THE FUTURE OF NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PROCESS OF »EUROPEANIZATION«
The Romanian Case

by Simona Stefanescu (Bucharest)

1 Rex, J.: Ethnic Minorities in the Modern Nation State. London, New York: Macmillan 1996, and Rex, J.: National Identity in the Democratic Multi-Cultural State, paper presented to the Joint Conference of the Ass. for the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism and the Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations held at the London School of Economics, May 3, 1996.

2 Ibid.

This paper intends to approach the recent historical process of re-construction of national identity inside the theoretical and explanatory perspective of social sciences – sociology and communication sciences. More precisely, I place my approach within the new scientific paradigm that opened the constructivist trend in human and social sciences.

The study is an exploratory and theoretical one, representing the first phase of research on the identification of some characteristics of a possible future of national identity. My research project deals with the issue of *national identity* versus *European identity* in the process of the so-called »Europeanization« dealing with theoretical and empirical perspectives of communication. Therefore, I am first interested in this/these identities' construction on a discursive level inside of media communication.

Theoretical and empirical approaches from the viewpoints of sociology, anthropology, and political theory attempt to find answers to questions like »In what relation and on which terms« does national identity interact with the new ›European identity‹?«; »Should European identity replace the national identity, or are both structurally different and therefore compatible and even coherent?«; »To which extent is there a danger of cultural uniformity at the European level, under circumstances which define the identity of a group at least at the national level rather culturally?«, etc.

In the process of the enlargement of the European Union the issue of the future of national identity is of major interest for present academic approaches and research. The concept of *national identity* is defined and analysed in connection with the history of the modern nation states.

The *modern nation state* is often thought of as being part of a modernising project in industrial societies. In this respect, it is not regarded as being based upon national identity, but is rather seen as a contribution to more universal aims. These include a modern economy, universal and uniform education and the compromise institutions of the welfare state negotiated between different classes and status groups. In some cases, on the other hand, a dominant ethnic group with its own values and institutions may establish the nation state. In both cases the nation state is presumed to develop its own national ideology, but this could be corrosive for subordinate ethnicities and ethnic identities.[1]

Therefore, what we call a modern »national identity« has at least a dual reference. On the one hand, it refers to the major institutions structuring economy and polity; on the other hand, it refers to the »way of life« practised by dominant groups in a more domestic and communal sense. A dogmatic sociological functionalism would argue that these ways of life must follow and respond to pressures from economy and polity, but it is obvious that in fact such ways of life are at least relativly independent. Paradoxically, while modernisation depends upon the liberation of economic and cultural institutions from moral and communal control, within the established modern economy moral, social and cultural values may become liberated from the forces of the market place and take on a life of their own.[2]

Today, there are discussions in the European Union of the possibility of evoking a *European identity* transcending the identity of nation states. This immediately faces the problem of the resistance arising from the complex nationalisms of the EU member states. It therefore seeks to define itself in contrast to extra-European entities and to emphasize the elements which most of the European states have in common.

In connection to that, the more recent concept of Europeanization is analysed as an EU-oriented process, directly dependent upon specific mechanisms and intervening confining conditions. These approaches are based on the combination of supranational institutionalism and democratisation theories that acknowledge the international dimension of democratisation.

The Concept of National Identity

Although used in various contexts, national identity still has a lot of difficulties related to its conceptualisation. In his study, *National Identity from Incantation to Analysis*, in 1990, P. Schle-

3 Schlesinger, Philip: L'identité natio-nale. De l'incantation à l'analyse. In Hermes 8-9 (1990), p. 233f.

4 Ibid.

5 Keane, John: Nations, Nationalism and European Citizens. In Periwal, Sukumar (Ed.): Notions of Nationa-lism. Budapest, London, New York: Central European UP 1995, pp. 182-207, here p. 186.

singer admitted, for example, that in his theoretical investigation he could not »find out the explicit conceptualisation of national identity, designated without ambiguity«.[3]

National identity is quite a frequent issue in sociological, communication and cultural the-ories, still »the most of them have not succeeded in conceptualising the national identity as distinct from the identity of the emergent collectives inside the settled nation-states« (ibid.).[4]

Still, according to Schlesinger, there are some characteristics necessarily to be taken into account if one speaks about national identity, although they do not suffice to totally cover it:

a) Formally, speaking about national identity comes back to speaking about *inclusion* and *exclusion*.

