

**DISCONTINUITY AND CONTINUITY OF IDENTITY. ROMANIAN ELITES  
AFTER 1989  
(second part)**

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**Undeveloped European Cultural Pattern**

As opposed to the tension found in Transylvania (due to the Romanian-Magyar relations), *in the land of Dobruja, throughout its entire known history, there was no recorded conflict with inter-ethnic or inter-confessional tensions as causes*. Romanian intellectual (cultural) elites often take pride in this example of absolute tolerance, even in the absence of a “social contract” that would intercede between ethnical minorities the socio-economic or cultural-religious reports. In other words, Romania holds the key to the puzzle that the EU is trying to solve for decades: a cultural model, perfectly functional, based on the slogan “Unity in diversity”.

“Dobruja has always been a pattern of ethnic cohabitation, also from the communicational point of view. In our case, the definitive element in human relations wasn’t the tolerance, but the very good communication, built and hardened in time, was the one that recommended us, constantly, as a reference standard in the interethnic interaction matter.”<sup>1</sup>

Dan Puric is known to be one of the most beloved public figures and member of the intellectual (cultural) elite, even by the younger generation. Through his book, *Who we are*, Puric teaches a lesson to the European institutions concerning the globalization, inter-culturally, cohabitation, even civilizational processes: “...a model which can be given to Europe is the Dobrujan one. There are 16 different ethnic groups there, which live without identity tags. How about we send Europe an article and ask: can YOU live without identity tags? How? This is how: following our pattern of human relations. Through a historical assimilation metabolism, in Dobruja live Tartars (Huns), Jews, Armenians, Greeks, and so much more, Bulgarians, Albanians etc. *They live there and they are living together*. (...) I wonder why the Dobrujan model is not yet adopted by Europe; a pattern in which one eats other’s Holy Bread, or shares the Easter Egg..., without ideological issues.”<sup>2</sup>

**The Constitution of 2003**

At the beginning of democracy in Romania, the NATO representatives, when referring to “flaws” of Eastern states with respect to democratization, alongside the access to mass-media (especially television), equal rights for the opposition and the minorities, also

<sup>1</sup> Serin Gafar, President of the Cultural Commission of the Turkish Democratic Union from Romania. (Bocai, 2008, “Ethnic communities, face to face with the «game of image» from mass-media”, <http://www.cugetliber.ro/1205704800/articol/15951/comunitatile-etnice-fata-in-fata-cu-jocul-dea-imaginea8221-din-massmedia/> (online January 2010).

<sup>2</sup> Puric, 2008.

mentioned the necessity to adopt a new Constitution of Romania<sup>3</sup>. Thus, in 1991, Romania would adopt its first Constitution as a democratic and free state.

Once the Euro-Atlantic institutional integration was completed, the *revision of the Constitution* was brought into play. The process took place during 2002-2003 and was finalized by a referendum. The population was not interested by the subject of the referendum, as the *initial* voter turnout was of only 4.14% in the first day. The fact that in the second day of the referendum the official voter turnout was of over 55% justified some analysts to call for a possible fraud<sup>4</sup>.

## Minorities and justice, military service and governing through ordinances

One of the main subjects of debate, and actually the greatest bone of contention, was on the subject of using the mother tongue in the justice system. Here we are dealing with the merger of the national/European dimension with the homogeneity/heterogeneity one. Two important parties at the time, GRP and DP, did not agree with the vote to modify the article in question. GRP deemed the proposal a frontal attack on national unity, boycotting the voting system in the Parliament and DP, through the voice of its then president, Traian Băsescu, labeled the situation as intolerable, saying that "to render the Justice System into a potpourri of languages is intolerable"<sup>5</sup>. The third voice, a singular one this time, was SDP's senator George Pruteanu, who suffered sanctions from the party for the vote given "in the name of the Romanian language".

In the end, after discussions among parliamentary parties, four of them (SDP, NLP, DP and DMUR) gave the final vote to the new Constitution. Regarding the article in question, "the Review Committee found a formula of compromise that would also satisfy DMUR members. According to it, the institution of the interpreter is not sanctioned by the Constitution, as the Fundamental Law stipulates that the use of «interpreters» will be regulated «so as not to hinder the proper administration of Justice»<sup>6</sup>, while the judicial procedures take place in Romanian.

Another subject of discussion was the one regarding the elimination of the mandatory military service, which surprisingly, did not give rise to debates, although from a NATO point of view, Romania could maintain military service in the former regulatory frame<sup>7</sup>.

Another delicate point of revision was the one concerning the regulation of the capability of the Government to emit ordinances. In the end, again, a compromise was reached in this case also. "Without completely satisfying the opposing parties, [...] the Senate adopted the variant of the Review Committee, which stipulates that the Government is obliged to motivate the urgency in the text of the ordinance"<sup>8</sup>.

Thus, the rapport of mediation for the revision of the Constitution was, in two weeks, approved by the Senate, in order for it to pass without problems through the Chamber of

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<sup>3</sup> "«Of course, there was much progress, but it is just as certain that there are many other things still to do. » [...] one of the concrete ways to help will be the recommendation that the president of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly will make to the Permanent Committee of the organization for the Romanian Parliament to receive the status of "associate-delegate" at the activities of the Assembly. [this status was also enjoyed by the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria and the Soviet Union]. [...] [NATO President, Charles Rose, on certain aspect of the process of democratization in Romania that continue to preoccupy the organization] access to mass-media, especially the television; *equal rights for the opposition and the minorities*; the adoption of the Constitution; organization of elections. [...] [on the request of the Czech President, V. Havel, to not exclude the possibility of accepting some East-European countries as new NATO members] «Nowadays there is a lesser need for the Atlantic Alliance, as things have changed. As the threat will subside, we will reduce our military forces. »" (Căpălescu, 1991, "NATO Parliament Members in Bucharest").

<sup>4</sup> Drăgotescu, 2003, "The Game for the Constitution Was Played up to the Last Minute".

<sup>5</sup> M.V.M., 2003, "Due to the Use of Mother Tongue in the Justice Systems, DP Members Will Not Vote for the Constitution".

