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(II)**

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# International Journal of Cross-Cultural Studies and Environmental Communication

## Dialogue as Global Action: Interacting Voices and Visions Across Cultures (II)

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# DIALOGUE MULTICULTUREL ET ACCÈS A LA SANTÉ DES IMMIGRÉS À L'HÔPITAL PUBLIC EN FRANCE: L'APPORT DES REPRÉSENTATIONS SOCIALES

Mariana Lecarpentier<sup>1</sup>

*Résumé: Dans cet article, je propose de présenter une partie des résultats d'une recherche psychosociologique, empirique que j'ai réalisée pendant trois ans dans plusieurs services hospitaliers dédiés à la prise en charge médicale et sociale de patients pauvres, en majorité des immigrés. Par une méthodologie de nature ethnographique : observation, entretiens non directifs, immersion du chercheur sur le terrain, j'ai souhaité saisir des interactions, des discours et des dialogues multiculturels entre professionnels de santé et patients à l'occasion de cette activité spécifique et en même temps méconnue. Les données empiriques ont été confrontées avec des données issues de documents historiques, des données de gestion et de management ainsi que des données théoriques issues de la recherche en psychosociologie, en sociologique et en psychologie clinique. L'analyse de ces données met en évidence des formes spécifiques de dialogues multiculturels déterminés à la fois par des processus de transformations techniques et économiques du travail à l'hôpital, intériorisation de processus sociaux de domination, de marginalisation, et d'exclusion mais aussi des processus psychiques de défense qui interviennent au fondement des alliances inconscientes. Les représentations imaginaires, sociales et culturelles jouent un rôle prédominant dans tous ces processus.*

*Mots clés: interactions, discours, dialogues multiculturels, représentations, désirabilité, dialogues asymétriques, négatif psychosocial, étranger, inégalités sociales de santé, productivité des soins, attractivité, tarification à l'activité, « files actives », « actions efficaces et peu coûteuses ».*

## Introduction

L'activité de soins et d'accueil des malades pauvres, en majorité immigrés en situation administrative irrégulière et d'origines multiculturelles, est réalisée dans un espace relégué aux marges, un espace méconnu à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur de l'hôpital. Les médecins qui soignent ces malades sont venus de l'extérieur de l'hôpital : associations humanitaires ou médecins libéraux à statut précaire (temps partiel). Des travailleurs sociaux et des soignants, eux aussi étrangers, majoritairement issus des anciennes colonies françaises sélectionnent et orientent ces patients. Les dialogues entre ces professionnels de santé et les professionnels des services médicaux spécialisés sont conflictuels ou inexistantes. Les représentants des professions « établies » traitent ces nouveaux comme des « outsiders » (Elias, 1965).

Mal connus, marginalisés et exclus des activités stratégiques par les anciens qui représentent des spécialités prestigieuses, ils ne partagent ni le fonds de souvenirs communs, ni les mêmes normes de respectabilité ; chaque demande d'hospitalisation d'un malade immigré pauvre formulée par un « outsiders » de ce service est un facteur d'irritation pour les spécialistes des autres services de l'hôpital qui repoussent ce qui leur paraît menacer leur cohésion et leur supériorité, en humiliant le groupe de ces professionnels qu'ils se représentent comme moins compétents et illégitimes.

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Les spécialistes de l'hôpital traitent les malades issus de diverses cultures et ils les prennent en charge selon les représentations qu'ils s'en font.

Les représentations sociales et culturelles, en tant que forme de savoir partagé par les membres d'un groupe (Jodelet, 1993), ont des fondements objectifs et subjectifs, conscients et inconscients ; des conditions sociales, historiques et culturelles s'expriment dans les pratiques et dans les discours. Présentes dans les interactions multiculturelles à l'hôpital, elles sont souvent orientées par des dimensions idéologiques.

A l'occasion de soins hospitaliers, la confrontation avec la réalité sociale l'altérité, de la misère conduit souvent à la mise en place de mécanismes de défense. Parallèlement, une forte idéologie égalitaire impacte les formes de communication entre soignants et malades alors que des traitements distinctifs, des discriminations expriment des formes différentielles de communication médiatisées par des représentations culturalistes réductrices des spécificités socioculturelles des personnes. Des processus de marginalisation et d'exclusion sociale qui en résultent coexistent avec des stratégies identitaires, avec l'empathie et la compassion.

Une ambivalence anthropologique de la désirabilité humaine face à l'étranger et à l'immigré se joue dans les dialogues multiculturels, impacte les attitudes et les pratiques professionnelles. L'hôpital, étymologiquement, a une double origine: *hostis*, ennemi, hostilité, et *hospes*, hôte. L'hospitalité renvoyant d'abord à l'idée d'étranger, celui à qui l'on doit égalité et réciprocité. Hôte et ennemi, hospitalité et hostilité, traitement égal et réciproque vis-à-vis de l'étranger, ont des significations en apparence hétérogènes et parfois contradictoires qui se retrouvent à la source étymologique de l'hôpital. Ces contradictions se manifestent à la source historique de la mission caritative de l'hôpital public en France tout autant que dans sa fonction répressive. Cette tension entre hospitalité et inhospitalité à l'égard des pauvres et des étrangers qui sont pris dans un paradoxe d'être à la fois désirés et indésirables est singulièrement présente dans les hôpitaux de l'Assistance Publique des hôpitaux de Paris, dans tous les services mais notamment dans les services des urgences et dans les Permanences d'Accès aux Soins de Santé (PASS).

Tous ces processus viennent étayer des dialogues multiculturels conflictuels ou l'absence de dialogues, des formes d'isolement relationnel de certains professionnels de santé en charge du traitement de ce qui représente le négatif social et psychologique.

La structuration sociale, historiquement et culturellement située, déterminent le système de santé dont les évolutions récentes impactent les dialogues multiculturels au sein des organisations de travail de soins. Seront ainsi abordés et développés la spécificité des dialogues entre professionnels et patients des PASS qui découle de la spécificité de leur activité dans la hiérarchie sociale et des représentations.

### **Organisation sociale hiérarchisée et asymétrie des dialogues à l'hôpital**

L'hôpital est une organisation professionnelle des plus hiérarchisées et institutionnalisées, espace de confrontation entre représentations souvent idéologiques et réalités psychosociales.

Dans l'espace social de l'hôpital, chacun représente pour l'autre un monde intériorisé dans la conscience.

La mise en scène d'une large communication sur le succès du combat pour l'égalité des droits des personnes à la santé occulte le silence sur les inégalités de situation et de traitement de certaines populations multiculturelles. Des processus institutionnels inconscients réduisent cette misère multiculturelle à l'invisibilité au même titre que la ségrégation spatiale, sociale et culturelle, par la mise à l'écart des indésirables par des alliances fondées sur la dénégation et occultation de ce qui dérange et reste méconnu, impensable, irréprésentable.

Des rapports privilégiés existent entre des positions géographiques reléguées et des rôles sociaux subalternes dans l'organisation sociale du travail à l'hôpital public. On retrouve, par exemple les PASS

situées à la périphérie de l'hôpital, près des services des urgences médicales ou au sous-sol d'un service de médecine interne ou de médecine d'infectiologie. Les patients sont non seulement les personnes sans droit à une protection maladie, mais aussi les personnes ayant une protection maladie mais exclues du système de santé de droit commun du fait de leur vulnérabilité sociale : isolement, errance, sans domicile fixe, difficultés à comprendre les exigences administratives, sociales et médicales, barrière de la langue. Médecins, infirmiers, aides-soignants et agents administratifs qui soignent et accompagnent ces malades sont eux aussi majoritairement d'origine étrangère, considérés moins qualifiés que d'autres professionnels de l'hôpital et, par conséquent, relégués dans des espaces marginaux, rôles subalternes, alors même que leur travail est plus difficile, plus complexe et nécessite des pluri compétences : techniques, linguistiques, humaines, psychologiques et stratégiques. Cette relation privilégiée entre positions géographiques socialement déterminées et rôles professionnels relégués révèle des processus de domination qui ont des incidences sur les formes de dialogue observées.

Ainsi, maintenus dans une forme de ségrégation (Hughes, 1996) sociale, d'exclusion à l'intérieur de l'hôpital, certains des médecins « outsiders » exercent une profession établie et soignent des patients étrangers dans une situation d'isolement qui leur permet cependant d'exprimer leurs points de vue sur la question de l'accès aux soins, d'organiser des événements professionnels et de militer contre les inégalités sociales d'accès de tous les malades aux soins de santé.

Le besoin de reconnaissance sociale des « outsiders » est une problématique partagée par les malades pauvres multiculturels et par ceux qui les soignent car ils se trouvent assignés en bas de l'échelle sociale et professionnelle, dans une position telle que d'autres leur délèguent le soin d'agir. En maintenant les nouveaux à l'écart des situations les plus embarrassantes, tout en ajoutant de nouveaux étages à la structure de la ségrégation, inconsciemment et consciemment on cherche à réduire l'ampleur des contradictions de statut social ou professionnel.

Dans les dialogues multiculturels interviennent l'asymétrie des places sociales occupées par malades immigrés et professionnels « outsiders » qui les soignent ainsi que des processus inconscients de défense contre la négativité représentée par l'étrangeté, le sale, le dégoûtant. La complexité de ces processus rend nécessaire une perspective pluridisciplinaire pour analyser l'écart entre phénomènes linguistiques, sociaux, historiques, économiques et psychologiques.

### **Approche historique de l'hôpital public en France**

Historiquement, en France, l'hôpital a été pendant des siècles asile pour les pauvres, dépôt de mendicité, établissement charitable accueillant des vieillards et incurables. Depuis le XIX<sup>ème</sup> siècle, des réformes successives ont accru la productivité des soins, accompli des progrès en matière d'hygiène. A partir de 1941, toutes les réformes ont accéléré la spécialisation, la segmentation, la standardisation des activités, l'augmentation de la productivité des soins, la technicité des actes et l'attractivité pour les pathologies prestigieuses. A partir de la réforme de 1958 s'accélère la spécialisation clinique et scientifique des médecins ainsi que le processus de sélection des malades et des médecins. Parallèlement à la spécialisation et à la sélection des malades et des professionnels, l'appel massif à des travailleurs immigrés contribue au développement de nombreux secteurs d'activité et de la recherche médicale expérimentale.

Progressivement, les réformes ont transposé à l'hôpital public des modèles d'organisation inspirée des modèles d'organisation de l'entreprise privée tournée vers la logique de la « rentabilité ». Au cours des années 1980 et 1990, les réformes médico-économiques ont tenté de mettre en œuvre à l'hôpital public des idéologies inspirées par un ensemble d'idées et de pratiques, forgées aux Etats-Unis et au Royaume-Uni. A la même époque, les « nouveaux » médecins, en situation de mobilité professionnelle, étaient associés aux dispositifs visant l'introduction et le développement du management privé dans les hôpitaux publics. Ces « nouveaux » compensent leur manque d'expérience

par une activité professionnelle importante, résistent moins aux réformes que les médecins « *installés* » ayant un statut permanent, l'expérience et le prestige qui constituent des ressources fondamentales du processus de socialisation à l'hôpital. Représentés négativement, ils sont placés en dehors du groupe. Économiquement et culturellement plus démunis, les « nouveaux » ont plus de chances d'être exclus de manière graduelle, imperceptible, inaperçue, par un processus d'élimination en douceur.

A partir de 2005, les financements des hôpitaux dépendants de l'« activité ». Un financement, par « *tarification à l'activité* » (T2A), incite les producteurs de soins à une multiplication des actes, à une plus grande productivité, à la sélection des malades les plus coûteux à traiter au détriment des plus atypiques d'entre eux, au risque d'une baisse de la qualité des soins de santé.

Depuis 2007, la réforme de la nouvelle gouvernance hospitalière oriente les choix stratégiques sur des activités rentables, coûteuses, qui rapportent un meilleur tarif. Elle accroît les inégalités sociales de santé et met à l'épreuve la qualité des soins.

Techniques d'information associées à des représentations sociales transforment les relations professionnelles et instrumentalisent le langage à l'hôpital organisé désormais comme une entreprise performante dans la production d'actes de soins et de traitements, qui classe les souffrances et les prises en charge sanitaires et repousse aux marges de l'espace social les indésirables portant la marque de la négativité multiculturelle.

### **Transformations sociales et instrumentalisation du langage**

Les nouvelles conditions de travail transforment aussi le temps de parole en temps productif, le dialogue inter humain en échange d'informations objectives. Certains discours rendent visibles l'adhésion et l'intériorisation des valeurs managériales par les soignants qui parlent désormais de « *files actives* », d'« *actions efficaces et peu coûteuses* » ; on ne parle plus de malades, ni de clients mais de « *patientelle* », de « *modèle d'efficacité médicale et sociale* » (à coût réduit) qui renforce davantage segmentations professionnelles et discriminations sociales. Ces discours ont été révélés pendant des entretiens réalisés avec des cadres de santé, des infirmiers et des cadres administratifs qui convertissaient les statistiques relatives aux patients qui se présentaient tous les jours à la PASS en « *files actives* » ; « *l'efficacité* », désignait la décision de soigner un patient en évitant son hospitalisation, car trop coûteuse, l'application de grilles d'évaluation par critères sociaux, sanitaires mais aussi financiers constituaient des véritables « *modèles d'efficacité médicale et sociale* » pour l'admission à un traitement par chimiothérapie, par exemple, ou le renvoi du patient étranger vers des cabinets de médecine libérale, des associations humanitaires, ou lui proposer le retour dans le pays d'origine.

Ce langage managérial traverse pratiques de soins et discours multiculturels discréditant progressivement la parole dans sa fonction créative et critique. La représentation instituée de l'immigré coûteux, dans un contexte de forte contrainte budgétaire à l'hôpital est reprise inconsciemment dans les discours des professionnels de santé pour représenter l'adhésion aux valeurs de gestion afin de sélectionner les malades à soigner tout en reproduisant des processus de marginalisation et d'exclusion sociale. Dans la perspective épidémiologique, la chronicisation des maladies et le développement des poly pathologies modifient la relation thérapeutique, certes, toujours dissymétrique, entre professionnels de santé et malades.

Au cours de la relation qui s'établit entre médecin, la parole ou le regard porté par le médecin sur le malade peut produire de l'empathie ou de l'assignation et participer ainsi à l'amélioration de son état de santé ou à la persistance des inégalités de prise en charge (Fassin, 2009). Le dialogue entre médecin et son malade peut ouvrir vers la sublimation de la charité en compassion. Par exemple, il n'est par rare de rencontrer, dans des hôpitaux publics parisiens, des médecins généralistes dont les valeurs religieuses orientent leur activité, leur manière de parler et de soigner les malades : ils sont souvent très disponibles et œuvrent pour l'intégration sociale des personnes les plus vulnérables, leur accordent du

temps, leur parlent, écoutent l'histoire de leur maladie ; la compassion les amènent à insister auprès de spécialistes pour faire hospitaliser un malade atteint de maladie(s) chronique(s). Leur empathie, comme la répulsion peuvent influencer la vulnérabilité de la personne malade car dans l'acte de soins et dans les dialogues multiculturels, l'Autre est traité selon l'idée que l'on s'en fait et de ses capacités supposées. Le plus souvent, plus l'origine sociale du patient est élevée, ses études importantes et plus le temps de parole qui lui est accordé est conséquent comme les soins et l'écoute. Si le patient est pauvre, d'origine étrangère et sans études, sa maladie est sous-estimée, sous traitée, le temps de parole est limité, il subit des humiliations.

### **Conséquences des représentations sociales sur le dialogue multiculturel**

Les représentations sociales et culturelles conduisent à l'identification de maladies spécifiques à certaines populations, orientent les dialogues multiculturels entre soignants et soignés, orientent les interactions groupales et institutionnelles. Elles structurent l'ordre social, institutionnel et professionnel : la supériorité sociale des spécialistes crée une représentation de supériorité humaine et une image d'eux valorisante alors que les pauvres sont indésirables mais aussi les professionnels qui les soignent, les travailleurs sociaux, les agents administratifs qui les accueillent.

Au niveau institutionnel, généralisations, dénégations et alliances inconscientes (Kaës, 2014) opèrent mises à distance et rejets au dehors de l'irreprésentable à l'intérieur et de l'institution qui opèrent par délégation du traitement des représentations déniées, rejetées. C'est au niveau institutionnel que l'idéologie<sup>2</sup> (Kaës, 1980) de l'égalité est repérable dans le discours en tant que position<sup>3</sup> issue d'un système d'idées abstraites conscientes et inconscientes. Certains médecins se représentent les malades africains incapables de décrire les symptômes de leur maladie pour justifier la présence d'interprètes multiculturels dans leurs services hospitaliers. Ainsi « *les choses s'effacent devant leur représentation* » : par la négation, par le déni ou par le désaveu, la pensée et l'idée sont prises, comme dans la perversion, pour objet de plaisir, de jouissance.

L'irreprésentabilité qui fonde les alliances inconscientes et les pactes dénégatifs reposent sur l'exportation de la réalité psychique individuelle et sa relégation aux marges de l'espace social ce qui la rend méconnaissable et inaccessible. Un pacte dénégatif en tant que processus défensif de « liaison par le déni » (Kaës, 1980) intervient dans des alliances collectives inconscientes afin d'occulter un réel indésirable, insupportable, irreprésentable. L'accès aux enjeux de l'alliance est rendu impossible et la représentation insoutenable est maintenue refoulée et déniée.

