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ANKARA ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
RADYO, TELEVİZYON VE SİNEMA
ANABİLİM DALI

TÜRK DİZİLERİNİN ROMANYA UYARLAMALARINDA DİL, DİN VE YER

Doktora Tezi

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T.C.
ANKARA ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Müdürlüğü'ne,

Doç. Dr. Burcu Sümer danışmanlığında hazırladığım "TÜRK DİZİLERİNİN ROMANYA UYARLAMALARINDA DİL, DİN VE YER/ LANGUAGE, RELIGION AND PLACE IN ROMANIAN ADAPTATIONS OF TURKISH TV SERIES.(Ankara.2023)" adlı - doktora/bütünleşik doktora tezimdeki bütün bilgilerin akademik kurallara ve etik davranış ilkelerine uygun olarak toplanıp sunulduğunu, başka kaynaklardan aldığım bilgileri metinde ve kaynakçada eksiksiz olarak gösterdiğimi, çalışma sürecinde bilimsel araştırma ve etik kurallarına uygun olarak davrandığımı ve aksinin ortaya çıkması durumunda her türlü yasal sonucu kabul edeceğimi beyan ederim.

Tarihi:

21.06.2023

Adı ve Soyadı:

Mara Mihaela Panaite

Acknowledgements

Writing this PhD thesis was a challenging journey that would not have been possible without the support and guidance of many people. First and foremost, this endeavor would not have been possible without my supervisor, Doc. Dr. Burcu Sümer, who has given me meaningful feedback, encouragement, intellectual support, and the confidence to overcome the difficulties along the way. Her constructive criticism and helpful suggestions contributed immensely to the quality of this thesis.

I also could not have undertaken this journey without my defense committee, Professor Dr. Oğuzhan Taş and assistant professor Dr. Deniz Tansel İlic, who have provided me with insightful comments and questions that helped me improve my work. I am very grateful for their scientific guidance, constant optimism, and encouragement throughout this long journey. I'm extremely grateful to Doc. Dr. Ergin Şafak Dikmen and Doc. Dr. Önder Muhammed Özdem for their constructive comments and suggestions.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my mother, Doiniţa, for her a tremendous motivation and support, before, during, and especially at the end of this thesis, and my deceased father, Vasile, who would have been proud of my achievement. I would also like to thank my brother, Alexandru, for his continuing belief in what I'm doing.

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INTRODUCTION

The world of television adaptation is a wide market that incorporates flows and counter flows between countries from all over the world. The global perspective of television production and evolution gets interesting when adapted into a local culture. Not only the elements of television broadcasting reviled in the context of socio-political evolution spark debate on the global level, but also the localized cultural elements that provide the uniqueness in this diverse world of television. Also, the global pattern of adaptation flow can be seen in trans-cultural context movements. In this matter, it is important to understand the political economy of transnational television and the framework of the adaptation studies. Technological evolution has a primordial role in understanding the faces of television broadcasting. Furthermore, the macro and micro insights of adaptation culture place the importance of the uniqueness in diversity.

This thesis examines the way in which the adaptations of television series are transposed in the local context and the way in which they produce changes in the national identity culture. To this end, this thesis analysis four Romanian television series adapted after Turkish *dizi,* namely *Fructul Oprit/ Aşk -I Memnu*, *Vlad/Ezel*, *Adela/ O hayat benim*, and *Clanul/ İçerde*. In this research of these adaptations, the focus shifts on the basic themes of cultural identity, such as language, religion, and location. By tracking and observing the cultural identity patterns found on the scripts narrativity, the research looks at the differences and similarities between the new localized version and their original format. This thesis explores the Romanian cultural identity distinctiveness during the adaptation process in relation with the Turkish culture, as seen in the matching series.

The television industry represents an environment in constant change and development all over the world. Ever since its appearance in the 1920s until now, these developments have marked the technological branch as well as the content. Scholars (Mikos, 2019; Hilmes, 2014; Chalaby, 2005; Schiller, 1993) talk in this sense about television as a "transnational and trans-medial medium", explaining the technological and content evolutionary context, and also audience preferences. Accordingly, the television industry is today seen in continuous expansion, increasing its transmission area on streaming platforms, and the content is diversified through a constant flow of television programs and films at a global level. All these changes that television is going through lead to a new reconfiguration of the global-local system. In this sense, the "television adaptation industry" has an important role in this reconfiguration. This not only introduces global products locally, or offers local programs a global face, but they have the ability to influence identity cultures. The adaptation of television formats plays a primary role in the context of the flow of content worldwide. In recent years, the television formats market has allowed exchanges between countries from different corners of the world and various global and regional markets, that have never been explored before. Thus, the new trends in the adaptation field have opened new research opportunities for academics. In the last ten years, Turkish television series entered the international market and were broadcast in all corners of the world. Their popularity allowed broadcasters to constantly purchase Turkish series for broadcasting them in the local context, by dubbing or subtitling them. In recent years, this popularity has facilitated the interest of producers in adapting these series to their own cultural identity. Thus, a new niche in academic research was created, easing the investigation of adaptations of Turkish series in local context.

In this regard, this study debates the way in which television content in Romania has changed over the historical course of television, but also the way in which it has influenced the national cultural identity. For this purpose, I chose to debate the problem of "Turkish dramas" and their adaptations in the Romanian cultural context.

Turkish capital has been a significant presence in Romania since 2007, when Dogan holding chain created the television station Kanal D (Abraham, 2016). Since 2008, Romanians were introduced to Turkish TV series. This type of programs has a variety of themes and generally present the lifestyle of the Turkish society (Tomic, 2011). The first Turkish series that Romanians watched at Kanal D was *Bin bir gece*/*1001 nights* (2006-2009, dir. Kudret Sabanci) and was broadcasted in prime time. Four months after the launch of the "1001 nights" series in Romania, one of the biggest online news sites (hotnews.ro, 2008) emphasizes that Turkish soap operas cached the Romanian ladies who are sharing their thoughts, summaries of the episodes one for another all on the online forums dedicated to Turkish series. The article talks about how Romanian women are influenced to lean the Turkish language due to the series, and highlights that some of the viewers watch the series online, on Turkish channels, without subtitles (hotnews.ro, 2008).

The popularity of Turkish Drama in Romania began in 2012, when Kanal D started broadcasting *Muhteşem Yüzyıl*/ *Magnificent Century* series which brought approximately two million Romanians in front of the televisions, with each episode (Chirileasa, 2015). According to the ratings, the television drama has been the favorite for the Romanian audience[1] general preferences, surpassing even the local (Romanian) telenovelas. Gradually

[1] 1st place in preference with a 6.6% Rating Point on the urban profile, age 18 to 49 (Media Fact Book, 2013: 27).

the popularity in televisions series was taken by Turkish dizi, which seemed to attract more viewers each day.

The expansion and appreciation of the Romanian public for Turkish production is due to the strong and realistic plots, complex character typologies and extremely well-articulated family stories; with natural dialogues that made them credible (Cheroiu, 2016; Musat, 2021). Turkish series, however, stand in opposition with the Latin American soap operas that are constructed as a "conventional, sweetened, schematic genre" (Comănescu as cited in Cheroiu, 2016) and with which the Romanians were very accustomed in the 2000s. Ilcnur Agop (as cited in Musat, 2021), Content Production Manager of Kanal D Romania, believes that many Turkish series present generally valid topics, which are locally nuanced. The reason behind the popularity between Romanians stands in the cultural proximity of the Balkan space, which was ensured by stories that protect traditions and familiar customs.

In recent years, Romanian television stations have stopped investing in American productions due to the excessive costs and have turned to Turkish television productions, which are more accessible from the financial point of view. (Cheroiu, 2016). In the last years, American series consumptions registered mostly on the video on demand platforms by the "the premium audience" meanwhile, "the popular audience" enjoyed with prevalence Turkish series, followed by South American and Korean products (Costanda, 2016). Local buyers invest in global formats for their channels because those type of products are assessed before, and certify the financial investment (Hutcheon, 2006; Moran, 2004; Straubhaar, 2012).

Starting with 2018, Romania began the production of Turkish series adaptations. The Romanian adaptations after the Turkish TV series were announced, mostly as adaptations

after the famous *dizi*'s[2] and public was curious enough to watch the new local extension of their beloved Turkish dramas. Until now, Romania has produced five series adaptations, which were/are being broadcasted on television, in prime time, namely *Fructul Oprit*, *Vlad*, *Adela* and *Clanul*, and *Lia* and the number of new adaptations is expected to increase in the following years. The industry of television adaptation after famous Turkish series in Romania is relatively new. As the television production market in the sphere of television series is not that wide as the Turkish or American market, the production range has its limitations due to economic factors. However, adaptations and reproductions of foreign series vary in terms of cultural significance and viewing habits.

Comănescu (as cited in Cheroiu, 2016) predicted the success of Romanian adaptation after Turkish series, even though the main media trusts in Romania massively broadcast original Turkish series. The popularity of the latter led to the production of these adaptations in recent years, making Kanal D a trend seller in the local media market. However, Romanians equally prefer to follow the domestic series market, but also Turkish productions, on television and streaming platforms.

Turkish television series are global products, thus their adaptation into near proximate location or international, is not an easy process. A global product is never immediately accepted and remains a copy for the country that bought their license. Each culture is unique and changing in terms of needs and expectations are always required in accordance with the local socio-political and economic environment. Local production team must read and reinterpret the scenario of the imported format in local context and rise to the standards imposed by local television regulations and audio-visual dynamics; and think how

[2] The only exception is the series *Fructul Oprit* series which was presented as an adaptation after Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil book.

to attract a large and varied number of viewers (Staubhaar, 1991; Van Keulen, 2016) and at the same time to keep alive the local cultural identity.

In the light of these considerations, this thesis aims to answer questions such as: are there any differences between original and adapted version of the Turkish series? What stands as Romanian cultural identity when adapting? What have changed in the cultural identity since the exposure to Turkish / international series? And how they affect Romanians daily life?

To produce comprehensive research results in this field of study, this investigation proposes qualitative research. The methodology will use focus group research and an analysis of data collection. I chose to use the "Focus Group" method for this research because it assumes the presence of group factors capable of enhancing the value, relevance, and validity of social data. Hence, group effects, under effective moderation, increase the volume and especially the relevance of the information obtained. Data collection includes articles and news about the series, interviews with professionals, critics, as well as YouTube comments. This approach gives the investigation the opportunity to highlight, compare and nuance the data obtained. As the research goes in parallel, it is easier to see how socio-cultural patterns frame up interpretation for cultural identity meanings. As Romania is divided into regions, cultural perceptions can be different, and the dynamics of visual image interpretations can vary. For this reason, this work expects the answers to these questions to differ depending on variables such as age, gender, or region. For this research18 participants were selected (9 males and 9 females, between the ages of 20-65)[3] and divided in three age groups. The focus group research was conducted online via Skype, and for the convenience of the study and the prevention of technical problems the respondents were chosen from the

[3] See annex 1

urban area of all nine regions of Romania, because of the high-quality internet connection and easy access to electronical devices.

This dissertation makes a significant contribution to the field of television adaptations and transcultural television studies, as it focuses on the study of Turkish television adaptations in Romanian market. Not only this thesis represents the first study of such genre adaptations in Romania, but it also reveals details about the way in which television contributed to the polishing of cultural identity. This research makes a foray into Romania's television evolution and presents the socio-political changes that led to new trends in the market and in the academic research field. Although there is massive debate on the academic field concerning the global flow of television products and their localization in a certain cultural space, the approaches lack of a strong empirical foundation and prefer to look at the matter form an abstract point of view. This thesis, in this matter, contributed to fill the gap in the academic field, by providing conclusive evidence illustrating how global television series shift toward local culture, and demonstrates the evolution towards the adaptation trend of Turkish series, but also the unique character of Romanian identity.

Turkish Television series represent a complex product that in the last decade managed to penetrate the global media landscape. In Romania, those series had a double localization, firstly through the process of audio-visual translation and secondly through adaptation processes.

This study provides a critical and analytical approach by questioning the role of television (series adaptation) in shaping the cultural identity and its implications in everyday life of Romanians. This qualitative approach to my research has given me the opportunity to obtain nuanced information and complex points of view. The present thesis seeks the way in which the stories from the Turkish series are represented and adapted in the national

setting. The localization process of these series is closely related to the Romanian cultural discourse in the socio-political context and aims to capture the uniqueness of the national identity character.

This thesis is divided into three parts, which aim to highlight the importance of television adaptations and to understand the "global-local" adaptation mechanism in the cultural context. Thus, the first part of this work presents a general vision of television in Romania, with the most important aspects that contributed to the evolution and socio-cultural changes. The chapters in this part details the evolution of the media market in Romania, from its beginning until now, with a special emphasis on television adaptations and cultural identity representations that have contributed to the reconfiguration of everyday life.

The second part talks about the flow of adaptation at the transcultural level that takes place all over the world. In order to understand these adaptation mechanisms, the investigation detailed the political economic dimension of television in its evolutionary context and offered a vision of the framework of adaptation studies. Understanding the functionality of the adaptations and their purpose in the "global-local" space allows us to visualize the cultural identity radiography of the interactions in the media market.

The third part presents the field analysis focusing on the transcultural adaptation of Turkish dramas in the Romanian space. The part begins with the methodological chapter of the study and continues with the qualitative analysis of the four adaptations of the television formats *Fructul Oprit*/ *Aşk-I Memnu*, *Vlad*/*Ezel*, *Adela*/ *O hayat benim*, *Clanul*/ *Içerde*. The obtained results present ample data regarding cultural identity and cross-cultural similarities.

The thesis ends with the conclusion chapter which synthesizes the research findings in relation to the research aims and questions and discuss the value and contribution thereof. It will also review the limitations of the study and propose opportunities for future research.

PART ONE: TELEVISION IN ROMANIA: AN OVERVIEW

The evolution of the visual media in Romania meant a period of more than 100 years. The transition from the newsreel, at the beginning of cinema, toward television in the mid-1950s and SVOD in the mid-2010s meant a process of growth in a constantly changing social and political space. The global evolution of technology and also of television media content has developed in close connection with the evolution of the national space and viewers' preferences. In this context, the events in the public space have acquired a new face, thanks to the television that keeps alive the collective memory of the Romanian national identity.

Over time, the study of television in the Romanian space has focused on topics related to the history of television (Mustata, 2011), the fundamentals of the exceptional found in television from the communist period (Sorescu Marinovick, 2018; Matei, 2014) but also the elements of entertainment from the communist period (Bardan, 2017). The need for a new approach in the study of television is absolutely necessary, in the context in which the literature framework does not shed light on the evolution and current movements of the market content.

This part proposes a new approach to overview television in Romania and focuses on the issue of the evolution of broadcasted content. In this regard this section makes an incursion into the evolution of television series adaptations and format adaptations since the development of television until present days. The debate is made in the context of socio-political changes and extensions that influenced the market dynamics and produce change in the cultural identity system. In this regard, the Romanian television content can be perceived as a cultural relic that represents the reflection of the Romanian cultural environment, that along the history produced changes in the collective mentality.

1.1 Development Stages of Television in Romania

"In Romania, the power of television station prevails."

Fatih Salis,

News and Internal Productions Director at Kanal D Romania

Romanian television market is a complex field that incorporate both private and public (state) television channels and their growth and evolution happened in the span of a long process that took more than 60 years. State television was the first to appear, in 1956, and after the fall of the communist regime, in the 1990s commercial and private television began to appear. Today, in Romania there are many TV commercial channels that cover a wide range of preferences and respond to various requests. Thus, there are general televisions such as PRO TV, Antena 1, Kanal D Romania, Prima TV, National TV, National 24 Plus etc. Niche TV channels such as news: Romania TV, Antena 3, Digi 24, B1TV; sport TV channels such as: Prima Sport, Prima Sport 2, Prima Sport 3, Eurosport, Eurosport 2, Digi Sport etc.; music channels such as MTV, U TV, Kiss TV, Music Channel, H!T Music Channel, ZU TV etc.; channels dedicated to women such as Acasă TV, Acasă Gold, Happy Channel, Diva etc. Romanians also have direct access to international televisions from all over the world. International channels such as TV5 (French), 24 France (French) TVE (Spanish), CNN (USA), BBC (UK), HGTV(USA), Rai (Italian), CGTN (English language news channel based in Beijing), Fashion TV (French), Al-Jazeera (Qatari based television, broadcasting from London and Doha), Travel Channel (USA), E! Entertainment (USA) are just some few examples of the available foreign television streamed in Romania by many Cable and Satellite providers. With technological development and the large-scale emergence of the Internet, television stations began to move their content online. Whether

we are talking about the classic YouTube platform or media trusts' own platforms, television content has become easy to access and watch (without commercial interruptions). In Romania, the television trusts' own platforms are available in online versions, accessible with or without a subscription. Their popularity began to grow with the diversification of the services offered and the specially created content. As Fatih Salis (as cited in Sisu, 2021) argued, the power of television station in Romania prevails, and even though similar or same content is broadcasted, the audience manifest its fidelity toward the television channel.

However, the present chapter periodizes the evolution of television and discusses state television in Communism; the emergence and evolution of commercial television in Romania with an emphasis on the three televisions with the highest rating points, namely PRO TV, Antena 1 and Kanal D; and last but not least, the evolution of online television and local streaming platforms.

1.1.1 State Television in Communist Romania

The institution of television officially appeared in Romanian in December 1956. However, the first contact of Romanians with television took place in 1938. Romanian press of that time talked about the 4th event of "*Luna Bucureștilor*"[4], which marked the 20th anniversary of the Great Union. On this occasion different stands and pavilions were

[4] Luna Bucureștilor (Eng. The Month of Bucharest) was an event organized for the first time in 1935, by the Bucharest mayor of that time, Alexandru Domescu. The event took place each year until 1940 between 9 of May to 9 of June. Those chosen dates mark two important moments in the history of Romania, namely, The Day of Royalty (May 10) and The Day of Restoration (June 9). In fact, except for the first edition, each edition celebrated moments considered founding of the nation, aiming at an affirmation of the identity of Greater Romania, relatively recently formed (1936 - 70 years since the arrival of Prince Carol; 1937 - 60 years since the war of Independence; 1938 - 20 years since the unification of the Greater Romania in 1918; 1939 - the centenary of the birth of Carol I and 50 years since the death of Mihai Eminescu; 1940 - 10 years of restoration). Thus, among the aims of this event were both the attraction of visitors from the country, to get to know Bucharest and the recent urban achievements, as well as the stimulation of economic development.

established, and one of them was dedicated to the television (Ciolan, 2016). The pavilion was divided into a broadcast studio, whose activity could be "supervised" by the public through a "control" window, and a room equipped with five receivers, whose screens reproduce images and sound of "all what is happening, at the same time, outside the walls of this room" (Universul, June 16, 1938, p. 7). Against the backdrop of the outbreak of the Second World War, the implementation of television in Romania was not a state priority. Thus, the development of television as a state institution began in the communist era, on December 31, 1956. The model that guided the development of television from a technical and content point of view was inspired by BBC standards. Through this approach, the institution of Romanian television received the role of public service, and its main obligation was the informational and educational service of the citizens.

In the 1960s, The International Radio and Television Organization (ORIT) developed, and its purpose was to establish audio-visual exchanges in the Eastern Block. In this regard ORIT launched the *InterVision* program[5] which facilitate the broadcaster form Central and Eastern Europe to exchange programs, based on the principle of reciprocity, without paying any copyright. Even though ORIT was functioning, the system was replaced by mutual sales, and purchases of programs through license (Kroupa, 1994:100). During that time Romania purchased films through the InterVision program frequently. However, during the 1970s, television implement the socialist values and Romania define itself as a culturally Western country. This means that the import of foreign television series of films also included West European, USA and UK productions. Through these manifestations, the country marked its independence from the Soviet Union (Imre, 2016). Despite this, most of

[5] The active members were Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Soviet Union, Poland, Romania, Mongolia, and Finland (Nordenstreng and Varis, 1974).

the television shows were made locally, in accordance with the ideology of the Romanian Communist Party.

Speculating the technological development and the accessibility to television as a household good, Romanian began its political propaganda through the national broadcasting system. In the 1960s television contributed to the "ideological activity" under a new political vision that is different from the Soviet and closer to the Western culture (Matei, 2014: 10). The so called "Thaw Era in Romania" brought educational television after BBC standards and presented an exchange of televised content with Western countries on a cultural level (Mustață, 2012). Education through television was implemented in Romania in 1968 in a joint effort between Romanian Radio- Television and Ministry of Education. In accordance with the policy of the Communist Party, education through television represented a collective concept, due to its sociocentric approach (Pup, 2021). Television was an adjacent branch of education in the institutionalized environment (schools, high schools, universities) and aimed to reach as many people as possible. It was broadcast from 9 to 10 am, and it corresponded to the daily school schedule. Television programs incorporated and delivered content that complemented the classical school instruction in specific subjects, for students of all ages. Programs such as *Consultaţii pentru elevi, Teleşcoala, Universitatea TV* and foreign language course were some of the most emblematic symbols of early basis communist educational training programs.

In the 1970s, television enriched its grid with programs that offer technical and practical skills development (such as *Consultaţii Tehnice*), quiz shows for children (such as Ex-Terra), general knowledge programs (such as *Universul Şotron, Telenciclopedia*), civic issue programs (*Brăţara de Aur*) and science related programs (*România la Ora Atomului, Panoramic Ştiinţific*). A unique initiative in Romania introduced foreign language courses

in French, English, Spanish, German, and Russian at television. During the 1970s and 1980s, Romanian television began to develop educational programs that are in close relation with the viewer, engaging it an active participation that feed its emotional engagement (Imre, 2019). Most of the educational television shows were lessons structured as quiz shows or live interactions between the public and moderators. The academics that provide information in different shows were replaced by moderators that managed to create an emotional rope with the viewer. The straightforward propaganda was turning into camouflaged information, under animated images. Educational television was transforming slowly into an ideological training that was focusing more on "taste cultivation" that its roots from the idea of aesthetic education that was brought into all household (Imre, 2019). The 70s brought with it changes in terms of organization and censorship. Thus, Radio and Television Committee became National Council of Romanian Radio and Television. The name and the structure changed due to the will of implementation of a public platform that aimed to supervise the broadcasting content in television and radio. The newly established council took decisions about the public information shared in each televised program. The constituency of the National Council kept changing over the course of the 1970"s, which signaled that the rule of broadcasting in Romania had become a much more politically claimed area. Due to these changes, an inevitable decentralization of power generated negotiations between new formed social groups and power centers inside the Romanian Television that inevitably lead to constant change in television identity (Mustață, 2011) and program grid content. According to Irina Margareta Nistor (as cited in Dweyer and Uricaru, 2015) under Ceausescu's Political regime the kiss scenes lasted maximum three seconds in the movies and the explicit sexual scenes were deleted (in the case of foreign movies, those were deleted, or forbidden, in the case of Romanian film or televised production). These forms of visual

censorship were seen as modest behavior and meant to "discourage divorce and extramarital affairs" (p. 223). Also, there were no images of sexual minorities on television or films, such taste manifestations were banned by communism in daily life, and many end up imprisoned. Those kinds of manifestations were considered "deviations" from the social norms (Hegheduș, 2016/2019).

Loudis (2017, December 13) observes that in the 1980s Romania had an affinity for movie culture and point out to the illegally videocassettes of Western movies that have been pirated and dubbed. The underground movement was fueled by the people' desire to see what it was like abroad. Many of the spectators were paying more attention to the landscapes, the streets, the cars, or the food that was present in the movie's background than to the actual action of the film (Călugăreanu, 2015) Most of those kinds of movies were banned in Romania, so the illegal acquisition and dubbing was a priority for the movie fans. This was an illegal practice for the communist state, but despite this fact, some people still had courage to do it. The most emblematic figure for this movie dubbing was Irina Margareta Nistor. She was a movie translator at TVR, translating for the Ideological Commission (best known as the Censorship Commission) and at the same time she was translating and dubbing pirated cassettes of western movies. She translated and dubbed more than 3000 films and her voice remain emblematic for Romanians. Some viewers claim that the movies without the voice of Nistor were "weird" and that her voice on the video content meant the "original" (Călugăreanu, 2015- 39:54). Even though the translation for the dubbing of the tapes (VHS) was done in a hurry, Nistor had a personal ethic of translation. She often interpreted and commented on the movies, adding some sort of personal feeling toward what she was seeing. The swears were no exception. They were translated in the same way, every time as *"Du-te dracului"* (Eng. "Go to hell"), no matter how bad and long was the swearing. Dubbing illegal

films for Nistor was equal to the liberty of speaking. The fact that she could use without restriction words such as: “priest”, “God”, “Devil”, “communist”, “Santa Claus”, things that were linguistically banned, placed her in the lines of the resistant movement fighters.

In the mid-1980s, the television regime became isolated, broadcasting was drastically reduced, most of which was black and white, and the educational character of the television dropped and programs shaft to information news about communist party achievements. The second channel established in 1968 stopped operating in 1985. In the same year, the broadcasting hours were gradually reduced, from ten to eleven hours to only four to five hours a day on weekends and two hours on weekdays, not only for censorship reasons but also for economic reasons (Ban 2014, Murgescu 2010). American series *Dallas* was one of the last programs who survived in that period. It was broadcast on Saturdays but was harshly censored and shortened by the regime. (Imre, 2016). the only television show that was “neither elitist nor exclusivist” (Imre, 2016: 54) was *Teleenciclopedia*. Its content promotes scientific knowledge, in the form of short documentary which was many times voiced over and narrated by celebrities. The television program survived in the 1980s due to the balance that offer equal parts of general knowledge information, educational thematic and interactive structure (Mustață, 2011). Teleenciclopedia did suffered censorship, information regarding Kings of Romania or religion was banned (Dragomir, 2020, May 22). Absurd information regarding animal behavior in the wild was erased many times from the actual footage. A great example here is a squeal that was seen by the censorship committee as frivolous because was jumping from one tree to another (tvr.ro, 2016, November 3). Teleeciclopedia managed to survive for more than 55 years on the screen, and it is consider one of the most popular programs that TVR had in all its existence. Today, the show is broadcast for 1 hour every Saturday afternoon, and presents subject matter of every kind, without any restrictions.

1.1.2 Commercial Television and Evolution in the Television Market

In the period immediately following the Revolution of December 1989, ideological censorship was abolished and clandestinely "independent stations" were established the broadcast of "free programs" with the help of local broadcasting stations frequencies, cameras, and amateur videotapes. Many times, these programs were worthless by simply broadcasting indecent programs (Stavre, 2010). Because of the content as well as the equipment used, these TV stations were a failure and quickly disappeared from the media landscape.

Right after the revolution the newly formed government began the reshaping of the socio-political scene in "a democratic" matter. The power of media and television was seen at that time by the political class as "taboo and fetish" and culminated with the president Iliescu's statement that "television is too important and powerful to be given over the private interest" (as cited in Matei, 1993). Due to protests demanding the opening of new television stations, the government permitted the establishment of 17 local and regional stations in different cities such as Cluj, Iași and Timișoara, and transmit television programs with local content nationally. However, the high taxes for signal distribution and temporary broadcasting licenses lead to their failure (Mustață, 2011). Romanian television faced many accusations of censorship brought especially in the election campaigns, regarding the favoring of the ruling class, biased news broadcasting, program censorship and even political bias in the licensing process of private television channels (Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, 1994). In 1992 in Romania National Audiovisual Council[6] was founded in Romania. The

[6] In Romania, the National Audiovisual Council represents the regulatory authority in the field of audio-visual programs, ensuring the free expression and interest of the public. The National Audiovisual Council must ensure that television and radio stations comply with the rules on fair information, privacy, human dignity, and the protection of minors, all in accordance with the EU audio-visual laws.

Council was established as a public authority which functions under parliamentary control. The purpose of this entity was to regulate and encourage the development of a free audio-visual market in Romania, and its main activity is stipulated in the Audio-Visual Law[7]. Despite this fact, the government still maintained a monopoly on nationwide radio and television broadcasting until the mid-90s. The new constitution and political view held the public television under government control, until 1994, when the adoption of the law on the organization and functioning of the public radio and television, came under the control of Parliament (Abraham, 2016). TVR's editorial policy suffered turbulence and had opposite tendencies regarding its grid of programs. In the first place, TVR tried to find editorial solutions that worked in the service of the Romanian citizen. In the second place, TVR tries to approach its grid of programs at the standards of commercial television, with more modern programs, which was the most prominent movement that was done and continued after mid 90s when commercial televisions appeared. Stavre (2010: 35-36) note that this approach to modernization was played between two poles that "hides the incompetence of imagining programs that respond to the public television mission" and "the integration into the European Union standards that encourage the program purchases".

The emergence of private television companies in the Romanian audiovisual landscape has brought competition between several televisions, and increase the quality and attractiveness of the programs (Stavre, 2010). Acording to National Audio Visual Council Raport (2001), in the years following the appearance of the Broadcasting Law until the end of 2000 there were granted 235 broadcasting licenses via terrestrial transmitters, 2,523 licenses for cable broadcasting and 18 licenses for satellite broadcasting. Of these, some were canceled due to the non-use of the license, and a considerable number of companies

[7] Law no. 48/1992

that did not resist competition. Here is to note that no television was shut down directly in Romania. It is a fine line between fulfilling the mission in good faith, and the freedom of expression of opinions, guaranteed by the Constitution (Goga, 2017).

In 1991, the first private television channel appeared in Romania, SOTI (acronym for "Society for the Organization of an Independent Television"). It had 4 hours of broadcast daily and was seen as an alternative to state television. It managed to broadcast with TVR management approval on TVR1 frequency for few months (Stavre, 2010). After 3 years, in 1994, its broadcast license was withdrawn and thus the activity of SOTI television was ended (rador.ro, 2017). The trend of new private television continued with the establishment of Tele 7 abc in 1994; followed by PRO TV in 1995. Two years later, in 1997, the television station Prima TV appeared. And in 2007, Kanal D Romania was launched. This represented the first autonomous subsidiary of a foreign television, Kanal D Turkey.

In the 90s Romanian broadcasting system split the country in two big categories, urban and rural. This situation depends on the territorial coverage of media broadcasters. The national television had full coverage of the entire territory of Romania, compared to the private televisions which, although they grew exponentially in the 90s, mostly covered the urban area, leaving much of the rural segment uncovered. Moreover, the cable companies also had greater coverage in the urban environment, limiting the distribution in the rest of the country, except for Bucharest proximity. Thus, urban population had access to both public and private television, while rural areas remain connected to the public television. This discrepancy in Romanian broadcasting was emphasized by the split between national and transnational character of television channels. Private television stands as transnational, while the public television remains simply national in the public eyes.

The chances for a television to survive at the beginning of the 90s required a person with financial and technical means, that was ready to invest in high quality content, that was craved by Romanians. The first step in this sense was made by Dan Voiculescu, a businessman who invest massively in television through his media trust Intact Group. In 1993 his TV station Antena 1 was born and began with the broadcasting of news, events, and films. One year later, in 1994, Antea 1 opened its first local channel in Pitesti, mainly focused on local news. In the mid-90s the TV station accession began with its local television shows such as "*Dimineața Devreme*", "*Marius Tucă Show*"[8] and "*Duminica în Familie*". In 1998 Antena 1, rebranded and changed its graphics and its slogan into: *"Mereu Aproape"/ "Always near"*, which remains the same today. In 1999, Antena 1 exclusively broadcast the National Football Championship, being the first private station in Romania to broadcast domestic football. Starting with 2000s the station's TV shows diversify to target audience with shows such as "*Totul va fi bine*", "*Din Dragoste*", "*Cacealmaua*", "*Te pui cu blondele*" etc. Today, the trust owns the generalist Antena 1 channel, a news channel Antena 3, a magazine channel Antena Stars, a channel dedicated to films and series Happy Channel and a radio station, Radio Zu.

The most important international investment in Romanian mass media was undertaken by Central European Media Enterprises (CME)[9], a company founded in 1994 by the US Businessman Ronald Lauder with the aim of opening in post-communist Europe. CME took over the television channel Pro TV, part of Media Pro group created by Adrian Sarbu. It then bought most of TV and radio stations of the Media Pro Group, while Adrian Sarbu kept the most important news agency in Romania, Mediafax, which was founded in

[8] Marius Tucă's late night show, *"Millionarii de la Miezul Nopții"*/ (Eng. translation) *"Midnight Millionaires"* (re-branded as Marius Tucă Show) a resemblance of CNN's famous Larry King Show (which had as guests, personalities from Romania such as politicians, athletes, singers, intellectuals etc.)

[9] The company operates in six countries: Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia

1991. From its launch on 1 December 1995, Pro TV has become one of the most important television stations in Romania, with a major influence over its audience. The television station has been a national audience leader for many years, surpassing all other news channels (Pora, 2019). Since the mid-2000s, the station did not get involved in politics, gave up evening talk shows, and the debates in the election campaigns. However, the power of influence is remarkable as the news, reportages, and investigation have constantly supported freedom of expression and shaped the so-called "pro generation" of the 90s, now reaching adulthood (Pora, 2019). In 2014 the economic crisis has affected CME in Romania, on this account the television station was reorganized, and a considerable number of its journalists were either fired or left to go to competing stations (Abraham, 2016).

In the 2000s, so-called “trust media censorship” appeared in Romania (Ardelean, 2017). This means manipulating the press through journalistic work, and the information provided to the public. Because the media trusts in Romania are led mainly by politicians, or persons who have political influences and affinities towards a political party or a certain political group. The starting point of this tendency was represented by Adrian Nastase’s prime ministerial political mandate in 2000, when media had no benefit from fiscal advantage and survived only from direct sale. In consequence media owners invest in their media trust by affiliating with politics in exchange of different kind of advantages (e.g., finance sponsorship). This manifestation led to the distortion of public agenda and censorship in accordance with political affiliation. The report of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (2013) shows the financial instability of Romanian media market, which determined their vulnerability towards political parties. In this context, the 2010s are regarded as the years of the most inappropriate usage of media by the political class. In the last 20 years, manipulation of press and journalism happened in many media

trusts, conducting to the so called "media trust censorship", which caused serious legal problems for so called "rogue group" (Broucher, 2016: 177) trust owners[10] who were accused and judged (some still in trials) for blackmail, forgery, tax evasion, money laundering, embezzlement, and corruption. Following the famous cases of trust censorship and political manipulation of the integrity of journalists, the National Council of Audiovisual Law changed, and the authority council members can apply fines to television and radio stations for acts of censorship and editorial interferences (Mediafax, 2011). Today, the National Audiovisual Council punishes those who violate the Audiovisual Content Regulation Code. For example, TV channels are most often fined for violating the provisions of Articles 47(paragraph 3) and 40(paragraph 5), which stipulate that "program moderators, presenters and producers have an obligation not to use or allow guests to use abusive language or incite violence" (Vlad, 2021). Fines and public summonses are often applied to television stations that distribute false news or erroneous information on topics of public interest, to those who violate a person's rights and freedoms, by exposing their privacy and self-image without consent.

A major change for the Romanian public came on March 2007, when Kanal D Romania, part of Dogan Media International began its broadcasting. Since its launch, the television station differentiate itself in the market with an unusual approach of content that Romanians were never been exposed to, namely the Turkish TV series. In 2008, Kanal D was the first television station that included in its grid Turkish television dramas. The first

[10] Sorin Ovidiu Vântu, the owner of Realitatea - Catavencu media company, was convicted for blackmail and forgery. Dan Adamescu, the owner of Medien Holding Trust was sentenced to four years in prison for corruption. Adrian Sârbu, the ex-owner of MediaPro trust, was accused of tax evasion, money laundering, forgery, and embezzlement. Dan Voiculescu, politician, and the owner of Intact Media trust was sentenced to 10 years in prison for corruption. Sebastian Ghiţă, politician and the owner of Romania TV, was sent to Court for corruption and is currently being investigated. Dan Diaconescu, politician, and the owner of DDTV and OTV television stations, was sentenced to five years in prison for blackmail.

Turkish series that Romanians were able to watch was *Bin bir gece/1001 nights and* was broadcasted in prime time. The popularity of the TV station began in 2012 when Magnificent Century soap opera, had the highest ratings when aired, placing the broadcasting channel Kanal D in the preferences of many Romanians (Bunea, 2012, November 27). In 2022, Kanal D's program grid is still dominated by Turkish Drama (Media Fact Book, 2022). Within fifteen years of airing Turkish television series, Kanal D Romania managed to offer in prime time the most popular dizi's in Turkey, such as: *Asi* (2007- 2009), *Mühteşem Yuzyıl* (2011-2014), *Kösem* (2015-2017), *Fatmagül'ün Sucu ne?* (2010-2012), *Adını Feriha Koydum* (2011-2012), *Medcezir* (2013-2015), *Ezel* (2009-2011), *Bizim Hikaye* (2017-2019), *Öyle bir geçer zaman ki* (2010-2013), *Kara Sevda* (2015-2017), *Sen Anlat Karadeniz* (2018-2019), *Istanbullu Gelin* (2017-2019), *Paramparça* (2014-2017), *Vatanım sensin* (2016-2018) *Mücize doktor* (2019-2021) and many others, which became local favorites in public preferences. Beside the Turkish series, Kanal D also integrate along the years in its program grid international TV formats such as: *Who wants to be a Billionaire, Wheel of fortune, Survivor, Power of Love, 40 Questions*. With this market approach Kanal D Romania consolidate its 3rd position as a generalist broadcasting channel, having in 2021, 70,9% female audience for the broadcasted Turkish Dramas (Media Fact Book, 2022: 39-42).

Along with the increase in the rating for Turkish series and the increase in the preferences of Romanians towards watching the Kanal D television station, the competing media trusts (Media Pro and Intact Media), end up purchasing Turkish series. The broadcasting of these serials by the competitors was done at first, on the main television stations of the trust, respectively Pro TV and Antena 1. The first competitor station that bought Turkish series was Antena 1, which broadcast in prime time in 2011 the series *Lale Devri* (a1.ro, 2011). Three years later, in 2014, Pro Tv broadcast the series, *Kara Gul*, but

not in prime time, only in the afternoon at 2 o'clock (protv.ro, 2014). One year later, in 2015, Pro TV broadcasted the series *Sila*, this time in prime time - but only for four episodes- then the series was moved to Acasă TV, also in prime time (protv.ro, 2015). In short time, Turkish series increase in number on the niche TV channels, dedicated to women, namely Acasă TV, Acasă Gold and Happy Channel, but disappeared from the main competitors PRO TV and Antena 1. Today, this niche channels, continue to broadcast on the daily basis Turkish series in their program grid. However, beside the Turkish drama, the program grids contain American Drama, Latin soap operas, Bollywood series and Korean series.

Due to high interest in Turkish TV series, on the 5th of August 2019, a new international television began to operate in Romania, namely Timeless Drama Channel, owned by SPI International (a CANAL+ company)[11]. One year later, the TV station's name was changed to Timeless Dizi Channel (TDC). The television is airing only Turkish television dramas and the purpose of it is to familiarize the viewers with the Turkish serials. However, Romanian audience was already familiarized with Turkish series since 2008. Regardless, TDC did not brought any unicity with its content, as most of the series broadcasted by the channel were aired before by Kanal D. Viewers complains that TDC offers limited content and most of which is re-broadcasted multiple times (Robert, 2020).

Turkish drama aired in Romania is usually fragmented, so that an episode of two hours is sometimes split in two or three parts constituting separate episodes that are aired multiple times a week. In this way the public enter into a routine of watching, that merges into a strong bond between everyday life and the story on the small screen. The time fragmentation of television programs is profit-related, as commercials are inserted during

[11] SPI International (a CANAL+Company) is an international Media Company from Netherlands. It is specialized in content distribution and broadcasting worldwide, across 6 continents, with a number of 42 television channels, and digital products.

the broadcasting time. More commercials mean more income to the broadcaster, thus more quality investment in choosing the series to be aired.

The major surprise with this trend came in 2020, when the state television, TVR1, began to broadcast in prime time, for a couple of weeks, the Turkish historical miniseries *Seddübahir 32 Saat* (2016). With the same historical pattern as *Muhteşem Yüzyıl* successful TV series, TVR tried to raise the audience, by airing a more recent historical event, namely the Balkan Wars. Since then, no other Turkish series was broadcasted on national television channel. The most favorite television channel that offers Turkish series, remains Kanal D Romania. As a subsidiary of a Turkish holding, Kanal D's viewers rely on the quality of the productions offered by the television station.

In conclusion, the evolution of the television market in Romania has seen an upward trend since the mid-1990s. The appearance of commercial channels led to a fierce struggle to maintain a loyal audience and high ratings. The main commercial stations Pro TV, Antena 1 and Kanal D, through their broadcast content, have contributed to the polishing of Romanian cultural identity, which has become flexible and responsive to new global trends.

1.1.3 Online Television and Streaming Platforms

At the end of the 2000s, the evolution of new technologies in Romania led to the appearance of Internet television. These online televisions were "more advantageous" than classic televisions because users could configure their own schedule of programs, record movies and shows or retroactive viewing of some shows for 24 hours. The 2010s represented the emergence of streaming platforms for the Romanian media sphere. This "broadcasting hybridization" of the content contributed to the fusion between classic television and Internet

technology, in consequence the consumption patterns have changed (Stavre as cited in agerpres.ro, 2022).

In Romania the market abounds in streaming platforms, both from local and international providers. Most of the International Streaming platforms such as Netflix[12], HBO GO[13], HBOMax[14], Amazon Prime[15], Mubi[16], Disney Plus[17] are present in Romania since the mid 2010's. However, local streaming platforms do also exist since the beginning of the 2010s but gain popularity between Romanians only in the last years. According to PwC market analysis, in 2022 the streaming market in Romania has grown by 22 % (Fodor, 2022) in comparison with 2021. Therefore, we can conclude that Romanians are keeping up with technological trend and chose to watch streaming platforms as well as television.

One of the first available international streaming platform in Romania was Netflix in 2016, and six years apart, in 2022 continues to be on top preferences for Romanians (Media fact book, 2022). According to the audio-visual observatory, In Romania the top 3 SVOD players in subscriber count per national market[18] show that, the first place is taken by the global player Netflix with 40% of the total market. The second place is taken by the local Voyo, with 38% and the 3rd place is occupied by the global player Amazon with 21 % (Grace, 2021).