b) To speak about national identity means to inaugurate the *perspective of something acti-ve*. Thus, we do not at first have an identity framework according to which the collective moves and acts. Yet, through collective action this framework is constructed (the con-struction is simultaneous with the action).

c) *The factor of space* is of importance, though it does not resolve the problem of the con-struction of national identity, it offers a limit for a possible construction nevertheless;

d) *To reduce national identity strictly to cultural identity is the wrong assessment*, because we have to distinguish between the historical period in which the national culture was established (in this stage the community shared certain symbols, patterns, precepts, re-presentations, etc. with a view to preserve them), and the present when the already established national culture is maintained (this stage includes furthermore the tension of disputes, because subsequently to the construction of a nation, the culture is not ho-mogeneous anymore, but is dynamically and continuously »alive«, that means, it perpe-tually changes. Thus, at this stage, there is not any longer a single national culture, rather various cultures which either »go together«, or are in dispute and contest each other).

e) Finally, the last element which is to explain in a way the precedent characteristics is the factor of time; we must not forget, claims Schlesinger, that the construction of national identity is a diachronic process, permanently taking place as a »selective reconstruction of the traditions and social memory«.[4]

A relevant approach to national identity, especially by putting it into connection and explai-ning its relationships with two other important concepts, *nationalism* and *democracy*, is to be found in the research of J. Keane. He defined national identity in ideal-typical terms as that

> particular form of collective identity in which, despite their routine lack or physical contact, people consider themselves bound together because they speak a language or a dialect of a common language; inhabit or are closely familiar with a defined ter-ritory, and experience its ecosystem with some affection; and because they share a variety of customs, including a measure of memories of the historical past, which is consequently experienced in the present tense as pride in the nation's achievements and, where necessary, an obligation to feel ashamed of the nation's failings.[5]

In this definition, national identity is an invention specific to modern Europe. It lays at the ba-sis of the struggle for national self-determination that, in the 19th century, made possible the appearance of nation-states and of democratic political regimes. The political importance of national identity consists also in the fact that it infuses citizens with a sense of purposeful-ness, confidence and dignity by encouraging them to feel »at home«. According to Keane, national identity enables citizens to decipher the signs of institutional and everyday life.

> The activity of others – the food they prepare, the products they manufacture, the songs they sing, the jokes they tell, the clothes they wear, the looks on their faces, the words they speak – can be recognized. That familiarity in turn endows each individual with a measure of confidence to speak and to act. Consequently, whatever is strange is not automatically feared; whatever diversity exists within the nation is more or less accepted as one of its constitutive features. The borders between a national identity and its »neighbouring« identities (of class, gender, religion and race, for example) are vaguely defined, and its security police and border guards are unreliable and tolerant. There is even some acceptance of the fact that members of the same nation can legi-timately disagree about the meaning and extent of their nationhood. This tolerance of difference is possible precisely because nationhood equips members of a nation with a sense of belonging and a security in themselves and in each other: they can

6 Ibid., p. 186f.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid., p. 192.

9 Ibid., p. 193.

10 Ibid., p. 196.

11 Ibid., p. 197.

12 Ibid., pp. 198-205.

say »we« and »you« without feeling that their »I«, their sense of self, is slipping from their possession.[6]

Unlike the despotic regimes that seemingly made time to stand still, people's lives were petrified, motionless and repetitious, and political life was boring. In democratic regimes, Keane asserts, everything is in perpetual motion. In democracy differences, the opposition, openness and constant competition among a plurality of power groups are not only normal but even encouraged. This quality of democratic regimes to self-questioning and self-destabilizing not only provides opportunities for the advocates of national identity to take their case to a wider public, but, at the same time, increases »the magnetism of anti-democratic ideologies such as nationalism«.[7]

The distinction between national identity and nationalism (made implicitly by Eric Hobsbawm in his book *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*) is fundamental in this context. Nationalism, Keane states, is

> the child of democratic pluralism – both in the sense that the existence of open state institutions and a minimum of civil liberties enables nationalists to organize and to propagate their nationalism, but also in the less obvious sense that democracy breeds insecurity about power, sometimes fear and panic, and, hence, the yearning of some citizens to take refuge in sealed forms of life.[8]