<sup>6</sup> Bogdan, 2003, "In spite of GRP Boycott, the Senate gave the final vote to the New Constitution".

<sup>7</sup> Diac, 2003, "From the NATO Point of View, Romania Can Maintain Mandatory Military Service".

<sup>8</sup> Bogdan, 2003, "In spite of PRM Boycott, the Senate gave the final vote to the New Constitution".

Deputies.<sup>9</sup> After voting for the Fundamental Law, the majority of the parliamentary groups declared themselves satisfied with the new text of the Constitution<sup>10</sup>.

### **Post-integration moments: Lisbon**

In December 2007, two events took place concerning the European Union. The first is the signing in Strasbourg of the European Charter of Fundamental Rights, an event that did not have a further echo in the Romanian press other than the informative article in the foreign affairs page.

The second event, of an increased importance, is the signing of the Treaty of Lisbon by the members of the European Union. The Romanian political elite, was devoid of interest in what concerns the manner of functioning and regulation of the European Union. For instance, within the Treaty of Lisbon, “Romania was the only state that did not request anything”<sup>11</sup>, while France had objections to free market, England reserved the right to select what matters from the justice and foreign affairs area will be conceded for coordination to Brussels, also obtaining the right to not be held accountable for respecting the Charter of Fundamental Rights, and Poland obtained the postponement of the new voting system – “the double majority” – until 2017<sup>12</sup>.

For the journalistic intelligentsia, the Treaty is but a temporary solution of compromise, but it brings nothing new<sup>13</sup>. Moreover, the tensions among member countries that, each on their own turn, put national interest first (the elimination of terms that make mention of supra-state authority, the rejection of treaties by national referendum), the specific labeling of the high representatives of the Union (Euro-scepticism determined by the different history from the one of the Continent, which generated the debates on the title of the EU Foreign Affairs Minister) and historic sensitivity (the change of the type of voting for the balancing of the power rapport among the members) led to the creation of a current of opinion completely opposed to the effort to finalize the document. In the Romanian press, the triumphant atmosphere from Brussels during June was labeled, in no uncertain terms, the “Partially United States of Europe”<sup>14</sup>.

Another critique is brought against the face change of the slow process of European construction. After the negative experience of referendums in France and Holland, rejected by popular vote, the European Union, from the slogans of “citizens’ Europe” and “democratic participation to decision-making” ended up ratifying the Treaty in parliamentary sessions (with the exception of Ireland). Thus, in order to eliminate any possible bureaucratic surprise, the European project is re-delivered “into the hands” of the political body.

### **The Church and European integration**

The Romanian Orthodox Church is member of the World Church Council (WCC) since 1961 and member of the Conference of European Churches (KEK) since 1964. It participates, along with the other Orthodox Churches, to the international theological dialogues with the Roman-Catholic Church, the Protestant Churches, the Anglican Church etc.

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<sup>9</sup> Ruse, 2003, “The Constitution Has Finished Its Course through the Parliament”

<sup>10</sup> With the exception of GRP that, through Dumitru Pop, affirmed: “You have made a mockery of the country’s Bible!”. (Idem)

<sup>11</sup> Iuraşcu, Oana; Rîpă, George Daniel, 2007, “The European Treaty in the Soft Formula”

<sup>12</sup> Idem

<sup>13</sup> Vasilescu, 2007, “To a New Treaty, New Negotiations...”

<sup>14</sup> Vasilescu, 2007, “The Partially United States of Europe”.

The Romanian Orthodox Church has a Bureau of Representation at the European Union and the other European political institutions, in Brussels.<sup>15</sup>

The integration of Romania into the European structures was supported from the very beginning by the Romanian Orthodox and Catholic Churches.

With the signing of the Treaty of Lisbon, the Churches have their “identity and specific contribution within the instances of the European Union” recognized<sup>16</sup>. Thus, the Orthodox and Catholic Church followed with interest the event from Lisbon, seeing it as a means to promote “evangelical values”.

The support of the Romanian Orthodox Church and Greek-Catholic Church<sup>17</sup> for the integration into the European Union was made explicit into an official document signed on the 16<sup>th</sup> of May 2000, at Snagov, along the other cults from Romania. ***“We hereby express our active support for this process, as we have always been European, we naturally strive for this goal, being convinced that this integration serves the interests of our members, as well as the ones of the entire Romanian society ... the cults have the holy vocation to contribute to the reconciliation and rapprochement between individuals and peoples for the glory of God and the redemption of mankind”***<sup>18</sup>.

Part of the intellectual elites recognized the development of the European structures, but only its horizontal axis, neglecting the spiritual component. In an article, Andrei Pleșu affirmed that ***“Europe from the «center» knows of the countries that it includes only as much as it needs it order to align them. It does not look for its own part in their past and is not interested in the existent latent [Christian] spiritual unity among the members and the candidates on the basis of common religious and cultural experiences.*** The look into its depths only searches for failures and guilt [the Balkan cruelty and nationalism] and the look up only searches for metaphors. The «institutional» Europe is ***a Europe that, for the time being, prefers to ignore its original [Christian] foundations”***<sup>19</sup>. The same idea is supported also by the Romanian religious elites who consider that, together with integration into the European structures, a significant contribution is made to the verticality of European unity, through the increase of the Orthodox factor, not only through the political, economic or social transformation. ***“Through the integration of our country and Bulgaria into the EU, the presence of the Orthodox Christianity into the confessional, cultural and social landscape of unified Europe is impossible to ignore and we will be called to partake in a dialogue that is no simple matter.*** With the integration of our country, ROC will be in a permanent Christian mission in order to protect its believers from the danger of apostasy, the distancing from faith and God... ***integration is on the one hand a major challenge from the spiritual point o view, and on the other hand our Church can contribute to the replacement of the EU on a new foundation, namely a spiritual one”***<sup>20</sup> by keeping the Christian-Orthodox spiritual and cultural identity of the Romanian people and by developing communion with the other European peoples<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> The Romanian Orthodox Patriarchy, [http://www.patriarhia.ro/ro/scurta\\_prezentare\\_ro.html](http://www.patriarhia.ro/ro/scurta_prezentare_ro.html) (online January 2010)