In Romania the most important media giants Media Pro, Intact Media and Dogan Media extend their division to the online content as well. In this regard, they approach the new technological trend with SVOD platforms with monthly subscription, online free

[12] Since May 2016 in Romania
[13] Direct to consumer SVOD platform, since 2017 in Romania (Marica, 2022)
[14] Since 2022 in Romania, replacing HBO GO service.
[15] Since December 2016 in Romania
[16] Since 2016 in Romania (Nicolae, 2022)
[17] Since July 2022 in Romania
[18] Romania has 1160 thousands OTT SVOD subscribers (Grace, 2021)

platforms with diverse content and YouTube channels. Thus, local streaming platform developed in the last decade, offering the viewer the opportunity to watch Romanian and foreign content such as films and TV shows on the platform as many times as they want, without advertising brakes. Some platforms offer the opportunity to choose between in advance content that can be watched further on television and original content that is available only on the streaming platform. The VOD platforms fee per month is relatively cheap, between 3 up to 15 euro. The prices vary within the functionality and the accessibility of the platforms such as: account with multiple users that can view content in the same time, possibility of downloading content to watch it offline, possibility of watching the same content many times, access to new TV shows and films from across the world, watching content before it's officially released and access to the account from various gadgets (television, laptop, tablet, smartphone) and location.

AntenaPlay is the online platform of the Intact Media Grup trust and was launched in 2013. It broadcasts all its TV channels (Antena 1, Antena Stars, Antena 3, Happy Channel, ZU TV, Antena international) live and other 3 exclusively digital channels of the trust, namely: Hello Taste, Antena Monden and Comedy play. The TV shows and TV series are available to be watched on the platform, in VOD system only after they have been broadcasted on TV. The content can be watched without commercial breaks as many times as the viewer wants.

Voyo[19] is an SVOD video content platform belonging to the media trust PRO and was officially launched in 2011, being the first SVOD and TVOD platform in Romania. However, Voyo is an international brand streaming platform, available with local versions

[19] Voyo is an international brand available with local versions and content in Romania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria, and Slovenia.

in Romania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria, and Slovenia. All local owned channels can be found on the platform, namely: PRO TV, Acasă TV, PRO TV International, PRO Arena, PRO Cinema, Acasă Gold and PRO TV News. The entire television content from the platform can be watched prior to the television broadcasting (with one day prior, and in some cases with one week prior), as many times as they want. Subscribers can watch also exclusively created digital shows[20], movies, series, full seasons of TV shows and Digital shows available just on the platform, concerts (e.g., UNTOLD), events (e.g., Oscar Awards, GOPO Gala) and not at least sports competitions. In summer of 2022, Voyo announce that they are producing *La Oraș*[21] the first Romanian online series exclusively for the VOD platform (Maria, 2022).

Dogan Media online division does not have any VOD platform, however, Kanal D's television content is available on YouTube platform, on Kanal D channel. Unfortunately, the Turkish TV series that are broadcasted by Kanal D are not available on the trusts official YouTube channels, but TV trailers of the upcoming episodes of are uploaded daily. The second YouTube channel with exclusive online shows is *theXclusive*, which provides exclusive online format content, created especially for online division. Here viewers have access to a variety of shows such as magazine, travelling, cooking and entertainment shows. Most of the online content is inspired and adapted after Turkish online formats. The third important YouTube channel is *WOWnews* and is focusing on magazine news shows and backstage videos from Kanal D TV shows. Dogan Media offers original digital content only on the YouTube platform, attracting many viewers and subscribers with free content.

[20] The first original VOD content made for Voyo was the "The Wrong Podcast", a weekly show of comedy where "impossible became possible" (Bunea, 2022).

[21] The series is a comedy and portrays the adventure of a village boy Doru, who moves to Bucharest to be a delivery boy. His plan is to make some money and get marry with his love of his life.

Public television in Romania must also be remembered in this evolutionary context. In 2012, TVR launched the beta version of the tvrplus.ro video platform. This platform allows viewers the opportunity to watch live, but also in the recorded version, all the channels of the public television station with the related content, free of charge. In 2012, TVR+ launched the first documentary made exclusively for the online environment and continued in the following years with the creation of exclusive content for the online environment. Over the years, this platform has broadcast live international events such as the World Football Championship, Eurovision, or the Olympic Games. The platform also includes archival editions of the communist period.

To conclude, the Romanian media industry infrastructure and the evolution of the internet have affected the production and consumption of audio-visual content in the last decade. In this context, the rise of local SVOD platforms, brought the expansion of specially created content by assuring an encapsulation of online and television programs, films and entertainment shows.

1.2 Romanian TV series and TV Adaptations

Ever since the development of television and cinema in Romania, original films, and series, but also adaptations of novels, plays, and short stories were developed. Television was born in the communist era, and although controlled by the political system, it developed in the same way as in other corners of the world. Adaptations of TV series reached their peak in the 70s, and then, with the restrictions began in 1985, entered into a period of stagnation which continued throughout the 90s. At this time the consumption habits focused on foreign productions that were screened massively on each television channel.

The boom in local television series and adaptations, inspired by Latin American stories, was recorded in the 2000s (when Romania produced scripted television content under the guidance of Ruxandra Ion and Valeriu Lazarov). Television productions have diversified with the passage of time, and the approaches have turned towards soap operas, sit-coms, action films, dramas, and comedies. The most popular and approached genre was the soap opera. Comănescu (as cited in Cheroiu, 2016) believes that Romanian telenovelas were so successful in the 2000s because they were the only television programs produced after the fall of communism and represented a "coherent phenomenon" that generated high ratings. Over the years, the market of scripted television adaptations has moved towards global trends such as British series and sitcoms, Nordic Noir series, American series, and Turkish dizi.

The recent rise in adapted TV scripted drama ordered by the local media outlets, such as Pro TV and Antena 1, or experienced international channels like HBO to the new streaming platforms like Netflix or Voyo, indicates that the industry began investing in adaptive drama practices. In this regard, this chapter discusses the evolution of television adaptations and scripted format content, from the first televised transmission in Romania to the present.

1.2.1 TV Series and Adaptations During Communism

Romanian television history is highly related with the field of adaptations since its early beginnings. With the first televised transmission, in 1956, Romanians were able to

watch the movie "*O noapte furtunoasă*"/ *"A stormy night"* (1942-dir. Jean Georgescu)[22] which represents a literature adaptation after I.L. Caragiale's play. The national identity spirit was always transposed on television with the help of literature adaptation, in the form of movies or television series. Today adaptation evolved and incorporated new elements in its creative processes, being a common form of entertainment, both in TV formats and TV series.

During the communist time, Romania produced many literature adaptations both in form of film and TV series. The inspiration for many TV adaptation series, stand in Romanian literature, as an impulse toward cultural identity. *Muşatinii* (1971, dir. Sorana Coroama Stanca) represents the first Romanian television serial made in Romania. It was adapted after the trilogy "*Apus de soare, Viforul and Luceafărul* (Rou.)/ *Sunset, Blizard and Star* (Eng.)" written by Barbu Stefanescu Delavrancea. The following years continue with other literature adaptations series such as *Cireşarii*[23] (*The Children on Cireșari Street*, 1972, dir. Andrei Blaier), *Toate Pânzele Sus!* (*Let's Sail!* 1976-78, dir. Mircea Muresan)[24], and *Fram* (1983, dir. Elisabeta Bostan)[25].

In the late 1970's Romanian directors and script writers also produced original TV series, being inspired by historical events and the roots of Romanian Identity. In this regard we can mention *Războiul Independenței*/ *Independence War* (1977, dir. Doru Nastase, Sergiu Nicolaescu and Gheorghe Vitanidis), which had a total number of 8 episodes. This

[22] The film *A Stormy Night* was filmed in the WWII circumstances and was released officially in 1942 in Romania. However, it was available in cinemas only in 1943. Due to the newly installed communist regime in 1947 the filmed was censored in 1953. All the cuts were made in accordance with communist ideology, and all the cut parts were lost forever.

[23] The series presents the story of a group of children who live in the same neighborhood. The series was adapted from the book with the same name written by Constantin Chiriță in 1956.

[24] The plot follows the ship "Hope" in its journey around the world. The series represent an adaptation from the book with same name written by Radu Tudoran in 1954.

[25] The plot has as main character a polar bear living in a circus. The series was adapted after the book with the same name, written by Cezar Petrescu in 1931

series stands as a remembers (again of one) of the first cinematic Romanian movies *Independența României/Romanian independence* (1912, dir. Aristide Demetriade and George Brezeanu). Even though, 60 years apart and under the strict control of communist regime, the same theme of identity is still recurrent in cinema and television industry. It correlates the fact that the Romanian cinematography is strong related with the formation of Romanian state and represents the basis of Romanian national identity. Whitin the appearance of television, the connection with the cinematographic sphere materialized in television series with similar themes. Also, another important TV series at that time was *Lumini și umbre/ Lights and Shadows* (1979, dir. Andrei Blaier, Mihai Constantinescu, and Mircea Muresan), again, a historical TV series written by Titus Popovici. The production has total number of 52 scripted episodes, but unfortunately only 36 episodes were filmed, and sadly 33 were aired (tvr.ro, 2019) because of the regime restrictions.

In the communist era, Romania engaged in co-production of films and television series with different countries of Europe, and mostly they represent adaptations from literature. In the late 1960s Romanian Cinema and Television industry was very interested in producing westerns. The approach to American culture materialized in communism under co-production with France and Germany for series of *Tom Sawyer* (1967, dir. Wolfgang Liebeneier and Mihai Iacob) and *Moartea lui Joe Indianul/ The death of Joe the Indian* (1968, dir. Wolfgang Liebeneier and Mihai Iacob), both adaptations after "*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*" by Mark Twain. The reconstruction of West American life scenes were shoot on Romanian land, in Danube Delta, because of the wild natural landscape that could fake the Mississippi river (Țuțui, 2013). Sergiu Nicolaescu, one of the most prominent film directors in Romania screened one movie (*The Prairie,* a 1968 French-Romanian co-production) and two series in the western genre (*Leather Stoking Legend*- a 1969 French-

West German and Romanian co-production; and *The Gold Rush*- 1975-1988 and Austian-West German, French and Romanian co-production) which were broadcasted in cinemas and television, both locally and internationally.

During socialist times, the import of foreign television series, which mostly were adaptations after famous novels and plays, was a common practice. Romanian audiences were able to watch BBC series such as *Elizabeth R* (1971, BBC) or *The Pallisers* (1974, BBC) and American films from the 1940s and the 1950s such as *Casablanca* (1942, dir. Michael Curtiz) and *Gone with the Wind* (1939, dir. Victor Fleming). The USA *Columbo* serial was also making sensation in the 1970s Romania, being one of the most popular and loved series. According to Iacob (2018) in the spring of 1974, the Bucharest regime decided to stop buying the *Columbo* series to save currency[26], thus the series was suspended from broadcasting.

The 70s brought imports of television series both from the Soviet Bloc, European Space, and the USA. Whether these imports were adaptations of famous novels or used an original script, Romanians appreciated these productions, and watched them regularly. However, the decrease in television content in the 80s led to a reduced broadcast of series and film productions. Nevertheless, Romanians in the areas near the borders continued to consume television content from neighboring countries through antennas. In the rest of the country, people continued to watch movies and series through illegally improvised cinemas.

[26] There were rumors concerning the fact that this situation had been caused by state censorship, which could lead to street protest. At that time Romanian government addressed the U.S. State Department and asked for a public announcement on videotape from *Peter Falk* to assure the Romanian audience that "no new episodes had been made" (Štětka, 2012: 110).

In conclusion, the audiovisual environment during the communist period enjoyed adaptations of famous novels during the glory years, either entirely produced by Romanian media professionals or in co-productions with European countries.

1.2.2 The Cultural Chaos of the 1990s

After the fall of Communism, Romanian television get into a phase of cultural liberalization, and the local film and series production was replaced with European and American productions. During the 90s the local television series were left behind as the public reached for the foreign films and TV series consumption.

However, local mini-TV series were still present in the Romanian space. One of this series is "*Ochii care nu se vad*"/ *Eyes that are not seen* (1994, dir. Dan Necșulea), an adaptation after the 1986 movie with the same name, directed by Dan Necșulea. The film was awarded at the international television film festival in Prague in 1986. Since the theme contained the premises of a larger scenario - the drama of a woman abandoned by her husband who tries to raise her children alone - the director decided to develop the idea into a mini-TV series (Coroiu, 1996). At the end of 1989, the TV series was almost ready, but due to the Revolution, filming was stopped and resumed only in 1994. The mini-series has 10 episodes, with a duration of 60 minutes each. The action takes place during and after communism (in democracy), and it presents the life of a family that loses two of its children during the Romanian Revolution of 1989. The mother begins an investigation to discover the culprits. To ease the pain caused by the loss of their children, the parents adopted twelve children from the orphanage. The series is a masterpiece of the Romanian film, reflecting the reality of the communist regime but also the obstacles of the society in transition to

democracy. The shadow of the past, responsible for the victims of the Revolution and the hope for a better future are the main themes in this post-communist television production.

In the 90s Romanian television series production was more absent than present. Television lack in Romanian TV series but produced documentary-series as remembering evidence of the past regime. In this regard we can mention the documentary mini-series productions such as *Revoluția Română în Direct/ Romanian Revolution Live* (1990, dir. Mihai Tatulici & Virgil Tatomir); *Rituri de Trecere/ Rites of Passage* (1991, dir. Stanca Ciobanu); *Memorialul Dureri/ The Memorial of Suffering* (1991-, dir. Lucia Hossu Longin); *Navetiștii Huilei/ Coal Commuters* (1992, dir. Camelia Robe) or *Vasele transcendenței/ Transcendent Vessels* (1994, dir. Ela Panait).

Both the artistic production of the series and the documentary mini-series present a television trend centered on the cultural hybridity in transition, taken from a Romania "haunted" by the traumas of the Revolution and the communist regime and the fight for a better future in the path to democracy.

In search for identity, and exploring the freedom won, Romanians choose to watch in the 90s, foreign TV series, especially American television productions. The most famous TV series in the 90s were: *Twin Peaks* (1990-1991, dir. Mark Frost and David Lynch), *Beverly Hills 90210* (1990-2000, dir. Darren Star), *Saved by the bell* (1989-1992, dir. Sam Bobrick); *The Bundy Family* (1987-1997, dir. Michael G. Moye and Ron Leavitt), *X-Files* (1993-2002, dir. Chris Carter), *Baywatch* (1989-2001, dir. Michael Berk, Douglas Schwartz and Gregory J. Bonann), *Full House* (1987-1995, dir. Jeff Franklin), *Merlos Place* (1992-1999, dir. Darren Star) and may others that were broadcasted by both national and private televisions.

The consumption of Latin-American soap opera also roots for the 90s, when Romanians could watch: *Esclava Isaura/ Isaura: Slave Girl* (1976, dir. Herval Rossano) a Brazilian telenovela adapted after Bernardo Guimarães novel with the same name; *Maria Teresa* (1972, dir. Grazio D' Angelo); *Kassandra* (1992, dir. Grazio D'Angelo and Olegario Barrera) *Marimar* (1994, dir. Beatriz Sheridan); *Perla Negra* (1994, dir. Nicolas Del Boca and Gaita Aragona); *Esmeralda* (1997, dir. Karina Duprez, Marta Luna and Beatriz Sheridan); *El privilegio de amar* (1998-1999, dir. Miguel Córcega, Monica Miguel and Ernesto Contreras) and many others.

We must remember that the basis of Latin American telenovelas are the famous novels of writers such as Delia Fiallo, Yolanda Vargas Dulche or Caridad Bravo Adams. The love stories of these novels became so popular that TV adaptations were frequently made in Latin America, then imported all over the world. For example, *Los ricos también lloran* (1979-1980, dir. Rafael Banquells and Fernando Chacón) has a remake, *María la del Barrio* (1995-1996, dir. Beatriz Sheridan and Marta Luna) as the story develops the same plotline. The productions were all the time embraced with enthusiasm by the Romanian public. Romanians were not bothered to watch the same stories adapted multiple times as long as the mirage of freedom made them enjoy everything that was foreign and broadcasted on local television, whether public or commercial.

1.2.3 The 2000s and The Boom of TV Production

With the popularity of Latin-American soap operas among women in Romania, Media Pro decided to establish a niche channel that would exclusively broadcast these series. Ruxandra Ion was the one who founded in 1998 the television station Acasă TV, part of the

Media Pro trust. The newly launched channel also needed the local spirit of Romania, inspired by Latin-American products success, and thus the first Romanian telenovelas, produced by Ruxandra Ion, were born. Inspired by the popularity of soap operas, the first Romanian telenovela, *Numai Iubirea* (2004-2005, dir. Iura Luncașu) was launched on Acasă TV, in prime-time and had a number of 100 episodes, each 60 minutes long and the soundtrack of the series, was a Latino song performed by the Romanian singer Pepe. This series was a national phenomenon, and an indisputable market leader, in all segments of the population, surpassing the audiences of American films and TV series (Badea, 2012). For this reason, the producers organized the caravan "Numai Iubirea". Within four months, the caravan visited 6 cities, and fans of the soap opera could meet and interact with the actors and participate in the music show organized for them (Vulpescu, 2005). The following years, Ruxandra Ion continue to produce for Media Pro local telenovelas such as: *Lacrimi de Iubire* (2005, dir. Iura Luncașu), *Păcatele Evei* (2005, dir. Adrian Batista), *Iubire ca-n filme* (2006, dir. Iura Luncașu), *Îngerașii* (2008-2009, dir. Vladimir Anton, Mihai Brătilă, and Bogdan Dumitrescu), *Aniela* (2009, dir. Iura Luncașu) the first Romanian epoque telenovela and *Iubire și Onoare* (2010, dir. Camelia Popa and Iura Luncașu) a telenovela with an oriental plot.

Meanwhile, Valeriu Lazarov produced for Antena 1 channel, *Secretul Mariei* (2005, dir. Enrique Acosta) soap-opera, in co-production with La Dolce Vita Production[27]. The telenovelas' script was written by the Argentinian Claudio Lacelli, based on an idea by Gabriel Corrado, especially created for the Romanian media market (Stamatescu, 2005). The series was initially planned to have 40 episodes, but due to the high ratings, the series was completed with 115 episodes (adevarul.ro, 2006). The following year, Lazarov produced

[27] Spanish production company, owned by Valeriu Lazarov

another successful telenovela for Antena 1, namely *Vocea Inimii* (2006, dir. Mihai Bauman and Doina Zotincă), which was detached leader in the prime time (jurnalul.ro, 2006).

With the integration into the European Union, the Media Pro trust and Ruxandra Ion produce for Romanians the series with the Roma minority as protagonists. The Romanian public was immediately conquered by the series *Inimă de Tigan* (2007, dir. Alexandru Fotea, and Iura Luncașu), Regina (2008, dir. Iura Luncașu, Alexandru Fotea, and Laurențiu Maronese), *State de România* (2009, dir. Iura Luncașu) and *Moștenirea* (2010-2011, dir. Mihai Brătilă, Iura Luncașu, and Laurentiu Maronese). The same plot continues with the adventures of Potcovaru family in two movies: *State de Romania-Student la Sorbona* (2009, dir. Laurențiu Maronese and Iura Luncașu) and *State și Flacăra în vacanță la Nissa* (2010, dir. Laurentiu Maronese and Iura Luncasu). Due to high ratings and local success, Ruxandra Ion's telenovelas and TV series managed to be sold abroad in countries such as Turkey, Bulgaria, Serbia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Croatia, Bosnia Hertegovina, Montenegro, Latin America (Mexico, Columbia, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Chile, Bolivia, Peru) and USA (Mediafax.ro, 2011, February 3). On the international market, these series were watched in their original form, but also adapted in a local form in various countries.

The 2000s represented a period of deceleration of television productions. We are talking about a boom in Romanian television series that have stood out in the domestic landscape. In addition to the telenovelas produced by Ruxandra Ion and Valeriu Lazarov, Romanian television stations also broadcast local productions of sitcoms, dramas, thrillers, and action series. The most famous sitcoms in the 2000s were *La Bloc* (2002-2008, Radu Dragomir, Razvan Săvescu, and Daniel Sandu) which managed to have 13 seasons in 6 years; and *Trăzniții* (2003-2020, dir. Misu Marinescu, Melia Cherches, Mircea Dumitrescu) which was the longest running series that Romania ever had. In the action genre we can

mention *Băieți buni* (2005, dir. Bogdan Barbulescu, Laurentiu Rusescu and Theodor Halacu-Nicon), a TV series inspired by American movies, where the Romanian police conflicts with local gangsters. Another TV series, with police produced in the mid-2000s is first Romanian Thriller *Martor fără voie* (2006, dir. Andy Lupu) based on the famous writer and criminologist Traian Tadin's books. The story follows crime events that occur in a paranormal side.

Medical drama series were part of the Romanian landscape, also inspired by American series such as Grey's Anatomy or Chicago Hope, local broadcasting networks produced *La Urgență* (2006-2007, dir. Andrei Zinică) and *Doctori de mame*/ *Mothers and Doctors* (2008, dir. Craig Lines, Shani Grewal, and Peter Kerek). The two series portray the life of Romanian doctors and their struggle to save lives.

Inspired by Argentinian TV series, Romania produced a romantic-comedy *Om Sarac Om Bogat* (2006, Virgil Nicolaescu, Peter Kerek and Anca Colțeanu), an adaptation of the famous Argentinian series Los Roldan (2004-2005), produced by the national Argentinian television Telefe. Like its original version, the Romanian adaptation was an absolute success. Although it was not broadcasted in prime time, the series was the audience leader among the urban audience (Torok, 2006).

UK sitcom was another TV series genre adapted in Romania for PRO TV in 2012, namely, *Tanti Florica* (2012, dir. Ben Kellert, Bogdan Dumitrescu, and Florin Calinescu) adaptation after *Mrs. Brown's Boys*. The series gained popularity very fast and registered high ratings in prime time.

The first attempt of adapting a Turkish drama in Romania was the series *Voință de femeie* (2008, dir. Bogdan Danelopol), and was broadcasted by Kanal D. However, at that

time Kanal D was in its early stages of evolution. Hence, the series did not had high ratings and the idea of adaptation was dropped off.

The television series produced in the 2000s, whether adapted or not, represented a local alternative to the consumption of foreign series and films. Although the Romanian productions at that time did not rise to the level of Hollywood ones, Romanians watched them with joy, empowered by the feeling that Romanian television channels did something similar in subject to a foreign product, but adapted to the local socio-cultural reality. In fact, in the 2000s the media rarely talked about television series adaptations, thus everything produced was considered original.

1.2.4 New Perspectives: Adaptations Since 2010s

At the beginning of 2010s Ruxandra Ion put the basis of the first Romanian Musical Project Lala Band, into a TV Series, named *Pariu cu Viața* (2011-2013, dir. Iura Luncașu, Alexandru Fotea, and Alexandru Borundel). The series presents the adventures, love stories and family bonds of a talented group of teenagers from the National High School of Performing Arts in Bucharest, which have in common the passion for music. Lala band have become the idols of thousands of teenagers in Romania. The success of the project contributed to the creation of an online radio station "Lala Radio" and a show on the radio station Pro FM, named "Lala Nation". Two years after the launch, the band released 5 albums, had 3 national tours, and over 60 concerts around the country (Protv.ro, 2013). In 2014 the project continued with *O nouă viață* (2014, dir. Alexandru Fotea and Mihai Brătilă) TV series, in the genre of musical telenovela, and represents the spin-off the *Pariu cu Viața* TV series.

After Romania joined the EU, many Romanians decided to work in the European space to ensure a better future for the children left at home in the care of relatives or strangers. Inspired by the reality of the 2010s, Ruxandra Ion produced the series *Îngerii pierduți* (2013, dir. Bogdan Dumitrescu and Laurentiu Maronese). The actual scenario of the TV series is inspired by the stories presented on the Pro TV national campaign, "Do you still know what your child is doing?".

Between 2014-2015, due to the economic crisis installed in the televisions and the negative feeding of the public with internal problems, the televisions in Romania are facing the deterioration of the public image, having as background the arrests of the owners of the media trusts. As a result of these events, Romanian televisions switched to a phase of "the total tabloidization" that "created an abnormal break" in television series productions due to "the lack of courage of the management" to invest in such audio-visual products (Ruxandra Ion as cited in Bărdașu, 2017).

In the following years, tabloidization was speculated by some television stations that gave the green light to TV series based on this trend. The tabloidization in Romania is present in TV series, usually inspired by real life characters. One of the best examples here is the comedy TV series *Baieți de Oraș* (2016-2018, dir. Dan Petrican) which gained popularity in the mid-2010s. The series got inspired by pamphlet TV Show, *În puii mei* (2009-2018, dir. Emanuel Parvu), where the actors imitate people from Romanian society (whether they were popular from tabloid TV shows or internet viral videos) and the show was split in mini-series episodes with different personalities each.

Since 2017, Romanian television stations gradually recover and start again to approach local productions in terms of television series. With the new television project Happy Channel, Ruxandra Ion began the production of local series in trend with global

movements. "*Când mama nu-i acasă*" (2017, dir. Ruxandra Ion) is the first Romanian series filmed entirely with the mobile phone. The series had a unique approach with a 360-degree coverage, being the first integrated product on TV, Online and social media, and represents a novelty from the technical point of view (Puișor, 2017) in the Romanian television market. Following the same plot, Ruxandra Ion launched the TV series "*O gramadă de caramele*" (2017-2019) which represents the sequel of "*Când mama nu-i acasă*". The TV series had three seasons and each of them had 8 episodes.

Meanwhile, In the 2010s, the HBO channel was already available in Romania on a subscription basis from cable or satellite distributors. For an additional 10 dollars paid to the cable subscription, Romanians could have access to newly released films and series form USA and Europe. Because the subscriptions were growing each year HBO decided to invest in local European production. Therefore, in the 2010s, The Romanian HBO series production began. This represents an impetus and fresh start for the development of television production market in Romania. The series usually reflect upon the Romanian society after 1989 with its "traditions and country specific circumstances" (Eichel and Keszeg, 2021: 115).

Romania adapted and produced with HBO famous Nordic Noir TV dramas such as *Valea Muta* (2016, dir. Marian Crisan) after the Norwegian "Eyewitness/ Øyevitne"; Israeli TV drama: *Rămâi cu mine* (2013, dir. Constantin Popescu and Mihai Bauman) after Israeli series "Matay nitnashek", În derivă (2010-2012, dir. Constantin Popescu, Adrian Sitaru, and Titus Muntean) after "BeTipul" series, *Umbre* (2014-2017, dir. Bogdan Mirică and Igor Cobileanski) after the Australian TV drama "Small Time Ganster".

În derivă, the adaptation of the Israeli *BeTipul* series, was the first adaptation of HBO in Romania. Even though in 2010 the psychotherapy was a practice well known abroad,

Romanians were not familiar with this thematic. Thus, the production represented a challenge for the Romanian team to transpose a psychotherapy session into a series (Buzas, 2010). However, the production was more expected by the Romanian public because of the well appreciated Romanian actor Marcel Iures (famous for Hollywood movies roles that he had).

The adaptation of *Small Time Gangster* in Romania as *Umbre* switched not only the story to the local pattern, but also the genre too. As the Australian production is a soap opera comedy, the Romanian version is a "mix of crime, social realism and irony" (Batori, 2018).

In the same decade, for HBO international, original Romanian TV series were produced, and broadcasted. We must mention here *Deschide ochii/ Open your eyes* (dir. Iura Luncașu, 2016), *Hacklerville* (2018, dir. Igor Cobileanski and Anca Miruna Lazarescu) and *Bani Negri/ Tuff Money* (2019-2020, dir. Daniel Sandu). All HBO Romanian Tv series productions have as directors professionals form the Romanian New Wave Cinema. The movies directed by them received high appreciation by international audience and this materialized in cinematic international prizes. HBO Romanian productions opened the gate to the European Market and introduce internationally not only the movies but also the TV series produced by the Romanian New Wave Cinema directors.

The same famous New Wave Cinema directors, create for Pro TV the series, *Profu'* (2019-2021, dir. Iura Luncașu and Letiția Roșculet) adapted after the German series "Der Lehrer". The production was appreciated by the young generation as it presents the Romanian high school life, teenagers' problems, and promotes education.

Starting with 2018, the media trusts speculated to the maximum on Turkish series and chose to invest in adaptations of the most successful series broadcast by Kanal D over

the years[28]. Furthermore, with this new approach, the time length per episode also changed. If in the 2000s the television series were conceived as 45-60 minutes time length per episode, Turkish adaptations into Romanian market expand the time length of the television series at around 90 minutes for each episode, as audience get used to the market pattern. This new length for local television series can also be attributed to financial and government involvement and support. In 2018, the Government launched a support program for the cinematographic industry in Romania. This project involves aid for companies whose main objective is the production of films and television series. Through this program PRO TV received from the Government 4,2 million lei, approximately 1 million euro to produce the second season of *Vlad* series. The received money constitutes only 35% of the entire budget for production (Bunea, 2019). As a parallel, ten years ago, the Ezel series had an estimated budget of 30,000 euro for an episode. In 2018, the Vlad production, adaptation of the Turkish series, Ezel, invested for the first season the amount of 200,000 euro per episode, reaching the amount of 2.6 million euro for the 13 episodes of the first series (Surmei, 2019).

In conclusion, the 2010s represented a period with fluctuations in terms of television productions and adaptations. If in the first years of the decade there was a trend towards musical-telenovela series, which culminated in large-scale concerts of the bands launched in the series, in the middle of the decade we have a major crisis in Romanian audiovisual on commercial channels. Only the premium channel HBO had the courage to invest in several series adaptations. Starting with 2017, the media market for television productions begins to

[28] So that Pro TV chose to adapt the Turkish series *Ezel* and *İçerde* (TV series broadcasted in Romania by Happy Channel), and Antena 1 decided to make an adaptation based on a famous Turkish novel and TV series with the same name *Aşk-I Memnu* and *O Hayat Benim* TV series. From the point of view of the series chosen for adaptation, Pro TV pursues productions based on the combination of action (with the involvement of the local mafia and the police) braided with love stories, meanwhile, Antena 1, followed the romantic-comedy drama pattern. A detailed analysis of these adaptations in the Romanian cultural space is presented in the third chapter of this thesis.

recover, and from 2018, the commercial channels are oriented towards the adaptation of Turkish series.

1.3 Non -Scripted Adaptation in Romanian Television Market

In the 90s Romania stand in a phase of transition, characterized by local format productions, made after western patterns. Game shows with colossal gains and talk shows were among the favorite programs for the viewers.

In the 90's and early 2000's producers start to invest in global formats of different genres, due to the high ratings that were registered abroad. The producers took the risk of adapting new television formats and bringing something new to the audience that was limited to the values imposed by the communist regime. In Romania, the hybridity between global and local formats has led to the creation of new cultural and identity patterns that the public has acquired over time. Consequently, the local mentality goes toward global behaviors, inspired by the technological evolution, the films, and series to which the Romanians had access in the last thirty years.

Screening television formats in the global era rise Romanian public expectations that began to want diverse and entertaining content in each program. The ideal television show must have every form of entertainment, diverse challenges, suspense, adrenaline, and emotion. Therefore, producers are challenged to come up with new ideas, incorporated in old or newly purchased television formats; but also, to be sellers of local original production in the global market.

1.3.1 Early Beginnings

Strongly influenced by the television program that were broadcasted before 1989, in the 90s, Romanian televisions integrated into their program schedule genres of shows that they lacked during the years of communism, namely talk shows and quiz shows.

At that time, the television shows in Romania were inspired by American TV shows, for example, the late-night show *Chestiunea zilei (The matter of the day)* presented by Florin Calinescu, a talk-show that gathered thousands of people in front of the TV in the mid-90s, was a reinterpretation of the long-lasting American program *The Tonight Show*. Even Marius Tucă's late night show, *Millionarii de la Miezul Nopții (Midnight Millionaires)* rebranded as *Marius Tucă Show* represents a resemblance of CNN's famous *Larry King Show*. In the last couple of years late night talks show have started to be rarer, and the ones that remained on the commercial televisions program grid are different from the ones in the 90s and are constructed after the tabloid pattern (e.g., *Xtra Night Show*).

Quiz shows introduced a new element for Romanian viewers, namely the possibility of winning. Adapted under a foreign license, *Robingo* was the first quiz where Romanians had the chance to win large sums of money. Due to the popularity, the show was incorporated later, in the New Year's program and thus a Romanian became millionaire in the night between years. Similar shows with higher earnings than those from *Robingo* in the 90s were *Știi și Câștigi* and *Te uiți și câștigi*. From the 2000s until nowadays similar television programs that offered prizes and winnings based on general culture questions popular and we can mention here *Roata Norocului*/*Weel of Fortune* (1997, 2012-), *Veri să fii Milionar*/ *Who wants to be a Billionaire?* (2000-2014; 2018-2019), *România Câștigă*/ *Win Your Country* (2017-) *Te pui cu Blondele*/*Beat the Blondes* (2008-2017); *Prețul Corect*/ *The Price*

is Right (1997-2000, 2009-2010, 2021-), *Ce Spun Românii*/ *Family Feud* (2015-), *The Wall-Marele Zid*/ *The Wall* (2017-2020), *Tu urmezi*/ *Next One*/*Avanti un Altro!* (2022-).

The mid 90's up to the beginnings of 2000's represent a big step to television programmes. A great impact for this step had Valeriu Lazarov[29] which with his global vision create and produce for the Romanian public new enetertainment programs, that were unique as content. One of the greates example here is the TV show *Surprize Surprize*/ *Surprizes, Surprizes*, which for 9 years it was one of the most popular television shows in Romania. In the first years after its launch, the show broke the audience records in the country among all the TV shows (Mirică and Lupu, 2008, February 15). The basic element of the program was the reunion of close people such as relatives, lovers or friends, whom distance or material shortages had separated them for a long time. The meetings were a surprise for one of the participants, as he was often overwhelmed by the situation and gave free rein to the externalization of emotions. Another section of the program which contributed significantly to high raitings was the artistic dimension most of the time as a mini live televised concert of international artists. During the nine years of the show, international personalities such as Bonnie Tyler, Demis Roussos, Richard Clayderman, Larry Hagman have appeared on stage delighting millions of viewers.

Between 1995 to 2000 the Romanian television media was characterized by television programs made after the west television models (e.g., *Wheel of Fortune, The price*

[29] Valeriu Lazarov is considered to be one of the most important television developers. He offered to the Television industry a new filming technique, named "zoom technique". As he explained, the zoom filming technique as it '*makes you feel just dizzy as if you were on a rollercoaster, or even more so'*. Goddard (2013) point out how important the concept of leisure was in Lazarov's world. He was one of the Romanian TV producers that guided the trends and helped Romanian television industry to find its path in rediscovering the national identity through an international popular culture. Lazarov's importance in Romania was gained in the 90s when he started to produce television formats for the Romanian national Television Channel (TVR) but also for commercial Romanian televisions channels. His Zoom technique was integrated in almost all the shows that he produced. Many of his TV shows were broadcasted for more than 8 years in a row and gained the highest audiences in the 2000's. For Romania Valeriu Lazarov produced TV entertainment shows such as: *Surprize Surprize, Din Dragoste, Iarta-mă, Genialii, Babilonia.*

is right) or simply foreign formats broadcasted in the original form (e.g., *Ford Boyard, The Oprah Winfrey Show*). The invasion of new television series and programs placed Romania into a multicultural world, that had access to worldwide productions from countries such as Italy, Spain, France, Germany, UK and USA, every day.

National television stations opened the gate to multidimensional television programs. In the mid-90s up to 2000s, Romanians watched music shows for example, *Școala Vedetelor/ The school of celebrities*. For about an hour, every week, some teenagers, appeared in a musical show and sang well-known songs, in English, or some of their own creation, in Romanian language. The foreign songs always had subtitling, which made the show more attractive to watch and learn. This generated a great impact in everyday lives of Romanians. As teenagers and adults watched those types of programs, language comprehension began to grow, and people were able to understand better foreign languages. Another music television show famous on the late 90s and early 2000s was *Alo, generația Pro/ Hello, Pro Generation*. The show was first broadcast live then registered and transmitted. The program included music and a sort of blind date between participants, that compete to win mobile phones and local vacation.

The 2000s were the time of culture shock for many Romanians. One of the television shows that scandalized the entire Romania with indecent attitude was Big Brother (aired by Prima TV) and at its time was considered a failure by many viewers. Daniela Zeca-Buzura, who has studied the scant online forum discussions on *Big Brother* Romania, notes that approximately 78% of the participants addressed the format's poor fit with the Romanian public (2007, 119). For the viewers was very difficult to identify with the behavioral patterns, which were unacceptable at that time: cameras being 24/7 on contestants, even in the bathroom- where they had no privacy and they had to shower with the bathing suits on

(Bardan, 2012). Furthermore, as Bardan notes, some participants who were very much aware of the producers' concerns, they started walking around the house naked, were less conscious of their gestures and did not shy away from having sex. This caused the national authorities to sanction publicly the producer of the show and the broadcasting channel. Even the Romanian Orthodox Church expresses its outrage.

With the pass of the years, Romanians learned to be open minded by having access to a lot of abroad TV shows, which changed their mentality and embrace taboo behaviors. Today, the show *Insula Iubirii/ Temptation Island* is one of the best examples of this kind. Having similar concept, boys and girls living together on an island, this time separated by their loved ones and living with new opposite sex mates they try not to fall in love and not to betray their beloved ones. The show has been broadcast by Antena 1 and Antena Stars since 2018. The rating of first episode the show in 2018 for the commercial public was the highest, with 8,4%, which situated the TV show at the same rating point as the *Vlad* series on Pro TV channel (Bunea, 2019). In the early 2000s a similar show with *Temptation Island* was *Vara Ispitelor/ Temptation Summer*. The only thing that was different at that time was the filming location and the budget. The show was filmed in Romania, at the seaside, not in Thailand's Islands. Cultural differences and identity patterns made the 2001 production less popular between Romanians that were scandalized by the contestants' behaviors. Comparing it with Big Brother, the show did not expose explicit content in terms of sexuality and privacy. Mona Segall (as cited by Bunea, 2016), the producer of *Vara Ispitelor* claimed that she manipulated what was on the screen, she felt that "everything that was happening was out her hands and it was her decision to let it be like that" (as cited in Bunea, 2016).

In conclusion, the first 15 years after the fall of communism brought major changes in the approach to television shows. State and commercial television brought to the public

shows and trends that contributed to the formation of a new cultural identity, based on Western values. The public has become receptive to the new trends in the market and the flexibility of approach and adaptation has brought gains to the broadcasters who compete in maintaining a loyal audience.

1.3.2 Evolution of Television Shows

With the advent of commercial television in Romania, the implementation of foreign television productions spread, and thus the local versions of international formats entered the program grid of newly formed television stations.

The acquisition of international formats in Romania has a constant growth since the emerge of commercial television channels. In this regard the most powerful television in Romania, namely the top leaders PRO TV and Antena 1 struggle to get license for the most popular television shows, which were in competition for the prime-time supremacy.

Got Talent, the TV Format developed by Simon Cowell in 2005, was licensed in Romania in 2011 as *Românii au Talent* (2011-). Since then, the *Românii au Talent* represents the most popular TV show in Romania, and it is also one of the most long running television show in the country, being present in PRO TV program grid at least once a year. Mona Segall (as cited in Stănciulescu, 2020) described it as "the perfect television format" because it encapsules everything that the public want to see.

Music related programs always have been appreciated by the public, as the interpretations of popular songs, from different musical genre transmitted emotions and the possibility to won prizes and fame. At the beginning of 2011 PRO TV began broadcasting *Vocea României* (2011-) after the international format *The Voice*, meanwhile, Antena 1

began broadcasting *X Factor* (2011-) after the British show *The X Factor*. The competition between the two TV channels, go further with the airing at the same time those programs. However, the rating showed that the Romanians preferred Vocea României over X-factor (Obae, 2014). Over the years the two television channels tried new music programs formulas, such as *The Four: Battle for Stardom*, or simply *The Four*. This was a format produced by the British Israeli Company Armoza Formats and was firstly aired in January 2018 in USA. Few months later, on 31st of March 2018, the TV show has its premiere in Romania, as the format licensed for Antena 1. Pro Tv tried it's best with *Super Star Romania*, the local version of the foreign franchise *Idols/ Pop Idol*, broadcasted in 2021 and also *Masked Singer Romania*, local version of international format masked Singer, broadcasted since 2020.

Cooking shows are also popular in Romania since the beginning of 2010s. The trend in international formats adapted on the local market started with PRO TV who broadcasted *MasterChef* (2012-) in prime time. However, its popularity began decreasing after season 3. In 2014 when the jury members (Sorin Bontea, Florin Dumitrescu and Catalin Scărlătescu) left for Antena 1, which began broadcasting *Iadul Bucătarilor/ Hell's Kitchen*. Since 2016, Antena 1 purchased the license for another famous cooking show, *Chefi la Cuțite*/ *Game of Chefs* and continued the collaboration with the three famous chefs.

On the opposite pole, the appearance of Kanal D in Romania led the popularity of Turkish television formats. In addition to the trend seller novelty of Turkish series, Kanal D introduced in its grid Turkish entertainment TV shows such as: *Bravo ai Stil* (2016-), the Romanian version of the Turkish format *Bu Tarz Benim* rebranded in Turkey as *Iste benim stilim* – which was the most popular fashion related show since the mid 2015s; *Jumatea mea știe* (2013) after the Turkish format *Ben Bilmem Eşim Bilir*; the international format

produced in Turkey *Puterea Dragostei*/*The Power of Love* (2018-), rebranded in Romania in 2022 as *Casa Iubirii* (The house of love); the game show *Jocul Cuvintelor* (2022) after the Turkish TV format *Kelime Oyunu* and not at least the talk show in the form of an interview *40 de întrebări cu Denise Rifai* /40 Questions with Denise Rifai (2020) made after Turkish format *40*.

Since 2018 Romanians enjoy watching sport entertainment shows. In this regard we can mention *Exathlon România* (2018-2019), which was broadcasted by Kanal D and represented a television show made by Turks and sold internationally. The format is based on the model of the American TV format *Survivor*; however, it has major changes to how it is played, how competitors are eliminated and how the game is won. In 2020, the show was re-branded as *Survivor*, and it has the same Turkish version for it. Two years later, the show changed the TV station, now broadcasted by Pro Tv. In the same register, we can mention television competitors aired programs, namely *Ninja Warrior* (2020); *Ultimul trib/ Nomads (2018)*; *Sunt celebru. Scoate-mă de aici/ I'm a celebrity. Get me out of here* (2015; 2022-). In the same genre, another famous game show that is currently broadcasted in Romania is *Asia Express/ Peking Express* (2018-), with a change of location for 2022 and re-branded as *America Express* (2022).