From this point of view, nationalism is a pathological form of national identity that tends to destroy heterogeneity. Unlike national identity, characterised by tolerance and diversity, as well as by unsecured boundaries, even real or imaginary ones, nationalism is fanatic, its boundaries are dotted with border posts and its border police is charged with the task of monitoring the domestic and foreign enemies of the nation. Nationalism has nothing of »the humility« of national identity. Within nationalism there is no shame about the past or the present, because it is supposed that only foreigners and »enemies of the nation« are guilty for any possible failures. Nationalism exacerbates the nation's glory and fills the national memory with stories about heroes, heroism and bravery in defeat. It nourishes the phantasms of invincibility, waves the national flag and, if necessary, eagerly bloodies its hands on its enemies.[9]

Thus, there is a close and interdependent relationship between national identity, democracy and nationalism. Yet, this relationship does not warrant either the solipsistic conclusion that national identity, the »raw material« of nationalism, is a pathological, outdated and hopefully declining force which in the meantime should be cold-shouldered by citizens, or the tragic deduction that democracy is somehow the root cause of nationalism, and that therefore the grip of nationalism can be broken only by abandoning democracy.[10]

The monist interpretations of nationalism, Keane shows, as of any other phenomenon examined by the social sciences, are inadequate precisely because of their one-sidedness. That is why the theory of Keane aims not to replace existing accounts of nationalism, but »to complicate our understanding of a force of fundamental importance in the life and times of modern Europe.«[11]

Solving the problem of nationalism by democratic means is possible, yet not easy, the author says. His thesis sustains that since democratic mechanisms facilitate the transformation of national identity into nationalism, democracy is best served by abandoning the doctrine of national self-determination and regarding a shared sense of national identity as a legitimate but *limited* form of life. This thesis, the author recognizes, contains a paradoxical corollary: national identity, an important support of democratic institutions, is best preserved by restricting its scope in favour of *non-national* identities that reduce the probability of its transformation into anti-democratic nationalism.

In the present European context, John Keane foresees a cluster of four interdependent mechanisms which together can curb the force of nationalism and, at the same time, guarantee citizens' access to their respective national identities:[12]

1.   The first of these remedies is to de-centre the institutions of the nation-state through the development of interlocking networks of democratically accountable subnational and supranational state institutions. In Western Europe the decentralisation, both on vertical and horizontal level, of the nation-state is supported by the development of regional concepts and regional power in areas such as Catalonia, Wallonia, Andalusia, Scotland and the Basque region. At present, the trend towards a »Europe of regions« has been ac-

companied and supplemented by the accelerating growth of supranational political institutions such as the *European Parliament*, the *Council of Europe* or the *European Court of Justice*.

2. The second mechanism could be the formulation and application of internationally recognized legal guarantees of national identity. This aspect should represent a vital adjunct of the break down of the sovereignty of the nation-state. It is about the »de-politicizing« and »de-territorializing« of national identity. This kind of vision has its roots as early as in the 18th century, when philosophers like Burke and Herder considered that nationality is best understood as a cultural entity; that is, the identity belongs to civil society, not to the state. From this point of view, national identity is a civil entitlement of citizens, the squeezing or attempted abolition of which, even when ostensibly pursued by states in the name either of higher forms of human solidarity or of the protection of the »core national identity«, serves only as the trigger of resentment, hatred and violence among national groups.

3. Of equal importance as a guarantor of national identity and democracy against nationalism is a factor that has been barely discussed in the literature, namely the development of a pluralist mosaic of identities within civil society. This third antidote to nationalism is as effective as it is paradoxical. It presumes that the survival and flourishing of national identity is only possible within a self-organizing civil society which, however, provides spaces for citizens to act upon *other* chosen or inherited identities. Thus, the probable role of national identity in the overall operation of state and civil institutions, political parties, communications media and other intermediary bodies is *limited*.

4. Finally, the fourth mechanism, perhaps the most difficult to cultivate, could be the fostering of an *international* civil society in which citizens of various nationalities can intermingle or at least display a minimal sense of mutual understanding and respect, and thus generate a sense of solidarity, especially in times of crisis (for example, during natural disasters, economic collapse or political upheaval). It is about a new type of modern cosmopolitanism in which the new citizens understand and sustain that in the contemporary world, identity is more a matter of politics and choice than of fate. Most often, Keane sustains, the process of the formation of a European civil society is an undramatic, nearly invisible process that seems unworthy of any attention of journalists, intellectuals and policy-makers.