<sup>16</sup> \*\*\*, News flux recognized and recommended by the members of the Conference of Catholic Bishops from Romania, “Church in the open, transparent and regular dialogue with EU institutions”, December 1, 2009, <http://www4.catholica.ro/stiri/show.asp?id=18866> (online January 2010)

<sup>17</sup> Andreescu, 2004, “The Romanian Orthodox Church, Actor of the European Integration”, <http://www.constiinta-critica.ro/upload/documente/doc78.pdf> (online January 2010)

<sup>18</sup> The Declaration from Snagov, May 16, 2000, [www.patriarhia.ro/Publicatii/BOREUROPA/snagov.html](http://www.patriarhia.ro/Publicatii/BOREUROPA/snagov.html) (online March 2007)

<sup>19</sup> Pleșu, 2005, “The European Vertical”, [http://ec.europa.eu/romania/documents/eu\\_values/andrei\\_plesu\\_verticala\\_europeana\\_00001\\_ro.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/romania/documents/eu_values/andrei_plesu_verticala_europeana_00001_ro.pdf) (online January 2010)

<sup>20</sup> His Holiness Bartolomeu: “The Europe that we are asked to join – a Europe constructed excessively on the economic and political factors, where there is no trace of spirituality, culture and religion cannot even be brought up. A poor Europe, decapitated by its spirit, which is more than terrible”. Dobrater, 1998, “In the view of His Holiness Bartolomeu Anania, «Europe Proposes that We Accept Homosexuality, Electronics, Drugs, Abortions, Genetic Engineering”.

<sup>21</sup> Priest Tomescu, 2007, “The Role of the Romanian Orthodox Church in the European Integration of Romania. Exigencies, Problems and Perspectives”, [http://www.episcopiacaransebesului.ro/articole.php?article\\_id=34](http://www.episcopiacaransebesului.ro/articole.php?article_id=34) (online January 2010).

## **The Orthodox concept on the state-church relation and European integration: *the Byzantine symphony***

As against the dominant “European” conception (inspired by the French Revolution), for the Romanian Orthodox Church, the separation of the Church from the State is a *rationalistic* anomaly. The Church represents the order in Heaven and the State the order on Earth. As the order on Earth needs divine blessing in order to work, the separation of the two planes served by said institutions is unseemly.

*The Byzantine Symphony* is the solution proposed by Emperor Justinian in the 6<sup>th</sup> century for the union of the state with the church, at a time when the Christians supported the separation of the institution of Caesar from the institution of Divinity. From the theocratic perspective of Justinian, according to whom the Empire meant the sacred manifestation of the world, the relation between the church and the state was also a symbiotic one. The state and the church formed a single principle within which, although they fulfilled different functions, they were both subsumed to the good of the Empire, as between the two there was no rapport of subordination. ”«*The well-being of the Church is the force of the Empire*», these words of Justinian represent the key of his theory”<sup>22</sup>. The Russian theologian Sergey Bulgakov considered that through the Byzantine symphony, the Church refined the institutions of the State through “its inner energies”. However on the long term, the tendency of the state to subordinate the Orthodox Church became increasingly more obvious.

In the '90s, Episcopate Gherasim of Suceava maintained that the separation state-church goes against Byzantine tradition. ”Where the Lord is, the Priest is also.” In the view of Teodor Baconsky, the current Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, the *Byzantine symphony* is obsolete, when the subordination of the Church by the State is an obvious matter. Hence, Baconsky welcomes the legal separation of the state from the church, a measure meant to render more efficient the European path of the Romanian society in the sense of the increase of social equity and its political evolution. ”A Church that is subordinated by the State (through Securitate files, wages for the clergy or funds for the maintenance of the places of worship) cannot exert its vocation to correct, through judgment that appeals to spiritual authority, the mediocrity of the political class or the mafia connections of the cleptocracy, not even mentioning the unjust polarization of the resources of this country. [...] Romania will not benefit from the European experience as long as the Orthodox Church will remain complacent in the ambiguities of «transition»” (Baconsky, 2007, p. 42). The discourse of the young Minister is in the paradigm of the intelligentsia that omits the non-material resource of the Church, for whom the popularity of the latter in society is explainable by a minus, a “flaw”, the rudimentary character of the “civic sentiment”.

### **Kosovo**

Although a Sister Church with the Serbian Church, during the events from Kosovo, ***the religious elite of ROC avoided adopting an official attitude***<sup>23</sup>. This was the position of the Patriarchy, as well as of the high clergy, who accepted to talk in short about the situation from the Serbian province. Iustin Hodea Sigheteanul, a high cleric from the Episcopate of

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<sup>22</sup> \*\*\* , Byzantine Symphony, <http://www.crestinortodox.ro/carti-ortodoxe/istoria-bizantului/simfonia-bizantina-80638.html> (online January 2010)

<sup>23</sup> ”We understand that the absence from the public space of BOR related to this subject is explained also by the current problems in the relations with BOS concerning the new Cults Law from Serbia and the status of the Romanian communities from Serbia (Timoc and Voivodina), problems with regard to which the leading bodies of both the republic and the Patriarchy of Serbia exhibited a total lack of flexibility. While the Romanian authorities acknowledge the existence in Timișoara of a Serbian Episcopate, incorporated into BOS, the Serbian authorities, ignoring any trace of reciprocity, grant to the Romanian Episcopate of Dacia Felix only a temporary entrance visa, to be renewed every 90 days, and forbid the Romanians from Valea Timocului the construction, with their own funding, of a church where they might have religious service in the Romanian language.” (Brusnawski, Paul; Buta, Gheorghe; Carp, Radu; Picu Ocoleanu, R., 2007, ”The Kosovo Dilemma and the Solution of Inter-religious Dialogue”)

Maramureș and Satmar, made a few declarations on this topic, where he insisted on the idea that **“ROC must refrain from taking emotional and spontaneous attitudes towards Kosovo”**<sup>24</sup>.