Other international television shows adapted in Romania and with high rating popularity were: *Dansez pentru Tine* / *Dancing with Stars* (2006-2013); *Dancing on ice/ Dancing on Ice: Vis in Doi* (2022-); *Te cunosc de undeva* (2012-) is the Romanian version of the show *Your face sounds familiar*; *Next Star* (2013-2021) – talent show for kids and many others.

The Romanian media space has demonstrated over time that it is capable to adapt and produce large-scale international formats, either guided by the format bible or guided

by foreign specialists. During the last decade, Romania produced original television formats that managed to be propose and sold at prestigious international festivals. Currently, Romania has four local productions that were sold abroad.

In the early 2010s Romania began exporting original Television formats around the world. The first Romanian TV format sold abroad was Prima TV's program *Miss Fata de la Țară/ Miss Country Girl*. The format was bought by ViaSat Broadcasting, owned by Swedish Media Conglomerate Modern Times Group, and was distributed to Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Slovenia, Czech Republic, and Ghana. The program presents local celebrities in search of authentic beautiful girls. Throughout the show, the contestants are subjected to various competitions to show their abilities, and the most skilled among them will obtain the title of Miss Country Girl.

M-a făcut mama artist or Mom made me a Star/ Got what it takes is the second TV format that was sold abroad. The program is dedicated to children between the ages of 7 and 12 who want a career in music. Their musical performances are analyzed by a jury of four celebrities. The format was taken over by Marble Media for North American countries distribution, and in the UK the format was acquired by British public television.

In 2017 a Romanian quiz show, *România Câştigă*/ *Win Your Country* was sold to North America (USA and Canada) and optioned for France. The program is a competition between contestants who have to answer general knowledge questions about their country, specific to a region, an area or a city.

Scena misterelor (2019) a TV show produced by Antena Group, part of Intact Media, was sold internationally in 2020. The first country that bought and managed to broadcast the TV format was Hungary. The TV show is based on two groups of celebrities fighting against each other to guess who is, the celebrity hiding behind a mask. The goal is to guess as many

celebrities as possible and collect points that at the end of the show, turn into money for a humanitarian cause.

The evolution of television formats in Romania has an upward trend. Not only does the local market keep up with the current global formats produced all over the world, but it managed in the last decade to enter as a seller in the global market, offering original formats to European, American, and Asian countries.

1.4 Televisual Representation of Romanian Identity

As we saw in the previous chapters, along the time, television in Romania contributed to the information, education, and entertainment of the people. Under these conditions, it is natural to ask in what form and in what way television representations contributed to the maintenance and development of the Romanian identity. The speech of the television and the televised content were constantly changing, in accordance with the local socio-political movements. Therefore, the flow of broadcast programs contributed to the cultural enhancement and redefinition of Romanian identity. Academics (Eriksen, 2007; Melleuish, Sheiko& Brown, Hyun, Kim & Sun, 2014) point toward the role that television has in shaping the knowledge of national identity by emphasizing the uniqueness of nation in the global space. In other words, national and cultural identity expresses through habits, rituals and daily life representations contributed to the way that people refer to “us” and “others”.

In this regard, the cultural identity dimension of Romania is debated in this chapter on three distinctive levels, namely language, religion, and place. I chose to debate the elements of language, religion, and place because there is a close connection between them, which contributed to the formation of Romania as a nation. In the socio-political context in

which Romania developed, it is essential to see how these identity building markers have undergone changes. This re-calibration of television in terms of identity happened in time and is still in change within the national and the worldwide global transformation. Even though the world is in the process of continuous change, it is important to see how macro and micro effects re-shape the country's identity and if those changes marked a crucial point in the history of Romanian television broadcasting.

1.4.1 Language as Identity

"There is no culture without having an essential source, which is language, and there is no nation, which does not have a language."

(Eugen Simion, 2019)

The Romanian Identity, as Eugen Simion (2015) argue, is based on the idea of space (land, country), on language, on the unity (based on common origin and on a way of being), on faith (the majority Orthodox in a Latin linguistic space), on tolerance (humanity) and on critical spirit. Simion (2019) highlights the most important of all is language.

The Romanian linguistic identity is a basic component of the Romanian culture and was formed over time as "a living dynamic organism" (Condruz-Băcescu: 38) that within the globalization evolves and enriches its vocabulary every day. The language seen through the prism of the development of television in the local context reveals to us the continuous evolution within socio-political changes. The current chapter aims to debate the linguistic evolution of Romania seen through the lens of television, the changes over time in audio-visual translation, but also the problem of identity and confusion with ethnic minorities.

1.4.1.1 Linguistic Evolution under Television in Romania

Dumitru Irimia (2003, 48), states that language is "a badge for the national identity" and represents "a shelter" for the human being. At the beginning of the 19th century, the term *Romanian* played an essential role in the modernization process of the Romanian society. Irimia (2003) talks about the publications of the time and how they extend the perspective of the language unity and national spirituality by adding the term "Romanian" in their names. Examples such as *Albina Românească*/ "*The Romanian Bee*" or *Curierul Românesc*/ "*The Romanian Courier*", *Viața Românească*/ "*The Romanian's Life*" are just some examples of this kind. Interwar Literature was characterized by an extensive modernization process. It was the time when the transition from rural-inspired literature to urban-themed literature took place. Also, there is the rise of women in literature, and Romanian literary works of international value wore written.

At the beginning of the communist regime under a Stalinist regime Russia tried to eliminate the Romanian culture, as it was considered to be a threat to Slavic hegemony (Tudor, 2015). Under Moscow dispositions, the Romanian communist authorities forbade the teaching of Latin in schools in 1948 and try to install a system of Russification of the Romanian language (Rodina, 2017, April 28). In other words, Moscow tried to replace the Romanian Latinate vocabulary and change the grammar towards a Slavicized version. Expressions used in official speech should be reproduced word-by-word from Russian, and The Romanian language should have adopted a new grammatical structure just to reproduce the topic of Russian constructions. (Cotter, 2008). The Soviet influence that dominated Romania manifest in books, translations, and language censorship. Iordan (1949) explained

that the language use in translations demonstrated to the Soviet Union that Romania accepted the alignment with the Soviet Union. However, in the 1970 Nicolae Ceausescu showed some independence from Russia by the mandatory introduction of the Latin language in schools.

Within the Communist period salute expressions and vocabulary had to adapt to Communist imposed language, restricting the right to use usual expressions. Common forms of salutation and addressing were changed into a standard imposed communist language. The terms "*Mr.* and *Ms*." (Romanian language: "*Domnul/Doamna*") were replaced with "*Comrade*" (Romanian language: "*Tovaraşul/Tovarăşa*"). The first uses of the word were only mentioned in the political discourses and refer only to the Communist Party members, but after a while it extended to daily use in all situations. The term "*Comrade*" was meant to emphasize the equality between citizens and all social classes. According to Ilie (2010) the terms of "*Mr./Mrs.*" were politically inappropriate and had a negative connotation for the communist party. This is the reason why these terms were not used in the public sphere. After the 1989, The Romanian system of forms of addressing had re-changed to the original form, the one used before 1947 (Ilie, 2010). Since then, the terms of Mr. and Mrs. are used in all social and political situations.

After 1989, the Romanian language was highly influenced by American English due to the television and newly created television channels which promoted much more Hollywood films, but also within the context of new businesses, information, and communication technologies. In this context the main question that scholars (see Ivan, 2017; Codruz-Bacescu, 2017; Buzea, 2017; Sim, 2007) asked was if these linguistic influences threaten the Romanian identity? Along the time the influence of other languages did not majorly impact Romanian language. Beside the fact that they enrich the vocabulary at a specific time, there were no arguments concerning a recalibration of Romanian grammar.

As in the last three decades, the language that influence and currently is still influencing our country is English, researchers point out to the influences that English can have upon our national identity. In this sense, Ivan (2017) argues that Romanian language identity is not threatened by English words, in consequence, as I explained above, it only enriches the vocabulary. The most receptive persons in using English words in their daily lives are the young who are influenced by media and media content. Television as a mass communication tool incorporates a lot of English words in the detriment of Romanian ones. This is simply because the new global trends impose it and because English is the most used language in the European Union. English is a global language that has to be understood by every citizen of Europe. Even television in Romania began to forget the concept of "*divertisment*" instead it uses the concept of "*entertainment*", the weather at "*sfârşitul săptămânii*" is replaced by "*weekend*", the guests of the TV shows are now "*sharing*" their stories with the public instead of "*împărtăşi*" and talk about their new "*hobby*" instead of "*pasiune*" and the list can go on. Somehow the new trends of using English are understandable in a society that is permanently in change. The most valuable thing that we should not forget as a nation is our identity, the element that distinct us from "others".

In the same context, Anikó Imre (2016) point on linguistic and cultural characteristic of Romanian television programs within the socialist television context. She argues that in Romania the entertainment programs have been known in socialism as *variétés* (Romanian: *varietăţi*), meanwhile in Poland and East Germany entertainment programs were labeled as *cabaret,* also a French term. Both of the terms were used in the 60's, having the same origin: the French language, and the same meaning concerning the televised content. The explanation for this division is very simple. Romanian television was made after the BBC model of the UK, where the term "*variety*" was frequently used in broadcasting between

1930 and 1960 (and is still exist today as a genre of television program). Consequently, Romanian television borrowed the model of the show as seen at BBC. The interpretation of *cabaret* in UK is far different from the one in Poland and Eastern Germany even if etymologically speaking has a French base[30]. Another logical explanation for this disruption in choosing which word to use is generated because of the fundamental base of language. Romanians seemed to understand better the French concepts and the distinctions between *cabaret* and *varieties,* as both French and Romanian have a Latin base langue at structure.

1.4.1.2 Minorities and the Confusion between Romanians and Roma Ethnics

On the Romanian territory, ethnic minorities are diverse. Among the most numerous are the Hungarians, the Germans and Roma ethnic group. During Communism, ethnic minorities in Romania had the privilege to be preserved and be treated like an integrated part, with attention on conserving the language and the traditions. Broadcasting programs in minority languages were usually a mixture of news magazines and high culture like theatre or traditional music. However, less importance was given to Roma ethnic which was neglected. In Communism, Roma ethnic minority had no presence on television screens. Their culture and identity have been taken into consideration after 1989, when the international confusion between Roman and Romanian start to appear. Due to the phonetic similarities, the word *Roman* or *Romani* is misunderstood as being the same with word

[30] A variety show represents an entertainment television program, that is streamed usually on the evening. Variety it is considered to be the one of the oldest television genres and has its origins from the shows of music halls and the vaudevilles. Meanwhile, the term cabaret refers to a place where people can consume foods and drinks. The term cabaret as integrated television genre has different meaning across Europe. In Poland cabaret represents popular live televised entertainment which involve comedy, comedy sketches, monologues stand-up comedy and even songs and political satire (that in communism was hidden under words to fool censorship). For Germany cabaret as television genre represent a performance of political satire and gallows humor (a distinct German aspect), where the intimacy created with the viewer create the same atmosphere as in the French cabaret.

Romanian. In reality, *Roman* and *Romanian* are different in ethnicity and do not share any common cultural background.

The Roma language is Romani, and it is a part of Indo-Aryan linguistic branch, which is spoken exclusively outside the borders on India. Also, the Romani language is divided into eight dialect groups, in accordance with the place they have established as an ethnic group (Matras, 2002).

Zatreanu and Halwachs (2004) consider that Roma ethnic groups assimilate and adapt to the language of the country where they decide to establish, giving up Romani language without losing their identity. For example, Roma living in Romania have as their mother tongue Romanian, instead of Romani, but still preserve their own tradition. This doesn't mean that they lost their linguistic background (Romani) but adapt to the culture they are living in, for better integration and acceptance into society.

After the fall of communism, Romanian social stigma rises against Roma minority. Right after 1989 Revolution, the newly formed coalition claimed that all minorities in Romania will have equal rights and freedoms as the Romanian majority. During the 1990s, in contradiction with all the claimed minorities rights, the newly formed coalition (FSN-*Frontul Salvării Naţionale*) blame every time Roma minority for all the ongoing violent events that took place in Bucharest or other cities of Romania. Considering this a background problem, in 1995 Romania's Ministry of Foreign Affairs decreed that Romanian Roma should be called *Ţigani/Gypsies* instead of "*Romi*/*Roma*", because they could easily be confused with Romanians (Nicolae and Slavik, 2003). The event rapidly took on proportions and generated a dispute between the political class and the ethnic minority. In the end the decreed failed. However, the discrimination against this minority persisted.

The 2000s gradually brought changes in terms of Romanians' perception of the Roma minority. In the context of joining the EU, Romania has implemented a series of strategies and policies for the integration of the Roma community. The strategies implemented by Romania for Roma inclusion refer to solutions and measures undertaken from a political, economic, and social point of view. In the support of strategies and national campaigns, television began the promotion of Roma minority in the early 2000's with reality shows and television movies. The representations of Roma culture and language in the Romanian media can be seen as a struggle of generating positive perception and positive public opinion. The stereotypical representation of Roma as "lazy", "poor", "dangerous", "dirty", "unreliable", "promiscuous", "untrustworthy" (Cohn, 1973, Csepeli &Simion, 2004, Lemon, 2000, Hancock, 2008) ethnic minority had to change by presenting the good parts of their integration into the society and the actual Roma culture traditions and customs. In this sense, Alice Bardan (2012) point on shows that make the distinction between Romanian identity and the Roma identity and names shows such as *The Adventures of Vijelie Family* (broadcast on Prima TV in 2005), *Clejanii (*The Clejani Family Kanal D, between 2009–2011) and *Dragostea de la Clejani* (Love in Clejani, which aired on Prima TV in 2006 and 2011) and Şatra (an adaptation after *The Simple Life*), which she analyzed it in detail and observe that in this show the Romas are "no longer the nomadic or parasitical street traders—as they were viewed under communism—but rather as biologically different people who happen to have a 'work ethic' which needs to be 'discovered" (p.168). What Bardan neglect to mention here is that the shows *Adventures of Vijelie Family* and *Clejani* series shows, as their name says, have as main protagonists' famous and appreciated Roma singers in Romania and their family life, who were not shamed by their ethnical origins. The pattern of famous Roma makes a smoother introduction for the viewer in the culture and tradition of Roma minority

family. Being famous through something, in this case famous for the music that they play, arouses sympathy from the public and also the curiosity of a celebrity lifestyle, which is part of an ethnic minority. For the Satra TV show, things are a little different in comparison with Vijelie Family and Clejani series. This time Romanian celebrities were placed in traditional Roma families, to live an authentic Roma life for a day. For the viewer the sympathy goes toward the celebrities, who are interested in learning about Roma culture. Notable here, as explained by Bardan (2012: 168), celebrities express a favorable agreement toward Roma, "but in the end inevitably berating them for who they are". Expanding Bardan's argument, inevitably the viewers beside the entertainment part of the show might agree with the 'bad' image that was inevitably constructed by the critics placed by celebrities.

More and more commercial television started to slowly integrate customs and traditions of Roma in everyday television shows. Weather we talk about prime-time television shows that had high audiences, or simple daily television talk shows that every other day promote or take into discussion a small part of Roma culture. For example, dance contest shows introduce the public to traditional Roma dances and food contest shows present Roma cuisine. All this was possible with the help of celebrities that joined and supported the national strategies against Roma discrimination.

The film and TV series industry has also joined the campaign to support the ethnic minority. The films and series deal with the issue of social inclusion of Roma in Romanian society, which is full of prejudices and discrimination. The authentic life of the Roma and the environment in which they live were portrayed by well-known actors of the Romanian film industry. The positive effect that these films and serials had is reflected both in the high rating but also in the policies and measures taken. The high rating and the public demand made these series have several seasons, under different names, but related to each other, each

portraying in detail the life and adventures of the main characters. The success of these series has enjoyed international acclaim. They have been sold and adapted in countries such as: Turkey, Bulgaria, Serbia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Croatia, Bosnia Hertegovina, Montenegro, Latin America (Mexico, Columbia, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Chile, Bolivia, Peru) and USA (Mediafax.ro, 2011, February 3)**.**

Regarding the lingustic conservation of Romani language , at national level, today TVR is the only television that provide one hour program in Romani language. Other commercial television incorporate in their grid Roma music or TV shows or serials presenting the daily life of Roma.We have to highlight here that most of the television shows, serials and movies about Roma are actually in Romanian language instead of Romani. One of the reason might be the reduction of discrimination and a better integration of the ethnic grup into the Romanian society. However, this situation might create confusion for the foregners (of Western Europe countries that watch adapted original version of the shows) who are prone to consider Romanian language the same as Romani, resulting in a missperception of cultures. The linguistical association and missperception of language usually fade away in the context of audio visual translation. Most of the Western countries rely on dubbing and less on subtitiling. The linguistical problem is overcomed by dubbing, which facilitates bettter understanding for foregners, that can easilly identify the culture differences and relate less to the original linguistic dimention.

1.4.1.3 Audio-Visual Translation in Romania

In Romania, AVT for television represents a tradition that began with the establishment of *Televiziunea Română* (TVR) in 1956. Academicians such as Dweyer and

Uricaru (2015), Varga (2016) believe that Romania was always stated preference for subtitling. Also, Vulpoiu (2016) confirms that subtitling was used before 1989 and is still used today. She goes further with the explanation arguing that subtitling was used in communism "due to sociopolitical and economic reasons" (p. 151) and nowadays because of the "public and the economic situation of television stations" (p. 151). Varga (2016) explains in her research that in Romania, on national level, the AVT variety is much more complex. The choice of using one modality to another depends on the genre and audience. Therefore, depending on the genre of TV production we can observe on television the uses of such modalities: subtitling, dubbing, voice-over, and sign language.

In 2002 the AVT modalities were recognized by the law of audio-visual. A great importance upon the Romanian Broadcasting had the law concerning sign language interpretation or subtitling for deaf. The law assures for at least 30 minutes per day that television channels must provide programs for the deaf and hearing-impaired people. In other words, television must include subtitling or sign language interpretation[31] for their programs. Internationally speaking, Chaume (2013: 122) regards sign language as an audiovisual translation mode, "since the source text and the translation both appear simultaneously on the same screen". After 2002 and especially in today's Romanian news television programs, at least once a day, provide sign language interpretation for deaf. Most of the news programs that provide sign language subtitling are placed usually during the day, not in prime time, at the most watched news for almost every channel[32]. The exceptions here are the most important news that concerns rules for all citizens. A great example here was the news concerning the measures taken by the Emergency Committee during the pandemic

[31] Sign language interpretation is a type of translation used for the deaf and hard of hearing persons to enhance accessibility for people with hearing difficulties. In Romania this type of translation is often seen on news programs

[32] Usually, the prime-time news began at 7 pm and last for one or one and a half hour.

situation, in 2020. Here is to mention that those types of news were live transmissions (usually from the Government building). During the statements of President, Ministers or members of the Emergency Committee, Bogdan Anicescu[33] was permanently "translating" into sign language, assuring understanding of such important messages.

In 2005 the law concerning the Use of the Romanian in public spaces, public relations, and public institutions mentions that all texts of general interest, written or spoken in a foreign language may be translated or adapted into Romanian. This law has been modified in 2015 and consequently, all TV programs broadcasted by Romanian televisions in the minority languages must be translated or adapted for the screen.

After Romania's accession to the European Union, in 2007, the Romanian translation market had a rapid development. With the new status of the Romanian language into the European community, translation commissions began adding and increasing Romanian language translation for audio-visual content in the European market (Greere, 2010). Within the digitalization and the appearance of new technologies, the training, and the performance of Romanian AVT translation has grown[34]. On Romanian media market, television request many times professional support concerning translation for their foreign television programs acquisition. Varga (2017) points out that the audiovisual contents of TV channels broadcasting in Romania present a rich linguistic diversity. This guarantees that the spectators are in permanent contact with many languages. Consequently, Romanians live in a multilingual and multicultural environment, where being able to watch an original foreign program with subtitle facilitate direct contact with foreign culture. Dweyer and Uricaru (2015, 210) believe that "Romanian spectators enjoy performing simultaneous comparisons

[33] Sign language interpreter within the National Association of the Deaf in Romania
[34] Software's such as *Gross Subtitle*, *OggWrit*, *AQ Title*, or *Vob Sub* are indispensable tools for audio-visual translation practitioners.

between the original soundtrack and the subtitles", as Romanian viewer considered "dubs inferior to subtitling". Dries (1994: 36) observes that Eastern European countries have a preference toward dubbing, even though, here "one would expect countries to choose subtitling, being a cheaper, less complex and faster way of language conversion". Other studies conclude (Bogucki 2004; Chaume 2012) that subtitling is taking over the voice over translation of audiovisual materials, including the dubbing countries. In this regard, we can mention Poland, where viewers can enjoy subtitled films on private TV channels and in cinemas. Chaume (2013: 117) notices that in Europe educated younger people are expressing a preference towards subtitling instead of dubbing because of the "aesthetic and artistic reasons". Romania favors subtitling (Dries 1994, Dweyer and Uricaru 2015, Vulpoiu 2016, Varga 2017) while regional neighbors such as Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia opt for dubbing (Dries 1994-1995: 36).

In Romania, in the case of young children, subtitling is thought to bring educational and social benefits by exposing children to foreign language programs from an early age (Dweyer and Uricaru, 2015). In 1992 the appearance of Cartoon Network TV channel in Romania, provide young viewers famous cartoons in English language, without any subtitling. This freedom of chose to watch cartoons in English languages was for the 90's generation kids the main opportunity to learn and acquire skills in English in a fun way. Within the gradual introduction of dubbing through Cartoon Network programs since 2002, things start to take another turn in terms of audience behavior. Therefore, a petition concerning dubbing of the cartoons in Romania was initiated by students in 2006 (Adevarul.ro, 2006, January 25). The petition asked authorities and Cartoon Network TV station to stop the action of dubbing because was having a negative impact on children's foreign language abilities and vanish away the real voices of cartoon characters (Bacaul.ro,

2006, January 22). This is one of the main reasons that the petition name was *Salvaţi-l pe Tweety*/ "*Save Tweety*[35]". Soon after that, as a compromise Cartoon Network introduced the alternative soundtrack, which allowed the alternation of the sound of English and Romanian (VAXXi.net, 2008, February 03).

In European Union a remarkable tendency is noted in the dubbing of Latin American and Turkish soap operas. Chaume (2013: 119) note that in subtitling countries such as Greece, for example the first dubbed versions of this genre "immediately put these soaps at the top of the audience share ratings, indicating that maybe dubbing has an economic future in these countries". For Romania, the Latin American and Turkish soap operas were always played by their original version, and despite this fact they have always been on top in ratings, especially if they were broadcast in prime time. In the case of Latin American soap operas, they were so popular in the 90's and 2000's that mothers began to name their babies after the serials characters (Manoliu, 2012 April 23). Since the beginning of 2010, in Romania the trend of popularity moved toward Turkish soap operas, which were obviously subtitled. Based on Hilmes (2013:35) transnational production theory, we can argue that Turkish series were introduced into Romania as an imported series; they were produced in the Turkish national context but were broadcasted and re-adapted in a new national context through subtitling. The original dialogues are localized with the help of translations, that adapt and interpret the original text to the local language through subtitling Thus, the viewers have access to the original audio (which provide and the opportunity to learn or wish to learn the foreign language) and textual Romanian translation. Subtitling of the Turkish TV series, offered to the Romanian viewers the possibility to compare the original audio with the text

[35] The yellow canary bird voiced by Mel Blanc, in the Warner Bros, Looney Tunes and Merrie Melodies series of animated cartoon (Maltin, 1987)

in their mother tongue translated version. Thus, subtitling stands as a linguistic cultural transfer, that operates on a binary system: the commutation from one language to another and the change from oral speech to written speech (Gambier, 1996:10). In many cases, viewers point toward wrong translation and interpretation of the subtitling texts, and most often the word "*Allah*" which is translated many times as "*Dumnezeu/God*". The cultural disruption between the translated words emphasizes the misunderstanding of religious affairs. In the focus group research, participants aged between 50-65, argue that, when they first saw Turkish series, they believed that the story is constructed around a Christian community as they read on the subtitle daily expressions which included the word "*Dumnezeu*" instead of "*Allah*". Their arguments go further pointing toward the center of Orthodoxy located in Istanbul[36]. However, the confusion dismissed only when Muslim practices were presented through funeral ceremonies, images of mosques and Islamic ritual of prayers.

In my research, the focus group participants in the 35-50 age group indicated that in some Turkish productions screened in Romania, "the ritual of circumcision" and the party organized for the little boys was often translated as "baptism". Although the rituals are part of two different cultures, the translators created a false impression of baptism, by calling the person who performs the ritual of circumcision "*naș/ godfather*". Some of the participants were intrigued by the translation, as they false believed of the existence of Muslim baptism only for boys and wonder about girl baptism. Mistranslations in Turkish series made the viewers search the Internet, libraries, and Turkish cultural centers to inform themselves about religious rituals and customs in Turkey. The Young generation, aged between 20-35,

[36] Among the autocephalous Orthodox churches, the honorary primacy is held by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

did not fall in the trap of wrong subtitles. As they are eager to learn foreign languages, they prefer to watch Turkish series, in original or with English subtitles, “because the Romanian translation is not always accurate” (focus group research answer quote). However, they also point toward the deficient translations in Romanian language on YouTube of the various sequences from Turkish TV series. Whether we are talking about the translation with the help of "google translate" type programs or through people without Turkish language studies, who upload various translated versions on YouTube, this only mislead the fans who are impatiently waiting for new episodes of their favorite series. Most often, people in the 50-65 age group prefer to watch Turkish series on TV, without accessing and consulting a translated version on YouTube, instead prefer to read the latest news about the series. However, youngers between 20-35 tend to watch more content on SVOD platforms (on Netflix) including Turkish films and series. The same habit is seen at the group age 35-50, for the SVOD platforms, with the mention that they prefer Romanian subtitles.

The dilemma between subtitling and dubbing in Romania, stays under the sing of technological evolution, cultural implication and (also as a) fear of political control. Subtitling was the best, quality option in communism for television content as it was seen as transparent, by giving the viewer the opportunity to compare the translated version of dialogs with the original ones, and in this way the dilemma and the fear of censorship was faded away by the authorities. Not least, subtitling facilitates the viewer the opportunity to enjoy characters real voices and have better contact with different cultures. After 1989 cultural perspective was a good reason for using subtitling, because the costs of it were and still are low, and ready in a short amount of time.

In the last years, the problem of AVT is viewed as much more complex, being in a process of redefinition due to the technological evolution implied by the localization

processes (Chaume, 2019). “Transcreation, transmedia projects, adaptation of television franchise, translational remakes of television programs, non-professional subtitling and dubbing” (p. 57) are just some of the few challenges that re-shape the meaning of AVT.

1.4.2 Religious Affairs and Broadcasting in Romania

The Orthodox Religious faith has a tradition of more than 2000 years and represents largest religious belief in Romania. The Romanian Orthodox Church is an autocephalous church, and it has been considered and stipulated by the 1923 Constitution to be *“The Church of the Romanian People”*. With the end of World War II and the change of the political regime in Romania, the constitution was amended and the religious association between the Romanian Orthodox Church and the state was excluded. However, the status of the Orthodox Church remained closely related to the question of identity, origin, sovereignty, and integrity of the Romanian state (Gillet, 2015).

Today, Religious life in Romania is conducted according to the principle of freedom of religious beliefs, a principle written in Article 29 of the Romanian Constitution, along with freedom of thoughts and opinions. Even if it is not explicitly defined as a secular state, Romania has no national religion. Public authorities in Romania are obliged to be neutral towards religious associations and cults.

The early stages of communism, under Gheorghiu-Dej, were characterized by human rights violations. Religion practices such as liturgies or baptism ceremonies were forbidden, and this generate the organization of religious practices clandestinely. Priests, intellectual and political elites, Orthodox students, supporters of the Iron Guard and Zionist members of the Romanian Jewish community were subjected of persecution, terrifying imprison and

torture. The horrors were done in specific places such as Pitesti[37] and Sighet[38] prisons. This type of re-education experiments have been done in order to transform the subjects from real or imagined enemies into adherents of the communist ideology (Stănescu, 2010-2012).

During the dictatorship of the couple Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu church never had space on television grid. They never allowed private religious schools, teaching of religions in public schools, pilgrimages abroad and public religious celebrations (Stan and Turcescu, 2007; Bărbulescu et al. 2012; Betea in Adevăruri despre Trecut: 2017; 2:08-2:35). At that time however, religious practices were allowed, and they were not limited only to Orthodoxy but also it encapsulates other minor religions. However, the ideology of the Romanian Communist Party separates the church from religion. Religion was seen as a manifestation of the primitive man, and the church was an institution meant to exploit man. Public discourse on religion was absent entirely, and communist ideology focused on creating an atheist state. Meanwhile, many priests and clergy accept to collaborate with Securitate, in the regime of further confession. They provided information about certain citizens targeted by the Securitate, by breaking the rule of holy confession. In this way priest were seen "as representative tools of the communist regime" (Stan and Turcescu, 2010: 154) having the benefit of free practice, without threats or any torture.

[37] Pitesti Prison was penal facility, known for the re-education experiments (also known as *Experimentul Pitești*– the "Pitești Experiment" or *Fenomenul Pitești* – the "Pitești Phenomenon"). made under the authorization of the communist authorities during the years 1949-1952. Virgil Ierunca, journalist, and anti-communist activist referred to the "re-education experiment" as the largest and most intensive brainwashing torture program in the Eastern Bloc (Ierunca, 1990).

[38] The Sighet Prison is now known as Sighet Memorial Museum, part of the Memorial Victim of Communism. In August 1948 it became place of detention for students and peasants from Maramureș. In May 1950, more than one hundred dignitaries from all over the country were brought to the Sighet penitentiary (former ministers, academics, economists, military, historians, journalists, politicians). Humility and mockery were part of the extermination program.

In 1948, when communists came to power in Romania, the most important religious celebrations Easter and Christmas were transformed in working days and religious terms were removed from the daily speech.

Traditional customs and all religious symbols were threatened by the Communist authorities who attempted to eliminate them from the daily life of Romanians. In this regard television had the mission to make the shift between religious holidays and secular holidays of the Communist regime. The situation was not singular in the region as Eastern Blok countries strived with the same situation (Mihaelj and Huxable, 2016).

Elise Stan, one of the most prominent television producers in TVR, talks about the fact that Easter Celebration programs were missing from the grid during communism. However, there were some ostentatious TV programs broadcasted on Easter day correlated with the Communist ideology, her example emphasizes the fact that even it was still the month of April, one of the TV programs was entitled "9 May liberation of the country from the fascist yoke" (Rogojină and Betea, 2017, 01:53). The allusion of a spring celebration (created in the context of the replacement) marked the point of re-shaping the Romanian identity and erased the collective memory of religious belief.

In spite the fact that religious content was absent on television, Romanians were still watching religious films in "improvised cinemas", in a dubbed version. The film *Jesus of Nazareth* (1977), directed by Franco Zeffirelli, was a phenomenon in the 1980s for Romanians who used to watch it around Easter. The film represented a great connection with God, and "many viewers were crying as they were watching the movie" (Călugăreanu, 2015, 52:59). The Securitate' officer, which worked in TVR, heard about the spread of the religious movie, and held responsible Irina Margareta Nistor for dubbing it. He got angry because of her inappropriate translation with words such as *"Dumnezeu"/ "God"* instead of *"Cel de*

Sus"/ "The One Above" (Călugăreanu, 2015, 53:42). This type of religious film came in a period when Ceausescu was demolishing Churches for his new urbanization plans that he had. The rebuilding of the cities landscapes in Romania had a direct connotation with the nation-building concept, the transition from an orthodox country to an atheist communist one was meant to happen step by step, with the erasing of old churches, historical buildings, and old town areas (Light & Young, 2013: 516). Fortunately, enough, some of the old churches managed to be saved by the ingenuity of Eugen Iordachescu [39], and they continued to be preserved between the new buildings.

Television was very careful in sharing anything related to religion, but in spite of this, rarely made compromises. Laurentiu Damian (Digi24, 2017) talks about the rules regarding filming near churches and the inside of churches. He argues that "the filming of church towers was forbidden; however, the exterior of the Church could be filmed as a building without a rooftop" and this was strictly related with the image of the cross that was entirely forbidden to appear on television. The paintings from the "church interiors were allowed to be filmed but were always presented in the context of art or painting techniques".

Following the restrictions imposed by the Romanian Communist Party towards the exposure of church and religion on television until 1989, there has been register one situation in which television broadcast live an entire funeral ceremony in the Orthodox faith with priests and prayers. The TVR archives video images present the funerals of Andruta Ceausescu[40], the father of Nicolae Ceausescu, in 1969. This situation was the only exception

[39] Between 1977 and 1989, twenty-two churches and monasteries were demolished. Eugen Iordachescu, known as *"the engineer of heaven"* (Constantinoiu, 2019), developed a system to move the entire structure of churches and other buildings of an immense architectural value. He had the idea to place whole buildings on the equivalent of railway tracks and roll them behind the new constructed apartment blocks. He managed to save in this way 12 churches and many important buildings (Constantinoiu, 2019), and created space for Ceaușescu's urbanization and construction plans for Bucharest.

[40] Contrary to Nicolae Ceausescu's atheist perspectives of life, Andruta Ceausescu was a very religious person and he also served as Parochial Counselor until 1969. As he wished, the funeral ceremony was realized entirely after the Orthodox Rituals.

when priests and Orthodox funeral customs were presented live, without any restrictions and censorship. However, during the Communist regime, television broadcasted funerals of Georghe Georghiu Dej[41], Maria Tanase[42] and Tudor Arghezi [43], but those did not have any religious service included.

Returning to the second important religious celebration, Christmas and the birth of Christ were substituted by new symbols such as Winter Holidays, "winter tree" instead of "Christmas Tree", "Grandfather Frost" (Romanian: *Moş Gerilă*) instead of "Father Christmas" (*Moş Crăciun*). Even the calendar dates have been changed in accordance with communist ideology. The winter holiday eve was the last day of the year, 31 December instead of the religious Christmas celebration day, 25 December. Ozana Cucu Oancea (2005: 164) points out the new meaning of Christmas carols that were replaced by patriotic songs. The allusion to the Bethlehem Star that was subliminally placed in the patriotic song "Saving the Red Star" created confusion in people's minds.

Again, in this regard, the television had the role to compensate the missing gap in the Romanian's identity. As Christmas is a celebration that brings joy, before 1989 television focused on creating a program full of humor that was meant to uplift the mood of viewers. As the New Year was the most important celebration in Communism, TVR created the *Revelion*[44]. Bardan (2017) points out that this New Year Eve Program was massively promoted in the television guides from the early 1960s. This situation can be tackled in two

41 Gheorghe Gheorghiu Dej was the first communist leader of Romania. In 1965, his funeral ceremony was inspired by the royal funerals, and it is speculated to have been a copy of Stalin's funeral ceremony.
[42] Maria Tanase was a Romanian singer and is national symbol for Romanians, she is known internationally for her voice and folk music. Her funeral in 1963 gathered more than 1 million people and the day she died was decreed day of national mourning in Romania.
[43] Tudor Arghezi was a Romanian writer. He died in 1967 and the funeral ceremony was broadcasted from his home's garden where he was buried next to his wife.
[44] from the French term *réveillonner*, to spend a "Réveillon".

different ways. Firstly, Romanian television started its broadcast on the New Year's Eve in 1956, and in this sense served as the promotion for its own celebration correlated with the support of political regime for the development of the country and the mass medium technology. And secondly, as Bardan (2017) observed it represented a diversion in which Christmas celebration was hidden in the political importance of the event. The humoristic program of *Revelion* was full of sketches which lasted for 8 or 9 hours each year. In the post-communist era, the *Revelion* program remained important for Romanians and continues to be a part of the television grid, without substituting the Christmas celebration.

After 1989, the religious freedom began to be practiced without any restriction creating a space for new religions to develop and attract adepts. Ethnicity, culture, and politics influenced the changes in the development of church and religious institutions in national context (Zrinščak, 2011). Printed religious newspapers, magazines, religious radio stations, television and web pages and not least public discourse on religion are just a few of the developments that are worth mentioning.

Within the fall of communism, the situation, and the history of ROC[45] spark debate between various church figures, scholars, politicians, and journalists. The continuous contradictory debate split between the collaboration of the Romanian Orthodox Church with the communist party and the other reflects upon the victimization of the church under the dictatorial regime. Most of the mass media debates rely on public information provided by formal political prisoners or discussions of ordinary people about the daily experiences of religious life during communism. However, since the 2000s, researchers on religious affairs could dig deeply into the historical problem of ROC, by accessing the opened files of Securitate. The files were selectively released and contain information about ROC. The free

[45] ROC- acronym, stands for Romanian Orthodox Church

access documents of the Communist Party talk about the vision upon religion, denominations, and religious leaders (Turcescu and Stan, 2015).

Religion began to be present in the broadcasting grid under diverse forms. For example, religious programs such as "Resurrection Service" programs for both Orthodox and Catholics were broadcasted form different monasteries in country but also from, Jerusalem or Vatican. Also, the opening of the school year was marked by the Orthodox Religious Services in which professors and students were blessed. In the daily programs, the TV presenters frequently mentioned the days of commemoration of the Orthodox Saints and did not forget to wish happy name day for those who were named after that specific Saint. News programs also included in their edition religious celebration and the traditions and customs that come along with it in different parts of Romania.

Romanian Patriarchate began to make its present visible in the life of Romanians by being active on five different directions: radio Trinitas, Trinitas TV television, a group of three publications (the *Lumina/ Light* newspaper, the only daily newspaper in the Orthodox world, the weekly *Lumina de Duminică*/ *Sunday Light*, monthly magazine *Orthodoxy*), Basilica News Agency Press Office and a public relations department.

At the beginnings of the 2000s Romanian Orthodox Church shows its openness towards European values, by signing the *Declaration of Religious Affairs for the integration of Romania in the EU* and since 2005 a permanent office of Romanian Orthodox Church was established in Brussels (Teacă and Chirimbu, 2014). Coincidence or not, in 2007 the year of Romania's adherence to EU, the Romanian patriarchy decide to open the TV channel Trinitas TV. Trinitas television was established in October 2007, at the initiative and with the direct involvement of Father Daniel, Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church (Tinitas.tv, 2020). The TV channel is bringing to the public the history, culture and treasure

of Romanian Christian faith and spirituality in the European context. The aim of this television is to informs the public opinion about the church events, the pastoral-missionary, social, educational, and cultural work of the Church (Trinitas.tv, 2020).

The evolution of the church through the lens of television broadcasting emphasizes the struggle of Romanians in search for rediscovering the meaning of Christianity and Orthodox faith. Today the Romanian Orthodox Church is present in the daily life of Romanians through all forms of mass communication. Its statements and public discourse have a high importance in re-shaping the cultural identity.

1.4.3. Impact of Local Politics: The Fall of Communism and Beyond

In December 1989, thousands of Romanians from all over the country, went out into the street to remove the communist dictatorship. The live broadcast of the Revolution made an entire nation to witness the overthrow of the communist political regime (Mustață, 2011). This moment represents the birth of free television and the vision towards a democratic society. The values and principles of the nation were to change drastically, with the formal collapse of the political and identity system created and manipulated by communism.

In socio-cultural terms, Romania step into the 90s with uncertainty. The hybridization played between the opposite poles of socialism and democracy transpose into an incompatible reality. The cultural identity of Romania after the revolution can be described as "*hitter and thither*" in its authenticity and "*mimicry*" (Bhabha, 1994, p: 4). Bhabha's concept of mimicry can be transposed and explained in the context of the new Romania as an *instability of culture,* which likes to juggle between two diametrically

opposed worlds. The place in between is the space in which Romania tried to understand and reshaped its identity in accordance with democratic values.

The transition phase in the early 1990s not only regards the quest for cultural identity and (re)invention of a nation but also the fitting gap of cultural differences that had to be reshaped. In accordance with the classical paradigm of postcolonial subject, Romania was trapped between authenticity and mimicry (Paris, 2014), or as Titu Maiorescu emphasized as "form without substance". With the 1989 Live Revolution Romania aimed for liberty, in the detriment of the collective well-being and "civic consciousness over peasant mentality" (Andreescu, 1996, p:114). In this transition Romania tried to make itself recognizable to "Others", highlighting once again the colonial mimicry, by its "slippage, excess and difference" (Bhabha, 1994: 86). The visual form of it determines a powerful example of cultural repetition trapped between the ambivalence of colonial discourse. The Live Revolution in this sense represents the recognizable "Other", in other words, the polarity of the social dialog made the country recognizable to "Others". The dilemma of national identity, roots, liberty, and democracy dominate intensively the socio-political events and movements in the country.

Concerning television and its early stage after the Live Revolution, national television found itself unable to move forward and keep up with occidental television standards. In the first part of the 90s, Romanian Television managed to complete what was left in the 1970s, namely the entire color broadcast transmission and new "democratic" entertainment programs. Content wise, entertainment programs were "decent" in Dana Mustață's (2011) terms. The programs were decent just in terms of adaptation to a public that had never experience new type of entertainment, which mostly were inspired by of American shows. Romania, after the 1989 Revolution was in a phase of creating a new

national identity. The oscillations between old and new, control and freedom, socialist and democratic, and the direction in which the country was going stood (for the first half of the 90's) totally unsure. The 90s were marked by a turbulent political period field with antigovernment events called *Mineriade* (Miners' Strikes)[46]. These occurrences were also televised, and therefore continued with a series of accusations regarding the political partnership against National Television.

Tthe following decade, Romania joined NATO and European Union, which represent big steps to democracy and state modernization. Romania's accession to the North Atlantic organization and European Union were long processes, possible only due to national consensus on the strategic choice made by Romania, to orient itself towards the West politically, economically, and militarily. Three years later, in 2007, Romania was the first post-communist country that joined the European Union. The accession to these structures brought major changes in audio-visual broadcasting as well. Romania was the first country from the Eastern Block that implemented entirely the requested broadcasting regulations and directives, without requesting any period of transition or derogation (Prihoancă and Amalacei, 2014). In accordance with the EU audio-visual policy, Romania established a cultural broadcasting dimension built on two important objectives, namely: the consolidation of television programs and the broadcasting services activity (Pascal and Vlad, 2004).