Par la mise à distance de la réalité, en repoussant aux marges de l'espace social les immigrés d'origines multiples mais aussi les professionnels de santé qui les soignent, les processus psychosociaux protègent de ceux qui dérangent par leur négativité, des interactions directes par le dialogue au sens de la culture que procure la rencontre avec l'Autre. Les représentations imaginaires opèrent comme des médiateurs à l'intérieur des systèmes idéologiques abstraits conscients et inconscients. Leur rôle dans les processus collectifs de défense et celui de médiateur de la parole ou de l'acte.

Les représentations sociales et culturelles des professionnels de santé sont une issue à la souffrance produite par l'image du dégoûtant, du sale, représenté par les malades étrangers, pauvres et dont les cultures restent méconnues. Face à la difficulté de supporter la proximité du négatif, la

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<sup>2</sup> Kaës définit la position idéologique en tant qu'organisation narcissique fondée sur un déni collectif de perception de la réalité au profit de la toute-puissance de l'idée, de l'exaltation de l'idéal et de la mise en place d'une idole, ou fétiche.

<sup>3</sup> Kaës définit la position comme organisation des formations psychiques et des processus dans leurs rapports avec les angoisses fondamentales, avec les mécanismes de défense correspondants, avec les instances idéales et avec les identifications (ibid, p174)

généralisation de cas particuliers aide à résoudre le conflit psychique: des représentations culturalistes, au sens d'une surdétermination culturelle de la réalité sociale justifient trop souvent des pratiques et des traitements distinctifs dont les résultats favorables pour certains et défavorables pour d'autres aggravent des inégalités sociales d'accès aux soins de santé.

Ainsi, représentations sociales et culturelles médiatisent des connaissances ou des méconnaissances collectives, des préjugés qui incitent des professionnels soignants à faire appel de plus en plus souvent à des interprètes, à refuser de soigner les malades étrangers pauvres ou à déléguer à d'autres les tâches ingrates, le « sale boulot » que représente la prise en charge médicale et sociale des immigrés malades d'origines culturelles multiples.

De leur côté, les patients pauvres et immigrés se représentent les médecins français compétents et humainement supérieurs, le système de santé français bien financé, doté d'équipements performants. Ils continuent à se présenter nombreux dans les hôpitaux publics français malgré les difficultés sociales et psychologiques qu'ils rencontrent.

## **Conclusion**

L'évolution des dialogues multiculturels et des pratiques professionnelles de prise en charge des patients pauvres et immigrés à l'hôpital public en France, témoigne d'une transformation profonde du monde social de l'hôpital et des représentations imaginaires qui interviennent dans les interactions. Dialogues multiculturels et pratiques paradoxales situées entre égalité de droits et inégalité de faits restent déterminés par les représentations, par la méconnaissance et par les préjugés dont les acteurs n'ont pas conscience.

Les transformations techniques, économiques et sociales de l'hôpital public, dans un contexte de mondialisation du marché de la santé, font apparaître des formes de communication instrumentales, fragmentées, exclusives qui s'opposent au dialogue dans sa dimension créative, s'opposent au dialogue clinique fondé sur l'empathie.

Le dialogue multiculturel entre malades pauvres, immigrés et professionnels qui les soignent butte sur ces mécanismes individuels et collectifs de défense contre l'irreprésentable, mécanismes qui conduisent à l'exclusion et s'expriment par le déni de reconnaissance, par l'évitement des pauvres et des immigrés, mais aussi par l'évitement des médecins qui les soignent et leur mise à l'écart.

Dans la perspective sociale, ces transformations marquant la fin de la mission traditionnelle d'aide aux plus pauvres. La perspective psychologique explique l'évolution des dialogues multiculturels, dans un contexte de mondialisation, par l'existence de processus psychiques individuels et collectifs de défense contre l'étrangeté et contre la négativité représentée par les malades immigrés. Des alliances inconscientes défensives lient les membres d'un groupe par le déni d'une représentation inadmissible, insupportable opèrent une délégalation du traitement de ces représentations, relèguent la réalité qu'elles rendent méconnaissable et inaccessible (Kaës, 2009).

Toujours présente dans les dialogues, la tension anthropologique entre la désirabilité et l'indésirabilité se manifeste dans la rencontre culturelle avec l'Autre, dans l'empathie ou dans le déni ou le rejet de l'Autre.

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# CONVERGING VERSUS DIVERGING VOICES IN THE NEWSROOMS OF MULTIMEDIA ORGANIZATIONS

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*Abstract: The evolution of technology has gradually transformed, over the years, the media organizations worldwide. Media convergence, regarded as a new perspective in journalism, which combines profession, technology and new practices in the newsroom, brought significant transformations in the activity and structure of media organizations. This paper shows that while the production and editorial operations are converging at the microlevel, divergences occur at the level of the individual journalists, who are directly challenged by the changes in their everyday work. Depending on the manner they construct their representations of professional identity and values, the journalists diverge in their way of accepting or rejecting change. The corpus of the article is made by semi-structured interviews with Romanian and American journalists and notes from field observation of digital operations in various newsrooms in Romania and the United State of America. The author chose to employ qualitative methods, such as observation and interviews with journalists from broadcast, online and print media, in order to illustrate the voices of media professionals affected by different aspects of convergence. This paper is conceptually supported by the theoretical framework of constructivism.*

Key words: *digital, convergence, newsroom, multimedia organizations, journalists, challenges.*

## **Introduction: Why Media Convergence?**

In the last 20 years, the evolution of technology radically transformed the activity of journalists worldwide. The interlocking of computers, information technology, telecommunication networks and the media content generated by newspapers, radio and television gave birth to a phenomenon called media convergence. Convergence is the process of social construction of a new technological system for news production, including not only adopting and adapting digital news production systems and devices, but also redefining work practices and newsroom layouts, rethinking journalistic roles and values, and multiplying publication platforms. It is an innovation process that is locally developed and historically embedded, by merging of journalistic resources, forcing the development of multiple versions of the news for print, television, and the web all within a single news organization. Media professionals are required to extend their skills beyond their traditional comfort levels, sometimes working with people from different professional backgrounds, and generally facing changes in their professional routines and organizational cultures (Boczkowski, 2004; Rabasca, 2001).

Through various digital presentation platforms, or media industries, companies which have merged or formed strategic alliances in order to develop new business models, the studies of convergence have focused primarily on the technologies. Convergence is a revolutionary form of journalism which is evolving in many parts of the world; therefore it may vary from country to country, from culture to culture both within countries and media companies. Media convergence is influenced by the power of digital technology, and the legal and economical factors in various countries and media trusts. The success of convergence depends on having journalists who could think multiple media and who are comfortable working across several media platforms (Haile, 2003). Convergence is what takes

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place in the newsroom as editorial staff members work together to produce multiple products for multiple platforms to reach a mass audience with interactive content, often on a 24/7 timescale (Quinn & Filak, 2005).

Convergence transforms the consumers of media products from passive readers, viewers and listeners to active audience, therefore could be regarded as a tool in the hands of a more and more fragmented audience. The public is able to get involved in the stories because converged communication provides multiple tools to select the level of interactivity while self-directing the content delivery. Media convergence also allows audiences to interact with or even generate mass media content. Thanks to convergence, consumers can now control when, where and how they access and relate to information of all kinds (Sutu, 2011). Quinn and Filak (2005) argue that convergence should be driven by the significance of the news event. They reached a simpler definition: convergence is about doing journalism and telling stories using the most appropriate medium for telling the story. According to Quinn and Filak, the importance of the news event should dictate the depth and type of coverage, and influence the size of the team involved (2005:12). Media convergence is also applied as an economic strategy, for media industries, companies which have merged or formed strategic alliances in order to develop new business models (Chan-Olmsted, 2014; Killebrew, 2005).

Romanian media is currently going through the process of adopting and implementing convergence at organizational, technological and economical level. For instance, multimedia editors and producers decide on the most appropriate way of covering the event, on the content and size of the team. As an example, for an accident with six dead and dozens of casualties resulted from a bus falling off a bridge, in Tulcea, Eastern Romania, on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010, producers from *Romanian Public Television* decided on the following working scheme: one team made of a local correspondent and a cameraman in Tulcea, and another one in Bucharest. Along with the reporter and the cameraman, the crew in Bucharest included four additional members, the technical crew for the live satellite broadcast. The team in Bucharest transmitted live from the emergency hospital where the victims were brought by helicopter, while the crew in Tulcea recorded pictures and sound for a news report from the location. The multimedia teams provided live and recorded video, audio and on-line content for TVR1, TVR2, TVR3, TVR Info, as well as for the Public Television 24/7 updated website (Sutu, 2013).

The individual journalists are those directly challenged by the changes in their everyday work. This paper approaches the transformations brought to the newsroom practices from the point of view of Romanian and American professionals, who use new communication tools. The article focuses on the representations the journalists and managers who were interviewed for this study attribute to media convergence as a phenomenon they have to deal with in their everyday activities. As a result of the evolution of media technology and the emergence of new economic challenges, Romanian and American journalists and managers have been forced to adopt new work practices in the newsrooms or in their independent work. The data are based on facts and situations observed during research. This article is conceptually supported by the theoretical framework of constructivism, a theory that has the power to explain what is known about a certain topic at a given moment, (Godfrey-Smith, 2003; Dubin, 1978).

### **Constructivism and Convergence**

According to constructivist theories, people are actively involved in constructing reality, which they study as a social product of interaction and negotiations between various actors and institutions. Constructivist epistemology asserts that the reality and knowledge are the result of both social and cognitive processes (Flick, 2009; Bryman, 2004; Godfrey-Smith, 2003). Thomas Schwandt and Bonnie S. Brennan consider that the reality is socially constructed, therefore they support the active role of the social science scholars who, through their experience and contextual accounts, guide those who read

their studies to construct their knowledge about the world. Constructivist paradigm supports the idea that the object of knowledge is not a copy or reproduction of the reality, but a new way of understanding and translating reality. The knowledge is therefore the result of direct interaction between the objects of study and the reality. Furthermore, the reality is filtered and contextualized by the individuals that construct the reality through their lifetime experience and knowledge, as a purely subjective endeavor (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). The qualitative scientists rely on connotative meanings and language interpretations, through which they understand and explain concepts related to human experiences (Schwandt, 2000; Brennan, 2013).

In the case of the studies of mass communication, the constructivists approached the direction of systematic explanations of daily practices, through cultural interpretation. More precisely, the communication scholars insisted on the manner different social groups use cultural artifacts to construct a version of reality, to articulate and support a certain sense of identity or to point out certain forms of control or domination (Williams, 1983; Pauly, 1991). Researchers who approached media convergence warned about the media monopoly as a result of media consolidation when big companies gain control of the supply of raw materials such as reports, stories and scripts, products such as newscasts and movies and distribution such as platforms of television, online or radio (Kolodzy, 2009; McChesney, 2003). The scientists underlined the role of cultural differences in building the identity of the journalist working for new multimedia environment (Wilkinson, 2009; Kraeplin & Criado, 2005). The researchers also highlighted the challenge of integration of the new skills and values generated by convergence journalism practice in the traditional media culture (Filak, 2009; Dupagne & Garrison, 2006). Numbers of studies on convergence approached as well media managers' actions in shaping convergent news operations and creating new roles in the newsroom (Fisher, 2009; Killebrew, 2005).

## **Method**

The author of this study chose to use qualitative methodology in order to scientifically investigate the various aspects of convergence from the point of view of journalists and media managers. The scientific inquiry is inductive, built as a result of field observation and inquiry. The qualitative inquiry analyzes the subjective meanings and the social production of events and practices, by collecting non-standard data, and analyzing texts and images, rather than numbers and statistics. When studying latent practices and phenomena, the attempts of identification, measurement and adjustment to specific statistics, which quantitative traditional methodology does, might not bring positive results. As a matter of fact, social science scholars argued that the nature of the research subject points out the most appropriate methodology, and underlined the lack of productivity when it comes to debates on the best method. The qualitative inquiry is considered a type of long time field observation, carried out in the proximity of the chosen phenomena, in order to investigate new perspectives and social context forms. Through extension, qualitative methodology fulfills the role of highlighting the essential differences and distinctive features of the phenomenon under study (Flick, 2009; Baran & Davis, 2000). Qualitative research stands out for appropriateness of methods and theories, subjective perspectives of the participants, reflexivity of the researcher, variety of approaches and methods, the ability to understand the phenomena from the interior, construction of reality, usage of text and language as an empirical material, and flexibility of the research design (Jensen & Jankowski, 2002; Flick, 2009; Babbie, 2013). Qualitative methodology has been highly useful in mass communication research, either when investigating journalism education or practices and roles in newsrooms: selection and information gathering, production or delivery of the news. Furthermore, the work of qualitative social scientists helped in establishing various cultural environments appropriate for studying the new media practices which are developing in the context of the new technologies. As a matter of fact, the qualitative inquiry was the main method used in the last decade when examining the implications of adopting and

implementing media convergence. When studying the adoption of convergence in a single ownership company with various media platforms, or the merger of different ownership companies, or through comparing multimedia newsrooms using new technologies in different countries, the researchers used one or mixed qualitative methods: case studies, observation, semi-structured or focus group interviews (Dupagne & Garrison, 2006; Aviles et al., 2008; Singer 2004; Marjoribanks, 2003; Kung-Shankleman, 2003).

This article employed qualitative interviews, extensively used in mass communication research, especially in the study of media organizations and their specific institutional procedures. The semi-structured interview is considered by social scientists "one of the most powerful methods in qualitative research because it allows investigators to step into the mind of another person, to see and experience the world as they do themselves" (McCracken, 1988:9). When researching mass communication topics, the qualitative interview is a valuable methodological tool, which generates the necessary data for building research questions (Spradley, 1979; Briggs, 1986). They support the utilization of qualitative interview as a useful method to provide essential research data and argue that the in-depth interview is an active process of construction of reality, through circumstances that generate meanings that the interviewer might not be aware or willing to acknowledge (Gobrium & Holstein, 2002).

The use of qualitative interview in researching media convergence has the role to facilitate the explication of the concept of media convergence and its implications for the work of journalists or newsrooms activities, to highlight the changes in the organizational culture and the professional identity of the journalists, to understand the challenges it brings to the values, roles and routines of media professionals. There is no definite rule on the ideal number of interviewees, but McCracken and Wengraf recommend eight respondents in order to obtain relevant findings from semi-structured interviews (McCracken, 1988; Wengraf, 2001). The author of this study selected twenty respondents, ten Romanian and ten American journalists and managers that have the ability to illustrate a wide range of indicators of the changes urged by media convergence.

Ten Romanian and ten American media professionals from broadcast, online and print media, with experience both in traditional and digital media were selected in order to provide relevant answers. The interviewees were affected by different aspects of media convergence, such as adopting new work practices in the newsroom, delivering the message through multiple channels and using social media as a communication tool with the target audience. Field observation was carried out in the newsrooms in the United States and Romania, researching various aspects of news gathering, production, post-production, delivery of the news and feedback from public, throughout a ten months period, from March to December 2014. Different media outlets were selected for analysis, from a local newsroom such as the Innovation News Center in Gainesville, Florida, to the News Department of the Romanian Public Television.

The research questions are most appropriate in new areas of scientific investigation when little is known about the relationships among variables and in which there is not enough literature that is applicable (Shoemaker *et al.*, 2004). In this particular case, there is a legitimate need for inductive research as the area of media convergence in Romania is still a virgin territory for researchers. The research questions used in this qualitative investigation are:

RQ1: What is the professional representation of convergence for the Romanian and American journalists and managers?

RQ2: How does media convergence influence the activities in multimedia organizations?

RQ3: What are the reactions to the challenges and difficulties generated by the adoption of convergent operations in the newsrooms?

## **Findings: Converging and Diverging**

The representations of convergence are determined by the specific media elements the Romanian and American journalists use frequently or the specific features they prefer in their everyday work routine. Both Romanian and American journalists interviewed in this study emphasized the ability to deliver the information in real time, using a computer software, on the online outlet of the media organization, using writing, sound and pictures, as well as posting on social media (Piperiu, 20014; Taban, 2014; Dawson, 2014; Woods, 2014; Wright, 2014). For those who welcome the new technologies in their everyday activities, media convergence is regarded as a perpetual need of the journalists to learn and train themselves in order to resist on a market dominated by the evolution of technology (Dinca, 2014; Morgan, 2014; Woods, 2014). Convergent communication is a system where journalists evolve every day, as they learn new writing styles and techniques, as well as use different approaches according to the particular medium they choose to deliver the information (Blajan, 2014; Alston, 2014). “The attention of the journalist is no longer focused exclusively on the television, radio or newspaper they are working for; one person thinks multiple platforms now. Reporters are required to be able to deliver content for differed media outlets, as well as to choose the most appropriate medium for a particular message” (Piperiu, 2014). Raluca Brumariu, manager of the newsroom of the Romanian Public Television, showed that media convergence broadens the communication and accelerates time; audience has the privilege to select the medium that is more convenient, easy to use, or closest to their system of beliefs, among various sources of information (Brumariu, 2014).

“The communication in the convergent system is not like a one way street anymore, but has become a real conversation between the media outlet and the public, where both parties bring their share of ideas” (Dawson, 2014). The crucial social and political issues are debated on social media and the important media corporations and businesses are a constant presence in the virtual space, through the Facebook pages and Twitter posts of the organizations or individual journalists (Carpea, 2014; Radulescu, 2014; Newport, 2014; Alston, 2014). Two editors in chief from two different countries and two different media systems emphasized that their organization is now able to reach different target audiences: those who buy the papers are traditionalists, as they grew up reading print, while those who follow the websites and Facebook pages are much younger. The Facebook page provides instant feedback and the media organization and the public are constantly connected (Dinca, 2014; Wright, 2014). “We are making the passage from the old, rigid structure of the traditional newsroom, to a flexible, mobile, newsroom, interested in innovation and initiative. We need a different vision and new abilities to deliver the information to a young audience, such as posting on Twitter before writing and broadcasting on radio and television” (Morgan, 2014). The manager of the Innovaton News Center in Gainesville, Matt Sheehan as well as the online editor and blogger for [cursdegurvernare.ro](http://cursdegurvernare.ro), Anne Marie Blajan, think that members of the audience have become, at the same time, consumers, contributors and creators of content, as well as agents of promotion and diffusion of different types of information and messages (Sheehan, 2014; Blajan, 2004).

