmed that through incorporation of traditions and nationalism, communism improved its image. Nationalism offered the communists the story telling, the heroes and the myths that populations need in order to identify collectively, but which imported, scientific socialism was not capable of providing.

A recurrent theme in Ceaușescu’s rhetoric was the so-called ‘national specificity’. According to Mihăilescu, promoting this idea served two strategic aims: “internal convergence around ‘specific’ values and external divergence against the values and structures opposed to this specificity” (Mihăilescu, 1992: 84). Indeed, at least four motivations for Ceaușescu to promote a nationalist discourse can be identified: the force this discourse had mobilised in the interwar period and under Dej’s regime; nationalism was a ‘shortcut’ to the lower classes, notably the peasants, whom had felt particularly alienated by the Soviet type of communism and not least punished by its forced collectivization; to legitimate his regime and remove all internal resistance; and last, but not least, nationalism was used to create the powerful and unified image of a “unitary symbolic space (the Nation) that denied diversity” (Verdery, 1991: 71). I will develop these four main reasons in the following.

First, the revival of earlier nationalist discourses proved to be quite efficient, especially because it represented a ‘return’ to the national identity discourse used before the creation of the Romanian nation-state (1918) and during the interwar period (section 4.2.3. *The Emergence of Nationalism*). In particular, the interest of the communist leadership for the nationalist type of discourse was due to the force this discourse had accumulated in the decades before the instauration of the communist

regime in Romania. In this way, even if the social, economic, and political conditions were featuring the ‘real socialism’, the resumption of the national discourse created the illusion of continuity with the interwar period (be it only at the discourse level). This is why, in order to understand Ceaușescu’s nationalism, one has to go back to the interwar nationalist discourse. Ceaușescu was not an innovator. He simply took over existing themes in the public discourse in the interwar period and used them to serve his own interests. For instance, Georgescu has linked Ceaușescu’s ‘obsession with the history’ and his emphasis on the autochthonous ancestors to interwar nationalism. As he points out,

another feature of the new elite is its obsession with the history. This obsession transformed itself in a form of neonationalism, similar to that practiced by Romanian radical right circles in the 1930s: an emphasis on ‘dacism’, opposed to the Roman origins, an exalted national ego, and an indirect support for xenophobe attitudes, non-patriotic, anti-Semite, anti-Russian or anti-Hungarian (Georgescu, 1992: 311).

This explains the process of restoration of some Romanian intellectuals, initially repudiated by the regime (e.g. Constantin Noica and his book, *Sentimentul românesc al ființei*¹⁷², published in 1978 which approached communist nationalist themes such as the exceptionality of Romanians and the detachment from the West).

The second reason for Ceaușescu’s to reinvent nationalism, was that it encouraged a collectivist mentality by engaging different levels of society. Andrei Roth (1999) uses the notion of ‘nationalist paradigm’ to refer to the intensity and the spread of nationalism at different levels of society. This ‘nationalist paradigm’ is characterised by “a mentality constituted through quasi-general consensus, meant to orientate the way in which the country’s social problems are formulated, approached and settled”¹⁷³. This mentality, shared by political elites and journalists, made that individuals otherwise belonging to different political orientations, had the same way of thinking. Cultivated through education and major cultural production (media, literary, historical, and philosophical), the mentality infiltrated extremely in the way of thinking of all layers of society, “where the professionals’ ideology and the common conception had the same denominator, ‘confirming’ and strengthening each other, for more decades, actually since the second half of the last century till

¹⁷² in English, The Romanian Feeling of Beingness.

¹⁷³ Roth, 1999: 32 (author’s translation).

nowadays”¹⁷⁴. Only by understanding this nationalist paradigm one can explain the echo that the national ideology had in people’s mind even in the darkest period of Ceaușescu’s regime.

Third, Ceaușescu’s nationalism played a significant role in eliminating the internal resistance against the regime. Ceaușescu used the *Securitate* to repress all resistance to his leadership and used it also to enlist the population to report on each other. According to the former Romanian secret police General, Ion Pacepa, “one in seven Romanians worked for the Securitate in one way or the other”¹⁷⁵. In his pursuit for supreme power Ceaușescu controlled Romanian politics, economic policy and even – to some extent - the West’s perception of Romania. After becoming the leader of the party, Ceaușescu created as mentioned the image of somebody who opposed Soviet Union and rehabilitated the national values. Thus, through creating this false image nationalism contributed to the legitimacy of his regime.

Fourth, Ceaușescu appealed to the invocation of national values to construct a unified image of the Romanian nation and to emphasise the holism of the Romanian communist project. This marked the shift of his mode of control: from being coercive to being symbolic-ideological (Verdery, 1996). This was very much a way to distract the attention from the country’s economic problems. Appealing to the masses through an impressive display of ethnic identity symbols, using and abusing them, he proved a good intuition for manipulating the collective imaginary (e.g., the images of Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu in a cornfield surrounded by happy children wearing traditional clothes). This way Ceaușescu consolidated his own position: presenting himself as a supporter and defender of national identity (despite his ‘economy of shortages’), he diminished substantially any embryonic kind of opposition vis-à-vis his regime. Retrieving this nationalist discourse he attracted intellectuals as well as the peasants on his side.

To sum-up, the above analysis has sought to identify the role and nature of nationalism under Romanian communism. Original, ‘internationalist’ communism found only limited support in mainly rural Romania. The restoration of nationalism helped Dej and Ceaușescu to legitimize their regimes. The false image created was partially accepted due to their assumed role as promoters of national ideals. The promotion of nationalism also encouraged a collectivist mentality, thus diminishing

¹⁷⁴ Roth, 1999: 32 (author’s translation).

¹⁷⁵ Mungiu-Pippidi, 1999: 135.

individual initiatives (and hence further weakening the emergence of a coherent civil society).

4.3.4. *Civil Society in Communist Romania*

Trying to depict the conditions under which civil society developed during communism, Tismăneanu (1993) reminds us that it was not the Lockean concept of civil society at work where the individual was invited to participate in public affairs. Civil society under communism meant flight from the omnipresent state into private forms of organization. This partly explains the peculiar picture of civil society in communist Romania. On the one hand, there were under communism examples of individual as well as collective forms of dissent (e.g. the Jiu Valley coal miners's strike in 1977 or the Braşov workers' movement from 1987). On the other hand, though, many scholars (Dahrendorf, 1990; Laignel-Lavastine, 1992; Verdery, 1991; Tismăneanu, 1993, 1998) have expressed the precarious condition, the 'anaemic development', and the fragility of civil society in Romania under communism. According to Vladimir Tismăneanu, "those who dared to criticize the increasingly irrational policies of Nicolae and Elena Ceauşescu were automatically branded as traitors to the national interest, and some were expelled, others were kept under house arrest, were imprisoned, or simply disappeared" (Tismăneanu, 1993: 318). Even the few attempts to set up independent labour unions were quickly removed. He refers to "mental coercion, indoctrination, and regimentation"¹⁷⁶ combined with fear for *Securitate* as the devices for the maintenance of the authoritarian system of the *Conducător*. Laignel-Lavastine (1992) writes of the main obstacles that delayed the emergence of civil society in communist Romania: the absence of democratic traditions; the attitudes of obedience vis-à-vis the political class; the influence of the Orthodox Church (traditionally subordinated to the government and which doctrine is linked more to community values than to individual values), the relatively low level of demands made by the Romanian working class, corruption, clientelism; last but not least, the disinterest of dissidents for civic responsibility manifested in the lack of solidarity with the workers' movements that took place in 1977 and 1987.

In the late 1940's and early 1950's the communists had a very active policy of removing or pacifying of all forms of civil society and political plurality. *Securitate*, created in 1948, was instrumental in targeting any potential opposition to

¹⁷⁶ Tismăneanu, 1993: 319.

the Communist Party. Democratic leaders who refused to join the communists, Party member with divergent points of view or peasants opposed to collectivization were imprisoned. Orthodox Church leaders were replaced by those who agreed to the communist project¹⁷⁷. After Stalin's death these actions were for a while reduced in intensity, but soon revived by the second half of the 1950s as a response to the revolts in Hungary and Poland. This time repressions focused on students and intellectuals. The 1952 Constitution contained important – often concealed - restraints of citizens' rights. For example, article 85 referred to the freedom of speech, media, meetings and demonstrations, but added that these liberties should be exercised with a view to strengthen the popular democracy regime¹⁷⁸. In sum, the deliberate actions of the communist regime explain to a great extent the incapacity of forming a thriving civil society as a counterweight to the state, and were effective in further weakening the already weak civil society that survived the interwar period and the fascist regime.

If in the beginning the communist regime controlled its population by force, starting with the 1960s the mode of control became more structural and less explicit in the sense that it gradually moved in individuals' daily lives. This meant that in addition to the direct legal and political suspension of civil society, it acted more deeply in the very structure of social action itself. As Srubar notes, the very concept of 'social relation' underwent several transformations. As the population gradually lost confidence in the communist system and its capacity to find solutions to their everyday concerns, alternative social networks based on personal connections started to form to solve multiple daily matters (for instance, the provision of consumption goods). This provoked rather a reverse of normality: in order to get your problems solved, you had to address not to the institution (undermining its function) but to your own network¹⁷⁹. People focused on satisfying immediate needs, while they were increasing alienated from the formal societal structures. One severe consequence, were signs of total distrust in the relevance of the individual performance in a larger context. Hence, an apparent paradox of the system was that, in accordance with the official rhetoric, it *did* in a way advance a sense of 'unity' – but it was a unity not at the prescribed ideological or national level, but rather in the very banal sense that people on the microlevel became highly interdependent in order

¹⁷⁷ Georgescu, 1991.

¹⁷⁸ Focşeneanu, 1992: 115.

¹⁷⁹ quoted in Badrus, 2001: 71 (author's translation).

to meet basic needs. Verdery (1991) sustains this thesis by arguing that by leaving individuals' basic needs aside, communism suspended in fact the internal motivation of the individual to support the institutions.

There is little doubt that the informal and ambivalent aspect of these networks had long term consequences at the individual level as well as in collective identity formation. Individual action was not only limited by the political and ideological pressure, but also by the dependence of these networks (not separated from moral and illegal compromises, often socially accepted). Thus, redistribution networks fulfilled not just an integrative function, but also developed the premodern institution of the 'gift' (*dar*), meant to assure the appearance of symmetry and mutuality inside the network. It is not hard to see the origin of the corruption problems, which today represent a major obstacle on Romania's path to EU membership. It is worth noting that the widespread small 'illegalities' committed by literally everybody served an additional function in an increasingly repressive society; they signified that you could still do something against the system and this would grant a social identity that would throw you - even if only symbolically and momentarily - outside the system.

The situation reached in the late 1980s to a critical phase. Botez (1992) uses the notion of 'social fatigue' to characterize the Romanian society between 1985 and 1989 and to explain how the 'economy of shortage' actually contributed to the stability of the system. In this sense the moribund planned economy became a significant tool in creating a low level of expectations. This fact diminished drastically all attempts of critique and guaranteed even cooperation with the system. This mechanism made Botez note:

when the simple movement from home to work becomes a nightmare, when the procurement of food remains a preoccupation that takes so much energy, when almost half a year you live – home or publicly – at a lower temperature than your organism normally functions, there is little strength (without mentioning time) for something else, for instance for critique and appeal. (...) Extended social fatigue does not necessarily imply the wish for change: I would rather recall the easy way in which one can obtain under such conditions insignificant satisfactions of some aspirations of a very low level (Botez, 1992:16).

The informal redistribution networks were an important indicator of the emergence of what Paquetteau (1993) terms 'black society'. Initially the creation of 'black society' was meant to attenuate the insufficiencies of the system. Then,

gradually, the ‘black society’ oriented itself towards adaptation to the communist system and finally coexisted with the system. The effect was a social compromise between the communist power and the society, subversive both for the state and the civil society. Therefore, in line with Paqueteau, I argue that the expansion of ‘black society’ and its informal networks was a crucial factor in hindering the development of a strong civil society during communism. And likely, a much larger obstacle than the deliberate, direct oppression organised by the regime. The compromise which the society made with the power structures turned against the civil society’s own capacity to organize solidarity actions: “the antithesis of civil society [was] not the bureaucratic and totalitarian communist state but the society itself reconstructed in the shadow and flows of this state and which increased through its networks the fragmentation provoked by power. The black society is the civil society functioning against itself”¹⁸⁰.

A second factor which affected civil society’s development during communism was the system’s direct impact on the mentality of Romanians. In an interesting study, of which I share the main conclusions, Verdery’s basically endorsed the idea that the communist system in Romania affected all aspects of life: the past, the present and - most of all - the people’s consciousnesses and the resulting everyday behaviour:

Not knowing when the bus might come, when cars might be allowed to circulate again, when the exam for the medical specializations would be given, or when food would appear in stores, bodies were transfixed, suspended in a void that obviated all projects and plans but the most flexible and spontaneous (Verdery, 1996: 49).

I argue that this arbitrariness of everyday life – reinforced by constant fear of the *Securitate* - caused widespread mental resignation. As a consequence, people became gradually subjects ready to accept anything, cold and hunger, whatever it took to please the system. Necessary, staged participation in communist propaganda was one thing; the general level of civic involvement in sustaining society was another. Instead of collective enthusiasm and productivity people became gradually reticent in public issues and a silent lethargy spread into the society, at its different levels. Seen in retrospect, it is not surprising that when the Revolution came,

¹⁸⁰ quoted in Badrus, 2001: 73 (author’s translation).

it was as the direct result of these violent food and heating shortages, not because an organized, civil counter-movement had developed.

As a third particularity regarding Romanian civil society, I want to draw attention to the limited role played by dissenting intellectuals during communism. Almost by definition, intellectuals have traditionally been producers of alternative and transformative ideas. Thereby often challenging the official version of the truth and even sometimes, in their personal capacity, serving as ‘rallying points’ for civil movements. In the context of cultural integration, the involvement of the intellectuals during communism is also interesting, because in earlier phases of Romania’s modernisation, intellectuals had played an important role as receivers and translators of external influences. Nonetheless, as I will demonstrate below, during communism the intellectuals seem to have been relatively absent in terms catalysts of transformation and representatives of civil society. It is worth noting that against the background of the massive cleansing among the national intelligentsia, which took place in the 1950s, many intellectuals accepted to join the Communist Party and even collaborated closely with the system (Deletant 1998a).

According to Tismăneanu, the fear for persecution made many intellectuals emigrate externally or internally by “refusing to participate in the official pageants” (Tismăneanu, 1993: 319). Notably by the 1980s the *Securitate* was so infiltrated in people’s minds that just thinking that the secret police could act provoked fear. All forms of criticism were criminalised, which eventually resulted in self censorship. Andreescu (1992) points to this ‘fear for *Securitate*’ as being a main factor that hindered the formation of civil society among Romanian intellectuals. Indeed, the few dissidents Romania had, have explained the non-participation in collective protests and the non existence of civil society by mentioning that justice, press, police, and security usually meant to defend individuals were transformed under Ceaușescu into intimidating and terrorising tools¹⁸¹. Tismăneanu (1993: 318) argues that an additional obstacle to the emergence of civil society among and around intellectuals was Ceaușescu’s reputation in the West as being an opponent to the Soviet Union. Something which made Romanian intellectuals feel abandoned and powerless.

The above does not signify that Romanian intellectuals entirely stopped producing alternative thoughts during communism. Yet, in general, they avoided

¹⁸¹ Dinescu 1990: 79.

direct confrontations with the regime and practiced instead a form of dissent that they called ‘resistance through culture’ (Verdery, 1991; Lovinescu, 1998; Barbu, 1999). Barbu, for example, has described this form of resistance as “a formula devoid of any political and moral sense as long as the entire culture of the five totalitarian decades was, almost entirely the product of ideology and of variable but inexorable mechanisms of censorship” (Barbu, 1999: 51-52). According to Alina Mungiu (1996), the main feature of the political performance of intellectuals during communism was “its perfect gratuitousness”.

Nobody, beginning with them, believed that a change of system was possible. A political position within the system did not interest them. The only possible thing to do was to escape the system through their own marginality. They thought their protests futile, but here was their strength and the beauty of their gesture – to fight an eternal immutable power. It was an autistic game, with rules and stereotypes understood only by the intimate partners, the secret police, and the dissenter himself (Mungiu, 1996: 338-9).

For Verdery it is too simplistic to condemn the failure to develop civil initiatives and popular participation in the communist period. In her own words, “the retreat into veiled statements in the cultural press was about all that made sense”, and “to do anything more than they did would have been pure self-destruction” (Verdery, 1991: 310-1). Yet, even if reduced to inferior positions in society, and persuaded not to act out of fear for the secret police, Georgescu (1992) and Barbu (1999) still question the more fundamental reasons for the relative inactivity of the intellectuals during the communist rule. As Georgescu puts it, it is difficult to explain that the Romanian civil society was weak because the secret police was strong. In his opinion, the power of the *Securitate* came also from the [already] fragile character of civil society¹⁸². Even more critical about intellectuals’ ‘complicity’ with the regime, Daniel Barbu writes,

the highest responsibility that cannot be cancelled by any transition, was not the collaborationism, outspoken or confidential, of some individuals, but the state of *moral emigration* where the biggest part of the Romanian population escaped, for five decades. The general disinterest *vis-à-vis* the community life, non-involvement in events, mistrust about neighbours and friends, the obsessive concern with daily food, hunting at any price the own interests, (...) this is how the map of a geographical paradox is drawn: most of Romanians lived in

¹⁸² Georgescu 1992: 295.

Romania without ever being present at what happened in their own country (Barbu, 1999: 55).

To summarise, the already weak civil society was further weakened under the communist regime. This was for a number of reasons, including the alteration of social relations ('the black society'), the fear for *Securitate*, and relative non-involvement of intellectuals in actions of dissent. These reasons along with the repression from the communist regime have prevented the development of a strong civil society and determined the precarious and fragile nature of Romanian civil society by 1989.

4.3.5. Concluding Remarks

The previous sections have presented Romania's communist era through analysis of four central themes: the emergence of Romanian communism; the nature of Romanian communism; the communist version of Romanian nationalism; and civil society in communist Romania. These themes bring together the specificity of Romania during communism. Thus, the sections represent -together with the sections on pre-communist Romania - the 'prerequisites' for the following analysis of Romania's contemporary transformation.

The communist era represents particular endeavour of modernization with a certain continuity. Many of Romania's contemporary challenges were rooted in the more than forty years of communism and in this respect they are unprecedented. But it is just as important to recognize that many of Romania's current difficulties antedate communism, and in this sense are *old* problems re-embedded in a *new* European context. Even if the revolution represented a significant discontinuity for Romanian society, the post-1989 development is subject to both types of influences.

For a balanced assessment of the communist legacy, one should be aware that even today Ceaușescu's regime is not only viewed in negative terms by significant large segments of the Romanian population. 'Why?', one may ask, knowing that the regime carries large responsibility for the high costs that many of the same segments pay under the current transformation. A related question will help me shed light on this seemingly paradox: How did communism survive for four decades? The issue of social legitimacy provides part of the answer. According to Illner, "legitimacy [under communism] was attained by trading political democracy for an egalitarian social welfare system" (Illner, 1999: 239). In the case of Romania,

the rural and semi-rural population benefited from joint supply of income from both agriculture and industry, as well as from the informal networks which were enjoying some social privileges. This has changed after the Revolution and has created disappointments, many Romanians being relatively worse off today than before 1989. The conception of the state as being the one providing for social welfare and responsible for the well being of its citizens is still to be widely found today. It will suffice to mention universal literacy, general education, and skilled labour as some the positive features that have turned out to be the 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu, 1973) of the post-1989 process of transformation.

In my view there is not only one factor that contributed to the fall of communism in Romania: economic, as much as political, social and cultural factors contributed to making the regime irreversibly insolate. One can also argue that on the one hand, it is the absence of pre-1989 reforms and the use of military and secret police that separates the way the Romanian revolution occurred from the Polish, Czechoslovakian and Hungarian revolutions for example. On the other hand, it is the oppression of Ceaușescu's autocratic rule and repressive policies which dehumanized the Romanian society and made the upheaval violent.

After the end of the communist rule, Romanian society again found itself faced with a – partly externally imposed - process reconstruction vis-à-vis a reshaped European reality. The second part of this case study will deal with the process of cultural integration linked to the process of internal transformation and its implications for the Romanian societal identities. The present phase may be considered as Romania's second entry into Europe or as the programme adopted by Tăriceanu's government on 28 December 2004 presented it, a 'second modernization of Romania'. Finally, talking about the legacy of the past – and as I will come back to later - one important element of continuity in today's Romania is that this 'second modernization' project is very much an elite driven project¹⁸³.

4.4. Romanian Society after Communism

The features of the modern Romanian nation and the communist type of society have been outlined in the premises for cultural integration. I will now focus my attention

¹⁸³ As stated in the current Government program, 'second modernization' is the process of active participation in the European integration process defined by the current Romanian government for the period 2005-2008.

on the way communism collapsed, the political forces engaged in the events of December 1989, and Romania's political transformation since December 1989. As illustrated in the previous sections on precommunist and communist Romania, from the nineteenth century to the beginning of the communist period, cultural integration was defined by two tendencies: (1) Western (represented by those who were in favour of the 'West' model as put forward by the French and German models) and (2) nationalist tendencies (those who were against 'Westerners' and who saw the imitation of the Western model as a threat to Romanian national values and traditions). As I will demonstrate in the following sections, these two determinants - though persistent in Romania after the downfall of communism - are not sufficient to understand Romania's current transformations and relation to Europe.

Based on the historical background of Romania's transformation, I will now explore the forces that are influencing the reconstruction of politics after 1989. Acknowledging the legacy of precommunist and communist past, should help us better understand Romania's present societal dynamics. As we have seen from the historical and political conditions presented in the previous subchapters, Romania's conditions for reconstructing its societal order have proven rather problematic. Moreover, Romania's awareness of its societal backwardness (i.e. the 'complex of inferiority') and peripheral position, even more backward than in the case of other communist countries, perceived as inherited from communism, has definitely influenced the process of reconstruction. Retaining these legacies, I now turn to look in more detail at the reconstruction of politics, post-1989 nationalism, and at the postwestern and postnational dynamics of cultural integration.

4.4.1. The Reconstruction of Politics after Communism

Before elucidating the impact of postwestern and postnational dynamics, this section will analyse Romania's political landscape in order to set the context for the process of transformation. As a first step, I will clarify the main political actors' specific vision of Romania's internal transformation. Thus, I concur with Wagner that argues for the need to look "at the situational horizon of the political actors" (Wagner, 2004: 53) in order to depict the transformation process proposed by the elites¹⁸⁴. This

¹⁸⁴ For a detailed analysis of Romanian domestic political transformation between 1989 and 2000, see also Wagner, 2002.

section will start with an analysis of the major political actors of Romania after 1989 and their Western and nationalist visions of transformation.

A note should be made on the meaning of ‘opposition’. In Romania, it is very difficult to distinguish a veritable opposition since “the groups that might qualify for it kept changing colours and sides” (Verdery, 1996: 111). Romania’s political landscape has been extremely dynamic: parties disappeared, changed name, divided, reconfigured the coalition; members migrated from one party to another and allied with enemies against their closest friends. For Kathrine Verdery, in post-1989 Romania the term ‘opposition’ refers “to a quite miscellaneous collection of personages, orientations, and interests, defined only through their criticism of the ruling coalition”¹⁸⁵. ‘Opposition’ qualifies therefore all Romanian political parties taking a position openly opposed to that of the party (or coalition) in government. Looking at the first years of pluralist democracy in Romania, one notices the unstable character of the opposition.

The process of internal reorganization pursued by social agents can be divided in two political currents. First, a nationalist trend orientated towards continuity with the communist past, limited (or anti-) reforms, exclusivist nationalism, sometimes anti-Western, and scepticism towards democratic procedures. These ideas have been represented by the National Salvation Front – later Party of Social Democracy of Romania - as well as the nationalist parties, Greater Romania Party and Party of National Union of Romania. The emphasis has been on “the need to safeguard the living standards and is wary of radical economic experiments” (Breuilly, 1993: 352). Second, a Western movement orientated towards a radical break with the communist past, a swift transition to a Western type of democracy, capitalism, and a strong civil society. These aspirations have been pursued by the so-called ‘historical parties’ - the National Liberal Party (PNL) and the National Peasant Party-Christian Democrat (PNT-CD) - and the newly formed parties, later united to form the Democratic Convention of Romania (CDR).

Already several phases of political pluralization can be identified in post-1989 Romania: first, the destabilization of the Communist Party by the revolutionary elites and anti-Ceaușescu propaganda (December 1989); second, the emergence of multipartism under ex-communist dominance (1990-1992); third, nationalist revival and stagnation (1992-1996); fourth, consolidation of the Western discourse (1996-

¹⁸⁵ Verdery 1996: 111.