The first official declaration, partially favorable to the Serbian Church, came only in 2008, in the letter of response of Patriarch Daniel, to the Patriarch of Serbia. There, the head of the Romanian Orthodox Church affirmed that **“The Romanian Patriarchy supports, before public opinion and the various international forums, the right of Serbian Orthodox believers from Kosovo and Metohia to freely manifest their faith and to protect their holy grounds, considering that thus it fulfill a sacred duty to our brothers and sisters in Serbia, faced with very difficult challenges”**<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>25</sup> \*\*\* , Letter of response of Patriarch Daniel, addressed to the Patriarch of Serbia, may 2008 <http://theolghia.wordpress.com/2008/05/17/schimb-de-scrisori-privind-situatia-din-ortodocsilor-din-kosovo-intre-patriarhii-pavle-al-serbiei-si-daniel-al-romaniei/> (online January 2010)

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## ANNEXES

### Passage of Euro-Atlantic Integration

#### European Union

**February 1, 1991** - The Romanian Parliament acquires the Special Guest Status at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe;

**February 1, 1993** - Romania signs the European Agreement establishing an association between Romania, on the one hand, and the European Communities and their Member States, on the other. This agreement, which created a free trade area between Romania and the Member States, recognized the Romanian objective of joining the European Union. The Agreement also provided financial and technical assistance from the European body; *The Copenhagen Summit (June 1993) was almost fully ignored by the press in Romania, as happened with the Treaty of Amsterdam (November 1997) or the Tampere Reunion (October 1999).*

**October 7, 1993** - Romania becomes a member of the Council of Europe, with the deposit of its instrument of accession to the Statute of the Organization;

**June 22, 1995** – Romania submitted the application to EU's accession (in 1993 in Copenhagen, the Member States decided that the associated states of Central and Eastern Europe can become members of European Union when they meet the criteria of economic and political - *acquis communautaire*);

**April 1997** – the adoption of the Parliamentary Assembly's decision (PACE) to stop the monitoring of Romania to the commitments made at admission to membership, subject to meeting certain requirements (Recommendation 1326/97 and 1123/97 Resolution of PACE).

The documents lay down for Romania following priority directions of action:

- reform the prison system;
- improve child protection system;
- amend the Criminal Code and Criminal Procedure Code, in order to remove provisions contrary to the fundamental freedoms contained in the Council of Europe legal instruments;
- amend the law on restitution of property confiscated in order to ensure owners are "restitutio in integrum" or a fair compensation;
- promoting a campaign against racism, xenophobia and intolerance and initiation of measures for social integration of Roma.

**July 1997. Romania is denied access to NATO in Madrid. That same month, in Brussels, the European Commission rejects Romania in the first wave of enlargement to the East<sup>26</sup>**, occasion on which the Commission proposed the expansion with Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, which could add Slovenia and Estonia.

**July 1997** - The European Commission adopted "Agenda 2000" which includes "opinion on the request of Romania's accession to the European Union. Jacques Santer, President of the European Union Commission, noted with that occasion that: *"Substantial efforts are necessary in combating corruption and improving the judiciary and the protection of individual rights against the police and intelligence and also improving the criminal justice system, the situation of the Roma minority, and the protection of children in orphanages. The ownership of land is not yet assured, the legal system is still fragile and the economic strategy was not always consistent. Much of the Romanian industry is in a critical state, and agriculture must be modernized; the low level of research and development, etc."*<sup>27</sup>

**March 1998** - EU launches formally, the enlargement process, and in November of that year, the European Commission publishes the first report on Romania's progress in meeting membership criteria;

**December 1999** - Helsinki European Council – opening of the accession negotiations with Romania, February 2000 - official launch of the negotiation process of Romania's EU accession;

European Councils in Copenhagen (December 2002), in Thessaloniki (June 2003), Brussels (December 2003) and Brussels (June 2004) reiterated the support of the EU Member States to close the negotiations in 2004, signing the Accession Treaty as soon as possible in 2005 and the effective accession in January 2007;

**December 2004** - completion of accession negotiations;

**January 1, 2007** - Romania and Bulgaria join the European Union.

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<sup>26</sup> On July 12, 1997 an article appeared in Romania in which it stated that we were left out, while Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovenia and Estonia have been accepted. Căplescu, 1997, "Recurrence of the Madrid scenario? In Brussels, European Commission recommended that Romania was not included in the first wave of EU enlargement".

<sup>27</sup> \*\*\*, 1997, "Agenda 2000: Romania on the waiting list of European Union".

## Romania - NATO

**October 1991** - Romanian President Ion Iliescu, sends NATO's Secretary General a message that sustains Romania's availability to engage in closer cooperation with NATO, stressing that Romania considers NATO the only organization capable, both politically and military, of ensuring the stability and security of new European democracies which are at the beginning of the road<sup>28</sup>;

**December 1991** - Romanian Foreign Minister Adrian Năstase, attended the first meeting of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC). He proposed increased cooperation with NATO;

**February 1992** - NATO Secretary General, Manfred Wörner, pays a visit to Romania. The Euro-Atlantic Center at Bucharest is being inaugurated;

**February 1993** - President Ion Iliescu visits NATO Headquarters. He reiterated Romania's willingness to integrate into Euro-Atlantic structures;

**October 1993** - U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defense made a visit to Bucharest and presented U.S. proposal to establish a "Partnership for Peace";

**January 1994** - Romania is the first Eastern European country to join the "Partnership for Peace" program (designed for Euro-Atlantic cooperation on security, with a major role in the inclusion of new members in NATO);

**June 1996** - Romanian Parliament addressed an appeal to the parliaments of NATO member states seeking support for Romania's aspirations to join NATO. The appeal emphasizes domestic political consensus on the major objective of Romanian foreign policy;

**February 1997** - Romanian President, Emil Constantinescu, meets in Brussels, the members of the North Atlantic Council and NATO Secretary General, Javier Solana. On this occasion, the president stresses that Romania is determined to join NATO;

**April 1997** - The Romanian Parliament adopted unanimously a message to the 16 NATO members, seeking support for a decision favorable to Romania, during the summit in Madrid;