The departments that have traditionally operated on different platforms are now united into a unique newsroom for broadcast, print, website and social media. This way, the same journalist reports for broadcast, writes for the print issue, updates the website and posts messages on Facebook and Twitter. The divergent voices in the newsroom complain that the writers and reporters are under time pressure and struggle with limited resources to deliver content for 3 or 4 types of media simultaneously (Dinca, 2014; Blackstone, 2014). The hierarchy of the traditional media organization is transformed, as the reporter covering a certain event writes, produces and posts the information, controlling the content for broadcast and online. There is no editorial filter, as only one person bears the responsibility of the content, and mistakes and errors can occur easily. The journalists interviewed for this paper bring examples of misquoting or taking statements out of context. For instance, when reporters take fragments

of interviews from Facebook or Twitter, and post them on the website of their organizations, without checking the facts or contacting the persons involved in the news story (Taban, 2014; Russell, 2014; Budinsky, 2014).

The multimedia journalist faces the challenge to adjust to different media, after a lifetime training and practice in one traditional medium, either print, television or radio. Broadcast journalists find it very difficult to write for online, switching formats sometimes three or four times a day, as they transition from the brief, succinct style of broadcast to the more elaborate content for online (Blackstone, 2014; Piperiu, 2014). Doing much more than their traditional job sometimes means less quality, as the attention and resources are divided. Ginger Blackstone, former producer for CNN, said that the producers are in charge not only with coordinating reporters for radio programs, but also with writing articles for online and posting on social media. “We did more than producing a television talk show, we were also responsible with creating animated, interactive graphics for broadcast and online” (Blackstone, 2014).

The Romanian and American journalists' radical reactions to the frustrations or hardship generated by the convergent operations in their media organization are early retirement, resignation and taking a line of work elsewhere: PR, teaching, private business (Piperiu, 2014; Taban, 2014). Their moderate reactions were moving to a different position and taking different job responsibilities in the same media organization (Budinsky, 2014; Carpea, 2014). The media managers from Romania and the United States of America had both moderate and radical approaches to the various reactions their employees expressed when their organizations adopted and implemented convergent operations. One moderate measure was to create positions especially adjusted to the skills and abilities of the employees in the multimedia newsroom, such as rewards for those who are motivated, hardworking and showing initiative in the adoption of convergence (Sheehan, 2014; Woods, 2014). Managers' radical approach was to get rid of those employees that refuse to adjust to the changes, and oppose progress, as they might negatively influence the others. Chan-Olmsted used the “moving bus” metaphor when referring to making the best decision for the organization. “Those who are opposing the change are welcome if they stay quiet in their seats; however, if they move, make noise and disturb the other passengers, they are thrown out of the bus at the next stop” (Chan-Olmsted, 2014).

## **Conclusions**

The journalists interviewed for this article went from one type of media to another, had to learn new technologies, to switch jobs and fulfill multiple positions, to change work routines, to learn how to write, produce and package for different media, and to use social media in order to promote their journalistic products. They are actively involved in constructing their representations of convergence, according to their previous experience in print or broadcast, their position in the newsroom, their specific skills and the responsibilities they held in the traditional media organizations they worked for in the past.

All the professional values and practices the interviewees referred to during this scientific investigation influence the way they understand, define and apply media convergence: from a journalistic, technological, organizational or audience perspective. The findings illustrate the constructivist theory according to which the reality is filtered and contextualized by the individuals that construct the reality through their lifetime experience and knowledge (Flick, 2009; Bryman, 2004; Godfrey-Smith, 2003). The journalists are actively involved in constructing the reality in which they operate, in this case the convergent system, seen as a social product of interaction and negotiations in the newsroom. Convergent communication is represented as a process of social construction of a new technological system for news production, including not only adopting and adapting digital news production systems and devices, but also redefining work practices and newsroom layouts, rethinking journalistic roles and values, and multiplying publication platforms.

As the journalists and managers come from various types of press, such as online, print and broadcast, but also from two countries, Romania and the United States, that have different media systems, the results of this study show a multitude of points of view on the representation of convergence and its influence on the practices in multimedia organizations. The approaches of convergence of the Romanian journalists and managers are rather on the idealistic side, as they have just begun to experiment with the new technologies. The Americans have already applied different working models and strategies, depending on the stages of implementation of media convergences in their newsrooms. Therefore, their answers reflect various reactions to the results of adopting new newsroom practices, learning new skills, experimenting communication and feedback, varying from enthusiasm to skepticism or rejection.

The validity of the data provided by some of the respondents is further verified through the questions the researcher asks other interviewees; it also plays an important part in highlighting the potential discrepancies and show latent problems that are difficult to impossible to identify at the beginning of the research process. However, further research is necessary to investigate the changes in the Romanian media organizations, at a wider range, through quantitative methodological tools. Therefore, this particular research has the potential to provide a valuable starting point for the scientists interested in investigating the effects of new technologies on media organizations, either in Romania or elsewhere.

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# DIASPORIC DIALOGUES IN SITES OF MEMORY: THE CASE OF ROMANIAN-AMERICANS

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*Abstract: Centered on the exploration of Romanian ethnicity in the United States, this study analyzes how salient ethnicity is for Romanian-Americans and the manner in which they negotiate their ethnicity as members of organized groups through cultural events. To this end, this study focuses on ethnic cultural events understood as platforms for the performance of ethnic identities and on the cultural strategies through which ethnic imagery comes into being through tropes of history and imagination so as to create "moments" of collective self-recognition.*

*Key words: ethnicity, Romanian-Americans, ethnic organizations, memory, cultural events*

## Introduction

This study hopes to generate some intellectual insight into the cultural and political logic of Romanian ethnicity in the United States through the exploration of tropes of ethnic belonging in the cultural projects of the Romanian diaspora in the United States. Rather than an analysis of Romanian culture in everyday life (as captured in banal, contingent, values and aspects that Romanian-Americans use in making decisions on a regular basis), my interest lies in describing ethnicity as outlined and configured through participation in cultural events. Though falling short of a case study of Romanian cultural events, this study consists of a sum of reflections on how Romanian-Americans construct their sense of ethnic belonging, and develop their attachment to Romania through a selective and diversified engagement with various cultural imaginaries occasioned by ethnic social and cultural gatherings. Most of my ideas draw on some cultural events which I witnessed in California and in particular on the monthly event called 'La Steaua ', a monthly book club organized by the Union & League of Romanian Societies of America.

While exploring ethnicity as embodied in cultural projects and illustrated through reverence for history, memory, this study mainly deals with the cultivation of cultural practices in which ethnic tradition is enshrined.

## Literature Review

A salient concept of the social discourse, the concept of ethnicity emerges at the intersection of anthropology, sociology, political science and psychology. The elusiveness of this elastic social concept is further compounded by the multiple relations which it establishes with interrelated concepts like nationalism, heritage and ancestry. There is a large diversity of opinions and interpretations within the phenomenon and whereas some critics articulate the discourse of ethnicity around biological variables (which gave rise to primordialist, biological or ethological theories of ethnicity), others focus on social

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factors <sup>6</sup>or on ethnicity as otherness<sup>7</sup>.Celebratory and disparaging comments polarize various types of discourses on ethnicity, either by professing the sense of difference and encouraging the introduction and development of the new identity politics or by incriminating ethnic ideology as the promoter of a discourse of disensus and disengagement from an inclusive political arena.<sup>8</sup>

One of the most commonly encountered misconceptions on ethnicity lies in its construction as a form of survival of primitive/traditional cultural forms, which feeds into the creation of an ethnic group as a collective entity legitimized exclusively by an ancient/noble /authentic tradition whose organization and functioning is independent of economic and political consideration. Before outlining the main arguments which refute this theory, my study consists of a review of the prominent theories associated with primordialism. The main goal behind this short theoretical excursus is to propose a framework of understanding ethnic culture in the larger context delineated by culture preservationism and cultural change. My intention is to point to the fact that ethnicity develops around problematizing culture and the creation and maintenance of an ethnic group is motivated by pragmatic considerations, by the need for social recognition and the interest to earn a competitive edge in the contest for staking claims or finding a social voice. In so doing, some general reflections on how Romanian ethnicity is configured by the participation of Romanian -Americans in celebratory events may reveal how Romanian diasporans in the United States relate to culture through multiple affiliations and allegiances and do ethnicity by re-interpreting cultural practices.

The proponents of the primordialist/essentialist argument stress the roles of biological factors and cultural attributes such as common history, myths, language, food, folklore in structuring ethnic belonging <sup>9</sup>. The theoretical pillars of primordialism identify race and ethnicity as primary sources of in-group loyalty and place emphasis on the emotional strength of ethnic bonds. Theorists associated with the principles of primordialism like Andrew Greeley (1974), Harold Isaacs (1975) and Walker Connor (1978) analyze ethnic identity as a function of emotion and consider intuitive bonds more meaningful than formal legalistic relationships. Clifford Geertz (1973) focuses on ethnic attachments as the “givens” of the human condition, while Paul Brass (1994) considers that ethnic groups are based on distinctive cultures and origin myth persist through times. Francisco Gill-Whites (1999) proposes a theory of evolutionary primordialism through the analogy between animal species and ethnicity by considering that both are determined by sets of culturally transmitted norms and behavior. Mark Schaller (2003) brings into discussion the undisputable advantages of interpersonal cooperation by invoking prehistorical reasons to advance the theory according to which group representations and belonging emerged out of the need to minimize dangerous encounters with strangers. The common denominator of these essentialist approaches to ethnicity is the argument of identity as non-rational/ non-calculated/ non-negotiated, but “primeval, original, primitive or fundamental” (Hardin 128), endowed with a “certain ineffable significance [...] and attached to the tie of the blood” (Shils 33). Connor's theory bridges the gap between the essentialist approaches mentioned above and forthcoming theories on community and group identity. They consider cooperation and sociality as essential to group and community formation while at the same time stress the “sense of sameness or oneness of kind” (95) that derives from a myth of common descent.

Primordialist arguments have been challenged or refuted on many grounds and some critical stances attempted to dismantle their theoretical legitimacy altogether. If such primordial attachments are natural, biological, why do not all communities experience them? Why do some individuals view

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<sup>6</sup> to Wernhart, “ethnic” signifies the unit of human beings who are united through common socio-cultural expression

<sup>7</sup> H.Bhaba's postcolonial perspective

<sup>8</sup> see Clifford Geertz: considers ethnic or “primordial” claims so extremely corrosive to political integration

<sup>9</sup> see Geertz 1963, Van den Berghe 1988, Chapman 1993, Eller and Coughlan 1993 ,Shils 1957, quoted in Scit 1990

ethnicity as optional, or refute claims to ethnic identity? On the other hand, if ethnic identity is founded on immutable beliefs and practices, why is the sense of identity constructed over time? Some critics point to the lack of a sustained effort on the part of primordialist theories to define or describe the “ineffable” aspect of ethnicity and to offer acceptable explanation pertaining to the “primordial” nature of ethnic affiliations. Others deplore the few associations between primordialist arguments and pertinent references to organization issues, such as sources of inter-ethnic conflict, and the role of elites in constructing ethnic consciousness. Still other critiques refer to the inadequacy of essentialist theories to investigate the (in)consistency of ethnic engagement over time. Despite the critique mounted against this trend, we need to acknowledge the body of scholarship produced by the community of primordialists and the contribution they made to ethnic studies. The mere fact that what is said about ethnicity nowadays seems to be an exercise in dismantling one or more lines of inquiry taken by primordialists is yet another conclusive proof that primordialists have opened new lines of inquiry on theories of community and are still widely read, even if for polemic purposes.

Unlike primordialist theories whose logic follows (with certain variations) the primitivism of ethnic feeling, circumstantialist, mobilizationist and instrumentalist theories propounded by economists describe ethnicity as the products of transaction of ethnic groups understood as service-producing clubs (see Congleton and Winthrobe 1995) or ethnicity based on sentiments elicited by circumstances (see Scott, as quoted in Eller and Coughlan, 48). Rather than an organic condition or internal predisposition within the group, instrumentalism describes ethnic identity as fluid and amenable to changes (Matsuo 507), a mutable phenomenon subject to continual reconstruction and negotiation. Prompted by ethnic engagement as a mode of affiliation (Guibernau and Rex 2003), ethnic identity is determined by external stimuli, by sets of options, choices, limitations, embodied in institutions and social practices. Rational choice theorists<sup>10</sup> consider that affiliation into an ethnic group is useful for achieving practical goals and describes competition over resources (material or symbolic) as the motivation which prompts people into claiming ethnic affiliation<sup>11</sup>. M. Waters (1990), Lyman and Douglass (1973) consider that people use their ethnicity selectively and their choice is dependent on circumstance, whereas Henry (1973) and Nagel (1994) consider that ethnic identities are maintained with a view to influencing political and social policies. When present, ethnic tension derives from groups and individuals who mobilize ethnic strategies in an attempt to compete with each other over social and political and economic resources (Mc Kay 399). The proponents of such interpretative approaches point to the mutable nature of ethnic attachment and stress the importance of interest and context in shaping ethnicity. They also consider that the appropriation of ethnic identity is correlated with a goal or objective, be it in terms of government resources or positive social status.

Other critics draw on theoretical choices which are harder to circumscribe to a single approach, as they either swing between multiple identifications of ethnicity or focus on the salience of difference as the sole factor in describing ethnicity. George DeVos describes ethnicity as the “subjective symbolic or emblematic use of any aspect of culture by a group in order to differentiate themselves from other groups” (16). Elaine Burges defines the same concept as “the character, quality or condition of ethnic group membership, based on an identity with and /or a consciousness of group belonging that is differentiated from others by symbolic “markers” (including cultural, biological or territorial) and is rooted in bonds to a shared past” (270).

The sense of difference at the very root of conceptualizing ethnic culture presupposes the existence of an ethnic paradigm that functions through difference from other ethnic and national paradigms. Yet, the attempts to demonstrate “cultural difference” as the main concept to legitimize ethnic culture proves to be a challenging project, fraught with errors arising from an oversimplified

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<sup>10</sup> like Rogowski 1985

<sup>11</sup> see Olzak and Nagel, Scott

understanding of culture as systems of inventories of cultural markers with a concrete dimension<sup>12</sup>. In an attempt to preclude oversimplified understanding of the relation between individual and culture, contemporary cultural theorists and anthropologists (Arjun Appadurai(1990), James Clifford(1994), Carolyn Harrison(1991) no longer construe culture as a shared value system handed down from generation to generation, but as complex fusions of cultural practices. An (ethnic) culture which finds itself in a process of change determined by the pressure of adaptation to another (national) culture undergoes constant re-evaluation of cultural practices, re-formation, re-definition of values and belief-systems (Balme 13). Therefore, rather than using the concept of independent autonomous ethnic culture, one should embrace more inclusive concepts like "cultural multivolcalism", a term coined by Ulf Hannerz (547) to refer to the multiplicity of belonging and emotional allegiances which one has to more than one culture. Moreover, the upholding of the concept of "cultural difference" runs the risk of reifying the culture or regarding culture as material and concrete. Keesing (307) warns about third world elites adopting, reifying, compartmentalizing and essentializing discourses of culture and deplors the representation of culture through exclusively fetishized material forms and performance like traditional dress, dance or artifacts. The critic considers that such a limited understanding of the concept precludes a more nuanced understanding of culture, which apart from incorporating tangible artifact, also comprises intangible aspects, such as thoughts, feelings, shared values and beliefs. Yet another danger lies in the compartmentalization of culture, or the tendency to view culture as broken down into clearly delineated entities. In 1996, Banks (54) started a powerful critique of any academic discourse that describes culture as "a repertoire of standardized forms of difference" like language, food, festivals, dress, dance and religion. As culture is not "some kind of child's construction kit" with "objects" and "attitudes" as discrete items or building blocks, it cannot be eminently observable; its beauty and fascination lies not in discreetly observable entities, but in unquantifiable emotional aspects and discrete emotions. Last, the essentializing of culture or the depiction of culture as autonomous and immutable equates ethnic culture with ancestry; yet the relation between ethnic culture and ancestry is more often than not indirect, fluid and problematic. Jimenez distinguishes between affiliative ethnic identity rooted in knowledge and patterns of consumption and an individual's ethnic ancestry which may or may not be claimed by the individual. In other words, an individual may be of a certain ancestry, but it is his investment in the ethnic culture which gives the salience factor of his ethnic identity.

Monisha Das Gupta (582) further argues that ethnicity paradigms which label certain practices as "traditional" on the assumption that "tradition" is easily identifiable and relatively transparent or that some cultural practices are "traditionally associated" with certain ethnic groups disseminates a type of fallacious essentialist understanding of what is "visible" ethnic culture on the premise that "certain traditional" practices are assumed to be authentically/conspicuously representative of ethnic groups.