The Challenges of »Europeanization«

In 1993 D. Wolton thought that three observations could give us the exact measure of the complexity of the political project that was about to become real (a political united Europe > European citizen > European identity).

1. The observation of the cognitive breach taking place at the same time as the changing of the technical-administrative united Europe into a political united Europe;
2. The problem of »knowing how far the voluntary setting up of a new political entity, fast and in relative transparency is possible«[13];
3. The changing of all those ways of thinking, representation, and symbolizing categories, on the basis of which Europe had been constructed by the technocratic minority, in such a way that these categories will become viable and functional when we talk »about mobilizing millions of citizens«.[14]

These three observations should not be taken into consideration in a defeatist manner. They could be accredited, on the contrary, as challenges:

*   *The historical challenge* presumes to keep the historical principle of the egalitarian democracy, but to transform its tools into a functional purpose, at the same time. Because they are cultural tools, they »will no longer permit us to define this new reality in a real manner«[15]. In other words, we could not imagine Europe as a larger nation; it is something else and needs different political instruments.

13 Wolton, Dominique: La dernière utopie. Naissance de l'Éurope démocratique. Paris: Flammarion 1993, p. 12.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

- *The challenge consists in the absence of experience*, which means that the population of this new political entity is lacking the representations, symbols and perception grids necessary for interpreting the European reality. »The symbolic frames and the cultural codes in order to interpret, day by day, the politics conducted by media«[16] are missing. More exactly, information about politics by the media became daily news, but the need of deliberation emerges at the moment when symbolic formulae and cultural codes must be created. What is missing refers therefore to the reception »side«, and can be found at the receptors level, hence the need for deliberation, its interpretation, and its comments. An eloquent example could be even the terrorist problem – September 11, 2001 or the of March 11, 2004. In these cases information was not missing, but there was a lack of comment, interpretation, explication, etc.

- The third challenge is that of *a de facto passing from an elitist model to one which is deeply rooted in the conscience and the will of the population*. We have, on the one side, a concept of democracy realized within the last 50 years, based on a minority, technocratic and elitist decision and participation model that now must pass the public opinion at the European level. As Wolton said, »it is brutally about social, cultural, anthropological, conditions that could be satisfied in order to lead millions of Europeans to appropriate the most gigantic political challenge«[17]. In other words, the technocrats of Brussels should now face this test. And as was often demonstrated, there are several instances where the perceptions of the public often differs from the one of the technocrats. This situation was revealed in many European countries by referenda which either had to be repeated or did not pass the barrier of public opinion.

Regarding this European identity and its relation with national identity, in the East-European space – and the Romanian space is no exception – the discourse is as follows: we want to integrate ourselves within Europe. We are Europeans, but we have to preserve our national identity, and we must not loose our national specifics, etc.

Such an approach does not work. The relationship between national and European identity is not of reciprocal exclusion, but, as we consider, the two are compatible instead. Turning back at D. Wolton's vision, he drew the attention to the fact that any other identity could not possibly be constructed in any different way than by keeping the anterior identities; they »have not been destroyed or either disqualified, but, on the contrary, are being legitimized and reintegrated in a new European identity.[18]

The Romanian Case

The symbolic process of transformation of national identity in the context of the »Europeanization« process supposes a spatial redefining and a redimensioning, too. This symbolic operation took place in two directions: 1) by spatial remodeling and 2) reissuing the geographical parameters of identity construction.

In the Romanian case, what is behind these transformations is rather the myth of re-integration, of re-finding. This interpretation is based on the context that an official recognition of »reintegration« has already been made a few years ago when on of November 21, 2002 in Prague, Romania was invited to enter the NATO. The invitation and the following visit of the American president George W. Bush to Bucharest two days later was to confirm and consolidate the official recognition of the Romanian symbolic exit from sphere of influence of the former Soviet Union.

In this way, an albeit limited symbolic charge strictly re-defining the territorial spacecould be added. Thus, in our case, the old structure which used to divide – sometimes even in the physical manner of speaking – the space »in the Russian sphere of influence zone« and the »NATO sphere of influence« (between these two existed an exclusive disjunction), was now replaced by a structure which allows the integration of the Romanian space within the North Atlantic Alliance without excluding, even presuming good relations with Russia.

