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**DIPLOMACY AS SCREEN NARRATIVE
- A CASE STUDY OF CULTURAL DIPLOMACY THROUGH CINEMA IN ROMANIA-**

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1. Introduction

'Globalization' increasingly becoming a buzz-word is rooted not only in academic debates, but first of all in practice and in everyday life. The increasing ease and affordability of travel, paired with the ability to instantly transmit information has made everybody more aware of everybody else. And where negotiations between states were often held following an open conflict, the tendency is now to put negotiation first to avoid a harsh confrontation in the first place. In a way, it can be said that the increasing focus on diplomacy and culture- understood as both "the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society" and "the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively" (Oxford Dictionary)- has levelled the playing field. Each country has a unique culture, so there can be no issue of superiority of one over the others. Their economic and political strength is still a factor in how efficiently they are advancing their interests through diplomacy in general. But, at the very least, everybody is operating with the same 'raw matter'.

'Culture talk' is a concept introduced by Mamdani Mahmood in his book, *Good Muslim. Bad Muslim* to designate the politicization of culture. El-Khairy (2009) explains: "This new understanding of culture is less social than political, tied less to the realities of particular countries than to global political events such as 9/11. Rather than seeing culture as intimate, local, and lived, this talk of culture is highly politicized and primarily comes in larger geo-political packages. Therefore, culture talk assumes that every culture has a tangible essence that defines it, which then goes to explain politics as a consequence of that essence" (pp. 123-124).

For a country like Romania, this context can prove to be a golden opportunity. Its perception outside of the country has been influence by the stigma of one of the harshest communist regimes in Eastern Europe. This has only become apparent after the revolution of 1989 that marked the change for democracy. Ceaușescu's communist apparatus had been very efficient in closing off the country for the outside eyes and strictly controlling the inflow and outflow of information. After almost 24 years from the revolution, Romania is still very much a democracy in the making, a country of contrasts and controversies. It boasts the title of EU member, but it is regarded suspiciously by the other members of the Union since the numerous immigrants causing trouble (often Roma ethnics) have spoken louder in the international media than Romania's domestic and international achievements.

The experience of communism has created a general scare on any government involvement in shaping the country's image, on one hand. On the other hand, the work on complying with the EU membership requirements had a strong internal focus and the external perception was often overlooked. There was, probably, a hope that the developments will speak for themselves and that

being accepted as a member of the Union would be a validation in itself. The river did run its course, but often not within the banks that Romania would have drawn herself.

In the midst of all of this, one particular area of Romanian culture, its cinema, gained more and more popularity, firstly and mostly for specialized audiences- among the festival-goers and art-house fans. The first break was made by director Cristi Puiu with his first feature, "Stuff and Dough" which gained recognition in several European festivals. But the real break-through came in 2005 when Romanian films started to become a fixture in the programmes of the major festivals, such as Cannes and Berlin- not only being selected, but also awarded. Since then, through its filmmakers, Romania has added to its name 2 Un Certain Regard Awards, a Camera d'Or Award, a Palme d'Or, a couple of Silver Bears, and, recently, a Golden one, as well as a short-listing for the 'Best film in a foreign language' section of the Oscars.

Selections and awards in festivals keep pouring, but once the initial thrill has passed several important questions have arisen: Is this development sustainable? Can it compensate for a national film industry? Asked less often, but equally important is the issue that this paper is trying to help clarify: What do they bring to the country? Can their success be capitalized on- from a cultural diplomacy perspective or otherwise?

In 2012, in a special edition of APERITIFF¹ magazine, Codruța Crețulescu analysed the situation of Romanian cinematography at the moment when it has, as many signal, reached a turning point. According to a report by the Romanian Film Centre (CNC), in 2009 and 2010 film production in Romania had increased by 100% and the presence of Romanian films in international festivals had also grown- by 300%, with a 100% increase in the number of awards. In this context the author talks about Romanian films as trophies on a mantelpiece, but notes: "Unfortunately the shiny trophies can no longer hide (and neither should they) the decrepit state of the mantelpiece itself, which is barely still standing, held up by sheer miracle..." (p. 30). The evidence for this is provided by the same report quoted earlier: 0.3 film entries per viewer in 2010 (a sharp fall from the 11 entries in 1989), only 39 of the 600 (in 1989) cinemas in the Romania Film network were still in place in 2009. And the consumers' expenditure for cinema going is one to match- 4 cents/person (as measure in 2006, an only 1 cent increase since 10 years earlier).

The shabby situation of the film industry is not a mere personal opinion, and Crețulescu (2012) backs it up quoting Nick Roddick (who's article, «Eastern Promise", appeared in Sight& Sound Magazine in 2007): "a national cinema without a national audience is living on borrowed time" (quoted in Crețulescu, p. 30). The local Film Awards (The Gopo Prize) testifies yet again to

¹ APERITIFF is the daily of the Transilvania International Film Festival. The event has been a supporter of the Romanian Film Festival in New York (to be discussed further in this paper). Part of the support is the editing of a special yearly issue of APERITIFF, an x-ray of Romanian cinema, with contributions from local and foreign film critics.

the little audience that domestic films get: "Love Sick" (the winner of the audience award in 2006) had 20,273 admissions (basically 0.1% of the population), while in 2007 "4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days" managed to bring in 89,339 spectators (a real record). More commercial production have slowly started to be approached by Romanian directors, but this do not fare extremely well in terms of admissions either (they are bringing in 25,000 spectators on average). Crețulescu makes a valid point that genre films (otherwise said, commercial ones) are an important part of a healthy and sustainable national film industry; but they are expensive to produce- a small budget cannot turn results competitive with the international offer and it can end up working against the purpose, further alienating an already estranged audience. The author rightfully calls for a coherent policy related to film, which should deal not only with production, distribution and exhibition, but also with training and promotion. There is a need of new, fresh ideas and film-makers but these cannot be properly supported with a development grant such as the one offered by the Film Centre- a maximum of 8000 Euros. Furthermore, only 2-3 débuts are (partially) funded each year and first scripts are not even considered.

"As long as there are no resources or designated funds for the promotion of Romanian films, the competition with Hollywood productions is already lost before it begins" Crețulescu adds (p. 31). While for the little funding it offers CNC gains ownership in the film, it lacks the appropriate marketing apparatus to even begin properly promoting the films it invests in. Furthermore, the funds of the CNC have gradually been diminished by a series of decisions: revoking direct support from the Ministry of Culture and the share it received from leisure activity companies (e.g. gambling). The competition for the little funding available grows fierce but to what end this films are funded is still unclear: while about 25% participate in festival (some being also awarded), the rest are shown only to a domestic audience sometimes as low as 400 spectators. "(...) for whom these films are made and, more importantly, why?" Crețulescu asks.

The research paper that follows attempts to explore to what extent the answer to this question can be: 'to promote Romania'. Films coming from large film industries do well both domestically and abroad. Other national cinemas boast strong domestic audiences, but hardly ever travel outside of their respective borders. Another possible case, exemplified by Romania, is when a film industry is not firmly established domestically, but the movies enjoy exposure and recognition abroad. Generally speaking, some countries may not be able to support a significant film industry because there are simply not enough talented people in this particular area. However, a small number of creative individuals might exist. Should they be supported? Could they create any benefit for the country (in either monetary or symbolic capital)? What can the support resources be in the absence of an industry (that would have generated a relatively constant revenue stream)?

These are all questions that have come up in the process of shaping the investigation of the case of Romanian cinema.

The case study that follows maps out the connection between Romanian cinematography and the country's foreign diplomacy, with a specific emphasis on culture. First, the concepts of public and cultural diplomacy are discussed based on the academic literature in the field. Next, after clarifying the research question and the methodology employed to answer it, the paper deals with putting the matter in context. This is done by looking into what are Romania's goals and actions in terms of public and cultural diplomacy. This is followed with presenting the results of the investigation into the current state of Romanian cinema- its evolution and accomplishments (compared with the goals set officially). The discussion section looks closer into, specifically, how the films are perceived and the implications on the country's image abroad. Lastly, the conclusion section provides a summary of the finds, also offering suggestions that can be adapted into policies concerning the use of cinema to advance Romania's foreign policy goals.

2. Public/ cultural diplomacy

2.1. What is public diplomacy?

The matter of diplomacy has become increasingly important in the evolution of international relations post World War II. After a second extended conflict that caused tremendous loss to those involved, the need for a less harmful way to resolve conflicts was actively sought. The importance of public diplomacy has been especially highlighted in relation to the Cold War (Cull, 2008). But if the root of the problem was to be addressed, the best strategy was to work towards avoiding conflict altogether. That is far from being an easy task to accomplish in what ultimately is a matter of power.

Nye (2008) wrote about the importance of power in matters of diplomacy, defining it as "the ability to affect others to obtain the outcomes you want" (p.94). Not all power is created equal, though. So while the first half of the 20th century had seen the deployment of hard power on a large scale, what followed was a tendency towards soft power. This implies cooperation and not coercion into "getting others to want the outcomes that you want" (Nye, 2008, p.94). The verb 'want' is essential here: it indicates that soft power means not only getting partners to accomplish a goal, but also persuading them that this goal is relevant (necessary even) for them as well, thus maximizing their involvement and contribution. This is why Nye points to the concept of attraction as a crucial one, because "Attention rather than information becomes the scarce resource, and those who can distinguish valuable information from background clutter gain power" (pp. 99-100).

Public diplomacy goes along the lines of this concept of soft power. (Nye, 2008) defines it as "an instrument that governments use to mobilize resources to communicate with and attract the publics of other countries, rather than merely their governments" (p.95). Other definitions stress the purpose of diplomacy as being that of avoiding conflicts, and highlight the fact that diplomacy is a process (Cull, 2008; Griffin, 2009), a "modus operandi" and "a method of managing a relationship- often between parties with different levels of power and different batteries of assets- that assigns a kind of fiction of equality to each party in order to enable communication" (Griffin, 2009, p. 263). In his definition, Cull specifically associates public diplomacy with foreign policy. This is also part of soft power in Nye's vision, including political values and culture (Nye, 2008).

According to Wang (2006), the literature on public diplomacy revolves around 3 principles:

- (1) Public diplomacy is inextricably linked to foreign policy and is based more on policy than on relationships.
- (2) It is assumed that the government has the dominant role (both in terms of sponsoring and communicating).
- (3) Mass-media is the primary means of communication, making it more of a one-way transmission.

In terms of actions required in diplomacy, Nye (2008) talks about daily communications, strategic communication and the development of lasting relationships as necessary and interrelated steps. Cull (2008) is going more in depth, proposing a taxonomy of public diplomacy- several paths it can take. These are listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchange diplomacy and international broadcasting. However, Cull is not very clear in terms of the criteria used to come up with these categories. For example, while cultural diplomacy has a goal in promoting the culture of a country, the others are just means through which a multitude of areas (including culture) can be promoted overseas. A clearer taxonomy in this sense would include, for example, 'commercial diplomacy'- aiming to introduce foreign markets to national products (in the sense of those produced in a certain country, and not traditional ones, because those are also likely to fall under the incidence of cultural diplomacy). The literature also emphasizes this inter-connection between the multiple ways to approach public diplomacy, like, for example, through the idea that culture is central to campaigns aiming to influence political economy (El-Khairy, 2009).

2.1.1. Public diplomacy, PR and propaganda

While a country is not, per se, a physical product, or a service, it inevitably engages with public diplomacy in a similar way that companies engage in public relations: "It can be argued that diplomacy (political, economic, informational, cultural) is part of organizational strategic PR and that skills of diplomacy are important to effective PR." (L'Etang, 2009, p. 608). Signitzer and Coombs (1992) explored the conceptual links between public relations models and public and cultural diplomacy. These are highlighted by a closer look at the sub-objectives of public diplomacy which include: information exchange, reduction of clichés and prejudices, creation of sympathy for own foreign policy and model of society, self-portrayal, image building.

Furthermore, associating the promotion of a certain image and a certain interests with a state cannot avoid contemplating the role of propaganda. For example self-portrayal can be perceived as a matter of framing the discussion- a country is actively portraying itself, highlighting certain traits, instead of sitting back and letting others form their own image (which might be much less favourable). It is not surprising that totalitarian regimes have been among the first to extensively use public diplomacy and to perfect true propaganda machines (as it will be detailed in the following sub-section). In terms of its connection to public diplomacy and PR, L'Etang (2009) explores the possibility that propaganda can actually be identified with the two practices. The idea is often rejected by many because of the negative connotation that 'propaganda' has acquired historically, but ever since the 50s practitioners in the UK have started investigating what are the overlapping techniques between propaganda and public relations (L'Etang).