2000); fifth, mainstreaming of the integrationist discourse (2000-2004); and presently, a process of political differentiation where the main question is whether ‘indigenous’ values can resist the socio-economic price of modernization (since 2004). These six phases will constitute in the last part of the chapter orientation points in my discussion of postwestern and postnational Romania.

The National Salvation Front: Revolution and Early Polarization between Nationalism and Westernization

Understanding Romania’s political transformation requires a shift in analysis from a discussion of general trends to a review of the specific political events around and right after the revolution. Beyond the controversial nature of the Romanian revolution¹⁸⁶ (i.e. was it a genuine revolution or a coup?), there was a political consensus on the “restoration of democracy, liberties and dignity of the Romanian people”¹⁸⁷. The other side of the revolution was its ‘unfinished character’ (Roper, 2000), highly favorable to members of the former communist elites. Despite public demonstrations and other televised events in the days around the revolution, Holmes has pointed out that it was, first of all, “the struggle between two wings of the party-state apparatus, the military and sectors of the Securitate, that sealed the fate of the Romanian anti-communist revolution” (Holmes, 1997: 82).

The revolutionaries organized themselves on December 22 under the name of National Salvation Front (*Frontul Salvării Naționale*, FSN) as a provisional government headed by a then second rank communist figure, Ion Iliescu¹⁸⁸ who assumed power and proclaimed the abolition of the one-party system. Other actors of the FSN comprised members of the communist nomenklatura, various anti-communist dissidents, students and military officers.

After the execution of the Ceaușescu couple on 22 December 1989, Iliescu broadcasted that “Ceaușescu clan which has destroyed the country has been eliminated from power”¹⁸⁹ and the creation of the National Salvation Front (FSN). Initially the FSN emerged as the interim government from the December revolution. As such it stated that it was not a political formation and therefore it will not nominate candidates for the first democratic elections. Against this commitment, in

¹⁸⁶ For a detailed account of the 1989 Revolution see Roper, 2000 and Neumann, 2000.

¹⁸⁷ Iliescu, 1995: 19.

¹⁸⁸ “a prominent member of the PCR before his demotion in 1971” (Roper, 2000: 65).

¹⁸⁹ Ștefănescu, 1995: 448.

January 1990, the FSN manifested a strong interest for participation in the forthcoming elections (for which it formally registered in February 1990). Partly because of this decision and partly because of the obvious control over mass media (especially television), the FSN came to be gradually criticized by the opposition that it was reinstituting the rule of the new ‘single party’.

Indeed, the FSN used its key role in the revolution to legitimate its leadership position in taking all state power. Gilberg (1990) argues that communists and not the communist party exerted influence after the Revolution. This encouraged the persistence of former communist networks. This also provides an explanation for the lack of coherent reform programs allowing informal and illegal performances to become entrenched in institutional practices. As Wagner depicted in 2002, “Romanian reform thus far has been a stop-gap affair: it has reacted to demands and criticisms from the outside, while on the inside being continually picked to pieces by contending political and socio-economic (!) interests” (Wagner, 2002: 278). Wagner’s study suggests that in Romania the “process of reform could never make up for what it lacked from the very beginning: a national-political consensus on the need and trajectory of reform”¹⁹⁰. Indeed, Romania experienced a slow process of reforms during the 1990s partly because Iliescu and his party formed mainly of former communist elites have remained in (or returned to) power at several occasions.

After the 1989 revolution the new political, institutional and economic changes began to manifest a controlling impact on Romanian society. According to Roper, “[w]hile Iliescu and the FSN established the political agenda, nationalist ideology became a polarizing force soon after December 1989” (Roper, 2000: 67). Officially, Western integration has been the aim of Romanian foreign policy since the end of Ceaușescu’s rule. Significant from this perspective is the firm ‘we are returning to Europe’ declared in the ten-point programme as formulated by the FSN in December 1989. Point nine refers namely to Romania’s “integrating itself in the process of the construction of a united Europe, the common house of all the peoples of the Continent”¹⁹¹. Moreover, on 5 January 1990 a Declaration on the status of national minorities, issued by the FSN, stated that “[t]he National Salvation Front

¹⁹⁰ Wagner 2002: 278.

¹⁹¹ quoted in Wagner 2002: 257.

solemnly declares that it shall achieve and guarantee the individual and collective rights and liberties of all the national minorities”¹⁹².

However, soon after FSN’s official Western agenda, nationalist ideas, which appealed to many Romanians, became a polarizing force. For ethnic minorities in Romania the revolution was seen as a political event which has reconciled ethnic groups and that tolerance and not chauvinism should form the basis of ethnic relations (i.e. Laszlo Tökes and the way the 1989 Revolution started). This vision was highlighted in the Proclamation of Timișoara of 11 March 1990¹⁹³ which main aim was to make clear the aspirations of the revolution. Yet, soon after this proclamation, the ethnic conflict¹⁹⁴ between ethnic Hungarians in Transylvanian towns (Satu Mare, Târgu Mureș and Sovata) and ethnic Romanians was proving the fragility and the real nature of the ethnic relations. This event was largely exploited by the nationalist Party of Romanian National Unity in an obvious effort to increase their popularity in the 1990 elections.

The Emergence of Multipartism under Ex-communist Dominance (1990-1992)

The first democratic elections were held in May 1990 with seventy-three participating parties¹⁹⁵. The ad-hoc revolutionary body FSN won an overwhelming majority (66 percent of the votes). Presidential elections, held at the same time, saw Iliescu gain approximately 85 percent of the vote and Petre Roman was named prime minister. For Roper, ”the FSN, as a former communist party, benefited the most from the Ceaușescu’s cult of personality and use of the secret police, which undermined any opposition movement or underground media” (Roper, 2000: 68). The revived interwar parties, the National Liberal Party (PNL) and the National Peasant Party (PNT) obtained together less than 10 percent of the votes. Interestingly, the minority party, the Hungarian Democratic Union of Romania (UDMR), attained over 7 percent of the votes¹⁹⁶.

Firstly, without a clear-cut political program, highly distrustful towards market economy and pluralist democracy, in favour of populist measures (e.g. reduction of prices and of working hours), the first Romanian democratic government

¹⁹² Rompres, January 6, 1990.

¹⁹³ Roper, 2000: 66.

¹⁹⁴ Condemned by the EU, Council of Europe, and NATO.

¹⁹⁵ Roper, 2000: 67.

¹⁹⁶ Source: Combes and Berindei, 1991: 75-76.

did not mean a radical break with communism¹⁹⁷. In fact the FSN carried over large parts of the communist legacy, such as the *Securitate*, interference in the judiciary and use of the political position for personal enrichment as well as certain policies including nationalization, collectivization and control over mass media. Moreover Ion Iliescu condemned on national television the rebirth of the ‘historical’ parties, the PNL and the PNT (Mungiu-Pippidi, 1999: 140). This created all premises for Romania to remain behind reforms, and as a consequence, Romania increasingly fell behind other East European countries in the race for EU accession. Iliescu related the prospective of integration to the erosive consequences of market society, which would eventually weaken the role of the state. Paradoxically, at the same time Iliescu held responsible the opposition’s criticism for Romania’s slowness of economic reforms, charges of corruption, and absence of foreign investment.

Secondly, a general assessment of communism or an analysis of the Romanian revolution was never really initiated, possibly because an overwhelming number of people were personally affected (Mungiu Pippidi 1999: 135). The critique was directed instead upon Ceaușescu’s remaining fortune and family, the phenomenon of corruption in late communism, and elimination of any opposition when the FSN was tackled with its own past. Likewise, the FSN’s critique was directed more general towards the communist party’s ‘monopoly on the truth’ and the subordination of the individual to the communist system. The official denunciation of communism and the actual actions taken were in sharp contrast.

Thirdly, Iliescu did not abandon the long (communist *and* precommunist) tradition of using nationalism to gain popularity. The nationalist feature of Iliescu’s rule became evident when his own rule was threatened. For instance, to control the urban opposition fearful of a Communist restoration, Ion Iliescu has more than once in the early 1990s resorted to vigilante groups, such as those among coal miners. In exchange for various benefits, the miners - presented as the vanguard of the working class by Communist propaganda - served as voluntary anti-opposition troops in favour of the FSN. The miners clashed with Bucharest protesters against the Roman government, mostly students, in June 1990, closing the new free media for weeks. Instead of dialogue, President Iliescu incited the miners to scatter the ‘hooligans’. A year later, the miners came back to protest against the government and against the

¹⁹⁷ Ion Iliescu has been the President of Romania for eleven years, from 1990 to 1996, and from 2000 to 2004.

living conditions. They also assisted in bringing down Petre Roman's government when he broke with Iliescu.

In sum, the main changes in the Romanian political sphere that occurred between 1990 and 1992 concerned the installation of a multiparty system, adoption of a new constitution, and the replacement of 'bad' communists with 'disguised' communists. Following Mungiu-Pippidi, the FSN did not start as a Communist successor party; it became over time, as reformers were pushed out and conservative Communist elements were (re)introduced (Mungiu-Pippidi, 1999). Tismăneanu had already predicted as early as in 1988 that: "anybody who would succeed Ceaușescu, even an ardent, seasoned apparatchik, would be the most popular leader in the whole of Romanian history... because such a person would benefit from comparisons with the worst period in Romanian history. It would, of course, be an undeserved and passing popularity. But it would be enough for Ceaușescu's successor to renounce some unpopular laws to achieve an extraordinary upsurge in popularity" (Tismăneanu, 1989a: 61).

Nationalist Revival and Stagnation (1992-1996)

In April 1992 due to internal power struggles the FSN was divided in two: first, the 'Iliescu group' (formed mainly by former communist elites) that founded the Democratic National Salvation Fond (FDSN), in July 1993 to become the Party of Social Democracy of Romania (PDSR). Adding 'democratic' to the party name was an obvious attempt to meet some of the growing critique – at least at the discursive level, hereby institutionalizing the 'coup'. The second faction was represented by the more reformist 'Roman group' led by Petre Roman who would found in May 1993 the Democratic Party (PD). Iliescu's FDSN won the September 1992¹⁹⁸ elections with support from rural voters, who favoured the restoration of land and soft reforms, thus opposing the more radical changes proposed by the opposition. The new government led by Prime Minister Nicolae Văcăroiu was formed by the FDSN with support from the three nationalist parties: the Party of the National Union of Romania (PUNR), the Greater Romania Party (PRM), and the Socialist Labour Party (PSM).

The internal reorganization project stated by Iliescu during the second mandate used two main modes of legitimation: first, a 'revolutionary legitimacy' (Blokker, 2004), based on the reestablishment of popular sovereignty as the basis of

¹⁹⁸ With hundred and forty four political parties participating in the elections (Verdery, 1996: 91).

political authority; second, a form of traditional legitimacy, populist nationalism (i.e. egalitarianism, social cohesion and national unity) perceived in direct continuity with the communist regime. Iliescu's leadership under a discourse of 'social-democracy' failed coming to terms with the prerequisites for integration. Yet, lack of reforms made that gradually this legitimization faded. The state did not wholeheartedly sustain rule of law and the establishment of a market economy. Iliescu generally rejected the Western inspired reforms and formulated an indigenous model, based on the notions of 'original democracy', 'social state', 'national consensus', and 'social market economy'. These 'lost years' are most likely also crucial in explaining why Romania turned out less pluralistic in terms of civil society (see section 4.7.4.).

During these years, the opposition emerged as a response to Iliescu's anti-Western, exclusivist and anti-reform way of rebuilding Romanian society. The opposition first rallied around Petre Roman's wing of the FSN¹⁹⁹ which supported a quicker pace of substantial reforms and wanted an open debate over Romania's communist legacy. After losing the 1992 elections, the FSN group found itself officially in opposition. Subsequently other parties outside the coalition joined the opposition in their claims for Romania's need to go 'West'. This included the centre-right parties, PNT-CD and the National Liberal Party. Although different from a doctrine point of view, these re-emerged historical parties shared a Western orientation regarding freedom of the individual and democratic reforms. This came in contradiction with the anti-Western FDSN and the nationalist parties' counter-understanding of freedom as collective emancipation.

Consolidation of the Western Discourse (1996-2000)

In the November 1996 presidential and parliamentary elections the Democratic Convention of Romania (CRD), which included the historical parties and other liberal formations won the elections. Emil Constantinescu was elected President. A coalition government was formed with the UDMR (the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania) and the USD (the Social Democratic Union), with Victor Ciorbea, as the prime minister. This election marked a turning point in the process of transformation of Romania, meaning also that for the first time since 1989 a distinct break with the

¹⁹⁹ The split officially occurred in March 27-29 during the national congress of the FSN. Roman's group continued being the successor of the FSN while Iliescu's group renames itself the Democratic Front of National Salvation Front (the FDSN).

communist past and the adoption of a clear Western discourse. The change of policy consisted mainly in rapid privatization, fast economic reforms, anti-corruption measures, and a clear commitment to integrating Romania in the European and Euro-Atlantic structures. This election proved a break with earlier interpretations of transformation and marked a change in the role of the state from ‘controller of society’ to ‘developer of society’.

Whereas previous governments had chosen to reform the system without renouncing at the communist one (Wagner, 2002: 251), now the so-called ‘shock therapy’ was called upon. The positive reactions from Western institutions did not delay showing-up. Following the first and hitherto only swing in government from the former communists to the anti-communists and the subsequent association of the government with the Hungarian minority party (UDMR), the European Commission formally acknowledged in 1997 that Romania had satisfied the so-called political Copenhagen criteria and invited the country to start formal accession talks with the EU from 1999. Furthermore, the new government expressed clearly that it “would reduce government spending, reform the banking system and speed up the privatization of key industries”²⁰⁰. On this basis, an agreement with the IMF was signed in April 1997.

The 1996 coalition could then use the adaptation to the new socio-economic and cultural conditions of the integration into Western structures as a mode of legitimation. It could be argued that whereas the ex-communists were associated with arbitrariness and corruption, the CRD was equated with transparency, impersonal functioning, and reestablishment of the rule of law (Blokker, 2004: 315). As such the coalition reinforced its own democratic origins and pro-Western direction along the Romanian history, thereby creating potential links with Romania’s precommunist past to fill the identity void and at the same time trying to break with the communist past. Communism was perceived as a discontinuity in the history of Romania, while the Europeanist tradition was associated with the only way to establish stability and prosperity within the society. This was also a way for the historical parties to reinforce their discourses of democracy and to legitimate their political actions.

The pro-Western orientation of the 1996 government was to a great extent endorsed to the fact that the minority party, UDMR, was included in the governing

²⁰⁰ Roper, 2000: 82.

coalition. The main impact of its participation was a significant shift: from an approach of ‘nationalizing nationalism’ (i.e. the domination of the minorities by the majority) towards a consensus between the national majority and the minorities. As a consequence of the internal pressure from UDMR and the external requirements from the EU, Council of Europe, and NATO, Romania started to internalize the minorities’ rights. Indeed, this indicated a significant change towards acceptance, recognition and tolerance vis-à-vis minorities.

The integration of Romania into the European and Euro-Atlantic structures was decisively one of the first priorities of the CDR government. Whereas earlier in the 1990s integration was looked at as to something that would betray national interests, now the democratic coalition considered that integration was the best way to promulgate the national interest. However, despite election commitments and diplomatic efforts, by 2000 the government had not succeeded in bringing Romania neither into NATO nor into EU’s first wave of enlargement. This was a major disappointment, which made the electorate question the legitimacy of the government project, and triggered intra-party disputes. Indeed, the government was under regular internal and external pressure: internal, through repeated attacks from the social democrats on the rhythm of the reforms, restitution of land, and cultural rights for the minorities; external pressure came from the Bretton Woods institutions criticising the government for the insufficient fight against corruption and requiring more economic progress.

A new government coalition, led by Radu Vasile, promised to improve economic reforms and political stability, but without significant success (e.g. delaying privatization of key companies). In January 1999, encouraged by the nationalist PRM and the PDSR, the coal miners came again to Bucharest in protest against the closure of several mines. This made Roper note that the transition was in a fragile state and that Romania “does not possess a civil society in which conflict and disagreement can be resolved through negotiation without the threat of violence” (Roper, 2000: 84).

Although between 1996 and 2000 Romania witnessed many changes of leadership (i.e. three prime ministers) and continuing internal struggles, the governing parties managed to preserve their coalition. Yet, the incapacity of the broad coalition to follow a common reform agenda and to generate a coherent discourse or to produce something different from the previous governments (i.e. economic hardship

brought by structural reforms), as well as the repeated corruption scandals loosened the belief that they could do better if reelected. This favored the come back of Iliescu in 2000.

Mainstreaming of the Integrationist Discourse (2000-2004)

Iliescu's PSDR regained power in 2000 after the outgoing CRD had been held responsible for Romania's socio-economic problems (including falling living standards and inflation), and corruption scandals. Already when finding itself in the opposition in 1997, the political program of the PDSR expressed clearly as national objective the modernization of Romania on the basis of 'political and social consensus' (PDSR, 1997). On the basis of a platform that highlighted the loyalty to European integration, Iliescu²⁰¹ adhered to a more Western-type social democracy in terms of economic reforms, even if the applied vocabulary remained partly nationalist (i.e. the discourse on the 'unitary character' of the national identity). The outcome of the election raised concerns about the fragility of democracy in Romania, as the nationalist PRM obtained almost 20 percent of the votes. According to a survey from mid-November 2000, 85 percent of Romanians had no trust in the political parties, the parliament or the government. The nationalist leader, Corneliu Vadim Tudor, knew how to exploit the lack of a political alternative and presented himself as *the* alternative to Romania's corrupt and ineffective political class.

Despite PRM's success, it is noteworthy that Iliescu's Party of Social Democracy (PSD) chose not to be in coalition with the PRM. Instead, the PSD formed a minority government with support from the UDMR and the National Liberal Party (which within a few months left the coalition). In the parliament the opposition did not have much choice but to support the PSD, given that otherwise the PRM would benefit from further political stalemate and early elections. Iliescu repositioned himself as committed to European integration and ethnic tolerance while at the same time proposing a coherent economic program. This can be labelled as both a 'strategic' attempt to deal with Western Europe and the imperatives of a post-Cold War scene and as a response to the changing nature of the electorate. In the period between 2000 and 2004, the PSD succeeded to a certain extent to transform

²⁰¹ Ion Iliescu received 36,6 percent at the first round and 66,8 percent the second round in the 2000 presidential elections.

itself from a party with authoritarian and populist tendencies into a 'European' social-democratic party.

Iliescu appointed Adrian Năstase as Prime minister who, in office for four years, continued the pro-Western foreign policy of the previous government. In 2003 the Romanian constitution was amended as necessary for EU accession. Indeed, Romania was able to join NATO in spring 2004 and signed an accession treaty to join the EU. Throughout this period, the reconstruction of the Romanian society progressed, with independent media and civil society gaining ground. External pressure from European and euro-Atlantic organizations proved a powerful tool for domestic politics. Here the increasing influence of international factors played a significant role in articulating a liberal model: democracy, market economy and rule of law.

Though progress was slow and often caused controversy, Năstase's centre-left government administered reasonably the (previously initiated) market-orientated reforms, and the economic and social results were better than most expected before the 2000 elections. Romania's improved outlook with regard to EU membership gave way to a sort of optimism of both the political elites and the public. When confronted with exclusion from the group of countries that would join the EU in May 2004 it was perceived harmful not least in the eyes of the electorate because it presented the government with a failure in the project of Western transformation of Romania.

Yet, these achievements were outdone by the numerous corruption cases, clientelist practices at high levels, and – not to forget - the publication of transcripts of party leadership meetings, which showed that the government routinely manipulated the justice system and the media. Although Iliescu's PSD had supervised Romania's entry into NATO and brought Romania closer to the EU membership, he has been criticized on the slow pace of reforms and not enough anti-corruption fight.

Democratic Consolidation and EU accession (Since 2004)

After long hesitations and despite ideological differences, the Justice and Truth alliance between the PNL and the PD was established in 2003. Following the 2004 elections, Traian Băsescu (PD) became the president of Romania. Călin Popescu-Tăriceanu was appointed as Prime Minister heading a government formed by the PNL, the PD, the UDMR and the Conservative Party (formerly the Humanist Party). Eighteen seats in the Romanian Parliament occupied by ethnic minority

representatives secure a majority for the coalition. The number one priority of the newly elected government has been bringing Romania into EU. Romania signed the accession treaty in 2005 and is expected to become a full member in 2007/2008.

After the last elections in Romania (2004) the new formed government put forward the so-called 'second modernization' project. Widely mediatized, the project refers to the current government's commitments towards shifting Romania's evolution from systemic integration (dictated by the *Acquis Communautaire*), towards the Europeanization phase through the "consolidation of the social economic system"²⁰². For Tăriceanu's government this process is defined as the process of modernizing political, economic, and social systems beyond the overwhelming damaging consequences of socio-economic transformation. This process is apparently seen as the only viable option. In May 2006 the European Commission assessed the country's preparations for the membership and postponed the decision for accession till October 2006 in order to maintain the pressure and make sure the Romanian government fulfils its commitments on accelerated reforms and anti-corruption measures.

Romania's governing coalition is not free of dissensus. Whereas the PNL is in favour of neo-liberal policies with low government spending, the PD is in favour of a social democratic approach with higher government spending. This division is openly aggravated by the unconcealed hostility between Băsescu and Popescu-Tăriceanu. The gradually more tensed relation between the coalition parties warn to increase political instability and delay EU-related reforms. Not only is there potential for conflict among the various parties that make up the coalition, given their diverse ideological heritage and the long-standing personal rivalries of their leaders, there is also potential for internal dissension within each of the parties. Given current internal problems in the PSD, the government's position is however relatively safe. The main question is whether this government will resist the socio-economic price of modernization or whether given the instability of the economy and unemployment rate, nationalist parties will turn out a popular alternative in the 2008 elections²⁰³.

Summing-up, an analysis of the Romania's 'politics of transformation' since the early 1990s reveals that Romania has apparently been characterized by two

²⁰² Programul de guvernare 2005-2008, Capitolul 3, Integrare europeană.

²⁰³ According to the latest opinion polls conducted in November 2005, the PNL and the PD received support from almost fifty percent of the voters, the PSD thirty percent of the voters, while the PRM received almost fifteen percent and the UDMR five percent.

main trends: a Western-oriented force and a nationalist force. On one side advanced by the pro-Western political parties, such as the National Liberal Party, which are for radical privatization and rapid integration of Romania into the European structures; on the other side a nationalist tradition, which lived on during communism and retained its platform also after the revolution, especially through the emergence of ultra-nationalists, but also expressed by Iliescu's persistent ex-communist flank. These parties see integration as threatening the national structures and the specificities of the Romanian society (Wagner, 2004). This dichotomy is a main element of continuity from the precommunist era, in which Europeanist politicians were up against autochthonists/nationalists. Since the 2000 elections, however, a seemingly national consensus on a pro-integrationist approach has settled both among moderate political elites and the population.

4.4.2. Nationalism after Communism: towards Postnationalism?

As clearly shown by the above analysis, nationalism has been an immanent factor in Romania's political life before, during and after communism. However, it has often been said that nationalism has experienced a 'rise' under the impression of increased uncertainty following Romania's post-1989 transformation. While intellectuals in the west have observed Europe's approaching the postnational age, Romania has been thought vulnerable to the revival of nationalism. Thus, analysts like John Breuilly, confirm that, in Romania, "is scope (...) for populist politicians to scapegoat minorities, for a politics and ethnic oppression, and for the upsurge of inter-ethnic conflict" (Breuilly, 1993: 352). As it is argued in the following, I do not see this development as a sudden 'rise' in the sense that Romanians have become more nationalistic after 1989 (something partly confirmed by high public approval of Romania's integration into European structures). Rather I perceive it as a *continuity*, where nationalism has seen different forms and expressions made possible by the disappearance of the communist exclusion of competing interpretations of national identity.

The fragmentation of the nationalist discourse has been evident in Romania, where parties and movements calling themselves national or nationalist have developed conflicting visions on nation and national identity. By its mere composition, Romania has always been a society where it has been very appealing to attribute great importance to ethnic division in politics. Thus, nationalism finds a

platform both among the ethnic Romanians and the ethnic minorities. Vladimir Tismăneanu (1998) has suggested a distinction between civic nationalism and ethnic democracy.

The Different Appearances of Nationalism in post-1989 Romania

Nationalism in Romania cannot be conceived separate from the inner minority conflicts, conditioned by conflicting historical traditions and political interests. The communist era had been characterised by massive assimilation or ‘nationalization’ policies. The revolution opened new possibilities for the minorities. Two most significant minority parties are the UDMR (Hungarian) and the much smaller FDGR (German)²⁰⁴.