The European Union politics encourages the public audio-visual field in each country to promote national identity values, common legacy, and European values, serving in this way to the socio-cultural purposes (Harrison & Woods, 2007:4). In this regard, the Romanian television market respects the policy and provides to the audience a variety of

[46]In Bucharest, in 1990, 1991, but also in 1999, there were violent demonstrations by miners from the Jiului Valley. These events are called the Mineriads (*Romanian: Mineriadă*) and represented the inter-political and societal struggles of Romania state after the Revolution.

programs that cover the requirements of the EU. Commercial television stations have acquired and adapted European television formats shows, films and series which were broadcasted in accordance with audio-visual policy. Also, the program grid did not lack entertainment programs that included many jokes and allusions to the benefits and disadvantages that these alliances have been creating for the Romanian nation. Popular comedy groups like *Divertis*, *Vacanţa Mare* or *Grupul Vouă* were among the most prevalent on television screen in the mid-2000s, gaining high ratings every week. Their jokes allude to the Romanian political system, both internally and externally, by portraying the political personalities such as presidents' or prime ministers, and even the former dictator Nicolae Ceausescu in their everyday life; or mirroring the current political state of the country and political decision matters. Furthermore, the cinema industry followed the same pattern and produced films that subliminally presented the pros and cons regarding the adherence[47] or the changes that the new democratic system brought to the Romanian identity and culture, emphasizing the struggle of transition from old to new[48].

Regarding the broadcasting technologies, Romania struggled to implement the digital terrestrial television in the entire country. The first inputs of digital terrestrial television date back in 2005 when the National Radio Communication Society inaugurated the first DVB-T transmitter in the Bucharest area. The system was active experimentally in the capital city and Sibiu until 2016. Because of this, in 2015, the national standard for terrestrial transmissions became DVB-T2 (protv.ro, 2018). In 2016, only 58% of the country was covered by digital terrestrial broadcasting technology (radiocom.ro, 2016), and manages to completely cover the entire country in December 2020 (radiocom.ro, 2020). Despite this,

[47] The most popular one with international recognition and prizes is *California Dreamin'* (2007) directed by Cristian Nemescu.

[48] Here to mention Cristian Mungiu's films: *Occident* (2002), *4months, 3 weeks and 2 days* (2007), *Tales from the Golden Age* (2009)

the available channels that broadcast in digital terrestrial mode are still limited to the ones of the Romanian Society of Television[49].

Also, in the context of EU, the judicial and corruption problems in Romania are regulated and implemented by the Mechanism of Cooperation and Verification (Șurubaru and Nițoiu, 2021). In the last couple of years due to massive excesses and violation of judicial processes (Mendelski, 2020), the audio-visual market, especially television canalize news, investigations, debate or entertainment programs and social campaigns in the regard of change. The main problems that impact the evolution of MCV in Romania were the fire of the Collective Nightclub[50] (in November 2015) which also generate and turn into the Anti-Corruption Movements that span over 3 years (the period between 2017 and 2019). The importance of television and journalistic investigation have spoken out in solving the corruption problems in Romania. Based on the images and information presented in the media about the "Collective Club" fire, *Gazeta Sporturilor*'s Magazine, and its journalist Adrian Tolontan, made possible to brought into the light the underneath corruption problems, institutional injustice, and the problems in the health care system. Intrigue enough, we must note that the complex investigation that contributed to change was made by a sport journalist, which was not afraid to talk, even though throughout its inquiry he had received many deaths threatening messages. His investigation stands as subject in the documentary

[49] TVR1, TVR2, TVR1 HD, TVR3, TVR Craiova, TVR Cluj, TVR Iasi, TVR Targu Mures, TVR Timisoara

[50] *Collective* club fire took place on the night of Friday, October 30, 2015, in Bucharest. The fire started during the concert of Goodbye to Gravity band and was caused by fireworks used during the concert. The flames spread very quickly throughout the club, killing 65 young people, and injuring 185 others. The event took proportion when injured people did not manage to survive due to the bacteria's caught on hospital caused by the usage of diluted disinfecting substances, bought by government form Hexi Pharma Company. Further reports show that the disinfectants were diluted, and the label of the products was not the same as their composition. The un-ending chain show that Hexi Pharma products were distributed to more than 300 hospitals causing the death of many other people.

movie "Collective" (2019)[51] by Alexandru Nanau which presents all the backstage details of the investigation. Two years later, in 2017 large scale protests took place all over the country. The violence of protests in Bucharest caught the attention of the foreign press. International publications emphasized that the rally in the capital had anti-corruption demands and that people wanted an end to the assault on justice started by the power (Digi24.ro). Dumitru Bortun and Bianca Cheregi (2017) talk about the anti-corruption protest from two perspectives, because of major differences in reporting corruption problems at various television channels in Romania (Sutu, 2017). The first one, the protests against the Government and the second one, protests against the President. Both sides of protesters have different ideological patterns, defining two different perspectives of the same reality: old and new Romania. The perspectives between "old" and "new" mentality are seen on the discursive of messages transmitted. First, the protestants in Piața Victoriei/ Victoriei Square represent the ideology of "New Romania" and they were having an antigovernment position ("Down with the thieves!", "The DNA[52] will get you!", "Down with the Government"), somehow reinforcing from the #colectiv protest[53] in November 2015. Secondly, the anti-protest from Palatul Cotroceni/ Cotoceni Palace represent the ideology of "Old Romania" and they were having an anti-president position ("Down with Iohannis", "Get out, traitor", "We voted, you divided us", "Iohannis and his fellows, traitors to the nation", "You dishonored us, you are suspended").

Romanians gathered in Piaţa Victoriei to send their message to the world. Television and photographs caught on camera two symbolic images that define Romanians' cultural

[51] "The film follows journalists, whistleblowers, patients and their families, as well as government officials and state officials, uncompromisingly exposing an entire network of corruption, lies and manipulation" (imdb.com)

[52] DNA(Romanian: Direcţia Naţională Anticorupţie) means National Anticorruption Directorate

[53] #Colectiv protest were a symbol in the fight against corruption. "The day we give in is the day we die" slogan reminding the fight against corruption that started in 2015.

identity. The first picture (Dragan, 2017)[54] was of the Romanian tricolor -the flag of Romania- made of lights, on February 12, 2017. The second photo (Ganea, 2017)[55], captured two weeks later, on 26 February 2017, was the flag of the European Union, also made of lights. The images of the light flags in *Piața Victoriei/ Victory Square* primarily represent the origin (Romania), but also the belonging to the European values and culture (the European Union). Gathering of these kind and similar images were present all over the world due to Romanian diasporas. According to the last report of CVM in 2019, European Commission is positive about the Romanian evolution and judicial measurements that were taken constantly. The improvements are going towards the achievement of the CVM recommendations, in accordance with the rule of law and EU rights (European Commission, 2021).

To conclude, the accession to the EU and NATO structures brought major changes in Romanian audio-visual market. The implementation of European policies in the sphere of television contributed to a balancing of broadcasting values at global standards. From a cultural point of view, television reflects the Romanian spirit of identity and belonging to European culture and values, which were gradually introduced over the 34 years since the fall of communism.

[54] See Figure 1 in the list of figures.
[55] See Figure 2 in the list of figures.

PART TWO: ADAPTATION FLOW IN TRANS-CULTURAL CONTEXT

Research on television has a long tradition in the academic field, focusing on different topics regarding evolution, impact, content, and adaptation. While there has been some interest in transnational television and television flow in academic literature since the 1950s, a concerned research effort only began in the late 1980s. In that time, however, there have been remarkable breakthroughs in both theoretical understanding and practical applications. Murray (2012b:124) shows that the twenty-first century adaptations of film and television have its roots from "any media format that migrate to any other place or any sector of the creative industries". In this concern, Moran, and Aveyard (2014:18) highlight that we must look at the cultural and geographical region of the content migration to observe the "dominant hubs" and "outer regions". The space in which certain formats tend to migrate and the nature of the specific genre that is subject of adaptation, can predict the patterns of a cultural proximity adaptation space. Hence, the audience response to it can clarify the success or un-success that the format might have, in accordance with the cultural profile of the viewer.

The study of cultural adaptations is strongly related with theories of media globalization, focusing on the image of local culture in the process of remake or adaptation (Hutcheon, 2006; Waisbord& Jalfin, 2009; Navaro, 2012). The newly created adaptation is not meant to be a copy of the original series, but more of an expressed "reaction and response" of a society to the process of globalization (Waisbord & Jalfin, 2009: 58).

The importance of adapting global formats at the national level, according to the norms and the specificity of the local market, has been supported by researchers (Oren and Shahaf 2012; Waisbord and Jalfin 2009). The dichotomy between global and local has been

debated more and more over the last years, and the conclusion has been reached is that the companies and producers, whether local or global, must collaborate in order to face the adaptation challenges as best as possible (Chalaby 2009; Fernández-Quijada 2013). Furthermore, today production practices can be coordinated by specialists between countries (Keinonen 2018; van Keulen et al. 2020), so that the newly created television product became smoothly understand and delivered to the public. However, television producers are always looking for international partnerships and collaborations so that they can gain global recognition through the content they produce and distribute on the market (Doyle and Barr 2019; O'Regan and Potter 2013; Shahaf 2016; Zoellner 2009). Research into the trans nationalization of the media market point toward the challenges in the industry but also on the habits and routines of productions (Baltruschat 2010; Havens 2014; Straubhaar 2007). The global production processes are incorporated into the local practices by the producers, so that when adapting the television formats, the cultural negotiation is carried out as well as possible. The adaptation of television programs at the local level is encouraged by the transnational production market, which offers a diverse range of opportunities.

The cultural negotiation reflected by the adaptations of television formats consists of intercultural interaction and aims to reflect the society in which the remake is made by creating a cultural identity as truthful as possible. The power of series adaptations and television formats lies in the system of values, beliefs, and cultural practices specific to each nation in which it is adapted (Buonanno, 1999; Castelló, 2009). The differences between the original and the adaptation led to the understanding of the narrative discourse and the national context. This differentiation can be seen in contrast to the global trends that share more and more universal values.

With the spread of cable and satellite providers in the 1990s, the international television industry began its transition from mass to niche content and evolved in the late 2000s to a new type of distribution, namely video on demand. The viability of the video trade has been transnational since the early stages of technology (Steemers, 2004; Havens, 2006), however in the last decade the internationalization of streaming platforms and video on demand consumption opened to re-configurate the transnational flow globally (Lobato, 2019; Steemers, 2016). Video on demand streaming platforms contribute to the flow of video content that reinforce the international markets through important cultural products. Thus, in recent years, streaming services have gained momentum and based on a subscription, viewers can access various content, from TV shows and series to films and documentaries. Thus, the viewer can configure his viewing content according to his personal preferences.

The globalization of television formats has occurred due to issues that transcend cultures and the sense of belonging that sparks debate at local-national levels (Esser and Jensen, 2015).

2.1. Political Economy of Transnational Television

The history of transnational television can be divided into two main categories that cover the technological and the content development of television. If we take a brief look at the span of television, we can see a gradual evolution in each decade since its appearance. However, this evolution involved a series of political and economic events that led to decisions of approval or postponement of the introduction of new technologies, and also the adoption of directives and treaties in order to regulate the transnational programs flows.

Since the early 2000s (see Esser 2002, Crane 2002, Hilmes 2003, Fichers and Jhonson 2010, Kuipers 2011, Weissmann 2018), transnationalism is considered an "academic buzzword", difficult to define precisely. Under the umbrella of transnationalism concepts and theories such as: globalization; glocalization, dichotomy of local versus global; Americanization, cultural imperialism, or cultural proximity spark debate. Cultural Imperialism and Cultural Globalization are two terms that are highly used by scholars and media practitioners to emphasize a wide range of processes and effects that are related to transnationalism and media flows worldwide. The differences in the approach to cultural imperialism and cultural globalization can be seen in the contrasting scientific research approaches. Cultural imperialism focuses on the idea of cultural domination and the imposition of ideology in the cultural process, while the notion of cultural globalization emphasizes cultural resistance and its power but also cultural consumption (Heinrich, 2020).

The field of political economy of transnational television is maturing, with a wealth of well-understood methods and algorithms concerning the cross-border flows and debates the globalization of national cultures. Transnationalism supports the production and reception of media products (Weissmann, 2018; Bondebjerg et al, 2017) in a field that is in continuous transformation. This chapter reviews the most important discoveries in recent years, as well as the current challenges and debates within the field.

2.1.1 The Expansion of Television Worldwide

When we talk about the expansion of the television worldwide, we can talk about two different aspects. The first aspect is the technological one, and it refers to the beginnings

and developments in creating the television as a household object and transmission system technology.

Studies concerning the implementation of television as technology began before the WWI and we can mention the pioneering studies of mechanical and electronic television (see the inventions of cathode ray tube and mechanical scanner system), in different corners of the world. Before WWII, we can already take into discussion television as a technology implemented in the USA and UK. Due to higher costs, television was present as a household good only in a few rich families. By 1940, for example, in the USA, the starting price for a television, RCA model, was 600 $ (Cox, 2011) almost as much as a new car worth at that time.

Because of WWII, television worldwide developed and became globally popular around 1950s. Since then, we can see a continuously evolution of television until nowadays as following: television as a household good (black and white, color, with lamps, tubular, led, LCD, 3D etc.), transmission technology (analog: NTCS, PAL, digital: DVB; SD, HD, live streaming etc.) and the receiving of television content (via short waves, satellite, cable, antennas, internet etc.). In this sense, Noll (1999) explained the notion of television as a system by making an analogy and adapting the communication system theory proposed by Shanon in 1948. The main aspects of reference are the production (as referred to the source), the distribution (as referred to the channel/noise) and reception (as referred to receiver).

The second aspect is the television content, which refers to the type of television formats and programs. Over the years, according to viewers preferences and other political and economic factors, the content of television programs changed, creating an evolution and development of television genres. In the context of technological evolution and television content development new branches of television regulatory institutions and market trade

appeared and continue to expand. Within the flows and changes on the global market, television space enriched in a variety of niche television channels that vary in content and reach its audience via classical broadcast television and internet television transmission. Also in the last decade, VOD platforms market expands and facilitates content to viewers according to their personal taste.

The most important aspect is to realize how the television industry expands and how it affects our daily life and cultural identity. The expansion of the television industry is related to two important aspects "the making of television (the production) and its circulation (the distribution)" (Gray and Lotz, 2019: 170). The expansion of television around the world in the early 1950s facilitated the implementation of national channels which were public services developed by each country according to its own politics. Usually, the content broadcasted was limited to news and programs that serve the "socio-cultural matters in the national context" (Bonderbjeg, 2020: 1). However, the need of programs for many territories was less viewed at that time, due to the development phase in which we found the television (Moran, 2006). The introduction of commercial television in the 1960s is related to the new technologies of cable and satellite transmission; hence "the distribution of technology changed television, from a public good to a private good" (Noam,1991: 8). Furthermore, the program grid had to be varied due to the appearance of various commercial channels that competed at that moment with the classic public television grid.

The high development of television in countries such as the USA, and UK, find TV operators to look to the international trading of programs, since the early 1950s. At first, much of this flow of programs transactions between countries was thrown together, with face-to-face debate, but many times it seemed to be unhandy and unproductive. A decade later, in the 1960s, wide-ranging international television exhibitions, markets and festivals

have been developed. Their basic function of the television industry was and still is to connect the marketers, suppliers, and licensors of television formats.

The importance of trade markets and others general global flow of television formats conduct to the implementation of special platforms for creators, producers, distributors, broadcasters, financial agents and other of this kind, where they can buy and sell formats, but also to make other market deals such as co-productions. Here is to mention the most prestige international markets which facilitate the exchange of television formats, namely: MIPTV[56], MIPCOM[57], MIPDOC[58], MIPASIA[59], NATPE[60], NEM[61]. The importance of these markets is seen by scholars (see Bielby & Harrington 2008; Havens 2011) as having a big impact on the flow of television content programs. Nowadays these markets are still on the top trend concerning the distribution and promotion of formats, adapting their content and the development in accordance with the new technological trends (Smirnoff, 2021; Roxborough, 2021, Smirnoff et all, 2020, Hopewell, 2021). In the last decade, academics debates suggest different perspectives among the importance of international markets that we have mentioned earlier. A great example in this regard is Joonseok Choi (2019: 160) who believes that MIPTV's conference "plays an important role in materializing the formats in the marketplace", contrary to Chalaby's (2016a: 70) perspective, who believes that the conference is "merely an additional event to a global market for television". Undergoing a rethinking of the problem, I propose seeing beyond those affirmations. International market conferences, as additional events, create opportunities for buyers to explore unique content

[56](Fr.) Marché International des Programmes de Télévision- (en.) International Market of Television Programs
[57](Fr.) Marché International des Programmes de Communication- (en) International market of Communication Programs
[58](Fr.) Marché International des Programmes des Documentaires – (en) International Market of Documentary Programs
[59](Fr.) Marché International des Programmes de Asia – (en) International Market of Asian Programs
[60] National Association of Television Program Executives
[61] New European Market

that is developed in certain countries of the world. Such conferences provide publications that abound in statistical data that cover information such as: the number of exports and imports, total incomes, audience ratings for specific regions of the world etc. Having access to those types of statistics provides a better understanding of the format trade business and came handy to both media practitioners willing to invest in television content and academicians who study the market flows.

2.1.2. Cultural Imperialism

Research on cultural imperialism began about 40 years ago and is a common approach in the field of television studies and has emerged from Herbert Schiller work. He was the first who proposed a broader thesis of cultural imperialism. In Schiller's perspective (1976: 9), cultural imperialism represents the process by which a society is brought to the modern world level, so that it corresponds and promotes the values of the dominant system. Society is thus "attracted, pressured and sometimes bribed to shape social institutions" to adapt to the imposed requirements. The cultural imperialism thesis presents capitalism in a position where it relies on spatial expansion and on foreign markets investigation. Consequently, as Christensen (2013) suggests, this not only explores the programs on television but also implies the market economy and the cultural values that developed in Western culture.

In the 1970s and 1980s the media theories concerning cultural imperialism debated upon the television imported content and capitalist consumerism. Not only the received content was accepted but also the national production of programs was growing. For example, in the 1970s, Korea produced 92% of the televised programs and India watched

national production programs in proportion of 99% (see Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1996). Despite this, the penetration rate of US programs was increasing worldwide (see Nordenstreng and Varis, 1974) and the content was received well all around the globe. Shela Shefffy (2017: 783) explains that this cultural importation is well received by foreigners because it creates "a sense of novelty and freshness". She also points toward the dynamics of receiving foreign content, explaining that people in the targeted groups are tolerant to new. In this way, the approach to cultural patterns is done in a fluid manner, allowing the consumer to gradually get used to a certain type of program or film. Due to the Cold War and Non-Aligned Movements, new trends in media development and research start to question cultural imperialism (see Schiller 1969, Schiller 1973). In this sense, a concern research effort was supported by UNESCO, which examined the international media flows and counter flows (see Nordenstreng and Varis, 1974) of television and film content, in more than 50 countries around the world.

In the 1980s, new important approaches appeared in film and mass media policy. In this regard, the European Commission adopted the document Television Without Borders (1984 and 1989), the MEDIA program (1987, from 2014 it was renamed Creative Europe), and the COE established a financial support program for European film, called Eurimages (1988). At that time, the biggest media capital was dominated by the United States (see Chalaby 2006; McChesney and Schiller 2005; Miller et al. 2005; Morley 2006,) and this is because it was the first exporter of films and television shows. Meanwhile, media companies in the USA began to grow, and have "significant cross media portfolio" (Hardy, 2010: XV), therefore West and East European markets began to import US media products. In this context, we can talk about an eclectic movement toward telecommunication and broadcasting system privatization across the world (North America, Western and Eastern

Europe, Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, and even Asia). Freedman (2008) talks about the neoliberal policies of liberalization, deregulation and privatization that were implemented in 1980s. Television broadcasting in Europe had a territorial and national advantage. The European broadcasters had a national purpose, but there were also exceptions, such as Germany and Switzerland (see Garitaonand´ıa, 1993: 184) which had a federal and respectively a regional political system. In this decade (the1980s), the *decentralization process* led to the development of television at the *infra-national* level, and the relationship of television with the national state was redefined. Complex local and regional television broadcasting systems were implemented. To this point, cross border televisions have become popular in USA but also in West Europe, when pan-European channels began cross border transmission. Regulatory changes have led to an increase in PETV. In the 1980s and 1990s, deregulation facilitated the release broadcasting in European countries. This resulted in a sudden increase in commercial operators, cable, and satellite services. Therefore, this growth has led to cross-border and trans-media ownership as well as international trade in television content (Galperin, 1999). In Europe, the formation of the global media industry facilitated the emergence of transnational media corporations, such as AOL-Time Warner, Viacom, and Disney (Herman and McChesney, 1997). The late 1980s and the early 1990s represent the starting point for the format trade, as it is known today (Choi, 2018).

2.1.3 Globalization and Television in Europe

In the 1980s the term globalization was widely used in the academic field to show cross border interaction in domains such as culture, politics, economics, and

communications. In the field of television, researchers (see Robertson 1992; Giddens 2000; Rantanen 2005; Castells 2009) show that the term globalization is used by highlighting the importance of the televisual flows that cross the national borders. For Weissmann (2018:19), the term globalization is likely to be correlated with "connotations of unequal power relations that are heavily skewed towards the dominant, American industry". In her point of view, academic research on globalization might create problems in defining cultural processes, as the word is an ambiguous one. In this context the term transnationalism may rather propose a narrower position that is described by Hansen (2018: 9) as "regarding two or more countries and not a global worldwide view".

Throughout the 1990s, "globalization" was a buzzword and was widely used in social sciences, commerce, and industry (Mody, 2003: VII). The idea of globalization presumes the adherence to a global economic, cultural, and political system, overshadowing the character and power of the national state (Castells 1996; Giddens 200; Horsman and Marshall 1994). The uncertainties of globalization include the dominance of American power in the international mass media. This is because the American business model prevails and the mass media are liberalized, commercialized, and privatized in many parts of the world (Cunningham et al. 1998; Sinclair et al. 1996).

In the 1990s, Ronald Roberson (1990) proposed a rejoinder for the term globalization, namely "glocalization", by making an analogy with the McDonald's restaurants business. As Hansen (2018: 8) later explains the analogy, the dimension of identity and business concept (the financial dimension) is highlighted by the fact that "both disperse a global production concept and a sensibility towards local tastes and interests", mentioning that globalization is "a process which interrupt locality". In the 1990s studies conducted to analyze the effects of television across culture focus on the US economy

influence of cross border flow (Biltereyst, 1991; Elsmar and Hunter, 1993; Ware and Dupagne 1994). Terms such as “McDonalization” (Roberson 1990) and “Coca-Colization” (Wagnleitner, 1994) were used by scholars for a better description of the USA influence on international level. The major topics investigated in this field explain and highlight theories such as cultural imperialism, Americanization, cultural hegemony, and globalization.

Researchers (see Langeand Renaud, 1989, Dupagne, 1992, Havend, 2006) considered that European television market would import more American programs to survive. This hypothesis was sustained by the dominance of the United States in the trade market, which consequently led to a trade imbalance between imports and European productions, therefore Dupagne (1992: 15) drive attention to the “concern within European supranational institution” in the context of “Unified Europe” and the emergence of TWFD in 1989 by the EC. A decade later, in 2000s, according to the European Audiovisual Observatory (2014), the number of hours of American TV shows scheduled by major European TV networks was about 214.000 and the number increase massively each year. Statistics show that in 2008, the media exports such as film and TV shows from the US were worth around 13,5 million dollars to other countries but imported less than 2 million dollars of non-US film and TV shows (Jin, 2011). It is important to note that building the global market for any format, need demand from viewers. In order to form a format market, there must be a community of people interested in this field and who share the same visions and values. Choi (2019: 160) notes that starting from 2003-2004, “the formation of a global format community accelerated” based on the legal and functional basis of formats.

Following the mid-90s studies (see Sinclair, Jacka, Cunningham, 1996) upon the global television market trade, where the main debate targets the internal dynamics and global connections between different regions in a general manner, there has been more

specific research in the mid-2000s (see Moran, 2006: 67) where the global television trade was divided into five regional markets. First market includes “larger populations of Western Europe such as Germany and France but also includes Japan”. Second market includes “other parts of Western Europe and Australia”. The third market includes territories in “the former Soviet Bloc”. The fourth market includes “smaller or less lucrative territories such as Uruguay, Turkey and even PR China”. The fifth market is that of the United States.

In the following years, this division has led to a great deal of debate in the field due to the “constant geographic flux”, as Vivarelli (2018, April 6) noticed. This means that the market classification proposed by Moran (2006) slightly changed as new countries join the list of the biggest TV content providers. Today, near U.K, U.S.A and Netherlands, the newest providers in the market space are Turkey, South Corea, Israel, and Japan. Consequently, the flow of television content moved toward new countries, which in the past had no collaboration at all. “The popularity of global formats necessitates a reconsideration of its cultural salience, not only in terms of format reproductions and localization strategies but also in terms of mapping a format’s imprint on the industrial and cultural conventions for creative productions and televisual cultures” (Ganguly, 2019: 21).

In the mid-2000s, Chalaby (2005b) proposed a new paradigm regarding media internationalization. He indicates that trans-nationalization is different from internationalization or globalization. Trans-nationalization can be defined as an internal globalization, because the public is exposed to different media cultures, due to media conglomerates that provide a wide range of content. The public operates with an "ironic stance to cultures" that moves them "beyond the frames of national society" (Robins and Aksoy 2005: 36, as cited in Chalaby 2005b: 31). Global media conglomerates operate

independently, regionally, or globally importing and exporting programs with different specificities (Weissmann, 2018: p.120)

Also, the 2000s represent the first steps into internet distribution of television and films through various platforms. Internet distribution has challenged in this regard the nationally oriented policy regimes, by enabling unauthorized television flows, namely copyright and piracy. However, the problem in the field is not new, as media scholars and practitioners began to debate the problem of copyright in the 80s and 90s, when it was regarded as a threat for creativity, science, and democracy (Edelmann,1980; Streeter, 1996). Throughout the years, the politics of copyright has strengthened worldwide, and legal framework was implemented in each country. Today, the transnational flow of television programs involves the legal guidelines for every television product and provide protection for all dimensions of any program.

2.1.4 Changing Faces of International Television

The 2010s implement the new media technology that unites the television with the internet. The intertwining of television with digital media generated a hybrid form of television business where apps and services try to respond to the public quest for visual entertainment. Therefore, the research field enriched in studies concerning the impact of new mediums among viewers and media market (see Osur 2016, Auletta, 2014, Bachman, 2013), consumption of TV and new media (see Espinoza Mata, Polanco &Tusev 2017), the flow of digital media and television (see Chalabi 2006, Waisbord, 2004), media history (see Bastiansen 2008) etc. The affordances of internet distribution enable different industrial strategies and business practices and have provided much for scholars to consider. Internet-

distributed television became mainstream in Britain in 2008 and in the US in 2010. Thus, it substantially refined the experience of television by freeing it from a linear schedule, in a manner deeply appreciated by viewers.

The newly formed trends in the industry talk about two separate services. One is the VOD and the other is OTT. The line between those two is very fine and many with no knowledge of the video industry might get confused. The OTT previously used satellite or cable for transmission but now uses the internet (live-stream, Skype, WhatsApp). The VOD is the opposite of broadcast television program, and it is watched whenever you want at any time you want. However, OTT and VOD are going hand in hand. To explain this, we can say that the migration of television providers towards a new technological medium makes them able to offer services of new qualities and new market demands. Next to the cable and satellite providers' telecommunication companies are now offering services of television, attracting more consumers who are thrilled by the package offers that incorporate few services at a reasonable price. Today we can talk of several types of videos on demand services such as SVOD (subscription video on demand), TVOD (transactional video on demand) with its subcategories, namely EST (electronic sell through) and DRT (download to rent), AVOD/BVOD (advertising-financed /broadcaster video on demand), PVOD (prime video on demand) and many other hybrid forms that develop every day. These new business models represent in a way the modern updated extension of the classical visual means of entertainment access, namely television and cinema.

One of the most significant dilemmas regards the boundaries of television in this unique environment. Film and television grow uncertain as services such as Netflix co-mingle television and film titles in recommendation screens and debut films without theatrical release. It is likewise unclear where to draw lines between "television" and the

range of “video” that now circulates on social media (YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok) were individuals became their own producers of visual content, posting and sharing experiences with the entire world. In this way the line between technology and classic media is hard to define. A solution to this problem is proposed by Stuart Cunningham and David Craig (2019) who emphasize the need for distinction between social media entertainment and the industrial sector (especially series and films production) of YouTube video creators. Broadly speaking, the problem can be addressed by the digitalization media businesses which lead to a proliferation of audiovisual distribution devices and platforms. This is a consequence of technological developments of the 21st century which makes possible the using gadgets (smartphones, tablets, video consoles etc.) that require new trends in the consumption of media (social media, crowdsourcing, VOD platforms etc.).

The development of video on demand platforms facilitates individuals to access various video content instantly and changed the viewers watching habits. Hence, “binge watching” and “marathoning” became one of the most popular types of watching between young generations (Mikos, 2016). Studies in this sense have been conducted by scholars such as Lothar Mikos (2016), Ksenia Frolova (2017), Djoymi Baker (2017) and Lisa Perks (2015) and revealed that young generation “prefer linear content” (Podara et al, 2019:70) watching, but “get annoyed” when have to skip commercials often (e.g., YouTube). This type of consumption is also affected by variables such as: gender, generation, studies, job, and access to technology (see D’heer and Courtois, 2014). However, online watching of television content is more popular among people under the age of 30, and less popular for adults over the age of 60 (see Bury 2018).

The digitalization era led to the proliferation of channels and television content which also in time, moved toward streaming platforms “which not only license television series,

but also documentaries and children's programs" (Mikos, 2019:11). In Comparison with the past period, when television was simply represented by cable, satellite, and broadcast signal, the 2010s, represent a television enriched with the internet distribution. According to scholars (see Gray and Lotz, 2019:10) we must keep in mind that this additional technology represents the future, but we must "remain cognizant of the previous organizations and structures that persist" even today. On this concern, the 1990s was a decade in which "the center of gravity of American popular television shifted away from the broadcast networks and towards the basic cable sector". This latter era of television is, for Reeves, Rogers, and Epstein (2007: 83) "probably the final moment in the age of television", a statement that is partly confirmed by the way streaming platforms (e.g., Netflix and Amazon) have recently join the marketplace to "jostle for their position as providers of original TV content". (Akass, 2015: p.744). Today, the social importance of digital television has grown. "Traditional media has been really successful throughout the years, even though it needs to do some adjustments in order to survive this new digital era" (Espinoza Mata, Polanco, Tusev, 2017:130). Despite this, classic television continues to be more present than ever, even though "many have already predicted its death" (Mikos, 2019: 11). Furthermore, television industries research has increasingly considered the change brought by digitization on traditional practices of industrial operation. The beginnings of 2010s abound in millions of television programs flowing worldwide, and television became a more niche targeted world (Chaney, 2019). Considering this, we can argue that nowadays "all types of media are born digital" (Bondebjerg, 2017: 23).

Importantly for television studies, Lotz (2017) argues that internet-distributed television (Netflix, CBS All Access) isn't some sort of "new medium" as many expected, but simply a new technology for distributing television, while Catherine Johnson (2017)

conceptualizes internet-distributed television as part of a video ecosystem. Andreea Esser (2016) point out that in Europe, the private U.S. networks had a great cultural influence upon television and highlights that the TV format trade of the last years led to the formation of European production groups. Consequently, to this, Esser (2016: 3586) emphasize that "the leading traditional U.S. media players have also acquired the largest of the newly formed and rapidly grown European production groups". Furthermore, here is to mention that this kind of exchange facilitated the format flow between continents, which led to a more global attendance in television adaptations in the last years.

In the European Continent, the SVOD platforms with the most subscribers are the USA based companies, such as Netflix and Amazon. This situation integrates the European Audio-visual market into the entertainment economy of the USA (Vlassis, 2020). Bondebjerg (2016: 5) notice that the global competition in Europe requires stronger cross-national collaboration across all platforms and with players that never collaborated before and highlights the fact that there is a constant tendency of media producing companies to fuse or integrate. In this context, the geographical patterns of format trade as observed by Chalaby (2012a) and Bourdon (2012) are led by producers and distributors especially from Europe and United States, even if they can be created and shared by any creator worldwide.

2.2 Adaptation Studies Framework: The evolution of screen adaptations

Since the early stages of cinema literature represented a framework in the creative processes of telling visual stories. The first adaptations from literature date back to the early beginnings of cinema. The pioneering adaptation in the film industry is George Melies's film "Cinderella" in 1899 after the Grimms' children story with the same name. Also, the very

first movie produced that could have turned into a series, was Erich von Stroheim's film *Greed* in 1924 adapted after Franck Norris's novel, "McTeague" (1899). As the original movie length was nine and a half hours, the production studio suggested massive cuts to reduce the length, so that the public can watch it without getting bored. The film ended up being 2-hour length. Commenting on this first film adaptation, Adkins (2015) notes that in such cases, when the length of the actual footage is hourly too long, a television series is a choice, because the raw footage can divide into episodes. Erich von Stroheim's film "*Greed*" could have turned into a masterpiece series, as the entire footage was almost 90 hours length. The circumstances at that time made lost forever the entire cuts, and the costs of production were unjustified by the critics. Regarding this problem from nowadays perspective, the notion of series was non-existent at that time. In 1924 the cinema industry was in development and television technology was in its early beginnings, thus the decision concerning the cuts was the only choice that the film could reach the audience.

Over the years, film and television content has gradually developed, and new forms of genres, formats, and approaches in the field have appeared. In this context, the practice of adaptations has grown, and the audio-visual content produced has led researchers in the field to constantly change their vision and debate about specific particularities. In the early stages of academic research, in the second half of 20th century, adaptation was considered by many as "abomination" (Cartmell, Corigan, Whelehan, 2008:1), and "very dependent on theories from outside its own particular area" (Milton, 2009:56). In the 1950s the main problem questioned by the scholars was the origin of adaptation, who is creator and who deserves the merits. As Bluestone (1957/2003) emphasized the answer would logically be the writer. Further research in the 1980s also includes, next to the author, the director of the film, which was now responsible for the video creation (Cartmell and Whelehan, 1999). At the beginning

of 21st century adaptation was perceived as "any media format that migrates to any other place or any other sector of the creative industries" (Murray, 2012: 124) and research in the field deepen even more and materialized in new complex definitions.

Television channels and digital broadcasting technologies expand significantly in the 90s and this caused a demand for television programs on the market (Bechtold, 2013). In this regard the number of television products released not only increased numerically but content wise the diversity of genres expanded. Within the flow of TV formats genres such as: game shows, reality, constructed reality, quiz shows and talk shows came to life. The international flow of television formats is viewed by Perkins and Ververis (2015: 3) as "formalization and regulation of the movement of program ideas from one place to another". This transfer, however, need to be done under the aspects of "production Bible" which incorporates the main idea and copyright aspects of the program. The research on the field of TV format adaptation was debating in the early 2000s the market domination of mostly game shows and reality programs (Rodrigue, 2007). Hilmes (2013: 35) talks about reality formats as a genre that when adapted is remade "in such a way as to change virtually every element of the show except the central organizing concept". Thus, cultural negotiations are made under careful guidance. Consultancy for formats came handy (Moran, 2009) when adaptation is done under the local specific culture (Moran, 2009) and limited budget, that can affect the production in the context of localization (Esser, 2014). However, television format adaptation such as reality shows, game shows or quiz shows are products that can easily travel, and they can be considered effective because present minimal risks and they guarantee the audience appeal. The minimal risk of television formats adaptation refers to the chances of success and positive reactions due to a previous acknowledgement of broadcasting, and such adaptations are perceived as the experience of "visiting an old friend"

(Marciniak, 2007:62). Success is guaranteed for shows that initially have success in the original country, they are relatively cheap to produce; the source ideas are molded into local context easily and assure high ratings; and this is because it "offers some chance of duplicating past and existing success" (McCabe and Akass, 2013:10). Nevertheless, the risk of failure still exists because of audience familiarity and cultural background whit the main thematic of the show (e.g., music, dance, matrimonial etc.)

Adaptation research field began to flourish in the 2000s, when scripted adaptations of different television series began to flow on the trade market. In general, scripted adaptations such as drama are sensible genres that cannot stay fixed under specific structures and require shaping in accordance with local culture and targeted audience (Moran and Aveyard, 2014; Chalabi, 2016). Drama as adaptation can be seen as a macro world of scripted narration that incorporates subdivisions of dramas such as literature adaptation of theatrical drama, docudrama, crime drama, political drama, war drama, romantic drama, comedy-drama, soap-opera etc. Such adaptations involve a strong re-writing of the scenario, which must be realized under fictional or daily inspired stories. In this regard, the adaptations should be enriched with a diverse pallet of cultural elements that sift towards characters and local flavor. The adaptation of scripts involves a strong cultural translation of scenario which persuades the public curiosity when watching the newly adapted version of it. In the last couple of years, Chalabi (2016) noticed that adaptation industry has risen, and it is able to create diverse and successful content from a banal script. In the process of adaptation scriptwriters pay attention to six core components, namely: textual structure; cultural context and linguistic code; inter-textuality, characterization in terms of action and events; characterization of focal points; textual medium (Simpson and Montgomery, 1995: 140). Those components came handy for practitioners, but also for researchers when identifying

aspects of narration and "analyzed when focusing on the dissatisfaction of an author with his or hers work, that has been changed in the process of adaptation" (Statham, 2019: 3)

The re-appropriation from one culture or country to other manifests in the replacement of the entire visual images, sounds and symbols in accordance with the decisions of the local production team and the copyright laws. Stam (2000: 55) saw this transfer as "an automatic difference between the original and the adaptation". Usually, scripted adaptation requires in-depth cultural translation and many times their risk of failure in the new market may occur. However, adapted in local context, the newly constructions embrace "national meanings" (Waisbord, 2004: 380). Even though these scripted formats are global products, in the local context they became culturally appropriate and should attract the viewers as they are familiar with the local viewing habits. For the production crew script translation is not enough, as the local culture requires adaptations and text interventions to make it more appropriate for the local context, because word by word reproduction is not desirable. Adaptation must be culturally suitable and merge with the local myths, symbols, and tradition, in other words to offer the viewer the familiarity of the local context. Thus, the script writers and producers are working to "interpret, actualize and redefine" (Navarro, 2012: 25) in a new context.

Due to the boom of literature adaptations in the global flow, the 2000s research on the field talk about literature adaptation in cinema and television and define it as an "appropriation of meaning from the prior text" (Andrew, 2000: 29), or a "relationship with an informing source text or original" (Sanders, 2006: 26). Linda Hutcheon (2006: 7) described adaptation as a "repetition without replication" because the original text that has been adapted did not represent something to be "reproduced" but rather a source that can be "interpreted, recreated, often in a new medium" (2006: 84). In her point of view, adaptations

represent a creative way of telling stories, a way in which the directors and scenarists "re-read and re-relate" (2006:111) stories. Literature adaptations remain a popular trend in the television and film industry. Furthermore, today the popularity of literary works stands in the number of screen adaptations that have been made (Cartmell and Whelehan, 2014:3). In this regard, this type of adaptation goes beyond the textual limitations and involves creativity and perspectives to create a masterpiece that gains popularity and appreciation.

Also, when looking at adaptations' researchers point towards the geography in which films and television series are adapted. Moran and Aveyard (2014: 18) talk about the "cultural and spatial media frontiers". Those two elements are important in understanding the market flows and the dominant regions in which adaptations are made and further sold. The problem of cultural proximity has received substantial interest in the last decades due to the implications of text selection, cultural translation, and transactions (Murray, 2012b: 127). In Murray's (2012b: 130) perspective, the "text's adaptation invites to critical attention" because the local culture, social norms and politics of the place creates new context and unique point of view in seeing the same story. And this has led to a great deal of debate about the specificity and fidelity of the adaptation.

Specificity and fidelity are defined as the most accurate notions in the practice of adaptation as they reveal the cultural attitudes and assumptions about the essential acquirements of the film or television series adaptation (Corrigan, 2007). The specificity and fidelity of a movie or series when adapted from literature represents a translation which can be interpreted in many forms as "the source is considered classical literature or popular literature" (Corrigan, 2007: 33). However, the notion of specificity and fidelity is debatable in terms of the field transition. Stam (2000) emphasizes that we cannot talk about fidelity since the adaptation changed its medium, from literature to cinema/television series, and in

consequence the text is replaced by visual images and voices, which can have hidden symbolism. The medium of adaptation determines" what are the limitations of the final product, as different mediums provide different opportunities and expressions" (Eberts, 2012: 8) An alternative approach to the problem is to see beyond the adapted text and to look more to the image appropriation used in films/series in the cultural identity terms, as symbolistic of images and surprised problems could be interpreted differently by audience.

Moreover, adaptations from literature generate open doors for new content that can be explored in the audio-visual field, namely remakes and sequels. As the name suggests, remakes refer to different manners of perspectives in telling the same story and sequel, refers to the continuity of an existing story. Leitch (2002: 44) explains that "sequels gravitate towards remakes, and occasional remakes contain elements of sequel". However, sequels are more important in the processes of films and series because they involve creative minds to think about the continuity of a story that has been told many times. It is important to note that sequels can refer to a single episode that frames up another continuity that stands as end for the adaptation or can be an entire series of episodes that materialized in a new season (Hark, 2010). Recent research on the field (see Hill, 2018) debates the relationship between adaptation and sequels in the global flow of film and television products. Hill (2018) highlights the same idea as Leitch (2002), that sequels can be adapted and generate that same nostalgia between audience with the previous versions or the original film/series that was broadcasted.

With technological evolution and the appearance of on demand platforms, adaptations are regarded as important products, that through their concept should attract more viewers, thus more monthly subscriptions. Adaptations of different dramas and the placement of those type of products on online streaming platforms contributed to the

attractiveness of the SVOD platforms. The investment in new adapted stories contribute to the global market, as more local content is trans culturally adapted and viewed through the help of television or streaming platforms in all corners of the world. With the development of the digital era, internet adaptations of literature represent a new trend in the industry that has grown exponentially. In this context, the market of TV dramas adaptation expands toward Internet and "opens up a new situation for the production of TV series" (Huang, 2018: p. 399). Boog (2019) noticed that the VOD platform Netflix has bought thousands of book copyrights for adaptation since its launch, and in 2019, around 50 of these books were transformed into series. Thus, the online adaptation industry began to increase novels' popularity and attract viewers to watch and compare literature adaptations. Therefore, not only the popularity of adaptations in the online space increased, but also the SVOD revenues. Statistics published by European Audio-Visual Observatory (2021) concerning the trends in the VOD market in the EU and show the exponential growth of revenues in the last ten years, namely from 388,8 million Euro in 2010 to 11,6 billion Euro in 2020.