### **The present approach**

The point which this study aims to advance is that ethnic groups have an inherently unstable nature in space and time (a group may display vibrant ethnicity at one moment in time and become less militant and disengaged later) and are prone to being shaped by cultural and historical events. It is highly unlikely for an ethnic group to maintain the same type of ethnic engagement and allegiance to one's ethnicity indefinitely, as this sense of engagement is fluid and context dependent. Rather than an internal predisposition within the group, ethnic engagement seems to be determined by external stimuli, by sets of options, choices, limitations, embodied in institutions and social practices. My exploration of

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<sup>12</sup> the 1970s and 1980s witness intense philosophical debates about the concept of culture. Anthropology, cultural theory and ethnic theories contributed to this debate initially started by social scientists and in the ensuing tug-of-war between postmodernists, cultural Marxists, critical theorists and theoreticians of identity politics, new models of culture gradually gained grounds.

Romanian ethnicity considers the system of reference delineated by ancestry, culture, history, where the unity of ethnic feeling is expressed in the sense of commonality emerging from the use of Romanian language, the sense of ancestry-rooted in common geography and the sense of history-as derived from common stories celebrating the achievement of heroes and symbols as markers of community/nation building .

One way out of the simplifying attempt at reifying, compartmentalizing or essentializing Romanian culture is to construe culture as “unbounded”, produced continuously in a dynamic flux delineated by material and symbolic resources and in flux (in the Heraclitean paradigm of pluralism). A possible objection raised to the idea of culture in a state of ongoing transition lies with the acknowledgement that in general, people have strong conservationist impulses, and their desire to preserve what they have undergirds many human decisions. Especially for first generation Romanian immigrants, the need to conserve valued traditions, customs, practices and modes of living molds and influences their way of living. Moreover, the extent to which the preserved cultural practices structure people’s lives and the salience of such practices can be considered indicative of their commitment to ethnicity. Yet, culture preservation should not be construed as the indiscriminate application of the ethnic culture values to new situations, nor the reproduction of practices and customs in their “original” form. It needs to be understood as a highly selective process, which starts with determining what ethnic elements should be taken over unaltered and which should be subject to change; it is here where the strategic, even political decisions come into play, in the act of asserting , assigning and assessing ethnicity. The survival of ethnic culture within the larger context of " Romanians becoming American"<sup>13</sup> should therefore be defined as an ongoing collective project of reaffirming prior practices, adopting new influences, dispensing of some ideas altogether. As exclusive preservationism is a failing self-defeating strategy and change is the only answer to long-term survival, the successful "preservation" of practices and ways of life involves their constant modification and interpretation. This ongoing re-interpretation of cultural practices is operationalized through accommodating the conservative impulses, by allowing individuals enough space and freedom to structure their lives in reference to a diverse array of values and practices.

Yet another way to understand the "unbounded-ness" of the Romanian ethnic culture may lie in the acknowledgement that individuals relate to culture through multiple affiliations and allegiances, rather than through association with an unique culture. Such an understanding is circumscribed to the idea that the status of Romanian-Americans emerges from new modes of intercultural contact. Their double belonging is predicated on the changes they witnessed or experienced in their transition from the European to the American space. As they come from a cultural and political logic that allows them to imagine themselves belonging to two worlds, their identity is construed not by a dismissal of Romanian specificity, but a recontextualization. This becomes a mediation, a dialectical or dialogic process in which allegiance to American values is not opposed to Romanian ethnicity; their Romanian identity in the US seems to be in a continuous process of negotiating the difference: What I was, What I am, What I need to become- complex diasporic negotiations entailed by multiple belongings. They have a precise vision of two disparate worlds: the one they left behind in the past and the one they openly embrace now. As they inhabit multiple geographies and their lived experiences draw on Romanian and American practices, their actions are in no way uniform processes of reproduction or transformation of already familiar modes of existence. Moving freely and comfortably between languages, they do not feel colonized, so they do not resist being Americanized.

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<sup>13</sup>For an ethnic culture to survive in this flow of constant change, it needs to be preserved by an ever-changing but relatively large and continuous group of people to use culture’s central ideas, practices, values, ideas, texts and artifacts

History and the act of remembering it are essential resources in constructing and celebrating the past, which is in its turn vital for the legitimacy of an ethnic group. However, the act of remembering history "as it happened" is a dilemmatic enterprise, as there is a significant element of creativity ingrained in personal reminiscing. While agreeing with R.A.Schemerhorn's viewpoint that an ethnic group is a "collectivity within a larger society having a real or putative common ancestry, memories of a shared historical past and a cultural focus on one or more symbolic elements"(182), the act of remembering history is highly problematic, as memory is porous and productive altogether, an elusive structure which allows some elements to be forgotten while creating some others. The preservation of tradition cannot therefore amount to an accurate process, of remembering things as they happened, but to a creative process, synonymous to fabricating, inventing tradition by putting together bits and pieces of the past.

The act of reminiscing the ethnic event is constructed by the actions of those who select, preserve, use and interpret the fragments of culture stored in artistic projects deemed eligible to represent and embody the mission and ethos of the group. Nowhere is the interplay of past, history, memory within the larger context of ethnic culture better encapsulated than in cultural events staged by various Romanian ethnic organizations.

In the United States, Romanian-American ethnic associations organize many ethnic cultural events, ranging from Romanian festivals, book clubs and heritage language classes to exhibitions organized by heritage museums, picnic gathering and celebratory events organized on March 1st<sup>14</sup> , March 8th<sup>15</sup> , Christmas and Easter. Annual gala balls (organized by Viitorul Roman Cultural of Aid Society), Romanian National Language Days (organized by the Union and League of Romanian Societies), Romanian heritage festivals (organized by Romanian -American Network, Niles, Illinois), to mention but a few of the cultural events organized by Romanian ethnic organizations in the United States, pledge to bridge cultures closer together and foster multicultural understanding through art and food.

Such celebrations usually gather several tens of Romanian-Americans in indoor or outdoor locations: ballrooms, churches-based facilities, private residences or halls adjacent to heritage cultural centers. The artistic manifestations to accompany such events feature music and dance programs with artists from the local community or Romanian artists as special invited guests. Such cultural events embody civic practices which are passionate, performative and familial and lend familiarity, immediacy and the possibility of intimate public speech to an event. They are also carefully staged events, with event organizers functioning as PR strategists and media people.

"La Steaua" is a monthly book club organized by the Union and League of Romanian Societies.<sup>16</sup> Usually held on the last Sunday of the month, the club derives its name from the title of a well-known poem by Mihai Eminescu, Romania's national poet. The mission of the book club, as posted on its website, is to promote Romanian culture and assert Romania's contribution to worldwide culture. While working to promote the spirit of Romanian ethnicity in the United States, the activities of "La Steaua" are also intended to foster cultural pluralism, mutual respect between the two nations and appreciation for other cultures. The efforts of this cultural group focus on the preservation of Romanian values and on highlighting Romanian specific creativity. The stated goal is to "ensure "the sustainability of the Romanian community in the U.S., to preserve, perpetuate and promote their cultural legacy.

Such events are usually hosted in private residences, usually large enough to accommodate an approximate number of thirty participants. The guests, usually, invited by phone or via social media, are

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<sup>14</sup> a spring celebration when girls and women receive a red and white string with hanging tassel which they wear pinned to their clothes

<sup>15</sup> Romanians celebrate women's day. Popular in Romania and largely observed worldwide, this day honors wome's role in family and society.

<sup>16</sup> a network of organization comprising Romanian fraternal benefit societies throughout Ohio, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Illinois, California, Minnesota, New York and Canada

family friends and acquaintances of the event organizers. There is a small participation fee in the form of a donation to The Union and League of Romanian Societies intended to cover the plentiful selection of food and beverages served throughout the afternoon and evening. The events feature book presentations, poetry readings, movie screening, Romanian traditional music, both vocal and instrumental.

There are at least three categories of participants invited to such events: the core participants-the organizers, a consistent group of supporters made up of friends and relatives and special guests (cultural elites or consular officers). When members of Romanian consular offices attend the event, and give opening speeches, their presence lends legitimacy and prestige to the event and is considered a personal success for the event organizers. The overwhelming majority of the participants from the local Romanian-American community are first generation immigrants. Sometimes they are accompanied by their children but schooled exclusively in the American system, these second generation immigrants are less proficient in Romanian than their parents and much less assertive in such ethnic gatherings. These events function as spaces in which people develop broad ethnic loyalties, but also loci for political activity and citizenship practice. As environments with an intense ethnic charge, they exert a considerable amount of influence over participants and their family, by providing exercises in ethnic socialization through contagion and imitation (Agnew, 1987, Cox 2002, Johnston1991).

The discussion topic of each forthcoming meeting is announced a month before, usually at the latest reunion, to allow potential presenters ample time to prepare their comments. The themes of such literary gatherings draw on the figures of Romanian canonical literature: Mihai Eminescu, Lucian Blaga, Liviu Rebreanu were the choice of the organizers in the period August-December 2013. On other occasions, creative writers in the Romanian-American community choose to present their own literary productions or a selection of texts written by Romanian poets. On yet other occasions, famous Romanian-Americans in the entertainment industry are invited to take the floor. In September 2016, Andrei Zinca, a film director in Los Angeles, gave a presentation of the literary career of his father, Haralamb Zinca, praised author of detective stories in Romanian in the 1970s.

Book presentations and movie screening sessions are usually followed by conversations on the topics discussed, which lead to other extraneous subjects, ranging from history to food recipes, job opportunities and present-day Romanian political practices. The discussion of literacy texts blends with musical performances. Instrumental interludes are sometimes followed by moments of dance, in which impromptu "hora"(a Romanian folk dance ) started by a handful of people, soon becomes a large circle joined by most people in the room, holding hands and moving sideways on rhythmic patters. Romanian ethnic culture is showcased by "native clothes", dance, food, icons and pottery items. Ethnic attires are proudly used during such occasions and the Romanian blouse "ie" is a staple item in the inventory of ethnic items on display. Especially when organized in "ethnic venues", near churches or cultural centers, traditional food features highly /is a highly prized item in ethnic festive repertoires. Polenta with stuffed cabbage, sour soup (ciorba) and nuts, raisins and chocolate babkka-lihe dessert (cozonac) make for lovely and familiar ways of recreating flavors of their yesteryears in Romania. The attempt to reconfigure "Romanian-ness" through such miniature tropes functions as symbols and markers of community building. Such artifacts or practices may at times dilute, exoticize or commodify the sense of ethnic identity but are nevertheless an effective strategy of evoking familiarity and the sense of communal cohesion.

During such gatherings, discussions about Romania's distant and more recent past occur on a regular basis. Some pride on their mixed Roman-Dacia descent and their Romanian language as a Romance language, while others argue eloquently on Romanians' exclusive Dacian heritage. Their villages, towns or cities of birth occasion particularly nostalgic remembrances. The place "as it used to be when I left it " vs " as I saw it in my last visit during the summer vacation "are staple elements of their unstructured conversations. Sometimes their devotion towards their local origin surpasses national

loyalties and they describe themselves as having been Transylvanian first, Romanian second. Such discussions spin tales of ethnic continuity, which reconstruct the spaces “here”/“there” and legitimize a discourse of attachment to the land and patrimony they left behind while at the same time providing insights into their self-making into the new world. Their speeches involve equal amounts of remembrance (of some cultural elements), oblivion (of other elements) and imagination (expressed and invoked by the creative alteration of specific features of identities). The bias, the inconsistencies and discontinuities of personal narratives are embedded in their discussions about historical events which mobilize memories and subtly guide the participants' imagination in ways that influence their perceptions and interpretations of that event. Such discussions about the ancient or recent past occasion no single story to tell, but multiple ones and the act of reminiscing of the past sometimes leads to idealized reconstructions of the personal and communal past, coupled with nostalgia towards some diasporic locations or claims to cultural distinctiveness in particular times and places of Romania.

The information about the organization of this event appears on social media various sites. "La Steaua" has its own website page<sup>17</sup>, where announcements about the topic, presenters and venue are posted prior to the event. After the event, the organizers usually upload pictures taken during the event, each occasioning lively exchanges of comments among participants. Announcements and press coverage are likely to appear on the site of Romanian consulates in the United States. The reunion on 31 August 2013 coincided with the Romanian National Language Day. The following days, The Consulate General of Romania in Los Angeles (whose representatives attended the event) announced the event and published a selection of three pictures<sup>18</sup>. The reunion on 29th June 2014, which celebrated a year since the inception of the group, was covered by short articles in The Transatlantic Press Club and in the online edition of the U.S.-based Romanian newspaper "Gandacul de Colorado". Both signed by Daniela Istrate, the president of the League and Union and Romanian Societies (the organization which created the book club), the articles represent short description of the order of activities within the event and the participants.

## Conclusions

Such cultural events provide a framework for the expression of Romanian ethnicity in terms of commonality and oneness through emphasis on common heritage. These events are self-referential, as they tell Romanian-Americans who they are and function at the same time as markers of distinctions, differentiating “them” from “others”. They are also discursive strategies through which Romanian - Americans invent, reinvent and reposition themselves in relation to an American political space and make rhetorical claim of identification and connection to Romania. Such events are the emanation of collaborative effort of local ethnic communities, community-based initiatives meant to construct a collective memory of the common event. Authentic sites of cultural production, such cultural events provide platforms through which national and ethnic identities are negotiated and function as multivocal cultural field in which different voices express claims of recognition. They provide contexts in which narratives of the past can be substantiated, by invoking cultural imaginaries which address the nature of nationhood, the role of ethnicity and the sense of belonging to an imagined space. Such cultural events function as a metaphor for national recollection, reflective of specific narratives on national identity and instrumental in creating narratives of belonging in which multiple versions of Romanian-ness are constructed. They provide a venue in which social relations are constituted through intense personal participation and social interaction. Cultural events build communication exchanges and interaction and

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<sup>17</sup> La Steaua has its own Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/963514180409664/>, a closed group made up of 148 members

<sup>18</sup> <http://losangeles.mae.ro/gallery/728>

inform participants with the sense of political and cultural belonging by offering them a selective and diversified engagement with experiences presented by different spaces through passionate familial and community practices.

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# FINAL DEBATES LIKE A NEW BEGINNING A FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS OF TELEVISED DEBATES FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN ROMANIA, FROM NOVEMBER 2014

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*Abstract: This study proposes an analysis of televised debates for presidential elections in Romania, in November 2014, from the perspective of functional theory of political campaign discourse. This study shows similarities with the results obtained in other countries, and highlights potential differences, which challenges the functional theory assumptions. The variability of the results can be explained if we consider some cultural particularities of the civilisation of dialogue in the local political life.*

*Key words: presidential debate; political televised debate; functional theory; political communication culture; political semiotics.*

## **Political debates as a symbol of democracy**

The political televised debate are the most significant experience of the electoral campaign (Boydston, et al.). Diana B. Carlin claims that debates are the most valuable form of communication in the presidential campaign. According to Michael Pfau, televised debate are “superior to other communication forms” (251). Considered the media event of political confrontation and a key element of the election campaign (Benoit, Hansen, and Verser 335), the political televised debate is a complex television genre which contributes to the deliberative construction of political communication (Beciu 139-140).

Such forms of communication have always drawn huge numbers of viewers, which suggests an enormous potential for influencing voters (Benoit, et al. 336). In this context, we are witnessing a shift in the shapes of political discourse towards a show-type politics, media events or infotainment (Beciu 116). Mass-media, primarily exploits the spectacular dimension of a televised debate and is more interested in candidates performance media show than the position on a topic of interest (Lemert et al.). Leon stated that candidates perform the role of ‘President’ in a more or less credible way. In conformity with Schwartzberg there are characters in front of a large public, attending the *mise en scène* of a special political event. According to Fortin (63), paradoxically, the tendency of transforming the televised debate into the practice of social spectacle could represent a threat towards the democracy. The effect of such a mediating approach is the decrease of the citizens' interest towards politics. The author explains this effect throughout the decline of argumentation speech in favor of a type of seducing speech.

However the televised debates remain essential forms of communication for the functioning of democracy (Coleman 1; Beciu 139-140) and could be an ideal opportunity for candidates to establish an interpretation of reality, to impose control and symbolic representations of the situation in the political field. Therefore the stimulating debate is one of the freedom of speech functions in a society (Wachsmann). In this way, TV debate is considered to be a symbol of democracy (Lochard 9). Prominent themes from the public sphere (e.g. the topic of elections in diaspora) may constitute serious constraints in elections, running and performing the discursive scenarios of candidates (Boydston, Glazier, and Pietryka 28). It is a test of the ability of the candidates to focus on the strategic dimension

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of the political themes messages. This may be one of the reasons why the influence of the TV debates is defined by “contextual dynamics of the campaign” (McKinney, and Carlin 210). In the local public sphere discussions on the usefulness televised election debates targeted, on the one hand, fears that the debate focuses attacks rather than exchanging ideas (the excess of conversational violence), on the other hand, the fact that the formal structure of the context of the debate could lead to self-censorship discourse of candidates (Beciu 139).

### **Functional theory of political campaign discourse**

This article examines the way in which social actors position themselves discursively during final debates for presidential elections, both one toward the other, and toward the content of communication, from the perspective of functional theory of political campaign discourse. Obviously, political messages and declarations aim to win the election. This article is based on the premise that televised political debates are conflictual, competitive verbal interactions. Starting from this premise, a functional approach to analyse political debates appears appropriate. We depart from the five axioms formulated by Benoit (*Political Election Debates* 9-19):

Vote is a comparative act.

Candidates must be distinguished from other opponents.

Political campaign messages allow the candidates to distinguish themselves (to assert their identity).

Candidates set up desirability (are positioned on preferability scale) by three discursive functions: acclamations (A1), attacks (A2), defenses (A3)

Election campaigns discourse is targeting two main themes: policies (P) and character (C).

The first axiom implies a certain competence of the citizens, which guides and makes decisions on preference of a particular candidate in a comparative way. The following two axioms include candidates' identity construction. The fourth axiom concerns discursive tools available for the candidates to position favorably on the audience preferences scale. The last axiom proposes two types of associations: one on “Character” and references to assertions concerning candidate image and another between the theme “Policies” and references to political issues under discussion.