**July 8-9, 1997** – During the NATO summit in Madrid, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland received an invitation to join the Alliance. Final handout confirmed further enlargement process; the text nominates Romania through the candidate states that have achieved significant progress in meeting NATO membership criteria, Romania is yet refused the access to the alliance structures;

**March 22, 1999** - NATO intervention in Kosovo (in April, Romania first allows access of NATO aircraft in the airspace, and the following month, at the request of USA, the Alliance's aircraft receives access to Romanian airports);

**April 23-25, 1999** - The NATO summit in Washington - the presentation of a Membership Action Plan (MAP) for Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Macedonia;

*September 11, 2001. The terrorist attacks on American soil.*

**2002** - Romania is invited to join the North Atlantic Alliance during the NATO Summit in Prague (21-22 nov. 2002). At that time, the Allies launched joining invitations for 7 countries - Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia;

**March 29, 2004** - Romania formally joined NATO by depositing their instruments of ratification to the U.S. State Department, the state holding the NATO Treaty. Preparation also meant the signing of Treaties with neighboring states, the most important being the basic treaties signed with Hungary (1996) and Ukraine (1997).

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<sup>28</sup> \*\*\* , Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Chronology of Romania - NATO relations, <http://www.mae.ro/index.php?unde=doc&id=25433&idlnk=1&cat=3> (online January 2010)

## The Church and the European Integration

**The situation of the Romanian Orthodox Church and its ecumenical relations in the context of the new Europe (1989-2009)**, the Word of His Beatitude Daniel, Patriarch of Romania, at the time of celebration organized by *Pro Oriente Foundation*, Salzburg, June 12, 2009 and Vienna, June 15, 2009.

Romania's EU accession was supported by the Orthodox Church from the beginning, the Romanian Orthodox Church being among the signers of the *Declaration of Religious Affairs regarding Romania's EU integration*<sup>29</sup>.

Given the intense religious life of the faithful, the Orthodox Church has engaged, along with the other faiths in Romania, "to help enrich the European spiritual heritage and culture, reaffirming respect for life, human dignity, right to property, and the value of family and of human solidarity"<sup>30</sup>. Aware of being the largest Orthodox Church within the members of the European Union, the Church held, throughout the country, pastoral-missionary conferences on requirements, problems and prospects of European integration, conscious of the fact that integration means a chance, but also a great responsibility<sup>31 32</sup>.

"As inheritors and preservers of the Christian civilization and culture of the European continent, and being at the geographic junction of East and West, we Romanians have the vocation to promote dialogue and cooperation in Europe. In this regard though, we believe that European unity should not only be reduced to the economic and political level, but must be extended to Christian moral and spiritual values. In a world of markets and material profit at any cost, Churches have the vocation to witness and promote the fundamental truths – of the Gospel of Jesus Christ's love, human dignity (bearing in her the image of God), the sacred gift of life, ethnic identity of every people and solidarity between peoples – to exit the spiritual and material crisis"<sup>33</sup>.

### **Catholic Church: "EUROPE NEEDS OUR BROTHERHOOD", Metropolitan JOSEPH<sup>34</sup>**

With the message sent on the occasion of the Third European Ecumenical Assembly in Sibiu, in September 7th, 2007, Patriarch Bartholomew stated that "the foundation for a new Europe cannot be only financial and political, but also with a cultural and national dimension. For this reason we support with all the determination and Christian belief, we bless and help to the creation of a human and social Europe, alighted by the eternal light of Christ".

"The Orthodox mentality is prepared to understand the process of European integration in all its subtleties and the ecclesiastical institution is ready to send its believers a message of hope and trust. We expect though, that the European Union effectively assumes the foundations of European culture and society and more openness to consider the contribution that European churches can make in the process of institutional strengthening of the Union".

### **"Church in the open, transparent and regular dialogue with EU institutions"<sup>35</sup>**

The Catholic Church in Romania, together with the European Commission Episcopates (ECE), welcomes the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon [December 1,

<sup>29</sup> \*\*\*, The Declaration from Snagov, May 2000, [www.patriarhia.ro/Publicatii/BOREUROPA/snagov.html](http://www.patriarhia.ro/Publicatii/BOREUROPA/snagov.html) (online March 2007)

<sup>30</sup> Tătaru-Cazaban, Miruna, 2000, "Religion declaration regarding Romania's EU integration".

<sup>31</sup> \*\*\*, 2006, Pastoral-missionary conference, "Romanian Orthodox Church and European integration. Requirements, problems and prospects".

<sup>32</sup> The Status of Romanian Orthodox Church and its ecumenical links, p. 6

<sup>33</sup> idem, p. 10

<sup>34</sup> Holiness (mitropolit) Iosif, *Europe Needs Our Fraternity*,

[http://www.orthodoxero.eu/media/Documente/EUROPA%20ARE%20NEVOIE%20DE%20FRATERNITATEA%20NOASTRA.pdf?wb\\_9661\\_session\\_id=127109041f5e3ccb4081982d8a0ded7](http://www.orthodoxero.eu/media/Documente/EUROPA%20ARE%20NEVOIE%20DE%20FRATERNITATEA%20NOASTRA.pdf?wb_9661_session_id=127109041f5e3ccb4081982d8a0ded7)

<sup>35</sup> \*\*\*, News flux recognized and recommended by the members of the Conference of Catholic Bishops from Romania, "Church in the open, transparent and regular dialogue with EU institutions", December 1, 2009, <http://www4.catholica.ro/stiri/show.asp?id=18866> (online January 2010)

2009], which introduces in the primary law of the European Union an article (no. 17) of particular importance for the Church.

”By Article 17, the European Union recognizes the identity and specific contribution of churches and hence can start a dialogue. ECE is optimistic in this respect, due to the already practiced dialogue with the EU institutions, a dialogue that can now increase”, said His Grace Virgil Bercea, the Greek Catholic Bishop of Oradea and representative for the Bishops Conference of Romania (BCR) under ECE.

”The Catholic, Orthodox and the other churches in Romania, according to the Treaty, have the right to enter this open, transparent and regular dialogue with EU institutions. It is very important for Churches to find ways to dialogue, for the evangelical values to be worn by Romanian parliamentarians, and not only by them, in the courts of the European Union”, said His Grace Virgil Bercea<sup>36</sup>.