Already on 25 December 1989, the UDMR (the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania) was founded to represent the interests of the large Hungarian minority. Gradually, the UDMR has become an important political factor. The program of the UDMR has been based on some fundamental principles such as universal human rights, collective minority rights, as well as the rule of law based on parliamentary democracy and equality of chance. Already in 2000 the UDMR was part of the minority government with the PSD, the PNL and the PD. Again in 2004 the UDMR became part of the governing centre-right coalition, with the UDMR-leader, Béla Markó, serving as Deputy Prime Minister responsible for the (identity sensitive) portfolio of Education, Culture and European integration. UDMR’s rhetoric has been very pro-European. The integration process represents clear advantages for the minorities in terms of ensuring rights and achieving relative independence from the central authorities.

Another minority party is the Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania (FDGR) also established in December 1989 as a political party to represent the interests of the German minority living in different parts of Romania (about 60,000 individuals as of 2003). The FDGR, led by Sibiu-mayor Klaus Johannis, has won

²⁰⁴ Although several Roma-based political parties emerged in the aftermath of the 1989 reforms, the political organization of Roma communities is underdeveloped. Compared to other ethnic minorities in Romania, Roma political organizations and parties are neither as influential nor as well developed. A UNDP study shows a distrust of – and lack of support for – Romabased NGOs, despite the fact that numerous NGOs have been formed since 1989 to represent Roma concerns (<http://www.roma.undp.sk>).

different offices at local and regional level. It is difficult not to interpret Sibiu's success in being appointed European Capital of Culture in 2007 by EU Council of Ministers – as the first city from Eastern Europe - as a significant event in strengthening the transnational link between minorities and the supranational European structures. Hence, as just seen in case of the Hungarian minorities, also the ethnic Germans seek for identification and recognition within the democratic framework of national, sub-, and supranational structures rather than resorting to separatist extremism.

Nationalism has found a quite different expression among in the populist 'majority' parties such as PUNR, the PRM, and the PSM, which have not hesitated to use xenophobic, anti-Semitic, anti-Hungarian, or anti-Roma rhetorical discourses. Party of National Union of Romania (PUNR) emerged as the first post-revolution nationalist party in 1990, as a direct reaction to the Hungarian UDMR. In direct continuity with Ceaușescu's nationalism, the PUNR's doctrine centres on "the representation of vital existential interests of the Romanian citizens"²⁰⁵ and the promotion of the fundamental values of the Romanian nation and the ethnic unity of Romanians. For Gallagher, the PUNR "appealed to a sense of threatened Romanian identity and to Romanian cultural and political assertiveness, both of which were often expressed simultaneously in its electoral propaganda" (Gallagher, 1995: 170). After Gheorghe Funar, the controversial former mayor of Cluj-Napoca, left the party for the Greater Romania Party (PRM) it has lost its political weight.

PRM was established by Corneliu Vadim Tudor (a former associate of Ceaușescu) in 1991. The party affirmed itself through the exclusivist nationalist position adopted by Tudor and his weekly magazine 'Greater Romania'²⁰⁶. Its own 'national' doctrine features the PRM as authoritarian, extremist (mainly anti-Hungarian), and centralist. As the name indicates - and totally ignoring the post-1989 geopolitical realities - the main 'historical-strategic' objectives are the internal and external remaking of Greater Romania and the protection of the Romanian nation. Authentic heir of Ceaușescu's nationalism, Tudor considers himself a visionary and a Saviour of the Romanian nation, insisting on the various conspiracies against the country and the numerous threats to Romania's national integrity (Gallagher, 2000).

²⁰⁵ <http://www.punr.ro/doctrina.htm>.

²⁰⁶ Using a calumnious (often suburban) language, the magazine has been depicted as extremist, racist and xenophobe.

An obvious outcome is a traditional strong scepticism towards European integration, which has nevertheless been moderated over the last two-three years.

The Socialist Labour Party (PSM) founded 1992 was led by another Ceaușescu associate, Ilie Verdeț. The party emerged directly from the disbanded Communist Party (PCR). Thus, members of this party include former *Securitate* officers, old communist *nomenklatura* and nationalist intellectuals. Using communist symbols and a cautiously choreographed political rite, the PSM has conducted an anti-Hungarian and anti-Semitic discourse. The nationalists blame Romania's present economic situation on the market economy imposed by 'foreigners'. Moreover, the Jews and Hungarians that held high positions in the Communist Party (in the beginning) are blamed for the 'negative' features of communism. In my opinion this is a way to divert from the role that the leaders and members of the PRM and the PUNR played themselves during communism. It is not difficult to explain why the former communist elites who lead the nationalist parties argue against Europeanization and integration into wider Europe. For Verdery, "many of them do not see a ready place for themselves in a democratic, market-based society" (Verdery, 1996: 92). These supporters of the former communist regime as well as their voters (many of whom have lost their jobs after 1989) would be much better-off without market economy and democracy in Romania. But also because "they have long experience with disseminating their ideas and disrupting ideas of others" (Verdery, 1996: 92).

Less extreme, but finally much more influential nationalism can be found during the 1990s in Iliescu's changing political constellations. As we have seen, Iliescu did not avoid emphasizing nationalist arguments such as the strength of national solidarity, unity and identity (especially under the uneasy coalition with the ultra-nationalist parties after the 1992 elections). As I will develop further on especially Iliescu's 'disguised' nationalism has had important influence on the course of Romania's post-1989 transformation. Let me first explore some of reasons for the resistant presence of nationalism in Romania's political landscape.

Identifying the Reasons for Nationalism in Post-1989 Romania

There are many causes of the continued appeal of nationalism after 1989. At least four main reasons can be identified. The first is the obvious element of continuity. Nationalism plays a role in politics nowadays, because it has played a central

ideological role since the construction of the modern Romania nation-state. Historically the idea of Romania as a ‘Latin island in the Slav Sea’ lies at the heart of Romanian nation-building and societal identity. This idea has generated “a marked regional differentiation of identity ideologies and politics”²⁰⁷. According to Wagner,

[s]ince the formation of Greater Romania, the relationship between ethnic Romanians and Hungarians and Germans has been a strenuous one, for most of its history characterized by a policy of Romanianization and the promulgation of a Romanian nationalism on the part of the ethnic Romanian political elites (Wagner, 2002: 246).

Under communism – as I have demonstrated - nationalism was a way to legitimate the idea of ‘national interest’ which partly appealed to the anti-Soviet feelings of Romanians, partly increased the popularity of the Communist Party by engaging intellectuals and lower classes into the communist project.

A second reason for the continued success of nationalism is the presence of large ethnic groups on Romanian territory. The largest minority in Romania is the Hungarian. According to a 2002 census²⁰⁸, 1.4 mio. people (or 6, 9 percent of the population) consider themselves Hungarians. The German minority counted in 2003 less than 60,000 individuals, while the Romas count a little over half a million individuals (or 2.5 percent of the population).

Third, there are also features of Romania’s transformation that makes nationalism attractive for average citizens, particularly in those parts of the country where ethnic minorities are the dominant population. These include the privatization of land and some aspects of constitutionalism (e.g. the citizenship law)²⁰⁹. In Transylvania, many Romanians blame the minorities for raising unemployment among ethnic Romanians. Likewise many Romanians feel threaten by the idea that the Hungarian government might claim the territory of Transylvania, even if this is a highly unlikely step in today’s European geopolitical context.

A fourth and important reason for the appeal of nationalism is without doubt its proven capacity to create a safe ‘sense of belonging’ to a community. Related to the transformation many Romanians have experienced a loss of frame of reference. Even if the communist regime was unpopular among large groups of

²⁰⁷ Dobrescu, 2003: 394.

²⁰⁸ <http://www.unpo.org/member.php?arg=24>.

²⁰⁹ Verdery, 1996: 87.

citizens, as we have seen, the Party did provide a more or less coherent vision for the society. For the many Romanians who have only seen their living standards decline since 1989 or who have lost a certain social position that they held thanks to the now gone regime, the nationalist ideas are an appealing resort. Large parts of the present nationalist discourse echoe Ceașescu, including the appeal to authoritarianism and answers to a nostalgic longing for the past.

The Consequences of Nationalism for Romania's Transformation

What have been the consequences to Romania's political and economic transformation of the continued alliance of nationalism and (reformed) communists? In terms of Romania's relation to Europe, Iliescu's so-called 'social democratic' discourse did contain certain integrationist points of view. Hence, the PDSR promulgated "the integration of Romania in the multifunctional structures of the developed world considering that this represents today a natural framework for the affirmation of national identity and to keep the unitary character of the Romanian state" (PDSR, 1997). But as it appears emphasize was often given to arguments such as national unity and identity, which are rather nationalist than integrationist. Especially, Iliescu's early alliances with extreme nationalist parties compromised the approach to integration. Nationalism linked the national interest and national unity to the safeguarding of the 'national unitary state'. Indeed, in the early 1990s, Iliescu proposed a vision of integration which isolated Romania from the western trends pursued in other eastern European countries. Blokker suggests that "integration was primarily perceived in a formal, legal sense, serving the purpose of securing international recognition of Romania's sovereignty" (Blokker, 2004: 307). It was actually not until after 1993 that integrating Romania into European and Euro-Atlantic structures became a policy objective. This marks the point where western external forces started to address the question of reforms.

Also the economic transformation of Romania was delayed. The nationalist discourse basically denied the need for (systemic) transformation (Blokker, 2004: 306). It is difficult to explain this tendency and the particular line of development in Romania without reference to the political agents' understanding of socio-economic transformation. To stabilize Iliescu's regime and gain popularity, the nationalist discourse allowed little opening to western investments, flows of capital and structural reforms. This again can be understood only with reference to the

communist past. Socio-economic changes were understood in terms of social stability and solidarity where the state preserved its interventionist role. In this sense the external forces of integration and their effects on the Romanian economy were perceived as threatening the internal social cohesion and the national interest. In contrast to the prowestern vision of transformation, the nationalist understanding of socio-economic progress was collectivist. The argument for a ‘national unitary state’ was strongly affiliated with the objective of securing “the national wealth for the Romanians as a collectivity”²¹⁰.

Also with regard to Romania’s democratic transformation the nationalism associated with the ex-communists had a preserving impact. In 1992 Iliescu stated that one of his main political objectives was to reconstruct an ‘original democracy’, meaning governance by consensus. Vladimir Pasti comments in detail this objective:

National consensus means that, beyond a group of personal interests, beyond any options, there is a unique solution, the best one, the solution imposed by reality if, assisted by technicians and specialists, one comes to know it well enough. (...) In order to stress the its absolute character, it is considered as representing the national interest and, [as] nobody can rise against the national interest, a consensus emerges about it (Pasti, 1997: 164).

In fact, this is a definition of democracy which is difficult to distinguish from authoritarian forms of governance. In Iliescu’s opinion all those opposing this project were antidemocratic. In this sense, Iliescu opposed his concept of democracy to what the opposition (the CDR) called ‘authentic democracy’. Although contradictory and highly thinned the concept of ‘original democracy’ remained a leitmotif in the PSDR’s vocabulary. In the context of Iliescu’s nationalist politics, it is worth keeping in mind that the state was conceived as having the role of securing social responsibility. With placing social responsibility at state level, the PSDR “recovered [the] authoritative state, defined as ‘social state’”²¹¹. Nationalism has had a harmful effect on the reorganization of civil society and generally on democratic practices, including the construction of a public space.

Another feature of nationalism is represented by Iliescu’s position vis-à-vis the minorities, as he failed to deliver a comprehensive set of rights, even after 2000 where he adopted a more prowestern line. Indeed, Iliescu responded with

²¹⁰ Blokker, 2004: 307.

²¹¹ Blokker, 2004: 309.

nationalism to western demands. By emphasizing autochthonous themes and criticizing the embracing of western political and economic models, the FSN and its successor the PDSR remained a predominant nationalist party. Iliescu's nationalism appealed to less educated groups of citizens by offering "a sense of belonging to a wider national family via an emotional solidarity that democracy has rarely been able to replicate" (Gallagher, 1995: 3).

Moderation of the Nationalist Discourse

A lot of hope was raised – not least outside Romania - after the shift in power in 1996. Yet, the change did not mean a radical break with nationalism. One may argue that the increased speed of reforms promoted by the incoming centre-right government actually even fuelled the nationalist forces. In any case, many political actors continued to exploit the nationalist theme in order to consolidate own interests and the outcome of the 2000 elections confirmed all pessimist thoughts with regard to the political potential of the 'conspiracy theory' (according to which 'evil' is situated outside the national community). On a background of deep social disappointment, the party which discourse is centred on such a theory (PRM) became the second largest party in the parliament, receiving roughly one fourth of the votes. The conspiracy theory in part represents another element of continuity from Ceaușescu, whose internal anti-western propaganda sought to implant in Romanians the idea that the world outside Romania was bad and violent. An image which was partly intact with the present author, when I for the first time visited the west in 1998!

The before-mentioned 2000 election deserves some attention as they mark an important shift in post-1989 nationalism. Pop-Eleches (2001) enumerates a number of factors which led to PRM's success. Among them, the moderation of PDSR's nationalist tone, which allegedly reoriented the nationalist voters towards the PRM. Yet, during the electoral campaign the PRM itself moderated its discourse and claimed that the party – if elected to govern Romania - was ready to engage in a constructive debate with the Hungarian minority. Moreover, the PRM focused on its outsider role between 1996 and 2000 and presented itself as the only alternative capable of driving the country's progress with regard to European integration while improving living conditions. It is not difficult to see that the PRM's capacity to reinvent itself as an alternative to the PDSR was influenced by the wider stand of the Romanian electorate. In November 2000 surveys showed 68 percent were in favour

of EU membership while 62 percent favoured NATO; 76 percent sustained economic reforms²¹². Important to note is the overwhelming support for European and Euro-Atlantic integration despite the low and often declining living standard of many Romanians. In the same survey 75 percent of Romanians had little or no trust in the justice system while 86 percent did not trust political parties. The fact that PRM now received support also from more progressive segments of the electorate reflects the widespread dissatisfaction with Romania's political elites one decade after the revolution, rather than deep nationalist sentiments among the Romanian population.

Given the high percentage of support for European integration and the open conditionalities imposed by both NATO and the EU, both political elites and the population have already accepted 'the rules of the game', even if they do not totally agree to them. This explains why the PRM has realised that politically it would be imprudent to oppose minority rights and other external influences and thus 'softened' its nationalist tone in recent years. In other words, it seems sustained that Romania's progress in approaching European institutions has played a significant role in modifying Romanian nationalism. It is no longer a feasible political strategy to reject the 'west'.

Concluding Remarks

By its mere composition and geographic location at one of Europe's 'crossroads', modern Romania has always been a society where it has been appealing to attribute great importance to ethnic division in politics. At the beginning of this section, I argued that what has often been perceived as a 'rise' of nationalism after 1989, should rather be understood as a continuation of the nationalist discourse of the procommunist and communist era in a transforming context (see sections 4.2.3. and 4.3.3.).

The rebirth of nationalism in Romania neither represents the recovery only of precommunist past (kept untouched during communism). On the contrary, the history of nationalism, far from being 'cold' under communism, followed its own course, but under particular forms, those which were allowed and used at the advantage of the instituted power. Gallagher notes, "chauvinists have benefited from the nationalist conditioning to which much of the population was subjected before 1989 and from the backing of important sections of the Iliescu state" (Gallagher,

²¹² Public Opinion Barometer surveys conducted by the Soros foundation in Romania.

1995: 226). Both the context and the content of nationalism are different now. Although post-1989 nationalism re-establishes the link to interwar nationalism, there are many differences between them, not least because the former emerges after decades of communism. Nationalism in post-1989 Romania has been generated at the intersection between external influences and the particularities added in the local development processes. An interesting difference from the communist era – with democratic potential – is the coexistence of the multiple forms of nationalism as the communists have lost monopoly. According to Dobrescu, “[i]n spite of the nationalist limitations laid on the political stage, the polemics between different types of nationalism can (and actually do) go very deep as far as political and moral principles are concerned, thus inducing a vibrant, really functioning pluralism” (Dobrescu, 2003: 413-4).

Another important change is the increased and better organised voice of the national minorities, which represent a clear *postnational* trend in Romanian politics. Hence, it was noted that minorities have chosen a strategy based on cooperation - not separation – and on appeal to European and universal values. Herein lies also an important move in the *postwestern* direction of developing ‘multiple identities’ (Rumford 2006a), as the minorities rather explicitly have proven the capacity to be both ethnic, local, national, and European at the same time – and that with increasing recognition from central authorities.

The blend of ‘ex-communism’ and nationalism sustained by the early Iliescu governments was certainly a disruptive element, which negatively influenced both the political and economic development of Romania in the first years after the revolution (Paquetteau 1995; Verdery 1996; Tismăneanu 1998; Rupnik 1999). However, the recent political development shows that even Romania - perceived as the embodiment of the backward ‘east’ - can make real progress in weakening the forces of traditional nationalism. The 2004 elections for example brought into power a coalition government consisting of parties that are certainly more open towards the legitimate demands of national minorities than previous coalitions were. Also, elections have shown that even if nationalism retains a certain appeal, its most extreme expressions have been marginalised, as the rejection of European integration is no longer a viable political platform.

The Diffusion Factor

The above sections have discussed the internal political development in Romania after the Revolution. We cannot discuss the nature of Romania's political transformation without briefly considering the role of diffusion. As stated earlier, 'diffusion' in this thesis is defined as 'the encounter with external models and ideas that are taken on, adapted and/or reproduced'.

In particular since 1996, the Western reference model, associated with Romania's integration into European and euro-Atlantic structures, has played an essential role in Romanian society. This model has been used to legitimize the introduction of a new societal order but has also raised hope with regard to transborder relations, mutual support and peace (Scholte, 1998: 61). Ultimately under the new condition dictated from both outside and inside forces, Romania has developed close relations and applied to join the EU and NATO. Early in 1990s Romania became a member of the Council of Europe and the OSCE. Different institutional structures have been either created or adapted to meet the exigencies of Euro-Atlantic integration. Romania could not resist the external forces that determined the extent to which Romania was able to attain its integration aspirations. Such a reality has slowly been acknowledged by the 'integration agents' after EU and NATO have markedly raised their expectations. The transformation process has therefore very much been concerned with coming to terms not only with the inside transformation but also with the external dynamics of the post Cold War order.

Western integration meant also that Romanians had to reconstruct their images of Europe. During communism 'Europe' had represented a struggle between two different value systems and types of society. The interpretation was rather static, as the division of Europe was for decades taken for granted. Also it was an image, which was primarily generated internally, as the Communist Party had an interest in imposing the idea of the West as the (negative) Other. Since the revolution, the image of Europe has evolved. External forces have come to play a larger role in the understanding of, what is Europe. Moreover, this has induced a *dynamic* into the image of Europe, as Romania's relationship with Europe has had its ups and downs since the revolution. Yet, also internal developments continued to influence the image of Europe. The image that Europe and the EU have acquired in the last years is partly the result of the political instability, widespread insecurity, corruption, moral vacuum, and deteriorating living conditions, which Romanians have experienced. In

this situation Romanians have turned both *against* Europe – claiming that the hardship is caused by the EU imposed reforms – but also *to* Europe to look for a way out of the socio-economic problems.

The EU integration is publicly perceived as a key to national security, economic success and political stability. According to the *Eurobarometer*'s national report on Romania from 2005, seven out of ten Romanians declare themselves in favour of closer unity within the European community. Lower than the 81 percent measured in 2003, but significantly higher than in e.g. Hungary, where less than half support further integration.

Yet, the future of Romanian society within the EU integration framework is filled with uncertainty and unfulfilled expectations. People fear – with a reason - that their life standard will not reach the level of France or Germany the second day after accession. Social and economic conditions of present Romania explain the prevailing uncertainty and lack of trust in a united Europe. The purchasing power has already decreased significantly, which also means that the living standard has lowered. Recent statistics (March 2006) show that the monthly income average was as low as 233 Euros while the average pension was only 78 Euros²¹³. This makes it difficult for many Romanians to meet ends every month.

To sum-up, the linkage between the domestic and external context is important for understanding the kind of societal order which is underway. The relationship between Romania and Europe is not one-way and political agents have not always been able to determine the rules of 'reorganization'. It would be a mistake, however, to see Romania's transformation as merely the product of the EU and NATO influences. As I will illustrate below, from a cultural integration perspective, the process of reorganization caused by political agents has been largely influenced by wider transformations in Europe, going beyond the formal institutions.

4.5. Rethinking Romanian Society: Transformation through Cultural Integration

Having outlined and discussed the specificity of Romania's post-1989 political life and the role of diffusion, in what follows I will seek to understand post-1989 Romania's experience through a sociological analysis of cultural integration. While

²¹³ <http://www.insse.ro/statistici/comunicate/castiguri/a06/cs03r06.pdf>.

approaching the matter from an overall theoretical angle, in accordance with the cultural integration model, I am not leaving aside the ‘uniqueness’ of the Romanian case (as also defended by Wagner, 2004). Political developments will serve as a point of reference along my analysis given that political structures are useful in revealing the inner forces, dynamics and main patterns of the Romanian process of transformation. As Wagner suggests that “it is safe to say that the condition of post-Communism has generated its own history, causes, and explanatory variables beginning with the political process itself” (Wagner, 2002: 277-78).

When the communist regime collapsed, the Romanian society had an opportunity to transform itself into an *open society* (Popper, 1995). Sztompka (1999: 211) used the term ‘*cultural clash*’ to describe the difficult exercise to bring the post-1989 East and West together, linking the Western cultural orientation to an anti-democratic, nationalist culture. As we have seen, even today, for the extremes of the Romanian political scene, such a division makes sense. Present-day Romania is still struggling internally with these two opposed cultural and political options. Despite these apparent reasons to regard Romania’s internal changes and relation to Europe as being solely the outcome of Western and nationalist political forces, I will demonstrate in the following sections that a more complete picture of Romania’s transformation can be achieved through the analytical framework of postwesternization and postnationalism. What is needed to be examined is the ‘openness’ of Romania’s transformation to the outside Europe. The question is not whether Romania can become fully ‘Western’ (which is often the point of departure of much of the previous research on Romania). Although the West has played a significant role in the reconstruction of the Romanian societal identity, Romania’s transformation needs further interpretation, as the ‘West’ is itself undergoing transformation and therefore is not a fixed point of reference. Consequently, it is useful to explore Romania’s experience with cultural integration, and in doing so it is essential that both Romania’s transformation and European transformation are seen, not as clearly defined, but as open entities.

In discussing Romania’s post-1989 transformation through the analytical framework of postwesternization and postnationalism it must be clear that these terms do not simply replace Westernization and nationalism. In fact, the two ‘sets’ of concepts are applicable at different levels of analysis. On the one hand, postwesternisation and postnationalism – exactly because these concepts concern the

interplay of Europe's and Romania's transformation – are operating at a transnational level. On the other hand, Westernization and nationalism – as identified by this thesis – are analytically applied in the mainly in a purely Romanian context. Postwesternization and postnationalism must not be understood to be mutually exclusive, but rather coexisting patterns of cultural integration. This is contrary to the stop-go logic of nationalism vs. Europeanization which tends to look at integration as a sort of zero-sum game between those two forces. Finally, some may see postnational Europe as chronologically *preceding* postwestern Europe. Admittedly, trends of postnational Europe can be observed back to the early stages of (west-) European integration – long before the idea of postwestern Europe became relevant – and has accelerated as legal, economic and political matters have increasingly surpassed the national borders in a multi-centred European polity. This, however, does not imply that it has become obsolete to address postnational dynamics with the seemingly advance of a postwestern Europe. In my understanding the two sets of dynamics influence the European states and state-system simultaneously. One may even raise the hypothesis that this coexistence is particularly manifest in Eastern European countries, including Romania, which have only recently entered into (already) postnational Europe.

With the end of communism, Europe offers itself to Romania again, this time as a 'prestructured space' that is "prestructured by the already existing – formerly 'Western' – institutions (most prominently the EU) and by a reinvigoration of the historical 'East/West' borderline of development" (Wagner, 2004: 57) to Eastern Europe. Even if studying Romania's integration into European and Euro-Atlantic structures provides us with an understanding of the internal changes taking place at the systemic level, it does not fully answer the question: what type of society are Romanians constructing for themselves after communism? The belonging to Europe, the process of becoming European is co-determined by new factors as well as old factors, producing much more continuity in the process of cultural integration than has often been acknowledged. Against what Sztompka called the 'sudden, radical break with the past' (Sztompka, 1992: 11) there is a continuity both of cultural and structural nature in the Romanian society perceived in individuals' patterns of behaviour, values and attitudes.

Romania's transformation takes place in a "dual context or cognitive frame of reference and comparison" (Offe, 1996: 230). The two dominant dynamics

of cultural integration - postwestern and postnational - have emerged in this dual context, which includes both understandings of the past (communist and precommunist) and understandings of transnational processes. The pathways Romania is taking are therefore not determined by foreseeable or self-directed processes of change. Rather, these pathways are the outcome of individuals' action and cultural constructions; culture - defined in this thesis as *a socially constructed reality based on social imaginary significations* - forms then a key concept in understanding the process of transformation.