2.1.2. Nation branding

Nye's (2008) concept of soft power includes national reputation which influences a country's abilities to: "build coalitions and alliances to achieve international political objectives, influence perceptions and purchase decisions, attract foreign investment or in-bound tourism" (Wang, 2006, p. 92). Wang uses the definition of national reputation proposed by Mercer (quoted here on p. 91): "collective judgements of a foreign country's image and character that are then used to predict or explain its future behaviour". In recent years the tendency has been towards the construction of national reputation being influenced more by 'popular perceptions' rather than governments. Nevertheless, this is a double edged sword (as it will also be emphasized by the present case study). While Wang argues that "It is certainly naive to assume that publics, domestic or foreign, always have an informed view or coherent opinion on matters related to cross-national and foreign policy issues.(...) Most likely, they do not." (p. 92), foreign policy decisions should not disregard the power of public opinion and should be linked to the way they are perceived by foreign publics.

This is only one of the several suggestions highlighted in the literature in terms of public diplomacy best practices. Nye (2008) emphasizes that properly completing all of the required steps (daily communications, strategic communication and the development of lasting relationships) does not guarantee the success of a 'product' that is not attractive to begin with: "Policies that appear as narrowly self-serving or arrogantly presented are likely to prohibit rather than produce soft power" (p.102). In addition, adapting to the audience is also crucial: the domestic audience might be receptive to something that a foreign audience is not receptive to. The vice versa might very well be true- what is not effective on a local audience can still have the desired effect on a foreign one. There is also the issue of entrusting the task of public diplomacy solely to market forces- but while that might be cost-effective, there is no control over the desired effect (Nye).

The development areas identified by Wang (2006) are related to national reputation as a process of negotiation- implying understanding the public being addressed and an adaptation of the discourse to them- rather than one of projection of a certain image: "national reputation is not just about projecting a certain national image but rather negotiating understanding with foreign publics (...) Yes, the element of how audiences relate to a foreign country (e.g. emotional versus deliberative) is often ignored." (p. 94). Other areas highlighted are the need to re-evaluate the means of communication used, as well as the role of government. Wang argues that credibility is an issue: "Without source credibility, no amount of communication and information will ever be effective and, worse, could even be counter-productive" (p. 94).

Coming up with general recommendations in terms of public diplomacy is, naturally, very difficult, because particularities are always game changers. And also because, as Nye (2008) highlighted, it is a matter of standing out from the crowd, being attractive, bringing attention to the

messages being sent out. Examples of successful diplomatic strategies are abundant, and there are at least just as many counter-examples. The United States alone can provide plenty of both, being one of the nations that have really used public diplomacy to exert their influence world-wide. Nye (2008) notes the recent decline in America's soft power, especially after the invasion of Iraq, which determined that the state is mainly perceived as negatively influencing the world in the international public opinion.

The historical evolution and milestones of public diplomacy are far too vast of a task to embark upon given the scope of this paper. A closer look will be paid specifically to cultural diplomacy in the following section.

2.2. What is cultural diplomacy?

The interest in diplomatic history has seen a revival in recent years, and one of the notable directions is "a more philosophical understanding of 'culture' " (Droste, 2006, p. 145). El-Khairy notes: "The iron curtain of ideology has shifted to a velvet curtain of culture" (p.119).

Culture is also one of the three main components in soft power (alongside political values and foreign policies). This includes both high culture - "which appeals to elites" (Nye, 2008, p. 96) - or popular culture- mass entertainment. Based on the experience of the Cold War, another distinction is made between 'slow media of cultural diplomacy' (art, books, exchanges) and 'fast information media', such as radio, newsreels and movies. So according to Nye's definition, film in general is not high culture. But not all cinematic experiences are created equal, and this case study aims to uncover if and how a country can include a cinema not specifically made for audiences in its cultural diplomatic strategy (see Chapter 7).

Similarly, Signitzer and Coombs (1992) talk about a tender-minded perspective, in which information and culture should be used towards the achievement of the "highest long-range national objectives" (p. 140) in order to reach mutual understanding. The cultural instruments are deemed 'slow media', and, while important, persuasion is only second to truth and veracity. This opposes the tough-minded conception, for which persuasion is the primary goal.

As a component of public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy tends to be a long-term process, appealing to psychology and emotions to bond with foreign audiences and gain their sympathy (L'Etang, 2009). A more detailed definition is offered by Hans N. Tuck, former Minister in the U.S. Foreign Service: a "government's process of communicating with foreign publics in an attempt to bring about understanding for its nation's ideas and ideals, for its institutions and culture, as well as for its national goals and current policies" (quoted in Mehring, 2013, p. 2).

Cull (2008) similarly defines it as "an actor's attempt to manage the international environment through making its cultural resources and achievements known overseas and/or facilitating cultural transmissions abroad" (p. 33). As noted before, the other elements the author includes by in the larger notion of public diplomacy can all be present as means of conducting cultural diplomacy. *Listening* is the "attempt to manage the international environment by collecting and collating data about publics and their opinions overseas and using the data to redirect its policy or its wider public diplomacy approach accordingly" (p. 32). He defines *advocacy* as "an actor's attempt to manage the international environment by undertaking an international communication activity to actively promote a particular policy, idea, or the actor's general interest in the minds of a foreign public" (p. 32). The following category, *exchange diplomacy*, aims "to manage the international environment by sending its citizens overseas and reciprocally accepting citizens from overseas for a period of study and/or acculturation" (p. 33). Lastly, *international news broadcasting* encompasses the "attempt to manage the international environment by using the technologies of radio, television, and the Internet to engage with foreign publics" (p. 34).

In a perspective that assumes the overlap between public diplomacy and public relations, Signitzer and Coombs (1992) consider public diplomacy can be exerted through political information or cultural communication. Cultural communication can further be delineated into two categories.

1) *Cultural diplomacy*- the creation and execution of cultural agreements, with the goal to "convey a favourable image of one's culture with a view toward facilitating diplomatic activities as a whole";

2) *Cultural relations*- "At their most effective, their purpose is to achieve understanding and cooperation between national societies for their mutual benefit. Cultural relations proceed ideally by the accretion of open professional exchanges rather than by selective self-projection. They purvey an honest picture of each country rather than a beautiful one. They do not conceal but neither need to make a show of national problems." (Mitchell, quoted in Signitzer and Coombs, p. 142)

The authors merge the model devised by Grunig/Hunt for public relations with Peisert's model of cultural communication in order to identify the PR techniques specific for each of the two types of cultural communication detailed above. The first two models are consistent with cultural diplomacy:

(1) PRESS AGENCY/ PUBLICITY = ONE-WAY TRANSMISSION OF ONE'S
CULTURE ABROAD

- both models are one-way
- propaganda (aggressive language policy)
- unbalanced relationship

(2) PUBLIC INFORMATION = SELF-POTRAYAL

- both one-way information, very little persuasion
- both concerned with comprehension

(Signitzer & Coombs, 1992, p. 144)

The following two correspond to cultural relations:

(3) TWO-WAY ASYMMETRIC = INFORMATION

- goal is sympathy and acceptance
- careful; scientific planning
- no change of one's behaviour

(4) TWO-WAY SYMMETRIC = EXCHANGE AND CO-OPERATION

- dialogue, balanced effects
- change of own behaviour on each side

(Signitzer & Coombs, 1992, pp. 144–145) □

A similar delineation is made by Banks (2011) between cultural diplomacy and cultural exchange. However, in his opinion, the latter is subordinated to the first- the definition of 'cultural diplomacy' implies cultural exchange associated with an agenda. Roberta Levitow (interviewed in Banks) points out that the conflict in diplomacy is more restrictive, thus more convenient for the diplomat, while cultural exchange implies a degree of freedom that is vital for artistic expression. According to R. Varea (quoted on p. 118) "there is a thin line between cultural diffusion and propaganda, and there is a lot of work ahead of us in making the exchange a true dialogue". While it is probably true in most cases that propaganda aims to be a monologue, that is not all there is to it, and its negative connotation is not supported across the board. As it was pointed out by Levitow, it is just a matter of preference for diplomats to maintain things within an area of control.

In terms of the potentially negative effects of cultural diplomacy, a concept that Banks (2011) uses is that of 'cultural invasion', which he takes over from Freire. Its effects are "inhibiting the creativity of the invaded" and the loss or threat of originality (p. 115). Related to cinema, the concept can certainly be applied to what Hollywood has undertaken, especially since the Cold War era. It happened in Romania, just like throughout Europe. The problem is not the originality and creativity of Romanian film makers has been hindered; it exists, and it is proven by a specific style, as it will be proven further. But it cannot be taken in by audiences for which the standard is Hollywood (the idea is discussed by Gorzo, 2012).

Banks refers to Thomas's concept of "complex web" "in which artists often find themselves when working on projects that have, at their core, cultural diplomacy" (Banks, 2011, p. 110). But this web not only entraps the artists, but all of those interacting with them (whether it is in an

institutional or a private context): "The cultural diplomats think they are using culture internationally to influence others; and seldom consider that they are being used by those others in the context of local politics" (Levitow, quoted in Banks, p. 117). Overall, Banks argues for a shift of focus from best practices to *better* practices, "a more fluid application of what works in each individual situation" (p. 110).

2.2.1. Cultural diplomacy- historic examples

While the actual term of cultural diplomacy is rather new, its principles have been applied since ancient Greece and Rome (Cull, 2008). The principles and techniques have been continuously developing over time, and according to the interests of each country. Cull notes that cultural diplomacy had been most salient in France. The author also identified countries that have prominently used the other ways of conducting public diplomacy (which can also be used to conduct cultural diplomacy, as argued before): listening in Switzerland, advocacy in the United States, exchange diplomacy in Japan and international broadcasting in Britain.

However, this does not imply that these particular techniques were the only ones used by each of these countries. For example, Lee (1998) takes a closer look at the case of the UK. The main cultural diplomacy instruments of the British Foreign Office were the BBC External Service (so, involving international broadcasting) and the British Council. The latter started as an overseas office (under the Department of Overseas Trade) destined to support and perpetuate the relations with foreign students coming to study in the UK as part of the process of maintaining commercial liaisons both in Europe and in Latin America. These activities imply both advocacy and exchange diplomacy, as well as cultural diplomacy. Lee argues that the Council had diminished powers, but nevertheless managed to pioneer cultural exchanges as well as the teaching of English as a foreign language. It acted mainly in Europe and a shift of focus, though advised, did not receive immediate support from the British Foreign Office. In 1948 an Information Research Department (IRD) was established under the same institution. The IRD was to "undertake research for briefing colleagues and other interested parties; its practice was to cultivate authors, journalists and editors in order to place stories which either exposed the machinations of the Eastern bloc or boosted the claims of Western democracy." (p. 117). Thus the activities of the Foreign Office also placed more focus on listening.

As noted before, the experience of the Cold War has emphasized the importance of public diplomacy (and, by extension, that of cultural diplomacy) for avoiding violent conflicts. Naturally, the two actors involved in the Cold War, the United States and the USSR are obvious examples for the use of cultural diplomacy. In the aftermath of WWII cultural diplomacy was an important resource used by the USA to maintain their relationship with both their allies and their former

enemies, while, at the same time it was used to "secure strategic interest of the US in Europe" (Mehring, 2013, p. 2). Griffin (2009) describes the fine propaganda that Russia was using to impose itself to the public opinion as more fit to take over the new Germany in the after the war. They were invoking a cultural affinity with the German population; their society, like the German one, was strongly rooted in culture, while the Americans, as innovative and efficient as they were, were merely "one-dimensional materialists" (p. 261). The Americans failed to identify how threatening this was to their position, and they only started considering fighting this at the insinuations of an American officer.

This is proof, yet again, to the fact that although it can be said that the US has perfected cultural diplomacy², it seems like not even they had it right from the very beginning. It was instead the Soviet Union who got the ball rolling, realizing the potential of both blunt, outspoken propaganda and more subtle approaches. It makes it all the more impressive how the Americans picked it up and ended up in the lead after the Cold War, largely still maintaining their position today. "Selling American products has become synonymous with selling America- its very soul, symbols, and lifestyles" El-Khairi notes (p. 126). However, it should probably be said that this affirmation is closer to the truth when reversed: it is these symbols that have been designed to sell the products and not necessarily the other way around (Wagnleitner, 1994 proves this in relation to cinema).