2.3 Understanding the Television Adaptation Industry

Adaptation Studies are a complex field which incorporates thousands of theories and methodological approaches that color the evolution of cinema and television broadcasting. Along the time, the research in the field of adaptation debate problems such as: fidelity and infidelity of the source (Emig, 2018, Adkins, 2015, Hermansson, 2015; Eberts, 2012; Dovey, 2012), formal and cultural approaches (Avis, 2015, Elliott, 2014), audio-video translation and culturalism (Chaume, 2019; de Figueiredo 2018; Evans, 2014; Chan, 2012), semiotics and linguistic approaches (Milton, 2009), epistemological approaches (Cattrysse, 2014;

Hutcheon, 2006), individual and sociological approaches (Murray, 2012a), politics and aesthetics (Hassler-Forest and Nicklas 2015; MacCabe 2011) and the list can continue.

In a more recent academic approach, it is considered that the field of adaptation studies is permanently adapting, due to its dynamic research (Elliott, 2017). The media market offers a large amount of content which gives the opportunity to adapt and re-adapt multiple times. In many cases, the same source of text can be approached in different ways creating a new adapted version (Eberts, 2012, Phu 2010). Researchers such as Geraghty (2008: 5) consider valuable for the field such adaptations because "comparison between different screen adaptations of the same source" can offer different perspectives, with different successes in the targeted audience. For each individual country, the local dynamics of the media industry have its own characteristics such as ideologies, cultural and social norms. Both globally and locally, these characteristics have a strong impact on the way television products are adapted and re-formed. In recent decades, the emergence and development of regional markets has made producers choose foreign television formats based more on their own local cultural values and beliefs.

This chapter aims to answer the question of the importance of adaptations in the transnational flow, and to explain industry practices and dynamics that stand in the process of adaptations.

2.3.1. The Importance of Television Adaptations

Television adaptations represent a complex process through which a television format of any kind and genre is borrowed or bought from the global market and remade in accordance with a new national context. During the adaptation process, the television format plotline, characters, and identity are converted and re-shaped based on a new culture, in the

local traits. Thus, television adaptations are part of the global market, which is accessed by professionals from all over the world to be used in their local nation as raw formats or remake the adaptation cycle.

In today's marketplace, the process of adaptation is an attractive practice for buyers from the financial point of view but also because such formats were tested before (Ellis, 1982; Moran 2004; Hutcheon, 2006; Straubhaar, 2012). Scripted television formats, as they were originally aired in one or multiple countries, offer the chance for media buyers to look at previous ratings and to take a decision if such products are suitable for their new location (Chalaby, 2011). Television series trading is profitable nowadays because it offers producers and media broadcasters the possibility to invest in an adaptation, without risking failure. Thus, they do not have to invest money and time in an original idea, that can have an unknow and uncertified success (Moran, 2004). However, producers and scenarists must be careful when adapting these scripted formats, as the cultural translation stands in the further success or failure of the product in the local market (Chalaby, 2016).

The practice of adaptation represents a stabile business because it is based on the minimization of risks and economic costs. So that the adaptation of television formats stands in equalized balance in terms of risks and benefits (Hutcheon, 2006). Every year, the global media market of television formats and their adaptations generates huge revenues in the sphere of production and distribution (Chalaby, 2016). The value of these television formats increase es with their multiplication and trans nationalization in new markets, where the adaptation can be done under other genres than the original one. Thus, local media markets develop due to the continuous flow of formats from the global market. The latter provide local producers with a varied range of scripted or non-scripted television formats, which will easily adapt to the new market due to their recorded success (Waisbord, 2009).

Investing in global formats gives local markets the opportunity to create a new socio-cultural space, adapted to the requirements of the national public (Moran, 2008; Straubhaar, 2012). In the last decades, the phenomenon of adaptations has gained momentum, so that viewers have become accustomed to watching television formats in accordance with the local culture and the related social space (Moran, 2007). Global exporters of television programs sell a lot of ready-made content, that goes across borders through license. Through this type of acquisition, local broadcasters can give a TV series a new interpretation, but also to evaluate the taste of the national public, and gain more success with the adaptation (Straubhaar, 2007).

Today, the adaptation of television formats is a global practice, which brings socio-cultural and economic advantages for local broadcasters. This practice ensures the birth of new hybrid formats that can easily migrate from the local space to the global one, thus generating profit and attracting an impressive number of viewers.

2.3.2 Industry Approaches in Adaptation Practices

The adaptation process of television formats is complex, requiring in-depth research on the differentiation between global and local, starting from the production stage to broadcasting and reception. This approach brings with it interactions at the level of the adaptation industry and the social environment, as well as state-imposed regularities.

In the television adaptation industry, the time and duration of the programs represent the way in which these reproductions are differentiated at the global and local level. We must mention that each country has its own industrial conventions that producers must respect. These aspects are guided by the cultural dimension and viewing habits specific to

each country. However, the regulations with regard to the time and duration of the adaptations depend very much on the budget allocated to the productions. In some countries we find television series with a duration of 30-40 minutes per series, and their adaptations in other areas of the world can end up having the same duration or, on the contrary, be extended to an hour or even two hours. Usually, longer adaptations develop scenarios based on more extensive details than the original format. Depending on the government regulations in each country, television stations are obliged to respect a certain amount of time for advertisements during the broadcasting of programs. Although advertisements are their main source of income, they represent an essential component in making decisions about the duration of programs. So that in some countries we have programs and series with a longer duration of broadcasting, and the revenues from advertising are proportional to their number and frequency. Or conversely, shorter programs and series addressed to a diverse audience, where advertisements are also chosen to target various categories of the public and to maximize revenues. Producers often use strategies based on time efficiency in intercultural adaptations. Hence, more time is allocated in local television production, to highlight certain cultural-identity details, but also to harness on "cultural proximity" (Larkey et al., 2016). Also, there may be cases in which the producers reduce the time in adaptations by simply deleting some details that seem unnecessary or doubtful in the local context.

An essential and representative component in the adaptation of television formats is the placement in the program grid. Hence, the moment of broadcasting plays a primary role in its public perception. Usually, the programs placed in prime time are considered the most important in the schedule, precisely because the rating is very high. This placement in the program grid is based on decisions related to internal content and the audience to which it is

addressed, but also the financial benefits that the broadcasters obtain as a result of their airing.

The dynamics of local media industries contribute to the way television adaptations are developed. For example, producers may be restricted in approaching thematic issues by specific audiovisual rules and laws. In these cases, the adaptation is done in accordance with the law, thanks to the screenwriters who can replace, emphasize, or detail other local details. Thus, through the process of adaptation, the screenwriters and local producers create a new presentation of the story in a new cultural and identity context. In this process they are guided by the "Format Bible" (Moran, 2008) or by the script and/or the original visual product (e.g., the original television series); which includes production elements and technical details that came handy for the practitioners. In the local context these guidance tools represent the scheme that the producers have to fill according to the requirements of the market in which they are located.

Besides these classic practices of the adaptation industry, there is also the possibility that a producer from the country of acquisition to come and aid the local producers, where the reproduction takes place. This concept is known in specialized literature as “traveling producer” or “flying producer” (Moran, 2007: 146; Chalaby, 2011: 295), and its attributes are similar, or complement the “Bible”. Usually, “traveling producer” helps in the pre-production and production stage of the adaptation when in-depth understanding of specific details is needed. This interaction between those producers aims to the flow of the cultural negotiations in the context where the local producer masters the of the socio- cultural environment from the area, and the “flying producer” takes care that the details of the initial production scheme are respected (Moran, 2007).

Society and the social environment also play an important role in the adaptation process of television formats. In other words, adaptations are influenced by social dynamics. The public prefers to watch visual content "close as cultural content" to their own culture, through elements such as "language, ethnic appearance, dress, style, humor, historical reference, and shared topical knowledge" (Straubhaar, 2007: 26; Larkey et al., 2016).

Watching television content similar to one's own culture produces the feeling of cultural belonging, because the audience resonates with the characters and the situations in which they are involved (see Straubhaar, 1991; Moran, 2004; 2008). In the adaptations of the television formats, this "sense of community" (Moran, 2004: 5) has the role of keeping the cultural identity intact and contributing to the preservation of local values and traditions. However, in many cases this "cultural proximity" does not refer only to the geographical aspect, based on the borders and neighbors of a country. Non-geographic aspects such as language or religion can provide a sense of belonging and/or cultural familiarity too (Straubhaar, 1991; 2007).

In Straubhaar's (2007) view, cultural proximity stands in national, subnational, cultural, linguistic, and geo-cultural regions. This concept of cultural proximity is classified into four distinct levels, namely: gender proximity; cultural shareability; value proximity and thematic proximity. In the genre proximity category, we can easily fit the style and structure of the script of a television series that, from the point of view of content, wants to be understood and recognized in the regions where these television products flow. Cultural shareability and value proximity refers to "common values", "cultural values", "images" or "archetypes" that have the role of creating a connection between the viewers and the story of the characters of the series, making them feel familiar with the themes and content addressed by series, by the simple fact that the cultural sphere is similar. The thematic

proximity refers to similar problems encountered by viewers in series and with which they identify (e.g., the loss of a loved one; difficulties in finding a job, etc.). Aesthetic proximity refers to stylistic elements such as music, costumes, or filming angles (van Keulen, 2016). Taking into consideration these elements, van Keulen (2016) highlights that at the universal level, between cultures there must be aesthetic proximity. Without this, the level of perception of the various productions that flow globally can be misunderstood by the viewers. Therefore, from the point of view of cultural proximity, there must be an aesthetic balance so that the public is attracted to what they watch on television.

Another aspect of the social implications that television adaptations have refers to the characteristics of the target audience. These constitute a decisive factor in making adaptation decisions, because the public can be divided according to age, ethnic minorities, religious cults, political affinities and so on. These characteristics of the audience can cause conflicts if the adaptation is not thought out in detail. Producers choose to respect a "dominant cultural order" (Butler, 2012:154) or rather a standardized form, depending on the dominant cultural values of the country in question. Also. Butler (2012) speaks of two dimensions that these productions can have depending on the characteristics of the audience, "broadcasting" and "narrowcasting". "Broadcasting" refers to the type of program that is addressed to a varied audience and "narrowcasting" assumes a more precise target audience, for example young or old people.

In conclusion, the dynamic of adaptation industry and the social environment, as well as state-imposed regularities represent an essential component of the interactions between global and local.

2.4 New Trends in Adaptation Flow

In the long run, television adaptations have been approached differently in their construction, and they as a product have been distributed all over the world. It is obvious that from a cultural point of view, their receptivity was different, and their interpretation was done in a cultural context. Gradually, from a scientific point of view, the new trends in the media market have been examined constantly and in detail by researchers. Along with the technological evolution and economic-social changes, television adaptations took another form, and their critical approach has been questioned in a transnational context.

This chapter debates the new faces of television adaptations and opens a new academic research approach on Turkish series.

2.4.1 Rebranding the Adaptation

Over the years, global television has undergone major changes and transformations. Technological progress and the production capacities of radio broadcasters have contributed to the expansion of the media market. So that these changes led to the diversification of audio-visual content, by approaching programs of various genres.

In recent years, on the backdrop of technological developments, the movements in the global market of television formats have produced major changes in the adaptive processes as well as in the economic, political, and socio-cultural ones. In this global market, the adaptive processes of television formats represent an inevitable cultural necessity through which content is generated in accordance with local ideologies. Along with the desire to protect and promote local cultural identity, producers prefer to adapt foreign content

to the local space of their country. Thus, the visual content acquires a new form and a new meaning, in the local socio-cultural and political context. So that the adaptations are more than simple imitations and rather represent hybrid products, where the intertextuality fits the socio-cultural space. Re-makes have thus become innovative and pluri-vocal productions, specific to the third millennium.

The evolution of terminology flourished with the growth of interest in adaptation studies. At the beginning, the adaptation studies were based on the fidelity of literary text, and with the passage of time this field of research began to include other forms such as adaptations of films, dramas, series, video games, etc. (Cartmell, 2012). The global development of adaptations has led to the redefinition of the research field. Hutcheon (2006) considers that the medium was often put in inferiority because most of the classic approaches to adaptations referred to the unequal textual relationship that a film had in comparison with the literary original text. The development of the study of adaptations attacked the superiority of literature. Technological development, new formats and flows in the media market have given a consistent value to adaptations, and their evaluation is often done without considering the original source.

The problem of originality was discussed and interpreted intensively. In this sense, scholars (see Barthes 1981) posed the problem of “intertext”, in other words, each text contains, to a greater or lesser extent, another text, and the flow of ideas is generated based on existing ideas. Transposed into adaptation research, this approach strengthens the idea of textuality, where the screenwriter's ideas are fueled by the socio-cultural context. The originality and fidelity of the adaptations raised questions about the creative process, which seems like an uninterrupted cycle of borrowings and interpretations. However, the practice of adaptations, widely recognized, is nothing more than a new replica of an existing text, but

which includes original elements of the socio-cultural and political context. In the process of adapting television formats, culture plays an important role because it is the one that breaks from the original narrative context to the re-created one, by placing it in a new setting, with different characters and feelings. Therefore, the adaptations consist in the ability to reconfigure, remake, and transpose the narrative thread into another socio-cultural context.

Finally, adaptations constitute a bridge between local and global. This redefinition is based upon the fact that media products have the ability to migrate from one market to another. In other words, when a television production, a script crosses the borders of the national context, to another country, a transposition or a translation of the narrative frame inevitably occurs in another cultural context, calibrated on new socio-political dimensions. In this context, we can say that through the adaptive process the local becomes global, and the global becomes local, making space for the "glocal" (Esser, 2013).

2.4.2 Turkish Drama in the Global Flow of Adaptations

Talking about the transnational television products in a global context, and due to the television market trade, over the years many countries have exchanged television products. In the last decade the transnational flow of adaptation regard countries exchanges such as: USA-UK, UK- Denmark, Korea-Turkey, Norway-Italy, and the list can continue.

Robert Cohen (as cited in Kornfeld, 2018) talks about exportable television formats as having three key attributes: universality, adaptability, and scalability. "Universality is about having a core appeal among a large group of people, adaptability is about how easily the concept can be adapted to local cultures, and scalability refers to the ability to accommodate the range of budgets made available in different parts of the world". Hence,

in the adaptation process it is important to understand the “harmony between the television business, target demographics, audiences and local cultures” (Erdogan, 2015: 23)", so that the newly created product generates profit.

In the last year Turkey exports its television series to more than 156 countries around the world, registering more than 500 million viewers globally (Daily Sabah, 2019). Moreover, since 2014 Turkey rank second largest TV serials exporter in the world after the US (Hurriyet Daily News, 2014; Daily Sabah 2019). In 2023, Turkey upholds its position, and expect to reach 1 billion USD in global sales (Kalaycioglu, 2023). Accordingly, one year ago, more than 33 Turkish production companies attend MIPCOM, most of them under national participation led by the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce, while others participate individually (Alakent, 2022). Turkish television dramas have become increasingly common in the current global media landscape, due to their complex scenarios that often incorporate global themes. In the recent years, the success and popularity of this series brought for Turkey international award winnings (see hurriyetdailynews.com, 2017; doyouknowturkey.com, 2019; miletnews.com, 2022) and sparked debate between academics.

Adaptation studies became popular in Turkey in the last 15 years. Academics in the field are actively involved in research of films and television series in the local context. In this regard we can mention remarkable studies of academicians such as Sevilay Çelenk (2009, 2010, 2018), Yeşim Kaptan (2013, 2018, 2020) and Ece Algan (2020), Ibrahim Er (2020), Bilge Yesil (2015), Seza Esin Erdoğan (2015), Melis Behlil (2021) and Eylem Yanardağoğlu and Neval Turhallı (2020). Their study on television adaptations is mainly based on the trans nationalization and local expansion of television production (Yanardağoğlu & Turhallı, 2020; Kaptan & Algan, 2020); adaptations of global series in the

Turkish cultural context (Behlil, 2021; Er, 2020; Erdoğan 2015); receptivity to Turkish series in the Middle East and the Balkans (Kaptan, 2013); and the fidelity of the adaptations in the Turkish cultural context (Kaptan, 2018, Çelenk, 2010; 2018). More than this, the adaptation studies concerning Turkish series expand in the cultural proximity of the Balkans and Middle East (see Tomic, 2011; Alankuş and Yanardağoğlu, 2016) and their reception is debated by researchers form different countries (see Ferreira, 2022; Rafi, 2020; Aziz and Louati, 2022)

Most of the Turkish TV series that are aired globally are adaptations and derivative works of other foreign TV series. Turkish television productions are generally adapted television series after USA productions; however, recently the market lead towards Korean and Japanese films and series (Birsin, 2019), which are official or loose adaptations of famous Korean dramas[62] (Khan & Yong-jin, 2020). The Nordic drama adaptation trend was not left behind, and first attempt of adaptation in the Turkish market dates back in 2014, with the adaptation of *Forbrydelsen*. The local version, *Cinayet* was unfortunately unsuccessful as there were imbalances between fidelity and local specific of Turkish culture (Kaptan, 2018), but also due to word by word and image by image adaptation that generated the high risk of failure (Chalaby, 2016). However, in the following years, Turkish market produced a large amount of soap operas and series that incorporates less or more the thematic of crime, in original or adapted formats (E.g., *The Departed* adaptation into the local series *Içerde*).

Even if many of the Turkish dramas that are broadcast all over the world represent adaptations of various Korean or American productions, they in turn managed to break away

[62] In this regard we can mention: *Bir Aşk Hikayesi* (2013-2014, dir. Barış Yöş and Murat Onbul) after *Nıce Guy* (2012, dir. Kim Jin-won and Lee Na-jeong); *Kiraz Mevsimi* (2014-2015, dir. Eda Teksöz and Aslı Kahraman) after *A gentleman's Dignity* (2012, dir. Shin Woo-chul and Kwon Hyeok-chan); *Kocamın Ailesi* (2014-2015, dir. Şafak Bal and Kemal Uzun) adapted after *My Husband Got a Family* (2012, dir Kim Hyung-suk); *Beni Afet* (2011-2018, dir. Gürsel Ates, Berguzar Demiroglu and Miriban Sahin) after *Temptation of an Angel* (2009, dir. So Jung Hyun); *Paramparça* (2014-2017, dir. Cevdat Mercan, Altan Dönmez and Orkun Çatak) after *Autumn Tale* (2000, dir. Yoon Seok-ho).

from the original narrative and create stories that attract international producers. The success of these series did not materialize only in their international popularity, but also through a new movement in the audio-visual sphere, namely the adaptation of Turkish drama, which slowly appeared at the beginning of 2010s and began its booming period recently. The emergence and development of this regional markets has favored in recent years not only the continuous flow of Turkish series, but also their adaptation in transnational context.

Over the last decade, the adaptation of Turkish drama series has become a global practice. By the end of 2022, there were a total of 22 Turkish series adapted in all corners of the world. Those series are : *Aşk-I Memnu* (in USA, India and Romania); *İyi Günde Kötü Günde* (in Middle East), *Rüzgarin Kalbi* (in Malaysia), *Anne* (in Spain), *Paramparça* (in Russia), *Ezel* (in Armenia, Ukraine, Mexico and Romania), *Gecenin Kraliçesi* (in Mexico), *İstanbullu Gelin* (in Liban), *Siyah Beyaz Ask* (in Ukraine), *Kara Para Ask* (in México), *Elif* (in Indonesia), *Olene Kadar* (in Thailand), *Şahsiyet* (in Mexico), *Son* (in Spain and Holland), *Fatmagül'ün Sucu Ne?* (in India and Spain), *Suskunlar* (in USA), *Yargı* (Greece), *O Hayat Benim* (in Romania), *İçerde* (in Romania) and *Asla Vazgeçmem* (in Romania), *Yargı* (in Greece), *Kırmızı Oda* (in Greece). However, the number of Turkish dramas adapted all around the world increase exponentially each year, making space to the newly trend in market, namely Turkish drama adaptation. Having this in mind, research field of adaptation gained another dimension to be explored and studied.

Romania, Mexico, and Spain are the most interested countries in adapting Turkish TV series, as the number of such products increased in their local market since 2018. For example, in 2022, the total number of Turkish series adaptation in Romania stays at 5. These series have brought economic, cultural, and industrial advantages for producers, representing in the last 4 years the main trend in local adaptations. Moreover, the globalization of Turkish

series and their localization brought with it the birth of new series stories, that were quickly integrated into the global television market. The way in which Turkish series are adapted and reproduced in international context is primarily influenced by state ideologies and local cultural norms.

In this sense, the next section of this thesis, debates the new trend that arose in the global media market, namely the adaptation of Turkish series in a national cultural context.

PART THREE: TRANSCULTURAL ADAPTATION OF TURKISH TELEVISION DRAMA IN ROMANIAN SPACE

The previous chapters make us understand the outlines of adaptation flow in the transcultural context but also the cultural identity of Romania seen through the lens of television and the brief history of Romanian adaptations along the stages of television evolution. Having all these outlines explained, this chapter propose the case of study where we examine how Turkish series as global products became localized in Romanian culture and identity. The localization in Romanian culture explores the symbols, myths and rituals that stand to explain the cultural framework of language, religion, and space.

When we are talking about cultural identity we usually think about symbols, rituals, myths, and practices that belong to a specific country or region. However, if we look at the global production of television, we can see that some of those practices have been increasingly present worldwide. In this regard some studies point toward homogenization between cultures, globalization, cultural imperialism, and hybridity (Schiller, 1976; Kraidy, 2005; Baker, 2003; Straubhaar, 2007; Chalaby, 2016;).

The subject of this chapter focusses on the four Romanian series (*Fructul Oprit*; *Vlad*; *Adela*; *Clanul*) adapted after the Turkish series (*Aşk-I Memnu*; *Ezel*; *O Hayat Benim*; *Içerde*); and aims to understand the process of globalization vs. localization of Turkish format adaptation in Romanian cultural identity. This research is pointing towards the transnational/transcultural adaptation processes that materialized in cultural identity elements. Having proposed the outlines of Romanian cultural identity, the transcultural flow of adaptation market and the brief presentation of the Romanian television space, I will focus now on the case of study between Turkey and Romania transcultural movement, were the

theories and concepts presented before, merge together for a better understanding the of Turkish to Romanian transnational television series.

By looking at *Fructul Oprit*, *Vlad*, *Adela* and *Clanul* adaptations of *Aşk-I Memnu*, *Ezel*, *O Hayat Benim* and *Içerde*, this thesis aims to understand how local cultural flavor and how the exceptional elements of Romanian Culture replaced the Turkish identity. The mentioned dramas are analyzed in comparison with the original (Fructul Oprit and Aşk-I Memnu; Vlad and Ezel; Adela and O Hayat Benim; Clanul and Içerde) draw attention to the differences, cultural identity patterns but also the cross-cultural similarities. Obviously, the construction of a new story starts with the same thematic and the main idea of the source scenarios, but it is developed and built around the Romanian cultural context. In analyzing cross-cultural television adaptations, this chapter intend to provide a comprehensive account of the ways in which specific cultural elements such as language, religion and place are (re)constructed and represented through the local television adaptations. Existing and operating in the TV production series, narrative, and symbolic layers of TV series adaptations, these various identity patterns are placed and conceptualized by producers to construct specific narratives, storylines, and perspectives in accordance with the local socio-cultural environment.

3.1 Methodology

Analyzing the Turkish drama adaptations in the Romanian broadcasting market, this thesis intentions to provide a comprehensive account of the role played by the specific cultural identity elements in the process of localization and how these local products

managed to shape the cultural identity perceptions in everyday life. In this regard, my thesis proposes a combination of sources and methods.

One of the methods used for this research is the focus group. Through the focus group method, I tried to reproduce on a "micro" scale the perception of the adaptations of Turkish series in Romanian culture, as it is seen on a "macro" level in everyday life at the cultural identity level. Participants selection was the most critical step for this research. Knowing that group dynamics and interactions are important matters to generate qualitative data I chose participants with similar characteristics such as age, place of living and education (Krueger, 1994), the selection of the participants was carried out by using a specialized operator, who selected the participants according to the established sample. I decide to mix the genders in my groups to improve the quality of discussions and its outcomes, as many research studies suggested (see Freitas, Oliveira, Jenkins, and Popjoy, 1998).

Another major step in framing the groups was the number of respondents. Researchers (Krueger & Casey,2000) point toward the general accepted number of six to eight participants, but other studies (Fern, 1982; Mendes de Almeida, 1980) conclude that the number of participants can be between 4 up to 15 in each group, to catch desirable information. I chose to use the focus group option made up of 6 participants because in this way, conversations from everyday life could be reproduced more easily, so it was clearly seen how the participants adjusted their own position compared to the other participants. In this way, I see clearly how participants opined in a horizon where their experiences were confirmed, reinforced, and nuanced.

I conducted a series of three focus groups and interviews with participants from all over Romania, to cover various regions of the country, as cultural pattern such as customs and traditions may vary depending on the region. Thus, according to respondents' locations,

the answers about cultural identity may vary, and interesting debate can occur when analyzing specific videos regarding the investigated series. As Romania is split in nine different regions[63], I ensure that at least one participant originate and represented the area. The participants were chosen from the urban environment, from representative cities for each region. For this research nine men and nine women were selected, one of each corresponding with one region (one man and one woman per region). Each focus group had held a balanced number between men and women, respectively three man and three women. In this way I ensure that the focus groups cover a range of points of view about the subject matter, and an equal gender participation that created a reasonable environment for debate. The subjects live in the urban space (in big cities), and they have the same educational backgrounds, namely, higher education. Regarding higher education, I must highlight that at this research attended individuals who have graduated at least high school, people who are enrolled for bachelor's degree or graduated it. The research had a total number of 4 people which have graduated only high school; 3 people which are students, enrolled for bachelor's degree; and 7 people were bachelor graduated.

The age of participants varies from 20 to 65 and their main common characteristic was the passion for Turkish series and their adaptations in Romanian market, in other words fans of the series *Fructul Oprit*, *Vlad*, *Adela* and *Clanul*. Being fans of Turkish series and their adaptations in Romania, makes my respondents to communicate easily on the subject matter and give precious interpretations about the theme researched. As Jenkins (1992) emphasizes in his ethnographic study on film and television, discussions between fans constitute an important part of post-viewing evaluations, which function to extend the experience of the watched program beyond its initial consumption.

[63] Transylvania, Banat, Crisana, Maramures, Bucovina, Moldova, Muntenia, Oltenia and Dobrogea.

The participants also came from three distinct stages of political development and media development in the country namely communism, early stage of democracy and the period after the adherence to NATO and EU. The oldest generation born in 1957 experienced the television ascension and decline in the years of communism, the middle generation faced the transitions and changes in audio-visual system in the 90s and 2000s and the younger generation face the 2010s evolutions and media trends. In this regard, the focus groups were divided into three age categories. Each age category covers an interval of 15 years. Thus, the sampling of the age groups included: the 20-35 years old category, the 35-50 years old category, and the 50-65 years old category. The age group 20-25 years old category had in its composition 3 people who are students and 3 who are graduates; the age group category 35-50 had in its composition only graduated persons; and the last category age 50-65 had in its composition 4 high school graduated and 2 graduated persons[64].

My focus groups were semi-structured, and I split the research into two main parts. The first part of the focus group incorporated open-ended questions and I invite the participants to describe their watching preferences of Turkish series and Romanian series adaptations and to compare Turkish with Romanian culture in terms of adaptations. I finished with specific targeted questions about the Turkish series and their impact over their daily lives and the questions regarding their Romanian adaptation television series. In the second part of the focus group, I screened to the participants a few fragments from the Turkish series (*Aşk-I memnu*, *Ezel, O hayat benim* and *İçerde*) and the adapted Romanian versions of the series (*Fructul Oprit*, *Vlad, Adela* and *Clanul*) with the purpose of generating comments and debates on Romanian cultural identity in contrast with Turkish culture as presented in the series. The video fragment chosen from the series regards religious practices

[64] See details about Focus Group participants in Anex 1

(funeral and wedding), ethnic minorities representations, linguistic features and interactions, and politics of place. Romanian myths and symbols, education, politics of place, ethnic minorities, and family interactions. This approach has been productive in generating excitingly detailed insight for inquiry area.

The focus groups were conducted via internet, on *Skype* and lasted for about one and a half hours each. It is believed that online focus groups are the modern alternative of the classic face- to-face focus groups. The modernity of this method stands in the environment, which is using conference calling or chat rooms and oversteps the problems of face-to-face group discussions. When using this type of focus group, problems related to internet connectivity may occur. However, I was lucky enough that I did not have such problems when I conducted my research.

Besides the focus groups I decided to use various articles in the media that included news about the series, interviews with professionals that worked to the series or were involved in the series projects (such as producer, directors, scriptwriters, and actors), critics to the series made by media professionals, as well as YouTube comments on the series episodes or video fragments (same with the ones investigated during the focus group), and relevant news comments that were found online and blog comments, regarding the series.

News articles in general provide for this research information regarding series making of, rating statistics, and viewers reactions toward researched series specific episodes/ or themes. The interviews with professionals fond in media articles provide for my research valuable information and data concerning specific differences and similarities in adaptations, clarifications about production decisions, detailed insights about adaptation processes, and opinions concerning the identity typology of characters. Professional film and media critics news articles and blogposts used for this research managed to illustrate, nuance, and

contradict aspects of adaptation in the local cultural context. And not least, the public reactions presented in news articles enriched my research with meaningful insights.

Comments published on the YouTube platform or News Articles represent an example of interaction and the ever-changing social web. Comment functions in the online space are facilitating the expression of opinions on certain subjects, and thus the content is constantly enriched. The analysis of online content constitutes potentially interesting data for my research as it contributed to filling the gap or confirming/ infirming data from my focus group research. The method of examining multiple sources of online comments was used before by academics (see Gilpin, 2010; Halse, 2014) and provides a more comprehensive understanding of the researched topic. In my study the comments were selected from the most relevant from certain episodes and fragments of the series (as they were chosen for commentary), and News comments were selected from relevant news concerning the television series. Irrelevant comments were excluded, and the focus was on identifying those that resonate with my research. For example, many times, the comments from the online environment failed to respond to the theme of cultural identity and represented only the public's thanks for the material posted online or praise for the actors.

This parallel analysis and combination of sources and methods used for this research provided me the best way to establish an understanding of the way Romanian cultural identity is preserved in context of products made after Turkish series, as well as the changes that have been generated in the daily life of Romanians, and the changes that occurred over the years regarding the Romanian cultural identity as part of the television industry progress.

The interpretation of the data collected through the focus group includes an ethnographic analysis[65], that in my thesis is materialized under direct quotes from the group

[65] The ethnographic approach seeks to understand the particular characteristics of certain categories of people, by circumscribing them in a specific "cultural space", highlighting differences and similarities. The

discussions. However, the quotations did not affect the integrity of research as I was able to tag them under specific themes. This ethnographic analysis allowed me to make an interpretation of the different socio-cultural patterns. Using this ethnographic approach enabled me to look beyond focus group responses and to expose and analyze the inner essence of series adaptation in a transnational field.

3.2 General Presentation of the Series

The adaptation of television formats to a new cultural space consists in their malleability to integrate into the broadcaster's preferences, audio-visual regulations, and production resources (Moran 1998: 21). The trade of global formats thus allows local producers to develop and adapt television series that correspond to their local "cultural identity" norms. In addition, the familiarity with international productions, in the local space, should not be forgotten. Broadcasting these television formats from the global or regional market in their original form familiarizes the local public with patterns and themes specific to everyday life.

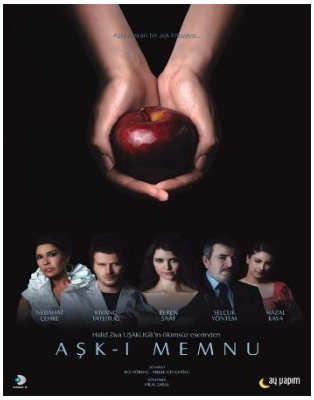
Turkish television series began to be imported into Romania in 2007, and their adaptation into local productions officially began in 2018. During the 11 years, Romanians became familiar with the specifics of these dramas, thanks to the development of the local market that facilitated watching the most popular and recent Turkish series in their original form.

fundamental concept of the ethnographic method is that of "culture". In terms of content, culture includes elements of a cognitive nature, everyday practices, habits, attitudes, beliefs, modes of expression, styles of interaction, etc. (Krahn & Putnam, 2005).

The cultural adaptation of television series from Turkey to Romania, such as "Fructul Oprit", "Vlad", "Adela" and "Clanul" are interesting because they go through "textual changes to fit in with the prevailing values, preferences, viewing habits, and local sensibilities of the adapting culture" (Joye, Biltereyst and Adriaens, 2017: 356). In the process of adaptation of a television series, modifications of discourse, approach, decor, and any other element are normal. By changing these structures in accordance with local belief systems, a new meaning and interpretation is given to the text, therefore, to satisfy the expectations of the public. Hilmes describes the adaptations in two categories 'creative' and 'controlled' or 'free' and 'faithful' and point toward plot elements changes that can be better than the original and do best in terms of audience (Hilmes, 2013: 38). How good this statement applies to these adaptations we shall see in the following lines.

The present chapter provides a general presentation of Turkish television productions and their adaptations in the Romanian space and follows aspects related to the original and the adapted format, as well as the audience's receptivity to these types of series.

3.2.1 Aşk-I Memnu and Fructul Oprit

	
Fructul oprit Logo[66]	**Ask-I Memnu Poster**[67]

[66] see reference in the reference list page 272.
[67] see reference in the reference list page 272.

Aşk-I Memnu is a novel written by Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil in 1900, and it is considered to be the first Turkish novel written in the "Western style of novels" (Ecevit, 2017: 21). The author crayoned its characters with deep psychological patterns, offering details about their emotions, feelings, and inner dialogue. The book presents the Turkish society of Istanbul that has adopted the aesthetics, values, and culture of Western life, at the end of the 1890s. The book tells the story and the problems of a "forbidden love" in marriage, which leads couples to split and have extramarital affairs. The author points toward the age gap between spouses and the weak ties between them as being the main cause for falling into a "forbidden love".

Along the years the novel *Aşk-I Memnu* inspired a multitude of Theatre plays[68], opera[69] but also two TV adaptations. The first TV adaptation dates from 1975 and was aired by TRT. It was directed by Halit Refiğ and has a total number of 6 episodes. The last Turkish television adaptation was produced in 2008 by Ay Yapım and was directed by Hilal Saral and written by the scenarists are Ece Yörenç and Melek Gençoğlu. The series has a total number of 79 episodes. Both book and Ay Yapım Turkish television adaptations have the story placed in Istanbul, but the distinction between them came in the action time placement. The book frames the 1900s atmosphere, while the latest Turkish adaptation focus on the modern time, as the action takes place in 2008. The production had high ratings in Turkey during its broadcasting and this caught the attention of international media. Thus, the series was sold to air in over 44 countries around the world including Asian continent countries such as: Lebanon, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Israel, and China; Balkan region in: Bosnia

[68] The most famous theatre plays after Tarık Günersel
[69] Music by Selman Ada and the libretto by Tarık Günersel

&Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovakia, and Croatia; but also, the USA and in Latin America in: Paraguay, Argentina, Brazil, Columbia, and Mexico. Along with the international popularity, countries that aired before Aşk I Memnu decided to adapt the series. The first adaptation was made in USA in 2013, under the name *Pasión Prohibida*, and has 107 episodes, then followed the second one in India, in 2018, under the name *Dil Sambhal Jaa Zara* and it has 75 episodes.

Hilal Saral series was also broadcasted in Romania by Kanal D, under the name Iubire Ascunsă (eng. Hidden Love) between 2009-2011 in prime time, then along the years the series was re-broadcasted in the morning and at noon, by the Turkish television and later by other niche televisions such as Happy Channel and Acasă TV. In Romania, Ruxandra Ion decided to produce a free adaptation of the *Aşk-I Memnu* novel, which came alive in 2018, under the name *Fructul Oprit* (Eng. translation: *Forbidden Fruit*) and was broadcasted by Antena 1 Channel, in prime time[70], every Wednesday. At the same time, Acasă TV[71] consider to re-broadcast the *Aşk-I Memnu* series, in prime time, in the same day with Fructul Oprit, offering in this way to the Romanian viewers the possibility to choose to watch, compare and comment upon the two version.

Even though Romanians are familiarized with Turkish literature of contemporary writes such as Orhan Pamuk, Elif Safak or Ayse Kulin, the book of Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil, *Aşk-I Memnu* is not translated into Romanian. Even the original version of the novel is not available in Romanian libraries. Therefore, viewers could not compare the adaptation to the original book, but they could compare it with the 2008 Turkish TV series.

[70] The prime-time hour was 20:30
[71] In 2018, Acasă TV was broadcasting at that time under a rebranded name Pro 2 channel.

As described by the TV producer Ruxandra Ion, *Fructul Oprit* represents "the first psychological drama series in Romania" (a1.ro, 2018). The scenario is written by Simona Macovei[72] and Radu Grigore[73] , and it is "a free adaptation of the Turkish novel *Aşk-ı Memnu* by Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil", as they affirmed (Bunea, 2017). The first season of the series follows the lives of the Caragea and Baicu Popovici family members. After the death of his first wife, Tudor (Adrian Titieni) was left alone with two children. He decides to rebuild his life after years and marries Sonia Baicu Popovici (interpreted by actress Michaela Prostan), a woman much younger than him, but with whom he hopes to find peace and heal the wounds of his soul. Roxana Baicu-Popovici (interpreted by actress Carmen Tănase) is Sonia's mother. She goes through tragic moments when, along with the loss of her husband, she also loses her social status, and she does everything to regain it. Sonia Baicu-Popovici suffers because of her father's death and finds in Tudor Caragea the person who will understand her, without judgements, and who will be by her side every time. Sonia changes her vision of life when she meets Alex Iova (interpreted by actor Petru Păun) who falls in love with her. Tudor Caragea is Alex's godfather. When Alex lost his parents in a car accident, of which he was the only survivor, Tudor decided to offer him a home and took care of his education, guiding him towards architecture studies, so that he could later join into his business. The Romanian version of *Aşk-I Memnu*, *Fructul Oprit*, not only presents the problems in marriage of Sonia and Tudor, where the man is older than the female, but also in the background story we can see the relation between Roxana Baicu Popovici with Mircea Adam. The love story between

[72] Simona Macovei is one of the most prominent figures of scriptwriters in the Romanian television industry. She started her career as redactor and scriptwriter for TV shows at TVR ("Suprize Surprize" and "Ploaia de Stele") and Antena 1 ("Din Dragoste" and "New Year's TV show programs"). As for TV series she worked closely with Ruxandra Ion and wrote the scenario for TV series such as: *Iubire ca in filme* (2006), *Inimă de Țigan* (2007), *Aniela* (2009), *Iubire și Onoare* (2010), *Pariu cu Viata* (2011-2012), *O gramadă de caramel*e (2017), *Cand mama nu-i acasă* (2017) *Sacrificiul* (2020) and many others.

[73] Radu Grigore is a writer and director known for *O gramadă de caramele (2017), Fructul Oprit (2018), Sacrificiul (2020) and Adela (2021)*

them is presented in antitheses with Sonia's and Tudor's relation, Roxana being older than Mircea. Their love story is complicated as Mircea was Roxana's love affair during her marriage with Traian Baicu Popovici. The series promises to show how can one person can love multiple persons, but as Modorcea (2018) notices, "there are only loves of interest" between characters.

The second season of *Fructul Oprit* represents a sequel and follows the evolution of the characters, 6 years after the events from the end of the first season. Sonia is amnesic and she has a son named Victor (interpreted by Călin Popescu). She has a love relationship with her psychiatrist Adrian (interpreted by the actor Bogdan Alburescu), who self-proclaimed itself as the father of her son. Ana Caragea (interpreted by Cristina Ciobănașu), Tudor's daughter gave up her dream of becoming a successful pianist and devoted herself entirely to Alex and to their daughter Mara (interpreted by Maria Nicole Nae). However, the characters' lives drastically change over season two, as new and old love stories come to the surface. Ioan and Ana began their love story and Sonia and Alex officially form a couple. The first series of *Fructul Oprit* has 23 episodes and represents the free adaptation of the book, as it was mentioned. And the second series, has 40 episodes and represents the sequel of the *Aşk-I Memnu* story, with the action taking place 6 years apart.

After the first episode of the series *Fructul Oprit*, the film critic Grid Modorcea (2018) considers the adaptation of the Turkish novel *Aşk-I Memnu* inadequate, in the context in which Romanian interwar literature offers a varied range of topics, which have not yet been explored by the Romanian cinema and television. Although the adaptation is based on a Turkish novel, Grid Modorcea finds similarities with the characters of Romanian literature. Thus, in the adaptation of *Fructul Oprit*, we have Roxana Baicu-Popovici in the foreground, which reminds of the characters of George Călinescu's novel, *Enigma Otiliei/ Otilia's*

Riddle[74] and the film, adapted after the Romanian novel, *Felix și Otilia*[75]. Roxana does anything for money, that's why she "sells" her own daughter, after the death of her husband. And she hoped to be proposed to by Tudor Caragea, but he proposed to Sonia, Roxana's youngest daughter. In Modorcea's (2018) vision, the character of Tudor Caragea, seems to have come from George Călinescu's *Scrinul Negru/ The Black Chest of Drawers*[76] and the couple Lina and Vasile Boască (interpreted by Adriana Trandafir and Marian Râlea) role play seems to alure to Marin Preda's novel Moromeții, as through these characters the image of the Romanian peasant is crayoned. However, Modorcea (2018) goes further with more obvious similarities with Alexandru Kirițescu's drama play *Gaițele*[77], and Vasile Alecsandri's drama play *Chirițoaiele*[78].

Notable here is that the literature of the 18th century sparked debates due to the growth of novel imitations and literary appropriations. Literary critics have observed a predictability and repetitiveness of literary subjects, which materialized in a hierarchization of literature and their adaptations (Brandtzæg, 2015). It is important to emphasize these previous debates, which allow us to understand that over the centuries, the literary influences, and the inspiration to write local novels had as main cause the education, in the spirit of certain schools of reference (e.g., the French School) as well as the flux of the literature that have spread interculturally.