A five-step movement to understand the impact of cultural integration in Romania's transformation is proposed: the acceptance of that not only does the West have an impact on the East but also the East influences the West; an acknowledgement of that both West and East are under transformation; the relevance of postwestern and postnational dynamics to explain Romanian transformation; the acknowledgement of the necessity to rethink Romanian society after coming into terms with the legacies of the past; a view on the Romanian transformation as not separated from the wider European and global transformation.

The persistence of elements of continuity in the Romanian society as well as the contemporary relevance of the terms 'postwestern' (Delanty and Rumford, 2005) and 'postnational' (Habermas, 1998, 2003; Curtin 1997) work in favour of describing the condition of Romanian transformation in terms of postwesternization and postnationalism, especially articulated around societal identities (as argued in Chapter 3). A problem in identifying the impact of postwesternization and postnationalism is the difficulty of separating external explanatory factors from domestic factors. One way to investigate postwesternization and postnationalism is to examine concrete events where both the external and internal pressures tend in these directions. Therefore, the following discussion places Romania in postwestern and postnational context that illustrate Romania's complex relationship with Europe and the impossibility of reducing the question of cultural integration to the classic dichotomy between Westernization and nationalism.

In terms of the relationship between postwesternization and postnationalism, they encounter each other because it is no longer possible for either to remain close in traditional contexts. When cultures enter postwestern and postnational Europe, their traditional cultures are altered. Despite the fact that there is also a cultural continuity in Romania, a break away from older structures occurs in

the encounter with postwestern and postnational Europe. Postwesternization and postnationalism are thus more complementary than contradictory. To be sure, postwesternization and postnationalism have not only been the forces impelling Romania, but also increased internal concerns with maintaining political dominance have encouraged these trends in several ways. I now want to examine the Romanian experience in terms of the cultural integration process by keeping postwestern and postnational as key concepts of the argument.

4.6. A Postwestern Romania in the Making

In the following analysis, I will examine some aspects of postwesternization with respect to the internal transformation of Romania. In line with the argument in Chapter 2, I shall posit here that the main changes that are occurring today in Romania are not dictated by ‘the end of history’ (which implied the triumph of a singular modernity). From a postwestern perspective, Europe is best defined in terms of ‘multiple modernities’ (Eisenstadt, 2000; Therborn, 2003; Delanty and Rumford, 2005). The theoretical discussion of how to approach Romania from a postwestern perspective will thus be linked to the concept of ‘multiple modernities’. I will then turn to examine how postwesternization is affecting Romania. The examples will substantiate the idea that a postwestern order is more than the simple absence of the Cold War and the geopolitical East-West division (a *minimalist* reading), but that postwesternization implies a more fundamental or qualitative shift in Romania’s behaviour and orientation. Postwesternization is characterized by reorganisation by and of social agents around objectives conditioned by ‘multiple belonging’ (Rumford, 2006a) in the sense that it is no longer enough to say ‘we are Western’ or ‘we are against communism’. Three features of postwesternization appear from further examples: first, with the end of the Cold War and the accelerated European integration process Romania has moved beyond the East/West division. Secondly, Romania is increasingly seeing itself as having a global orientation, which exceeds the immediate European context. Thirdly, Romania has started to interact more openly with the potential ‘new East’ (i.e. former Soviet republics), no longer afraid that this will cause others to identify it as an Eastern-oriented country.

4.6.1. Romania's Transformation on the Basis of 'Multiple Modernities'

Current thinking on the nature of modernity conceives modernities as multiple, overlapping, and contested (Therborn, 2003). The way in which postwesternization is approached inevitably involves conceptions drawn from non-Western settings for cultural integration is not a *complete* (uniquely western) process, but a reflexive and open-ended process. Postwestern Europe “is a Europe that is no longer based on singular, western modernity, but multiple modernities” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 49). The commonality of Europe marks the end of the notion of the West and “the emergence of in its place of a multiplicity of geopolitics and with these new models of modernity” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 43). If Europe no longer is imagined in terms of the West, then the East too has been reconfigured. The argument in favour of a postwestern Europe is premised upon the assumption that the enlargement is about “transformation of Europe, the relativization of Western Europe and an awareness of many Europes shaped by multiple modernities”²¹⁴. As an alternative to western modernity, there is not only one modernity, but multiple modernities open to contention and alternative understandings. This is not the same with saying that Romania amounts to an alternative modernity as such. I rather regard its modernity as the result of the encounter with other modernities. Romania's modernity rests on the particular trajectory emerging from the encounter with other modernities. Rather than understanding Romania's experience with modernity as ‘failed modernization’ or incapacity of convergence with Western modernity, its diversity should be acknowledged.

In Romania modernization (i.e. openness towards Europe and western ideas and practices) has often been seen as opposed to traditionalism/autochtonism (Verdery, 1991; Hitchins, 1994). This dichotomy rests on a rather singular idea of modernity. In the modernist approach, traditional and modern societies are conceived as two different societal systems, each with an entirely different set of features. In a broad sense, modern society was opposed to particularism and a religious world view that was local and based on Eastern-oriented traditions and values. Modern attributes involved rationalism, universalism, and individualism. From this perspective modernity and tradition were seen as negating each other, as if the traditional form of society (the East) would always represent the anomaly - a residual. “As social change

²¹⁴ Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 24-25.

is understood as the transition of traditional societies into modern ones, traditional attributes must necessarily give way to modern ones” (Blokker, 2004: 33). The end of communism delegitimised the conception of a state-socialist society and made the political elites – as least in the beginning – appeal to “the apparently neutral idea of rejoining the Western project of modernity” (Blokker, 2004: 40). However, what occurred in Romania after communism was not a replication of Western liberalism and democracy. This monochrom explanation of transformation falls into various problems. First, by overlooking the historical diversity, this interpretation ignores the dynamics and internal conflicts inherent to the process of transformation. Second, this view fails to lead to meaningful insights in empirical research. Third, by taking the ideal idea of Western society, it assigns this model as a normative project on Romania. Instead of similar outcomes imposed by above, a potential diversity of outcomes and diverging paths are presumed. As clearly indicated in the analysis of Romania’s post-1989 politics, diversity in the paths of development taken but also continuity is the outcome of agency.

However appealing it is to associate Westernization and nationalism with pro- and anti-modernism, it is rather suggested that these trends represent different but not automatically mutually restrictive conceptions of modernization. A perspective that admits ‘multiple modernities’ is thus more adequate to analyse the plural forms that postwesternization can take in the case of Romania. Against this background, nationalism should be understood as both reaction and alternative to postwesternization. Put differently, the concept of ‘multiple modernities’ places Romania beyond East and West and at the same time considers the outcome of current transformations as ‘an open question’ (Eyal *et al.*, 1998: 39).

As mentioned earlier, the postwestern dimension of integration marks the meeting point where Romania and Europe convene at the end of the East-West division. One assumption for this integration dynamic is that a postwestern Romania meets a postwestern Europe built on ‘multiple modernities’. First, postwestern integration relates to the integration of Romanian society within wider transformations in Europe. Second, the postwestern dimension of integration also concerns the transformative dimension of Europe affected itself by Eastern transformations (Wagner, 2004). In other words postwestern integration has transcended the boundaries of the Romanian society and has had a long-term impact not only on the Romanian transformation but also on wider European

transformations. Not only had the fall of communism produced a rebordering process (Rumford, 2006a), but the main borderline that divided Europe has ceased to exist and Boia's interpretation of Romania as 'borderland of Europe' (Boia, 2001b) has lost its significance (i.e. Romania becoming a crucial actor in the EU's Neighbourhood Policy).

Looking at postwestern Romania in a postwestern Europe suggests the idea that Europe is changing at the same time Romania is changing. Thus, by postwesternization I understand both Romania's undergoing changes and the changes that Europe itself experiences as it enlarges. Postwesternization is the logic result of the end of the East-West division in Europe. This division has been mostly used to define politically the Cold War division between the communist Eastern Europe ('the East'), including Romania, and the capitalist Western Europe ('the West'). For Herslund, "[t]he names 'East' and 'West' thus became purely political labels, everything to the East of the Iron Curtain becoming Eastern Europe" (Herslund, 2005: 18). After the end of the Cold War the term 'European' came to replace what before was termed 'Western' with reference to values, culture and civilization. As such, the concepts of East and West have lost their meanings in Europe. Europe needed an expression of its own (Therborn, 2006).

But postwesternization is more, and also implies a transformation of the relations between Romania and Europe, as Europe is no longer a synonym of the West. Indeed, Eastern Europe has become an 'indispensable' part of the 'West' and Western culture, values and civilization. Beyond the prospect of enlargement, divided Europe becomes not only one Europe, but multiple Europes. According to Therborn, "the commonality of Europe is by no means a cultural emanation, but a commonality of conflict, of war, as well as of bargaining, truces, and compromise. [...] Also in this way 'Europe' has become post-Western" (Therborn, 2006: 3). This means that not only the East is being shaped by the West but also the other way around. In accordance with the ideas of multiple modernities and multiple identities also the coexistence of multiple 'Europes' or interpretations of what is Europe is possible.

Romania going postwestern does not mean becoming a member of the European and Euro-Atlantic order, which itself is going through continuous changes, but that the Romanian internal transformation (i.e., '*Eigendynamik*' as used by Wagner, 2004: 59) is part of transformations taking place on overall European level, as Europe becomes postwestern (see also Delanty and Rumford, 2005). The first

wave of enlargement has already transformed the EU and contributed to questioning basic assumptions in the community (the debates around the Convention leading to the French and Dutch ‘no’ votes in 2005 illustrate this point). This will continue with the perspective of Romania becoming an EU member in 2007/2008. Instead of seeing the EU in the bipolar terms of centre versus periphery, in an enlarging Europe there are in fact various centres where agents may wish to position themselves in different ways, in order to seek out the niche positions most suitable. Rumford (2006b) uses the notion of ‘polycentricity’ to describe the decentred and dynamic nature of Europe.

If Europe is gradually becoming postwestern (Delanty and Rumford 2005), so is Romania. Indeed, with the incorporation into NATO and EU, a historic milestone in Romania’s history has been marked. Not only has Romania escaped the fears of being a ‘periphery’ and a grey zone between a European core and a Russian dominated-east, but Romania has also changed its course of action in new directions. Both Europe and Romania are being reinvented. Creating postwestern Romania does not necessarily imply identification with a common European identity. For Romania, Europe is no longer perceived as the West. There are subtexts of recognition, particularly when confronted with EU enlargement (see also Törnquist-Plewa 2002). According to Delanty, the contemporary idea of Europe “has lost its traditional referents in the institutions and processes of modernity – in history, ethnicity, religion, geography – and is becoming a free-floating term” (Delanty, 2003c: 21).

Postwesternization suggests the idea that Romania is moving beyond the East-West distinction. As argued in Chapter 3, section 3.5.1., Romania and Europe get closer as they become postwestern. Europe is no longer made of separate cultural worlds upon which the idea of a unique East depends. Not situating Romania beyond East can lead to isolating elements of difference. And since east and west are no longer separate, but rather merged or inseparately intertwined under a postwestern condition, Romania and Europe share as basic element the openness towards ‘multiple belonging’ (Rumford, 2006a). While it can not be denied that the EU has a role in shaping Romania, the idea that the EU is actually able to inflict a unitary societal model on Romania is highly questionable. As other dynamics are at work, “new and different models of modernity take shape” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 49). Exactly what kind of orientation has Romania developed will be discussed in the next two sections.

4.6.2. Reconstructing Self-Images beyond East and West

The general postwestern trends and Romania's place herein depicted at the beginning of this section – a move beyond the East/West division, a shift away from a situation where Romania looks simply West and the interaction with the new East – will be illustrated in the following by two concrete examples. First, the Romanian state has started to develop a more proactive international role. For instance, Romania's participation in the US-led invasion of Iraq and its possible complicity in CIA 'Rendition Flights' sustain my argument about Romania's exhibition of multiple belonging, as the European reality is not in the way of a global vocation. Second, an analysis of Romania's relations with the new borderland of Europe, namely with Ukraine, provides evidence of a changing attitude towards the East. Whereas the first example is a clear illustration of postwesternization, the case of Romania's relation with Ukraine may be read also as a symptom of the parallel impact of postnationalism. Postwestern because Romania has started to look 'East' without fearing that this undermines its *hard-fought-for* image as increasingly belonging to the 'West'. The example has a postnational side in that it demonstrates that contentious 'high politics' issues – earlier belonging solely to the national realm - increasingly acquired a postnational character.

Any reflection on the relation between Romania and postwestern Europe actualises Chris Rumford's concept of 'multiple belonging' (Rumford, 2006a). After the end of communism, the impact of this reality has altered the orientation of Romania's successive governments. A more 'fluid' Europe and world has opened the possibility to seek self-identification on a more ad-hoc basis. In particular, more recent governments (Năstase and Tăriceanu) have become progressively influenced by these dynamics. These governments seem to have been convinced that a global orientation is both central and indispensable to the country's long-term development. Especially in the wake of 11 September 2001, Năstase government was eager to maximize the benefits from this new orientation. One consequence of these shifts has been that the 'door' of entry into NATO began to open wide.

From the early spring of 2002 the rapprochement between Romania and the US has had clear advantages for Romania. The events of 11 September enlarged Romania's strategic importance to the US which swiftly needed countries in the Black Sea region to provide military infrastructure and troops. The move was meant to present Romania as a stable and reliable partner in transatlantic relations (at a

moment when the already existing NATO members, Greece and Turkey, were reserved and reluctant). This can be seen as an attempt at reconstructing society by interpreting Romania as playing the role of a defender of democracy and freedom in the world. Many Romanians believed that if Romania helped to build democracy in the world, Romania would irrevocably cut the link to its communist past. This can be interpreted as an attempt to reconstruct Romanian society on the basis of a ‘globally oriented’ strategy. Romania has also allied itself closely with the US over Afghanistan and Iraq and in its ‘war on terror’ more generally.

Indeed, since 2002 Romania has become increasingly absorbed into more global relations. This growing attention towards supraterritorial interests has been especially apparent in Romania’s readiness to participate in the US-led war against Iraq. Partly to convince its NATO allies that Romania is not a potential weak link vis-à-vis radical Middle East regimes (i.e. a legacy from the communist era intelligence operatives)²¹⁵, partly to create a new image for Romania, Năstase government appeared in 2002 a strong supporter of Romania’s involvement in the Iraq War. In August 2002, Romania became the first country (in the world) to sign a bilateral agreement with the US that offered American soldiers and diplomats immunity from prosecution by the International Criminal Court (ICC). The strongest critics came from the European Commission that stated: “We would have expected a future member-state to have at least coordinated with us such an important issue”²¹⁶. This was indicative of later events.

In early 2003 the Romanian parliament voted in favour of Romania’s participation as *de facto* NATO ally in the Iraq War. The support included US access to Romanian airbases and airspace, as well as active deployment of ground troops. The decision was strongly criticised by many key European players. Indeed, Romania’s closeness of the US raised concerns within the EU about the country’s foreign policy priorities. Not least from France whom otherwise had been instrumental in convincing its European partners that Romania should be welcomed in the EU. Also EU Commissioner for Enlargement, Günter Verheugen, declared himself ‘disappointed’ by the decision. French president Jacques Chirac’s disapproval of Romania’s participation generated a strong response from Romanian politicians. “Romania and Bulgaria were particularly irresponsible. If they wanted to

²¹⁵ Gallagher, 2005:324.

²¹⁶ Reuters, August 9, 2002.

diminish their chances of joining Europe they could not have found a better way”, Chirac said²¹⁷. According to Gallagher, Chirac “sounded as if it might be ready to veto Romanian and Bulgarian entry” (Gallagher, 2005: 327). The then Romanian President Ion Iliescu stated that “Jacques Chirac should regret such expressions, which are not in the spirit of friendship and democratic relationships”²¹⁸. Chirac’s reaction prompted US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld to differentiate between what he named ‘old Europe’ and ‘new Europe’. Caught between core Europe’s mistrust vis-à-vis Bush’s diplomacy and the United States, Romania has since been trying to balance two identities (i.e. ‘multiple belonging’).

The significance of this event is not so much that France continued to consider Eastern European countries as subordinated European juniors (accusing them of ‘childish and irresponsible behaviour’), whereas established EU members such as UK, Denmark, and Italy who also adopted a pro-US policy were not criticized as openly. This only illustrates that mental barriers are persistent even in a significantly changing Europe. The importance is rather that Eastern European views by now have become an unavoidable presence in the set of values that the expanding EU represents – not least seen from the outside world (in this case from across the Atlantic). The west of Europe no longer holds a monopoly on defining Europe’s view of the world. East is part of West. For Charles Maier (2003), the division issue of ‘old’ versus ‘new’ Europe is not about a new and an old Europe. In Maier’s words, “I would call the East Europeans not new Europeans but ‘new West’ Europeans”²¹⁹. Such a development implicitly makes obsolete the East-West distinction, and hence places us in a postwestern situation, where neither the label ‘West’, nor the label ‘East’ is any longer meaningful.

In June 2006, against the background of decreasing public approval of the Iraq operations (particularly since the kidnapping of three Romanian journalists in 2005 and casualties among Romanian soldiers in both Iraq and Afghanistan), Prime Minister Tăriceanu requested the withdrawal of Romania’s peacekeeping troops from Iraq stating security concerns and financial reasons²²⁰. Yet, the president of

²¹⁷ www.cnn.com, February 18, 2003.

²¹⁸ BBC News, February 19, 2003.

²¹⁹ quoted in Wood, 2003.

²²⁰ Earlier on April 27, 2006 the same prime minister declared on the occasion of a state visit in the Netherlands that the withdrawal of the Romanian soldiers was excluded (Southeast European Times, April 28, 2006).

Romania and other leading political figures from the coalition parties replied that Romania had to assume its global responsibility as a NATO member and continue to contribute to the military operations in Iraq. Băsescu called the proposal ‘unacceptable’ and accused Tăriceanu of damaging Romania’s credibility abroad. Moreover, the internal split over the Iraq War was more than a proof of Prime Minister’s office incapacity of institutional cooperation with the president office and inside his own party. Only two parties from the broad coalition, the Conservative Party and the UDMR, said they supported the withdrawal of troops from Iraq. In recent public opinion polls over 60 percent are for the withdrawal of Romanian troops²²¹ while only 23 percent are for maintaining the troops. This encouraged the Liberals to suggest a referendum on the issue of the Romania’s present in Iraq. Less surprising in a European context, Tăriceanu’s declaration was waited for a long time by the European Union where the collaboration between Romania and the US continues to be perceived as a form of negligence of European priorities. It seems that in his fight of political survival, Tăriceanu is searching for a European legitimacy against a pro-US president. Opposing his prime minister, Băsescu stated that the EU security policy was not enough for Romania²²².

The case for Romania’s growing identification with a postwestern Europe can be further sustained by the case of possible complicity in the alledged CIA ‘rendition’ flights. Although this could have turned out to be an obstacle in Romania’s EU orientation, it has actually created new forms of solidarity. As Therborn has pointed out, “the American war has both undermined Europe, and, unintendly, reinforced it” (Therborn, 2006: 4). The East-West distinction has been deconstructed. In this sense, both Romania and Europe have moved in a postwestern direction. Closely related to the issue of Romania’s involvement in the Iraq War, the affair of the secret detentions (elaborated below) has a postwestern significance. The examples underline Romania’s development towards a postwestern order through a ‘global’ commitment rather than just a European. Even at the price of damaging its (still somehow fragile) image among core European partners.

As mentioned earlier, after 9/11 the United States has had publicly known agreements with Romania to use its air space and strategically located military airports near the Black Sea and Timișoara. Yet, according to a controversial front

²²¹ Libertatea, July 7, 2006.

²²² Detsche Welle, June 29, 2006.

page on the *Washington Post* on 2 November 2005, the Romanian government had provided support which went far beyond mere logistics. Allegedly, on the said facilities Romania had established, in close cooperation with the CIA, secret prisons where detainees could be made subject to torture and other unlawful treatment²²³.

Romanian top officials have consequently rejected all accusations regarding the secret detentions and qualified them as ‘pure speculation’. As to Romania providing general support to the US, President Băsescu said: ‘You can’t be a partner of the United States only when you need the advantage and support of their alliance. Sometimes the United States needs your support and this is what we are doing’²²⁴. However, no matter how strongly President Băsescu and others have refused any accusation that Romania has hosted secret CIA detention centres, the suspicion remains and the press kept referring to Romania as an ‘American gulag’.

The Council of Europe immediately decided to inquire further into the matter. If the accusations were true, the existence of such detention centres would be a serious violation of the European Convention on Human Rights to which Romania is signatory. And hence, a graver derailing of Romania’s credibility as defender of European values. In June 2006, rapporteur Dick Marty, a Swiss member of the Council’s Parliamentary Assembly, released an in-depth report stating that since the 9/11 attacks captured terrorist suspects had been detained indefinitely without any human rights protection²²⁵. Senator Marty accused Romania and several other countries of responsibility ‘at varying degrees, which [is] not always settled definitively’ for violating the rights of named ‘rendered’ individuals. As a reply to the report, the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, Mr. Terry Davis, was quoted as saying: ‘On the basis of the information I have received so far, I am now in a position to say that we no longer need to speak about ‘alleged’ cases of rendition’²²⁶.

Despite growing public disenchantment with the country’s involvement in Iraq and although Romanians do not favour the use of inhuman methods and non respect of human rights, they remain committed to the United States. In contrast to other European countries accused of harbouring CIA’s ‘ghost flights’, where the topic has raised considerable public protests, in Romania the issue has not caused large public debate. Romanians still remember the US’ role in bringing communism

²²³ ‘CIA Holds Terror Suspects in Secret Prisons’, *Washington Post*, November 2, 2005.

²²⁴ Iancu 2006: 1.

²²⁵ ‘Europe: Report Rendered, CIA flights in Europe’, *The Economist*, 379 (8481), June 10, 2006.

²²⁶ BBC news, June 8, 2006.

to a fall and pushing NATO expansion eastward. Whereas many 'Old Europe' countries mistrust the American idea of exporting democracy to the Middle East and elsewhere, Europeans in former communist countries are less sceptical due to their historical experience. A divergence eagerly sustained by the US president: "some of the most important support for Iraqis is coming from European democracies with recent memories of tyranny: Poland and Hungary and Romania and Bulgaria and the Czech Republic and Slovakia, Georgia, Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. Others in Europe have had disagreements with our decisions on Iraq"²²⁷. Bush's rhetoric has in itself a postwestern element. It is contributing to redefining the West, by indirectly characterising 'New Europe' as more *Western* in its political action than 'Old Europe'. When East is regarded by an important external actor like the United States as more "Western than West", then the East-West distinction is fundamentally challenged. Yet, Romanian commitment to the US does not make EU membership less important. Simply, for Romania, isolated from the West during communism, it is just not enough to be Western – in the sense of west *European* - in the same way as it was not enough to be Eastern.

The transatlantic link is seen as the key guarantor of Romania's security. Yet, Romania's involvement in Iraq represents more than mere paying back to the US for NATO – and indeed EU membership (Gallagher, 2005: 324-327). Romania's political class generally admires the US for its prosperity as much as for its determined stance against communism and other forms of totalitarianism. What 'old Europe' regards as an American simplification of complex international relations issues, "new Europeans tend to see as principled stances reminiscent of those that helped bring down the Soviet empire in the late 1980s" (Pehe, 2003: 33). Although most Romanians philosophically oppose the idea of war, their experiences under Ceaușescu taught them that the existence of dictators like Saddam Hussein in some cases can justify armed action. In a postwestern perspective, it is highly indicative that a European state like Romania is seeking inspiration and guidance outside Europe.

By joining the 'coalition of the willing', Romania made a choice between the view of core-EU countries like France and Germany and the ideological (and pragmatic) interest in developing close ties with the United States. In the case of the

²²⁷ George W. Bush, Commencement Address, United States Merchant Marine Academy, June 19, 2006.

Iraq war, Romania looked beyond the EU and sought to embrace a global role rather than simply thinking narrowly in terms of return to the 'West' (i.e. the EU). Even at the cost of risking delaying EU membership. This has allowed Romania to construct a new independent identity. Romania is becoming increasingly postwestern not only because Europe has become postwestern, but also because Romania no longer feels constrained. This has entailed an orientation towards a new political agenda. The stated objective of this agenda is to enhance Romania's role in the world since being anticommunist or simply Western is not enough. With its participation in the Iraq war, Romania demonstrated an interest in redefining itself in global terms, rather than as an 'add-on' to the west of Europe.