Towards the end of the Cold War, as cultural diplomacy was employed by the Russians to emphasize the new openness of the USSR and their desire for peace, the ones at the receiving end of these efforts (especially the Americans) were weary of its methods and suspected hidden intentions. The notion of peace for Russians was linked to "the acceptance of Soviet policy goals" (Barghoorn, 1958, p. 41). By opening itself to the world, the USSR was in fact looking to more effectively disseminate socialist culture. There was a natural suspicion towards the truthfulness of the information spread, since it concentrated on glorifying the accomplishments of the communist society (still, after Stalin, in terms of science, for example, the accomplishments of other states were praised alongside the Soviet ones). The international community also feared that Russian delegations involved in cultural exchanges abroad would engage in espionage, a fact that was in fact confirmed for several cases. Barghoorn explained how this new openness was seen as more beneficial for giving others the opportunity to conduct public diplomacy on their own behalfs in Russia, since the country was now welcoming towards foreign visitors and delegations.

Super-powers such as the USSR and the US are not the only ones using cultural diplomacy to promote themselves and advance their interests. One example is (then) Czechoslovakia, who, in

² El-Khairi, 2009 notes: "global popular culture is American popular culture and African American popular culture is increasingly becoming American popular culture" p. 120

1902, organized an exhibition of the work of French sculptor August Rodin in Prague in 1902, which also included a visit by the artist himself (Giustino, 2010). The event, though not dealing with a Czech artist, proved to be a good move in terms of both domestic and foreign policy in an interplay of forces. The author notes: “the Rodin spectacle was far more than an art show. It was a thoughtfully choreographed display of Czech national being designed with two audiences in mind, one national and one transnational” (p. 591). The nation's self-confidence was strengthened by the appreciation displayed internationally towards the event and the way it had been handled. It is important to stress that the entire event was painstakingly put together by a group of enthusiasts who slowly managed to overcome the authorities' reluctance (fearing that this was too big of a challenge for a small, insignificant, nation).

2.2.2. Cultural diplomacy through cinema

Whether regarded as high or as mass culture, films are undoubtedly a widespread form of culture. However, it is also, by nature, a capital-intensive industry, generally involving a large number of professionals in the making of these cultural products. Commercial aspects are inextricably linked to film, giving it a particular statute within the larger cultural sphere.

Historically, the best known examples in terms of cultural diplomacy through cinema are the USA and the USSR, as well as France. While the first started realizing the full potential of this tool after World War II and has deployed it as a diplomatic tool, the USSR was actually the one to first explore the persuasive nature of cinema. However, its use was not as much linked with foreign policies, as it was with domestic ones: the moving image was a great way to spread the socialist ideas in a vast country where a sizeable proportion of the population was illiterate. The intellectual montage techniques that film-makers such as Serghei Eisenstein, Vsevolod Pudovkin or Dziga Vertov developed were explorations of the cinematic language in the same proportion that they were propaganda techniques. The socialist doctrine had to be spread fast and effectively, and these directors were looking for ways to propagate these ideas as concisely and unequivocally as possible. In general, the role of motion pictures in particular was an important one in the Soviet cultural policy: the authorities would organize film festivals, and were focused on partnering in co-producing films (Barghoorn, 1958).

As for France, it is a country where cinema is an immovable part of the culture, which, in turn, is an important part of people's lives. Before Hollywood started to exert its dominance, it was France that held this position (Wagnleitner, 1994). The French have always been the most drastic in terms of fighting the import of American movies (and the American culture that came within that same 'package').

Another category are countries that, while not having a national cinematography that is competitive on the international market, they have established themselves as an important player. Whether it is by being involved in co-productions (like Austria³) or making themselves attractive options for shooting locations- both through scenery and through tax incentives (like Hungary, the Czech Republic or Poland, and, again Austria- <http://www.locationaustria.at>) (Crețulescu, 2012), these examples show that using cinema to brand a country does not necessarily mean producing films.

But the undisputed leader of the international film market is the US, through Hollywood productions. In addition to a history of imposing their movies world-wide (that will be dealt with in more detail below), Hollywood has also ensured the US cultural diplomacy through cinema indirectly, offering support to European national film industries in the aftermath of the war. Mehring (2013) writes on a series of films directed by local film-makers which were supported as part of the Marshall Plan in a number of European countries. The article is concerned with the processes of cultural translation and diplomacy, as well as propaganda and censorship that were at play in these movies financed with money basically coming from American tax payers.

In his account on the American influence on Austria after World War II, Reinhold Wagnleitner (1994) calls film "the Esperanto for the eye" (p. 223). The phrase fully encompasses the characteristic that makes film such efficient and appropriate means for conducting (cultural) diplomacy: with little effort (subtitling, dubbing) they are ready to be shown everywhere in the world. However, this still leaves a question unanswered: that of major cultural differences (such as East vs. West), which are irreconcilable. When globalization plays in, it might be that the differences are still there, but the fact that they are acknowledged as such is bound to lead to more receptive audiences.

According to Wagnleitner, in the silent era, the US was already one of the main competitors in the film industry, but it was neck in neck with France, Italy, UK and Germany. Back in 1912, 90% of the world market was in fact dominated by France. The appearance of talkies impacted the costs of production, and made the issue of dominating the motion pictures market a question of economic power. The US had an advantage at that moment, because of the large size of its domestic market (compared with competitors), which meant films there would have a faster return on investment, and profit could be reached through exporting. In addition, establishing a dominant position also in Europe for American films had to do with the intervention of the American

³ Austria currently has co-production agreements with 7 countries: Germany, Switzerland, France, Luxembourg, Canada, Italy and Spain. "International co-productions are becoming increasingly important for the Austrian film industry. On the one hand, they open up more financing possibilities for individual films and, on the other hand, they help to ensure that there will be a return on the invested capital as well (giving access to additional markets). Films resulting from co-productions are considered domestic films and can be awarded the same financial support as is available in the contractual country." (<http://www.en.bmwfj.gv.at/EconomicPolicy/FilmIndustry/Seiten/default.aspx>)

Government in pushing these films in post-war Europe, under the slogan "Freedom of information". The Government support was due to the importance of films in securing foreign markets for American products. A "quasi-diplomatic acknowledgement of Hollywood" (p. 233) was established through the addition of the Motion Picture Section to the Department of Commerce in 1926.

The European film industries tried to defend themselves by instating quotas and subsidizing their national cinema, but the move struck right back: Hollywood companies established local branches in Europe, so the films produced by them were technically national productions of the countries where they were established. This meant that they were fully benefiting of the subsidies, to the point that Europe was offering the essential financial support for Hollywood. In turn, the real local production proceeded to adopt the "Hollywood *perspective*" (Wagnleitner's emphasis, p. 224). Europeans had tried to establish a competitive advantage through a different style, but the Hollywood 'film grammar' was already established; the European style was considered "elitist high culture" and "too demanding as a mass media form" (p. 232). (As it will be shown further in this paper, these accusations often still stand and they are in line with those brought to the New Romanian Cinema). Hollywood gradually established control over sizeable parts of production, distribution and exhibition abroad.

This context lead to the loss of European sovereignty in film after the First World War The strategy employed by the US had two steps. Before penetrating these markets, they concentrated on eliminating European films from their domestic markets (a task made easy by the post WWI conditions, when there was very little money in Europe for film production). Thus the three main factors at the base of Hollywood's raise after WWI are: the economic advantage, linked to the technical factors (due to the talkies), and the support of the Government. The latter had been established during the War and implied a degree of censorship, leading to a control over the production in order to ensure that money was invested only in those productions that were ideologically-correct. Since these conditions were vital for obtaining the support, the situation in the industry evolved towards a self-censorship of sorts. While this was somewhat a limitation of freedom of expression, the studios were eager to follow the guidelines since the Government not only supported production, but this also ensured distribution and exhibition on a scale as wide as possible, to maximize revenues.

The position of Hollywood further strengthened after WWII, when the areas liberated by US troops bore no import restrictions for the American films. A reintroduction of quotas was attempted, trying to balance the situation for the economically precarious conditions in Europe. The American diplomacy, however, was quick to intervene successfully managing to determine authorities in Italy, France and UK to eliminate the quotas.

A conflict arose in occupied Germany after WWII between the interests of the American authorities and those of the American film industry. While the first intended to support a democratic German film industry, Hollywood wanted to make use of the control in the area to completely annihilate its strongest competitor at that time (it should be noted, Germany had such a strong film industry also because of the war and the Nazi propaganda, which placed strong emphasis on cinema). Hollywood used its position in order to blackmail the government into giving in to their pressure: the American film industry was less dependent on the revenue from Germany, than the American Government was ideologically dependent on film.

There is no doubt that American diplomacy was fully engaged in cinema. Between 1949-1966, as part of the Marshall Plan, 16 million dollars were spent on funding films reflecting 'the best elements of American life'. T.H. Guback (quoted by Wagnleitner, 1994 on p. 245) stated that "American film could (...) go forward with the rank of ambassador". The American embassies in each territory were also very much involved: they sent in reports on reactions to films, allowing Hollywood studios to adapt its production and increase the chances of exporting their products.

According to George Smith, a great deal of symbolic capital was also circulating with films in addition to the economic capital. Wagnleitner (1994) deems film a "channel of cultural self-interpretation and self-definition" (p. 225). The author quotes Sypher on film acting as a sort of encyclopaedia of the values of a certain culture in the modern age, based on the idea of technical primacy (which posits that all the art forms in a given period of time fall under the influence of the one that is most technically developed). For Hollywood films, the values promoted are related to lower-middle class, capitalism and US democracy. From the early films, the products of the industry were not directed toward the elites, but toward the masses, and this has been decisive for its success at home and abroad.

Through trial and error, cultural diplomacy continues to evolve nowadays, taking on new challenges. The cultural agenda inevitably faced the need for changes due to globalization 'challenges', which Belanger (1999) analyses. Besides artistic factors, communication and economic flows became relevant issues for cultural diplomacy, especially in the face of new ICTs and trade liberalization. While Belanger's research deals with the situation in Canada, the author generalizes in terms of the new role cultural diplomacy has acquired within foreign policy: "The state's cultural mission on the international scene no longer simply entails promoting an already existing culture abroad. It involves a more visibly active role in protecting and developing national culture" (p. 678). This perspective brings about the concept of 'social security', linked to globalization threatening national identities; Belanger points out that even if the threat is not a real one, the argument will be used to legitimate political action. But up to what point is this action really legitimate?

2.3. (How much) should the state intervene/ control?

This is, naturally, a question for which a definitive answer is impossible to come by. Experience so far goes to show that there is probably more than one right answer, and it very much depends on the context being questioned. In a perfect democracy, everybody should be able to express their opinions and ideas through whatever art form they see fit. But the artistic nature of the film is not universally accepted- some actively reject it, some do not even consider it and are familiarized with movies as entertainment products. Furthermore, in the spirit of democracy all should be equally supported. However sizeable, though, resources are always limited. So when it comes to devising and applying a strategy, compromises are unavoidable. Specifically in the case of film, while not funding it does not mean it is in any way censored or kept from being produced/distributed/exhibited, this can, however, drastically diminish its chances.

In addition, as a cultural product, movies involve a great deal of uncertainty. Despite it being very capital intensive, the only way to increase chances of success for a producer/studio is actually put out several such products (Caves, 2002). When some form of government or legally designed funding is involved in these productions (such as it is the case for Romania), it is unavoidable that tax payers more or less directly finance the productions of films that do not match their tastes. Staying in a democratic paradigm, it is their right of those unsatisfied to express their disapproval of the way their money is spent. While it certainly needs to handle both, the government then needs to decide whether it is going to place a stronger emphasis on the domestic or the foreign policy in the matter. Naturally, the balance will shift according to how interests vary with time.

The literature explores a notable trend in recent years- that of the states themselves being no longer at the forefront of diplomacy- what Lee (1998) calls “new institutionalism” (p. 145), meaning that all kinds of non-governmental organizations are in the lead. These institutions function under the norms of cultural sociology, each proposing a set of norms and values. This is why Droste (2006) concludes that diplomacy is more and more about a cultural transfer. Lee does note that this shift of power is a fairly recent development. He uses the example of the UK's relationship with USSR to exemplify how a fragmentation in the foreign policy of the UK that diluted the role of the government weakened Britain's position as far as the USSR was concerned. Efforts were made to change this situation and prove that government had a central, powerful strategy. Undoubtedly things have changed today, when the role of governments in diplomacy is re-evaluated both by themselves and by the public opinion- i.e. the ones as the receiving end of public and foreign diplomacy.

3. Research question

Deciding to approach this topic through a case study had to do with the subjective and largely unquantifiable nature of cultural diplomacy. This also impacted the search for an approach, a framework for the paper. Particularly, a research question that does not carry any ideological implication or any taking of sides (due to the personal involvement in the subject) was difficult to come about.