[74] The novel written in 1938, and reflects the life of the Bucharest bourgeoisie, having precise social frameworks with characters built to illustrate a certain psychological typology. The novel is written in a classic Balzac style combined with modern elements.
[75] Directed by Iulian Mihu in 1972
[76] Novel written in 1965. The main character of the novel Ioanide is an intellectual architect.
[77] Humor is a priority, and the text aims to highlight the lack of culture of rich people who only want to travel and spend the whole day doing absolutely nothing.
[78] The action of the comedy's centers around the protagonist, who is an uneducated and rude country landlady who wants to appear as an educated, worldly-minded, French-speaking aristocrat, whom she speaks badly.

Both Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil and George Călinescu were inspired by the French literature. Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil was inspired by Gustave Flaubert and George Călinescu was inspired by Honoré de Balzac realism. Thus, the similarities that Modorcea signalized are veridic, as both writers construct their novel stories after the French literature pattern. Even though the plot actions are different, the characters are constructed with strong psychological features. Bulbul (2021, June 22) notice that *Aşk-I Memnu* can be considered the Turkish adaptation of Madame Bovary, as both novels' protagonists are "unhappy married women who cheated on their husbands and in the end, they commit suicide".

The series *Fructul Oprit* can no longer be seen on the television landscape, on the Antena Play streaming platform and anywhere on the internet, because Antena Group was sued by screenwriters Aycan Ece Yoren and Melek Gencoglu, who worked together, in 2008, on the script of the 2008 TV series Aşk-I Memnu. Antena TV Group/ Intact Group can no longer sale, rent, loan or any other way of transfer for a fee or free of charge to third parties of the rights it holds on to the broadcast. In the first instance, the two screenwriters lost the trial[79], but they appealed the Bucharest Court's decision to the Court of Appeal, and the court accepted their appeal. Following the trial, regarding the intellectual rights, the *Fructul Oprit* series had to be removed from television and all broadcasting platforms, a decision "in premiere" for the Romanian market (Bunea, 2020). In 2021, one year after the final decision of the Bucharest Court of Appeal, the Turkish screenwriters Aycan Ece Yoren and Melek Gencoglu requested through a bailiff the approval of the enforcement of the Intact Group (the media trust that owns the Antena 1 television station). We must mention here that the series *Fructul Oprit*, was produced for Antena TV Group, by an external Turkish

[79] In the European Union the protection of copyright for a literary work is set to 70 years from the death of the author.

production house, and Antena 1 was only the broadcaster. As seen in OSIM[80] Romanian documents, the production house SC Sinevizyon TV Production SRL registered the series *Fructul Oprit* as Industrial Property on 07 November 2017 (OSIM, 2017), few months before Antena 1 broadcasted it. As a co-production, *Fructul Oprit* shared the costs, the rights, and common provisions in advance. In this case, SC Sinevizyon TV Production SRL acts as the lead partner, while Antena 1 made agreed financial contributions and was entitled to broadcast the series.

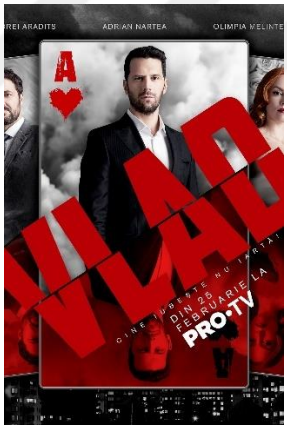
The two Turkish screenwriters proved in court that the Romanian version has some of the script passages and characters taken from their script, arguing that in the book these characters have a different story; also, they point toward several scenes that were copied entirely, as well as the trailer and the series' soundtrack (sfin.ro, 2021). However, regarding the soundtrack, my research study shows the opposite. Romanians considered "soundtrack" the song from the beginning and from the ending of the series episode, and "music songs for specific moments" for the rest of music played during the series. The focus group respondents conclude that they hear "more, fragments from the Romanian soundtrack and less instrumental music" (male, age 27, Bucovina), which however, "does not sound the same as in the Turkish version" (female, age 42, Crișana), "foreign English songs"[81] (female, age 59, Moldova) and "a song played by Criss and Vlad"[82] (female, age 20, Banat). Thus, Romanian producers and directors chose to associate modern music which can easily summarize the series main plot actions, "the passionate love". Such music association contributes to high ratings of the television series (Gillick and Bamman, 2018), and are

[80] OSIM stand for Oficiul de Stat pentru Invenții și Mărci (State Office for Inventions and Brands)
[81] Artist: Elizabeth Riordan, song: Time Slow it Down (2016); artist: Erazoff, song: Next to You (2016)
[82] Artist: One, song: Only Lie (2013)

chosen in accordance with the cultural perceptions. Carla's Dream[83] song "*Până la sânge*:" is the official soundtrack of *Fructul Oprit*, and this song has nothing to do with the original soundtrack of *Aşk-I Memnu*.

Despite all the problems encountered by the free adaptation of *Aşk-I Memnu* in Romania, the series *Fructul Oprit* recorded an audience of over 1.5 million viewers for the first season (Bambu, 2018), and over 1.3 million viewers for the second season (Iordache, 2019).

3.2.2. Ezel and Vlad



Vlad – promo poster.[84]



Ezel – promo poster.[85]

The Turkish television series Ezel created in 2009 is an adaptation of the novel The Count of Monte Cristo by Alexandru Dumas. Over the years, the novel has had numerous screen adaptations in all corners of the world, either in the form of a television series or

[83] Carlas Dream is a famous artis in both Romania and The Republic of Moldovia. Along the years, Carla's Dream music songs were chosen for other television series such as *Atletico Textila* (2016, dir. George Dogaru) with the song "*Atletico Textila*" (official soundtrack) that was created especially for the series; or *Sacrificiul* (2019-2020, dir. Ruxandra Ion) with the song "*Imperfect*" (opening theme music).

[84] see reference in the reference list page 272.

[85] see reference in the reference list page 272.

artistic film. The Turkish version had enormous success over the world being broadcasted in more than 100 countries around the world. Until now, the popularity of this series led to its adaptation in four countries, namely Mexico, Russia, Armenia, and Romania.

The *Ezel* (2009-2011, dir. Uluç Bayraktar and Mert Akbas) series tells the story of the young Omer who lived a modest life with his family and his friends, Ali and Cengiz. Back from the army, Omer plans to marry Eysan. But his fate was changed by the three friends and Eysan's father, who hatched a plot. Omer ends up in prison even though he is innocent. He is accused of robbery and murder. In prison, Omer meets Ramzi Karaeski, who helps him escape and change his identity. Thus, after 8 years, Omer becomes Ezel and returns to find out the reason for the betrayal but also to take revenge from his friends. The action of the series takes place mostly in Istanbul, but other abroad locations were included in the story such as North Cyprus, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and England.

The TV series *Vlad* (2019-2021, dir. Jesus del Cerro) is a Romanian television adaptation after the Turkish television drama *Ezel* (2007-2009) and was broadcasted by PRO TV channel. The series is divided into 4 seasons which were aired between 2019 and 2021 and had a total of 65 episodes. *Vlad* series is the first Romanian television series after 1989 filmed at cinematic standards (Constanda, 2019). The production was filmed in various locations such as Bucharest, Romania and abroad in Greece; Turkey (in Istanbul) and Spain (in Barcelona).

The action of the series revolves around Adrian (interpreted by actor and producer Anghel Damian) / Vlad (interpreted by actor Adrian Nartea), a young man who was betrayed by his closest friends and because of which he was unjustly imprisoned after accused of robbery and murderer of a man. In prison, Adrian/Vlad meets Cezar (Constantin “Bebe” Cotimanis) or “The Engineer” as everyone nicknamed it. Cezar becomes Adian’s mentor

and helps him to make a new life. Adrian changed his identity in Vlad and returned to take revenge on those who betrayed him.

Even though the series is mostly associated with Duma's book because of the similarities with Edmond Dante's adventure of revenge, it seems that the Turkish series Ezel, has multiple sources of inspiration. Turkish media analysts (see Altun, 2019 and Sel, 2016) highlight that among the Turkish films that inspired the script details of the Ezel series are Battal Gazi'nin İntikamı (1972, dir. Natuk Baytan) and Kanun Namına (1952, dir. Lütfi Ömer Akad). Abdullah Yavuz Altun (2019), points toward details and similarities found in emblematic movies. For example, Quentin Tarantino's movie, Kill Bill (2003) and the association between Ezel and Beatrix Kiddo (Uma Thurman), as in the first episode he holds in his hand a picture and tells the story of the friends that he would take revenge on. Also, the memorable fruits that we see all the time in the Ezel series are oranges; and they are inspired by The Godfather (1972, dir. Coppola) movie. The oranges stand as a metaphor for death, even if those fruits give the feeling of familiarity, they represent the transition of the characters to a new step in their path (Marovich, 2018). Similarly, in the Romanian version, Vlad, the oranges are a present element faithfully reproduced. In the first episode of the series, when Adrian is arrested, he is beaten with an orange net by a police officer. However, fans of the series did not stop to notice the similarity with the original series and referred to the situation that preceded it, the trial scene.

For the Romanian version, online comments concerning the trial scene comment upon the wrong judicial classification. The articles mentioned in the series provide something completely different. Zaharia Darex (2022, February), points toward the fact that the bad inclusion in the law could have freed Adrian from imprisoning. Or another comment wonders if in this case "the witness could be cross-examined" (Ninja Spider, 2022) so that

the judge could see that it was a lie in the middle. The allusion to corruption and the so called "justice laws" that were meant to change Penal Code and Penal Procedure Code – "The 2017-2019 Romanian protest", were the first things that came up into the respondent's mind when commenting on the first episode of Vlad series, at the trial scene. In the context indicated by the focus group participants and the above online comment, the idea of "blind justice" refers to the violation of the principles of justice and the unjust accusation of an innocent person. According to the statistics provided to the press by the European Court of Human Rights ECHR, Romania surpasses all 27 EU states regarding "violation of the right to a fair trial as well as violations of legal procedures" (Mihala, 2018). In Romania, the reforms of the Supreme Council of Magistrates led to the reduction of the duration of the trials and improved the effectiveness of investigations and other procedural violations in the judicial system.

One of the online media articles regarding the adaption of the Turkish series in the Romanian market, refers to the fidelity similarities that were found on the first episode. The journalist Petrişor Obae (2019) talks about a mirror adaptation, as he finds similarities in the story such as "blind mother, service work, casino robbery, bag of oranges and ring dropped on the floor".

Similarly with the Turkish version, the Romanian adaptation revolve around the poker and luck games. It seems that the screenwriters, both Turkish and Romanian, considered that the modern version of making a lot of money or losing a fortune quickly is possible through gambling. However, gambling is not a common feature of either Turkey or Romania, but rather, it is a global feature, which we find everywhere in the world. The Poker games and gambling themes were seen in the Romanian cinema industry in the 2010s in films such as *Poker/Poker* (2010, dir. Sergiu Nicolaescu) or *Ultimul corupt din România/*

The Last Corrupted Man of Romania (2012, dir. Sergiu Nicolaescu), but the approach to the thematic was illustrated differently. The broadcasting of the series Vlad in Romania lead the rise in the popularity of online casinos and gambling rooms (Lupu, 2019), as one of such online platforms has the name of main protagonist, Vlad.

Even though *Vlad* is an adaptation after the Turkish television drama, Ezel, the Romanian version chose to inspire more from the French novel and add details that are not explored in Ezel. For example, Adrian/ Vlad worked on a cruise ship for a year, like Edmond Dantes who worked on Pharaoh's ship as a sailor. Prosecutor Toteanu (Procurorul Toteanu) from the series Vlad, who appears at the end of season 3, can be associated with Prosecutor Villefort from the novel. Just like in The Count of Monte Cristo, at the end Vlad reveals his identity to those close to him, however he does not marry Eliza (Olimpia Melinte) as Dantes does with Mercedes in the novel but continues to be present in her and their son's lives.

Also, the Romanian version has swape the plot line drastically as some characters have another faith than the Turkish version. For example, in the Turkish version, Ali ends up marring Azad, Ramzi's daughter. In the Romanian version, Leo ends up having a love relationship with Delia, Cezar's wife, after the latter passes away. Both Leo and Delia are going to prison, and their love relationship continues there. In the Turkish version, many characters die, such as Mert, Omer's brother or Şebnem, Ezel's assistant. However, the Romanian version chose life instead of death for characters. For example, Razvan became a successful journalist and Miki continues her life in a happy way. Those are just a few examples of the changes in the plot. The Romanian scriptwriters managed to create a unique local version of the Turkish series, which became "one of the most popular and loved TV series in national context" (male, age 38, Muntenia).

In Romania “most fan communities were seen on social media”, where the “series was massively promoted” (male, age 24, Moldova). On the other hand, the producers of the series have specially organized meetings with the characters from the series for the fans over the years. The last episode of season one of the Vlad series premiered at the cinema, where it could be watched by fans, local stars, and the PRO trust stars, as well as the entire production team. To benefit from an entry ticket to the event, the fans had to register online for a contest that involved describing their favorite scene from the series as well as what they liked the most about this production (Gheorghe, 2019, Mai 06).

In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, the fans of the series Vlad and the actors and the production team could meet in the virtual environment every week. Most of the meetings were organized on the Instagram account, and the interaction between the two groups took place live, with question-and-answer sessions, contests, and many surprises in prizes (Pana, 2020, March 24). The official page of the series offers fans the possibility to participate in a quiz and find out which character from Vlad they are most compatible with. There is also the section of the director's blog, where events and experiences from the filming of the director Jesus del Cerro are posted.

The most interesting point in the Vlad production is the fact that a director of Spanish origin managed to capture the Romanian culture and identity very well. Jesus del Cerro is well known for many films and series produce in both Romania and Spain, with international renowned. Thus, along the many years he spent in Romania he managed tie close boundaries with the local culture. Five years ago, del Cerro talked about the importance of Romanian national identity elements that he used in his Romanian film Hawaii (2017). More specifically he emphasisez that in order to create that past background atmosphere he analized photos of people in that period of time, he paid attention to details such as furniture,

the way people dress, what they have on their diner table, but also he made sure that he understaned right the cultural insights and asked the people from the production team for confirmation in this sense (noizz.ro, 2017). Eventhough Jesus del Cerro is a Spanish origin film producer and director, he demonstrated along the years how much he understands and feels the Romanian culture through his faimous film and television productisons such as: *Maiami Bici* (2020), *Hawaii* (2017), *Ho ho ho* (2009), *Ho ho ho 2: O loterie de familie* (2012), *Vlad* (2019-2020) and many others. .

On the streaming platform Voyo, Romanians have had the possibility to watch the Vlad series, one day prior to the television broadcast. Also, platform subscribers have unlimited access to all episodes, from their computer, tablet, or phone. The platform, unfortunately, does not have the option to download content and watch it offline. Another approach to the fans were the behind-the-scenes images from the filming sets as well as exclusive interviews with their favorite characters. The interviews were posted on Voyo, but also on the free platform protvplus.ro. In this sense, the miniseries *Beyond Vlad* was created, and it had a weekly frequency. The series proved to be a real success in Romania, but also in Bulgaria, on b TV[86], where the television series was sold in 2020 under Ecco Rights license (Bădilă, 2020).

The series Vlad enjoyed record audiences throughout the 4 seasons, ranking the PRO TV station in the top of favorites many times. For example, the first episode of the series attracted more than 1.7 million viewers nationwide (Tudor, 2019) and the last episode of the 4th series attracted 1.3 million viewers nationwide (Bambu, 2021).

[86] B TV is the first private national television in Bulgaria and was founded in 2000. Since its appearance the television channel rated the top in Bulgarian preferences (bg-gkservices.com, 2021). The television is part of the same CME (Central European Media Enterprise) as the Romanian PRO TV.

3.2.3 O Hayat Benim and Adela



Presentation Poster
O Hayat Benim (left side) and Adela series(right side)[87]

Turkish television drama *O Hayat Benim* (2014-2017, dir. Hamdi Alkan, Reyhan Pekar, Sadullah Senturk et al.[88]) is an adaptation after the Korean drama *Her Legend* (2013, dir. Lee Seung-ryul). However, the original version last for one season and has 20 episodes, with a shorther episode lenght than the Turkish version. Eventhough the series follow the same narative line, the distinctiveness between them stands in the depth of the scenario and detailed local elements that were explored by the Turkish writers, through the first season and the sequel seasons that were created afterwards.

The series *O Hayat Benim* (2014-2017) was broadcasted in Romania between 2016 and 2017 under the name *Bahar: Viață Furată*. The series has 131 episodes divided into 4 seasons. In Romania the episodes were split up, to be shorter, and were broadcasted in prime

[87] see reference in the reference list page 273.
[88] The series was directed along the years by: Hamdi Alkan (2014-2016); Reyhan Pekar (2015-2016); Sadullah Senturk (2016-2017); Yildiz Hulya Bilban (2014); Merve Girgin (2014); Gulbin Aydin (2017); Ozan Uzunoğlu (2017).

time by Kanal D, Monday to Friday. *O Hayat Benim* was one of the most appreciated series in Romania (Arvunescu, 2017), and brought high ratings for the local Kanal D. Since the beginning, the series audience was over 1.5 million per episode (Cheroiu, 2016) and this assured the television station the popularity and the 3rd place of the most appreciated commercial television among Romanians.

The series follows the life of Bahar, a young woman who was taken by her grandfather at birth and given to be raised by the modest family of Nuran and Ilias and their daughter Efsun. After many years, Bahar's grandfather returns to tell the truth to his granddaughter and to tell her about his biological father Mehmet, who is a famous businessman. Unfortunately, Bahar's grandfather dies before revealing the truth, and so Nuran and Ilias claims Efsun as Mehmet's daughter and send her to live with him. Thus, Efsun acquires Bahar's identity and enjoys the privilege of living in luxury. During the series, the situations become dramatically complicated, and Bahar discovers her real identity.

The Romanian series *Adela* (2021-2022) represents the second Turkish adaptation made by Ruxandra Ion for Antena 1. The series has 158 episodes split into four seasons. The first season has 48 episodes, the second season has 36 episodes, the third season has 40 episodes, and the last season has 34 episodes. Adela was broadcast by Antena 1, in prime time, at 20: 30, each Thursday, and it is still available on the Antena Play platform. Here, subscribers can access the series as many times as they want and watch the last uploaded episodes. Moreover, on YouTube, on the official channel of the series, small video fragments or episode summaries were posted, after their prior broadcast on television. During the broadcast of the Adela series, in the online environment, on the Antena Play platform, a new entertainment series "*Adela-Tot ce nu se vede*" was launched. This represents a series of

episodes from behind the scenes of the series, where the public finds out more about actors and their characters, their relations on the set, or how a filming day is like.

The Romanian version starts with the story of two sisters, Adela (Mara Oprea) and Andreea (Oana Moşneagu). They grow up together in modest conditions, in a village near Bucharest with their parents Nuți (Anca Sigartău) and Mitu (Marian Râlea). The life of the two characters is going through change when they find out that one of them is, the daughter of a rich man, the owner of an important media company. However, Nuți decides to send her biological daughter, Andreea, to the rich man to change her destiny. Thus, Andreea assumes the identity of Adela, and began living in a luxurious house in Snagov, with Adela's father, Paul Andronic (Mihai Călin). In such a life turn Andreea learns to fight for her new social position meanwhile Adela struggles to find the truth about her identity.

The transnational remake of *Adela* series differs in dynamics from its counterpart series *O Hayat Benim*. Romanian producers placed the story in national context, but also use characters swaps and shape their personalities differently. For example, in the series *Adela*, Nuți (Andreea's mother) in comparison with Nuran (Efsun's mother) has total opposite characteristics. In in the Turkish version Efsun is the one that likes fashion in the Romanian version Nuți is the one interested in fashion and stays in trend with the latest clothes that she mismatches and makes her look funny. She even candidates for the mayor position in Butimanu village, being confident about her potential as a politician. Nuți Achim is a controversial character. She tries to be fashionable both in terms of clothing and language. In an interview for paginademedia.ro, Anca Sigartău points out that her character, Nuți, form the series *Adela* makes "Romanian language to suffer" and the viewers may want to "throw away the television set", even though she hopes that her character behaviors "put a smile on the viewers face" (as cited in Bunea, 2022). The character is constructed in such a way that

reveals an upstart character who speaks broken Romanian language. Nuți, in her everyday life, makes serious mistakes of syntax, vocabulary, semantics and stylistics. Even the grammar and pronunciation of the words are used wrong by her. However, in spite she speaks with mistakes, the public likes her character and notes that her language creates funny situations that produce laughter. The way she speaks is complemented by the way she dresses, and behaves with the other characters, revealing in this way the low socio-cultural status, but also the will to change her destiny, by faking a high social status.

One of the main similarities between the two series stands in the mottos. In Adela series "*Ce-i al tău e și al meu/ What is yours is mine too*" slogan is a phrase used by Adela and Andreea frequently during the series, when they talk to each other. Similarly, the Turkish version slogan is "*Ya hayatin senden çalındıysa/ What if your life was stolen from you*" and represents the words and thoughts of Bahar and Efsun. However, it seems that the Turkish version goes toward a mysterious phrase, which let the viewers think about the possibility to stole someone's life, meanwhile the Romanian version suggest the shareability.

The production team of the series Adela managed to create a quasi- interactive position for their series on the television market and speculate it through the popularity of social media platforms interactions. The practice was seen before in the broadcasting landscape as cross-platform television production managed to offer on social media interactions (Ytreberg, 2009).

In the online environment, the Adela series has enjoyed popularity through the hashtags created and proposed by the producers of the series and as well as by fans. What Antena1's series production team tried to implement through this hashtag was the second screen scenario to facilitate conversations and debates between viewers in the online space.

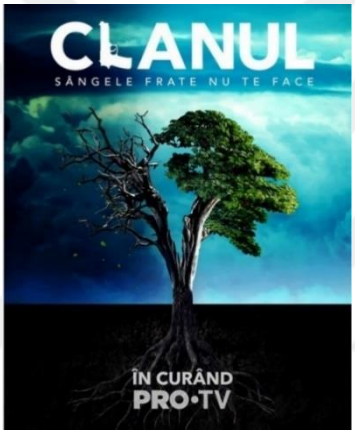
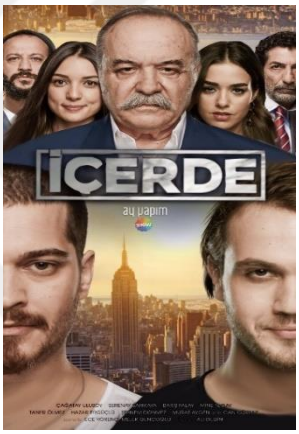
One of the most popular hashtags regarding the series[89], circulating on the internet is *#dacaejoieadela/ #if it's Thursday it's Adela*, pointing toward the day that the series is broadcasted by Antena 1. On the televisions' website, the hashtag # *dacaejoieadela* was first used in November 2021, on a news article about the ratings concerning the episode broadcasted on the 4th of November (A1.ro, 2021). According to focus group participants, the words "*dacă e joi, e Adela*/ *if it's Thursday it's Adela*" were "used all the time" (female, age 25, Transylvania) on Antena 1 promos for the series, but also on Happy Channel and Antena 1's "several shows that had the actors from the series as guests" (male, age 26, Dobrogea).

Not only does the hashtag offer the series notoriety but also the songs played as soundtrack and the selection of songs that play during specific moments during the episodes. Adela series takes a step further and use popular songs in both Romanian and English for many episodes fragment, emphasizing the narration or feelings between characters (such as romance, ager, fury, frustration, and other feelings that characters had during a specific time) along the episodes. The mix of licensed Romanian and foreign songs (English language songs) used for the series creates for the viewer the feeling of familiarity with local drama series. Delia's[90] song "*Arunca-mă în aer*" was launched in 2020 and it already had 10 million views on YouTube before it was chosen as soundtrack for the series *Adela* in 2021(a1.ro, 2021). The producers find a suitable match between the lyrics of the song and the story of *Adela*. Even the artist embraced the association in a positive way, as she believes that "her music and stories bring healing" to the human soul (a1.ro, 2021).

[89] According to focus group participants, aged between 20-35
[90] Delia collaborated on a soundtrack with Smiley in 2005 for the Romanian telenovela *Secretul Mariei*.

The Adela series had large audiences during all its four seasons, with an average of 1.4 million viewers for the television screen (Obae, 2022). It seems that the popularity of the series expands globally, as the production was promoted and proposed at the international festival in Cannes, MIPTV (a1.ro, 2022). and L.A Screenings in 2022 (videoageinternational.net, 2022) under Calinos Entertainment company.

3.2.4 Içerde and Clanul

	
Clanul- promo poster[91]	Içerde- promo poster[92]

Içerde (2016-2017, dir. Uluç Bayraktar) is believed to be "the best ever aired series in Turkey" and probably one of "the least Turkish" (Cesarini, 2020), because it is based on Martin Scorsese film "*The Departed*" (2006). However, Scorsese's film is also an adaptation of the Hong Kong action film "*Infernal Affairs*" (2002, dir. Andrew Lau and Alan Mak).

The Turkish version of the adaptation chose to transpose the story of the film "The Departed" into a television series. Thus, *İçerde* production spanned 39 episodes of 120 minutes each and was broadcast between 2016-2017. The series presents the story of Sarp

[91] see reference in the reference list page 272.
[92] see reference in the reference list page 272.

and Mert, two brothers who, separated by destiny in childhood, end up fighting against each other from opposite sides of the law. Sarp is Yusuf Kaya's undercover man in the mafia, and Mert is Celal Duman's man undercover in the police. The series enjoyed high ratings in Turkey and became one of the most watched Turkish dramas on YouTube (ecchorights.com, 2021). In Romania, the series *Içerde* was broadcasted by Happy Channel in prime time, Monday to Thursday, between 2017-2018. Two years later, in 2020 the series was re-broadcasted on TDC channel.

The second adaptation from the Turkish market made for PRO TV is *Clanul* (2022-) after the drama *Içerde*, and it is directed by Anghel Damian. The Turkish media was surprised to find out that Romania chose to adapt the Turkish series *Içerde*, instead of the original movie of Martin Scorsese, "*The Departed*", after which *Içerde* was created (Türk, 2022). The similarities between *Içerde* and *The Departed* end after the first episode, and in the same manner the Romanian version promises that *The Clain/Clanul* do not have the same pattern as *Içerde*. Anghel Damian assures that Romanian version "do not build similarities with the Turkish characters", even though the story "starts from the same point" (as cited in Cristescu, 2022). He highlights that Turkey and Romania are "different societies", and when him and Lia Bugnar watched Içerde "without reading the original script" they "gave life to a new story" (as cited by Cristescu, 2022). Even though the series represent an adaptation, the characters are "placed in Romania, they speak Romanian language, they have a history related to this context" and "they feel and live differently" (Anghel Damian as cited in Ciuta, 2022).

The Clan/ Clanul series focuses on Tudor, a young graduate of the Police Academy who fell into disgrace after being expelled before completing his studies. Against the background of the threats brought to Commissioner Costoiu, Tudor goes to prison. Here, he

manages to see and learn another perspective of life and manages to penetrate the mafia group led by Bebe Măcelaru'. In contrast to Tudor, the series presents David, Tudor's brother who was kidnapped when he was a small child. He managed to overcome the difficulties of growing up on the streets as a child, and it's grateful for Bebe Măcelaru' because he was the one who saved him from the streets. David managed to graduate from the Police Academy and was recruited to work with Commissioner Costoiu.

For the series Clanul (adaptation from the Turkish series Içerde), PRO TV announced the availability of the episodes on *Voyo* streaming platform a week prior to the TV broadcasting. The series Clanul is broadcasted by Pro TV, on prime time. The first season was aired on Mondays and the second series is aired on the television grid on Sundays. In addition to Clanul series, in the online environment, on the *protvplus* platform, was launched a mini show, "*Clanul la Vorbitor. Interviuri pe bune*". This consists of a series of interviews with the characters of the series, as well as with the producers and screenwriters. These interviews focus on the personal lives of the actors, behind-the-scenes stories on the set, as well as interactions stories between the actors, screenwriters, and producers.

When producing the television series *Clanul*, the director and script writer Anghel Damian thought of bringing two diametrically opposed worlds to the public, namely the world of the mafia and the world of police. In his view, the story will become more interesting because the public "knows about these worlds, hears about them, but does not know their interior" (as cited in Irimiea, 2022). However, the underworld and the mafia were themes that the Romanian film industry exploited at the beginning of the 2010s under the comedy genre, when films such as *Naşa/ The Godmother* (2011, dir. Jesus del Cerro and Virgil Nicolaescu) or *S-a Furat Mireasa/ The bride was stolen* (2012, dir. Jesus del Cerro) were produced. Even Romania's proposal for the Oscars 2020 must be mentioned in this

context, namely the film *The Whistlers* (2019, dir. Corneliu Porumboiu), whose action takes place in the Spanish island of La Gomera, where a Romanian police officer becomes a whistleblower for the mafia. The change in the approach of this type of series reveals the maturity and the growth of the Romanian audio-visual industry. While living in a global space, producers and script writers tend to transpose socio-cultural problems into films and series, encapsulating daily reality into different televisual genres.

Codin Maticiuc is the actor who plays the mobster Iulică in the series Clanul. The naturalness with which he plays his role can also be attributed to the book he wrote, about the life of the Romanian underworld of Nuțu Cămătaru. The book is called *Dresor de lei și de fraieri*/ *Trainer of lions and losers* and provides details about the underworld in which Nuțu Cămătru revolved. Moreover, the book was source of inspiration for the script of the *Clanul* series as well as for the director Anghel Damian (Ciuta, 2022). The image of the mafia character *Bebe Măcelarul*/ *Bebe the Butcher* is given by the actor George Mihăiță, who plays a paradoxical role. Although he is an important mafia boss, he has the image of a good man with a lot of humor. The Romanian version proposes the pseudonym *Tătuțu/ Daddy* instead of Tata/ Father, as it was seen in the Turkish series (Celal Baba/ Father Celal). In this series, the diminutive, however, has a connotation that imposes respect and fits very well with the character.

Romanians have the expression "Sângele apă nu se face"/ "Blood is thicker than the water" which refers to the fact that family relationships are the most important and the strongest. Allusion to this proverb, the Romanian insight for the Tv series Clanul is saying that *"sângele frate nu te face"/ "blood doesn't make you brother"* or "brotherhood does not stand in blood"- which crayoned the essence of the movie. Even if in their veins flows the same blood, brotherhood does not matter, if the paths of the characters chose to be separate.

The same words as in the slogan are developed further in the official soundtrack. "*Sângele frate nu te face*" song is interpreted by the Romanian artists Theo Rose and Ian. Even though Theo Rose is known as a singer, she debuted acting in the series *Clanul* where she plays the role of Bebe Măcelaru's daughter, Vera, a successful lawyer. My research revealed that the popularity of the television series increases due to her fans, that admin on YouTube comments section that as "Theo will have a role in Clanul", they "will watch it" (iasminaloredanagroza9215, 2022; bacoslaurentiuionut9424, 2022; raduhuzum7535, 2022). On this online platform, the song *Sângele frate nu te face* gained millions of views since its launch, and the fans comment discussions goes toward her acting debut, which they described as "very well" (kiki_kids, 2022; DonCicio.pericol, 2022) while others point toward the series that in their opinion is "simply good" (constantinbaltatu, 2022).

The focus group research participants, aged between 20-35, admit the same thing about Theo Rose's debut in the acting career and highlight that "she plays extremely good even though she came from the music industry" (male, age 27, Bucovina) and think that the success of the series is "gained due to her popularity among younger" (female, 20, Banat); the same ideas are shared also by the age group 50-65, they showed their support for the young generation of talented actors who are making their debut and for their interaction with renowned Romanian actors. However, the group aged between 35-50, think that the popularity of the series is "largely due to the director and screenwriter" (female, 42, Crișana), and the fact that "a famous singer received a role in the cast is just a coincidence" (male, age 47, Maramureș).

At the debut of the series Clanul reached an audience of 1.4 million viewers, thus surpassing the television stations Antena 1 and Kanal D (Bunea, 2022). Throughout the first

season, the audiences remained almost constant, registering around 1 million viewers for each episode (Obae, 2022).

3.3 The Shape of Cultural Identity

In the present chapter, I explore the concept of "cultural identity" as seen and perceived by Romanians, in the television series under discussion. In this context, "national cultural identity" assumes that Romanians perceive a feeling of unity, based on the belonging to the common space "Romania"; even if there are socio-cultural differences in various regions of the country. Benedict Anderson (1983: 6) refers to the concept of "imagined community" by which he claims that the members of a nation "will never know most of their fellows, meet them or even hear of them", but nevertheless there will be a "feeling of communion" between them. Thus, national identity represents an inevitable cultural process that every person "learns" or "inherits" consciously or unconsciously. In this chapter, I will analyze the important role that these television adaptations have in building the feeling of cultural belonging.

3.3.1 Religious Practices

Over the years, television has approached religious practices in diverse ways. Their exposure in films and television series during the years of communism was strictly prohibited. Whether we are talking about Romanian films and series that were born in that period or films imported from the USA or other European countries, the censorship of these images was necessary. During the 90s, these representations were completely allowed and

integrated into the television discourse, either through the exposure of local audio-visual content such as (news, documentaries, films), or through the lens of global television productions (films and television series) and events (e.g., Princess Diana's Funeral). Although the 2000s represented a boom in Romanian television productions, the religious themes addressed in local television series relate more to civil weddings than to funeral practices. From an aesthetic perspective, the filming location of these television series was limited to the studio, and too little focused on filming in public locations.

The approach of Turkish series as the theme of adaptation in a localized form, allowed the producers and directors to increase the range of perspectives to religious practices. The spatiality and placement of the stories in public locations facilitated the outline of the stories and scenes to be seen as part of daily life reality. Thus, the approach to funeral themes could be carried out in a propitious setting, in the cemetery, and the wedding ceremonies in the church. The filming of these monuments was not restricted from any socio-political or artistic point of view; the crosses and the church tower could be filmed; the context of the performance of religious services could be accurately addressed; which created for the viewer a familiar setting, pinned in the reality of everyday life.

3.3.1.1 Representation of Funerals

Research on the ways death is addressed has a long tradition the research field (see Goffman, 1959; Brandbury, 1999; Knoblauch; 2009, Weber, 2012). Recent theoretical developments show an increasing interest in the representation of television mediation of death, funeral practices, commemoration, and memorialization (Freytag &

Ramasubramanian, 2019; Stratton, 2020). In general funerals can be described as social experiences, which happen in the co-presence of family, friends, and acquaintances.

In all the Turkish series and their Romanian remakes, we see more death bodies than we see funerals, whether we are talking about the death of "the negative character" that happened by gun shot or stabbing; or the death of a "positive character" that happened because of an accident or illness. However, funeral rituals even if they are not presented for each death, their representation is found in both Turkish and Romanian series, and usually emphasizes the strong bound with the other characters and the politics of commemoration of the death, as the character that left the set had an important contribution to the development and the growth of the other characters in the series. Funeral rituals shown in the Turkish television series provide for the Romanian viewers knowledge and information about experiences that in real life, they have less to no access to; and the opportunity to compare and relate to the Romanian funeral representations. As presented in the remakes, these rituals revolve around the psychology and sociology of grief and support. For this section of debate, I propose the funeral of Bahar character, from *Ezel* and the funeral of Roxana character, from *Vlad*.

		
Prin screen Ezel, episode 33 The beginning of Bahar's funeral	Prin screen Ezel, episode 33 During Bahar's funeral,	Prin screen, episode 33 After Bahar's funeral

	
Print screen *Vlad*: episode 39 Roxana's Funeral ceremony at the tomb: Eliza, the priest, and the close ones: family and friends	Print screen *Vlad*: episode 39 Anuței's family attending Roxana's funeral, Maria is carrying the Colivă

In the online space, comments regarding the funeral rituals were absent, however, the death of Roxana character spark discussions between fans. Some internet users suggest that if Vlad had repressed his feelings towards Eliza and continued his relationship with Roxana, the latter would not have died (Horacioooscar2819, 2022). While others narrate the thread of actions that led to the death of the characters in the series, and blame Eliza for her sister's passing (alexadrapopescu2997, 2022).

The news in media (see Năstase, 2020; Economu 2020) only refer on Diana Sar's vlog, where she talked about the death of her character. Diana Sar, the actress who plays Roxana in the series, claims that when she found out about her character leaving the series, she "felt like someone close to her was dying". However, she is happy with the end as Roxana's farewell was "not expected at all" and what makes the scene so surprising is that she dies in "an accident, after she finds her sister, together with Vlad, at a time when they were much too close".

When commenting upon the Roxana's funeral passage, respondents from age group 50-65, pointed toward the priest clothes, which are dark blue, and conclude that the ritual "might have taken place during the Lent[93]" (male, age 55, Oltenia). In the tradition of the

[93] period before Easter celebration, which is dedicated to fasting.

Romanian Orthodox Church, priests' clothes can have diverse colors such as white, gold, red, green, dark blue or light blue, purple and black. Each color of clothing is associated with "specific services and holidays celebrated throughout the year" (female, age 65, Maramures region).

Comparing Bahar's funeral with Roxana's funeral, respondents conclude that they are opposite, and the adaptation was in accordance with the local Orthodox cultural identity, "just because most of Romanians are Orthodox" (female, age 42, Crișana). They point toward obvious differences such as "imam and priest" (male, age, 38, Muntenia), "modest grave and tomb with tombstone" (female, age 53, Dobrogea), while others wonder "how it could be if the adapted version had a Muslim or other religious cult funeral" (male, age 26, Dobrogea). The comparison goes further with the number of people present at the ritual. Respondents talk about the fact that Eysan "did not had anyone attending her sister's funeral" (female, age 20, Banat), meanwhile Eliza "had her father, Vlad, Anuței's family and other unknown persons next to her" (female, age 37, Oltenia). These remarks revealed further discussions, between age group 35-50, that suggest "Romanians like to have their family and friends close in such cases, even if sometimes there are misunderstandings in the relationships between them" (male, age 47, Maramureș). Group age 50-65, suggest that "it's a shame not to attend someone's funeral" (male, 60, Transylvania) and by being next to the deceased family in such moments "it's a form of respect for the one that pass away" (female, 59, Moldova), also they point toward the "unusual Turkish funeral for Bahar" because, as they have seen in other Turkish series, "people attend in large number" (female, age 65, Maramureș).

In the Romanian version everyone is wearing black, as in the Romanian Orthodox Church the compulsory dressing code is all black for such ritual and denotes sobriety and

respect for the death person and his/her family. The Turkish version presents Eysan dressed simple with jeans and white cardigan. She is not elegant as Eliza, who is showing her dignity and respect for her deceased sister. Respondents conclude that funerals are big events in the Romanian cultural belief system and the tradition of prayers and alms that follow the event are strictly respected in the everyday life.

Furthermore, some respondents try to find the reason behind the way Eyşan looks at her sıster's funeral, claiming that "Turkish funerals must happen fast, as the deceased must be buried immediately", thus Eyşan "didn't have enough time to find something nice to wear"; contrary to the Orthodox faith where "the body is buried on the 3rd day" and family and friends "have some time to find the right clothes to wear". Others compared the burial with others they had previously seen in various Turkish series. The respondents concluded that "Turks also dress in black at funerals". The respondents found that this non-color is adopted globally in the representation of funerals, "regardless of the religious cult or atheists". The answers received to this research confirm that the Romanians are familiar with their own Orthodox religious tradition, but also that they have acquired knowledge about the funeral traditions and customs of the Muslims, by watching the Turkish dramas.

The participants see the Islamic funeral, presented in *Ezel*, as simple and minimal, and point toward the timing of the traditions and customs, which take less time, than the ones presented in the Romanian version, *Vlad*. The Orthodox tradition involves mourning for at least 40 days (for the family members), prayers, and regular memorial services after several days, months and years, plus commemorative days dedicated to the dead. We often see Anuței family coming to Adrian's grave and prepare for such death celebration. Even late-night visits of the characters at the graveyard, provide spiritual elements and emphasizes the religious dimension of Romanian cultural identity. Lighting candles at the grave

represents a specific practice found in the Romanian Orthodox culture. Lighting candles is a form of prayer for eternal life and for the souls of those who passed away and represent the physical embodiment of our prayer for their soul. In Romanian tradition, these practices are kept strictly, and the adapted television series managed to precisely capture the church rituals performed on these occasions. However, the series are entertainment products, thus the accent of such rituals is not explored in detail, as the series purpose is to entertain not to sadden. Nevertheless, in the Romanian cinema the thematic of religious traditions related to funerals and alms were explored in depth in the last years (e.g., films such as Niki and Flo (2003, dir. Lucian Pintilie) or Sieranevada (2016, dir. Cristi Puiu).

There are big religious differences between Orthodox religious faith and Islamic funeral practices. In Romanian culture, at funerals, wreaths and flower bouquets are usually brought and placed next to the coffin during the funeral service (and prior days to the funeral at afternoon prayers[94]), and at the end of the ceremony they will be placed on the grave. The funeral ceremony is carried out in the first phase in the church, then it continues at the grave, and at the end of the service, the deceased person is placed in the grave.

The representation of flower wreaths for both Turkish and Romanian tradition is different.

[94] In Romanian Orthodox culture and tradition, the dead are buried on the third day. The first two days are considered vigil, and services are held by the priest with prayers for the deceased in the afternoon; and the third day is the day of the funeral.

	
Turkish wedding wreath[95]	Romanian funeral wreath[96]

In the cross-cultural analysis of the Turkish series in comparison with the adapted Romanian ones, respondents point toward flower wreaths, present in both Turkish and Romanian culture. In the Turkish cultural traditions flower wreaths are usually used for the wedding ceremony decorations and often include messages on the ribbon for the groom and the bride. However, such representation in the Romanian culture, are totally opposite and relate with funerals. Here the close family members, friends and acquaintances usually bring those wreaths to the deceased one at the funeral, and usually on the ribbon are written messages of condolences and the name of the person/ group of persons who brought it.

These representations caused confusion among Romanian viewers who at first did not understand why funeral wreaths are used at weddings. Over the years, the habit of constantly watching Turkish series, familiarize Romanians with such depiction, even though at first this situation created laughter, because of mismatching representation of rituals.

Group age 50-65, made a comparison with the films before 1989, when "the representations of funerals weren't made from the religious perspective as they are made

[95] see reference in the reference list page 272.
[96] see reference in the reference list page 272.

nowadays" (male, age 63, Crișana). Participants point toward the "religious censorship" that was seen in communist times, when representation of churches was "only artistic rather than religious" (male, age 60, Transylvania).