According to William L. Benoit, in the functional theory of political discourse, candidates are positioned on the preferability scale by three discursive functions: acclamation, attacks and defenses (*Political Election Debates* 13-18). Acclamations are positive statements aimed to promote self-image, and to increase the desirability candidate. Benoit states that attacks are discursive interventions targeting weaknesses and limitations of the opponent, used to reduce a candidate's social desirability (“Content Analysis in Political Communication” 45). Defenses are statements which reject the opponent's attacks and which could influence the candidate's level of preference (*Political Election Debates* 15). The three discursive functions are stimulated and mutually conditioned (Benoit, and Wells 112). In 2005, Benoit and Airne noted that “these three functions work together as an informal form of cost-benefit analysis: acclaims increase benefits, attacks increase an opponent's costs, and defenses reduce a candidate's alleged costs” (226). This suggests a strategic approach of discursive exchanges during the televised debate. In Romania, the functional theory of political debate was tested in the case of televised debates for the 2009 presidential elections (Cmeciu, and Pătruț).

## Methodology

This paper proposes an analysis of televised debates for presidential elections in Romania, in November 2014, from the perspective of functional theory of political campaign discourse (Benoit, *Political Election Debates*). Benoit makes some predictions regarding functions of the discourse in political campaigns (*Political Election Debates* 18-26):

H1: Candidates use acclamations more frequently than attacks; and attacks more often than defenses.

H2: Comments on the policy themes are much more common than those relating to the character of the candidates.

H3. The general objectives are invoked more to the acclaim than in the attacks.

H4. Candidates use values more to acclaim than to attack.

H5. Candidates attack more and acclaim less on future plans than on general objectives.

All five hypotheses of functional theory were tested in the two televised debates for presidential elections in Romania: 11 and 12 November in RealitateaTV station, B1 TV respectively. Candidates who took part in the two debates were Victor Ponta (PSD, Social Democratic Party leader), the prime minister at that time, and Klaus Iohannis (PNL, National Liberal Party chairman), former mayor of Sibiu at that time, who is of Saxon origin. Note here that Klaus Iohannis is currently the president of Romania.

The two debates constituted the corpus for our analysis.

In order to test the hypothesis of the functional theory, we used the content analysis techniques, mainly thematic content analysis. The three discursive functions we discussed above were grouped around two main themes: policies and candidate's character – suggesting a categorical scheme of content analysis. The first theme, "Policies" consists of three categories, distributed based on the temporality criterion: past actions (achievements) (PA), future plans (FP) and general objectives (GO). The second theme, "Character" consists of three categories as well: personal qualities (PQ), leadership skills (LS) and ideals/values (I). Registration units were considered assertions, claims, statements, and arguments of candidates (themes), and each theme was coded for one out of the three discursive functions: acclaims (A1), attacks (A2), defenses (A3). For the first televised debate, RealitateaTV channel, 11 November 2014, there have been 473 assertions concerning the candidates: 259 assertions of the governing party's candidate (Victor Ponta) and 214 of the opposition candidate (Klaus Iohannis). For the second debate, B1 TV channel, 12 November 2014, there have been 463 assertions, 252 of the governing party's candidate and 211 of the opposition candidate.

## Results

The first hypothesis has been partially confirmed (we have more attacks than defenses, acclamations occupying intermediate position). In the first televised debate, the frequencies for each type of discursive function were: A2 (45.9%) > A1 (34.5%) > A3 (19.6%) (see Table 1). The descending order in the distribution of frequencies is maintained in the second debate as well: A2 (45.8%) > A1 (36.7%) > A3 (17.5%) (see Table 2). Only in the case of the opposition candidate, Klaus Iohannis, during the second debate, the relationship between the three discursive functions is consistent with the first hypothesis: A1 (46.4%) > A2 (44.6%) > A3 (9%).

Klaus Iohannis used particularly offensive enunciations (attacks) on issues related to corruption in the presidential elections and diaspora vote: "You have suppressed the right to vote of such citizens in the diaspora" (11 November 2014, RealitateaTV).

Victor Ponta used offensive enunciations much more on Policies theme than on Character theme: “Yes, that’s why, I ask you to treat us with respect. You have an attitude of landlord, with all the Romanians and I want to treat us with respect” (11 November 2014, RealitateaTV).

Also, the candidate Victor Ponta built his defensive statements on several discursive strategies. One strategy was to deny the failure of the election process in the diaspora and to attribute the responsibility to other institutions, strategy called *minimum assumption report*:

“The point is that people who could not vote, have a legitimate claim linked to those organizing elections - BEC and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – to create the conditions for them to vote” (11 November 2014, Realitatea TV).

Another strategy used by Victor Ponta was to *redefine the communicational situation through the discursive strategy of interpellation*:

“Tell us, how did you organize the elections there - our ambassador in Germany asked us five voting points ... and you did not agree. What are you going to do next, for the second round? What’s the solution?” (11 November 2014, Realitatea TV).

Table 1. Frequency distribution for each discursive function, in the first debate (11 November 2014, Realitatea TV).

	<b>Acclaims (A1)</b>	<b>Attacks (A2)</b>	<b>Defenses (A3)</b>	<b>Total</b>
<i>Victor Ponta</i>	89 (34.4%)	101 (39%)	69 (26.6%)	<b>259</b>
<i>Klaus Johannis</i>	74 (34.6%)	116 (54.2%)	24 (11.2%)	<b>214</b>
<b>Primary debate (D1) - Nov. 11, 2014 -</b>	<b>163 (34.5%)</b>	<b>217 (45.9%)</b>	<b>93 (19.6%)</b>	<b>473</b>

$\chi^2 (2) = 20.09, p < .01$  (significant test)

Table 2. Frequency distribution for each discursive function, in the second debate (12 November 2014, B1 TV).

	<b>Acclaims (A1)</b>	<b>Attacks (A2)</b>	<b>Defenses (A3)</b>	<b>Total</b>
<i>Victor Ponta</i>	72 (28.6%)	118 (46.8%)	62 (24.6%)	<b>252</b>
<i>Klaus Johannis</i>	98 (46.4%)	94 (44.6%)	19 (9%)	<b>211</b>
<b>Second debate (D2) - Nov. 12, 2014 -</b>	<b>170 (36.7%)</b>	<b>212 (45.8%)</b>	<b>81 (17.5%)</b>	<b>463</b>

$\chi^2 (2) = 13.59, p < .01$  (significant test)

The chi-square test calculated for the three types of discursive functions, show significant differences in the way the two candidates used those functions in the two debates:  $\chi^2 = 20.09, p < .01$ , in first debate; respectively  $\chi^2 = 13.59, p < .01$ , in the second debate.

Regarding the second hypothesis, the results show that particularly in the first debate, candidates focused rather on discussion about policy actions than on issues of candidate’s character (H2 was confirmed). It was found that during the second debate politicians talk more about policy (75% of the enunciations) compared to the first debate (60% of the enunciations). Also, in the first debate they talked less about character (25% of the enunciations) compared to the first debate (40% of the enunciations).

Table 3. Topics for primary debate (11 November 2014, RealitateaTV).

	<b>Policy (P)</b>	<b>Character (C)</b>	<b>Total</b>
<i>Victor Ponta</i>	170 (65.7%)	89 (34.3%)	<b>259</b>
<i>Klaus Iohannis</i>	113 (52.8%)	101 (47.2%)	<b>214</b>
<b>Primary debate (D1)</b> <b>- Nov. 11, 2014 -</b>	<b>283 (59.9%)</b>	<b>190 (40.1%)</b>	<b>473</b>

$\chi^2 (1) = 8.03, p < .01$  (significant test)

Table 4. Topics for secondary debate (12 November 2014, B1TV).

	<b>Policy (P)</b>	<b>Character (C)</b>	<b>Total</b>
<i>Victor Ponta</i>	197 (78.5%)	54 (21.5%)	<b>251</b>
<i>Klaus Iohannis</i>	150 (71%)	62 (29%)	<b>212</b>
<b>Secondary debate (D2)</b> <b>- Nov. 12, 2014 -</b>	<b>347 (75%)</b>	<b>116 (25%)</b>	<b>463</b>

$\chi^2 (1) = 0.12, p (=0.727) > .05$  (insignificant test)

The chi-square test was significant, when we tested the differences between the way candidates used “Policy” versus “Opponent Character” enunciations in the first debate ( $\chi^2 = 8.03, p = .005 < .01$ ) and non-significant ( $\chi^2 = .12, p = .72 > .05$ ), for the second debate.

We noticed that both candidates used general objectives to acclaim more than to attack, with only one exception – Victor Ponta, during first debate, who used general objectives to attack (5 times), compare to acclamation (one time). Therefore we confirmed the third hypothesis.

The fourth hypothesis was confirmed as well by our data. Both candidates used the ideals rather for acclamation than to attack, during both debates. The fifth hypothesis was partially confirmed. Both candidates attacked more on future plans than on the general objective, in both televised debates, but acclaim more on future plans than on the general objectives: 27, respectively 17 times compared to only once respectively 3 times during first debate – for Victor Ponta; and, in the case of Klaus Iohannis, – 13, respectively 30 times compared to 11, respectively 12 times during the second debate.

## Discussion

The results allow us to compare the two candidates’ distribution of enunciations on general topics and discursive functions, for each of the two debates, in a comparative way. The results of the analysis point to a few conclusions:

The data show that the candidate who was already in power Victor Ponta (prime-minister at that time) uses the defense strategy more often than the opposition candidate Klaus Iohannis, in both debates: 26.6% versus 11.2% of the enunciations in the first debate, the difference increased during the second debate: 24.6% versus 9% of the enunciations;

During the first debate, the opposition candidate Klaus Iohannis attacked more (54.2%) than the candidate in power, Victor Ponta (39%);

The situation has changed during the second debate, where Victor Ponta attacked more (46.8%) than Klaus Iohannis (44.6%);

During the first debate, both candidates have used acclamation in relatively equal proportions (34.5%), while during the second debate, opposition candidate Klaus Iohannis has used the process of acclaim much more (46.4%) than the power candidate, Victor Ponta (28.6%).

Benoit indicated three reasons why candidates tended to limit the use of defensive enunciations (defenses) and to be rather offensive (“The functional theory of political campaign discourse” 321):

Defensive enunciations can keep a candidate “outside” of the message due to the fact that the attacks are most likely drawn to address the weaknesses of a candidate;

Defensive enunciations may create the impression that a candidate is reactive, rather than proactive;

Defensive enunciations have the potential to inform or remind voters of possible weaknesses of the candidates.

From this point of view, the candidate in power at that time, Victor Ponta, was worse placed than his opponent, Klaus Iohannis. The defensive enunciations of Victor Ponta focused on his past actions (40) and on his personal character (18) in the first debate; decreasing in frequency during the second debate (27) on past actions. In the second debate, Victor Ponta has slightly increased his enunciations on general objectives (5 to 1) and future plans (6 to 4), compared to the first debate.

It should be noted that Klaus Iohannis ability to attack on prominent issues, in the forefront of media agenda, but also on the public agenda, respectively on the elections issues regarding to diaspora, payed off for him. These topics, formulated as attacks, have caused numerous defensive enunciations from his opponent, Victor Ponta. During the first debate, the opposition candidate attacked mostly on past actions, on leadership skills and on personal character of the candidate who was in power. During the second debate, Klaus Iohannis has slightly decreased the attacks on past actions and increased the number of attacks on the opponent’s future plans. Ponta’s attacks focused on past actions of the opposition candidate, on personal character and his leadership skills, during the first debate; whereas during the second debate, his attacks intensified on personal character dimension, on past actions and faded personality of the opponent.

The data obtained in this study could suggest a political communication culture focused more on attack rather than on defense strategy. This could be considered an easier approach compared to more complex strategies such as acclamations

As a research limitation, we mention here constraints related to: fidelity of the coding procedure, adequacy interventions of candidates to the moderator style, and report of the contextual developments during the time the research was conducted.

## **Conclusion**

The present study has its starting point in the Benoit’s functional theory, trying to reveal the semiotic dynamics of the three discursive functions – acclamations, attacks, defenses – during a Television political debate. Tensions of the attack-defense discursive exchanges, invite the public, beyond the cognitive processes, to participate in the construction of the decision on their preference for a particular candidate. The particular mode in which social players use the three discursive functions in the debate (strategic positioning) can be used by voters to decide which of the candidates is preferred. Researchers argue that the model of the functional analysis of the debates could be transferable between different cultures, because in their semantic spaces, the concepts of acclaim, attack and defend are isomorphic. The three types of discursive interventions may be slightly operationalized and defined in multiple languages and cultures. However, the present study, but like other studies conducted in Europe, such as the study of Isotalus (41) in connection with the debates in Finland, does not fully confirm the assumptions of functional theory. Some cultural particularities – how cultural context defines the rules of the political dialogue, particularities relating to types of acclamations, attacks or defenses in different cultures, the role of the moderator, the quality of the questions submitted to candidates and so on – may affect the cultural variability of the results (Holtz-Bacha, and Kaid 406).

Still, our study shows similarities with the results obtained in other countries, and highlights potential differences, which challenges the functional theory assumptions. The differences can be explained if we take into account the different cultural codes of Romanian communication culture.

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## DIALOGUE AND NARRATION

*Anna-Christin Ransiek<sup>20</sup> & Rixta Wundrak<sup>21</sup>*

*Abstract: In this article, we would like to give implications to analyze biographical narratives by using the concept of dialogue. Therefore, we like to show how dialogue and narration are connected in biographical narratives. We will introduce different levels of dialogue within a narration by choosing passages of interview-transcriptions out of our studies. These levels (interactional level, historical level or processual level and locational level) shall serve as an analytical tool in order to identify the narration's specific dialogical character. We do this based on two research projects in which each of us has been involved and which represent different cultural, geopolitical, and social contexts. Our research projects are concerned with two different minority groupings: People of Color<sup>22</sup> in Germany and Chinese entrepreneurs in Romania.*

*Keywords: Biographical Research; Exclusion; Migration; Narrative Interviews; Dialogue; Discourse Analysis; Sociology of knowledge; Interpretative paradigm.*

### **Introduction**

Within biographical narratives<sup>23</sup> dialogues are shaped between the past and the present, between the local and the global, between the self and the other. By 'biographical narratives' we understand the self-presentations in the form of a biography. Through our case studies, we will illustrate how (and why) narrations interconnect different positions, spaces and times in an interview setting. The projects we are going to present are on the one hand a study on biographies<sup>24</sup> of People of Color, who experience racism in Germany and on the other hand a research about Chinese entrepreneurs in Eastern Europe. Both studies are based on extensive ethnographic field work, a collection of biographical-narrative interview-data, and comprehensive material for discourse analysis. The study of the first author (Anna Ransiek) aims to answer the question how racism in everyday life is handled by the individual considering the background of specific powerful discourses in German society. For this purpose, she conducted and analyzed biographical interviews with People of Colour who mostly had one parent from an African country and one from Germany and were born and socialized in Germany. The second author (Rixta Wundrak) analyzed life stories of immigrants who came in the early 1990es from the Republic of China

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<sup>22</sup>The term People of Color is a political term of self-definition to describe a position where one is confronted with racist ascriptions, see Dean, Jasmin. "People of Colo(u)r." *Wie Rassismus aus Wörtern spricht. (K)Erben des Kolonialismus im Wissensarchiv deutsche Sprache. Ein kritisches Nachschlagewerk.* Eds. Arndt, Susan and Nadja Ofuatey-Alzard. 1st ed. Münster: UNRAST, 2011: 597-607. Print.

<sup>23</sup>Rosenthal, Gabriele. "The Narrated Life Story: On the Interrelation between Experience, Memory and Narration." *Narrative, Memory and Knowledge: Representations, Aesthetics and Contexts.* Eds. Milnes, Kate, Horrocks, Christine, Kelly, Nancy, Roberts, Brian and Robinson, David Huddersfield: University of Huddersfield Press, 2006: 1–16. Print.

<sup>24</sup> The general concern of biographical research is to understand and explain social phenomena in the process of their origin of creation, construction and transformation. Biographical Research in our understanding cannot be considered as research on the subjective perspective only. Biographies can be seen as a connection between individual experiences against the background of its historical and social context.

to Romania in the context of transition in Eastern Europe. She compared the narrations of these immigrants with public and political discourses about migrants and minorities in Romania.

In this essay, we examine both studies on one selected biographical case each. We will introduce different levels of dialogue within a narration. By choosing passages of interview-transcriptions out of our studies, we will establish three dialogical levels, the interactional level, the historical or processual level, and the locational level. We will argue that these levels shall serve as a tool to analyze the narration's specific character.

The goal is to outline the definition and the meaning of "dialogical references" within the process of storytelling. Our article focuses on those dialogical references within an interview situation, which concern topics of belonging, exclusion and *othering*. We assume that members of outsider groupings act within a frame of power structures and refer to these structures when interacting with others. They therefore do so by way of telling their story to a researcher or the audience.

Although the research projects are both dealing with the same topic (which is the phenomenon of exclusion), they are embedded in quite different contexts. That raises the questions of how these two cases can be compared. Before explaining, what comparison in this article means, it is important to state what it does not mean at all. By comparing those groupings we presuppose neither a similarity or comparable difference between them as a grouping nor similarities or differences between their historical and political positions and relations to others. We rather aim at comparing the narration in its' *ways of referring* to national, social, and historical circumstances in the situation of an interview.