In this point, I consider that it could be interesting to remind one of the theory of one of the most important contemporary Romanian anthropologists, Vintila Mihailescu, regarding the place of the »border idea« in the Romanian imaginary. Analyzing the »*ancestor myth*« – which appears to be more the »*ancestor complex*« – Vintila Mihailescu identifies two charac-

teristics of the Romanian nation building: »1) the national community is constituted as subject of the independence, and not as subject of the liberty, and 2) the national community is constituted as subject of the modernity and traditionalism, simultaneously«[19].

The first characteristic, the author sustains, shows the exceptional value of the concept of borders' defence in the Romanian »imagery«/mentality. This collective value far outruns other individual values, such as freedom, for example. Thus, »for Romanian people, torn between the great empires, the target was not liberty, but independence [...]. Built on the independence values, the ›national being‹ has, therefore, a constitution bent towards its independent borders. In this way, it has always been vulnerable to border threatening, either real or imaginary ones.«[20].

In this sense, in the Romanian case, another myth that worked well, namely the »myth of the rescuer« (which at the occasion of the American president's visit in Romania took the form of »the coming of Americans«) together with the dream of rejoining the big European family to which we actually belong, seems to be in disagreement with the »national being« or at least with the manner in which it is related to the first characteristic. Only the second characteristic makes the theme of reintegration conceivable, although in a rather ambivalent logic.

Within this methodical framework proposed here, I am goint to present some results of a more extensive research project focused on the visit of the US president George W. Bush to Bucharest on November 23, 2002 and to which I contributed. The visit took place only two days after Romania's invitation to enter to the North-Atlantic Alliance. We considered the two events as being strongly connected and analysed the visit of G.W. Bush in the context created by the previous event. One of the research objectives was to investigate how the event was covered by the media, especially the most important Romanian newspapers. Within this objective, one of the research hypotheses was that the American President's visit had response in the Romanian press with certain impact on the collective mentality of the Romanian people, in particular the idea of security in the sense of border defense.

The above-mentioned Romanian anthropologist Vintila Mihailescu theoretically suggested that the concept of borders' defence has always had an exceptional valuein the Romanian »imagery« and was more important than individual values.

Starting from this point of view, I checked up the assumption according to which the concept of security – in the sense of safety of our own borders – are approached especially by the Romanian mass media in the context of the Romania adhesion to NATO and of the visit of the American president in Bucharest. Thus, I carried out a comparative analysis of the Romanian newspapers published the first day after George W. Bush's visit in Bucharest, namely the papers of Monday, November 25, 2002 (the visit took place on Saturday, November 23). The research was based on content analysis. We studied the eleven most important Romanian national newspapers: *Adevarul* (*The Truth*), *Romania Libera* (*Free Romania*), *Evenimentul Zilei* (*The Event of the Day*), *Ziua* (*The Day*), *Jurnalul National* (*The National Journal*), *Libertatea* (*The Liberty*), *National* (*The National*), *Gardianul* (*The Guardian*), *Cotidianul* (*Daily*), *Curentul* (*The Trend*) and *Cronica Romana* (*Romanian Chronicle*). In these newspapers, we selected editorials and, in some cases, the permanent commentary columns usually written by the same journalist or »analyst«. We applied frequency analysis, on the one hand, and tendency analysis, on the other hand.

The research had a complex grid analysis. For this specific study I present and tackle only one item, namely that of »*concepts*« with two sub-items:

1. »*Positive*« *concepts* are, with the following words as registering units: a. liberty/freedom; b. democracy; c. security/safety; d. peace/pacifism; e. tolerance; f. prosperity; g. independence; h. cooperation/ collaboration; i. reform/ reorganisation.
2. »*Negative*« *concepts* are, with the following words as registering units: a. communism; b. totalitarianism/ fundamentalism; c. tyranny/dictatorship; d. terrorism; e. corruption; f. bureaucracy; g. danger/threatening/insecurity.

As it appears, we took into consideration as »positive« concepts some registering units expressing democratic values, such as liberty/freedom, prosperity etc.), historical ideals (safety, independence etc.). As »negative« concepts we counted some words expressing both dangers/external situations that affected us (such as fundamentalism, tyranny, threatening, and terrorism) and internal problems (such as corruption, bureaucracy).