## **The three major privatizations attached to ”Euro-Atlantic integration”**

### **”Bechtel Affair” (2003) – Infrastructure**

At the time of its beginning (2004), the ”Transylvania highway” was the largest infrastructure project in Europe<sup>37</sup>. With a length of 415 km, the four-lane highway starts in central Romania (Brasov NV), reaching near Oradea, on the border with Hungary. Among the cities connected by it, we can call: Brasov, Făgăraș, Sighișoara, Târgu Mureș, Cluj-Napoca, Zalău and Oradea. The highway is designed to have 58 road passages, 94 bridges over the motorway and 16 road knots<sup>38</sup>.

Although the contract stipulated that the work was planned for completion in 2013, of a total of over 400 km project, after 6 years of site, in November 2009 exactly 42 km of highway were opened, a section that was built at a cost of over one billion Euros. If we take into account that the initial amount stated in the contract was 2.4 billion Euros, at present, with the expense accounts put together<sup>39</sup>, the highway reached the cost of 5.6 billion Euros over a stretch of road of approximately 10%, crossing a landscape that doesn’t pose difficulties<sup>40</sup>.

In June 2009, a few years after taking over of the Transylvania highway project by Bechtel Company, the Romanian transport minister, Radu Berceanu, said publicly what the press implied for years: ”At the time the contract was signed with Bechtel, Mircea Geoană made the necessary arrangements, being the U.S. ambassador at the time. It was speculated that the contract was awarded so quickly, contract with a value exceeding two billion ... contract that was negotiated in 6-7 days **to help Romania to join NATO**”<sup>41</sup>.

### **”The Frigates Affair” (2003) – Defense**

Romania has the capacity to produce advanced combat ships - one example being the destroyer/frigate Mărășești, built in 1986, modernized by 1990, the flagship of the Romanian Navy.

<sup>36</sup> \*\*\*, News flux recognized and recommended by the members of the Conference of Catholic Bishops from Romania, ”Church in the open, transparent and regular dialogue with EU institutions”, December 1, 2009, <http://www4.catholica.ro/stiri/show.asp?id=18866> (online January 2010)

<sup>37</sup> \*\*\*, About the ”Transylvania Highway”, <http://www.autostradatransilvania.ro/page/2/Despre-Autostrada-Transilvania.html> (online January 2010)

<sup>38</sup> Cireașă, 2009, ”Reward for the Robbery Against the Romanian Tax-Payer, Bechtel Promoted the Chief of Transylvania Highway” [http://www.cotidianul.ro/rasplata\\_pentru\\_jaful\\_contra\\_contribabilul\\_roman\\_bechtel\\_1\\_a\\_promovat\\_pe\\_seful\\_autostrazii\\_transilvania-103170.html](http://www.cotidianul.ro/rasplata_pentru_jaful_contra_contribabilul_roman_bechtel_1_a_promovat_pe_seful_autostrazii_transilvania-103170.html) (online January 2010)

<sup>39</sup>”Americans who are building Transylvania Motorway buy construction materials at minimum prices and they discount them at maximum prices”, Șoica, 2009, <http://www.ezv.ro/articole/detalii-articol/862939/Bechtel-negot-cu-piatra/> (online January 2010)

<sup>40</sup> Șoica, 2009, ”Hyper-Charged Prices at Bechtel”, <http://www.ezv.ro/articole/detalii-articol/862266/Preturi-umflate-la-Bechtel/> (online January 2010)

<sup>41</sup> \*\*\*, 1999, ”Berceanu: The Contract with Bechtel was signed to ease the Integration of Romania in NATO”, [http://www.realitatea.net/berceanu-contractul-cu-bechtel-a-fost-semnat-pentru-ca-romania-sa-intre-mai-usor-in-nato\\_529687.html](http://www.realitatea.net/berceanu-contractul-cu-bechtel-a-fost-semnat-pentru-ca-romania-sa-intre-mai-usor-in-nato_529687.html) (online January 2010)

However, the Romanian government decided in 2003 to acquire two **second hand** British frigates, at exorbitant prices, instead of ordering the construction of new vessels in Romanian sites at a much lower price, following the ship-admiral production line. Those involved in the repair and use Mărășești frigate catalogue this choice as a political bill. And the purpose is none other than securing the accession of Romania to the North Atlantic Alliance. To date, the Naval Forces purchase of "King Ferdinand" and "Queen Mary" frigates, decommissioned by the British Royal Navy, is **the most expensive single acquisition in the history of the Romanian Army**. *"Only the initial purchase and first stage of modernization of the two frigates ... have cost 185 million dollars, and after the second stage of the frigates modernization, the total cost of the program could reach 600 million dollars."*<sup>42</sup>

The business was so onerous that the British authorities were forced to open a criminal investigation in 2006, although it brought disservice to their arms companies. "The request of the British judicial bodies - which included references to **large-scale frauds committed during the acquisition process** - has reached The Romanian National Corruption Department (DNA). More specifically, according to judicial sources, British authorities had asked Romanian prosecutors to initiate investigations and determine which are George and Georgiana Barry's contacts in Romania – the frigate deal's intermediaries - with which they would split a **commission of over 7 million pounds**. This is because, from British investigation, it appears that the money would have entered the pockets of former Romanian dignitaries"<sup>43</sup>.

Furthermore, the purchase agreement included a 100% offset program<sup>44</sup>. In other words, the British promised to compensate the equivalent of the amount paid for the modernization of vessels, giving orders to the Romanian defense industry. And this compensation was to take place within 5 years, through direct orders, participation in privatization and investment<sup>45</sup>. However, none of the contractual obligations were met by the United Kingdom.

"After nearly three years of negotiations with officials from the British Ministry of Defense and representatives of BAE Systems Ltd., Romanians realized they were swindled with the purchase of the two frigates that entered the navy equipment. **These frigates for which we paid three times more than was normal, was the price agreed by Romania, for Britain to support our country's integration into NATO**.