The comparison therefore is based on the practice of storytelling in a methodological sense. That means that the following analysis is not a comparison between two stories in terms of their "content", but between two narrative patterns. According to our perspective, patterns of communication and narration need to be examined at the 'small units' of the social or the micro-level of story-telling, where dialogue is constructed and reproduced communicatively. Therefore, the main question, we are going to answer here is the following: How do people create dialogues in their narrations in interaction with the researcher, especially when dealing with excluding ascriptions connected to their belonging and/or experiences of exclusion and racism. The article first gives a brief outline of the methodological approach and theoretical assumptions (chapter 1). We then focus on two case studies and outline the dialogical character of the narration in the German case (chapter 2) followed by the Romanian case (chapter 3). We conclude with a comparison of these two cases concerning their dialogical references (chapter 4) leading to some methodological implications for the analysis of narrations in general.

### **Methodological approach and theoretical assumptions**

The main theoretical assumption we follow is the Social Constructivism of Berger and Luckmanns' work "The Social Construction of Reality" (1966).<sup>25</sup> According to the authors, society is a constructed and commonly shared reality, in which subjects produce, reproduce and transform this "reality" in diverse social situations throughout live. Berger and Luckmann also emphasize the importance of language and the daily "conversation machinery" for the construction of a shared social reality. (Keller 2011)<sup>26</sup> Coming from the field of sociological biographical research (Rosenthal 2004; 2006) we understand biography as such a social construction (Kohli 1978)<sup>27</sup>, in which experiences and socially established patterns of interpretation are related, modeled and transformed through narration.

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<sup>25</sup> Berger, Peter L. and Thomas Luckmann. The social construction of reality: A treatise in the sociology of knowledge. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co, 1966. Print.

<sup>26</sup> Keller, Reiner. "The Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse (SKAD)." Human Studies, 2011: 34–43. Print.

<sup>27</sup> Kohli, Martin. Biographical method - methodological biography? Paper presented to the 9th world congress of sociology, Uppsala, August 14-19 1978. Print.

In research practice, these narrations are generated within the frame of a specific communicative setting, the narrative-biographical interview. When conducting interviews, biographical researchers are asking for the whole life- and family story of the interviewee. Thus, it is a very open model of an interview in which the researcher doesn't interfere with the narration (Rosenthal 2004). Based on the "social nature" of autobiographical narrations, we follow the ideas of Alfred Schütz (1966)<sup>28</sup> and the concept of "talk-in-interaction" of Erving Goffman (1983)<sup>29</sup>. Following Schütz's phenomenological view, we focus on action and interaction in everyday life and we consider narrations as such forms of interaction. The methodological purpose of conducting open interviews is to produce a narrative which is oriented on this every-day communication as well on the interviewee's 'system of relevance' (Schütz 235). With Goffman's micro-analytical and constructivist view on interaction, we are not only looking at those structures which 'determine' the interview. We are rather interested in the process of how the researcher and the interviewee interact with each other, and how they create and form social structures and patterns by doing so. (Goffman 1983) The methodological everyday life oriented procedure of interviewing allows not only the narrator to talk more easily and without strategic 'considerations and planning' (Rosenthal 2004 4). It also leads to a deeper understanding during the procedure of interpretation. It allows an analysis of the meanings and the relevance of the story itself as well as the meaning of the interaction in present, e.g. how one is addressing the "listener" sitting before him or her during the interview. Furthermore, we are analyzing discourses about, and ascriptions of, these groupings in both research fields. Hereby we follow the 'Sociology of Knowledge approach in Discourse Analysis (SKAD)' (Keller 2011) which links Social Constructivism to Foucault's discourse theory. (Foucault 1982).<sup>30</sup> We understand a narrated biography as a construction "of the past out of the present". (Rosenthal 3)<sup>31</sup> It is always generated interactively and constantly related to past and present discourses. (Ransiek 2016<sup>32</sup>; Schäfer and Völter 2005<sup>33</sup>).

The following case-results selected for this essay derive from interpretative analysis according to the abovementioned theoretical assumptions and methodological approach. Both case-presentations are going to be structured in two parts. They start with the wider societal and biographical context of their stories, followed by examples on the micro-level (text-level) of their narrations.

### **Belonging by choice – Dialogue through a better place**

The project which provides our first example, is dealing with the experience of racism in everyday live in Germany. Although Germany has also a significant colonial history and stereotypes

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<sup>28</sup>Schütz, Alfred. *Collected papers*. The Hague: Nijhoff, 1966. Print. *Phaenomenologica* 22

<sup>29</sup>Goffman, Erving. "The interaction order." *American Sociological Review* 48.1. 1983: 1–17. Print.

<sup>30</sup>Foucault, Michel. *Archaeology of knowledge and the discourse on language*. New York, 1982. Print.

Theoretical and empirical studies on this approach, see Ransiek, Anna, Rosenthal, Gabriele, Völter, Bettina. „Diskursanalyse.“ *Interpretative Sozialforschung. Eine Einführung*. Gabriele Rosenthal.. 5th ed. Weinheim: Juventa, 2015: 247-258. Print.

<sup>31</sup>Rosenthal, Gabriele. "Biographical Research." *Qualitative Research Practice*. Ed. Seale, Clive, Gobo, Giampietro, Gubrium, Jaber F. and David Silverman. London: Sage, 2004: 48–64. Print.

<sup>32</sup>Ransiek, Anna. "Zum Verhältnis von Interaktion, Narration und Diskurs – Implikationen für eine Verbindung von Diskursanalyse und biographischen Fallrekonstruktionen." ["The Interrelation of Interaction, Narration and Discourse. Implications on the connection of Discourse Analysis and Biographical Case-reconstructions"] *Perspektiven Wissenssoziologischer Diskursanalyse*. Ed. Bosanic, Sasa and Reiner Keller. R. Wiesbaden: VS-Verlag, 2016: 279-297. Print.

<sup>33</sup>Schäfer, Thomas and Bettina Völter. "Subjekt-Positionen: Michel Foucault und die Biographieforschung." *Biographieforschung im Diskurs*. Ed. Völter, Bettina., Dausien, Bettina., Lutz, Helma and Gabriele Rosenthal, 1st ed.. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2005: 161–188. Print.

from the period of colonialism are still powerful (Arndt 2006<sup>34</sup>), racism in Germany in its reception is also deeply bound to the time of National Socialism (Rommelspacher 2011)<sup>35</sup> and the biological conception of race in the frame of the NS-ideology. Even though the existence of the concept of race was officially neglected it is still powerful in discourse (El-Tayeb 1999<sup>36</sup>). In our understanding of racism, these discourses are not necessarily connected to practices of physical violence or the official “political” existence of an ideology of race but they are powerful in excluding ascriptions and in everyday-life (Eggers, et.al. 2005).<sup>37</sup> Depending on the context, People of Color are confronted with different forms of *othering* and exclusion:

„Representations of the Other are [...] neither static nor unitary. They have undergone transformations over time, in response to changing circumstances, including the economic and political position of those producing and reproducing representations.” (Miles 51)<sup>38</sup>

Empirical findings have shown that the experiences of exclusion of those People of Color who were born in Germany and who had a parent from an African Country are strongly connected to processes of *othering* based on the color of their skin. In these settings they were often considered to be “African” instead of German (Oguntoye et. al. 2006)<sup>39</sup>The view of others places them in an outsider position in which their (national) belonging is challenged due to their appearance. Against this historical and social background and experiences, one can ask: How do people deal with these ascriptions connected to their belonging in their narrations in interaction with a white female German researcher<sup>40</sup>? In the following, we outline the story of a German Woman of Color, who Anna Ransiek met for an interview. The biographical self-presentation of Ms. Pohl<sup>41</sup>, as we chose to call her, can be assigned to a type called: “belonging by choice”. MS Pohl is born 1972 in Germany and has a Ghanaian father and a German mother. During the whole interview, the question of *belonging* or *not-belonging* is crucial in her narration. In her story she deals with the social ascriptions within society mentioned above. When telling her life story Ms. Pohl focuses on those experiences of exclusion and otherness. These experiences of otherness she speaks about are often connected with her appearance and they are bound to the closer social environment, especially to her white family and the village she grew up in. When talking about her family another topic becomes crucial: the National Socialist past of her family, a topic which is *not* talked about in the intergenerational dialogue within her family.

In the whole interview she distances herself from the family and from Germany in general. Connected with this ‘need to distance’, she claims to belong elsewhere; she claims for a belonging “*by choice*”:

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<sup>34</sup>Arndt, Susan. "Impressionen. Rassismus und der deutsche Afrikadiskurs." *AfrikaBilder. Studien zu Rassismus in Deutschland*. Ed. Susan Arndt. Münster: UNRAST, 2006: 9-45. Print.

<sup>35</sup>Rommelspacher, Birgit. "Rassismen. Eine kurze vergleichende Einführung für den deutschen Kontext." *Wie Rassismus aus Wörtern spricht. (K)Erben des Kolonialismus im Wissensarchiv deutsche Sprache. Ein kritisches Nachschlagewerk*. Ed. Arndt, Susan. and Nadja Ofuately-Alzard. 1st ed. Münster: UNRAST, 2011: 46-50. Print.

<sup>36</sup>See, for a historical approach on the continuity f.e. El-Tayeb, Fatima. "Blood Is a Very Special Juice": Racialized Bodies and Citizenship in 20th Century Germany," in: *Complicating Categories: Gender, Race, Class, and Ethnicity*, ed. Eileen Boris, *International Review of Social History* 44. 1999: 149-169. Print.

<sup>37</sup>Eggers, Maureen Maisha, Kilomba Grada, Piesche, Peggy and Susan Arndt, eds. "Mythen, Masken und Subjekte. Kritische Weißseinsforschung in Deutschland." 1st ed. Münster: UNRAST, 2005. Print.

<sup>38</sup>Miles, Robert. "Racism." London/ New York: Routledge, 2003. Print.

<sup>39</sup>Oguntoye, Katharina, Opitz, May Ayim and Dagmar Schultz, eds. "Showing Our Colors: Afro German Women Speak Out". University of Massachusetts Press. 1992. Print.

<sup>40</sup>Who is potentially in the position to challenge her belonging.

<sup>41</sup>The real name has been changed to protect the biographer's identity. Ms. Pohl is a pseudonym.

“I would say South Africa is my adopted home<sup>42</sup> country and I am an absolute fan of South Africa. Okay people from South Africa ask me where I am from, because I am not talking English like that or not to mention Zulu or Kossi [...]but a lot of people assume that I am from South Africa and I think: how cool [...]”

In this passage, the interviewee defines her concept of ‘home country’. She chooses to adopt a country: South-Africa. In terms of her life-story, she hasn’t any personal connection to this country, except for a touristic experience. Therefore she refers to a belonging which is in some way created imaginarily. In the quoted passage she names two more languages, Zulu and Kossi, which can be read as a way to demonstrate her knowledge about the language system and therefore she positions herself as an expert. She also explains her reasons or the criteria of her sympathy. People would assume that she is from South-Africa. Her not-belonging to South Africa is just apparent by the way she speaks (which probably can be learned – she proves it by using English vocabulary – and can therefore be changed). She continues:

“I think it [South Africa]**sets an example on dealing with fascistic structures**<sup>43</sup>and okay Germany was destroyed [“in Schutt und Asche”<sup>44</sup>] could be a reason but on the other side, I think one has to reconsider how to process the **past in another way.**”

In this passage she compares South Africa and Germany based on their history: the Apartheid-regime in South-Africa and the National Socialism in Germany. She not only explains why she chooses one country to be her home country but also why she feels the need to distance herself in such a way from the other: its failure to address the history of National Socialism whereas South-Africa sets an example. In this passage it is also interesting to integrate the vis-à-vis in the analysis. Telling this story to somebody who experienced the Apartheid might have caused objection or a discussion about which way of dealing with the past is the better one, whereas the German researcher – which she knew to be on her side – would have never argued about this statement.

As mentioned before, the topic of National Socialism and the need to distance herself from a country, which has this specific history, is not just central for this passage but for the whole self-presentation. In some passages, she connects the topic of National Socialism directly to her physical appearance, for example when she said: “The advantage of my skin color: Wherever I go no one associates me with Hitler”.

But what biographical experiences have led to that self-presentation<sup>45</sup>, if not her ‘real’ South African migratory-background? The analysis shows that her self-presentation is strongly connected to her experiences in Germany and within her family. Within this setting the adoption of South-Africa (which she compares to Germany based on the processing of its history) provides a possibility *not* to

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<sup>42</sup> This part of the narration was translated from German to English for the purpose of this article, except for this marked part *is my adopted home country*, where she switches to English. It can be read as a way to fortify her statement by using one of the languages which are spoken in the country she chooses to be her home country.

<sup>43</sup>The bold passages are passages where she emphasizes words herself, which indicates in the analysis, that it is a meaningful statement.

<sup>44</sup> She uses the expression “in Schutt und Asche” “destroyed and in ashes” which is not specifically connected to the National Socialism but often used to describe the destruction of German buildings after World War 2.

<sup>45</sup> In biographical-case reconstructions a difference between self-presentation and biographical experience is made. One question of analysis which is central is: how do your biographical experience influence the way in which you present yourself in the moment, see Rosenthal, Gabriele. “The Narrated Life Story: On the Interrelation between Experience, Memory and Narration.” Narrative, Memory and Knowledge: Representations, Aesthetics and Contexts. Eds. Milnes, Kate, Horrocks, Christine, Kelly, Nancy, Roberts, Brian and Robinson, Davis. Huddersfield: University of Huddersfield Press, 2006: 1–16. Print.

belong to a *here* (the place where she was born) but to an alternative *there* (the place where she feels at home). From the place of exclusion where belonging is complicated or challenged by negative external ascriptions she transfers herself by narrating to a better – yet imaginary – place. This reference to a better place provides two conditions which are not just visible on the micro-level of her narration in this single quotation but are relevant for the whole biographical experiences. South-Africa provides the possibility to engage in a dialogue with her own biography and the past of the society she lives in. Narration offers the possibility to acquire a context, within a specific situation: the interview-setting. Vis-à-vis to a white German researcher who shares with her knowledge of the historical background in Germany (although from a white and not from a black perspective) it offers the possibility to connect different (historical) spaces and times: past and present, here and there to claim for an imagined belonging in order to distance herself from where she comes from.

### **“The Dialogue-Man” Embodying Transnationalism in every-day life**

The project, out of which we picked up the second story, was running between 2003 and 2008. Rixta Wundrak worked on the migration process from Asia to Eastern Europe which began after the downfall of the Ceausescu regime. She reconstructed the history of the Chinese Community in Bucharest – a Community which has built-up since the early 1990s and in the meanwhile has become an entrepreneurial power in Romania’s society. The city of Constanta has been the first docking point for migrants and ships with containers of their goods. It then became an informal trade-net built-up all over Eastern European countries. The Chinese market in Bucharest resulted eventually in a huge economic project called “China town”. But this network of entrepreneurs was connected with different other migrant- and minority groups as well as Bucharest’s inhabitants, who work there as freelancers or clandestine, which “enables them to survive” and what is “buffering the social costs of transformation” (Stanculescu 2004, 117)<sup>46</sup>. Thus, the network was not only an ethnic economy but also an intercultural entrepreneurial field.

By then, the public and political discourse in Romania can be narrowed down to current international political debates, labeling Romania as ‘a country of transit and “as a central point of organized crime and human-trafficking”’. Alongside these dominant topics the settlement of the immigrant community was completely unnoticed. One can speak about containment and concealment within the political discourse. (Wundrak 2007)<sup>47</sup>In the following years, the image of Chinese migrants in Bucharest changed fundamentally in the course of transition in Romania and in the course of the changing role and power of the Republic of China in a global context. The prototype of a migrant as a *parasite* or *criminal* has been transformed to the type of a respected ‘modern capitalist businessman’ or –woman. Migrants became supporters of the economic expansion in Romania. In Romanian society, ‘ethnic economies’ (Spaan et al. 2005)<sup>48</sup> are either synonymous with poverty or with entrepreneurial success. How are these assumptions and changing we-pictures organized and assembled in the narration of the interview? We will give here one example of a life-story, whose protagonist represents a type we call “the Global Player”. The biographical interview with Mr. Wang<sup>49</sup> was conducted by Rixta Wundrak who met him in the center of Bucharest. It took place in an old and famous casino – which he presented

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<sup>46</sup> Stanculescu Manuela S. “Households economic strategies between state, market and the informal economies.” *Informal Economies and Social Transformation in Romania*. Ed. Neef Reiner and Adair Phillipe. Münster: LIT, 2004: 99–118. Print.

<sup>47</sup> Wundrak, Rixta. “Immigration during the ‘Wild Years’. Chinese Pioneers in Bucharest.” *Romanian Journal of European Studies* 5-6, 2007: 135–51. Print.

<sup>48</sup> Spaan, Ernst, Felicitas Hillmann, and Ton van Naerssen, eds. *Asian migrants and European labour markets: Patterns and processes of immigrant labour market insertion in Europe*. London: Routledge, 2005. Print. Routledge research in population and migration.

<sup>49</sup> The real name has been changed to protect the biographer’s identity. Mr. Wang is a pseudonym.

as if it was his home – and which indeed seemed to be. Mr. Wang usually spends a lot of time here, as he explained to the researcher, gambling, chatting and relaxing in the evenings or on weekends. In this context, the casino itself, of which one can find hundreds in the city, can be considered as a representation of a global and intercultural place within the urban landscape of Bucharest. Regardless of where Mr. Wang lived, that's how he put it, he would belong to a globalized world, he would find chances, he would gamble. This pattern is mirrored in the narration, which the following quotation of the interview shows:

„Everything is different to Paris. Here [in Bucharest] there are too many people, poor air quality. The market is full now. It changed since the beginning when I came here. I used to travel all my live I travelled to Hungary, Germany, France, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Austria. Eventually I have found a Chance: the revolution in Eastern Europe. I thought which countries could be considered, because I don't speak every language. At the airport I used to ask for a Chinese Restaurant or a casino. I don't want to live in the US 'cause there are a lot of Chinese. Here, Chinese are strangers. That means every idea is number one.”