Research Results

The content analysis led to the following results for the two sub-items of the »*concepts*« item:

»Positive« Concepts	Adev (The Truth)	Rom Lib (Free Romania)	Ev Z (The Event of the Day)	Ziua (The Day)		Jurn Nat (National Journal)		Lib (The Liberty)	Nat (National)		Gard (The Guardian)	Cotidian (Daily)	Curentul (The Trend)		Cr Rom (Romanian Chronicle)	Total
Liberty/ Freedom	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	2	1	2	3	o	1	o	9
Democracy	o	5	o	2	o	1	o	o	1	o	2	2	o	2	o	15
Safety/ Security	1	o	4	1	o	o	o	o	4	o	1	7	2	4	o	24
Peace / Pacifism	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	4	o	o	o	4
Tolerance	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o
Prosperity	1	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	4	o	1	1	o	1	o	8
Independence	o	o	o	o	o	1	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	1
Cooperation/ Collaboration	4	o	2	3	o	o	o	o	o	o	1	1	1	o	o	12
Reform/Reorganisation	1	2	1	7	o	o	o	o	o	o	1	o	1	o	o	13
Total	7	7	7	13	o	2	o	o	11	1	8	18	4	8	o	86

Tab. 1

»Negative« Concepts	Adev (The Truth)	Rom Lib (Free Romania)	Ev Z (The Event of the Day)	Ziua (The Day)		Jurn Nat (National Journal)		Lib (The Liberty)	Nat (National)		Gard (The Guardian)	Cotidian (Daily)	Curentul (The Trend)		Cr Rom (Romanian Chronicle)	Total
Communism	3	1	o	o	2	1	o	o	o	o	o	o	1	2	o	10
Totalitarianism/ fundamentalism	3	o	o	2	o	o	o	o	o	1	o	o	o	o	1	7
Tyranny/ Dictatorship	1	2	o	2	o	1	o	o	o	o	1	3	o	o	o	10
Terrorism	1	o	1	1	o	o	o	o	o	o	1	4	1	2	1	12
Corruption	1	3	o	1	o	o	o	o	o	o	1	o	3	1	o	10
Bureaucracy	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	1	o	1
Danger/ Threatening/ Insecurity	5	o	1	2	o	o	o	o	o	1	o	o	o	o	o	9
Total	14	6	2	8	2	2	o	o	o	2	3	7	5	6	2	59

Tab. 2

In order to make some viable comparisons, we continued the analysis, as I already mentioned, applying the technique of tendency analysis. We calculated the tendency analysis indicator using the formula AT= (F-D)/L, where AT = the tendency analysis indicator, F = number of favourable units, D = number of non-favourable units and L = number of all the units referring to that theme (Chelcea, 1985, p. 103). With the aim of obtaining some relevant research results, we delimited some dichotomies between pairs of items and pairs of registering units. Even if some of the polarities between pairs of elements are relatively artificial, their use for analysis was motivated by their relevance for our research aims.

The indicator of tendency analysis may take values between +1 and –1. When the indicator value approaches +1, we may say that the first element of the pair was mostly covered by the media in comparison with the second element; when the indicator value approaches -1, we may say that the second element was much more covered and when the indicator value approaches 0, the media coverage of the two elements was well-balanced or neutral.

We applied tendency analysis in this study on the following pairs of registering units:

a) Concepts on a general level, with the pairs of elements: F = »positive concepts« (on the whole) and D = »negative concepts« (on the whole).
b) The concepts of security versus terrorism with the pairs of elements: F = »security/ safety« and D = »terrorism«.

The results of tendency analysis are presented in tables 3 and 4:

Concepts (on a general level)	Adev (The Truth)	Rom Lib (Free Romania)	Ev Z (The Event of the Day)	Ziua (The Day)		Jurn Nat (National Journal)		Lib (The Liberty)	Nat (National)		Gard (The Guardian)	Cotidian (Daily)	Curentul (The Trend)		Cr Rom (Romanian Chronicle)	General
F	7	7	7	13	0	2	0	0	11	1	8	18	4	8	0	86
D	14	6	2	8	2	2	0	0	0	2	3	7	5	6	2	59
L	21	13	9	21	2	4	0	0	11	3	11	25	9	14	2	145
AT	-0.33	+0.08	+0.56	+0.23	-1	0	0	0	+1	-0.33	+0.46	+0.44	-0.12	+0.14	-1	+0.19