Martin Griffin (2009) proposes a narrative approach to diplomacy in general, and cultural diplomacy in particular. Narrative is the default framework of many structures, films included. In his book on writing novels, Turkish writer Orhan Pamuk states that “the cinematographic industry was built on the idea of fiction created and spread by the novel, and in the 20th century film transformed in turn this idea into something that we all accept today” (p. 34).

What Griffin (2009) puts forward is a sort of intuitive approach, with different stages developing organically in continuation of one another: "Narrative is, therefore, both an instinctive drive and an intellectual concept, something that has both emotional and rational dimensions, and the dynamics of narrative influence the cultural and political arena in many different levels" (p. 259). What the author argues is that conducting cultural diplomacy (and, by extension, public diplomacy) is matter of telling a story: a good one, an attractive one, a convincing one.

The model proposed by Griffin includes two axes of storytelling. The **internal** one deals with: "who is in charge of the story (...) and who is a character in someone else's narrative?". The second one, the **external** axis, has a functional outlook: "what one can do with the story in the real social world". (p. 259). Naturally, the first question is 'which is the story?'. The consequent one, according to Griffin are: Does the story cohere? Who is framing the story? Who is being framed by it? What is the purpose of this story in the social world?

This narrative approach to cultural diplomacy suggested by the literature was used to frame the case study of Romanian cinema and cultural diplomacy that makes the object of this paper. After first establishing what is the story and who are the story teller and the character(s), the final focus is on the external, functional aspect of the story. Thus this exploratory research aims to answer the following research question: “What is the social role of the narrative of Romanian cinematography after 2000?”. This will be determined in terms of the two types of cultural communication identified by Signitzer and Coombs (1992): cultural diplomacy (presenting the best aspects of a country, a one-way approach) and cultural relations two-way communication of an honest, instead of an 'edited' picture). The process will determine whether this role matches the one that is expected from it in terms of cultural diplomacy and nation branding. Finally, the paper will conclude with policy recommendations to optimize the way in which Romania uses cinema to promote itself to the world.

4. Methodology

4.1. Why a case study?

Since every culture is unique, cultural diplomacy cannot really provide a one-size-fits-all structure. While a wider perspective does provide an over-arching understanding of the concept, the details, nuances and particularities are very important here (since that is what culture is about, after all). Thus a case study, with its in depth focus, “looking at the *how* and the *why*” (Thomas, 2011, p. 73) can create a more accurate picture.

The choice for a case study as method of research was also the result of a natural evolution process for developing this paper. The topic choice came first, based on personal and professional interest in cinema in general. Considering its many possible facets, as well as the corresponding knowledge the paper needed to prove (as a Master thesis in the field of Media and Business), a more specific focus was decided- that of cultural diplomacy in connection to film. Considering the particularities of culture highlighted above, a case study was chosen as the most suitable approach, which would allow for an in depth focus, and also for a research process that could also include gathering knowledge through a more hands-on, practical approach- such as an internship. Ultimately, based on personal knowledge and interest, the specific case was decided as being Romania.

4.2. What type of case ?

Based on Thomas' (2011) classifications, choosing to investigate Romanian cinema is primarily a local knowledge case- rooted in a personal interest and pre-existent knowledge. The case chosen can also be seen as somewhat of an outlier within the Romanian culture as a whole; it has sparked more or less by itself and reached recognition (by comparison with, for example, literature, which often depends of government translation grants to become available outside of Romania). In the overall context of European (and even world) cinema, Romania can be regarded as a key case- not only did it commence a trend, but it is also a situation in which art-house style constitutes the mainstream film-making style (Gorzo, 2012).

Purpose-wise this case study of cultural diplomacy and Romanian film is firstly evaluative- “framed by the expectation that you are doing research to see how well something is working or has worked” (Thomas, 2011, p. 99). This also include an exploratory endeavour, because the research intended to take a step further, past personal interest, and considering the perspective of the stakeholders involved- the government, the film industry, the domestic and foreign audiences. The case study ultimately also has an instrumental purpose, being conducted to provide better understanding, aiming for improvement (Thomas). This is mostly apparent in the final chapter

which focuses on suggestions for policy making.

4.3. Data collection

The approach chosen for studying the case of cultural diplomacy and Romanian cinema is what Thomas (2011) classifies as 'drawing a picture' or an 'illustrative-demonstrative approach'. It is strongly linked with “practical learning” and “It enables readers or inquirers to share the experience, using their own reserves of knowledge and experience to make sense of its structure and its lineaments” (Thomas, pp. 119-120). Considering that this research is the object of a Master thesis, this was chosen as the most suitable approach also because it allows readers to understand a context that is probably known to them to a lesser extent than it is to the writer.

The flexibility a case study offers in terms of choosing the actual methods of research was seen as ideal for the subject at hand. The topic of cinema and cultural diplomacy was studied using Romania as a case and employing a mixed methods approach. This include quantitative and qualitative analysis of industry reports and press coverage, as well as a few interviews and participatory observation during a one month internship in the Romanian Cultural Institute in London (in April, 2013). This provided the 'practical learning' approach which is, not only specific of the illustrative-demonstrative approach, but was also a personal goal set by the researcher for the process.

A mix of academic literature and material available from the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration (which also deals with tourism) was considered for chapter 5. Industry reports (available from the Romanian Film Centre) are analysed in chapter 6 and a more detailed version is available for consultation in Annexe 3 The knowledge obtained through the internship and one of the interviews are also included in chapter 6, when discussing the activity of the Romanian Cultural Institute in the context of Romanian cinema and cultural diplomacy. Press coverage (mostly in the form of film reviews and wider analyses of the phenomenon of recent Romanian cinema, by both Romanian and foreign critics) was the basis of chapter 7. Chapter 8 discusses the perception on the cultural value of Romanian films, as well as the perceived image of the country as created by them. This chapter is primarily based on three interviews- with Ramona Mitrică (in charge of the Romanian Film Festival in London), Bronwen Riley (working for National Heritage publishing house in London, the author of a book about Transylvania) and Renata Clark (Deputy-director of the Czech Centre in London).

5. How is Romania currently portraying and promoting itself?

As highlighted before, many of the techniques used by public diplomacy are very familiar to the realm of public relations. The two seem to be interconnected, and this becomes more apparent when looking at an area that is probably most focused on turning into plus-value the 'attractiveness' that Nye (2008) talks about as an important factor in generating soft power: nation branding. The concept is defined as: "engaging the profit-based marketing techniques of private enterprise to create and communicate a particular version of national identity" (Aronczyk, 2008, p. 42). In broad terms, it is done to attract tourism, trade, talent, investment, and it can also be used for "dodging the spotlight of unfavourable international media attention" (p. 44). This is a problem that concerns Romania, as incidents related to immigrants have created a negative perception of the country (Nicolaescu, 2008). In addition to the external effect of nation branding, Aronczyk also notes the desired effect domestically; in addition to its role in promoting the country abroad, nation branding "serves as a recursive function- that is, to convince domestic elites, stakeholders and the public that their government is acting in their best interests"(p.44). For this reason, one major pitfall of nation branding is nationalism.

Nation branding is an area that Romania has been actively exploring since 2004, a fact partly due to the influence of Wally Olins who has researched nation branding in Eastern Europe and the Balkans, also participating in a conference on the matter held in Bucharest that year (Cotîrlea, 2013; Nicolaescu, 2008). Since then, several projects have been adopted and abandoned- a brief outline of which is provided in Annexe 1. It is important to add that the nation branding aspect is the first (an only so far) to have united commercial, economic and cultural interests into a strategy (or rather several), whereas before 2005 most efforts were initiated by individual interested parties, depending on the area- like Ministries or trade unions (Nicolaescu, 2008). Coming up with a cohesive strategy has proven itself to be a struggle nevertheless, and in 2008 Nicolaescu noted that "In the past few years, Romania has promoted rather randomly the different components that contribute to the creation of a country image: the tourism, Brâncuși, products Made in Romania, the Enescu festival and various trade fairs".

Following Olins's conference, the "Work group for Romania's image abroad" was formed, with members including cultural personalities, as well as banks representative. Lacking an organizational structure, the work group soon disembodied (Nicolaescu, 2008).

During 2007-2008, a PR and advertising company (Grapefruit) was brought on board and much of the debate on Romania's nation branding was held online (through the website www.brandingromania.com, currently not active anymore). One of the directions they were following was branding the country through products -the export of Romanian products and brands

of products, focusing on crafts products, natural products and, as an exception, IT. Another area of interest was the attraction of foreign investors through the fiscal policies, as well as through the activity of the Romanian Agency for Foreign Investment, functioning under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (it is still listed on the Ministry's website, but the Agency's own website is no longer functioning) (Nicolaescu, 2008).

The foreign policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also factored in culture- “promoting the Romanian cultural phenomenon both through its historical component, the traditional values, and through its contemporary component, the currents of ideas and the artistic tendencies of the last decades” (Nicolaescu, 2008). Part of the cultural policy of the Ministry was the organizing the Romanian Cultural Institute in 2005 (an institution dealt with in more detail in Chapter 6 of this paper). The Institute was modelled after analysing established institutions in the field- such as the British Council, The Goethe Institute and the Alliance Française. Another action was the “Romanian Cultural Decade” “conceived as a complete framework for the presentation of the cultural phenomenon, through thematic cultural activities (years dedicated to Eminescu, Brâncuși, Caragiale)” (Nicolaescu).

At the time (in 2008), Nicolaescu was suggesting building the nation brand based on the origins of Romania, as well as capitalizing on already existing positive images- such as sports and cultural personalities, but also “the beautiful Romanian women”, the Palace of the Parliament⁴ and Dracula's castle. That should be complemented, she argued, by new images, created based on the identity of Romanians as it is defined by themselves and as they wish to present themselves abroad. None of this is inherently wrong, but it inevitably raising the question of who is nation branding intended for? As Aronczyk noted, its implications are also domestic, but its external results might depend on adapting the brand for that specific audience.

A study conducted by Nicolaescu (2008) amongst 101 respondents (also including 27 Romanians) indicated that the “attractiveness of art and culture” has a mild importance on influencing the perception of a country. The nature and the cultural elements are listed as aspects perceived positively by the respondents. But culture here mostly had to do with cultural heritage in terms of architecture or cities and villages, the gastronomy, the music, the crafts and folk arts. These are the areas thought to have specificity and are perceived as positive aspects of Romania. On the other hand, innovation and creativity mostly stirred neutral perceptions (neither good, nor bad). It can be argued that this could reflect the actual perception, but also the fact that there is not much knowledge of this area as it has not been actively promoted (whereas traditions and folk culture have been considered, in various forms, as components in all the attempts towards a Romanian

⁴ A massive construction in the center of Bucharest, the building was formerly known as The People's House, being one of Ceaușescu's last and most expensive projects.

national branding).

The nation brand currently in place was initiated by the Ministry of Tourism and has been adopted in 2010, being launched at the Shanghai World Expo. It is the only officially approved projection of the country (in the sense of a cohesive strategy) and its most recognizable elements are the symbol- a leaf- and the slogan “Explore the Carpathian Garden” (Romania Insider, 2010). As the graphic elements and the slogan suggest, the emphasis is on nature- unspoiled and diverse landscapes- in addition to folk traditions and legends (such as that of Dracula). These areas of focus were decided upon as a result of a study conducted in Romania, as well as in the main prospective markets for tourism: UK, Austria, Russia, France, US, Hungary, Germany and Italy. More specifically, the emphasis is placed on six touristic products: the cultural circuits, the nature, the rural areas, the city breaks, the adventure tourism and the wellness tourism. A brochure and a promotional clip was created for each of these products.

The ones dedicated to culture focus on national cultural heritage (monasteries, castles, crafts and folk arts), as well as music and ballet (with sections in the brochure dedicated to the National Opera and the Enescu Festival) and cultural personalities (including inventors in the field of aviation, as well as writer Mircea Eliade, sculptor Constantin Brâncuși and playwright Eugen Ionesco). In other words, the emphasis is consistent with what was proposed through the other versions of the country brand. What “Explore the Carpathian Garden” had different, besides the logo and the slogan, was a better coordinated implementation strategy. However, much like all the efforts to brand Romania that came before it, it does not play on the idea of the contemporary culture and creators, and by no means does it have any connection to the contemporary cinema. Its focus in terms of culture has to do with cultural diplomacy, and not cultural relations- it aims to present a positive image of the country, beating a path that has been walked before many times. It is a strategy with a low level of risk-taking, for which attracting tourists is the primary goal.

The issue of a strategy to promote the contemporary culture in general, and contemporary cinema in particular, still remains, as well as the possible outcomes of this strategy. The topic will be developed while discussing the two institutions mostly linked to the matter- the Romanian Cultural Institute and the Romanian Film Centre.