According to Therborn, "Europe became a 'dispensable' part of the West, to which only the United States was the 'indispensable nation'" (Therborn 2006: 5). With the recent political disagreement over secret American rendition centres on its territory, "Europe is no longer meaningfully part of a common North Atlantic West"²²⁸. Expressed in more general terms, we can say that the concern with the *global* in Romanian politics (not imposed by the EU) has added a postwestern dimension to Romania's transformation which was not previously evident. With the on-going reconstruction and remanifestation of the state after the dismantling of the communist system, the Romanian state has reasserted itself in a postwestern direction. The state is less dependent on the traditional 'return to Europe' rhetoric. Thus a major dimension to Romania's transformation is the openness towards new frames of reference. These new frames of reference are becoming more and more important in the shaping of Romania today. The tendency until recently was to concentrate on Western/nationalists forms of identification. The above examples illustrated the need to think about Romania in postwestern terms and hence move beyond the traditional Western-nationalist duality.

If back in 1989 Romania's 'one eyed' focus on becoming part of Europe - and 'Western' - was easy to understand, Romania is increasingly coming to terms with a Europe less Western than it used to be. Less Western in the sense that Europe has been redefined by the interaction with the East. This was obvious in the lack of unity over the Iraq question. Given the diverging stances towards a common 'other' now that the 'East' has ceased to exist, the idea of Western has lost its meaning. The lack of a firm Western identity which previously countries like Romania could

²²⁸ Therborn 2006: 5.

identify with is disappearing. There is no border between Western and Eastern Europe. In the same line of thinking, Delanty and Rumford suggest that non-establishment of East-West border is basic to all definitions of Europe. Delanty and Rumford propose, to see both Europe and its borders as ‘discursive constructions’ (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 36). As Balibar has pointed out, it would be a mistake to consider Eastern Europe’s ‘*border* of democracy’ a separation. According to Balibar, “in today’s world, it has not the slightest chance of being maintained, and no one would to rebuild the Wall a little further east” (Balibar, 2004: 99).

A further point needs to be made in the discussion on borders which includes Romania. During communism the East and West distinction referred to the eastern border as a ‘frontier’. The East marked the border of Europe. Romania was then part of the East. From a historical perspective, the Eastern frontier can be perceived as a ‘troubled’ boundary defining “a space open to a variety of narratives the West produces about itself” (Eder, 2006: 11). The eastern border has been subject to a dynamic process of reconstruction. As a result of the EU expansion the interstate borders between Romania and the EU will become increasingly irrelevant. If there is going to be a border then this will not be limited to the (traditionalist) inter-state divisions. It would rather be the product of socially constructed narratives that does impact our daily life practices beyond the *border*, delineated in the traditional jargon (Newman, 2006) by mental borders.

I have argued that the idea of postwestern Romania requires a rethinking of the relation between Romania and the rest of the world. There are two dimensions to this. First, this has meant a shifting relation between inside and outside Europe. This alone necessitates a new understanding of how both European and Romanian spaces are reorganized. Second, Romania’s special relationship with the US does not create a border between Romania and the EU. It rather reinforces the idea according to which both Europe and Romania are becoming postwestern. In sum, a new global dimension to studying Romania, currently not developed, is the necessary concomitant of the idea of Romania as postwestern.

It is noteworthy that this development has taken place at a time when Romania is also redefining its relations to the ‘new east’, i.e. with those countries that have been at the potential new dividing line between East and West. As I will illustrate below, Romania’s relations with Ukraine contribute to the further shaping

of a postwestern identity for Romania and actively contributes to blurring a potential new dividing line in Europe before it gets the chance to settle.

4.6.3. Dynamics of Openness towards the New Borderlands of Europe

As already argued in Chapter 3, section 3.5.1., Romania does not develop postwestern tendencies alone. One aspect of these developments is that the distinction between what is Europe, what is outside/external and what is domestic has become less rigid than before. Whereas previously to westernize for Romania meant that it had to orientate itself exclusively to the West, now Romania ‘dares’ to look East as well. There was a time immediately after the revolution, when Romanians would feel uncomfortable about looking eastwards, afraid that it would imply that Romania was not Western enough - that it would compromise its *Westernness*. Recent developments show some evidence that Romania is becoming more ‘relaxed’ about a parallel eastern orientation than it used to be. And this is clearly a postwestern feature. Extending these points further, I will relate the discussion of a postwestern Romania in the making to Rumford’s idea of the borderland not only as ‘the spatiality’ of borders themselves, but also as a new spatiality of politics. As such, borders create their own spaces. However, as Rumford suggests “[b]orderlands should not be thought of as simply a development of Europe’s borders” (Rumford, 2006b: 162). I will return to this post-territorial aspect below.

Following the recent enlargement, the EU’s formal external border has shifted eastward. As the EU’s external boundaries gradually alter, political transformations occur ‘at the border’. These transformations refer to the creation of ‘integrative borderland landscapes’ (Newman, 2006: 181) that produces new dynamics of openness and closure. As Romania will become part of the EU’s internal space, the EU has sought to ameliorate the problematic nature of borders. In the case of Romania, the EU’s concern with its borders has improved Romania’s relationship with Ukraine. It has made Romania less divided from Ukraine. The reconfiguration of Romania’s position vis-à-vis Ukraine in certain ways is illustrative for the general ideas of this thesis. First, it sustains the argument of postwesternization seen in a change of attitude towards Ukraine. Second, it has a postnational element in that it has created an awareness of the meaning of spatial borders: contested territorial issues are no longer national questions but European. Both aspects will be developed below.

The EU has put a lot of efforts into creating the so-called ‘soft borders’ (Rumford 2006b) through trans-boundary activity spaces. These spaces, previously closed, are reconstructed as frontier zones of interaction. The purpose of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), an initiative put in place by the EU in 2004, has been to strengthen links with the countries that are becoming new immediate neighbours as a consequence of the enlargement. The ENP is in a way a continuation of Romania’s efforts of the last decade. Beyond doubt, Romania’s post-1989 objective of acquiring membership of NATO and the EU has had a positive impact on the relations with its neighbouring states, as good regional relations is a conditionality for membership. Notably, this has meant an improvement of the relationship with a third country like Ukraine.

Since Ukraine’s independence, bilateral relations between Romania and Ukraine have had their ups and downs. Periods of more intense cooperation and dialogue have been followed by periods of stagnation. Namely three controversies have been framing the periodic tensions between the two neighbours: delimitation of the continental shelf in the Black Sea, Ukraine’s intentions to restore a shipping canal in the Ukrainian part of the Danube Delta, and the question of migration. Let me briefly introduce these sources of disagreement in turn.

The status of Serpent Island has been at the heart of the maritime border dispute. This tiny Black Sea Island is symbolic of the larger issues at stake. The small, rocky island, which is located in an area with major proven oil and natural gas reserves, was annexed by the Soviet Union in 1947 and later inherited by Ukraine, despite Romania continuously claiming its historical rights. The second dispute concerns the restoration of the shipping canal in the Ukrainian part of the Danube Delta. Romania opposes Ukraine’s construction of a navigation canal through the Danube Delta meant to aid the shipping industry and improve the employment situation in the area. While Romania officially opposes the canal for environmental reasons (the delta’s biosphere is declared UNESCO world heritage), Ukraine maintains that Romania is trying to ensure its monopoly in terms of shipping services in the area. Romania’s official position has backing from the EU, which in October 2005 urged Kiev to postpone the completion of the canal, likewise citing environmental concerns. A third persistent issue has concerned migrant workers. Notably, Romanian nationalists have been concerned by the flow of Ukrainian

labourers to Romania as well as by the threat posed to Romanian industries by their cheaper Ukrainian competitors.

Recent political developments - Ukraine's 'Orange Revolution' and the election of Băsescu in Romania - have had a positive impact on the two countries' relations. From the first days of his presidency, Băsescu has attached particular importance to relations with Romania's immediate neighbours. The long-standing cases of the Black Sea continental platform and the ownership of Serpent Island have finally been brought before the International Court of Justice in the Hague, which have been asked to help the two countries draw the demarcation line. A decision from The Hague is expected by 2008. Similarly, Romania has signed in Odessa a protocol that stipulates that both parties are to follow the recommendations of a UN Committee regarding the Bastroe canal project. In July 2006 international experts have supported Romania's position on the Bastroe canal, pointing out it will have devastating effects on the biotope of the region. According to the Investigation Commission, the Bastroe canal 'would likely have a negative effect on the border environment' in the Danube Delta situated at Romania's border with Ukraine.

Intensified dialogue between Romania and Ukraine has also been driven by shared interest to find solutions to the problems of their national minorities living within the counterpart's territory. An open dialogue on human and minority rights within the framework of international conventions and the laws of the two states is new. This means that now decision-making regarding minority rights and the legal structure of Romania is not purely taking place at national level but European. In other words the state cannot do what it pleases with its minorities. It has to abide to certain international conventions and agreements.

The changes in the relations between Romania and Ukraine have been significant in the past five years. Whereas previously the focus was on the negative consequences of coexistence, now there is a belief that both Romania and Ukraine will benefit from more and closer cooperation. Furthermore, both parties agree to look for multilateral assistance in disputes where each country's subjectivity represents barriers to finding common solutions. For Romania itself, relations with eastern neighbours are vital from the point of view of its reforms and integration into European and Euro-Atlantic institutions. It is hoped that stronger bilateral relations with Ukraine, as well as multilateral regional cooperation, will help to avoid the emergence of a new dividing line on Romania's eastern border. Hereby, Romania has

been pulled out of its 'East complex' – in the sense of not any longer avoiding to look East in order not to be identified herewith by the 'West'. This is in some way a postwestern development, where attempts of Westernization actually bring Romania *beyond* the East-West distinction. Further, whereas previously Romania would make unilateral territorial claims, now it is letting differences between Romania and Ukraine to be solved by international instances. In other words, Romania seems moreover influenced by a postnational order where national disputes are solved beyond the nation-state under influence from transnational norms and cultural patterns.

At first glance, the term 'postwestern' can appear to be of little use. Like yet another case of academic *over consumption* of the 'post' prefix. However, as the above sections have illustrated, the term covers much more than simply the formal end to the East-West division as symbolised by the dismantling of the Berlin Wall or the EU enlargement. Europe in general and Romania in particular is currently undergoing a development, where the interaction and integration of the two formerly separate regions have reached a degree of intensity, where distinction between East and West loses relevance. A convergence is taking place, where the West – under influence from the East - gradually becomes less Western, and vice versa. The West ceases to be the West and – as a consequence – the East is not any longer exclusively Eastern. A new, postwestern logic, with far-reaching consequences for political decision making and perception, is imposing itself. Like there is no light without darkness, talking about 'West' makes little sense, when East no longer implies the same connotation. Not least, because the constructed idea of an Eastern Europe and a Western Europe was strongly enforced by the bipolar logic of the Cold War, where the two were mutually constituted. Hence, the term postwestern.

To sum-up, the preceding sections point to the idea that Romania is increasingly becoming postwestern. As a *relapse to Easternness* is regarded as highly unlikely, Romania feels 'on the safe side' to an extent that it has started to act more independently in its external relations. The given examples of Romania's involvement in the second Iraq war and possible complicity with regard to the alleged CIA detention centres have illustrated how Romania constructs its self-image beyond simple compliance with what is considered *comme il faut* among determinant European partners. The example of Romania's improved relations to neighbouring Ukraine, likewise demonstrates a Romania, which is not any longer afraid to be

‘recreated’ as Eastern by cooperating with its eastern neighbours, and which therefore acts more pragmatically. These three examples, by inductive reasoning, have overall provided support to the idea that Romania and Europe are moving in a postwestern direction. I will now turn to examine the reconstruction of the Romanian identity in terms of postwesternization.

4.6.4. *Becoming ‘more’ European*

We cannot discuss postwestern Romania without considering changing features in the societal identity. As noted in Chapter 3, Section 3.5., the idea of postwestern identity takes as point of departure embedness in “pluralized cultural models of societal identity” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 23). As it has already been hinted, postwesternization raises new questions concerning the very identity of Romania. The construction of societal identity has become open to new interpretations. Instead of the *old* one-dimensional identity, based on resistance to external influence, the *new* societal identity has acquired new, additional dimensions without losing the old *one*. It would be an illusion to believe that i.a. the totalitarian system has not had an impact on the Romanian identity and that the old Romanianess has disappeared. Romania has been a country where former communist political figures remained in power and dealt with an ideology which no longer existed. In this sense, the result may have been the reconstruction of a more *normal* societal identity (Kennedy, 1994).

Romania’s identity is certainly not antiwestern. As depicted earlier, this was already visible during the events of December 1989. These events represented a high point in the national self-awareness. At the same time, however, the slogan ‘We are returning to Europe’ expressed the wish to rejoin the wider community of Europe, from which Romanians have been cut off some half a decade earlier. This definition of the new societal identity not separate from a shared identity with Europe accentuated the elites’ awareness for change in the paradigm of identity, by bringing to light the project of modernization inspired by western democratic Europe. The wish to ‘return to Europe’ and to join pan-European structures, particularly the EU and NATO, has dominated the domestic political programs in the mid 1990s. Since Romania took the first formal steps towards EU membership in June 1995, the main goal has been to integrate into Europe’s formal institutions and to become fully European. Social and economic problems and the difficulties related to the current

accession to the EU did not exhaust the interest for becoming European. As I write these lines, Romania is still outside the door of a relatively mistrustful EU, waiting for full formal membership in 2007/2008. For Romanian political elites this was not only a question of security and stability guarantees but also had a symbolic meaning: going Western meant belonging to Europe. For half a century Romanians have thought in terms of East and West and now the East as such does not exist anymore. The main axis of their identity has disappeared. With the end of East-West division and the ‘annihilation’ of the East, the *normal* societal identity (i.e. non-imposed) was confronted with an ‘identity vacuum’.

The definition of what is distinctively European asks for reflection on fundamental features of the Romanian society. There is even today according to the Hungarian sociologist Elemér Hankiss a “neurosis of backwardness”²²⁹, that some might call the Eastern European (inferiority) complex (Törnquist-Plewa, 2002). The main dilemma for the Romanian society has often had its origin in the gap between an identification with the Western culture and its economic and social backwardness. In this context the process of cultural integration legitimates their hope of becoming ‘more European’. This dream started with the Yalta Conference (February 1945), an event seen as a founding myth of the artificial East-West division. This is also why the communist history of Eastern Europe is perceived as one having external causes.

Postwesternization has started to reshape Romania’s identity in different ways. First, postwestern identity has involved a rethinking of the relations between Romania and Europe. As a consequence of postwesternization, Romania has moved closer to the new East. Romania’s close relationship with the new borderlands of Europe has overcome the traditional identity-crisis about the East. Second, the new conditions of openness have redefined societal identity by reference to the global. Part of the postwestern perspective is seeing Romania as a part of Europe in the world, as a global player. It is suggested that the meaningful construction of a postwestern identity has been a means for Romania to both acquire recognition and thereby escape the historical complex of inferiority.

In the Romanian society in-depth changes took place under the mutual impact of tradition and the different types of adaptation to the new context. Existing cultural patterns of transformation have been in a continuous synchronicity with the on-going transformations of Europe. In some cases these external influences have not

²²⁹ quoted in Rupnik, 1988: 11.

just maintained the old patterns of political transformation or dynamics. They have also reconstructed primordial tendencies and still create, in different ways and in different settings, the shaping of the Romanian society in a postwestern direction.

4.7. Placing Romania in a Postnational Europe

Cultural integration as discussed in the previous sections related to the making of postwestern Romania. I shall now examine a parallel form of cultural integration, postnationalism. Part of the postnationalist perspective is no longer seeing Romania as a nation-state in a world of nation-states but or as a part of a civilizational cluster (Delanty, 2003c). The issues raised in this section can be seen as advocations of postnationalism in Romania. These issues will help illustrate the complex relationship between Romania and postnational Europe: Romania is both being influenced by a postnational Europe and contributing to the postnationalization of Europe. First, I deal with postnationalism as emerged around the changing nature of borders, minority rights, and interethnic relations (which have affected the spatiality of politics in Romania). The first example concerns Romania's relations with another neighbouring country in EU's new borderland, namely Moldova. Recent developments in the relationship between Romania and Moldova are illustrative of Romania becoming increasingly postnational. As I will illustrate below, the new and changing relations between Romanian and Moldova have been influenced by the wider European context. At the same time, the postnational dimension includes loyalty towards pan European forms of solidarity and guarantees of security rather than those relying upon the nation-state. The second example confirms Soysal's thesis that postnational rights are being legitimized by a supranational discourse of universal human rights. The case of Hungarians in Romania provides a salient example of how minority rights in Romania have started to be redefined on the basis of cultural diversity and general human rights norms, rather than being another attempt to deal with Hungarians as a societal problem. The third example is taken from the demands of territorial autonomy made by the Szekler region in March 2006. This example of postnationalism illuminates how Romania under external influences has changed its approach to interethnic relations. After these elaborate examples, I will analyse main features of civil society in post-1989 Romania. Finally, I will look at the societal identity of Romania, which, it is argued, is gradually going in a

postnational direction, as a result of the changing nature of the relations between Romania and Europe.

4.7.1. Romania's Changing Relations with Moldova

A first way in which postnationalism has affected Romania is through the context of its (forthcoming) EU membership and the changing nature of the EU's borders. The vision of a postnational Romania is related to the shift in the post-1989 relationship with Moldova, the EU's new borderland. There is an increasing identification with issues beyond national borders which is reinforcing the general trend towards postnationalism.

In the aftermath of the Soviet Union's collapse, unification of culturally related Moldova²³⁰ and Romania was not an unlikely development, supported by various forces in Chişinau. The Romanian language (called 'Moldavian' during the Soviet period) was declared the state language, the Moldovan state chose a new flag based on the Romanian tricolour, and the Romanian national anthem was adopted as its own. Demonstrations in 1989 denounced the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, the basis for the Soviet annexation of Moldova from Romania. In 1992 the speaker of the Moldavian Parliament, Alexandru Mosnau, said 'Moldova is preparing for unification with Romania'²³¹. On both sides, the border was perceived not as a natural border but as a result of the historical contingent situation from 1940 when Moldova was annexed from Romania by the USSR. The end of communism and the dissolution of the Soviet Union brought about a new situation with far-reaching implications for Moldova-Romanian relations: for the first time in fifty years, Romania could normalize the bilateral relations with Moldova. This normalization has been slow mainly because of the complex nature of historical legacy. The aspirations of unification were strongly encouraged in Romania during the early 1990s. Not least during the first Iliescu presidency (1990-1996), when Moldova's newly won independence was treated with some arrogance by Romania. Having previously been dominated by the Soviet Union, Moldova had good reasons to criticize Iliescu's attitude of superiority. According to Boia, there were several factors that contributed

²³⁰ Moldova (that more or less corresponds to the former Romanian province of Bessarabia) was annexed from Romania by the Soviet Union in 1940 and has a population of 60% ethnic Romanian. Until World War II Romania controlled all of Moldova except Transnistria. Moldova's language is simply Romanian with a regional accent and Russian neologisms.

²³¹ quoted in Holman, 1992: 4.

to the failure of reintegration after 1989: anti-Romanian propaganda during communism, the presence of a large Russian-Ukrainian minority in Moldova, and not least, Russia's direct opposition (Boia, 2001b: 23).

Later, several events altered the character of the bilateral relationship. On the one hand, Romania gradually changed its attitude. As Romania was approaching NATO and EU membership, a unilateral improvement occurred in Romanian-Moldovan relations based on recognition of the existence of two equal states. This included Romania supporting Moldova's independence, sovereignty, and integrity. This has also applied to the Transnistria²³² conflict, possibly the most complicated issue in EU's borderland after enlargement as the separatist region has emerged into a hub for illicit trafficking in arms, people and drugs, organised crime, money-laundering and smuggling. Calm in appearance only, the security situation is far from stable and could deteriorate at any moment. Romania has closely coordinated its actions with the EU not only as part of Romania's wish to play a significant role in regional politics, but also as part of Romania's concerns with stability, security, human rights, and democracy in Moldova as pointed out by then Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mircea Geoană²³³.

On the other hand, the return to power in Moldova by the communist party (CPM) in 2001 temporarily deteriorated the bilateral relations. Not least when Moldova's Justice Minister later that year at a Council of Europe session in Strasbourg accused Romania of expansionist tendencies and interference in domestic affairs. A position confirmed in 2003 by Moldovan president, Vladimir Voronin, when during a televised speech he named the western neighbour 'the only empire left in Europe, made of Moldova, Dobrogea, and Transylvania'²³⁴. However, after re-election in 2005, Voronin has adopted a far more balanced approach and made closer cooperation with Romania a central foreign policy objective.

Despite remaining tensions over long lasting issues, overall relations between the two states have developed in a positive direction after 2004. Băsescu said after being elected in December 2004 that Romania would have what he called a

²³² The separatist Transnistria region (Russian speaking province), comprising the area between the Nistru (Dniester) River and Ukraine, has its own government, dominated by Russia. The conflict started in 1991 after the Soviet collapsed.

²³³ 'Romanian foreign minister urges Moldova to stay on European path', *BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union*, January 21, 2004.

²³⁴ 'Moldovan president says ready to improve Romanian ties', *BBC News*, September 25, 2004.

‘policy of partnership’ for its neighbour, Moldova. He said Moldovans would be treated as ‘good Romanians’²³⁵. Băsescu added, ‘I hope very soon, the relations between Bucharest and Chişinau will become relations between two states who have the same people on their territory’. As Moldova is not likely to join the EU at least in the next few years, a constructive opening in bilateral relations has been in line with the European Neighbourhood Policy and other EU policy instruments. With the prospect of joining the EU, Romania promised Moldova to be its advocate in the European integration process. A basic treaty and a draft border treaty between Moldova and Romania as well as negotiations on the visa regime have been discussed in April 2006. President Voronin stressed that the signing of these treaties would become a landmark in strengthening the foreign policy immunity of the Moldovan statehood but also in consolidating regional security in the Black Sea region. Partly, the establishment of a basic legal framework regulating the political status of the relations between Romania and Moldova, as well as the border regime between the two states, is among the criteria which Romania has to comply with before joining the EU. Yet, the settlement of these treaties is more than examples of Romania’s modernization. These are noteworthy moves away from (nationalist) stereotypes by starting to respect each others sovereignty, existing borders, and historic features.

For the record, it is worth noting that recently the bilateral relations have again been challenged. This time in a somehow paradoxical way, as it is Romania’s upcoming EU membership which have contributed to reopening the otherwise already (*postnationally*) settled border question: ‘The Republic of Moldova has no intention to re-unite with Romania, now and not even after Romania and Moldova becoming EU members. The union will never take place’²³⁶, declared on 6th of July 2006 Moldova’s president. The declaration came as a sharp reply to president Băsescu’s press statement, that ‘Romania offered to the Republic of Moldova the choice of entering the EU together and that although they were the only separated country (after the re-unified Germany), the union will be accomplished only inside the EU in very near future, and not differently’. Seeking reunification in a postnational framework represents a new dynamic in the relations between Romania and Moldova. Acceptance of Moldova’s sovereignty by Romania marks a postnational development, where Romania has put aside any remaining

²³⁵ Tomiuc, 2004.

²³⁶ *Adevărul*, July 12, 2006.

‘imperialism’. As noted earlier, in particular, right after the end of communism Moldova was very reserved vis-à-vis Romania, fearing Romanian expansionism. Lately, well integrated within European and not least transatlantic frameworks, Romania has adopted a more open approach. Whereas earlier the past – where Moldova belonged to Romania - was more important than the future, current developments indicate that Romania has moved in a postnational direction in its relations with Moldova.

This leads me to the notion of border. From a postnational perspective the border between the two countries has acquired a new significance, that of an on-going process of openness characterised by moments of closure (Delanty, 2006b). If during communism the border between Romania and Moldova allowed for limited contact, now the border has become much more open. In other words, the border between Romania and Moldova is becoming increasingly shaped by the postnational context. But societies do not change alone; their borders change as well. It is no longer a border which divides two separate states sharing the same ideology (i.e. communism). It has become a border where ethnic Moldovans are considered as ‘good Romanians’. Also with the growing importance of the EU integration context, Romania’s borders take on a postnational form. From such a perspective, the new EU members “provide a policing role to the rest of the EU, which provides subsidies for such policing controls” (Delanty, 2006b: 193). This is also linked to the changing relation of the centre to the periphery in Europe. A new mode of governance emerges as “the EU expands its governance beyond the member states to neighbouring regions” (Delanty, 2006b: 193-194).