Thus, the purpose of "the frigates deal" was one, again, detrimental to the Romanian state. The government decided to cancel, in April 2008, the agreements with the British, "practically leaving the fleet of frigates without maintenance and modernization services"<sup>46</sup> [emphasis added].

## OMV-Petrom (2004) – Oil

Press releases are eloquent, at least in terms of public perception of privatization of the largest Romanian company, "Petrom":

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<sup>42</sup> Diac, 2006, "After It Spent Hundreds of Millions of Dollars on the Two Second-Hand Frigates, Romanian Army Wants to Buy a Second-Hand American Nuclear Submarine. Nobody Knows what Romania Could Do With Such a Thing".

<sup>43</sup> "An intermediary of BAE Systems, Barry George, and Romanian-born wife, Georgiana, were arrested Wednesday ... for they would have appropriated one million of the commission, being accused of corruption and conspiracy to corrupt. Serious Fraud Office (SFO) in London ... has confirmed that BAE Systems (fourth arms manufacturer in the world and first in the UK) has actually paid the seven million, but declined to say to whom." (Lică, 2006, "Great Britain Sold in Romania Its Rusty Frigates With a Bribe of 7 million £")

<sup>44</sup> "Industrial Offset Program for a period of 5 years. It is at 100% of the purchase agreement in which: \*80-90% indirect offset for the Romanian industry. A percentage of 60% of the total offset has as beneficiary the defense industry and it consists in direct orders, participation in privatization, investment and 20-30% of the benefits go to civil industry. \*10-20% direct offset addressed both to MND for training activities and maintenance documentation, as to industry for logistic support activities industry and design." (Idem)

<sup>45</sup> Idem

<sup>46</sup> Dragomir, Doru, 2008, "Frigates – Gate Between Victoria and Cotroceni. A New Record: BAE Systems Ltd. And The British Ministry of Defence Stung Romania".

”If our country would have retained control of national oil, its position at Europe's table would have been different. Through the sale of Petrom to OMV, the European interest in the energy key area moves from Bucharest to Vienna”<sup>47</sup>.

Economy Minister Codruț Sereș, showed in 2005 that ”Romania is the only Petroleum State that has not defined leverages to stop the internal growth of gasoline’s price”<sup>48</sup>.

”Romanians already associate privatization with relentless rises affecting the living standard. Romtelecom was privatized, subscriptions endeared, and OTE profit is 213 million Euros on 9 months (2005). Petrom privatized, OMV has increased the price of gasoline, being **more expensive** than in Austria. Therefore, OMV too, made a profit of over 500 million Euros in 10 months at Petrom”<sup>49</sup>.

”After paying taxes on mining and royalties, Austrians remain in the final with a net profit of 80%. It is the worst deal of the Romanian state. While OMV has tripled its oil reserves following the acquisition of Petrom, and received huge profits - only the first half of last year, the net gain was about 700 million Euros - Romanian state has lost billions of Euros in just a year and a half” claim authorized sources in the oil sector. Romania receives from Petrom-OMV the lowest oil royalties compared with other countries. Thus, while our country gets about 8% of the oil company’s production value, for 10 years, in other states, oil companies pay taxes between 40% and 65% of the production”<sup>50</sup>.

”No one ever suspected that Mozart candy will taste of Gazprom, until Russian dissident Vladimir Bukovsky, invited at the Romanian Anti-Communist Resistance Colloquium in Brașov, demonstrated in three minutes that we are some poor tenants of reveries, with unpaid arrears: "I am for the third time in Romania and found that everywhere is full of Lukoil gas stations. And Lukoil means Gazprom - which has 30% of the Austrian OMV - and Gazprom does not mean anything other than the KGB, so things are clear, through Lukoil, the KGB seized the entire energy system in Romania!”<sup>51</sup>

”At that time, **the privatization of Petrom was, according to the Government, one of the conditions for EU accession**, who didn’t although requested that the investor should be made numberless favors that the Romanian state made on behalf of the EU. ... For the whole year [2005], OMV took from Petrom 106 million Euros from dividends and 234.4 million Euros from the sale of its stations in the Balkans (178) by Petrom. **Basically, the Austrians gained from Petrom, already well above the amount of the acquisition**”<sup>52</sup>.

In 2006, ”deputy head of the Office of State Ownership and Privatization in Industry of the Ministry of Economy, Dorinel Mucea, who negotiated the contract for privatization of Petrom, has been indicted yesterday by prosecutors of the Supreme Court, for offenses that affect national security”<sup>53</sup>.

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<sup>47</sup> Chirieac, Bogdan, 2006, ”For Romanian Oil, Call Vienna”.

<sup>48</sup> Nedelcu, 2005, ”The Selling of Petrom Left Us With No Oil”.

<sup>49</sup> Pârvu, Elena, 2005, ”The profits, Exported Throughout the Own Chain of Companies”.

<sup>50</sup> Trefaș, Cristina, 2006, ”While OMV – Owner on All Oil Reserves, Pays Insignificant Royalties in 10 Years, Romania lost, in 1,5 Years, Billions of Euro from the Petrom Sale”.