6. What is Romania actually doing in terms of public/cultural diplomacy?

Romania's main diplomatic channels are ensured by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the network of Embassies and Council in Europe and across the world. In terms of cultural diplomacy, Romania followed the established path, creating a dedicated body, the Romanian Cultural Institute (ICR). As Cull (2008) notes, cultural diplomacy tends to have a long term focus, the information flow being directed outwards. The typical infrastructure for this is a cultural centre and/or library. Signitzer & Coombs (1992) also note that cultural communication is "usually entrusted to a cultural section of a foreign ministry, a cultural institute abroad, or some type of semi-autonomous body such as the British Council or the German Goethe Institute" (p. 142).

The authority in matter of cinematography is the Romanian Film Centre (CNC), an autonomous institution subordinated to the Ministry of Culture. While its activity has more direct domestic implications, it is, by extension, involved in the cultural promotion of Romania through cinema.

In what follows, the role and current situation of the two institutions will be detailed. The last part of the chapter is dedicated to evaluating their efforts in terms of promoting Romanian culture in general, and through film in particular.

6.1. The Romanian Cultural Institute (ICR)

The statute and mission of the Romanian Cultural Institute are explained on the institution's website (<http://www.icr.ro/bucharest/objectives-mission/about-rci.html>) :

“The Romanian Cultural Institute, a public body founded in 2003, is tasked with raising the profile of Romanian culture around the world. In order to achieve this, it spreads information and spearheads cultural projects involving Romanian artists and writers.

Furthermore, the Romanian Cultural Institute acts as means through which foreign audiences can experience the products of Romanian culture. Cultural exports from Romania are, for the most part, facilitated by the Institute's 16 foreign branches, located in Berlin, Brussels, Budapest (with a subsidiary in Szeged), Istanbul, Lisbon, London, Madrid, New York, Paris, Prague, Rome, Stockholm, Tel Aviv, Venice, Vienna and Warsaw. These are tasked with organising high-visibility cultural events adapted to suit the tastes of foreign audiences, while at the same time ensuring that a balance be maintained between their uniqueness and an international appeal.

The Romanian Cultural Institute has developed extremely close ties with Romanian minorities in neighbouring countries as well as with the Romanian diaspora. It aims to facilitate their efforts to preserve their own cultural identity while living abroad.

Not only does the Romanian Cultural Institute target cultural circles abroad, it is also very

much involved in supporting cultural activities in Romania. It achieves this through non-refundable financing programmes, scholarships and courses in Romanian language and culture. [...]"

The Institute's leadership consists of a board of 21 members, including a President, two Vice Presidents, a Secretary General, and a Deputy Secretary General, as well as representatives of each of the following organizations: the Presidency, the Government, the Ministry of Culture and National Cultural Heritage, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports, The Romanian Academy, The Romanian film-makers Association, Romanian Association of Theatre Artists, The Union of Architects of Romania, The Writers' Union of Romania, Romanian Publishers' Association, The Visual Artists Union of Romania, The Interpretative Creation Union of The Romanian Musicians. In addition, the board also includes 1 member of The Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania, 2 members of The Democratic Liberal Party, 2 members of The Social Democratic Party, and one member each for The National Liberal Party and The National Union for the Progress of Romania.

6.1.1. Current situation

After being under the same leadership ever since it was constituted, the ICR saw a change in this matter in the summer of 2012. With the change of the governing party, the Institute was taken out of the subordination of the Presidential Administration and placed under that of the Senate (through an urgent government ordinance), marking several changes in its statute and causing ample protests from those involved in different areas of the cultural sector. According to its former president, Horia Roman Patapievici (who resigned shortly after), the new statute ensured that "The mission of the Romanian Cultural Institute will consist just of the strengthening of national identity of Romanians outside of the national borders (...)" (I.R., 2012a). While this is debatable, it is indeed true that the bottom-up approach has been changed for a top-down one (which will be detailed below).

One of the first measures taken after the changes in statutes, was a reduction of the institution's budget by one third, motivated by the needs to cut costs. This not only left the ICR network without funds for the rest of 2012, but also caused a 5 million lei (over 1 million Euros) deficit because of projects that were already happening (I.R., 2012b). Soon after, a new leadership was appointed, to replace the previous team, which had resigned. Andrei Marga, professor and rector of the Babeş Bolyai University, and, until recently before his appointment as ICR President, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, was offered the position, being supported by the two parties in the governing coalition (R.M., 2012).

Numerous controversial measures of the new leadership followed. Several directors of the ICR network were demitted and replaced without respecting the competition methodology.

Romania had been already announced as the invited country for the 2013 edition of the Paris Book Salon, but many writers who had confirmed their participation refused to participate. Those who chose to not associate themselves with the new ICR leadership were most notably Mircea Cărtărescu, Andrei Pleșu and Gabriel Liiceanu, whose books, translated in French, have attained a certain popularity there, as well as in Europe in general (Mixich & Ionel, 2013).

Certain individuals that were most vocal about their dissatisfaction of the new direction ICR has taken have been replied with accusations published as press releases on the Institute's website. One example is writer Filip Florian. He offered an interview to *Observatorul Cultural* (Purcaru, 2013) following the success of his latest novel. When asked about his take on the current situation of ICR, Filip Florian stated that while the former leadership had accomplished many good things, he did not see its replacement as necessarily a bad thing. They had had their fair share of weak points and controversies. What he hoped from the new leadership was only a mending of what was not running smoothly, because before them ICR was, he states, "like a machinery on wheels, which only needed some minor parts changed, some oiling of the spins, but still should have been left to roll". He was most vehement in accusing the president, Andrei Marga, of developing a personality cult. Florian expressed his reluctance about all the petitions and protest movements that the new ICR leadership have spurred. The writer believed that while this endangers somewhat the current statute of Romanian literature previously achieved by ICR (its evolution from being virtually unknown abroad), it is not a matter of stopping its good course, but one of slowing it down. He stated his confidence that, when they will put forward good books, attractive for foreign editors, Romanian authors will continue to be translated despite the lack of institutional support. The only solution to the issue is the boycotting of the Institute- the refusal to co-operate with them by any of those they might approach. Florian does not see this as being possible though, because there will always be people who will be willing to collaborate with just about anybody.

The reaction of the Institute was yet another press release, which questioned the value of Mr. Florian (calling him a „cardboard character”), which they accuse of talking against an institution that has financed the translation of his books. One of the first to react in defending Florian was director Radu Jude, who expressed his worry that “an institution of the state dares to offend in such a way a Romanian citizen” (Jude, 2013).

The most recent controversy involving the Institute was the rejection for financing of some of the most successful and well-known (both at home and abroad) Romanian cultural events, including several related to cinema: Transilvania International Film Festival (TIFF), The Independent Film Festival “Anonimul”, The One World Romania Documentary Film Festival, as well as the DVD production for Cristian Mungiu's Cannes-awarded and Oscar short-listed film “Beyond the Hills”. Later (after the information was picked up by the press), the motivation for

rejecting these projects was communicated as being for “technical and financial reasons”, bearing no connection to their potential value (MVA, 2013).

As noted before, the change in status and leadership has also marked a change in strategy and approach for ICR. In the beginning of 2013, the institution published a document entitled *Framework programmes for the strategy of Romanian Cultural Institutes abroad*. It is part of a process of "rebuilding of trust" of the institution "after a period in which the critics brought to the state and the leadership of ICR between 2008-2012 extended in society". The aim is to create a strategy that is "coherent and realistic, non-exclusive and non-exclusivist", with a focus on both contemporary culture, but also "the culture legacy of Romania which, without being propagandistic or officialised, continues to be the pillar of the Romanian cultural identity". This is embodied by framework programmes "meant to create prestige and an authentic visibility of Romanian culture abroad", offering a "correct and attractive" image of the country. The strategy is focusing on three areas: "the profile of identity", "Romanian creativity", "contemporary creation in the inter-cultural dialogue" (<http://www.icr.ro/bucuresti/anunturi/programe-cadru-pentru-strategia-institutelor-culturale-romanesti-din-strainatate.html>). For the detailed list of supporting programmes for each of these areas, please see Annexe 2.

6.1.2. Film programmes of ICR

Only this last category, "contemporary creation in the inter-cultural dialogue", includes a supporting programme directly linked to cinema: “The on-going travelling generic programmes *The Romanian Cinematheque*”. While this would imply that the ICR network would promote contemporary cinematographic creations, this is not always the case. The websites of each of the subsidiaries of the network mention, amongst their events, the support they offered to various recent films in the participation at festivals in the respective countries. However, the exact nature of the support is not detailed. Some of them have on-going film screenings programmes as detailed below.

- *ICR Berlin* has initiated a series of screenings, a permanent programme “that present the most important Romanian cinematographic creations of all times. This programme of Romanian film has the goal to present feature cinematographic creations from before the revolution created by directors like Tatos, Pintilie, Săucan, Gulea, Daneliuc, Caranfil or Pița, as well as documentaries which present personalities of Romanian cultural life” (www.icr.ro/berlin). While directors such as Stere Gulea and Dan Pița are still active today, their films are not among those that created the fame of Romanian cinema in recent years (see Chapter 7). Furthermore, director Nae Caranfil (who, as it will be argued later, is not a representative of the 'Romanian style' in film, but is a representative of contemporary cinema), directed his first movie in 1993, three years after the revolution.

- *ICR Stockholm* organizes the “Days of Romanian Film” (reaching the 7th edition this year), an event that “offers Swedish audiences an overview of the evolution of Romanian cinema through screening some of the most recent productions” (www.icr.ro/stockholm). This year's programme includes films by Cristian Mungiu, Marian Crişan, Radu Jude, Adrian Sitaru, Tudor Giurgiu, but also by veteran Radu Gabrea and recent graduates of the National Drama and Film University (UNATC) such as Ivana Mladenovic and Nae Constantin Tănase.
- *ICR Lisbon* organizes in June 2013, in collaboration with local partners, a series of screenings of recent Romanian films of directors Cristian Nemescu, Radu Muntean and Cristi Puiu (www.icr.ro/lisabona). However, this subsidiary has no on-going film screenings programme.
- *ICR Warsaw* started such a programme (with monthly screenings) in January of 2013 under the name CINEFANI.RO. It is described as “the new cinematographic programme of ICR Warsaw dedicated to the members of the Romanian community and to all of those interested in Romanian language and culture. The programme offers the possibility to see masterpieces of Romanian cinema from the 20th century, many of them screened for the first time in Poland” (www.icr.ro/varsovia). Again, qualifying this programme as a promoter of 'contemporary' cinema is highly debatable.
- *ICR Budapest* initiated in April 2008 a series of events dedicated to cinema under the name of Film Klub. Both features and documentaries are being screened monthly, including recent and older films alike. The Institute in Budapest is the first with a local subsidiary, in Szeged, to which the screenings have extended (under the name “The Romanian film at 5 o'clock”). The subsidiary also organizes a yearly showcase, "The Days of Romanian Film" (which had its 5th edition in 2012). For the latest edition three films produced in the past 2 years were screened.
- *ICR Venice* does not run an on-going programme, but is involved, along with the Ministry of Culture in the selection of Romanian proposals submitted for the Venice Biennale in all areas, including cinema.
- *ICR Vienna* regularly screens documentary films in its DocuMental programme. According to the website (<http://www.rkiwien.at/>), during 2013, 14 documentaries will be screened, divided in two sessions (May-July and September- December). The first of the two is organized in partnership with Astra Film Sibiu (a documentary film festival) and HBO Romania and it is part of the 20th anniversary of Astra, “continuing the efforts of ICR and Astra Film Sibiu to promote Romanian documentary film”.

- *ICR Chişinău* has an on-going collaboration with "Cronograf- International Documentary Film Festival" (in 2013, ICR awarded the Grand Prize of the festival- 1500 Euros). They are also partners of Anim'est Chişinău, the first Romanian animation festival (established in Romania since 2005) which had its second edition in Moldova in 2012. ICR Chişinău was also a partner in the première of Puiu's films ("Stuff and Dough" and "Lăzărescu") in Moldova, in 2011.

The Romanian Cultural Institutes in New York and London will be discussed separately here. The first one because it has been one of the most active in promoting recent Romanian cinema. The second, because it was the site of a month of participatory observation as part of this case study.

ICR NEW YORK

According to their website, www.rciny.org:

“**The Romanian Cultural Institute (RCI)** is a public agency dedicated to cultural diplomacy and international arts exchange. Born in its present form out of the rehabilitation of the notion of Romanian cultural cooperation, the RCI has thrived, since 2005, under the guidance of a new and visionary executive board. (...)