Going further with the analysis of the funeral rituals in the Romanian context, it seems that the director skips some stages in the process of this kind of representation, as the context and the purpose of this exposure was not meant to emphasize explicitly religious practices. However, the scene accuracy fold perfectly on Romanian reality, as include all the traditional elements that a funeral needed.

The participants in the focus group stated that the series presents very well the ceremony of funerals and but they also indicated that those representations could have been more localized as in some areas of the country there are other traditions related to funerals that we do not see present in the series such as offering candles tied with handkerchiefs as a sign of respect for the deceased (and these must be kept and taken home after the funeral) or tying a black towel to the wooden cross of the deceased during the funeral. However, the connoisseurs of different burial rituals turned out to be the groups of people aged between 50-65 years followed by the 35-50 years group. It seems that the young generations (aged 20-35) are not yet familiar with the entire detailed burial ritual and have knowledge only about the basics of rituals, for example the cooking and the serving of *colivă*. Dish that we find in all funeral and death cult related representations of the series adaptations.

	
Print screen: Fructul Oprit, season 2, episode 1 Representation of Colivă/ Koliva	Print Screen: Adela, season 2, episode 12 Representation of Colivă/ Koliva

Colivă/ Koliva is the main offering, used in the Orthodox tradition to commemorate the dead. Usually, the dish is prepared to be given as alms for souls who have passed away and is distributed at funerals, requiem days and religious commemorations dedicated to the dead. The dish is well known in the cult of the Eastern Orthodox Church, and it is made from boiled wheat and ground walnuts. *Colivă/Koliva* is covered with a layer of powdered sugar or grated biscuits and compulsory decorated with the sign of the holy cross made from cocoa powder, additionally other decorations can be added.

The series exposed the thematic of such dish in two ways. The first perspective is the one of funeral and requiem, as seen in *Vlad* and *Fructul Oprit*; where the dish is necessary for the religious practices performed at church and cemetery; and the second perspective is the one of alms, performed at home, in *Adela* series. The respondents noted that Koliva is found "only in the practices of the Orthodox church". They claim that "such representations underline the Romanian identity" as "more than 80 percent of the country is Orthodox".

The respondents from the group age 50-65 agreed that during communism, the representation of Koliva (as a dish with holly cross on it) in films had a vague representation. The connection between Koliva and the alms was found in various movie lines of the Romanian film throughout the history of cinematography and television (e.g., Moromeții,

1987 dir. Seere Gulea; Duelul, 1981 dir. Sergiu Nicolaescu; Mastodontul, 1975, dir. Virgil Calotescu). The other two groups, age 20-35 and 35-50, considered that such thematic is seen in "recent Romanian movies and television series", but in "the normal limits, without any exaggerations", and think that Koliva is an element that "can't skip any funeral from any film or series".

3.3.1.2 Representation of Wedding Ceremonies

In the evolutionary path of humanity, the wedding ceremony is the most important event. Following this ritual, people get another status and a new position in the system of roles and relationships; both in terms of everyday communication and in terms of "ceremonial communication" (Caliman, 2010: 43).

The ceremony of marriages in Romanian films and television series was known to the public and detailed mainly on the civil marriage, which usually took place at the town hall, followed by the wedding party that usually takes place in the saloons, and less seen as a religious ritual. However, wedding related rituals were seen all the times in the Romanian films and television series, and the wedding as a major theme has been seen before in the Romanian cinematography (e.g., *S-a furat Mireasa/ The bride was stolen*, 2012, dir. Jesus del Cerro).

	
Prin screen: O hayat benim, episode 89 Bahar's wedding,	Prin Screen: O hayat benim, episode 89 Bahar's wedding

O Hayat Benim series did not present any religious ceremony of a Turkish Islamic wedding. Along the series, the presence of imam was seen only in relation to funeral rituals, but no representation of *Imam Nikah* or as it is also called *Dini nikah* was seen. However, other wedding rituals were explored in the Turkish version. For example, the main wedding thematic seen and reported by focus group participants concern "the music". The music, and musicians that all Turkish traditional wedding must have regard the drum and shrill pipe (zurna), which are present in the wedding representation of the series *O Hayat Benim*. Berber (2009: 10) points toward this conservation of traditions that survived the living modern condition and the passage of the time. Like the global representation of weddings or wedding parties, we see that Turkish series emphasizes the ritual as a big party with family, relatives, close friends, neighbors, and acquaintances. The space chosen for the event is the garden, to the detriment of a classic wedding at the salon, and it is decorated festively with light garlands and balloons. For Bahar, the wedding was a surprise as she had no idea that all her close ones had arranged this for her. In comparison with the Romanian version, the wedding of Adela and Mihai, was something planed by the groom and bride in the last moment, and similarly to *O Hayat Benim* the idea came up from Mihai.

	
Print screen: Adela's Wedding, episode 5, season 3	Print screen: Adela's Wedding, episode 5, season 3

Today the wedding as a social event, presented through the lens of Romanian television series, points toward the sacred sphere, by presenting religious ceremonial but also traditions and customs related to the event, in the spirit of the local identity. Unlike *O Hayat Benim*, where Bahar's wedding was a lavish one with many guests, in the Romanian adaptation, Adela chooses to have a modest wedding in a small space, with family members and a few close friends. Adela is having her religious wedding at the *Church on the Hill* in Sighisoara[97]. The choice of a small wedding representation is perceived by the focus group respondents as "a productıon choice in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic" (female, age 37, Oltenia), but also as "an association with Adele's modest character" (male, age 47, Maramureş). What differentiate Adela and Bahar wedding is the location, however the balance in terms of adaptation fidelity remains equal. To be more precise, Bahar has a lavish wedding through the number of guest and musicians invited, meanwhile, in Adela the lavish wedding is translated through the medieval location. However, both characters structure is crayoned the same by the scenarist. Focus group debates, however, take into discussion the location and highlight taste preferences, as some "like more the local adaptation, as the location is historical" (female, age 25, Transylvania) or "banal in the house garden, like we see at the village" (female, age 33, Muntenia).

Even though in the Romanian Orthodox culture, the ritual of religious wedding has many dimensions, the TV series *Adela* only emphasizes the end of ceremony when the groom and the bride, and all the guests go outside the church. Research respondents suppose that "it is very likely that no religious cult affiliation was desired" (male, age 60, Transylvania), but it let the viewer to understand "the importance of religious marriage in

[97] This is a Gothic church, the third largest in Transylvania and was built in several stages, between the 12th and 14th centuries.

the Romanian cultural identity" (male, age 24, Moldova). Age group 35-50 signalized other possible answers regarding this situation such as "prohibition of filming inside the church" (female, age 42, Crișana) or "the distancing from the classic pattern of the series with the bride and groom in front of the altar" (female, age 45, Bucovina).

On YouTube comments found on the wedding fragment, mainly debate the small character of the wedding and the groom's dressing code. The wedding scenes were seen as "a bit weak" and "very short" (TheCezara933, 2022; loredanachiriac1364, 2022). The dressing code elements were seen inappropriate for a wedding as Adela was wearing "boots" (loredanachiriac1364, 2022) with "an ugly dress" and Mihai "had red sneakers with gray suit" (tomaana3205, 2022). However, others considered Adela's cape "the only nice piece" from the "grooms' outfits" (laviniasnow4494, 2022). In general, comments were positive and express joy as "finally Adela and Mihai got married" (denisaiusan7614, 2022).

When comparing the two chosen scenes the respondents talk about the swipes and changes that occurred in the local adaptation. In comparison with Bahar's wedding, where Efsun was supportive and was chosen as a wedding witness, Adela did not have Andreea next to her. Previously, Andreea broke the wedding of Adela and Mihai, thus she was not invited. Despite this, Andreea showed up to her sister's wedding party, just for a couple of minutes to produce a rumpus, this time between groom's brother and his fiancée. Despite this, the little party continued, and all the guests showed their love and appreciation for the newlyweds.



Print screen, Adela, ep 5, season 3

In accordance with Romanian culture traditions and rituals, the series *Adela* managed to incorporate many customs along the wedding ritual of Adela and Mihai. Research participants point toward "throwing rice over the bride and groom" (female, age 37, Oltenia) as a "traditional practice that reveals abundance" (male, age 47, Maramureș). Age group 50-65, consider that this tradition "was well conserved over the pass of years" (male, age 60, Transylvania) and "it is present in urban and rural areas as well" (female, age 53, Dobrogea).

The custom of throwing wheat or rice at the bride and groom after the wedding has its roots in a pagan ritual, and it is believed to have special powers over the newly married couple such as fertility, abundance but also drives away evil spirits that might stay in the way of their happiness. Thus, wheat and rice assure a happy marriage free of unpleasant events. Although, as argued by respondents age group 20-35, there is also a moderate version of this ritual, which replaces wheat and rice "with confetti or flower petals" (female, age 33, Muntenia), as it is "more modern and romantic" (male, age 24, Moldova). However, public considered that the series chose to preserve the classic Romanian tradition, by using rice instead of confetti. Furthermore, some respondent point toward "rice as an environment

friendly practice" (male, age 40, Banat) as "it does not necessitate cleaning afterwards, because pigeons and other birds eat it" (female, age 45, Bucovina).



Print screen, Adela, ep 5, season 3

Another custom and tradition related to wedding reflect on "crossing the threshold of the room while carrying the bride" (female, age 42, Crişana). However, respondents admit that this practice "is not entirely Romanian" (male, age 40 Banat), but frequently used in the local space because it was seen in "foreign series and films" (female, age 37, Oltenia). In the local series, Adela and Mihai conform to the traditions, as Mihai carries Adela in his arms to cross the threshold of their hotel room. Ethnographic studies (see Kerr, 2018) revealed that this practice has its origins in Medieval Europe and symbolizes the protection of the new bride from the evil spirits hidden under the threshold of the house. However, the tradition has been seen before in western series and films and was perceived in the global context of wedding rituals that can be found all over the world.

In conclusion, the wedding as seen in the Romanian series emphasizes the uniqueness of the place in a modern-medieval space, mingling between old and new, where

the traditions and customs of hundreds of years are preserved in the current context of the Romanian cultural space.

3.3.2 Representation of Roma Ethnic Minority

Through these television series, the producers and screenwriters try to promote ethnic minorities emphasizing their own cultural heritage. The different identity of the Roma minority now becomes an affirmed identity that can be found in the local adapted series.

In accordance with European Union directives and the continuous support of media against ethnic minorities, almost all the television series in the last fifteen years include at least a glimpse of Roma minority in the local scenario. The adaptation of Turkish television series is no exception in this matter and contribute to the development of positive or negative attitudes toward Roma ethnic minority.

In this regard, I chose for the focus group analysis a fragment from season 1, episode 5 of the series *Clanul*. The background description of the spatial action portraits Roma minority on "poor area" of a village, near Bucharest, in a place with no paved road between the houses. The print screens present Bebe the Butcher as he was attending a Roma party, organized in the middle of the street, with improvised tents and barbeque.

	
Print screen: Clanul episode 5, season 1	Print Screen: Clanul episode 5, season 1

The placement of the party is seen as "accurate having all the visual elements specific to a Roma community" (male, age 40, Banat), such as "poverty" (female, age 53, Dobrogea), "miserable streets" (male, age 27, Bucovina) and "sparkly and vivid clothes, floral skirts, and gold jewels" (female, age25, Transylvania). However, the representation of Roma ethnic group is different portrayed in *Clanul* than it was in the television series for the late 2000s and early 2010s, where the main subject was constructed around "the image of Roma and their daily life living in *șatră*" (female, age 45, Bucovina), and now the focus is on "Roma parties, manele party music, and their relations with mobsters" (female, age 37, Oltenia).

The representation of the Roma minority in the *Clanul* series emphasizes the prejudices and stereotypes related to their lifestyle in the context of social norms. This approach is not surprising, because the contemporary public discourse about the Roma is based on stereotypes and prejudices related to "illiteracy, crime, violence, corruption, primitiveness and unwillingness to abide by societal norms and values" (Breazu, 2020, 2022: 41; Cretu, 2014; Messing, & Kóczé, 2017). Moreover, academics such as Breazu& Machin (2020), Imre& Tremlett (2011) or Hensen& Ringrose (2014), point out that there is a duality through which the Roma communities are presented on television. As in the case of the *Clanul* series, there is a differentiation between Roma social classes, some being defined by poverty and others by wealth. And the wealth of the Roma is seen by the public in association with criminality, which is closely linked to the mafia clan. Although it is not precisely mentioned in the series that the character Bebe Măcelarul is ethnically Roma, the focus group respondents associated mafia clans with ethnic Roma. Thus, from the perspective of the public, Bebe represents a stereotype of criminality, and "rich Roma" in contrast with the guest who are perceived by the public as "poor".

In *Clanul* series, the Roma minority is presented through the perspective of a Roma community party, where Bebe Măcelarul/ *Bebe the Butcher* was invited. At the Roma community party *manele* music genre was played after his arrival, in a sign of respect for him and his family. It is well known that *manele* music genre is often associated with Roma ethnics singers (Hipper, 2010). The genre is one of the most successful in Romania and it is believed to be listened by "younger people with low to medium level of education"; but according to Trandafoiu (2018: 64) the genre popularity goes beyond and include an extensive range of people, "from urban to rural, male and female, young and old". Udrea (2014:44), in her research highlighted that the music genre is viewed as "contaminated by ethnic associations, consumerism and unleashed capitalism", reactions supported by other research studies as well (see Szeman, 2013; Haliliuc, 2015). Nevertheless, Feraru (2010) in his study conclude that the preference for the music genre is just a matter of taste for the listeners and the low educational background and culture associated with the genre did not rely on anti-Roma attitudes.

However, five years ago, in 2017, Romania was scandalized because it allowed the filming of a videoclip of the "*manea*" genre in the Library of the Carol Davila University of Medicine and Pharmacy in Bucharest (hotnews.ro, 2017). Although the video was filmed during the summer vacation, in August, many Romanians were outraged online, on social media, concerned about the association between the University and the controversial music genre. Following this incident, the University reported itself and started an internal investigation. The articles in the mass media at that time refer to the racist connections and ask the question if there would have been a similar reaction if a foreign artist had filmed his video in the Library of the Carol Davila University of Medicine and Pharmacy (Apostol, 2017). Two years later, the scandalization of the controversial musical genre *manea*

continued in Romania, as this time two international DJ were involved. In 2019, the Swedish DJ Salvadore Ganacci played a *manea* during the Neversea festival; and Estonian DJ Tommy Cash, mixed the same *manea* song at the Electric Castel festival. The public was dissatisfied with this and criticized the artists (Bălțărețu, 2019). In the online environment, pro and con reactions were debated on this subject. However, a positive reaction was registered in 2022, when a DJ mixed a *manea* at a secluded stage at Electric Castle festival, and the audience congratulated him (Tămaș, 2022).

Following the broadcast of the *Clanul* series, which presents the mafia clans parties with *manele* music, the reactions of the public did not take long to appear in the online environment. Some of the viewers feel offended by the promotion of *manele* in the series, while others appreciate the artistic value of fiction and the story created around this controversial type of music. On a blog post, Mihai Vasilescu (2022) wrote about his impressions on the first episode of the Clanul series. He is convinced that "the series will make high audience" because it presents the perfect combination of "action, manele singers and manele" (Vasilescu, 2022). The reaction comments to his blog post allude to the correctitude of using the Romanian language in the series (John Temple, 2022), the acting skills of the actors and child actors (florin, 2022; maria, 2022; costicămusulmanu, 2022), and if the singer Theo Rose plays the role of a manele singer in the series (Zedicus, 2022). Similarly, comments posted on a Pagina de Media news article (Irimiea, 2022) regarding the name of the actors that play in the series, dispute upon manele singers names that will join the cast of Clanul, namely Theo Rose and Bogdan de la Ploiești (Howard, 2022; Mara,2022). Some comments point toward the name confusion between the renowned actor Bogdan Farcaș and the manele singer Bogdan de la Ploiești (Daniel, 2022), eventhough both appear in the series (Ioana, 2022).

"Manele" represent a link between Roma and Romanians (Voiculescu, 2005:265), and the popularization of this musical genre increases the cultural renegotiation of the ethnic minority. However, such music songs and artist are often perceived as the representation of low culture in Romanian context (Haliliuc, 2014). The online comments are a proof that there is a type of "racism without racists" (Bonilla- Silva, 2006), the jokes in the comments alluding to "poor language" and "manele singers" go beyond pure amusement. Even the name coincidence ought to split and differentiate "a famous Romanian actor" form "a Romani manele singer". The distinction wants to clarify standards and social norms, as Roma are not "racially others" but "a special class of people" (Breazu, 2022: 52). Furthermore, comments regarding the role that Theo Rose will have in the series need to be emphasized and explained here. As Ruxandra Trandafoiu (2018: 69) points, female *manele* singers are "ethnically Romanian, not Roma", thus the public is concerned about the "ethnicity" that the artist will have in the series, given that the musical genre is specific Roma.

In my research, besides the music genre correlation with the Roma ethnic groups, other interesting associations were made by the participants. Younger people (aged between 20-35), have different opinions about the subject of the matter. Some associate the mafia with Roma ethnic groups, as they reported to see this correlation on the news regarding violence's acts, street fights, connections with organized crime, money laundering and many other crimes. However, the other respondents, emphasize that Roma ethnics should not be associated with mafia, as Romanians also can have mafia implications, and the role of mafia, can be taken by anyone, with any kind of ethnicity and cultural background.

	
Print Screen: Fructul Oprit, episode 34, season 2 (Tanța and her mother Șlibovița)	Fructul Oprit, episode 34, season 2 Șlibovița doing an incantation[98]

In the Turkish adaptations in the Romanian space, the ethnic Roma female figure in present in almost all the series. Roma female represented in *Fructul Oprit*, emphasize the duality between modernism and conservatorium, mirroring mother and daughter life characteristics in opposition. The mother figure is seen as traditional conservative because of her "daily practices and rituals of incantations" (female, age 45, Bucovina), while her daughter is modern having a "normal job as servant, cooking and cleaning for Caragea family" (female, age 53, Dobrogea).

Age group 50-65 associate Roma women with "the practice of divination, witchcraft, charms, and incantations" (female, age 65, Maramureş) as they are "known to have special powers to put spells, to tie or untie relationships, and predict future" (male, age 63, Crişana). As presented in the series *Fructul Oprit*, Șlibovița, an ethnic Roma woman, the mother of the servant Tanța from Caragea's family is specialized in future reading, and her supreme power is to bind and untie mysteries. She predicts that sooner someone from the family will die, and two weddings are going to take place. As the series continues, we see that her predictions were real, as in the end of the second season Ana and Sonia are having a double wedding and Roxana Baicu-Popovici is killed by Bihter.

[98] see reference in the reference list page 272.

The act of incantation made by Șlibovița in episode 34, from the second season was seen by respondents as "accurate in accordance with Roma ethnic culture" (male, age 47, Maramureș). However, in comparison with her daughter Tanța, Șlibovița describes the ethnic minority better as she is "wearing traditional clothes" (male, age 60, Transylvania), she can read the future in coffee beans and has specific needed objects for incantations and witchcraft such as photos, coins, and potions. Furthermore, the ritual of incantation takes place next to the fire and she has the power to see and interpret symbols seen in the fire's smoke. Șlibovița is seen by the group age 20-35, as a character "full of life, dynamic and with humor as she speaks with an accurate Roma accent" (female, age 25, Transylvania), and "funny because of the way she behave with the others". Even though, Șlibovița represents the conservative Roma women, the humor created around her stands in the way she behaves and speak with the other characters.

Meanwhile, they see Tanța as the opposite of her mother, because "she has a normal job working at Caragea's family" (male, age 24, Moldova), she "does not wear traditional Roma costumes in her everyday life" (male, age 26, Dobrogea), and she "rarely does incantations and future reading" (male, age 27, Bucovina). In the respondent eyes the typical Roma woman wears "long, multi-layered, and richly colored skirt, big earrings, long hair that is often braided" (male, age 63, Crișana) and the married woman have "the head covered all the time with a bandana" (female, age 53, Dobrogea). As seen in the television series since the 2000s, respondents assume that Roma women "like to wear red as it is their favorite color" (female, age 20, Banat), and because "it is considered to bring good luck" (female, age 59, Moldova).

For the Roma women, dress and jewelry are all clearly visible symbolic marker of social status (Crețan and Powell, 2018). Results showed that the media discourse created

around the Roma ethnic group conceptualizes social practice, that is, their occupation. Wodak and Van Leeuwen (1999) pointed out that these representations have a strong impact on public discourse. Stereotypes and prejudices regarding Roma, as seen in television series, shape the opinions and perceptions of the public in relation to the social status and daily life of Roma.

From the answers of the research it is understood that the public associates the culture and representation of the Roma minority with what they have seen on different media platforms and as Brooks & Hebert (2006) say, their perceptions are less based on personal experience. The adaptations of the Turkish series in the Romanian space portray the Roma ethnic minority in various forms. Romanian producers and screenwriters want to promote the Roma ethnicity in a positive way, without stigmatizing it. Many times, these representations produce the opposite, and the desired effect is lost in the Romanian collective mind. As Brezu (2022: 60) also said, the wrong interpretation and erroneous portrayal "do not benefit the Roma communities". However, these productions approach the subject differently and sometimes "innocently" (Breazu, 2022), by incorporating elements of humor or the well-known "*manele*" music genre. In conclusion, the representation of the Roma ethnicity in these productions is still problematic, in the interpretative sense of the visual images presented and the collective mind of Romanians.

3.3.3 Language and Literature

Scriptwriters propose for the television series approaches of Romanian subdialects to give them the local flavor that audience expected. In this way the Romanian media approach the diversity geography of subdialects. Romanian language is a language with a

unitary character, identifying with the nation that speaks it. However, the territorial linguistic varieties do not alter the language essence but create specificities for certain communities. This chapters aims to make an introspection of the way that the adaptations of Turkish television series get localized through the usage of regiolects, and how this regiolects are seen by the Romanians. Furthermore, language mistakes and the incorrect use of Romanian language are also present in the localized television series.

3.3.3.1 Linguistic features: regiolect, humor and socio-cultural characteristics

Linguistic identity is the basis of the collective identity of each nation, participating directly in the identity construction of individuals. Language is a defining feature for the national identity, and sometimes tends to produce unique linguistic features, which lead to the emergence of language varieties, such as: regiolect, slang, jargon, or sociolect (Blanchet, 2000: 114). Ethnolinguistic typologies are the basic analysis concept that stands between linguistic communities and linguistic behavior. Language features are a source of information and function as identity markers, helping with forming opinion, and attitudes about individuals.

Romanian language as used in Romanian television series reveals the appurtenance to a specific region of the country, but also reveals the socio-cultural status of characters. In this regard, the construction of character and the inner voice of actors' merge to develop strong characters and sustain the plot and the action. Moreover, through linguistic characteristics, the screenwriters sought to highlight certain types of individuals, encountered in the reality of the daily life of Romanians. Subdialect as a linguistic notion, is not synonymous with popular language. The popular language, which presents various

deviations from the norms of the literary language, is realized in different regional forms, in rural or urban speech, in the familiar or slang register. The features of the popular language are common, therefore, to all these varieties of the language, which we call dialects. Regionalisms are language facts (phonetic, grammatical, or lexical) specific to the subdialect of a certain geographical area of the country. They enter the vocabulary and are used in the context of these television series to refer to specific characters from a certain geographical area of Romania.

In *Fructul Oprit*, the servant's family Boască origins from a village in Oltenia region, thus their way of speaking is specific and recognizable by everyone. The fundamental characteristic of the Olten subdialect is the frequent use of the simple perfect tense. However, this verbal form is not a popular one in use between other Romanians, however this does not represent a deviation from the norms of the literary language.

The importance of such representations does not stand only in the usage of perfect tense but in the humor that is created in the scene by the characters. The way they behave, talk, and interact with other characters attracts the viewer's sympathy. Familiar situations, braided with jokes make the spectator comfortable, as it is able understand the "cultural code" (Boskin, 1987) of the society that it's living in.

	
Print screen Fructul Oprit, episode 5, season 1 Receiving gifts from Oltenia	Print screen Fructul Oprit, episode 5, season 1 Drinking Zaibăr

As many actions of the series *Fructul Oprit* portrays the characters around the table, we can notice Romanian food and drinks with local indication. Focus group participants point toward the" wine and leeks, that are indispensable goodies" (female, age 45, Bucovina). Specific for the Oltenia region, the wine Zaibăr[99] is frequently seen in Fructul Oprit, as the Caragea's family servants are from that region. The local indication of the wine emphasizes the Romanian traditional specialty and the authenticity of the Oltenia region. The connection between "Olteni and leeks", or "Olteni and Zaibăr", was gradually introduced into the minds of Romanians, "from Ceausescus' time" (male, age, 60, Transylvania), when the actor Amza Pellea appeared in the New Year's program, or in various skits on TV and played "Nea' Marin, the Oltean from Băilești". Also, worth mentioning the famous film with Amza Pellea "*Nea' Mărin Miliardar*" (1979, dir. Sergiu Nicolaescu) which is emblematic for this representation. Nea' Mărin character always had in his bag leeks and Zaibăr, and enjoyed consuming them, while telling a funny story about his relatives or neighbors form Băilești. The film goes beyond the Oltenia region, as Nea' Mărin goes with his family to the seaside and carries this time in the briefcase the leek and cheese that he brought from home. To the same extent, this continuity of humor from the Ceausescu era was kept alive. *Fructul Oprit* manages to incorporate "comic situations through the Olteni family" (female, age 33, Muntenia), who lives in the capital, where the interactions between the two families (Boască and Caragea) are captured.

Research participants, argue that in the series Aşk-I Memnu such comic specificities are "present at all the characters" (female, age 59 Moldova), and there is "a line that makes the delimitation between the two families" (male, age 47, Maramureş). In the Romanian adaptation, the strong bonds between all characters emphasize the enlarged family, which

[99] Zaibăr is a Romanian wine, made out of zaibăr, un-grafted grapevine.

includes not only the "members of the basic family or with blood ties, but also friends, servants, and close ones" (female, age 20, Banat). Furthermore, the jokes and comic situations are seen all the time "in relation with the house owners" (male, age 24, Moldova) who "are surprised and intrigued, and get to laugh all together" (male, age 38, Muntenia)

The adaptation *Fructul Oprit* use culturally specific humor, created with the help of language and local specificities of Romanian sensibilities, such as characters behavior from popular culture and images that carry insight connotation of local specificities. Humor constructed with the help of regional language is very important in the construction of national identities because it creates the feeling of familiarity and belonging for the viewer.

Another important regionalism, seen in the adaptations of the Turkish series in the Romanian space, is the Moldovan subdialect, also seen in the series Fructul Oprit. Here the servant Catia is the one that came from The Republic of Moldova, and she works for Roxana Baicu Popovici. The Moldovan accent used in Moldavia region form Romania is similarly to the one used in The Republic of Moldova. However, there are some particularities in the language spoken in The Republic of Moldova such as the pronunciation of the letter "L" which is usually softer. The actress, who interprets Catia, Cosmina Larisa Dobrotă, played for more than 16 years only roles of servant in films and television series. All her characters that she interpreted spoke with the Moldavian accent (Chelu, 2019). The skill with which he speaks in the Moldavian subdialect can be based on the fact that she has roots in the city of Galați (which is part of Romanian Moldova region), even though she has been living in Bucharest for more than a half of her life. For the character Catia, the Romanian language used in the specific Moldavian subdialect includes phonetic, grammatical, and lexical regionalisms (words that have a limited circulation, basically a certain geographical area, and which may not be understood / known to speakers from other areas). For example, she

uses regionalisms to express basic words, and "creates funny confusion between other characters" (female, age 53, Dobrogea) that at first do not understand her. In relation to other characters, she is the one who is made fun of because of her language, and the misunderstandings that are created around simple things. Catia is a complex character who managed through her language to create comic situations. Not only screenwriters integrate the character in Romanian locality, but also managed to give to the adaptation identity cultural features, which makes the storyline unique.

Even if the character Catia stirs up comical situations through the language used, her social evolution depended a lot on the social interactions that showed her "loyalty and purity of soul" (man, age 40, Banat). Catia overcomes her condition as a servant and becomes Roxana Baicu Popovici's friend, who managed to work legally in Romania. On the other hand, in the Turkish version, Katya remains the servant of Mrs. Firdeves, "who uses her to achieve her goals every time it is needed" (female, age 42, Crişana).

On the opposite pole, in the series Adela the linguistic regionalism of Transylvania (or Ardeal[100]) is present through the character Mitu. Marian Râlea, the actor who plays Mitu, considers that his character outlines very well the specific character traits of people from Transylvania, namely "calm and gentleness" (tvhappy.ro, 2021). In contrast to him, his wife Nuți, is from Muntenia and has a volcanic character. She has a versatile role who speaks grammatically incorrectly. Through her poor language proficiency, and the way she acts, and the relations that she has with family members, the scenarist emphasizes arrogance and stupidity and invites the public to laugh. The fact that the character Nuti is from Muntenia, does not refer to a specific characteristic of the people of this area, but only outlines a stereotype, that of "uneducated people".

[100] Name under Transylvania is also known.

In these Romanian adaptations, the screenwriters gave humor an important socio-cultural function. Although these adaptations belong to the "drama" genre, through the situations created and the interactions between the characters, but also through the jokes exposed, they are rather directed towards "comedy-drama". All these humorous situations built through the language, the regiolect, and the jokes at the expense of the characters only reinforce the idea of "national identity" specific to the "community". This is where the differentiation between "us" and "them" comes into play. Making a joke or an allusion to belonging to a certain geographical area of Romania roots the feeling of belonging to "us", and the humor is transferred to "them".

3.3.3.2 Reproduction of Romanian Literature and Family Interactions Toward Children Education

The representation of children in Romanian series is closely related to the educational sphere, placing the characters in age-specific situations. For example, In *Vlad* series, Matei is often doing homework and school projects with his mother or grandparents; as well as Răzvan as children, when he's come back home from school and play with his brother, Adrian. The same pattern is seen in *Clanul* series, where Florinel rehearses for school, often with his mother, but also with Vera and his father. The representation of children in Romanian culture is placed between adults, who encourage them to perform good and do good in school.

The image of children as presented in these series emphasizes the competitive nature of children. Florinel wants to be the best, therefore he rehearses a lot for the school play, and tends towards perfection when he chooses the people with whom he wants to learn with, and

from whom he wants to learn. In Florinel's perspective his father is the ideal model to be followed, as it can do everything and anything for him. This competitiveness that we find at Florinel, outlines the exact opposite of the Romanian communist society children construction whose representation on television "used to discourage competition" (male, age 63, Crișana) and emphasizes more the Western model seen frequently since the 90s (Colăcel, 2020: 40).

This subchapter proposes for discussion a video fragment of the Clanul series, compared to İçerde; where the representation of children is done through the close involvement of parents, under the educational aspect of local culture and literature.

The Romanian public did not relate with story of Keloğlan played by Mustafa, in *Içerde*. But when compare with the Romanian version, the focus group respondents find fidelity and similarities as both series present a rehearse for a school play, ottoman yellow costumes for children, and the father figure that is involved in children education.

	
Mustafa, print screen episode 5 İçerde	Florinel, print screen episode 6 Clanul

The costumes of the children are similar, however "Mustafa is wearing a real Ottoman costume" (male, age 38, Muntenia), meanwhile, Florinel has "an improvised costume made from a curtain" (female, age 45, Bucovina), that helps him to feel the words he's saying and "to make him get comfortable with his role" (male, age 55, Oltenia). Furthermore, both boys want to make a good impression and play their roles best and "both

are struggling in getting the right people to rehearse" (female, age 65, Maramureş) for their roleplay. However, temperamentally, children are different. Mustafa is "calm and speaks politely" (female, age 59, Moldova) while Florinel "gets angry quickly" (male, 26, Dobrogea) and is "mean as he doesn't want to rehearse with Vere nor his mother as they are girls" (female, age 25, Transylvania).

The research respondents discuss the different construction of the scenarios. In the Turkish version "Melek does not want to involve in helping Mustafa" (female, age 37 Oltenia) contrary to Romanian version were "everybody and especially Vera and Magda are present in each educational step that Florinel takes" (male, age 40, Banat).

An aspect that is worth mentioning is that one of Bebe Macelaru's employees, Mircea when helping Florinel to rehearse. He played so badly that the research participants assumed that "he doesn't know how to read" (male, age 24, Moldova) as "his voice trembles and mumbles the letters" (female, age 53, Dobrogea). Other respondents consider that the feminine presence of Vera "might intimidate Mircea" (female, age 53, Dobrogea) because she "is smart and well educated" (female, age 42, Crişana) and "as she asked Mircea and Micu to help Florinel, the guys are stressed because she is the daughter of Bebe" (female, age 33, Muntenia).

Apparently, the respondents do not make any allusion to the Roma ethnicity that the characters play and the stereotype of illiteracy. Even though the audience pays particular attention to humor and ridicule in this representation, these two elements are actually built on the differentiation of the class and social status of Roma.



Vera, Mircea and Florinel, rehearsing for the school play.
Print screen, episode 6

Online comments suggest that the poetry has a "subliminal message" and the meaning of it "will be discovered in further episodes" (avspoiala, 2022), while others see it as "awesome if the meaning is understood" (paulailenei2121, 2023). Research respondents believe that *Scrisoarea a treia/ the third Letter* by Mihai Eminescu[101] is representative for both Romanian and Turkish history, as it describes the "historical bound through the dialogue between Mircea cel Bătrân/ Mircea the Elder and Bayazid" (male, age 60, Transylvania)[102].

The fragment of poetry is described by the young group as an educational one, because it keeps them remembering the poetry words, or finding it easy to keep in mind the poem after seeing this fragment played by actors. Insertions of literature are seen as "mini educational lessons, useful for school" (female, age 20, Banat) by the young generation, and they claim to find "motivation to study" after seeing this kind of representation, but also to "memorize better the text as it is interpreted by actors" (male, age 27, Bucovina), with experience (e.g., George Mihăiță reciting *Scrisoarea a treia* in *Clanul* series; or Constantin

[101] Mihai Eminescu was a Romanian poet, prose writer and journalist, generally considered to be the most famous and influential personality in Romanian literature.
[102] See *Scrisoarea a treia/ the third Letter* by Mihai Eminescu in Anex 2

Cotimanis in duet with Anghel Damian reciting Oscar Wilde's *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* in *Vlad* series). In discussion, the respondents signalized the importance of film and television adaptations based on books, because they are beneficial "as it helps to understand better the book" (female, age 33, Muntenia), or simply chose to "read the book after seeing the film or television series" (male, age 26, Dobrogea).



Bebe and his son Florinel, rehearsing for the school play.
Print screen, episode 6

The last part of the dialogue between Bebe and Florinel "describes the current relations between Turkey and Romania", as Turks do better than Romanians "*in tourism, anything and everything*", and they represent "a role model in economy".

The strong bound between Romania and Turkey is placed subliminally in the series Clanul, through the carefully chosen poetry, *Scrisoarea a III a/The third Letter,* that talks about the historical event of "The battle of Rovine 1395". Not only the poetry emphasizes a remarkable in happening in the history of Romania under Ottoman Empire, but also suggests the old connection that stand alive to nowadays.

Online news talks about the promotion of education in the series Clanul. The article refers to the character Magda Udera, and her memorable phrase: *"Când e vorba de ăla micu, subiectul se acorda întotdeauna cu predicatul/When it comes to the little one, I always speak correctly"* (Clanul, season 1, episode 6; 5:12). This line suggests that even within the mafia

clan “intelligence, not force, makes a man a leader” (Munteanu, 2022). In her lines the scenarist brings attention to the importance of school. Even if Magda plays the role of a mobster’s wife, and “her level of culture is expected to be low” (Munteanu, 2022), the character proves the contrary. She is educated, highlighting the high mark that she has at Baccalaureate[103], even though she often speaks with bad grammar on purpose, just to “understand better” with her husband (*Clanul* series, season 1, episode 6: 4:46- 5:40). Thus, the message transmitted by Magda character shows an explicit support for education (Munteanu, 2022). However, YouTube comments, show the contrary, suggests that Magda’s character is different and form the Turkish version. She is considered uneducated, as she talks “like an illiterate person”, while Yasemin is more “styled, elegant, and classy” (MihaelaNM, 2022).

Based on the assumptions made by research participants, online comments and articles, Roma minority is judged by their educational achievement, lifestyle, and cultural practices. In the literature field, scholars like Flemmen and Savage (2017) or Lamont (2016) addressed racial injustices in their research and explain how minorities are less valuable in the eyes of “others”. Although it is not emphasized that Magda is of Roma ethnic, the allusion is proven by the fact that she is the wife of a mobster. What the screenwriters tried to do here is to diminish the stereotypes regarding the education of the Roma ethnic group and the position of women in society through the lens of a modern ethnic family. If Trandafoiu (2018) and Giurchescu and Rădulescu (2016) talk about the representation of women in the videos of the “manele” singers where they are “sexualized” through skimpy clothing, we can deduce that the character of Magda wants to be represented similarly,

[103] National examination after high school graduation

precisely by the way she is dressed, with "a generous neckline and massive gold jewelry" (female, age 37, Oltenia), accordingly emphasizing her social status.

		
Magda shows authority. Print screen episode 6	Magda and Florinel Print screen episode 6	Yasemin and Mustafa Print screen episode 5
Magda': *"Tu să nu te răstești la mine că îți trag un dos de plamă de te ia toți dracii! Cu tot cu Baiazit, ai înțeles? /Don't raise your voice at me, otherwise I will slap the hell out of you! Including Bayezid, do you understand?"* (season 1, episode 6; 1:23:35)		

Despite the appearance, research respondents see Madga as "a loving and careful mother" (female, age 59, Moldova), which "cares about her son's education" (male, age 63, Crişana) and "show authority, when the child passes his limits and raises his voice to her" (male, age 47, Maramureş). The group discussion also referred to the fact that "Magda threatened Florinel that she would slap him" (male, age 40, Banat). Even if this does not happen, the respondents found similarities with the way they were educated by their parents. It seems that in the Romanian cultural identity "children are threatened with beating when they make a mistake" (male, age 26, Dobrogea) which makes them "to know to fear of their parents" (female, age, 33, Muntenia). Moreover, some of the respondents referred to the popular Romanian saying that "beating/slapping is a piece of heaven"[104] (female, age, 45, Bucovina), suggesting that "some parents still educate their children using this method" (female, age 37, Oltenia). The respondents found similarity with the Turkish tradition

[104] Same with the proverb "Spare the rod and spoil the child".

"where children are hit with house slippers when they make a mistake" (female, age 25, Transylvania), although in the Içerde series this does not happen, "due to the different behavior that the two children have" (male, age 38, Muntenia).

Both in Turkish and Romanian culture, the way children are raised and educated plays an important role. The knowledge by which parents educate their children represents specific attitudes and behaviors (Bibi, Chaudhry, Awan, & Tariq, 2013) that provide an "emotional climate for the interaction between parents and children and have a significant impact on the quality of family life" (William et all, 2009: 1063). Both Magda and Yasemin representations have an authoritative parenting style, that manifest differently throughout the series. They both have "high demandingness and high responsiveness", which can be translated as high expectations for achievement and but at the same time they are "warm and responsive" (Baumrind, 1966).

3.3.4 Transnational locations in series adaptations

From the cinematographic and television perspective, space and place are two distinct elements, which have a major impact on the narrative of a film or a television series, and in the case of adaptations place and space condition this remake process. Research into television proposes a clear distinction between space and place, so that space is "abstract and global", and place represents a "familiar space" (Lury, 2005:147-150). The place is "a unique setting, which has a specific identity and personality" and often assumes "cultural, historical and personal implications" (Murphy, 2014: 34).

Academic literature often talks about the role that television and cinema play in the promotion of a country, a location, or a community through visual stories, highlighting on

the unique elements and specific characteristics (Bberi & Audette-Longo, 2010; Gunning, 1986; Holt, 2002; Thompson & Tambyah, 1998). Each country is unique due to its geographical and historical spatiality, political system, set of cultural and ethnic values. All these elements and characteristics give a country attractiveness, but also touristic and business value (Albaum & Duerr, 2016). The film industry and television productions exploit these manifestations for national interest, thus promoting their values and beliefs in a global space that tends increasingly towards uniformity.

History and legends of places act like a bridge between old and new, giving special understanding of stories. For Romanians the foreign locations form television series in discussion represent a perception that was formed in the minds of people during personal experiences while visiting, reading, or watching other films, documentaries, or series. Thus, individual images and mental perceptions contributed to consumer behaviors (Bianchi, Pike, and Lings, 2014).

3.3.4.1 Locations debate

The locations of the series: *Fructul Oprit, Vlad, Adela* and *Clanul* have as common point the city of Bucharest and the surrounding area. Bucharest is the capital city of Romania since 1862, and it is considered a national symbol for all Romanians. As seen in most of the Romanian television series that were made and broadcasted in 2000s the actions happen to be often placed in Bucharest and the surrounding area. Along the years, only few Romanian television series chose to place their action in other cities such as Timișoara (e.g., Hackerville series) or Brașov (e.g., The Silent Valley series), or village like Fierbinți (e.g., Las Fierbinți).

In the local adaptation of Turkish series, the action takes place mostly in Bucharest, however, some on the episodes are filmed in various locations in Romania, but also abroad. The action in the series *Adela* is set in this sense for several episodes in the city of Sighisoara. The production house *Dream Film Production Company SRL*, signed in May 2021 a cooperation agreement with the Sighisoara City Hall to film, for a period of 3 days, sequences for the series Adela broadcasted by Antena 1 channel. Through this cooperation, the Adela series promotes the image, the cultural heritage and tourism for the city of Sighisoara. In the series, the medieval Romanian town of Sighisoara is in the center of the action for some couple of episodes. Not only the importance of the city is presented but also the myths and legends that survived until today. *Adela* series present the city of Sighisoara as a vacation destination for both local and global audience. The history and the legends of the place were braided into *Adela*'s story, thus this contributed to the perception of national image of a medieval city placed in the heart of Romania. The comments on YouTube referring to the city of Sighisoara are few, and they refer to the beauty of the city which is described "as a painting in every season" (cielomioelcin6730).

The places near Bucharest where some of the series action takes place reveal the typology of the people that are living there. In the collective mentality of focus group participants Snagov is perceived as a luxurious location, as focus group respondents associated with the Romanian "celebrities that have their home houses there" (male, 63, Crișana). The luxury and richness stand not only in the place but also in the typology of people living in Snagov. The analogy was seen by respondent also in the characters of Fructul Oprit series, where Caragea family was described as "wealthy" (female, age 37, Oltenia) because "Tudor is an architect, and his job is well paid" (male, age 40, Banat).