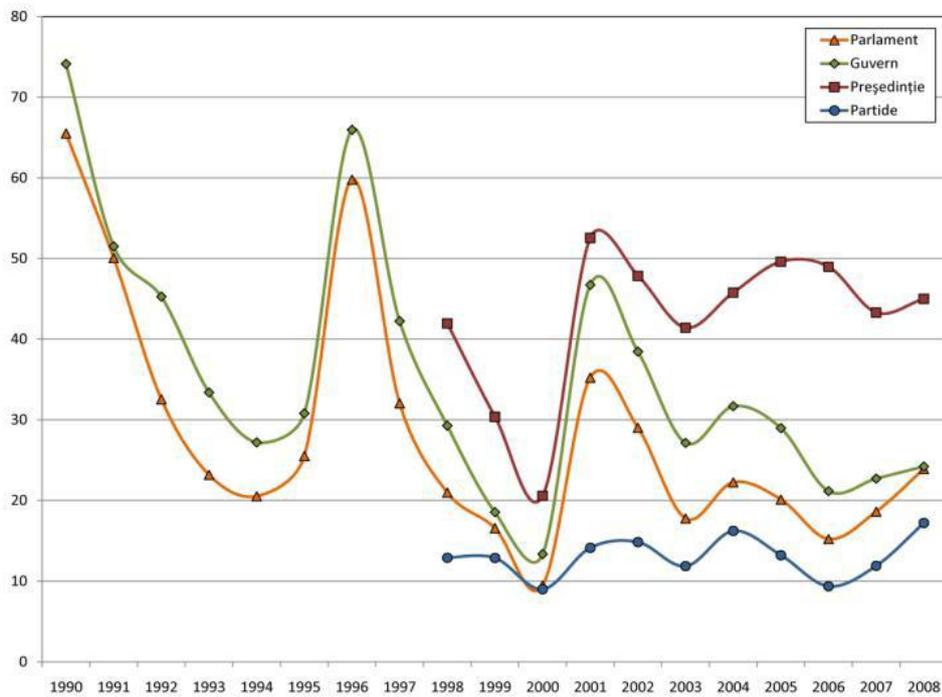
<sup>51</sup> Dinescu, Mircea, 2006, ”Vienna Doesn’t Believe in Tears”.

<sup>52</sup> Cireașă, 2006, ”Romanian Meed: We Sold Cheap and We Bought Expensive”.

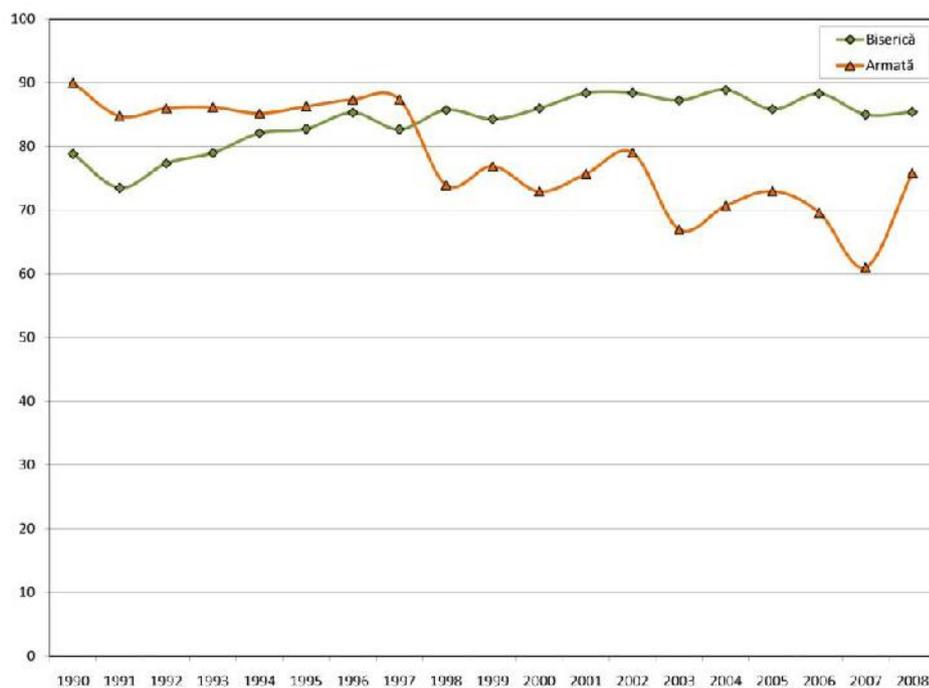
<sup>53</sup> Toma, 2006, ”Ziua Effect – OMV”.

## Figures

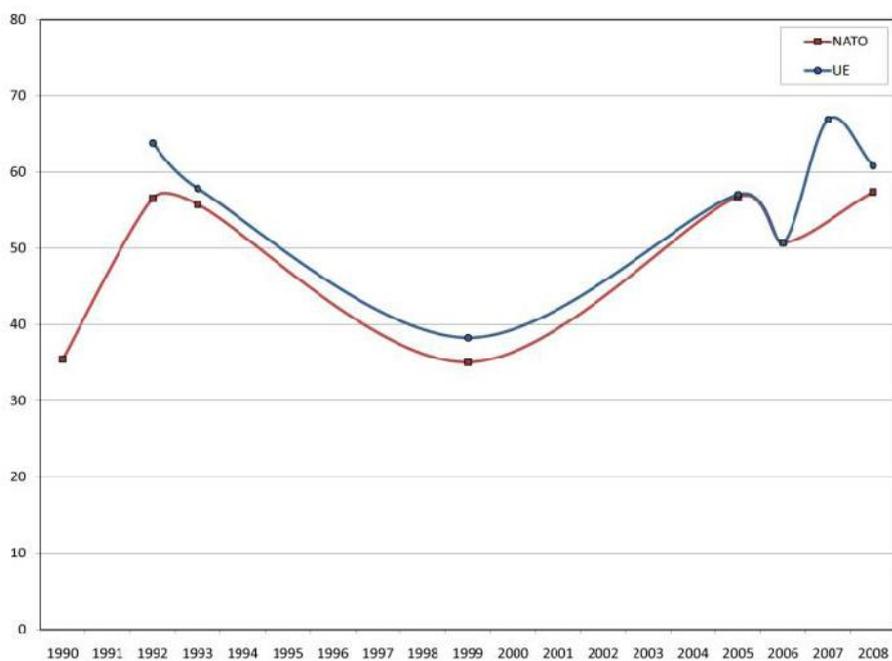
**Figure 1. The dynamics of trust in state institutions: 1990-2008 (Values of Romanians, Research Institute for Quality of Life, July 2009; percent of population with confidence in ...)**



**Figure 2. The dynamics of trust in traditional institutions: 1990-2008 (Values of Romanians, Research Institute for Quality of Life, July 2009; percent of population with confidence in Biserică – Church, Armată – Army)**



**Figure 3 The dynamics of trust in EU and NATO: 1990-2008 (Values of Romanians, Research Institute for Quality of Life, July 2009; percent of population with confidence in ...)**



**Figure 4 Rates of poverty in Romania 1989-1999**