The most important action lines of RCI are:

- Presenting compelling Romanian culture to international audiences;
- Connecting specific Romanian cultural domains to broad international venues and intellectual networks;
- Subtly designing a new approach based on the encouragement of daring contemporary arts on one hand and, on the other, the creative preservation of traditional cultural Romanian values.”

In terms of films, in addition to announcements of notable US events involving Romanian film-makers, the website also includes a dossier of Romanian cinema (under the title “Romanian Cinema Rising”, but the latest entries there are films that had premiered in 2011.

But the most important contribution of this subsidiary, until 2012, was the Romanian Film Festival in New York (RFFNY). According to Mona Nicoară (in *APERITIFF* 2012), RFFNY started in 2006 as a weekend dedicated to Romanian films at Tribeca Cinemas and many people (organizers and the public alike) saw it as a one-time thing. The Romanian Cultural Institute in New York was at work putting together and supporting events that promoted Romanian culture and artists, but "these events rarely reach far beyond the immediate expatriate communities for which they serve as reminders of home and pretexts of socializing" (p. 6). The Institute itself had only

been reconstituted in 2005, and its activities focused on promoting new artist in all areas of culture. In an earlier edition of APERITIFF (2010), Richard Pena (the director of the Film Society of Lincoln Center, which has become a partner of the festival) praises the activity of ICR New York: "The Institute's constant programs on music, theatre, the plastic arts and intellectual life have helped create a context for understanding and judging the new films" (p. 7). According to him, the films have arrived, in this case at least, on fertile ground, to an audience that had been, if only minimally, introduced to Romanian culture, and this was an important factor in their reception.

Part of RFFNY establishing itself as an important event in the city were the constant efforts by the Director and the Deputy Director (Corina Șuteu and Oana Radu) to attract the attention of press- from the beginning: the event was acknowledged in "Village Voice", "Time Out New York" and "The New York Times". The activity related to the festival soon extended to not only the period of the event, but throughout the year: supporting Romanian presences at Sundance, as well as the Romanian film season at Lincoln Center (which spurred an article by critic A.O.Scott in NY Times Magazine), and the release of Romanian films in the US. Nicoară also notes the great support received from critic Alex Leo. Șerban, who was moderating the Q&A sessions after the films urging audiences that "No, movies are not supposed to be tourist brochures for Romania" (p. 9) and promoted all film genres, directed by old and new film-makers alike. As the event grew, so did the audience, and its composition- the Romanian diaspora was no longer the majority (Nicoară, 2012).

But in 2012, the event was no longer supported by the central office of ICR in Bucharest and the team of the festival turned to crowd funding to keep the event going, re-naming it „Making Waves”. As their Kickstarter campaign page explains:

“Despite the festival’s growing success and recognition, its survival is jeopardized by recent political and cultural policy changes in Romania – which impacted the mission, status and budget of the Romanian Cultural Institute, which co-sponsored the previous editions of the festival. In response, the team of the festival set up the Romanian Film Initiative, which, in cooperation with the Film Society of Lincoln Center, aim to reinvent the festival, keep alive its playful, experimental spirit, and continue to help Romanian films make waves in NYC and beyond.”

<http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/romanianfilm/making-waves-2012-romanian-film-festival-at-lincoln>.

In the meantime, Corina Șuteu is no longer the director of ICR New York, but she still belongs to the Romanian Film Initiative, the organization that is keeping the „Making Waves Festival” going as an event independent of ICR. Mihai Chirilov, who has curated the selection of films for the festival across the years, and who is also the artistic director of TIFF is still with the team. Through him, the already existing bond between the two festivals is still maintained. The

Kickstarter platform is used again in the attempt to gather the budget for the event, benefiting from the image capital they have obtained last year through their efforts to keep the festival going (300 people pledged various sums). In the previous edition (in 2012), the 26 screenings and events brought in 3000 spectators. This year, the festival is due to take place again in December, keeping the collaboration with the Film Society of Lincoln Center, and adding the Jacob Burns Film Center in Pleasantville, NY as a partner location

<http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1715064836/making-waves-2013-romanian-film-fest-continues-and>).

ICR LONDON

The Romanian Cultural Institute in London was first set up in 2004, but exists in its current form and as a part of the network of Romanian Cultural Institutes since 2006. In 2008, ICR London became a founding member of EUNIC (the European Union of National Institutes for Culture), currently holding its presidency. Their mission, as stated on their website (www.icr-london.co.uk), is the following:

“We act on several levels: as a diplomatic mission, cultural management unit, artistic and PR agency and as a centre for research and documentation.

These four principal functions are executed in a whole series of activities. As a diplomatic mission, we are in charge of cultural and public diplomacy projects, managed by a dedicated team of professionals. We are also responsible for creating long-term partnerships between Romanian and British individuals and institutions. We devote equal energy to initiatives about Britain for Romanians and we collaborate with Romanians in the UK on community projects.”

A one month internship in the institution allowed for the observation of and participation in the events it organizes, which include the “Romanian Cinematheque”- a series of monthly screenings of Romanian films. During the observation period, the Institute was experimenting a new type of format- that of weekly screenings during a month, dedicated to a screen personality- either a director or an actor. The first of this kind was dedicated to actor Amza Pellea, one of the most popular in pre-revolutionary Romania, and consisted of screening 4 films starring the actor. The event was actively promoted online, as well as in press (both in Romania and in the UK).

But the most important event of the Institute in April 2013 (the period of the internship) was the London Book Fair where ICR London had a stand through which it represented several Romanian publishers. The theme of this year's stand was “A tribute to the labors of love”- revolving around the translators and publishers that have introduced the English speaking world to Romanian literature. Along to the books exhibited, the Institute organized four panels with writers and translators from both countries, as well as other British cultural personalities which have actively

manifested their interest in Romania and its culture. One of this panels, “Romania: Travels, Expectations, Discoveries”, moderated by Răzvan Marc (in charge of the Romanian Tourism Office in London) focused on Romania's most articulated country brand, the touristic one. When asked about what Romania should promote, the speakers agreed that the country's natural landscapes and its many legends are its biggest assets, playing into the idea of a mythical and unspoiled land. But they also highlighted the need for preserving these assets, as well as the possibility that culture can be more emphasized as an entryway to discovering all of these aspects about Romania, being highly likely to help get foreigners over the stereotypical bad perception of a former communist country.

As for the Romanian Cinematheque and the other film-related events, they are mainly supervised by Magda Stroe, the Deputy Director of the Institute. She is supervising and organizing 12 to 14 cinema-related projects yearly. Roughly half of them are initiated by the Institute, while the other are initiated by others and have ICR as a partner. In 2012 there were 11 projects that promoted films, which made up for a total of 33 individual events. This included screenings of Romanian films in British and Irish film festivals, but also two new initiatives. One of them was “East Meets East” which “expressed the educative and social side of the Romanian programme at the *Cultural Olympics*” (Magda Stroe, personal communication). It consisted of workshops held by Romanian film-makers with 22 young people from the Olympic neighbourhoods in East London who had the opportunity to be guided to the whole process of making a film. The second event was a screening of Romanian silent film “Manasse” (directed by Jean Mihail in 1925) at the Barbican Centre, with a live music soundtrack. The “Romanian Cinematheque” (initiated in 2010) continued, increasing its visibility in the online environment and thus managing to attract more viewers.

The films concerned by the Institute's relevant programmes require them to collaborate with both the Romanian Film Centre and the National Film Archive (for older titles), as well as directly with producers, for newer titles. The basis for selecting the films to be screened is their artistic value, the actual content being of importance only when the Institute acts as an intermediary curator for specific thematic sections of festivals (such as The International Film Festival for Immigration).

It is “the new/recent films (after 2006/2007), which got awards at internationally-recognised film festivals and whose directors are well known film-makers” that also attract the biggest audiences for the Romanian Cinematheque screenings. In addition to screening them, ICR also often acts as a liaison between UK distributors and Romanian producers and film-makers, and support the directors' presence in festivals, as well as promoting the films through their channels.

As for the audience to the Institute's film programmes, “The planning process takes into account both audiences: mainly the local UK-based audience, who, through our events, has the chance to explore Romanian culture (and, particularly in the cinema field, to watch some of the best

films Romanian cinema has ever produced) and, on the other hand, to engage with the Romanian diaspora, in order to maintain their connection with their culture and to offer them the opportunity to invite their UK or international friends to a cultural event.”. Looking specifically at the foreign participants to the ICR London events in general, the aim is to contribute to enriching their image of Romania and change their perception of the country (often governed by clichés, many with negative implications). “The cinema can strongly contribute to the appreciation of Romania among film-goers audiences and can create a good reputation internationally”. Furthermore, “the results are probably counted in time, since the love for Romanian culture can lead to visiting the country or engaging more with projects related to Romania”, Mrs. Stroe adds.

The cause of Romanian cinematography is also pleaded in London outside of the activity of the Institute through the Romanian Film Festival (RFFL). In 1999, working as a cultural attaché, Ramona Mitrică learned about a 'film club' organized in New York by Carmen Firan (Romanian writer) and director Radu Gabrea. In 2003 she decided to attempt something similar in London, launching "The Other Cinema"- monthly screenings in a room with a capacity of 60 people. Directors and/or actors of the films screened were invited to attend and participate in a Q&A session with the audience. One of the films screened in the one year that "The Other Cinema" was in place was Mungiu's "Occident".

This gradually developed into the Romanian Film Festival in London. As the event developed, Romanian film-makers started gaining prizes in festivals. So whereas before the event was cheaper to produce, but was harder to promote and to gain visibility for, now the costs had risen, while the names, in a way, promoted the event themselves. Workshops in partnership with the London Film School were also added to the festival.

The audience has started being composed mainly by British in time. The festival also acts to support the presence of Romanian films and film-makers in other festivals in the UK.

Seeing these films become more and more popular, one could ask "Why are we even considering promoting them when they are already popular through festivals?", Ms. Mitrică highlights. The answer is because through RFFL, these films can be screened more and they gain access to British distributors. To add to that, "Romania invests very little in its image", and what ICR does, she deems as "imposed" promotion of the culture (as opposed to the "infiltration" approach that the RFFL has).

The festival now has an on-going partnership with Curzon cinemas, which has proven to be an important partner in attracting the British audience and creating visibility for the event. They have also gathered around them a number of British distributors of independent and art-house

cinema: Tartan, Artificial Eye, Trinity, Dog Woof, Soda Pictures who usually pick up the films before the festival in London, so it is with them that they have to arrange the screening rights.

6.2. CNC

6.2.1 Legislative context

The Romanian Film Centre (CNC) has been around, in different forms, ever since 1934. It functions with a certain degree of autonomy under the Ministry of Culture, but it does not directly receive any of its funds from the state budget. Its existence and functioning was legally established in 2001, when the National Film Centre replaced (actually including) the National Cinematographic Office. The CNC is funded from a certain percentage of the following: advertising revenues (both of the national broadcaster, and the commercial ones), revenues obtained by advertising agencies from transactions with broadcasters, the revenues of cable companies, as well as that of cinemas (and other films exhibition spaces) and DVD sales. These constitute the Cinematographic Fund, which is also the source of the salaries of the CNC employees.

The CNC supports the production of films and film-promoting events through direct credits, part of them being irredeemable. The funds allocated never cover the entire budget. Two competitive funding sessions are organized each year for which film-makers and producers of cultural events submit an application. Their projects in each category (features, debuts, animation, festivals etc.) are evaluated and scored by a jury and by the administrative council of the CNC. They are both made up of film-makers as well as film critics, or professionals otherwise involved in the film industry.

Ever since its official existence in its current form and under this name, the National Film Centre's leadership (president and vice-president) have been named by the Ministry of Culture. This is the only direct intervention by the Ministry into its subordinate institution.

While taxes levied on leisure activities were part of the CNC budget, this is no longer the case. According to the Law of Cinematography in use (Law 574/2001, with the subsequent modifications and additions), it is presently mainly relying on:

* 4% of the advertising time sold by public and private broadcasters

* 3% of the selling price and 15% of the renting price of video cassettes, DVDs or any other recorded format

* 4% of the revenue obtained from the exhibition of films in cinemas and other spaces dedicated to public screenings

* 1% of the monthly revenue of cable, satellite and digital broadcasting companies

As for the procedure to allocate the money, this is established through the “Norm regarding the establishment of the set-up state support for cinematography” (available at <http://www.cncinema.abt.ro/Files/Documents/fls-1127.pdf>). It details the manner and conditions of allocation of either direct (redeemable) or indirect (irredeemable) financial support. This is allocated “to support the production of cultural products that are important for the process of educating the civil society, which are currently clearly in disadvantage, in terms of competition, with productions from outside the community space”. Romanian film is defined as “a cinematographic product” which is “on one hand a cultural commodity since it conveys symbolic ideas and values, and on the other hand, the role of a cultural service was attributed to it because it responds to a cultural idea or need”. (For more details on the norm, see Annexe 4).