However, Snagov is unique for its natural beauties that “everyone can enjoy for free” (female, age 33, Muntenia)

Izvorani is also a place located 30km from Bucharest and became popular in the mid-2000s, when the first reality show with and about local “stars”, who exposed their private lives in the public space, caused controversy among Romanians. The reality show "By Monica Gabor" followed the life of the couple Monica Gabor and Irinel Columbeanu, who lived at that time in a luxurious villa in Izvorani. According to my research, in the respondent’s opinion the association of Izvorani and luxury location remained as such “since the mid-2000s when the reality show was broadcast” (male, 47, Maramureş), and some respondents wondered “if the villa in the series belongs to Columbeanu” (male, age 40, Banat). The location has nothing spectacular to show, as it is a place that “has only houses and villas” (female, age 25, Transylvania). Despite this, the idea of “luxury location” (female, age 42, Crişana), was used in *Adela* series” where it was seen as “the perfect place for living for the media tycoon Paul Andronic”.

Meanwhile, the series Vlad was by far the most generous with locations and outdoor filming. Many historical monuments in Bucharest or next to Bucharest were used as filming locations. For example, *Palatul Bragadiru/Bragadiru Palace*[105] or *Palatul Snagov/ Snagov Palace*[106], are two historical monuments emblematic for Romanian history. Even though their primordial purpose faded and today serve as wedding and events location, the history of the place remains alive and stays anchored in today’s reality. Both buildings are architectural jewels built in 1900 and 1930, respectively, and serve today for the benefit of

[105] The Bragadiru Palace was built as a brewery with a recreation place for the citizens. They had in the immediate vicinity the summer garden "Eliseul Luther", the brasserie, the restaurant and the "Colosseul Oppler" performance and ballroom (it no longer exists today). During the years of communism, the building was renamed the Rahova Brewery, after the name of the neighborhood where it is located.

[106] The palace was built for Prince Nicolae of Romania, but with the establishment of communism, the building became a meeting place for councils of ministers, or party receptions.

the citizens. Young participants of focus group point toward that such places presented in series are "inspirational location" in making decisions about their own "wedding party locations" (female, age 33, Muntenia). Other respondents were nostalgic and remembered Lipscani Street, in the old center of Bucharest. The images they saw in the Vlad series brought back "memories from years ago" (male, age 55, Oltenia) and described them as "a place where they spent their free time during their student years" (male, age 38, Muntenia).

Another important and emblematic place for Romanians is Bellu Cemetery. Bellu Cemetery[107] is the biggest cemetery in Bucharest, and it is best known for Romanians as the place where the biggest personalities of Romania, are buried. The cemetery is seen today as a Funerary Art Museum thanks to the chapels, (funerary) monuments and sculptures that evoke the personalities buried here. After Săpânța Cemetery[108], Bellu is the second best known for Romanians and Romanian Culture. Over the years, many films have been filmed in Bellu cemetery, and recently the trend of television series, moved toward this location as well. The remakes after the Turkish series, place some of their actions here, as characters are coming to visit graves or attend funerals (mostly seen in the series *Vlad* and *Fructul Oprit*), and "light candles for the deceased ones" (female, age 53, Dobrogea). Respondents aged 50-65, claim that Bellu was a location seen in many "old movies" along the time, however, the setting "was not all the time related to funerals" (female, age 53, Dobrogea) but with "the

[107] After the introduction of the new "Organic Regulation" in the Romanian Principalities, in 1831 the "Legion for Burials outside the city" was established and assumed that the cemeteries around the churches should be abolished and moved outside the cities. Thus, in the fall of 1855, the landscaping of the cemetery began on the field donated by Barbu Bellu (1825-1900; Minister of Cults and Justice). In 1859, according to the government's decision, ordinary people but also the old boyar families began to bring the bones of their ancestors to this cemetery. Today, the Bellu Cemetery is considered the National Pantheon of Romania, precisely because prominent personalities of Romanian cultural, social, and political life are buried here.

[108] The Săpânța Cemetery is known as the Happy Cemetery. It is famous for its brightly colored grave crosses and paintings depicting scenes from the lives and occupations of the buried person. This is followed by an epitaph which is written in the folk language, and it describes moments or concerns of the deceased in a funny way. The graveyard was founded in 1935 by Stan Ioan Patras, a local sculptor.

death of characters as they were shot, by the bad guys in the crime movies made by Sergiu Nicolaescu" (male, age 60, Transylvania).

The "Admiral Vasile Urseanu" Astronomical Observatory[109], the only public observatory of the city of Bucharest, was not missing from the movie Vlad. The scenes filmed here sparked heated comments among the viewers who considered the intimate romantic scenes filmed here inappropriate, and obscene for this location. In the online environment, the accusations were related to "denigration of the historical space"; and the images were seen as an "insult to Romanian astronomy" (Țaga, 2021). The management of the Museum came with a reaction after the broadcast of the episode and explained that the scenes were filmed based on an agreement signed with Pro TV, and the approval was given by the management of the institution. The reason for the approval to film a scene for the *Vlad* series was to supplement the institution's own income[110] in accordance with the organization and operation regulations[111] (Barza, 2021). As the production of the series was broadcast in prime time, there were no images of an obscene character to be sanctioned by the Audio-Visual National Council (Consiliul Național al Audiovizualului). The reaction of the television station PRO TV appeared immediately after social media comments and mentioned that the series Vlad is part of the category of fiction films, and the narrative thread of the story follows the romantic meeting between Vlad and Zenovia, and the location of the astronomical observatory has a special significance for the character of Zenovia, as it is observed in the episode.

[109] The activity of the Observatory is related to the Museum of the Municipality of Bucharest

[110] According to the rates established by the Bucharest City Museum, a day of filming cost 5,000 lei.

[111] The Regulation of Organization and Operation of the Museum of the Municipality of Bucharest, provides that this public cultural institution is financed from subsidies from the local budget of the Municipality of Bucharest and from its own revenues, obtained from the receipts from the tariffs for the services offered, from other specific activities, but also from space and property rentals.

Vladimir Stefanescu (2021, November 29), a video blogger from YouTube channel Expertise Factory, specialized in astronomy, made a pamphlet analysis regarding the "astronomical scene from the series Vlad" that he thinks is "funny" for any "expert in astronomy". He draws attention to details regarding the new placement of the rooms in the Astronomical Observatory, as the person who welcomes the two protagonists, "does not come out from an office, as suggested in the film, but from the toilet"; the silly dialogue where the characters use the term "astrology" instead of "astronomy"; or small details such as "the telescope without an eyepiece mounted".

Focus group participants' opinions were different for all the age categories. The group 50-65, was not intrigued by the location but by the fact that "the series has far too many kissing scenes"(female, age 65, Maramureş) that periclitated the action of the series; saying that characters are "placed in romantic situations that do not make sense in the context of the story" (male, 63, Crişana), and point toward the "decency" (female, age 59, Moldova) in the films and series broadcasted in Communism. The group age 35-50 confirm the internet comments that the romantic scene is placed in "an inappropriate location" (female, 45, Bucovina), where producers "should not mix culture with romantism" (male, 38, Muntenia). Younger group age 20-35, believe that "the scene is not exaggerated" and the location is used for "artistic purpose" as the scope was to create "a romantic atmosphere under the stars" (male, age 26, Dobrogea).

The Romanian series discussed in this paper aim to address both national and international locations. These manifestations of places are distinct due to their environment, but to the same extent they represent a connection with other cities of the world, by the simple fact that they are connected by roads, airports, commerce, business, or family ties. This interconnectivity of the place in the series often exceeds the borders of the country and

refers to a common European framework (belonging to the values of the European Union) but also to the sphere of the world that stands at the crossroads between East and West, namely Istanbul.

The director of Vlad, Jesus del Cerro argues that they chose Greece as the opening location for season 1 of the series because, "*Greece it's a glamour location that offers yachts and hotels and creates the perfect location for one of the main characters*". Also, del Cerro argue that "*Greece was chosen to differentiate the television production from the other location chosen by Romanian productions*" (del Cerro, 2019a). For the second season, Barcelona (Spain), was the perfect place to shoot the introduction of the new character, Iulia (Anda Sarbei), Cezar's daughter. The director, Jesus del Cerro point that he is familiar with the city and the language, as he is Spanish. The shooting took place in Las Ramblas and the gothic neighborhood, where the production team filmed the crimes and Tilbor's runaway (del Cerro, 2019a).

The 3rd season of Vlad was filmed in Istanbul, in locations such as Galata Tower and Galata Bridge, Hagia Sophia Square, Süleymanie Mosque and Üsküdar port (Serdan, 2020). The filming duration took five days, and it materialized in three episodes, that opened the 3rd series of Vlad (del Cerro, 2019b) Jesus del Cerro argues that filming locations and the wonderful story makes the third season of Vlad to be a successful one, as audience is curious about the new adventures of the characters (del Cerro, 2019b). Focus Group participants appreciate the challenging work of the production team as the abroad filming scene were "filmed for real in public crowded places" (male, age 40, Banat).

The series *Fructul Oprit* also chose to film some of the episodes abroad, in Istanbul, however the research participants believe that "there were more inside filming than outdoors" (female, 65, Maramureş) and Istanbul representations was created only with "the

view of Bosphorus as characters were in the ferry-boat" (female, age 25, Transylvania), or "in Taxim outside of a shop" (female, age 45, Bucovina). Also, the 35-50 age group found that the Fructul Oprit series gave them a sense of familiarity by approaching the theme of "medical control and surgery at a clinic in Istanbul" (female, age 59, Moldova). The respondents found that "the broadcasting of Turkish series made many Romanians choose to be treated in Turkey" (male, age 40, Banat) and the fact that the character "Sonia went to Istanbul for surgery" (female, 45, Bucovina) confirmed to them "the close connection that Romania has with Turkey" (male, 63, Crişana).

The Romanian adaptations also encounter atypical situations where locations are mentioned without illustrating significant images. Such an example is the one from the Fructul Oprit series, compared to Aşk-I Memnu. The scene analyzed and commented on in the focus group refers to the terrorist attack at the Bataclan in Paris where Alex was attending a concert; compared to Behlül's helicopter accident in Azerbaijan.

	
Ana and Sonia finding out that a terrorist attack happened in Paris at Bataclan, at the concert that Alex attended; Print screen: episode 15	Nihat called Adnan and announced that Behlul is missing as his helicopter had an accident; Print screen: episode 35

Even if the narrative thread of the two series is similar, the participants in this study confirmed that there are similarities and differences between the two productions. They point toward similarities between the Turkish and Romanian versions, through the characters behavior such as: "both Tudor, and Adnan, are the ones who leave as quickly as possible to

the disaster location" (female, age 37, Oltenia); "both Ana and Nihal want desperately to go to the event place with their fathers" (female, age 33, Muntenia); and "Sonia and Bihter react similarly when they receive the call from Alex respectively, Behlul" (female, age 25, Transylvania). Regarding the differences, respondents highlight the different locations "France and Azerbaijan", the way of getting the news regarding the tragic event: "Everyone was having dinner together when Bihter's brother-in-law called Adnan and announced Behlul's disappearance" while "Sonia and Ana found out about the terrorist attack from the television" and the time of taking the news "early morning in Romania and late evening in Turkey" (male, age 63 Crișana).

The Romanian version seems to have created "a more tragic vision in a European context" (female, 42, Crișana), while the Turkish version stay "in the proximate area, in Azerbaijan" (male, age 27, Bucovina). The countries of Western Europe have often faced terrorist attacks, resulting in thousands of deaths. Respondents believe that the Romanian adaptation is created and inspired by "real facts and the cruel reality that France had faced in 2015" (male, age 40, Banat); and as can be seen from the dialogue that Alex has with Ana on the phone, the latter brings up to discussion the night of the 13th of November 2015 Attacks in Paris, at Bataclan theatre, were at the concert of the American hard rock group *Eagles of Death Metal*, over 130 persons were killed by the terrorists (Mazoue, 2021). The research participants drew attention to the fact that the Romanian story is "a more tragic one", in the context in which "terrorist attacks can be prevented by imposing strict rules and increased security" (female, age 45, Bucovina); while the helicopter accident "was caused by bad weather which cannot be controlled" (male, age 38, Muntenia). The group age 20-35 brought into debate the local tragedy of the fire at the Collective club in Bucharest. The respondents suggest that the scenario "could have been adapted to the local event of

Collective" (female, age 33, Muntenia) as it could present "a more local story that everyone can relate to" (male, age 24, Moldova).

In conclusion, the uses of different locations in the adaptation series play an important role in shaping the cultural identity patterns of Romanians. Even though the main action of the series takes place in Bucharest, producers animate the landscape with new filming locations. Filming in important historical locations in Bucharest not only creates nostalgia among the public but also pays homage to Romanian culture. The authenticity of these filming locations is attributed to the discursive process of the meaning they create (Michael, 2015). Also, the producers went further and chose to promote other locations from the country or abroad during several episodes. Thus, the idea of mobility in an extended European space was created in the collective mentality. The various city's location of each this television series represents an interchangeable background in which the action takes place (Eichner and Mikos, 2017: 47). However, the locations encountered in these series represent an integrated part of the story line, that influence and shape the cultural identity of Romanians and their lifestyle habits.

CONCLUSION

Over the span of broadcasting evolution, cross-border exchanges of television productions and films have increased exponentially. Not only does technological development contribute to the matter but also people's interest in different forms of televisual entertainment. On the backdrop of this situation, adaptation studies emerged new approaches in the television industry. Their flow into different markets around the world opened up new fields of studies that reflect on the changes produced in the cultural patterns. Series adaptations take on a new form in different cultural contexts, and their transposition in the local environment is based on local politics, ideologies, and socio-cultural issues.

Researchers argued (Beeden and Bruin, 2009: 17) that the success of television adaptations stands in the "interpretation of the original rather than simply copy", but also in the way that "social, cultural, and institutional context" are integrated into the story. Following this remark, this thesis has aimed to unveil the cultural identity that stands in the local representation of these cultural adaptations. Using a comparative approach of these cross-border formats, the study highlights the adaptation process that reveals the basic of Romanian cultural identity patterns. In studying these transnational adaptations, the key questions that sought to answer were the following: What stands as cultural identity when adapting? What have changed in the cultural identity since the exposure to Turkish series? and How they affect Romanians daily life?

In the evolving context of television in Romania, the cultural identity pattern has undergone many transformations and has included a series of global peculiarities. Thus, the only basis that could establish the uniqueness of cultural identity stands in the pillars of language, religion, and place. The challenge to answer the other two questions was a complex one because it is based on the experience and personal perception of each

individual, who lives on the territory of Romania, in various regions and is educated differently. Thus, in order to find out the answer to these questions, the investigation propose to do qualitative research. The study of this thesis was based on the focus group method, on online comments and on media articles. Treating this problem comparatively, the answers were confirmed and strengthened and generated considerable insights.

The Romanian television production development brought positive outcomes and recognition on international market though the series proposal at international festivals. The cultural pattern related to Turkish television series exposure in the Romanian society have emerged since 2008 on Kanal D. As the exposure of such television products raise on the other niche television, the collective behavior of Romanians changed, and people began their interest in exploring Turkish culture. Furthermore, Kottak (2016: 9) noted that television content influenced the cultural behaviors, hence Romanians changed through "shared common knowledge, beliefs and expectations". Short vacations in Istanbul or other tourist areas of Turkey, or even medical consults and treatments are manifestations that developed while watching Turkish television series.

Television can create new cultural meanings and its effects can be identical to the ones that the state, church and educational system implement in society. However, as it is well known through television content individuals from the same environment can experience "the community and solidarity feeling" (Kottak, 2016: 9). This kind of transformations were observed in the Romanian society within the fall of communism as the representation of Revolution was transmitted and commented live. The changes continued in the 90s with the massive consumption of foreign television content that was broadcast by the state and private television. In the 2000s the exposure to foreign content made television producers shift the local market to the "telenovelas" and so called "Latin trend". Not only

the local television series focus on the development of products inspired by Latin American soap operas, but also the music industry generate the local music genre *"Latio*". In the 2010s, HBO invest in producing local television series by adapting Nordic Noir television, but their content was available to "premium consumers", as the mass consumption focused to American, Latin American, and Turkish television production. The late 2010s brought the recognition to the local Balkanism and shared common history with Turks, as producers and scriptwriters turned their faces toward more affordable and handy approach, the adaptation of *dizi*.

In this regard the research analyze how Turkish television series were adapted into the Romanian market, as producers make the transition to cultural identity particular elements that emphasizes the local national spirit. The television adaptations series contribute to the maintenance of Romanian national spirit by inserting and sustaining the most important pillars of cultural identity, namely language, religion, and place.

Although the Turkish drama genre has global success, it seems that the development of new adaptations in other countries, makes the distinction in perceiving and interpreting universal themes, situations, customs, and traditions. However, my study stays limited to a single national setting (Romania) giving the chance in this way to dive into cultural particularities and analyze those particularities of the adaptative process.

The comparison between the Turkish and the Romanian adapted versions of the series has demonstrated differences concerning the cultural identity. The research results reviled that the Romanian adaptations were tailored to fit the local flavor and specificity of the national socio-cultural environment and gave the feeling of "belonging" to the national audience. However, even though the production of the series was constructed in the mirror, as the thread story remains the same, cultural articulations succeed to create a new meaning

and a unique character specific to the national frame. Both Turkish originals and Romanian adaptations remain relatively similar in terms of main thematic, but they display key differences within the components of situations, characters, and customs.

The insertions of basic popular culture elements recognizable in local situations, national character traits, articulations of social issues relevant in national context represent only a few aspects that make the difference between the original Turkish version and the Romanian adaptation. However, Both Turkish and Romanian version of the series achieved high ratings in the Romanian market. The Romanian adaptation success can be easily linked to global thematic narrative script and the familiarity with Turkish dizi's which was invigorated this time by the national cultural patterns that were meticulously incorporated. Tackling the issue of national specificity, not only did their success occur locally in high ratings, but they managed to arouse international interest, that materialized in their acquisition abroad.

The Romanian cultural identity approach in relation with Turkish drama series, allow this research to reveal the evolution of television with its transcultural particularities. Analyzing this specific fragments comparatively with their Turkish series source, this research provides transcultural similarities but also differences, under the cultural negotiation practices. The elements that gave uniqueness and specificity to the adaptation in the local space were targeted and debated in the focus group research, and in parallel, comments from the online environment were analyzed and conduct to a strengthened broad vision of the public.

The specific locality in the series was created through the linguistic characteristics specific to Oltenia, Moldova and Transylvania region, but also with specific comic situations created around characters representing Roma ethnics (e.g., Șlibovița for the series Fructul

Oprit) or illiterate persons (e.g., Nuți from the series Adela). Although in the scenarios of these productions encountered elements specific to various regions of the country (e.g., Moldova, Oltenia) these particularities made the respondents feel that they belong to the "Romanian cultural space". These elements delighted the audience by the simple fact that they were transposed with the help of humor, of the comic situations in which the characters were placed. The adaptation of the series in the Romanian cultural context was based on everyday situations, in which each individual found himself. As a component of language, humor not only created comical situations between the characters, giving value to the place, but managed to break the barriers of discrimination and offer new contrasting dimensions. However, the representation of the Roma ethnicity in these series remains problematic, in the sense that the construction of the characters is sometimes based on stereotypes, which in the collective mind allude to discrimination. As proof, research participants have divergent opinions about the ethnic minority, while online comments reflect the stigma.

Religious practices in the adaptation series are presented at a macro level that incorporates only the essential elements that constitute specific rituals such as weddings and funerals. There were no differences in perception of religious practices in Romanian cultural identity, however, the research revealed that age group is an important factor of knowing customs and traditions related to such practices. In this regard the age group 50-65, it's the most specialized in knowing religious rituals and expressed their desire to see more local elements of funerals in these adaptations. Groups aged 35-50 and 20-35 are less experienced in funeral practices and consider that their representation in the series is represented enough in cultural context and more localized specific regions practices do not need to be exposed. On the other hand, wedding rituals spark different debates in the public space. Online comments mostly criticize the wedding outfit while research participants emphasize the

traditional customs that have to be more present in television series. The religious rituals of weddings and funerals convey antithetical feelings. On this basis, the research answers showed that more representations of wedding rituals and traditions in a local context are preferred in these television series.

The representations of the place in the series adaptations are often associated with collective culture and memories. From the perspective of the age categories, it was observed that people between 50-65 years old are nostalgic and remember events from their youth, places they visited or associate the images with similar representations from the films of "Romania's golden age". At the opposite pole, young people aged 20-35 see the representation of the place as a source of inspiration for future vacations or events in their personal life, and places to visit.

Age influenced the perception of the adaptations when compared with the past perceptions among television and films content. The age group 50-65 mostly compare the adaptations' themes with films and series that they watched before 1989, where censorship covered topics such as religion or lavish meals. This comparison made by respondents contributed to a better understanding upon the cultural identity movements that were shaped through television. Age group 35-50, and 20-35, compare mostly the adaptations with foreign productions from the 90s and 2000s.

The present research aims to fill the gap in the academic field, as no previous academic research on Romanian television adaptations after Turkish series was made. This research represents a starting point study of cross-cultural television adaptations between Romania and Turkey, facilitating debates regarding the Romanian cultural pattern used in television adaptations, remakes, and sequels, which further may develop into analyzing the role of Romanian series on the global market.

In the last years the increased number of television adaptations after Turkish television series has contributed to the local production environment development toward global trends. The successful stories of cross-cultural adapted series sparked debate between Romanian citizens on online platforms, showing their positive or negative attitudes toward the newly series and Romanian production values. Those debates contributed to the (de)valorization of the Romanian cultural identity. Therin, the present work proposes an analysis of adaptations of Turkish television series in the Romanian cultural and identity environment. An important contribution of the study is the critical point of view offered to the cultural adaptations of Turkish television series in the Romanian space. As global products, Turkish television series adapt into the Romanian cultural sphere from both cultural product and AVT method point of view. However, the main discussion of the thesis goes toward the cultural identity dimension as it is important to understand how and when did Turkish series began to influence the Romanian television market. My thesis debates in this regard the evolution of cultural identity through the lens of television, that over the years left its mark on society. The last chapter of this research focuses mainly on the cultural adaptation patterns and exemplifies how the dimensions of cultural identity of language, religion and space define and keep alive the local authenticity.

The adaptations of Turkish series in the Romanian cultural space include a varied range of meanings, symbols and myths that are woven into audio-visual elements designed to attract the viewer's attention in the most subtle ways, placing them in the reality of the Romanian cultural space. As a result, the detailed analysis of the frames required a comprehensive and qualitative examination, to disseminate the micro details of the Romanian cultural identity as perceived by the viewers (which are both exposed to two different cultures). The present research makes a major contribution to the field of

transnational studies of television series adaptations and underlines the importance of approaching a multi-cultural (global cultural) vision in the local context of television programs.

This work aims to contribute to the generation of debates and further research in the Romanian academic environment on the important topic of local television adaptations. Understanding the adaptation mechanisms and the critical analysis of the elements that make up a television product are essential for configuring the Romanian foundation and placing these formats in the global environment. The international recognition of these adaptations also lies in the penetration rate of the global series industry. This is why a good promotion, and a good understanding of these adaptations is necessary in the academic field.

In order to reveal cross-cultural differences and similarities concerning the newly adaptation trend of Turkish series worldwide in the cultural context and to contribute new conclusions, more investigation is needed in the field and have to target different national or regional settings. Approaches can include collaborative research between nations that adapt the same Turkish television series, and in this regard a comparative study of cultural approaches can be debated. However, researchers must pay attention to the fact that this kind of research necessitates a deep understanding of historical and cultural changes that led to certain patterns and dynamics in the local/regional market. Micro details concerning representation of ethnic minorities, discriminations or other socio-cultural problems can be tackled in global- local debate.

One of the major limitations of this research is represented by the fact that specific fragments from the series were taken into consideration for debate, instead of a full-length episode or in-depth research of all the episodes, for all the adapted series. However, the study preferred to limit the research to these specific fragments as they portray specific topics of

cultural identity. In this way it is easier to delve into specific particularities, which were analyzed and explained in accordance with the focus group debates interpretations, online commentary, and media articles. Also, the research is limited to urban space of Romania, with participants that have higher educational backgrounds. However, further research in the field can expand to rural areas and encapsulate respondents with different educational patterns.

The challenge of this research came from extracting information from the Romanian press, which in recent years has become increasingly tabloidized. Many of the articles related to the adaptations of Turkish productions on the Romanian media market address the topic of the tabloid media, or deal with the serious issue of adaptation through magazine news. The texts are brief, illustrating the idea from the title, without presenting additional information; or use bombastic and intriguing titles that have nothing to do with the content of the news. The information is condensed and simple, with topics that are more related to the private life of the actors, or with distorted information about actors, associated most of the time with the lines from the series. The approach to the content is very relaxed and simple, using a quasi-colloquial tone and often offering the reader the opportunity to be "directly involved as a witness to what is reported" without including substantial analyzes and comments (Ionescu, 2017: 85). The summaries of the series on the official pages are more absent than present. Their presentation is designed to attract the audience and provides elusive details about the episode, often sprinkled with questions and lack of answers.

There are few journalistic articles written in a serious manner and with details provided by specialized media analysts on cinematographic topics or television series, and their adaptations subjects. However, the space allocated to these articles is limited in the newspapers and online news publications and they are hard to find between tabloid articles.

In this sense my research makes an essential synthesis of eloquent articles regarding television series in the context of the adaptation process. In this matter, the comments made to the various fragments and episodes of the adaptations, as well as the comments on blogs and articles from the online space, were followed. The approach of the qualitative focus group method allowed a critical and analytical view of the cultural identity elements that have been preserved in the Romanian space. In this way this research managed to reveal in-depth information and complex answers.

Overall, the results of this research suggest that the space of the television market in Romania is constantly changing and at the same time keeps pace with the global movements and the television flow. Television is receptive to foreign productions, and easily acquires global patterns that are combined with elements of local cultural identity. However, the essence of Romanian local identity is kept alive in television productions and series adaptations. The Romanian language, religion and space define the foundation of the national cultural identity that has been preserved over time; even though the socio-political changes managed to polish only the surface of the national identity system. The adaptations of global television series in the national cultural context are the testimony that the unique and distinctive values of Romanians (created through language, religion, and place) are preserved and exhibited in television productions. However, cultural elements from the international sphere are also found at the local level, thus establishing a universal code of global identity that ensures an easier and more responsive adaptation of television series.

The findings of this investigation showed that the Romanian cultural adaptation of Turkish TV series in terms of globalization and localization are subject that need critical approach. In the context of television production expansion in Romania, cultural adaptations of television series represent the starting point for cultural (identifications and) social change.

Abstract

Over time, Romanian television has undergone turbulence that has led to a series of constant changes in the audiovisual market. Socio-political, economic patterns and daily life habits have influenced the flow of television to which audiences have been exposed. The television adaptation industry has gradually evolved from literary adaptations to various internationally recognized and broadcast foreign series adaptations. Over the years television adaptations have conformed to international trends, but the political economy of the market has contributed to fluctuations in the adaptation process. In the 2000s, Romania has seen an exponential increase in Latin American adaptations, and in the last five years local production of TV adaptations has focused on the famous Turkish series.

In this regard, this dissertation aims to study the cultural adaptations of Turkish television series in Romanian environment as a way to exemplify how global television series are getting national and culturally localized. Through a critical perspective, this research emphasizes how Romanian cultural identity has been preserved throughout the television history, following the line of socio-political events and investigates how television series adaptations contribute to the cultural identity of Romanians highlighting on elements of language, religion, and place. Using a combination of qualitative methods, such as Focus group, analysis of data collection that implies online comments, news articles and blog posts, this research presents a complex analytical framework based on the analysis of four television adaptations of Turkish series in Romania (*Aşk-I Memnu/Fructul Oprit; Ezel/Vlad; O Hayat Benim/Adela; İçere/Clanul*) and their original version.

Research findings show how television adaptations are reinterpreted and reconfigured in the local context, pointing to symbols, myths, practices, and representations of everyday life. As such, the broadcasting television market is open to the assimilation of

new values and cultural traditions without changing its basic identity structure. The constant exposure to series from the international market familiarized the audience with new cultural patterns. Thus, even if Romania and Turkey are spatially close, the adaptation of the Turkish series in the Romanian space addressed global issues from different perspectives. The cultural negotiation and local character were provided by the distinctive elements that gave uniqueness to the new television productions and ensured the transfer to the international market flow of television series.

Keywords: adaptation studies, Turkish television series, cultural identity, Romanian television, transnational television flow

Özet

Zaman içinde Romanya televizyonu, görsel-işitsel pazarda bir dizi sürekli değişime yol açan çalkantılardan geçmiştir. Sosyo-politik, ekonomik kalıplar ve günlük yaşam alışkanlıkları, izleyicilerin maruz kaldığı televizyon akışını etkilemiştir. Televizyon uyarlama endüstrisi, edebiyat uyarlamalarından uluslararası alanda tanınan ve yayınlanan çeşitli yabancı dizi uyarlamalarına doğru kademeli olarak gelişmiştir. Yıllar içinde televizyon uyarlamaları uluslararası trendlere uyum sağlamış, ancak piyasanın ekonomi politiği uyarlama sürecinde dalgalanmalara neden olmuştur. Romanya'da 2000'li yıllarda Latin Amerika uyarlamalarında katlanarak bir artış görülmüş ve son beş yılda yerel televizyon uyarlamaları üretimi ünlü Türk dizilerine odaklanmıştır.

Bu bağlamda, bu tez, küresel televizyon dizilerinin nasıl ulusal ve kültürel olarak yerelleştiğini örneklemenin bir yolu olarak Türk televizyon dizilerinin Romanya ortamındaki kültürel uyarlamalarını incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu araştırma, eleştirel bir bakış açısıyla, Romen kültürel kimliğinin televizyon tarihi boyunca sosyo-politik olaylar doğrultusunda nasıl korunduğunu vurgulamakta ve televizyon dizisi uyarlamalarının dil, din ve mekân unsurlarını vurgulayarak Romenlerin kültürel kimliğine nasıl katkıda bulunduğunu araştırmaktadır. Odak grup, çevrimiçi yorumlar, haber makaleleri ve blog yazılarını içeren veri toplama analizi gibi nitel yöntemlerin bir kombinasyonunu kullanan bu araştırma, Romanya'daki dört Türk dizisi uyarlamasının (Aşk-I Memnu/Fructul Oprit; Ezel/Vlad; O Hayat Benim/Adela; İçere/Clanul) ve orijinal versiyonlarının analizine dayanan karmaşık bir analitik çerçeve sunmaktadır.

Araştırma bulguları, televizyon uyarlamalarının yerel bağlamda nasıl yeniden yorumlandığını ve yeniden yapılandırıldığını göstermekte ve gündelik hayatın sembollerine,

mitlerine, pratiklerine ve temsillerine işaret etmektedir. Bu nedenle, yayın yapan televizyon pazarı, temel kimlik yapısını değiştirmeden yeni değerlerin ve kültürel geleneklerin asimilasyonuna açıktır. Uluslararası pazardan gelen dizilere sürekli maruz kalmak, izleyiciyi yeni kültürel kalıplara alıştırmıştır. Dolayısıyla, Romanya ve Türkiye mekânsal olarak yakın olsalar bile, Türk dizilerinin Romanya'ya uyarlanması küresel meseleleri farklı perspektiflerden ele almıştır. Kültürel müzakere ve yerel karakter, yeni televizyon yapımlarına benzersizlik kazandıran ve televizyon dizilerinin uluslararası pazar akışına aktarılmasını sağlayan ayırt edici unsurlar tarafından sağlanmıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: uyarlama çalışmaları, Türk televizyon dizileri, kültürel kimlik, Romanya televizyonu, ulusötesi televizyon akışı

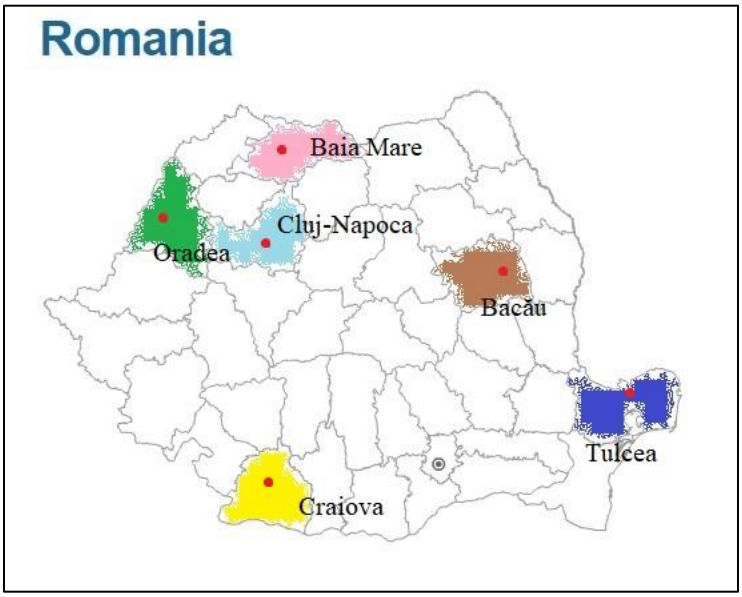
Anex 1.

Data concerning Focus Group Participants

● Eighteen people were selected for the Focus group method.
● The age of the participants is between 20 and 65 years.
● The participants come from the nine regions of Romania. For each region, two persons were selected, respectively a woman and a man, with different ages. Total number of nine men and nine women.
● The regions of Romania are Transylvania, Banat, Crișana, Maramureș, Bucovina, Moldova, Muntenia, Oltenia and Dobrogea.
● Three focus groups of six persons each were held. The placement in groups was done by selecting participants from different regions.
● All participants live in cities (urban environment), from this point of view they have a quality internet connection and electronic devices, with access to the Skype application.

<u>Group A: age 50-65</u>

Male 63 (Oradea)/ Female: 65 (Baia Mare)
Male 60(Cluj-Napoca)/ Female 59 (Bacău)
Male 55 (Craiova)/ Female 53 (Tulcea)

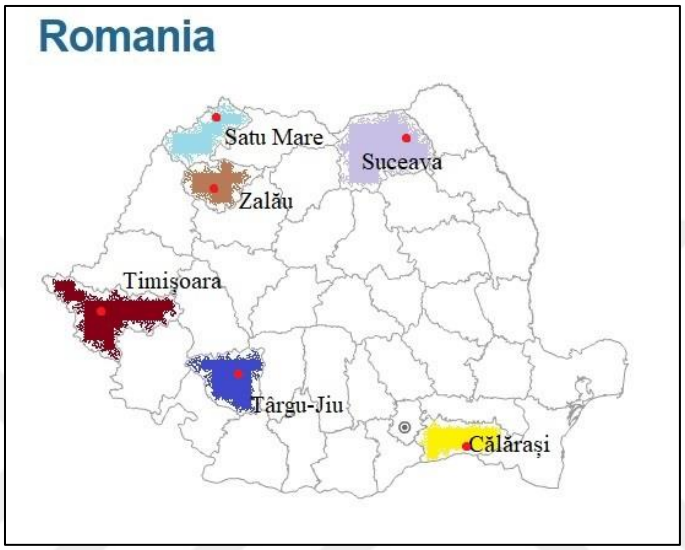


Group A: age 50-65. Participants city locations on the map of Romania

● In the group A age 50-65 the participants are form the following regions Crișana, Transylvania, Oltenia, Maramureș, Moldova, and Dobrogea

Group B: age 35-50

Male 40 (Timișoara)/ Female 45 (Suceava)
Male 38 (Călărași)/ Female 37 (Târgu-Jiu)
Male 47 (Satu Mare)/ Female 42 (Zalău)

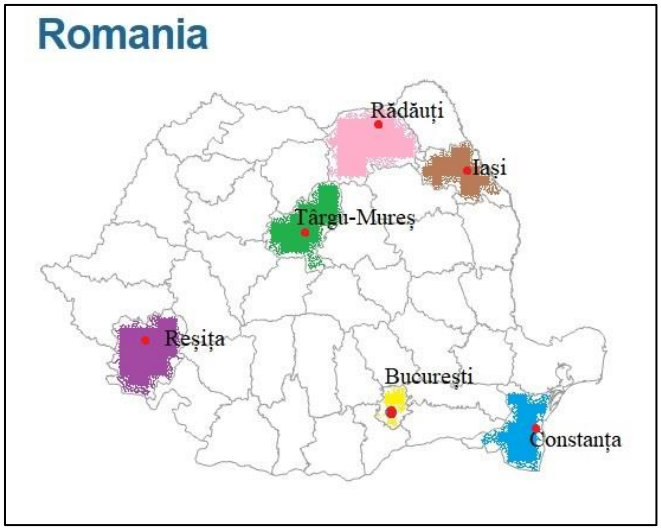


Group B: age 35-50. Participants city locations on the map of Romania

● In the group B age 35-50 the participants are from the following regions Banat, Muntenia, Maramureș, Bucovina, Oltenia, and Crișana.

Group C: age 20-35

Male 27 (Rădăuți)/ Female 33 (București)
Male 24 (Iași)/ Female 25 (Târgu-Mureș)
Male 26 (Constanța)/ Female 20 (Reșița)



Group C: age 20-35. Participants city locations on the map of Romania

● In the group C age 20-35 the participants are from the following regions Bucovina, Moldova, Dobrogea, Muntenia, Transylvania, and Banat.

Male Group

Age 63: Crișana (Oradea)
Age 60: Transylvania (Cluj-Napoca)
Age 55: Oltenia (Craiova)
Age 47: Maramureș (Satu Mare)
Age 40: Banat (Timișoara)
Age 38: Muntenia (Călărași)
Age 27: Bucovina (Rădăuți)
Age 26: Dobrogea (Constanța)
Age 24: Moldova (Iași)

Female Group

Age 65: Maramureș (Baia Mare)
Age 59: Moldova (Bacău)
Age 53: Dobrogea (Tulcea)
Age 45: Bucovina (Suceava)
Age 42: Crișana (Zalău)
Age 37: Oltenia (Târgu-Jiu)
Age 33: Muntenia (București)
Age 25: Transylvania (Târgu- Mureș)
Age 20: Banat (Reșița)

Age of participants by region

Transylvania (age: 60 and 25)
Banat (age: 40 and 20)
Crișana (age: 63 and 42)
Maramureș (age: 65 and 47)
Bucovina (age: 45 and 27)
Moldova (age: 24 and 59)
Muntenia (age: 38 and 33)
Oltenia (age: 55 and 37)
Dobrogea (age: 26 and 53)



Regions of Romania

Education status by age

Age 20 (female): B.A. student
Age 24 (male): B.A. graduated, working.
Age 25 (female): B.A student.
Age 26 (male, Dobrogea): B.A. student,
Age 27(male): B.A graduated, working.
Age 33 (female): B.A graduated, working.
Age 37(female): B.A graduated, working.
Age 38 (male): B.A. graduated, working.
Age 40 (male): B.A. graduated, working.
Age 42 (female): B.A. graduated, working.
Age 45 (female): B.A. graduated, working.
Age 47 (male): B.A. graduated, working.
Age 53 (female): High School graduated, working.
Age 55 (male): B.A. graduated, working.
Age 59 (female): High School graduated, working.
Age 60 (male): B.A. graduated, working.
Age 63 (male): High School graduated, working.
Age 65(female): High School graduated, retired.

	High School Graduated	B.A. Student	B.A. Graduated
Total Number of Persons	4	3	11

Occupation by age

	Student	Working	Retired
Total Number of Persons	3	14	1

Anex 2.

The fragment reciting refers to the dialog between Ottoman Bayezid and Mircea cel Bătrân the ruler of Romanian country (Wallachia), in *Scrisoarea a IIIa* written by the Romanian poet Mihai Eminescu.

Romanian	English
-Tu eşti Mircea? - Da-mpărate! - Am venit să mi te-nchini, De nu, schimb a ta coroană într-o ramură de spini. -Orice gând ai, împărate, şi oricum vei fi sosit, Cât suntem încă pe pace, eu îţi zic: Bine-ai venit! ……. -Cum? Când lumea mi-e deschisă, a privi gândeşti că pot Ca întreg Aliotmanul să se-mpiedice de-un ciot? ……. Şi de crunta-mi vijelie tu te aperi c-un toiag? Şi, purtat de biruinţă, să mă-mpiedec de-un moşneag? -De-un moşneag, da, împărate, căci moşneagul ce priveşti Nu e om de rând, el este domnul Ţării Româneşti.	-Isn't Mircea? -Yes, your Highness! -Take heed, for caution warns, Lest you your crown exchange against a wreath of thorns. -That you have come, great emperor, no heed what be your aim,while still at peace I hail you, our greetings that you came …… -What, when nations open their gates before my trump You think my hosts will stumble against a rotten stump? …….. Yet you before my legions imagine you can stand, You ridiculous old dotard, with a bare staff in your hand? -To that old dotard, Emperor, aught one courtesy accord For over all Wallachia 'tis he the chosen lord. And wiser you would guard your words, nor yet too loudly boast,

Eu nu ţi-aş dori vreodată să ajungi să ne cunoşti, Nici ca Dunărea să-nece spumegând a tale oşti. …… Eu? Îmi apăr sărăcia şi nevoile şi neamul… Şi de-aceea tot ce mişcă-n ţara asta, râul, ramul, Mi-e prieten numai mie, iară ţie duşman este, Duşmănit vei fi de toate, făr-a prinde chiar de veste; N-avem oşti, dară iubirea de moşie e un zid Care nu se-nfiorează de-a ta faimă, Baiazid!	Lest should the furious Danube flood engulf your fleeing host. …….. But I defend the poverty and the needs of a struggling land And therefore all the rocks and streams and hills that guardian stand And all that grows and moves and breathes to me is ally true, While every blade of grass and stone is enemy to you; We have small hosts, yet love of soil had ever power to rid This flowering land of all its foes. Prepare then Bayazid!”
Fragment from Mihai Eminescu: Scrisoarea a III a/ Translation into English by Corneliu M. Popescu[112]	

[112] Corneliu M. Popescu (1958-1977) Romanian translator

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Figure 1. Dragan, O. (2017, February 13) [Day13: 70,000 Protesters Built Huge Human Tricolour Flag out of Lights in Bucharest] [Photograph] Romania journal.ro. Retrieved from: https://www.romaniajournal.ro/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/received_1457498230927229.jpg



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