Romania is undergoing a process of transformation towards a postnational society in the sense that it is becoming increasingly transnationalized. This is linked to idea that the EU’s borders are being reconstructed into less hard borders than before. Indeed, with the end of the Cold War the hard border that divided East and West Europe has been withdrawn and “the EU has expanded into a potentially open – and some would say – limitless territory” (Delanty, 2006b: 185). This is to prevent some of the problems that could emerge for both Romania and the EU. According to Chris Rumford, “[t]he development of this this new neighbourhood policy is seen as a very positive foreign policy tool by the EU and offering access to EU markets and other networking opportunities is viewed as a means of encouraging democratization and the restructuring of economies according to market principles” (Rumford, 2006b:

161). Rumford sees this development as a sign that the EU has started to practise integration without enlargement (i.e. expansion of the EU governance to non-EU spaces). But there is another aspect to it. Through the emergence of supra-national governance, Romania-Moldova relations are being affected by the ‘changing spatiality of politics’ (Rumford, 2006b). In particular, the context of transformation of the EU’s external borders has led to a rethinking of the nature of the border between Romania and Moldova. This signifies that “political space can no longer be equated with that of the nation-state” (Rumford, 2006b: 160). This came as a result of the expansion of the EU space. Moldova has become an EU borderland, and as such has been included in the EU ‘ring of friends’ (Rumford, 2006b). Under the process of rebordering of Europe, the relationship between Romania and Moldova has been changed. More importantly, if previously this border was disputed, now as a result of the EU enlargement, the border ceased to be contested. As a central mediator of EU’s neighbourhood policy, it is worth emphasising the double synchronicity of the transformation. Not only is Romania influenced by Europe’s development in a postnational direction. Romania is itself contributing to pulling Europe towards postnationalism.

4.7.2. Minorities and Postnational Rights

The second illustration of a postnational development in Romania and Europe concerns Romania’s Hungarian minority. As sustained by the historic analysis, the presence of a large Hungarian minority has frequently been the source of dispute since the foundation of modern Romania. The example illustrates the way Romania in recent years, under influence from integration into pan-European structures and the appearance of new forms of transnational politics has altered its approach to minority issues. The rights of minorities are increasingly being incorporated into the legislation via international human rights conventions that Romania has signed. Legislation concerning the Hungarian minority has significant impact both for Romania’s democratic consolidation, its relations with Hungary, and by contribution to regional stability.

Influence from Integration into pan-European Structures

Language rights have been high on the agenda of the Hungarian minority since the discussion was relaunched in 1989. In particular, Hungarians have strongly criticized

the Romanian government and the Education Law because of restrictions on teaching in Hungarian and on establishing a Hungarian university. As expressed by a Hungarian-language newspaper, “the legislature adopted, and continues to adopt laws that gravely violate fundamental human and civil rights. . . . The law on education takes first place among these measures” (Gazda, 1994: 3). Former Prime Minister Victor Ciorbea called the Education Law one of the “urgent issues” of Romanian society because of its important implications for minority and language rights (Rompres, 1997). Only after applying for EU membership and in order to prevent criticism from the EU, the Romanian parliament passed a new Education Law (July 1995). The new Law was described in an English (promotional) booklet

to be modern, to combine the most democratic provisions that exist in similar laws of European nations with the tradition and specific traits of the Romanian school, considering the existing situation in Romania. It is in accordance with all the international documents Romania has signed (Romania, 1995: 1).

Notwithstanding the difficulties of overcoming decades of prejudice, Romania has made progress in the area of protection and integration of its ethnic minorities. Pushed by the Council of Europe, the UN, UNESCO, the EU, and the Hungarian government, Romania has ratified most international conventions protecting minorities and minority languages in the early nineties²³⁷ although it only started to implement them later²³⁸. Inter alia fifteen seats are reserved for minorities in the Chamber of Deputies, and both houses of Parliament have a Standing Committee on human rights and minorities. A Council for National Minorities and Minority Protection Office, which has initiated a number of legal regulations aiming to improve the situation of minorities, has been formed. And the Hungarian minority party, UDMR, has been included in government - to mention the more important steps which have been taken.

The UDMR regards Romania’s ethnic Hungarians as integral part of the Hungarian nation and defines them as a ‘co-nation’, or ‘a state-building nation in Romania’²³⁹. At the international level, the UDMR required to be considered as the official representative of the Hungarian minority in Romania and as such to

²³⁷ For a detailed analysis of the issue of minorities in Romania and a list of agreements and treaties signed by Romania see Wagner, 2002: 257-274 and 281-282.

²³⁸ For a detailed description of the legal regulations concerning minorities in Romania see Romanian Academic Society (2006).

²³⁹ See the Programme of the UDMR, <http://www.rmdsz.ro/>.

participate in every bilateral agreement on the status of the Hungarian minority. At the same time Hungarian government officials have lobbied at Council of Europe, the EU, and the OSCE on behalf of the Hungarian minority parties. This may also be read as an attempt to create virtual borders. In this picture, states are no longer fully sovereign within their frontiers; these frontiers have become more permeable. The issue of minority rights reverses the conventional norms associated with modern citizenship. National citizenship becomes thus not the only way to acquire rights and identity.

In 2004 the leader of UDMR, Béla Markó, was elected Minister in charge of coordination in the field of culture, education and European integration. From this strategic portfolio Markó directly initiated the work on a minority law based on international norms of minority protection and human rights. A key element was the establishment of a legal framework for the practice of cultural autonomy. The draft law regulates the right to study in native language at all levels of education and states that authorities do not have the right to undertake legislative or administrative measures to change the ethnic mixture of an area. Moreover, the law defines those national minorities that can be regarded as traditional and historical minorities in Romania due to their long-lasting co-existence with the Romanian majority. The partaking of the UDMR in the governmental coalition has been perceived by the external world as a positive development in the recognition of the Hungarian community's status. As Bárdi points out, it shows "the beginning of the political integration of the minority elite" (Bárdi, 2004: 58). In its influential 2005 annual progress report on Romania's EU bid, the European Commission pointed out that the Hungarian minority situation 'has continued to improve' since the UDMR joined the governing coalition.

Whereas previous governments were considered to be 'anti-Hungarian', since 1996 the successive governments turned out much more responsive to their demands. In the second half of the 1990s after signing the Hungarian-Romanian basic agreements, significant changes occurred in the minority policies as European integration became a clear priority. Under both external and internal pressure the draft law on national minorities was approved by the Romanian government in 2005 and is currently (July 2006) being discussed in the Romanian parliament. With the recent changes in the law on minority rights, individuals belonging to different ethnic

groups in Romania will benefit from this postnational development in terms of rights of the individual.

There is little doubt that in Romania the treatment of minorities with regard to language or citizenship law has been more pluralist than it likely would have been in the absence of EU and NATO membership. In December 2005, the Romanian prime minister said that “Romania has all the interest to adopt European standards in terms of minorities”²⁴⁰. This discourse has been influential in the expansion of minority rights in Romania. Advocates of the proposal of the new law on minorities have clearly been influenced by the “universal right to ‘one’s own culture’” (Soysal, 2004: 3). As Yasemin Soysal has pointed out, the fact that minority rights are being linked to the work of international institutions, means that “collective identity starts to be redefined as a category of human rights” (Soysal, 2004: 3). Romania’s increasing postnational orientation is not only that its legal framework requires Romania to share sovereignty with the EU (i.e. in October 2003 the Romanian Constitution was amended in order to facilitate legal harmonization with the EU), but also that with Romania becoming an EU member the guarantees for minority rights will move beyond Romania’s national boundaries. The Hungarian minority (and other ethnic minorities) has started to see the guarantee of human rights as promised by the European institutions to be increasingly important. When Romanian courts do not produce results, Hungarians can turn to the European Court of Human Rights where cases are brought under the European Convention of Human Rights²⁴¹. Hence new forms of mobilizations emerge beyond the framework of the nation-state. Increasingly demands of ethnic collective groups connect their demands to transnational institutionalized discourses of “equality, emancipation and individual rights” (Soysal, 2004: 4). For instance when the UDMR-leader, Béla Markó, insists on education and culture in mother tongue, he does so based on a discourse which appeals to the rights of the *individual*.

The assertion of Hungarian rights has increasingly converged with Romania’s postnational development. An important step towards coming to terms with an increasingly postnational reality has been to recognize that the governing elites could not control other groups as easily as they could in a national setting. Now there is obviously a postnational dimension in that Hungarian and other minorities in

²⁴⁰ Rompres, December 5, 2005.

²⁴¹ A treaty signed by Romania in 1994.

Romania have started to feel more secure as they see minority and human rights as guaranteed by the EU to be increasingly important. Significant changes in the legal structure of Romania where to a growing extent decision making is not taken purely at national level but European has certainly improved the status and recognition of minorities. Romania's accelerated process of European and Euro-Atlantic integration offers indirectly the prospect of improved legal protection for the Hungarian and other minorities. Public opinion in Romania perceives European integration not as a mere political decision but as a positive step in the process of social change. There are good reasons to believe that minority rights in Romania have become postnational in the sense that they have become a discourse that is able to challenge national sovereignty. The discourse of minority rights is no longer confined to international law but has entered the Romanian national legal system. As it was the case in the Moldova example, it is worth restating the double sidedness of this development. As a large country in the Balkans, notoriously known for centuries of interethnic conflicts and minorities problem, Romania in a way serves as a 'test' case, if not for the entire continent's transformation, then at least for this critical region.

The Emergence of New Forms of Transnational Politics

New forms of so-called transnational politics have also affected Romania's approach towards minorities. To illustrate this point, I will refer to the referendum that took place in Hungary on dual citizenship for non-national Hungarians. In 2004 the citizens of Hungary were called to decide through referendum if ethnic Hungarians living in the neighbouring countries should be granted non-resident citizenship preferentially by lifting all residency requirements from among the pre-conditions of obtaining a Hungarian second citizenship. A majority of voted 'yes', but the referendum failed because of insufficient turnout²⁴². The outcome disappointed most Hungarians living in Romania. The referendum as well as the so-called Hungarian Status Law²⁴³, which grants certain rights other than citizenship to ethnic Hungarians

²⁴² National Election Office Hungary 2005, http://www.valasztas.hu/main_en.html.

²⁴³ The name given to the *Act on Hungarians living in Neighbouring Countries LXII/2001* established by the Hungarian government in 1999, adopted by the Hungarian Parliament in 2001, and set in application since January 2002. The Status Law created a form of state membership (i.e. 'Hungarian status') for ethnic Hungarians living outside Hungary. The law offers a National Identity Card to trans-border Hungarians that allowed its holders to gain a set of cultural and economic benefits, including seasonal working permits in Hungary, but not the right to vote.

outside the motherland, generated a lot of debate in Romania. Hungary was accused by Romania of irredentist nationalism and of explicit nationalist-revisionism. Seen from Romanian government's point of view the relation between Hungary and its national minorities challenged the sovereignty of the Romanian state. The EU also criticized Hungary for the lack of consultation with neighboring countries before its adoption and "for the fact that the law provided for a set of extraterritorial rights for ethnic Hungarians" (Kovács, 2005: 57). The position of UDMR (Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania), part of the coalition government between 1996 and 2000 and again from 2004, was that the Hungarian minority in Romania should support the Status Law and decline the claim of full Hungarian citizenship. A gesture which suggests that also national minorities – and not only governments – increasingly base their actions on a postnational pragmatism.

The Status Law is based on two main assumptions. First, it is the conception of a nation in ethno-cultural terms, i.e. that a group of people that has once formed a nation and developed a strong sense of national identity – regardless of the present borders – has something meaningful in common. The second assumption is the fear that the home state does not protect the rights of kin minorities. According to Brigid Fowler, the Status Law moves beyond the modern norms of statehood which have been linked to "absolute territorial sovereignty, singular national identities and an exclusive citizenship as the only possible legal and political relationship between states and individuals" (Fowler, 2004: 182). From a postnational perspective states are no longer sovereign, borders are becoming more and more open, and postnational phenomena challenge states' position as the only actors. Hungary is thus acting as a defender of minority rights by pointing to perceived deficiencies in Romania's treatment of its minorities.

Romania has criticised the law itself mainly in terms of 'modern' norms of territorial sovereignty and equal treatment element of state citizenship. The official position of the Romanian government on the Statute Law was submitted to the Council of Europe's 'Venice Commission' in 2001: "a person cannot have several identities. A person can have several citizenships but not dual identity"²⁴⁴. Moreover, it was noted that "free choice does not suppose supplementary confirmation from any organization or authority"²⁴⁵. The report of the Venice Commission maintained the

²⁴⁴ Government of Romania, 2001: 6.

²⁴⁵ Government of Romania, 2001: 5.

importance of bilateral and multilateral treaties, intergovernmental agreements, domestic legislation stipulating their implementation when dealing with the status of minorities and recognition of minorities²⁴⁶. Still in office, the then Romanian Prime Minister Adrian Năstase was quoted for saying: “the idea that citizenship can be granted to compact ethnic groups, the way one spreads chemical fertilizers over a field, is totally incompatible with the provisions of constitutional law (...) citizenship is granted to individuals” (Stoica, 2004). Romania has also complained against Hungary’s passing the Status Law unilaterally, thus depriving Bucharest of the opportunity to negotiate its way to the expansion of similar privileges to the Romanian minority in Hungary.

In addressing the need for more effective minority protection, the policies of dual citizenship have brought about the revival of national and ethnic policies in Eastern Europe. The granting of dual membership to external kin populations is an external attempt to overcome the inherent and inevitably minority problems by proposing non-territorial solutions. The Hungarian Status Law offers a kind of a ‘fuzzy citizenship’ (Fowler, 2004). It is also a form of institutionalization among members of the Hungarian nation across state boundaries. Placing minorities in a ‘Europe of communities’ implicitly opens the way to some of the constituting elements of postnationalism, i.e. attenuated sovereignty, multiple identities, multiple belongings, and non-citizenship relationships between states and individuals. According to Soysal, these relationships primarily express and accommodate the rights of individuals and specifically migrant individuals, whereas the kin-state role is based on the idea of the nation as a cultural collectivity (Soysal, 1996: 23-24).

Even if Romania perceived the Hungarian referendum as an (offensive) way for Hungary to increase its influence in Romania, Romanian politicians have recently started to reformulate the topic of minorities in terms of international agreements and conventions. Actually Romania also enacted similar legislation for its co-ethnics living in other states. Most important in this context is the way in which Romania has asserted its kin-state role vis-à-vis Moldova while rejecting Hungary’s assumption of a kin-state role vis-à-vis the Hungarian minority in Romania. According to the constitution, Romania ‘shall support the strengthening of links with the Romanians living abroad and shall act accordingly for the preservation,

²⁴⁶ Council of Europe, 2001.

development and expression of their ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity' (Article 7).

As exemplified in this case, the Hungarian minority's claims for rights are affirmed in universalistic terms. These new forms of demands acquire a transnational character in the sense that they expand beyond the boundaries of the Hungarian ethnic community and link transnationally different public spheres. In the case of the Hungarian minority we find groups, organizations, and community associations which operate at local levels but this does not mean that their claims remain local. During the last elections in Romania minority rights issues have played an important role. In pursuing their claims, minority groups entail national and transnational institutions. The emerging forms of making the demands for minority rights in Romania are less and less nationally defined minority projects. Hungarians pushed for more demands for rights. These rights are activated within and at the same time without the nation-state. In other words, the discourses of rights are no longer limited by national constellations even if these rights continue to be organized within the nation-state.

Yasemin Soysal argues that "in postwar Europe the national no longer has the primacy but it coexists with the transnational mutually reinforcing and reconfiguring each other" (Soysal, 2004: 6). This confirms that the intensification of debate on minority rights, a novel development in post-1989 Romania indeed accentuates the development of postnational Romania. The definition and redefinition of postnational rights is not necessarily free of conflict. As Soysal puts it,

like any set of rights postnational rights are also results of struggles, negotiations, and arbitrations by actors at local, national and transnational levels and contingent upon issues of distribution and equity. And like any set of rights, they are subject to retraction and negation (Soysal, 2004: 7).

The Hungarian community will soon be able to make demands on the Romanian government as a result of the incorporation of international law on minorities into the national law. These groups can also appeal to the EU or Council of Europe directly, thus undercutting national law. This is also a result of the emergence of deterritorialized rights under postnationalism.

4.7.3. Solving the Szekler Question: Postnational Pragmatism

My last example that will help to outline the relation between ‘postnationalism’ in Romania and postnational Europe refers to the Szekler Region. Recent events in Romania indicate an important shift from nationalist politics to a more ‘pragmatic’ approach that builds on the increased rationalization of society as a solution to conflict. Retrospectively, these trends indicate also the coexistence of different expressions of nationalism and postnationalism.

It received considerable media attention, when in March 2006, the Szekler National Council (CNS), a Hungarian community organization, asked the involvement of the UN Security Council and the EU in obtaining the statute of territorial autonomy for the Hungarian dominated Szekler²⁴⁷ region in Transylvania²⁴⁸. The CNS aimed for the region to have its own president and government, as well as its own police force and education system. According to Csapo Jozsef, leader of the CNS, the Szeklers wanted the international forums to call on Romania to put in place a law that would assure the autonomy of Szekler County. Csapo pointed out that CNS's initiative resulted from Romania's inability to solve this problem by itself.

This incident led to a strong debate between the nationalist parties and the representatives of the CNS in the media. Corneliu Vadim Tudor, leader of the nationalist Greater Romania Party (PRM), claimed that he would send 100,000 Romanians to Odorheiu Secuiesc, the city where on 15th of March 2006²⁴⁹ the self-proclamation of this territorial autonomy was expected to take place. PRM senator, Gheorghe Funar claimed in *The Diplomat* magazine (April 2006): ‘The source of the problem is that Hungary and UDMR work continuously for the dismemberment of Romania’²⁵⁰. Eventually, events developed peacefully, although ethnic inspired

²⁴⁷ Today the term ‘Szekler’ is used to designate the Hungarians of eastern Transylvania. Historically, the term refers to one of the three leading nations of the Middle-Age Transylvania, along with Hungarians and Germans. After World War II, the Soviet Union supported the idea of a Szekler region (approximately identical with the planned Szekler region today) to become autonomous based on the ethnicity principle. Under Nicolae Ceausescu in 1965, the region lost its autonomy.

²⁴⁸ In 2003 the politicians who left the UDMR established the Hungarian Civic Alliance, the Hungarian National Council in Transylvania, and the Szekler National Council.

²⁴⁹ National holiday in Hungary, commemorating the independence revolution of 1848.

²⁵⁰ *The Diplomat*, vol. 2 (3), http://www.thediplomat.ro/news_review_0406.htm.

confrontations were expected between the Romanian majority and the ethnic-Hungarian minority.

Romanian president Traian Băsescu met in early March 2006 with leaders of CSN, UDMR, and the Hungarian National Council of Transylvania and other representatives to discuss the issue. The outcome of these discussions was that the ethnic-Hungarian leaders decided to replace their proclamation with a proposal that simply expressed their wish for autonomy at a later stage. 'We are convinced that Romania's accession to the EU will create the conditions for the founding of the Szekler region', said the CNS leader in a statement that seemed to suggest that the idea of a unilateral proclamation of autonomy had been buried for the time being. But also a statement which indicates that the Hungarian minority now directs its loyalty towards Brussels rather than to the States, be it Romania or Hungary. Indeed, a postnational development.

In the Romanian context, postnationalism does provide an answer to the Szekler region's claims of preservation of cultural self-identity. Although the extent of postnationalism in Romania should not be exaggerated, the above events have pulled Romania out of previous era of nationalism turned over endangered national sovereignty. Romania's present government under the formal project of European integration discursively tries to construct a model of 'constitutionalism'. Here the political project of constitutionalization imposed 'from above' has encountered the national concerns in terms of local autonomy and cultural diversity. This does not mean however, that nationalism disappeared, but rather it is a more latent phenomenon than it previously was.

One of the contradictions of Eastern Europe consists in the fact that nationalism "re-mobilized old symbolic markings and designs new symbolic borders" (Eder, 2001: 233). *Old* national symbols have acquired *new* socially constructed meanings. Postnational integration is based on diversity and continuous conciliation of conflicts. Society-wide and transnational, the postnationalism has emerged as an adaptive pattern necessary to cope with the openness of transformation. Fundamentally, as Wagner has noted, Romanian politics 'are not nationalistic' (Wagner, 2002: 249). Even if it can be argued that the 1989 revolution was to a certain extent nationalistic. The main issue is not so much related to nationalism, but to postnational attitudes concerning national minorities²⁵¹. The example of these

²⁵¹ Breuilly, 1993: 353.

recent events illustrates two points in particular. First, a postnational pattern is emergent in present-day Romania. This pattern shows that ethnic nationalism does not need to be aggressive²⁵² and that actually a set of values can accommodate the other. In a postnational order, minority groups can enjoy rights beyond the nation-state. The second point is that the end of the East-West division has also had an impact on nationalism. Once Romania's political elites believed in the project of integrating Romania into Europe (indeed the goal of EU and NATO memberships has been an important stimulus to this), the space of postnationalism has opened for abolition of internal ethnic conflicts.

As noted in Chapter 3, section 3.2.3. Habermas's conception of a postnational Europe is about creating a transnational European democracy. Constitutional patriotism is meant to transcend the exclusive nationalism and endow with for an alternative way of social cohesion. Constitutional patriotism is constructed on a shared political culture of the liberal-democratic state based on popular sovereignty, individual rights, and association with civil society. Habermas (2001) further adds that the constitutional patriotism is also based on the "use of values of social welfare and mutual recognition among the existing varieties of forms of life". While some might fear that such a vision of a democratic and constitutionally based European polity could increase the so-called democratic deficit and that "a big state would not be able to deepen democracy" (Delanty 2006b: 195), the debate on Romania's transformation is related to this idea of a postnational Europe.

According to Habermas (1998), as a response to wider transformations at global and transnational level and as a result of the declining significance of the nation-state, postnationalism places nationalism beyond the nation-state. Habermas argues that postnationalism is essential in achieving identification with democratic or constitutional norms (i.e. 'constitutional patriotism') and in defining the new Europe after the end of the Cold War. From this perspective, postnationalism has led to recognition of diversity and reconciliation of conflicts.

As I have argued in section 4.4.2., nationalism in the case of Romania has been reinterpreted to meet the demands and the needs of the present (i.e. postnationalism). This is to suggest that nationalism is not a threat to the development of a postnational Romania. Instead, recent developments suggest that postnationalism is gaining momentum and marks the point where postnational Romania encounters a

²⁵² Tamir, 1993: 83-94.

postnational Europe. In spite of the ethnic conflicts that have occurred in the past, the worst forecast with regard to the influence of extreme nationalism is not likely to be fulfilled. Furthermore, in Romania, the latest period has seen the transformation of a number of previous ethnic conflicts and certain recognition of the status of minorities. Ethnic conflicts have been transcended. Hot national issues such as the reunification with Moldova have either been frozen or melted down. Other controversial questions (i.e. border delimitation in the Black Sea) are being solved beyond the nation-state.

Fundamental to my understanding of postnationalism in Romania is the idea that postnational Romania is encountering postnational Europe. With Romania becoming an EU and NATO member (after having adopted minority rights and constitutional guarantees of pluralism and freedom) these tendencies are ‘under control’ as it is hard to believe that they will break up into violence and dictatorship. As I have already argued, there are signs to believe that Romania’s going postnational could be praised with good chances of slow but constant improvement. There is a potential for nationalist parties to accommodate their Euro-sceptic rhetoric to broadly pro-EU political discourses. Likewise, Andrzej Walicki concludes,

that nations could be constructed to a certain extent only, that modern nations, like it or not, need a firm ethnic basis, and that ethnic conflict could not be exorcised by inventing or imaging a nonethnic, purely political (let alone spiritual) definition of a nation (Walicki, 1999: 252).

Walicki’s conclusions emphasise that the past does somehow confine nationalism. But it does not mean that the coexistence of postnational elements with traditional nationalism is excluded.

The above contemporary issues within Romania sustain the need for a new framework to understand developments in Romania that would be difficult to understand through the traditional approaches to European integration and Europeanization. To sum-up, the preceding sections have examined how both domestic and external influences have contributed to the development of Romania in a postnational direction. The discussion on the dynamics of postnational integration reveals two aspects in particular: first, the empirical analysis of Romania’s political transformation reveals that Romania has had its own experience with postnationalism. As Romania entered Europe, domestic transformation has involved a gradual cutting off from communism and adaptation to postnational demands (respect for minorities, democratic institutions, and human rights, to name just a few). The

existence of such developments are significant enough to say that postnationalism is self-evident in Romania. Particularly against understanding Romania's transformation as a linear evolution encouraged me to pay more attention to the 'double synchronicity' of transformation. Let me now return to the question of civil society.

4.7.4. *Civil Society in Post-1989 Romania*

So far I have stressed how postnationalism is instantiated in different ways in Romania. In the following, postnationalism will be linked to the issue of civil society in post-1989 Romania. Another way of reading postnational Europe is that this idea of Europe has become a reference for prosperity and model of civil and political rights. Europe then becomes a symbol for rupture with a (dividing) past, for democracy, civil society, and human rights. As Delanty and Rumford (2005) put it, since the end of communism in Eastern Europe, the current 'return to Europe' discourse features an effort to place questions of civil society at the forefront. This has important implication for identity formation.