6.2.2 Current situation

While the number of films produced in Romania in all categories and genres has greatly increased since the year 2000, the situation of Romanian cinematography and its main support institution is on uncertain grounds. As highlighted before, a legislative change has greatly reduced its budget, further cutting the institution's limited financial power to contribute to films. While two competitions to obtain funding should be organized each year, the last one was held in the first half of 2012. The next one took place for projects due to take place in the second half of 2013.

According to the Statistical Yearbook for 2012 (see Annexe 3), 19 long feature films were produced in Romania last year. Fourteen of them had received support from CNC (including 5 début films), 4 of which were completed with 100% national funding. The other 10 were co-productions (8 for which the funding came mainly from national sources, and 2 for which it came chiefly from foreign co-producers. Other 6 long documentary films and one animation film were supported by the Centre, all of them having full or mainly national resources for their production budgets. Five other long features, as well as one documentary were completed in 2012 with no help from the Film Centre, and only with funds coming from within Romania. It is a clear evolution in this sense, since all films produced in 2008, 2009 and 2011 had been supported by the institution (with only one movie being produced independently of the CNC funds in 2010).

In terms of shorts, 9 fiction projects and 1 animation were produced in 2012. One of the fiction shorts was produced without support from CNC, managing to obtain its budget from several national sources. The other 8 films were all funded by the Romanian Film Centre and also gathered the rest of their finances locally.

In terms of distribution, 186 films premiered in Romania in 2012, 23 (12,4%) of which were Romanian. European premières accounted for 25,8% (48 films), while American films were clearly dominant- 113 movies (60,7%). The proportions roughly stand for the total number of films

in distribution (430), with over half of them being American productions and only 13% (56 films) Romanian.

For the exhibition chain, 2012 showed a slight improvement compared to the previous years. There was a growing tendency in terms of number of cinemas (81- out of which 8 are art-house or part of the EURIMAGES network), total number of seats (58 096), with over 8 million admissions, and a box office of approximately 32 million Euros (148 million lei). The average number of admissions per inhabitant is still very low (0,43), but even so it has more than doubled since 2008 (0,18), despite of a slight, but continuous increase in the ticket price.

Several exhibitors operate on the market, one of them being the Autonomous Administration of Film Exhibition (R.A.D.E.F. România-Film) which is also subordinated to the Ministry of Culture and has in administration 35 cinemas which are “private state property” (<http://www.romaniafilm.ro/despre-noi>). România-Film was the 5th in the 2012 classification based on number of viewers (with 422 364 spectators), grossing roughly 4 million lei (over 850 000 Euros).

The overall number of admission shows a clear preference of the public for American productions: more than 7 million admissions, making up for 87,3% of the total, and a box office close to 30 million Euros. Though the absolute number shows a constant increase (as it also does for European and domestic films), the percentage is actually the lowest since 2009, indicating an increase in the cinema-going habits of Romanians. European films had an overall audience of 747 095 people (8,9%). Domestic productions attracted 297 487 viewers (3,6%). Although the actual number is more than double that of 2008, the percentage for 2012 is the same, further strengthening the idea that while Romanians have increased their movie-going, this is not necessarily in the benefit of Romanian films. The tendency is apparent in the overview of the attendance of Romanian film premières between 2003 and 2012 (see table below). Notably, 2007, the year Cristian Mungiu won the Palme d'Or for “4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days”, was the first and only one when the share of admission to Romanian premières went over 5 % (see Table 1).

In a piece on Romanian Cinema, New York Times film critic A. O. Scott (2008) also emphasizes the poor condition of the film exhibiting infrastructure: only 80 cinemas (for a population of 22 million at that time), with several cities having no screens (“7 out of the 42 largest municipalities”). Learning this, Puiu's claim that “there is no Romanian film industry” seemed not so far from the truth. Nevertheless, the critic notes the existence of the Law of Cinematography (based on the French model) which puts the bases of the support the state gives to films (through CNC). The states' investment has to be paid back by the film-makers over a 10 year period, and once the debt is paid they fully own the film. The critic notes the existence of conflicts between the institution and the beneficiaries of the funding, but CNC is a part of getting these films done, and

"their success abroad (...) feeds the system with prestige and helps bring in money from the European Union and adventurous foreign investors". Scott does not offer proof to this claim, but if it were to be true, the question is if this is a fair exchange. In purely financial terms, probably not- the money invested in the film is, prospectively, a smaller amount than what their fame attracts in European funds and private investment. But if these directors' main motivation is getting their films done (which is most likely to be true, since they admit themselves to not conceiving them for a mass audience), than they probably gain more.

Table 1

Year	Admissions	Percentage
2003	20 545	0.30%
2004	97 943	2.80%
2005	63 793	2.60%
2006	107 511	4.30%
2007	134 829	5.10%
2008	131 919	3.70%
2009	114 376	2.30%
2010	153 492	2.70%
2011	91 006	1.30%
2012	288 363	3.60%

The selection criteria and the management of funds have often been questioned, but even more so in the past 6 months. The president of the CNC has repeatedly been accused of mismanagement and favouring certain directors and/or projects for others. The press has also uncovered several seemingly fictitious events that have been awarded funding, while established festivals (such as Anim'Est, the only Romanian event dedicated to animation, which has been running and growing since 2005) were declared not eligible.

Furthermore, there is a constant love-hate relationship between the film-makers and/or festival organizers and the institution. While they disapprove of the way it is run, and the way the funds are allocated, it is often the case that the little financial support they might receive from CNC is enough to make or break a project; it is their chance to get the ball rolling and get other funders

and sponsors on board.

On behalf of filmreporter.ro, journalist Florentina Ciuvercă wrote a series of articles detailing all the irregularities she had found while taking a closer look at the latest funding session. In a first article (published on April 25), Ciuvercă looks into the controversial situation of one of the events that had received financing. "The Gold Fish" festival was financed in the first and only session of 2013 (for projects due to take place between July 1 and December 31) with 70000 lei (approximately 15500 Euros). It was the first time the press and film-makers had heard about the festival, although it had been financed with the same amount the previous year. The journalist's research found a folklore festival bearing this name happening in Tulcea County, dedicated to children and youth. Based on a brief activity report (found on the CNC website), the festival apparently took place in October (no precise dates are mentioned) and it focused on documentaries. As the journalist notes, this report seems to be put together hastily, with expenditure justifications such as 12 900 RON (2800 Euros) for "socializing".

Radu Nicolae, the person who had signed this report, was contacted by Ciuvercă to offer more detailed information, but refused to provide them and threatened to sue the journalist for libel. He refused to confirm whether there was any connection between "The Gold Fish" film festival and the folklore festival in Tulcea.

Ciuvercă continued her investigation by contacting the organizer of the latter, Ștefan Coman, who confirmed that since the festival started, in 1992, there have never been film screenings associated to it. Director of photography Florin Paraschiv, a member of the Administration Council of CNC, confirmed, on the other hand, that the festival in Tulcea had been "enriched" with a film section. He mentions having easily informed himself on the matter by searching on the Internet, although, as a member of the committee that scored the project he should have been familiar with the specifics. Director Elisabeta Bostan, another member of the Administration Council, said she had nothing to declare on the matter and prompted Ciuvercă to ask the president, Eugen Șerbanescu, for details.

On April 29, another article was published on filmreporter.ro, as a result of the journalist signalling the situation to The Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. Although the Ministry has been repeatedly prompted to intervene in ensuring the transparency in the activity of CNC, all those that held the position of Ministry of Culture stood by the autonomy of the institution, although it appoints the general director/president. After they had been informed about the irregularities discovered by Ciuvercă, the Ministry (though its press office) replied saying that they will intervene, asking for a control, "when and if the existence of irregularities will be brought to our attention". The Ministry also argued that the selection criteria of CNC must be objective and it must conform to the legislation. "Thus, it is not the Ministry of Culture's competence to evaluate, through

its central body, the quality of artistic value of the financed or eligible to be financed, but to supervise that this process happens responsibly and to the level of professional standards, by those suitable for this".

In a following article (on April 30), Film Reporter uncovered several other projects financed (through irredeemable grants) by CNC in suspicious conditions. The journalist mentions that, in what is an exception among institutions of its kind in Romania- the files of the Film Centre are secret. She quotes the law on the matter of not allowing certain individuals to participate in the CNC funding sessions. This includes projects of authors which have the function of general director of CNC, those of members of the Council, heads of film studios, other commercial entities in the film industry for which the majority of the capital comes from the state, those holding other leadership positions in CNC, as well as the members of the selections committees and public clerks of the Ministry of Culture.

Since the Romanian Film Centre is not directly financed from the state budget, Ciuvercă concludes in an article on another online platform, La Punkt (on May 20), the Ministry is not willing to take the responsibility of controlling CNC or opening a legal investigation into the way the funds are allocated. The journalist highlights the poor quality of management: not only the passivity of the institution lead to it loosing part of its sources of revenue (such as the National Lottery), but Șerbanescu has never used the legally-granted authorization to enforce the payment of sums due (either from producers that were beneficiaries or redeemable grants, or from the companies that contribute to CNC's budget). The journalist emphasizes that what CNC needs most is competent institutional management that should come through a new head of the institution.

Ciuvercă was not the first to question Eugen Șerbanescu's management of the institution. Earlier in 2013, director and producer Tudor Giurgiu was the protagonist of a direct clash with the president of CNC. On December 19th 2012, during the closing festivity of IPFF (Independent Producers Film Festival) Giurgiu held a speech calling Eugen Șerbanescu "a disgrace for film-makers", stating that "we are living an institutional disaster of the Romanian cinematography" and that "the bankruptcy of Romanian cinema is due to Mr. Șerbanescu" (as quoted in the response by CNC, 2013).

The institution's response that quickly followed (signed by the CNC Press Office- a department non-existent in the structure of the Film Centre, as Giurgiu remarks), Giurgiu is called an exponent of "toadyism with a bow tie" and his accusations are contradicted. There cannot be any talk of bankruptcy since the films financed by CNC had achieved both domestic and international success- a fact exemplified by Mungiu's "Beyond the Hills" (short listed for the Oscars) and Călin Netzer's "Child's Pose" (which had been selected for Berlinale).

The reply states: "We lament, with this occasion, the psychological state, tired from so much work, in which Mr. Giurgiu finds himself and which has lead him to such misinformation and intoxications, in total disagreement with reality- probably also due to his desperation related to the debt of nearly 2.5 million Euros that Libra Film has towards CNC". According to this press release, between 2006-2012 Libra, Romanian Film Promotion and Transilvania Film (all companies of Tudor Giurgiu) had received approximately 5 100 000 Euros (a sum which "places Mr. Giurgiu on the 1st place in the top of beneficiaries of CNC funds in all categories and of all times"). Out of this total amount, 2.5 million Euros were irredeemable grants (including financing for Transilvania Film Festival, The Gopo Awards and the Romanian stands at the Berlin and Cannes film festivals), while 2.6 million Euros constituted a debt still to be paid.

Giurgiu's response came on January 15, 2013 in an article titled "The Survivor- The Naked Emperor, the Toady in a Bow Tie and Romanian Film (open letter to Mister Eugen Șerbănescu, general director of the National Film Centre (CNC))". It firstly highlighted the lack of competence Eugen Șerbănescu has to conduct the Film Centre, since he has a Ph.D. in aerodynamics and aerospace constructions. Despite this, he was appointed director of CNC in 2006, with an unlimited mandate. When, in 2007, Cristi Puiu called for the resignation of Șerbănescu, Giurgiu thought the film-maker was too vehement. He has come, since, to not only share his opinion, but also to approve of his tone.

Giurgiu responds to the claims that under Șerbănescu, the CNC had significantly contributed to the success of Romanian film-makers and their movies. In fact, he argues, these successes allowed the general director to keep his position for as long as he has, because they spoke loud enough to distract attention from all the irregularities. This opinion had already been expressed by Mungiu back in 2007, before he had won the Palme.

The author argues that CNC should not take as much credit as it does for the achievements of Romanian films, since it provides only 30-40% of the budget of films and film promotion events. The rest is secured through EU funds, co-producers, TV broadcasters⁵. Giurgiu mentions his (and other film-makers') actions to promote Romanian film both at home and internationally, many of which had been accomplished without funds from CNC.