As in this passage, international business, flexibility and creativity were the main thematic framings of the biographical narration. Mr. Wang presented himself as somebody who created himself, as a kind of a global “self-made man”. This stands in contrast to the abovementioned discourse of Chinese migrants as discriminated people. He interprets his outsider-position as an advantage for business ideas, as an opportunity structure for start-ups in businesses. He presents it as if it was an adventure. During the interview, he underpinned this narrated presentation by using his computer and mobile phone, and performing not only a dialogue with the researcher from Western Europe, but also with different acquaintances and business partners in his home country or different locations of the world – which he mentioned in the quotation.

How can this presentation be connected with the experience Mr. Wang made during his life? Like Mr. Wang, Chinese migrants have been permanently confronted with different ascriptions in society not only in Bucharest, but already in their country of origin. People who wanted to leave the country have been stigmatized and repressed during the time of Cultural Revolution. As potential emigrants, they have been seen as traitors. Contradicting that, they became an important “source of hope” in the 1980s, during which the People's Republic of China openly began to display its aspirations to become a global economic power. The new Chinese migration flow (Benton und Pieke 2000; Nyiri und Saveliev 2002) <sup>50</sup>into Eastern Europe can be seen as an integral part of this economic transition. Migrants should work at this new part of the world which was full of opportunities in order to bring back economic capital when returning home.

Mr. Wang has experienced these fundamental changes during his whole life-story. One fundamental transition has taken place already in the context of the changing system of the Republic of China during the 1950s, which is his birth year and are the birth-years of the respective generation of a big part of this migrant community. Since then, Mr. Wang has experienced political, societal and economic changes (and their values) during the Cultural Revolution and later on. Biographical disruptions related to societal transitions made this man an experienced person in travelling as well as in changing societal environments. Furthermore, financial ups and downs – again and again finding new job opportunities – and with that – reinventing himself. Thus, he learned to deal with changes, contradictions and reinventions. With this biographical “know-how“, he arrived in Romania. The story of the migrants' incorporation into the new society in Romania is riddled with contradictions.

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<sup>50</sup> Pal Nyiri, Igor Saveliev, eds. *Globalizing Chinese Migration. Trends in Europe and Asia.* 2002, Burlington: Ashgate. Gregor Benton, Frank N. Pieke, eds. *The Chinese in Europe.* 2000, London: Macmillan Press LTD.

Mechanisms of discrimination similar to those affecting any national minority, result in the community's stigmatization by the Romanian population (or even the very denial of their existence). This discourse made immigrants a scapegoat for many problems related to transformation similar to other minority groups, especially the Roma-population in Romania. The immigrant community is characterized by its social disparity, which fits in a society where a huge gap exists between rich and poor (often times, newly rich or newly poor as a consequence of transition). The opportunity structures of this society, undergoing political and social transition, proved to be decisive for the immigrant communities' economic success on the one hand, and for their social exclusion on the other. Based on the views of politicians (as well as often scholars), these networks are either supposed to be organized by 'criminal gangs' or by 'kinship loyalty'. This view undermines the complexity and multiplicity of the migrants' social reality. The migrant-networks are determined by the politico-economic embeddedness as well as by dominant discourses.

This structure is mirrored in the story of Mr. Wang and in the way he narrates. He referred not only to a global world but also to his home country, and also to local people in Romania, by adapting many times to completely different circumstances. His narration provides the possibility for this adaption to change and it can reproduce or recreate (as well as cope with) this biographical logic of experiences. At the same time, the researcher as an international representative provided the opportunity to reinforce this imagination, to serve as a channel to this imagined global world. Indeed, the interview in the casino stood for entering into dialogue with an international audience in a symbolic but also very concrete way.

### **The Benefit of Comparative Analysis**

In this analysis, we reconstructed biographical experiences and compared the dialogical references within a narration. Both studies are dealing with minority groupings and their positions in society. The common shared interest of research is to ask why and how different constructions of belonging are entangled with the biographical experiences of their members and how these constructions are interconnected with different positions in society. Based on this interest, comparative analysis can be useful on two levels:

1. The level of interpretation: What can be done here is to widen the researchers' horizon of interpretation by including more information about different circumstances and patterns of acting in different societies. Only if the researcher has knowledge about those different possibilities she or he can shape the analysis of the own research context in its specifics.

2. The level of conceptualizing an analytical framework: comparison is not only helpful to find the specific in one case but also to sharpen the analytical frame of the researcher. General narrative patterns like the reference to specific dialogical levels can be established and refined by using different cases.

To concretize our assumptions: We found, that people - wherever they might be - refer to the dialogical levels we established and that's what they have in common. Therefore, it can be well used as an analytical framework for analyzing narrations in general. However, they refer to dialogical levels in different ways. Thus, it must be analyzed, why (and how) some levels are connected and others are not. The way in which those levels are connected is what makes the case unique or specific. Comparison therefore is helpful to gain access to the specifics of the cases within the frame of the cultural and historical context and to shape different types of narrating.

## Conclusion

Narrating is a way of bringing together different voices from different times and spaces and transferring them to the present situation. In this way the practice of narrating is shaped by dialogues vice versa across multiple levels: between concrete situations and abstract social phenomena ('micro and macro'), between past experiences and the present interaction, between local circumstances and global imaginations, between the Self and the Other, between unequal positions of power, and between multiple and interlinked belongings.

A look at the micro-level of narrations should demonstrate how they inherit the possibility to create and generate dialogue. To explore this argumentation in this essay, we focused on narrative interviews in two distinct research contexts. By choosing segments of our narrative interviews, we argue that analyses of auto-biographical 'narrations in interaction' have to consider multiple levels of dialogical references.

To conclude, we distinguish three main levels of dialogical references:

The first level is the level of interaction. Narrations are bound to the participants who are involved in the situation of narrating and the power-balances which are in use in the situation. The counterparts in our examples were white German women and researchers, who served as a channel for a dialogue with 'Romania' and with 'the global world' and a dialogue with a 'Germany', the narrator belongs to. This first level also has to be seen in a wider context of power relations in society. Both interviewees are positioned as outsiders in their society. With their biographical narrations they create dialogues between themselves and the society they live in, by connecting their outsider positions to other positions within society.

On the second level, the historical or processual level, narrating offers the possibility to enter a dialogue between the present and the past, with the historical background on a societal level as well as with the historical experiences on a biographical level. In the narrations of our interviewees, experiences of the history in the Republic of China are interconnected with the present situation of the Chinese migrants in Romania today. The German history of National Socialism is interconnected with the present situation of People of Color and their way of choosing their belonging in Germany. Ms. Pohl is getting into a dialogue with the past in order to distance herself from the present German society. By criticizing the National Socialism and its influence until today, she aims to clarify, that she doesn't belong to Germany. Mr. Wang uses his biographical resources of know-how concerning changing circumstances and positions in society. His voices in the present derive from experiences he made in the past.

Thirdly, narrations connect different locations and spaces. Within a narration it is possible to refer to a place even if one hasn't ever been there physically. On this level, narrations are imaginary, they make things happen, which are not "possible" or not 'locatable' in real live. Both examples show that voices from different places are connected for example by entering into dialogue with the Germans through references to South Africa or with the Global community of Chinese migrants.

Narrations are shaped by dialogues. An analysis of narration therefore needs to consider the level of dialogues. We argued that narrations have to be analyzed as interconnections between elements on different dialogical levels. If done so, it is helpful to get a better understanding of dialogues and narration in different current cross-cultural situations.

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## POPULIST DICHOTOMY *WE* VERSUS *THEY* AND THE OUTBURST OF HATE SPEECH 2.0 IN THE ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN

Viorica Păuș & Adriana Ștefănel<sup>51</sup>

“Who’s voting for Ponta? The crows<sup>52</sup>,  
the outlaws, the corrupted, the disabled,  
mindless peasants, thieves, garbage,  
mafia, the interlopes.”<sup>53</sup>

### **New technologies: between the democratization of the political sphere and the populist burst**

In the television era, politics has become a TV show, broadcasted in primetime and watched live by various groups within the general public, between a day-time entertainment programme and the evening movie. Citizens have been transformed into passive viewers, and their involvement in political and media space is reduced to the vote itself and to the audience’s measurement.

Highly receptive to this state of affairs, politicians seek no more their legitimacy inside political parties, but rather in TV studios. Political careers are no longer at stake within the parties; it’s rather one’s presence in the spotlight, that’s more susceptible to attract notoriety, being increasingly preferred to a party’s slow pace. One’s value as a politician is not automatically associated with experience; a telegenic aspect becomes a benchmark. Political actors play their role thinking less ideologically and more about the fact that any deviation from the rules imposed by television will quite likely lead to their own exclusion from the political life.

The need for TV-related exposure transforms politicians into actors and mere subjects to rules which, once overlooked, lead to marginalization. In order to survive and succeed in the traditional media public sphere, political actors must consider their actions as events that can be used by media. The Internet and the new technologies have changed this logic. Although the research on their influence on politics is yet to be developed, one issue is clear: an increasing participation of ordinary citizens in the agenda-setting. Virtually, anyone with a smart phone and Internet access can generate news.

Although the enthusiasm is still high, especially among ordinary people, some voices in the academic world begin to draw attention to the fact that new technologies based on the aggregation of imagined communities (in the Andersonian sense of the concept) assault the very spirit of tolerance (Wodak, R et al., 2013, Wejnert, B & Woods, D, 2014, among others).

The present paper, part of a larger project that includes the Facebook pages of all the candidates in the electoral campaign, aims to deconstruct, in a quantitative manner, the discursive structures used by the contributors/commentators on Klaus Iohannis’ Facebook page in order to sanction the Others, different and at the same time deviants, voters of Victor Ponta.

We will focus our attention on hate speech acts in order to understand the populist approach of the 2.0 Klaus Iohannis’ Facebook page community. We will also try to deconstruct the Manichean identities created on this page: We (Good) versus They (Bad); and to highlight the violations of the democratic discourse within this community.

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<sup>52</sup> Pejorative label for gipsies.

<sup>53</sup> Comment on Klaus Iohannis’ official Facebook page posted by M\*\* S\*\* M\*\* (anonym user) on 16<sup>th</sup> of November 2014 at 03.05

## The Concept of Alterity. Using Alterity to Build Community

The idea of ‘*otherness*’ is central to sociological analyses of how social identities are built through discourse. The sociologists are interested in the ways in which the notions of otherness are dealt with within the society. Bauman considers that the notion of otherness is central to the way in which societies establish categories of identity. He argues that identities are set up as dichotomies: *woman is the other of man, animal is the other of human, stranger is the other of native, abnormality the other of norm, deviation the other of law-abiding, illness the other of health, insanity the other of reason, lay public the other of the expert, foreigner the other of state subject, enemy the other of friend* (Bauman 1991: 8).

These dichotomies are conceived as being natural and so often, in everyday life, they are taken for granted and presumed to be natural. But social identities are *not* natural. They represent a socially established order – a hierarchy where certain groups are acknowledged as being superior to other groups.

Max Weber insists, in his book *Economy and Society*, on the catalytic role of the Other for the community. The sense of community develops only if a common danger arises. Paradoxically, the Other creates the community. It is what causes individuals to ignore differences and focus on similarities. Facing the Other, different individuals become an Us, a community.

In addition to this, the Other gives meaning to ambiguous or difficult situations. The simplicity of the explanatory model built around the Other assures its popularity. The events are reduced to the same principle – this was caused by the Other. All the bad stuff in a society – poverty, misery, crises, wars, unemployment, diseases, drugs, immorality, pornography and so on – appears as genuine by-products of the Other. In this way, the Other provides an explanation to misfortunes faced by people and societies in general. The solution is simple, the disappearance of the Other.

On discursive level, The Other is otherwise, different, sometimes not entirely human. The Other has different habits, speaks another language, worship other gods, and therefore negatively arouses feelings. The Other can sometimes be admired, one may refer to it as a model, but it most often serves to mark a distinction and highlight one’s own cultural landmarks (Boia, 2004:6).

### Research questions and corpus of analysis<sup>54</sup>

Considering the above, we intend to analyse how 2.0 identities are built during the electoral campaign; the social representation of the contenders and their voters. In order to do that, we will use the Romanian president’s, Klaus Iohannis, Facebook page during the last week prior the elections, in November 2014. In order to understand how those identities are built and to what extent the propaganda techniques (Rosca, L. 2006) might be employed in the 2.0 politics, we will find the answers to a set of six questions, displayed in the table below:

Research questions	Klaus Iohannis	Victor Ponta
The candidate’s image	Q1.1 representations on Klaus Iohannis	Q1.1 representations on Victor Ponta
His political supporters’ image	Q2.1 representations of Klaus Iohannis’s supporters	Q2.1 representations of Victor Ponta’s supporters
His voters’ image	Q3.1 representations of Klaus Iohannis’s voters	Q3.1 representations of Victor Ponta’s voters

<sup>54</sup> The research was carried out, as part of a post-doctoral fellowship, by Adriana Ștefănel at the ICUB-University of Bucharest Institute of Research, 2015-2016, Romania.

The research method is the quantitative text analysis, applied to a corpus of 316 comments posted on Klaus Iohannis' Facebook page, between November 12<sup>th</sup> and November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2014, comments that generated 83,961 likes within 3,056 replies. For each post of the candidate, we selected the most popular (number of likes) 30 comments, having reached an initial total of 390 comments; 80% of them (81.02%) being useful to our analysis. The distribution of these comments for each research questions can be found in the table below:

Research questions	Klaus Iohannis (Q*.1)			Victor Ponta (Q*.2)		
	comments	Likes		comments	Likes	
		no.	Mean		no.	mean
The candidate's image (Q1.*)	87	29998	344,80	57	24447	428,89
His political supporters' image (Q2.*)	9	6000	666,67	28	3594	128,35
His voters' image (Q3.*)	160	38311	239,44	25	2835	113,40

As shown in the table above, most of the comments include self-references to Klaus Iohannis voters. Quite interestingly, Klaus Iohannis supporters' new reviews generate the highest average number of likes (666.67 likes on average, for each of the nine posts); 33 comments (10.46%) include dichotomies, the most common being the one between the two candidates' voters (10 comments). Only five comments set the two candidates in opposition.

### Summary of findings

Q1.1. Klaus Iohannis' image in the comments posted on his official Facebook page, in the last week of the second round of elections

Out of 87 comments within the corpus of analysis, over a third of them (33, adding up to 15,090 likes) include references to the function of the president. To summarize: these comments express the idea that Iohannis should become president because he looks and acts like a president, as opposed to Victor Ponta, totally inappropriate for this dignity.

In addition, Klaus Iohannis is associated with the following attributes:

Attributes of Klaus Iohannis	Frequency	No of likes
Gentleman	8	317
Country's last hope	7	656
Change for the better	6	935
German	6	570
Capable	5	207
Loved (by the people)	5	232
Respected (by the people)	5	363
Speaks a good language	4	233
(more) Romanian (then)	4	384
Non-conflictual	3	158
Non-offensive	3	158
Man (manly)	2	456

As reflected in the list below, the attributes subsumed by a populist imaginary (last hope, an alternative to the current unbearable situation, loved by the people, virile/manly) attracted most likes from the virtual community. His Otherness is also built in a populist key (Stefanel, 2016). His ethnicity (other than Romanian) is, paradoxically, a further argument in his favour: He is different than those who are ruling the country now, but far more Romanian than these Romanian guys; as Romanian as those Romanian fellows working abroad, yet devoted to their native country (*Diaspora* label self-assumed by those who support him in the virtual environment).

Q1.2 Victor Ponta’s image in the comments on his opponent’s official Facebook page, in the last week of the second round of elections

Following the same populist-reductionist logic, Victor Ponta's image in the comments on the official Facebook page of his contender is built in complete opposition; he is associated with the Evil oppressing the country, hindering people’s intentions to vote and even force them to go working abroad. In contrast with Iohannis, who is loved by the people, Victor Ponta unites Romanians against him; he is not respected. Also, in opposition to Klaus Iohannis, who seems to represent the country's future, Victor Ponta is anchored in the Communist past (communist, Securitate, etc.), and he is strongly associated with the non-democratic deeds of those first post-revolutionary years (bribing voters, stealing votes, etc.)

Victor Ponta's associated attributes are summarized in the table below:

Attributes associated with Victor Ponta	Frequencies	Likes
Liar	15	7954
Let’s unite the people against him	9	746
Thief	8	742
He humiliates people	7	2937
Briber	4	2654
Coward	3	201

In total opposition to the male virility and attraction attributed to Iohannis, Victor Ponta is caricaturised, being associated with cartoon characters (Mickey Mouse, Pinocchio) and apparently emasculated. Even if in real life he is very tall, in one of the comments he is called *dwarf*, this referring rather to his moral stature. In addition, he is associated with the disease (Ebola infection), with unlawful activities (thief, jailbird, injury), yet he is also fearful and coward; obviously, totally inadequate for a presidential candidate.

Q2.1. The image of Klaus Iohannis’ voters in the comments posted on his official Facebook page, in the last week of the second round of elections

The comments on his official Facebook page make no reference to Klaus Iohannis’s political supporters. Neither the Liberal National Party as a whole, nor the Party’s leaders were mentioned by those who post comments on this page. In a clearly populist logic, between the leader and the people (the good part of it) nothing interferes.