For Hegel, civil society as a *process* is divided between ethical life and particular interests. Hegel differentiated between civil and political society²⁵³. It is suggested that Hegel's conception of civil society – focused on the market – is well suited to depict civil society in Romania. For Hegel, recognition of rights is realised first and foremost through property. In the context of civil society in Romania, Pralong argues that "foreign support created a 'market' (of funds for democratic assistance) which allowed the emergence of a non-governmental sector and the mutual recognition of civil society actors, but not yet their cooperative association" (Pralong, 2004: 231).

Criticizing Hegel's state-centred conception of civil society, Habermas (1990) envisions civil society within the communicative structure of ordinary people in daily practices. In his own words, civil society's "institutional core comprises those non-governmental and non-economic connections and voluntary associations that anchor the communication structures of the public sphere in the society component of the lifeworld" (Habermas, 1996: 366-367). Habermas's definition focuses on the individual as the gradual embodiment of moral principles. For

²⁵³ Hegel, 1967.

Habermas, civil society issues have to do with the ‘quality of life, equal rights, individual self-realisation, participation, and human rights’ (Habermas, 1987: 140).

For Habermas (1994), the 1989 Revolutions offered Europe a second chance to construct a communicative civil society. The democratic West, he added, would be thus able to ‘catch-up with the East’ where the leading ideas were against the state and democratic, of civil society, anti-political politics, and the self-limiting revolution (Habermas, 1994: 72). The idea of civil society becomes then closely linked to the concept of active public sphere where citizens actively engage. In Habermasian terms, the active public space is about morality, rational debate, and an active citizenship. Habermas points out that, essential to civil society is a mature post-traditional ethics, in which public debate is confined by procedural rules. However, when surveying civil society in Romania after 1989, no clear and well defined picture of civil society as defined by Habermas emerges (as yet). There is still little collective action and public engagement that would justify such a conception of civil society. As Pralong pointed out, “people do experience solidarity and collective responsibility; however, this happens in the *state*, not in civil society” (Pralong, 2004: 230).

After 1989 civil society in Romania re-emerged as the subject of the public discourse that appealed to the necessity of its reconstruction. The difficulties in creating a civil society in Romania were to a great extent generated by the fact that Romania was a former communist society. But also here it is necessary to acknowledge the long historic perspective, as we have seen, civil society even before communism was relatively weak. Touraine (1990) described the context for civil society in 1990: “in the countries coming out of communist regimes society is weak, the economy is in crisis and institutions emptied by real content. It is not about liberating the social actors of the burden of an unfair and inefficient *Ancien regime*; it is about inventing a society”.

Touraine emphasizes that it is unrealistic to expect that once the communist regime removed, one can introduce a Western-type society: “how to produce society from non-society, democracy from totalitarianism, rationality from arbitrary, liberty from the police-state?” (Touraine, 1990).

Indeed, in the early 1990s all visible sources of (re)constructing a civil society were unstable and contradictory. One could register the discrepancy between the violent tone of revolts and the real needs of constructing civil society. According

to Outhwaite and Ray, after communism, the relationship between state and civil society “often involved a one-dimensional polarization of authoritarian state power against the resistance of civil society” (Outhwaite and Ray, 2005: 157). The popular acclamation during these revolts, ‘Down with Iliescu’, is indicative in this case. This made Gail Kligman note: “[i]t is one thing to overthrow a dictatorship; it is another to participate in the establishment of a democratic public sphere and of civil society” (Kligman, 1990: 411). As we have seen, against his prowestern rhetoric, Iliescu was strongly opposed to democratic and market-driven reforms. This left little political space to democratic elites’s engagement. Pralong points out that Iliescu and his allies both “colonized the ‘democratic’ terrain” while at the same time they “secured the space on the left, the home of the former *nomenklatura*, of which they were a part” (Pralong, 2004. 232). The remained space was taken by the revived historical parties that formed the democratic opposition.

Definitive in creating democratic practices are “tolerance, effort, attention, and the patience to achieve and maintain them”²⁵⁴. These features were hard to be found back then in the Romanian political culture. Given the experience of an oppressive communist regime, “the establishment of public life, is prerequisite to constituting a civil society and a democratic public sphere”²⁵⁵. Not surprisingly, it is in this sphere that “Romanians must learn the ‘art of association’, and unlearn the dynamics of fear that foster atomization”²⁵⁶. According to Kligman, the fact that Romanians have accomplished in ten days what Poland did in ten years (i.e. the overthrow of the communist regime), proved the inexistence of some elementary form of civil society. She concludes,

[t]he difference between ten years and ten days – Poland and Romania – accentuates the very absence in Romania of any functioning of the basic kernels of civil society. Disabling in every day to almost its entire population, the former regime left a set of deeply embedded behaviours that will not be easily abandoned. In Romania today, civil society is, and can only be, in an elementary form (Kligman, 1990: 427).

By promoting the primacy of the individual, the CRD centre-right government emphasised a strong distinction between the state and the civil society. Civil society was defined as “the exercise of individual and collective liberties, the

²⁵⁴ Kligman, 1990: 400.

²⁵⁵ Kligman, 1990: 426.

²⁵⁶ Kligman, 1990: 426.

unrestricted exercise of human rights, the opening of democracy to public life, the encouragement of private property, the accelerated privatization of state property, [and] all elements necessary for the insurance of a profitable economy, of the prosperity of every citizen and every family”²⁵⁷. Thus for the government the new society required placing the individual within the civil sphere that needed to be sheltered from the intervention of the state. Civil society could then stimulate the performance of the individual and resolve its own crisis, perceived in the apathy and lack of participation of the citizen to societal matters (Voicu and Voicu, 1999: 623). Simplified, but linked to the parallel shift towards a more pro-European line, one could say that in terms of Europeanization and identity, ‘becoming European’ equated becoming a citizen in the liberal, democratic sense.

Unlike earlier interpretations in which the state had an interventionist role in all spheres of society, now the main aim was the emancipation of the individual. Such an orientation on civil society offered an alternative construction of societal order based on neoliberalism. “In both an economic and political sense, the coalition proposed the rebuilding of societal order on the basis of legal, rational, procedural norms as the most effective means to counter the collectivism, state repression alleged illusions of the malleability of society and inefficiency” (Blokker, 2004: 313). This outcome is significant for several reasons: first, it brought a new perspective on the state-society relations by the concern of a (civil) society as a condition for a thriving transformation. Second, the removal of state from society was an essential condition for the society to function accurately. The expected heightening of human and civil rights and on the formation of a civic sphere has strengthened the identification of civil society with economic and political arguments. This kind of development corresponded to a guarantee of private property (its benefits) and a limitation to the state interference in the economy.

However, it was not only discontinuity that made the emergence of civil society not easy. Other factors have contributed to the slow materialization of civil society in the first one and a half decade after communism: nationalism, the intellectuals’ incapacity to instate a ‘social dialogue’, the persistence of a certain social atomization, and the unfamiliarity with the concept of civic awareness for the majority of the Romanian electorate. Civic awareness needed to be restored. It is not enough to complain (individually) that winter conditions in cities are tough or that

²⁵⁷ quoted in Zamfir, 2001.

you still need to pay ‘extra’ (in Romanian *mită*) for public health services, for example; a public reaction would be a more efficient way to blame the local authorities. Even more critical, Alina Mungiu argued that, by 1995, “there is only a program to create civil society supported by a group of intellectuals, but this can not substitute a spontaneous social emergence”²⁵⁸.

A focus on the day-to-day realities in Romania reveals a series of dysfunctions that have affected the constitution of strong civil society. The low level of participation to a political party (between 3 and 8 percent)²⁵⁹ comes from the excessive fragmentation of political culture which discourages cooperation between the political elites and the masses and civic engagement. Aurelian Crăiuțu (1994) explores the idea of ‘apolitical familism’ to characterize the situation in Romania where political cooperation is reduced to the restrained circle of family and friends. This implies passivity, resignation as well as isolation of civil society. Political clientelism is another feature in today’s Romanian society. Political clientelism (based on ‘invisible’ inter-relations) as well as populist nationalism sustain mainly a passive political culture where the civic participatory values are still missing and the state authority is weakened (Tănase, 1996). In a society based on consanguinity, mainly of kinship, the dynamic, the evolution and the reconstruction of civil society are delayed. Under such conditions the authority of the state is undermined by the existence of interpersonal relationships where one of the sides is represented by the public authority.

Indeed since 1989 the issue of corruption came to the fore. This phenomenon is one of the elements of continuity from communism where corruption functioned at the level of the gift by combining the leftovers of the patriarchal society with a bureaucratic society. As a matter of fact the very notion of ‘corruption’ was introduced in people’s vocabulary only after 1989; before 1989 people spoke of string-pulling, privileges, human relationships to label services in ways which depended on the status of the individual. For Ditcher,

[i]t is difficult to compare the statutory corruption under Communism with the monetarized corruption which succeeded it; but although the second produced greater moral anguish, it was also because of the feeling unsophisticated people experienced of losing their social place in a system of exchange that had become at once anonymous and deterritorialized (Ditcher, 2002: 92).

²⁵⁸ Mungiu, 1995: 120 (author’s translation).

²⁵⁹ Mungiu, 1999: 147.

The expansion of the number of NGOs in recent years does not equal that there is a strong civil society in urban Romania²⁶⁰. The same applies to the countryside where the political elites did not want to change “their authoritarian and collectivist political attitudes”²⁶¹. Yet, civil society remains artificial, although more democratic attitudes are on rise (Mungiu, 1999: 147). Last, but not least the nationalism affirmed by some political elites who promote the values of a closed society, has negative effects on civil society. As mentioned earlier, nationalism has been used by some political parties to manipulate the electorate in the name of the ‘national interest’ and even to stimulate ethnic intolerance by reference to historical reconstructions in the name of the protection of national identity. This nationalist discourse which represents a continuity element with the communist regime in Romania is an obstacle to the modernization of the social sphere. As Verdery wrote soon after December 1989, “[i]t is unlikely that the national idea will disappear from Romanian culture in the post-Ceaușescu era. (...) The discourse on the Nation can also be expected to enter powerfully into party politics, fortified by its earlier confrontation with Marxism” (Verdery, 1991: 318).

Câmpeanu noted that the prominence of the ‘national’ was visible from the first moments of the instauration of new political power both rhetorically and at action level. For instance, the text of the National Salvation Front Declaration towards Romania, the term ‘national’ recurred twelve times whereas the notion of ‘social’ appears only once (1994: 185). His main explanation is that, by using the ‘national’, the new political rule was trying to legitimate itself as representing the national interests of Romania. Another example is that almost all parties include the term ‘national’ in their title, including for instance the internationally oriented liberal party. The same observation can be made about the overwhelming presence of the term ‘national’ in the 1991 Constitution (Preda, 1998: 186). In the same line of thinking, Barbu notes that “as long as the state itself is defined by the Constitution as being a ‘national’ state, it means that, despite all legal guarantees, Romanian citizens of other ethnic origin than the majority, become *stateless persons*” (Barbu, 1999: 142). Thus, as suggested by the Constitution, Romanian nationality is defined in ethnic terms, and not civic. In other words, it is as if as long as we have a *people*, we don’t need a *society*. These few examples on the prominence of the ‘national’

²⁶⁰ According to Badrus (2001) 40,000 NGOs are functioning in Romania as in 1999.

²⁶¹ Mungiu, 1999: 147.

illustrate a certain pattern of thinking inherited from communism, that is ignorance of the 'civic'.

It was not only liberty of expression and a multi-party system that people hoped for in 1989. The majority wished for material benefits and a high level of consumption that would equal that of the EU countries. Politically there was a hope of 'coming-back' to the political conditions before the Second World War. Unfortunately Romanian politics has disappointed its electorate, through the lack of action and initiative, corruption, poor corporate governance, lack of transparency, and unclear political agendas. At the same time, there is no link between political parties and large social groups. The national space becomes more and more subject to the European and international context in terms of political and economic decision-making. There is almost an undisputed support for integrating Romania into the European and Euro-Atlantic structures. This is not to say that those keen to see Romania entering the EU knows actually what this implies. For Mungiu, Romanians' eagerness to join and share Europe simply shows "that anti-Western and anti-capitalistic attitudes exist mainly when supported or induced by the authorities" (Mungiu, 1999: 147).

Moreover, the 'ownership vacuum' experienced during communism (Câmpeanu, 2002) had at least two consequences: the first upon the individual's attitude towards society, the second, upon the individual's conception of work, in other words, the symbolic valorization of work. The Romanian imaginary has lots of examples to prove that Romanians do not evaluate work as a mean to social promotion or legal accumulation. There is a certain inclination towards fatalism, luck or negotiation that determines the individual's behavior. This is not very encouraging for civic engagement either.

Voter absenteeism can be explained by the fact that people have ceased to believe in the wealth promised by the political elite. The explanation is two-fold. First, the unemployment has risen drastically since 1993. It is mostly concentrated in the eastern part of the country. The differentiation between North-East/South-West regions is higher than during communism due to the shutting down of inefficient heavy industry. This inequality is moving towards the extremes: the indigenous economic and political elites are getting richer and richer while the rest of the population is becoming poorer. The most problematic aspect of the social structure is the failure to strengthen the middle class that could have guaranteed

social stabilization both at economic and political level. The agricultural sector is impecunious and besieged by competition from (sponsored) imports. Second, the atmosphere of omnipresent corruption which cases are regularly revealed in the media. What is shrinking is the more overall indifference of the voters who do not believe in better life conditions promised in the eve of political elections. This lack of interest is to be compared with the pre-1989 lethargy when the communist political class was perceived as ‘them’. The feeling of suspicion is strengthened when people see that a good part of the political and economic elite which had important positions during communism control present Romania.

The post-1989 coalitions after 1989 have been receiving less and less support. A common feature of Romania’s post-1989 politics is that political leaders have failed to obtain support from masses. They are accused of indulgence, corruption, and promotion of personal interests (Offe, 1999). But distrust is also oriented towards the state institutions, the ones that activate for the members of the Romanian society. The shared opinion is the state institutions are influenced by political and economic games.

Europe of the East-West division was raised on the basis of powerful myths and forgetting created by yet attachment to another, now dysfunctional myth, ‘communism’. As Wagner points out, the West “had signified the ‘other’ for Communism and after the moment of 1989 was the only system or alternative remaining” (Wagner, 2002: 240). By ‘returning to Europe’, Romanians (and their neighbors) thought not only that they could overcome the economic backwardness of their society but also find the force to overcome their national traditions.

A number of factors work in the direction of a division of politics from identity. One and a half decade after the eventful winter of 1989, there is a feeling of disillusionment and frustration. The standard of living has not improved for most of Romanians, democratic participation is hesitant, and almost 42 percent of the electorate chose *not* to vote at the last 2004 parliamentary and presidential elections²⁶². This low electoral turn-out shows political demobilization, indifference and apathy. The reconstruction of the Romanian society that has involved the building of the very foundations of economic and political order has been done from above by political

²⁶² Romania Parliamentary and Presidential Elections, 28 November and 12 December 2004, OSCE/ODIHR, Assessment Mission Report, Warsaw, February 14, 2005.

elites that are not yet clearly constituted nor socially legitimized, but definitely committed to the political game (Staniszakis, 1991: 34). The reconstruction of the economy brought about hardships and deprivations for significant parts of the population.

While by now formal institutions, economic and political changes at national level are in place, nobody can guarantee that they will work properly as they need social and cultural preconditions (i.e. social interest, political and administrative culture), or one of the problems is what Sztopka (1993) called ‘civilizational incompetence’. In my view, the accurate running of these institutions has been jeopardized partly by the lack of ‘civilizational competence’ which did not occur automatically after the end of communism.

Notions such as authority, relations between state and civil society, the construction of meanings, their understandings of the meaning of Europe, and their ambivalent attitudes towards the Western centre differs from country to country. As Rumford put it, “[n]owadays former Eastern bloc countries are more firmly embedded in the architecture of the emerging European Union order” (Rumford, 2006b: 3). Romania’s transformation is merely a fragment of broader processes and as such it influences and it is seriously influenced by wider developments within Europe (i.e. Constitutionalization, New Neighbourhood Policy, to name just a few). Romania’s indigenous transformation has had consequences on other ex-communist countries from Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Moldova, and Ukraine).

The deepest level of transformation, the reconstruction of civil society - what Dahrendorf (1990) calls ‘the hour of the citizen’ is still to come. At the moment, one encounters an unsynchronized transformation, when politics came first (Wagner, 2002), the economic transformation followed, whereas civil society is still in embryonic form. ‘Social vacuum’, ‘communist mentality’, and social consciousness, that have been deeply affected by communism, are highly resistant to change even under postnationalism. Sztopka refers to these features as to a particular ‘personality syndrome’ in Eastern Europe. Its main components are: “passivism, avoidance of responsibility, conformism, and opportunism, learned helplessness, prolonged infantilism, disinterested envy and primitive egalitarianism” (Sztopka, 1992: 19).

The dream of changing the societal fundamentals through adherence to a postnational order still seems distant in this perspective.

4.7.5. Changing Cultural Patterns: The Postnational Identity of Romania

Moving from the question of civil society, I will elaborate on the postnational identity of Romania. As noted in section 4.2.2. a large majority of Romanians are in favour of closer unity with the EU. The popular support for unification with Europe in Romania raises issues about the support for a postnational identity. Such an identity emphasises the importance of universal values, such as civil and human rights, and individual claims of self-determination. Identification with these transnational issues makes identity postnational.

The 1989 changes within the Romanian society powerfully questioned the communist imposed societal identity. This identity was a combination between a Romanian ethnic identity and the communist understanding of the individual. The new post Cold War order has opened for alternative visions. Although in the early 1990's Iliescu's rule restated the ethno-cultural conception of societal identity and emphasised a national identity against possible 'alien' elements (e.g. Hungarian or European) the context of change has at least left the debate on identity open to criticism. The FSN brought about the reconstitution of the new societal identity in more 'local' terms where Europe was perceived as threatening the national identity. Other groups manifested their opposition to this 'local' understanding of reconstruction arguing that "the ideal of our revolution has been and remains a return to genuine values of democracy and European civilization" (Timișoara Declaration 1990). In spite of the 22 December Declaration that instituted "a democratic and pluralist system of government" (Iliescu, 1995), the period 1990-1996 was determined by an effort to define the new societal identity through the concept of 'original democracy', that is in ethnic terms (i.e. shared language and culture).

This limited perception of identity had definitely marginalized the identity of minorities. Moreover, it brought about criticisms from the EU and external pressure arose against limiting the possibility of expression of minorities. This ethno-cultural understanding of community (through the emphasis on 'national interest' and 'national community') meant in reality denial of national minorities' demands for collective rights (i.e. local autonomy and cultural rights). For instance, the 1991 Constitution referred to the 'unity of the Romanian people' (article 4.1.) and the state sovereignty is based on the 'majority ethno-nation'. Article 4. 2. refers to the Romanian citizenship: 'Romania is the common and indivisible homeland of all its

citizens without any discrimination on account of race, nationality, ethnic origin, language, religion, sex, opinion, political adherence, property or social origin’.

Barbu (1999) writes critically of this double view on citizenship: on the one hand, a pre-political vision on citizenship based on ethnic identity and on the other a political citizenship, according to which those who have the residence on the Romanian territory enjoy some rights and have some obligations. As the identity rights are considered insufficient by the Hungarian minority, in particular, this interpretation of Romanian citizenship has led to conflict over minority rights. Nationalist parties such as the PRM and the PUNR had at several occasions manifested their disapproval over the UDMR’s proposal for autonomous education and usage of the minority language.

As we have seen, the centre-right opposition which came to power in 1996 called for a radical break with the communist past and identity (Tismăneanu, 1997). Generally the discourse could fairly be perceived as pro-European. As noted earlier, the coalition’s political program emphasised the development of the civil society separated from the state, democracy, and market economy. All in all, the reconstruction of a different societal order than the precedent one. This societal order was meant to function in full accord with wider European reference points. The concepts now operative in the political space were essentially those of an ‘authentic democracy’. As early as in 1997 the government chose a strategy of swift integration into NATO in the first wave of enlargement together with Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic. Committed to Euro-Atlantic integration, Ciorbea government delayed the indigenous economic reforms announced before the 1996 elections. The government could not deliver on their project of building an ‘authentic democracy’ which was translated by many as the reconstruction of Romanian society by getting rid of its communist elements in order to smooth the progress of integration into the new political reality. Romania’s NATO membership was finally postponed for a later stage.

From 2000 onwards due to the general understanding that Romania could not do without recognition on the European level, an awareness of the Romanian identity was reasserted in integrational terms. This is an awareness of Romanian European identity rather than simply Romanian identity, in other words, bringing Romania in a closer relationship with Europe and its neighbours. The particular support for democratic institutions and EU membership may be understood as the

most significant achievement of the Romanian transformation. The reconstruction of the Romanian society has involved a process of renunciation to the particularism of the communist past. In this sense, the new societal identity is going in a postnational direction, based on abstract procedures and principles. Rather it has to be understood as the precursor of a much broader tendency towards postnationalism.

Postnational integration, with its socio-cultural implications, has extended to Eastern Europe after the end of the Cold War. This form of integration is giving rise to constantly changing cultural patterns that constitute different responses to wider transformations of Europe. This also implies that ‘going postnational’ is understood as a process of adaptation around democratic principles. Postnationalism supposes that the state “have lost its monopoly on collective identity”²⁶³. As illustrated in my previous sections, postnationalism relates to a move towards new reference points beyond the ‘nation code’ (Delanty, 2000a). These new reference points extend beyond the nation-state and may be designated as postnational.

Postnational identity is a loose collection of civic ideals, such as democracy, progress, equality and human rights (Soysal, 2002: 274). It develops a new basic component of national identities – the civil one. As such, Eastern Europe represents a ‘transnational normativity’ (Therborn, 2001). Anyone respecting these principles can be simply European. “We increasingly observe a *normalization* of national canons, by which I mean a standardization process that removes the mythical, the extraordinary and the charismatic from its accounts of nationhood” (Soysal, 2002: 275).

Delanty perceives European identity not only as a collective identity that legitimates the EU but also as an emerging cultural model. The connotation of this is that “a future European post-national and constitutional order will have to reconcile itself with the fact that the identity of Europe is not easily codified in a cultural package” (Delanty, 2003a: 85-86). Indeed it is difficult to argue that the nation-state still dominates ‘the meaning of belonging’ (Delanty and Rumford, 2005).

The main implications of postnationalism on societal identities after the collapse of communism included, on the one hand, reinvention of a new societal identity by eliminating its communist features, break-up with the ‘communist imagination’, and construction of a European Romanian identity. On the other hand, within only one and a half decade Romania has been more successful in what

²⁶³ Delanty, 2000a: 96.

systemic transformation is concerned than it is commonly admitted. Communist rule ended, a market economy has replaced a state planned economy, a multi-party political competition has replaced the mono-party political system, NATO membership was a reality in 2004 and preparations to become EU member in 2007 are almost accomplished. Members of the Romanian society welcomed the re-opening of borders, the access to global trade, travel and study abroad.

There is no doubt that the integration into the EU offers a positive economic, political and legal environment for the Romanian society. In my view this process is the key difference between the situation in Romania today and its unhappy experience through history. “The prospect of institutionalised ‘return to Europe’ also makes them different from other democratic transitions outside Europe” (Fowler, 2001). The appropriation of the EU institutional patterns in Romania did not mean acceptance in the original outward appearance. It rather meant a constant reinterpretation, and reconstruction of these patterns. From a postnational perspective, European norms and values create a new kind of society and a distinctive European identity in Romania. When so many things are European, the question is why should societal identity stay national? Europeanization plays of course a big role in the postnational type of integration where the local no longer defines communities.

Yet, the debate on postnational identity is linked to a wider European cultural identity, distinct from EU politics and policy. For Delanty and Rumford, this identity is defined “by an orientation to a broad cultural conception of Europe” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 55). With Eastern European societies being gradually integrated into the EU, a postnational identity will be defined by the greater “interpenetration of European societies and from a certain ‘liquidification’ of national identities” (Delanty and Rumford, 2005: 55). Together with the emergence of this openness, the issue of recognition comes to the fore. As a cultural imaginary, postnationalism is also a process of recognition. Romanians today aspire to some ‘space for recognition’ (Jawlowska and Kempny, 2002) which can only be granted in a postnational Europe.