Tab. 3

Concepts (Security vs. Terrorism)	Adev (The Truth)	Rom Lib (Free Romania)	Ev Z (The Event of the Day)	Ziua (The Day)		Jurn Nat (National Journal)		Lib (The Liberty)	Nat (National)		Gard (The Guardian)	Cotidian (Daily)	Curentul (The Trend)		Cr Rom (Romanian Chronicle)	General
F	1	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	4	0	1	7	2	4	0	24
D	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	1	2	1	12
L	2	0	5	2	0	0	0	0	4	0	2	11	3	6	1	36
AT	0	-	+0.6	0	-	-	-	-	+1	-	0	+0.27	+0.33	+0.33	-1	+0.33

Tab. 4

As we may note above in tables 1 and 2, the positive concepts outrun, on the whole, the nega-
tive concepts (the proportion between them is 86 to 59 and the indicator of tendency analy-
sis has, in accordance with table 3, a value of +0.19).

Regarding the hypothesis of this study, that security/safety is the central element, our fin-
dings show, at least at the level emphasised by the media coverage of the American presiden-
t's visit in Romania, that this theme (security/safety) still occupies the central place in the
Romanian imagery. Thus, the concept of »security/safety« is, within the category of positive
concepts, the concept with the highest media coverage (it appears 24 times in analysed new-
spaper articles). After a remarkable distance it is followed by the concept of «democracy», with
only 15 appearances.

This fact suggests, on the one hand, the importance currently given to this theme within
the NATO discourses, and on the other hand, the continuing centrality of »security« (in the
sense of »safety«) in the Romanian mentality. Among the analysed newspapers, *Cotidianul*
(*Daily*) most frequently covers this term (7 appearances).

The opposite concept of »insecurity/danger/threatening« (counted in the »negative con-
cepts« category), has 9 appearances, while the concept of »terrorism« has 12 appearances
within all of the analysed Romanian newspapers. The best-covered concept of the sub-item of
»negative concepts« is not, therefore, insecurity, but terrorism, as may be seen also in table 2.
A possible interpretation of these findings is that security represents even the supreme value
of the NATO; still, the avowed »enemy« of this Alliance is not insecurity in general, but terro-
rism.

However, if we compare the number of appearances of each of the two concepts, »securi-
ty« versus »terrorism«, we may notice a »double« coverage for »security/safety«: 24 appea-
rances compared to only 12 appearances for »terrorism«. The indicator of tendency analysis
also points out this preference of Romanian newspapers. Thus, as we may see in table 4, it
takes a value of +0.33 on the whole newspaper level. In the same table we notice that, in most
cases, the tendency analysis indicator has a positive or at least null value when we analysed
the pair »security« versus »terrorism«. Only in one singular case, that of *Cronica Romana* (*Ro-
manian Chronicle*), the indicator has a negative value (there, »terrorism« appears once only
and »security/safety« is absent).

A possible interpretation of these facts could be that the internal value in Romania, iden-
tified as a fundamental historical ideal and also as the most frequently covered concept in
Romanian newspaper discourse is »security« (in the sense of »safety«), and the current thre-
at, as it appears in the printed press discourse, too, is »terrorism« as a specific threat. If we
compare the coverage of the two concepts in the Romanian printed press discourse, the
Romanian historical ideal, that of border defence and of security is quite frequently mentio-
ned – probably as a consequence of its primordial importance for the Romanian mentality –,
inded more often than the threat of terrorism which, probably, is more diffuse and farther
away from the Romanian space, at least at present.

Dr. Simona Stefanescu is Senior Researcher at the Inst. of Sociology of the Romanian Academy; Univer-
sity Reader at the National Academy of Information and Ecological University, Bucharest: 2002 PhD De-
gree in Sociology, Univ. of Bucharest, Romania; PhD thesis: *Political Crises and Mass Media Commnication.
Coverage of the Interethnic Conflict (1991-1995) in Former Yugoslavia*; 1995 Master's Degree in Sociology,
Univ. of Bucharest; Specialisation in »Communities and Organisations«; 1994 Bachelor Degree in Socio-
logy, Univ. of Bucharest; Research Interests: Sociology of mass communication; political communication;
communicational ways of the construction of public sphere; the new identities in the context of
EU enlargement.
Contact: simonastefanescu71@yahoo.co.uk