Klaus Iohannis is only associated with two (or three, if some cases) Kings of Romania: Carol I; Ferdinand (and Michael). Although the combination is strictly ethnic, Carol II is conveniently left out due to his controversial personality and its constitutional slippages.

The call to the people, for them to rise against the oppressing elites, is also present in the comments analysed. For example, a comment recording over 1,000 likes includes the following paragraph:

*I hope that Iohannis will not disappoint us and mingle with other politicians, but he will remain with the people. He must not forget that he was chosen by the people, and the people will take him down if he forgets his promises! The people endorse his campaign, not the politicians, not the party!*

Another populist dichotomy that appears in the comments and shapes the image of Klaus Iohannis' supporters is the one between Internet (seen as a space of freedom of speech), and TV stations, traditional media as a whole, the latter being arguably controlled by an economic power in direct relationship with the political one.

Q2.2 The image of Victor Ponta's supporters in the comments on his opponent's official Facebook page, in the last week of the second round of elections

A populist key is also used in the presentation of Victor Ponta's supporters. He is generally supported by:

*Landlords with wide collars and thieves who plundered the country in pursuit of wealth ... They have cut down our trees and they took us the right to breathe clean air, they poisoned our water with cyanide, they sold our rich mountain's natural resources heritage left by our ancestors, they destroyed our industry, the agriculture, our factories and mills were sold for scrap ... They humiliated us and made us slaves on our land and destroyed our reputation[...]<sup>55</sup>*

The association with the Social Democratic Party is very strong and has a demonizing effect. The ultimate argument that he is not suitable as a president derives precisely from this element, where he is associated with *Securitate* (the former communist secret police and some post-communist structures), with those who called the miners (in 1990 and later on) and the Mafia.

On the election day, the dichotomy between Victor Ponta's supporters and the people is illustrated with comments reminiscent of the uprising of 1907:

*In Turnu Magurele, Teleorman, on Dragnea's land, the people shout: "Down with communism!" That is the true victory! Congratulations, Iohannis! Congratulations, Romanian!<sup>56</sup>*

But also with the revolutionary moment of 1989:

*Only in '89 the Romanians came out in the streets!!! This is the end of the communist era! Congratulations and good luck!!! (...) The Romanians are coming to vote to get rid of the new Communist regime!!! Vote for freedom and democracy, ELECT IOHANNIS!!!!<sup>57</sup>*

Besides a collective figure of the Evil elite subsumed by *communist: FSN -Securitate -PDSR - PSD, same s\*\*t, different names<sup>58</sup>*, there are a number of political figures associated with Victor Ponta,

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<sup>55</sup> Comment on Klaus Iohannis' official Facebook page posted by A\*\* M\*\* (anonym user) on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2014 at 19.30

<sup>56</sup> <sup>56</sup> Comment on Klaus Iohannis' official Facebook page posted by C\*\* A\*\* (anonym user) on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2014 at 20.43

<sup>57</sup> Comment on Klaus Iohannis' official Facebook page posted by S\*\* M\*\* I\*\* (anonym user) on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2014 at 14.27

<sup>58</sup> Comment on Klaus Iohannis' official Facebook page posted by L\*\* B\*\* (anonym user) on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2014 at 20.11

whose image reflects on his: Teodor Melescanu, the minister of Foreign Affairs, accused of having poorly organized the voting process abroad, with the aim of tipping the scale towards Ponta's advantage; Liviu Dragnea, Ponta's campaign coordinator, also a bigwig in one of the poorest regions in the country, repeatedly accused of plotting towards rigging the elections (unproven allegations); Adrian Nastase, the former Romanian prime minister whom Traian Basescu ultimately defeated in the presidential election race, 10 years ago, and who was sent to prison for crimes related to the electoral processes; Daciana Sarbu and her father, both accused of corruption (unproven allegations); other local leaders of PSD, either disreputable and/or prosecuted by the National Anticorruption Direction.

Q3.1 The image of Klaus Iohannis' voters in the comments on his official Facebook page, in the last week of the second round of elections

More than half (50.63%) of the comments in the corpus include self-references to Iohannis' voters group. They see themselves as:

Attributes	Frequencies	Likes
Diaspora	72	9478
Sacrificial spirit	28	583
Youth	26	3646
Revolutionary	20	1274
Many (all those good)	12	6780
True Romanians	9	520
Educated	6	1891
Heroes	2	7167

Diaspora, as a defining element for Klaus Iohannis' voters, appears in two contexts: either the Romanian citizens abroad assume the voice of the diaspora as a whole or the Romanian citizens respectfully refer to the sacrifice of those who voted/did not vote. The recurrent theme in these comments is their sacrifice: forfeiting a day of rest, the specific costs incurred by repairing the car that got them to the place where they could vote (the Embassy) or the supreme sacrifice – leaving the country, abandoning their loved ones, but never giving up hope. Those who had made this sacrifice had a vision that they share not only online but also to future generations:

*I was asked by my 3 years old son why were we staying in the cold, for many hours, in front of the Consulate, why were we not going home... I said to him that in a few years he would not be forced anymore to sit among strangers and that we could change that by voting on that day.<sup>59</sup>*

Some other features that Iohannis' voters assign to themselves are their youth, their beauty, their education, and their moral values, in contrast with the moral decrepitude of Victor Ponta's voters.

Q3.2 The image of Victor Ponta's voters in the comments on his opponent's official Facebook page, in the last week of the second round of elections

As it results from comments posted on Klaus Iohannis official Facebook page, those voting for Victor Ponta are not just old but also fall for physical and moral decrepitude: they are either Communists or they sell their children's future in exchange for electoral freebies (gifts such as: oil and flour). Sometimes, they are explanations (ultimately, they are one's parents, one who is voting for Iohannis)

<sup>59</sup> Comment on Klaus Iohannis' official Facebook page posted by D\*\* P\*\* (anonym user) on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2014 at 19.17

but who often are blamed. In any event, not letting them vote becomes a heroic act. Quantitatively depicted, their image is as follows:

Attribute	Frequency	Likes
Old	12	883
Uneducated	9	415
Bribed	7	1750
Those who can't (do, think, work, etc.)	7	281
Marginalised	6	141
Unaware	3	109

In total opposition with Klaus Iohannis' voters, Ponta's ones are uneducated, marginalized or, at best, irresponsible (not conscious yet).

### Partial conclusions of the study

Annoyed by the traditional media's alternative discourses, disappointed by the political compromises in traditional politics, the citizens search within the on-line sphere for consonance and ideological unity<sup>60</sup>. From this to the exclusion of the Other and his metamorphosis into the Enemy is just a small step. In the on-line environment, free from formal censorship and informal rules, this step is easy to take. Our hypothesis is that, during highly conflictual and symbolically loaded moments of the electoral campaign, the on-line world gets transformed into a space of segregation, of hate speech and populist dichotomies, rather than into a space of dialogue.

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<sup>60</sup> Especially in the post-communist societies, as Vladimir Tismaneanu pointed out (1999:16)

Tismaneanu, Vladimir (1999) *Fantasmeme salvarii: democratie, nationalism si mit in Europa post-comunista* [Fantasies of Salvation: Democracy, Nationalism and Mith in Post-Communist Europe]  
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# SYSTÈME MÉDIATIQUE ÉTATIQUE - SYSTÈME MÉDIATIQUE PUBLIC ÉVOLUTIONS INSTITUTIONNELLES, INDISTINCTIONS CONCEPTUELLES ET CONSÉQUENCES PRATIQUES

Raluca Petre<sup>61</sup>

## Problématique

Il est toujours intéressant de remarquer à quel point le scepticisme domine un peu partout lorsque 'il s'agit des perspectives du système médiatique public dans les nouvelles démocraties, du Bangladesh à la Croatie et du Taiwan en allant jusqu'à la Roumanie. Pour simplifier, les gens n'aiment pas les médias publics parce qu'ils les confondent avec les médias de l'Etat propres aux régimes autoritaires, en proie à la censure et contrôlés par le pouvoir politique. Par le même biais, dans les jeunes démocraties le système des médias commerciales recueille la sympathie des masses qui le considèrent comme étant « libre ». Ce fut une des principales conclusions de la Conférence RN18 de l'Association Européenne de Sociologie qui a eu lieu à Bucarest<sup>62</sup>.

En poursuivant la même logique, des ONG reconnues utilisent les termes média de l'Etat/média public de manière interchangeable, comme s'ils décrivaient le même objet<sup>63</sup>. Et même parmi les employés du nouveau système des médias publics il y a certains qui pensent œuvrer dans le cadre d'un système étatique, en reproduisant ainsi les tares de celui-ci. Est-ce que système étatique et système public représentent la même chose ? Est-ce la Télévision chinoise d'Etat identique à la BBC ?

En Roumanie un projet de loi récemment passé dans le Sénat propose de supprimer la redevance radio et télévision. L'audimat montre que les chaînes publiques sont à la peine dans les préférences des téléspectateurs<sup>64</sup>. Parallèlement, la radio publique est plébiscitée mais la suppression de la redevance va pour la télévision aussi bien que pour la radio publiques.

Le moment est venu de se pencher un peu plus sur l'analyse de la mutation subie par le système médiatique étatique en système public dans le contexte de la démocratisation mais aussi de la libéralisation économique en Roumanie.

Notre recherche n'a pas pour but de faire l'apologie du système médiatique public mais de dresser une problématique et de présenter les scénarios de l'évolution du système médiatique en Roumanie tout en plaçant au cœur de la démarche la dimension publique. Nous souhaitons analyser également les confusions discursives entre système médiatique public et système médiatique de l'Etat avec ses conséquences pratiques.

Une des prémisses de mes recherches concerne le potentiel des canaux médiatiques publics, potentiel sous-utilisée dans les projets de démocratisation des régimes ex-autoritaires, ceux-ci tendant à privilégier les messages d'origine commerciale ou associative et civique. Le projet néolibéral et une dérèglementation massive gagnant du terrain, les années 1990 ont représenté un moment de contestation du secteur public. Ce phénomène a eu des conséquences autant en Europe de l'Est que dans l'Ouest du continent (McQuail, Siune, 1998 ; Bourdon, 2011).

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<sup>62</sup> <http://lists.csbs.utah.edu/pipermail/critical-realism/2014-February/012938.html> en date du 23 octobre 2016

<sup>63</sup> Dans les rapports pays par pays de la Open Society Foundation, *Mapping Digital Media*, 2010

<sup>64</sup> [http://www.paginademedia.ro/tip\\_audienta/audienta-medie/](http://www.paginademedia.ro/tip_audienta/audienta-medie/) en date du 23 octobre 2016

Le manque de distinction conceptuelle entre les médias publics et les médias détenus par l'Etat a contribué à la faible légitimité des premiers en tant qu'alternative au cours du processus de démocratisation post-communiste (Coman, 1995).

Le discours nord-américain centré sur le « marché libre » et la « liberté » associé à celui-ci a eu gain de cause en suscitant un grand enthousiasme dans la Roumanie des années 1990 (Petre, 2012). De surcroît, des évolutions institutionnelles telles que la signature de l'Accord de Libre Echange avec les Etats Unis commencent à faire ressentir leurs effets à partir de 1994. Les tendances commerciales et la dérèglementation ont prospéré dans ce nouveau cadre institutionnel.

Dans ce contexte, l'adhésion de la Roumanie à l'Union Européenne peut être perçue comme une chance de reconnaissance sur le plan législatif et institutionnel des médias publics (Lazăr, 2008). La crise économique qui a commencé en 2008 n'a fait qu'affaiblir encore plus la confiance globale dans le projet néolibéral prenant appui sur des marchés libres et dérèglementés.

Selon la définition donnée par l'UNESCO, un système des médias publics est créé, financé et contrôlé par le public pour le public. Il n'a pas vocation commerciale, n'est pas détenu par l'Etat, il n'y a pas d'ingérence du pouvoir ni de pression commerciale. A travers ce système, les citoyens sont informés, éduqués mais aussi divertis. A partir du moment où l'on garantit le pluralisme des opinions, la diversité des programmes, l'indépendance des lignes éditoriales, un financement adéquat, le sens des responsabilités et la transparence, le service public peut représenter un tournant dans le processus de démocratisation<sup>65</sup>. Le système médiatique public est basé sur l'intérêt public général. Il est impartial et ne soutient aucun parti politique, qu'il s'agisse du parti au pouvoir ou de l'opposition. Enfin, un tel système est entièrement à but non-lucratif.

A l'opposé, un système médiatique étatique est détenu et contrôlé directement par l'Etat ou le gouvernement en exercice. Il peut remplir une fonction d'utilité publique comment il peut être un simple instrument de propagande au service de l'Etat ou de son gouvernement. A son tour, le système médiatique étatique est financé des fonds publics et son activité est non-lucrative.

## **La démarche de recherche**

Ma recherche se concentre sur l'évolution de la radio et télévision étatiques après 1989 en décelant l'institutionnalisation de leur vocation publique. Les principales questions posées au cours de la démarche analytique sont les suivantes: Est-ce que les transformations subies par la télévision et la radio après 1989 sont profondes ou plutôt de surface? Y a-t-il des différences significatives dans l'évolution de chacune d'entre elles? Quels sont les moteurs du changement et lesquels les freins? Est-ce que l'enjeu public a de la légitimité aux yeux de l'acteur du secteur? Qu'en est-il des enjeux économiques et politiques? Les décideurs de ces institutions se perçoivent-ils en tant que « bras armé du pouvoir », « gardiens de la démocratie », entrepreneurs du privé? Ou tout autre chose?

Ainsi, je vais corroborer des informations contenues dans des sources secondaires déjà publiées (Matei, 2013; Nicolau, 2009; Harcourt, 2003) avec des rapports et des analyses institutionnelles mais aussi avec des entretiens qualitatifs avec des anciens et actuels décideurs, en utilisant la méthode de la boule de neige.<sup>66</sup>

Lors de la deuxième étape, je fais une analyse de bonnes pratiques dans le domaine audiovisuel public. Les arguments conceptuels sont construits à partir de la compréhension des spécificités et du rôle joué par les systèmes médiatiques européens (Hallin & Mancini, 2004; Williamson, 2005). En plus, la dynamique des systèmes public européens engendre des options d'organisation, de gouvernance, de

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<sup>65</sup> [http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=1525&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=1525&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html) en date du 23 octobre 2016

<sup>66</sup> Confirmée la participation à l'entretien de Romina Surugiu, Maitre des conférences, membre du Conseil d'Administration de la TVR jusqu'en 2015.

soutien et de sanction publics des opérateurs médias publics. Les politiques publiques européennes dans le secteur média ainsi que les expériences institutionnelles concrètes de certains opérateurs média belges peuvent orienter des options de politiques publiques constructives pour le système médiatique public roumain.

La Belgique représente à la fois l'endroit où voient le jour des politiques publiques dans le secteur média conçues pour toute l'Union Européenne qu'un pays extrême intéressant de par son système médiatique public à forte tradition de pilarisation (Roekens, 2009). Mis à part les spécificités belges ayant engendré des systèmes médiatiques répondant aux besoins des populations wallonne et flamande, les exigences économiques et commerciales représentent un point commun dans l'évolution de tous les systèmes médiatiques en Europe ces trente dernières années. La principale méthode de recherche dans cette étape est l'analyse des documents.

## **Méthodologie**

Pour mieux comprendre le système des médias public émergent je me sers de l'analyse néo-institutionnelle qui vise à comprendre une organisation dans le cadre du secteur auquel elle appartient (Powell, DiMaggio, 1991). Le concept de « champ » introduit par Pierre Bourdieu représente l'équivalent opérationnel du « secteur » dans la théorie néo-institutionnelle. De surcroît, il présente l'avantage de se concentrer sur les acteurs ayant un fort pouvoir symbolique et donc la capacité de façonner leur domaine (Bourdieu, 1998, 2001; Benson, Neveu, 2005). Enfin, le concept de *domestication* des politiques globales au niveau national nous offre un cadre de référence et de compréhension plus ample (Alasuutari, 2009).

La deuxième direction prise est celle de l'analyse des documents en s'appuyant sur l'appareil critique et méthodologique fourni par l'analyse du discours (Fairlough, 2010) ainsi que par l'analyse sémiotique (Barthes, 2007). Cette dernière permet de mettre en évidence des dimensions mythologiques et même idéologiques à l'intérieur d'un texte. Une démarche utile dans cette recherche est d'agréger les sphères connotationnelles des termes étudiés, en l'espèce « médias d'Etat » et « médias publics ».

L'analyse critique du discours permet l'identification des acteurs institutionnels, des positions de pouvoir ainsi que des « voix » dominantes dans l'émergence des options décisionnelles. Cette analyse rend possible le placement du objet analysé dans le discours du pouvoir ; une de ses principales vertus étant d'ouvrir des nouvelles perspectives dans le texte en tant que tel, dans la continuation d'une tradition conceptuelle sophistiquée inaugurée par Michel Foucault (1971, 1972). L'analyse critique du discours offre la possibilité d'observer le processus d'institutionnalisation des termes en tant que discours aux conséquences reflétées dans la pratique.

## **Conclusion**

La confusion conceptuelle et de discours entre un système médiatique public et un système médiatique d'Etat constitue un frein dans la revalorisation du rôle des fonctions du premier dans une démocratie fonctionnelle<sup>67</sup>. De plus, cette confusion peut avoir des conséquences institutionnelles graves : soit la réétatisation d'un système public financé directement par le budget de l'Etat soit sa transformation dans un simple fournisseur de contenu média à caractère commercial, avec la suppression de la redevance.

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<sup>67</sup> <http://www.global.asc.upenn.edu/state-vs-public-vs-commercial-media-systems-and-why-distinctions-are-important-by-raluca-petre-phd/> 23 octobre 2016

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