Habermas (1998) argues that the sources for a postnational identity come from cultural forms of cohesion based on certain principles: procedural rules, reconciliation of conflicts, limited patriotism, identification with the principles of the constitution, rather than on territory and cultural traditions. Habermas sees the critical and reflexive forces that such an identity requires at work in all societies. In my own

view, these so-called civic values have acquired a dimension of practicality in the case of Romania. As I have illustrated earlier with the example of the Szekler region's demands of territorial autonomy, the postnational dimension of the Romania identity has been acquired through a form of pragmatic discourse of evaluation. In many ways it is a postnational development and the fact that it has become articulated in Romanian politics is particularly interesting. Although driven by pragmatism and administrative necessity (vis-a-vis the EU), the approach to the question of minorities has wider meanings. The principle of recognition of minorities and their rights is now being placed on a postnational level. This development replaces earlier conception of diversity when minorities were considered as an alien to the Romanian nation and culture. This is not to say that such a postnational position does not challenge nationalism. As mentioned earlier, postnationalism and nationalism do not exclude each other: they are coexisting expressions and overlapping tendencies inside each society.

In sum, the reconstruction and representation of societal identities within the political reality of Romania correspond to a shift from the communist interpretation of identity to the postnational definition of identity. The loss of reference points from communism has implied an identity crisis. This mechanism has encouraged members of society to accept discourses of identity based on ethnicity (i.e. ultranationalist). Such discourses legitimized in exclusivist terms have alternated with the current trend of reorganization of identities in postnational terms (through a strong attachment to Europe and democratic principles). This gave way to replacement of patriotism with postnationalism which distinguishes national from ethnic identities, thus recreating an inclusive form of social relations between different ethnic groups. Within this framework, the new societal identities represented both a mode of reconstructing power and an adaptation to postnational Europe (i.e. recognition of minorities). This leads me to conclude the ambivalence of manifestations in reconstructing the societal identities which may carry different and sometimes opposing political messages, with no deviation but simply a different content.

4.8. Final Remarks on Cultural Integration and Romania

After 1989 Romania's politics can best be understood within the framework of an analysis which sees Romania becoming postwestern and postnational. The definition

of cultural integration used in this chapter – as the process of reorganization caused by social agents who seek to reconstruct an existing societal order on the basis of their specific understandings – led me to the empirical analysis of Romania's encounter with cultural integration. It should have become evident that first of all, any particular encounter with cultural integration is delineated by the particular historical context in which it takes place. Secondly, cultural integration and the interpretation of cultural integration is less of a homogenous encounter than suggested in the classical notions of integration, transition, and Europeanization. Thus, the Romanian case suggests a more critical perspective on the traditional approaches to study transformation. The vocabulary of the old debate can confine neither the dynamics of the integration process, nor its open structure. As Delanty pointed out, integration is merely “a self-creating process based on the constant negotiation with inside and outside relations” (Delanty, 2003c: 14). Another conclusion is self-evident. To the extent that Romania's reconstruction has emerged as the outcome of political agents, the internal drive for this reconstruction of societal order has come from wider transformations in Europe. The empirical analysis of Romania's political transformation came to support the idea that Romania is becoming increasingly postwestern and postnational.

In the case of Romania, an open-ended social constructivist approach on cultural integration has revealed that the political agents have left a distinctive stain on the process of cultural integration of the country. Two conclusions can be drained from this proposition. First, the analysis of cultural integration requires a meeting point between Romania and Europe and an acknowledgement of the diversity of social agents and their meaningful proposals of modernization. Second, existing theory on integration needs to be reassessed in its focus on the outcome of transformation towards a focus on the dynamics and unforeseen consequences of cultural integration.

As it looks now, Romania is going both postwestern and postnational. The analysis has not touched upon all features of transformation in Romania – more could have been mentioned (i.a. cosmopolitan Romania and about the emergence of ‘network society’ as a new form of civil society) - but I have concentrated to those features that concern most the reorganization process pursued by social agents. This chapter was meant to draw attention to those features of cultural integration that, although emerging vaguely in the first phase of post-1989 transformation, were

obvious in its later stage. Awareness of the complexity of the open-endedness transformation, of the ties linking them with the recent as well as the more distant history of Romania, as well as of its uneven and unequal course in the different regions, and of the importance of wider European transformations for Romania's development, should all contribute to a more objective and realistic analysis of the assessment of what is happening in Romania. As Bauman (1994) put it, it is still too soon to make ultimate conclusions as cultural integration process is still going on and its intention and direction are still uncertain.

5. Conclusion

This thesis was set in the context of the current debate in social theory around the emergence of a so-called *postwestern* and *postnational* Europe. It has sought to develop a framework by which transformation of the Eastern European countries can be investigated and to examine that framework in light of ‘evidence’ presented by the case of Romania. The perspective of cultural integration suggests that Eastern European transformation can no longer be read simply through an ‘enlargement’ or ‘transition’ framework. It is proposed that a more rewarding line of examination is to consider how Eastern European societies are responding to the transformation of Europe, at the same time as they are dealing with their own internal transformation. Thus, it was argued that complex dynamics of transformation occurring in Europe point to a broadening of the idea of integration. This thesis maintained that postwesternization and postnationalism are main dynamics for societies in transformation from Eastern Europe after the end of the Cold War. And that these dynamics are far from being mere the outcome of the EU enlargement or transition.

5.1. A Brief Summary

The study has aimed to investigate the constitutive dynamics of cultural integration in Europe after the end of communism. Cultural integration has been understood as the process of reorganization caused by social agents who seek to reconstruct an existing societal order on the basis of their specific understandings.

Chapter 2 set out to present a critical analysis of the major approaches to the contemporary processes of transformation in Europe, from the traditional ‘integration theories’ to the discursive, social change, nationalist approaches to European integration, and ‘Europeanization’ in the sense of adaptation caused by the EU. On the one hand, these theories were considered useful in understanding systemic aspects of integration. On the other hand, it was argued that notably the traditional theories of European integration fall short of grasping the normative dimension of the transformations in contemporary Europe. In particular the logic of

integration linked to wider processes of transformation - beyond the EU's institutions – leaves insufficient the conventional theories of European integration. The thesis then turns to an alternative, social-constructivist interpretation of 'Europeanization', now understood as a process of adaptation around conceptions of Europe, whereby societal identities are being redefined. It was suggested that the current socio-cultural forms of transformation in Europe are better depicted within the analytical framework of 'cultural integration'. The reshaping of former communist societies and key aspects of their societal identity were highlighted through a social constructivist perspective. By applying a social constructivist perspective, the emphasis came on the on-going process of social construction and the capacity of change of European societies.

Chapter 3 outlined the conceptual framework for the study of cultural integration and presented a model of cultural integration. In providing a framework for exploring further the nature of change, the model emphasised the need to conceptualise the current dynamics in terms of 'postwesternisation' and 'postnationalism' as in later years we are witnessing not just a convergence process towards 'more of the West in the East', but rather the emergence of a fundamentally *different* Europe, beyond East and West. This also implied that the internal dynamics of integration could not be depicted simply in terms of Westernization and nationalism as forces that respectively promote and hold back the interaction with the external. Drawing on theoretical insights from Delanty and Rumford, F. Peter Wagner, and Habermas and placing cultural integration in a social constructivist perspective, the chapter stressed the following as essential elements of a model of cultural integration: the importance of continuity and context, integration as open-ended transformation, double synchronicity, impact of external influences or 'diffusion', multiple modernities, postwestern and postnational Europe.

In Chapter 4 the thesis then went on to apply the general cultural integration model to Romania, commonly regarded as a 'problematic' case in transition studies. Initially the thesis analyses key aspects of Romania's political development during pre-communist and communist eras. Emphasis is given to the interplay between internal political developments and Romania's relationship to Europe. Important elements of continuity were observed. Starting out from the historical continuities, the chapter then analysed the impact of cultural integration in post-1989 Romania through the framework of postwesternization and

postnationalism. In the case of Romania, the on-going transformation in the context of cultural integration implied a fundamental rethinking of the existing societal order and societal identity. A number of concrete examples served to illustrate the general (theoretical) findings, including how Romania's transformation is both influencing and being influenced by the appearance of a postwestern and postnational Europe.

5.2. Answering to the Research Question

The research question posed in the introduction asked: *how to analyse the transformation of Eastern Europe in the context of the wider transformations taking place in Europe?* The question entailed the supposition that internal transformations cannot be observed isolated from changes taking place in the rest of Europe, a widely accepted assumption regardless of theoretical approach. However, by indicating 'wider transformations' the research question presumed that the influences cannot be deduced uniquely from EU integration, i.e. the East's adaptation to standards set by the 'West'. This latter interpretation suggests that integration is a relatively linear transition process of which the complexity can be condensed to 'stop' and 'go' – or in more ideological terms: nationalism and Westernization. By contrast, the present author understands integration as a multilayered and polychronic process. Thus, as an answer to the above research question the thesis proposes to apply *cultural integration* as a complementary approach to the study of European integration. 'Complementary' in the sense that I find that existing approaches only provide a partial understanding of integration. A cultural integration perspective focuses on the interplay between internal transformation and European integration. At the same time it opens for a fundamental rethinking of the conceptual framework for understanding this interplay. The following 'tools' have proven essential in analysing the transformation in Romania in the context of the wider transformations taking place in Europe:

A first element, which the thesis has sustained as vital, is the importance of understanding integration from a postnational perspective. Thereby one attaches importance both to the transfer of norms beyond legal rules, and to other actors than the state. Admittedly, the analysis has focused on social agents mainly in terms of political actors operating at national level. Nonetheless, for instance the significant role played by minorities in Romania supports the idea that transformation is more

adequately understood, when perceiving Europe as gradually shifting towards a 'post-Westphalian' order.

The idea of an emerging postwestern Europe has proven another useful steppingstone in analyzing transformations in Eastern Europe. This perspective puts the observer in a position to appreciate the impact that enlargement has not only on the acceding member states, but also on the idea of Europe as such. The idea of understanding integration from a postwestern perspective proved particularly relevant, as it was shown that with Romania increasingly integrated into Europe, its international behaviour contributed to redefining the entire continent in terms borders, values, and common identity.

This links up to the importance of acknowledging the concept of 'multiple modernities'. The development of a postwestern Europe implies that 'modernity' does not refer to a distinctive Western scheme. But that several norms for societal organisation can coexist within a multi-centred Europe subject to local interpretations. In the case of Romania, it is not feasible to identify the specificities of a possible 'Romanian modernity'. Yet, the already noted continuity of pre-revolutionary elements anticipates that Romanian society will remain distinctive despite adaptation to various foreign influences, including systemic integration.

Moreover, the thesis of 'double synchronicity', which states that changes are taking place simultaneously in Romania and in the rest of Europe, must be taken into account. This induces a different logic into the integration process than if the relationship is perceived primarily as a one-sided convergence. The consequence is that the researcher will have to look further into the interplay of these parallel and intertwined processes, but also the synergy which implies that both Romania and the rest of Europe changes through the interaction. Mathematically speaking, enlargement is not a simple addition, but rather a multiplication with several unknown variables. For instance, with the eastern enlargement the EU as such is becoming more culturally diversified. This adds a new dimension to the question of European unity.

Furthermore, it is important to recognize the significance of continuity and context. Contrary to transition theory that regards transition as a fundamental break with the past, the framework proposed by this thesis, insists on the necessity to take into account societal legacy. A revolution does not come out of nothing, nor does it create a *tabula rasa*. Traditions, habits, and patterns of identity are persistent

and constitute an indispensable basis for the construction of a new societal order. The surviving elements are often redefined in a new context, but as the example of nationalism showed in the case of Romania, it continues to play an important role in shaping national identities.

Another critical element of a cultural integration approach derives from the need to stress the open-ended character of large-scale processes of social change. In the same way as the starting point of transformation cannot be defined independently of the past, the outcome of integration is not fixed, either in time, or in content. Cultural integration is not a process which eventually leads to an integrated European society or to uniformity of cultures and identities. The intentions and aspirations of integration are continuously redefined and subject to many parallel and often conflicting interpretations. The emerging Romanian society is neither just a late comer to the EU family, nor a reproduction of the Western liberal capitalist states or a return to precommunist Romania.

Finally, one must consider the impact of ‘diffusion’. This may seem self-evident, as integration *per se* is traditionally understood as the adaptation to external influences. However, diffusion in a cultural integration approach means more than adaptation of legislation, but refers to spread and reembedding of ideas and values in new contexts. When, for example, Iliescu in the early 1990s formally adopted a ‘social democratic’ agenda, neither the ‘social’ component, nor the ‘democratic’ component necessarily reflected the European mainstream of moderate leftism. Instead, the societal project put forward by the ex-communists stood on the shoulders of five decades of social engineering, more than a century of nationalism, and a very embryonic conception of public participation.

These above points review the main insights produced by this thesis, hereby summarizing, what I regard as essential elements, when analysing the transformation of Eastern Europe in the context of the wider transformations taking place in Europe.

5.3. Implications for Further Research

Theoretically the foremost contribution of the thesis is a substantiation of the concept of ‘cultural integration’, as a complementary approach to the study of integration and societal change in Europe.

Besides the specific points that constitute the answer to the research question, I will draw attention to three more general implications for further research, which arise out of the present study.

A first point concerns the very nature of transformation. The study has restated the importance of seeing transformation not only as changes in structures but also as changes in local meanings and identities. Furthermore, the double-sided nature of transformation – i.e. that local transformations transform the meaning attributed to Europe and vice versa – is another general point, which may have potential implications for further research.

Secondly, the thesis prescribes a more central role to ‘culture’ in social theory in general and in integration studies in particular. In most current research, culture - although admitted as an important dimension of integration - is treated only rudimentarily. However, as sustained by the thesis, culture – here defined as a socially constructed reality based on ‘social imaginary’ significations - is not only a factor that explains the different points of departure for societies under transformation, but also a crucial variable in determining and understanding the path that each society chooses to pursue.

A third general implication relates to the possibilities opened by using social constructivism to study cultural integration. This thesis has made the case for the application of social constructivism. It follows that social constructivism should continue to lend itself to the study of the cultural dimension of integration, characterised by the reconstruction of an existing societal order and identities and a clearly articulated reflexive dimension. The re-shaping of European societies in a postwestern and postnational direction also suggests a place for constructivist theorizing.

5.4. Elements of a Future Research Agenda

A study like the present, which explores relatively new theoretical and empirical frontiers, necessarily leaves a number of open ends as well as it sets out the direction for further research. I will indicate four areas, which I expect to be particularly rewarding to inquire further into.

First, recent research has proposed to see Europe in a cosmopolitan perspective (Delanty and Rumford, 2005). In a way, this is the natural next step from a postnational order, which ultimately does imply the development of some sort of

complementary pan-European identity. But also a step beyond postwesternization as such, as the cosmopolitan perspective does not entail a merger of cultures into one unitary Western culture, but rather the coexistence of multiple identities, including also minorities of non-Christian, non-European origin.

Second, this thesis has explored multiple axes of the post-1989 relationship between Eastern Europe – in particular Romania – and the rest of Europe. However, one cannot ignore that current transformations take place under the condition of globalization, which imposes its own logic. To place cultural integration in a global perspective would open new insights. As already hinted by the case-study on Romania, actors and forces outside Europe do play a crucial role in defining borders – mental or ‘real’ – as well as patterns of identification.

Third, in my opinion this study also encourages further rediscovery and rethinking of Eastern Europe by using a historical-contextual approach and moving away from integration theories and transition studies. Seeing transformation in a longer perspective raises sensitivity towards the societal problematic, here understood as the creation of well functioning, inclusive communities. At the end of the day, applied social science cannot escape its ultimate normative *raison d'être*: the search for ‘the good society’.

A final aspect, which deserves far more attention, but which the main focus of this study has left only limited space for, is the question of how external discourses influence and *empower* local understandings and identities. This could be made subject to an extensive empirical study. The cooperative position assumed by the minorities in Romania after the revolution and the quasi-independent links they have nurtured to the European supranational structures, are indicative for this matter. At the same time, minorities are well-suited objects of study in this regard, as quantitatively they represent relatively few individuals. Moreover, due to their special situation they are likely to be relatively overexposed to the influence of external discourses.

5.5. Concluding remarks

As already explained, Romania has generally been regarded as a ‘problematic’ case for integration studies, since Romania’s trajectory has in many aspects been deviant from the ‘transition mainstream’. For a number of reasons, summarised in the introduction, I chose nonetheless to work with Romania in the application of my

cultural integration model. In hinder sight, one may legitimately question if this was a prudent choice, when it comes to the general applicability of the findings. However, by constructing an analytical framework, which emphasized the wider transformations of cultural integration in Europe, I partly accommodate this potential critique. Despite differences in internal composition and local constitution of identities, *all* societies of Eastern Europe are subject to the dynamics of postwesternization and postnationalism, which by definition exceed the national order. Against this background, I believe that the findings regarding how to approach the study of integration can serve as a guideline also outside the Romanian case.

This having been said, a short epistemological closing remark seems appropriate at this point. This thesis has built on a social constructivist epistemology. This represents a conscious choice, as I have found that such an approach would be helpful in overcoming conventional understandings of what constitutes central terms like integration, transformation, and identity. The analysis has sustained the usefulness of social constructivism for my purpose: it has made possible the construction of connected theoretical statements on cultural integration; it has helped me to identify main cultural dynamics in Eastern European societies; it has provided the ground for inferring testable hypotheses from theoretical statements; and it has made available some additional clarity to the apparently confusing societal developments. However, any choice of epistemology also to a large extent lays the ground for what kind of findings will later be derived. Hence, I do not ignore that another (essentialist) epistemology would have shed light on other aspects of my subject. This is why I insist that the proposed model to analyse the transformation of Eastern Europe in the context of the wider transformations taking place in Europe is complementary to existing approaches.

This leads me to my next point. Since 1989 the former communist countries of Eastern Europe have undergone significant changes and have been subject to various internal and external forces of influence. Cultural integration as an academic approach is *one* path to pursue which reveals *its* version of a multifaceted reality. ‘Postwesternization’ and ‘postnationalism’ are far from being immediately observable in all aspects of Romania’s everyday life. Wagner, for example, argues that “the process of economic reform is not getting off the ground and is continually getting bogged down in a mix of frantic doing and undoing” (Wagner, 2002: 277). Less optimistic living conditions are seen as “highly problematic with most people

living in a grey zone between actual poverty and a stable socio-economic existence by simply making- ends-meet each and every month” (Wagner, 2002: 277). A Bukovinean pensioner receiving a monthly paycheck of 70 euros certainly would have another version of reality to contribute than the one revealed by a cultural integration approach. This, however, does not undermine the general relevance of the proposed analytical tools, but basically sustains the thesis regarding multiple realities and identities.

Finally, the central notions of ‘postwestern’ and ‘postnational’ are open to critique: they are neither fixed concepts within current research, nor easy to observe empirically. Yet, for the purpose of this thesis they have proven useful to express the dynamic and *sui generis* elements of cultural integration: how Eastern European countries in the aftermath of communism are responding to the transformations of Europe while at the same time dealing with their own transformations. In the end, whatever aspiration one may have for a work of this sort, if it has contributed to broaden the perspective on European integration in general and on Romania’s transformation in particular, and if it represents even a minor step in the direction beyond the persistent academic East/West dichotomy, it has fulfilled its most essential task. After all, in the words of Outhwaite and Ray: *We are all postcommunist now!*

Dansk resumé

Europa undergår fundamentale forandringer i kølvandet på den Kolde Krigs afslutning. En afgørende begivenhed er udvidelsen af den Europæisk Union (EU), der indebærer, at de tidligere kommunistiske lande i Østeuropa bliver del af et samlet Europa. Samspeilet mellem ydre og indre faktorer i disse samfund bevirker, at det i stigende grad er nødvendigt at befatte sig på en ny måde med studiet af europæisk forandring og integration. Svaret i denne afhandling er 'kulturel integration'.

Afhandling tager sit afsæt i den aktuelle sociologiske debat vedrørende fremvæksten af et såkaldt *postvestligt* og *postnationalt* Europa. Denne indebærer, at ikke alene de østeuropæiske lande forandrer sig, men at hele Europa er genstand for grundlæggende refortolkning i takt med at landegrænser opløses og Øst/vestdelingen af kontinentet gradvist ophæves. En sådan 'dobbelt synkronicitet' (*double synchronicity*) står i modsætning til hovedparten af eksisterende teorier om europæisk integration, der forklarer Østeuropas integration i det øvrige Europa som 'transition'. *Transitologien* hviler på to grundantagelser: Dels at de østeuropæiske lande bevæger sig entydigt i retning af en vestlig model (konvergens), dels at integration alene udspiller sig indenfor rammerne af EU's formelle institutionelle struktur (singularitet). I modsætning hertil er det opfattelsen hos denne afhandlings forfatter, at de aktuelle forandringsprocesser i de tidligere kommunistiske lande i Østeuropa ikke kan begribes fyldestgørende inden for rammen af disse traditionelle integrationsteorier. På denne baggrund spørger afhandlingens problemformulering: "hvordan analyserer man forandringsprocesserne i Østeuropa i sammenhæng med de overordnede forandringer, der finder sted i Europa?"

Besvarelsen falder i tre hovedafsnit. Indledningsvist foretages en kritisk analyse af de væsentligste eksisterende teorier om europæisk integration. Analysen blotlægger, at bestående teorier, der navnlig befatter sig med systemisk integration, ikke i tilstrækkelig grad kan begrebsliggøre de igangværende sociokulturelle forandringer. Afsnittet vender sig i stedet mod Europæisering (*Europeanization*), som en socialkonstruktivistisk tilgang, der lægger vægt på tilpasningen omkring forskellige opfattelser af begrebet Europa, hvorigennem kollektive/samfundsmæssige

identiteter bliver redefineret. Dette leder frem til den delkonklusion, at de aktuelle forandringsdynamikker mere adækvat begribes inden for rammerne af begrebet 'kulturel integration' (*cultural integration*).

I afhandlingens andet hovedafsnit etableres et begrebsapparat for studiet af kulturel integration. Dernæst fremlægges en teoretisk model for kulturel integration, baseret på bidrag fra Gerard Delanty og Chris Rumford, F. Peter Wagner samt Jürgen Habermas. I modellen betones nødvendigheden af at forstå de aktuelle forandringsdynamikker ved hjælp af begreberne 'postvestliggørelse' (*postwesternization*) og 'postnationalisme' (*postnationalism*), idet vi i de senere år er vidner til fremkomsten af et grundlæggende anderledes Europa, hvor integration og forandring ikke lader sig dækkende forklare alene indenfor rammerne af 'vestliggørelse' (*Westernization*) og nationalisme, som to kræfter, der hhv. fremmer og begrænser integration. Modellen lægger tillige vægt på, at samfundsmæssige forandringer må iagttages i historisk sammenhæng, idet disse i høj grad er afhængige af videreførte dynamikker.

I afhandlingens tredje hovedafsnit anvendes modellen til at belyse udvalgte aspekter af den forandringsproces, som Rumænien har været genstand for siden omstyrtelsen af Ceaușescu-regimet i 1989. Udgangspunktet tages i en analyse af Rumænien før og under kommunismen med særlig vægt på samspillet mellem den interne politiske udvikling og forholdet til Europa. Baseret på identifikationen af væsentlige elementer af historisk kontinuitet, analyseres Rumæniens aktuelle forandring indenfor rammerne af modellen for kulturel integration. Analysen understøttes af en række konkrete eksempler, der illustrerer, hvordan udviklingen af et postvestligt og postnationalt Europa indvirker på identitets- og samfunds(om)dannelse i Rumænien.

På baggrund af det gennemførte empiriske studie og som svar på problemformuleringen fremhæver afhandlingen en række 'redskaber' som væsentlige for en analyse af kulturel integration: ideen om 'multiple identiteter' (*multiple modernities*), tesen om dobbelt synkronicitet, betydningen af at anskue forandring i en historisk sammenhæng, vigtigheden af at opfatte sociokulturelle forandringsprocesser som 'åbne' og uden et fastlagt endemål, samt 'diffusion', dvs. eksterne påvirkninger som genindlejres i lokale strukturer og identiteter. Hertil lægger sig naturligvis ideerne om fremkomsten af et postvestligt og postnationalt Europa.

Teoretisk er afhandlingens væsentligste bidrag en substantiering af begrebet 'kulturel integration', der udgør en komplementær tilgang til studiet af integration og samfundsmæssige forandringer. Afhandlingens konklusioner antages at være generelliserbare også uden for det umiddelbare empiriske område belyst i afhandlingen (Rumænien). Endvidere tilskynder afhandling til at give kultur en mere central placering som forklaringsfaktor indenfor socialteorien. Empirisk bidrager afhandlingen til belysning af samspillet mellem integration og sociokulturelle forandringsprocesser i Rumænien, der – endskønt den næststørste af EU's nye og kommende medlemsstater – kun i meget ringe grad har været genstand for systematisk analyse. Konkret skal nævnes illustrationen af, hvordan Rumænien både påvirkes af og bidrager til omdannelsen af Europa i postvestlig og postnational retning.

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