In the case of Transilvania International Film Festival (TIFF), an event that "brings important image benefits to the country" according to Tudor Giurgiu, about 10% of the budget for the festival comes from CNC, while 55% is covered by sponsors. Currently, the funds CNC has to finance films and events are about half of those the institution had available in 2007. This situation

⁵ In APERITIFF 2010, film critic Cristina Corciovescu dedicated an article to the contribution of HBO Romania in supporting Romanian cinema.

is attributed to Șerbănescu's lack of reaction⁶. Amongst the other accusations Giurgiu brings to CNC and its leader is the fact that only 15000 US Dollars had been granted for the US promotion of "Beyond the Hills" (short-listed for the Oscars), while "Eva" (directed by Adrian Popovici and starring, among other international actors, Vanessa Redgrave), a film with no notable results neither locally or abroad had been awarded 70 000 dollars in 2010 for a participation (without a nomination) in the Oscars and Golden Globes.

As for debts to CNC, Giurgiu argues they are explicable since the productions often do not fully cover their investment through exploitation. This is also due to the lack of involvement of CNC in this area of the film industry. After being a member of the CNC script selection committee in 2009, Mungiu made a plea for the institution to act for the improvement of film theatres. Șerbănescu replied that "CNC is not the Salvation Army or the Mother of the Wounded", despite the legal obligation of the institution to develop a strategy for cinematography. CNC should have explored solutions for making Romanian films competitive with the American blockbusters on the domestic market, Giurgiu argues here, echoing the opinions of other Romanian film-makers and producers. The lack of a general strategy had been signalled by Cristi Puiu since 2006 (after having been denied funds to develop two projects, despite his international success with "The Death of Mr. Lăzărescu"). One such strategy was proposed in 2008 by the Association of Film-Makers (an organization existing since 2006), but the measures proposed there were never adopted by CNC. Giurgiu argues that not only is there no strategy, but the actions of the Centre and its employees also ignore opportunities created for them. For example, in June 2009, through an internal directive, no member of the CNC participated at TIFF, although similar institutions in Europe had sent representatives interested in collaborating with the Romanian counterpart. After that, Prime Minister Emil Boc acted towards the replacement of Șerbănescu (which did not end up happening because of the unlimited nature of his mandate). Reportedly, Eugen Șerbănescu was prepared to leave his position at CNC in exchange for one in diplomacy.

This eventually happened this year. Starting on April 5, through a government ordinance, Eugen Șerbănescu was named council of Romania in Bologna (Sauciuc, 2013). His mandate was due to end in 2014, thus for the 6 months left before a competition can be held to appoint a general director of CNC, a substitute was found for the position in the person of Mihai Ioan Kogalniceanu (for several years a counsellor in the Ministry of Culture) (Cerban, 2013). Despite inevitable speculations, Șerbănescu leaving the position has not been officially linked to the constant accusations towards him and the institution he ran and no legal investigation has been started in the matter of mismanagement of funds.

⁶ For example, in 2009 the European Commission was not notified in time for the scheme of state support in cinematography, and as a result there were no funding session for more than a year

Kogălniceanu now takes over an institution with a lot of issues. The per cent of profits made from advertising revenue by the national and commercial TV broadcasters that add to the cinematography fund has been diminished in the latest version of the law, on top of advertising revenues having overall sensibly decreased due to the crisis. Other sources of contributions (such as taxes on leisure activities) have been eliminated altogether. Since the Centre does not directly receive money from the state budget, these legislative changes lead to the situation that where there not a lot of money to spread around, now there are even less.

6.3. Evaluation

This issue of limited finances is inevitably linked to measuring the effectiveness of diplomacy. Nye (2008) stands by a rather naive vision, claiming it "is measured by minds changed (as shown in interviews and polls), not dollars spent or slick production packages" (p.101). The first half of affirmation stands, but what the author fails to ignore is that the appropriate resources are often essential for changing minds and access to sufficient resources can have a direct impact on extent of reach; furthermore, slickness of packaging is very much a part of the attraction that he had earlier praised. However, this is not to say that small efforts (in terms of money invested) can't be successful or that a large amount of money guarantees in any way the effectiveness of public diplomacy.

A clear, quantifiable evaluation of the success of public diplomacy is difficult to come about. However there are certain criteria that can be used, such as attractiveness, which is considered an important aspect by Nye (2008). Cull (2008) talks about the different types of diplomacy that can be employed: listening, advocacy, exchange diplomacy, international news broadcasting. He also emphasizes the importance of credibility, and especially its relation to the perceived closeness or distancing from the government. This is detailed in the table below (Cull, p. 36):

**TABLE 3
TAXONOMY OF CREDIBILITY IN STATE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY**

Type of Public Diplomacy	Source of Credibility	Helped by Perceived Connection to Government?	Helped by Perceived Distance from Government?
1. Listening	Validity of methods used	Yes, if it implies the actor is listening to world opinion	No, if it implies the actor is not listening to world opinion
2. Advocacy	Proximity to government	Yes	No
3. Cultural diplomacy	Proximity to cultural authorities	No	Yes
4. Exchange diplomacy	Perception of mutuality	Yes, if it implies the actor is listening to the world	Yes, if it implies the exchange is not self-interested
5. International broadcasting	Evidence of good journalistic practice	Usually no	Yes

As shown here, the credibility of cultural diplomacy is higher when it is kept (at least in terms of the publics' perception) at a distance from the government.

Belanger (1999) talks of two possible approaches towards cultural diplomacy: 'protection' (which can be associated with a defensive strategy) as opposed to 'projection' (which implies a more offensive approach) (p. 678), the latter being the traditional approach to cultural diplomacy. Protection is mainly linked to education in the general perception on the matter. Another dichotomy related to the way culture is perceived is based on the goal it sets for: either culture as a finality (related to national identity), or as instrumentality (linked more to economics and trade).

In the case of ICR, the public targeted is both the foreign audience and the Romanian diaspora. This also means that the institution acts both to project and to protect culture. However, as it is apparent from the recent developments and the current strategy, the focus has grown stronger on the latter. This means that, in the overall vision, culture is regarded as finality. Nevertheless, as the case of the Romanian Cultural Institute in London shows, the subsidiaries might act autonomously in using culture as instrumentality. Overall however, the Institute only practices listening to a little extent, focusing now on a top-down approach, where the main strategy is centralized around what the Board defined as the areas to be promoted and the approaches for each. The activity of the Institute's subsidiaries offers examples of the use of advocacy, exchange diplomacy, as well as international broadcasting.

The Romanian Film Centre clearly acts towards the protection of culture (a fact most apparent in the "cultural criteria" detailed in an annex to "Norm regarding the establishment of the set-up state support for cinematography"- «The Cultural Test». Eligibility Criteria for the Allocating Indirect Financial Support"), using culture as finality. The lack of listening and advocacy is emphasized by the lack of a clearly stated strategy regarding films in a diplomatic perspective. Its involvement in exchange diplomacy and international broadcasting is rather an indirect one, mainly circumstantial, through the presence of the productions they support financially in international film festivals and through the presence of foreign guests during domestic film events.

In terms of credibility and it being enhanced by distance to the government, ICR and CNC both are, as shown before, in a delicate situation, because the involvement has actually increased lately.

Despite both institutions not placing a strong emphasis on culture as instrumentality, which means that, in the way they were defined by Signitzer & Coombs (1992), both ICR and CNC are not fully pursuing cultural diplomacy; but neither are they really fond of focusing on cultural relations. The aim is to promote a positive image of the country through culture (but when it comes to cinema, as it will be shown in the subsequent chapters, this is not necessarily the case). However, the concepts of cultural diplomacy or nation branding are not being taken into consideration when,

for example, there are pleas for CNC to re-draw the projects' selection criteria. It is a matter of establishing a strategy that reaches farther than the film industry, to affect the entire culture. Romania still needs to decide whether it should promote only its positive aspects and hide the others as it best can; or play the 'freedom of expression' card (usually powerful, but more so coming from a former communist country). The latter option would imply that while there is less (or no) control over the image itself, there is a high cultural value associated with all the Romanian cultural products.

7. *New Wave/ New Romanian Cinema*

Talking about the notion of 'cinematographic language' developed by Rudolf Arnheim, Gorzo (2012) argues that currently, the dominant film language is learned early on and from the Hollywood films (the public being firstly and mostly exposed to those). While for many viewers that is the only one, the author argues for an alternative. The debate goes back to the very beginning of cinema, and then, as now, two major directions were possible: using the camera simply as a recording device, or using it as medium to filter the image. The latter is the road taken by many and fully established by the Hollywood style film making. The first, not nearly as popular, had recurrent appearances in time- one of the instances of its appearance was the French New Wave; one of its most influential supporters was André Bazin, whom Gorzo relies on here as a starting point.

Michel Marie (2010) offers a theoretical perspective on this school of cinema which has been the cause of much debated change, and an equally highly debatable precursor of current movements, such as the recent Romanian one. The time frame in which the French New Wave appeared (approximately 15 years after the German occupation) is, according to Marie, consistent with a cyclical pattern observable throughout French culture. He notes that the period 1959-1960 marked the appearance of a new generation of film-makers throughout Europe. The trend was observable also in the Eastern bloc, where a wave of aesthetic innovation (initiated in Poland) was caused by the attempt to steer away from the socialist realism dogma present in cinema up until then. Nonetheless, Marie notes, it was an age suitable for cinema. In other times, this group of young creative people could have probably activated in any other art form/creative medium. However, the author presents it as something inevitable and recurrent, a renewal of forces that is needed through an influx of new voices and visions.

The name of 'New Wave' actually appeared not related to cinema, but generally to the theme of 'youth'. It was also linked to a change of generations, which actually proved to also be the case in cinema. Linking the name of 'New Wave' to film was "due to the extraordinary success of the campaign by Unifrance-Film, an official structure within the National Film Centre, whose duty was promoting French film abroad⁷" (Marie, 2010, p. 25). The campaign was launched in the aftermath of the 1959 Cannes Film festival, and the term was quickly taken over by the press. It was actually not the specialized press that were the most influential in creating a buzz word of the 'New Wave' (starting in February-March 1959). Two of the most popular New Wave films to this day- *The 400 blows* and *Hiroshima, mon amour*- were distributed in cinemas immediately after the Cannes Festival to benefit from the attention that had already been attracted to the movement.

⁷ It should be noted that despite having been modelled after the French Film Centre, the Romanian one does not directly state promoting Romanian film abroad as a goal.

Director Francois Truffaut highlighted that it was due to this campaign that the idea of a cohesive group, a 'school', was created, when in fact this was not the case. Godard also critiqued this 'labelling' that stereotyped what was supposed to be a group of film makers with highly individual styles⁸. Prior to the campaign led by Unifrance, during the festival, a group of young film makers was reunited (also at the initiative of Unifrance); while the event was presented as one that facilitated the agreement on a common strategy, the proceedings are actually proof of diverging conceptions. The opinion conflicts supported the media campaign around the event- with the newspaper *Le Monde* organizing two debates (one at the end of 1959 and one in 1960) that concluded that "The New Wave is about diversity" (quoted in Marie, 2010, on p.29). And indeed it was- "every author-director had built his/her own cinematographic universe". This included characteristic themes and types of characters, but also working with particular actors.

The critical reactions were quick to appear, and they mostly came from the supporters of the 'old' generation of film makers. The New Wave directors and their films were blamed for the drop in the number of spectators (from 354 million in 1959 to 184 million in 1969). But Marie (2010) highlights that there was a decreasing trend during the period, which can also be observed in other European countries (such as Germany and England). Using the New Wave as a scape-goat was a persistent tendency: "Starting in the '90s, every time the number of spectators in the theatres drops, the spectrum of the New Wave is pulled out of the drawer, being blamed for chasing away the audience" (Marie, p. 89).

In a parallel to the current situation in Romania, while many have criticised the contemporary directors for estranging the domestic audience, as the CNC statistics have shown before, the overall interest in film watching is growing. While the contemporary Romanian films also saw an increase in viewership, so did the European and the American ones. So there is hard to prove that there is any direct connection between this particular films and the rise in numbers. As it will be discussed ahead, their merit is not necessarily coming from their mass appeal. But it comes from the debate that they spur, creating a context in which film is a subject in the media, raising awareness not as much for particular films, as for cinema in general.

From a certain point of view, the context in which the New Wave appeared is the exact opposite to that of 'the current tendency in Romanian cinema' (to paraphrase Truffaut); for the French, there was economic prosperity, but also "a profound artistic crisis" (p. 38). In addition to that, the conditions in the film industry were not exactly favourable to the appearance of a new generation; as part of the motivations, there was very little to no room for experimentation and the rigid, hierarchical structure of the industry was not welcoming for new comers. Thus, one of the

⁸ As it will become apparent further, most of the directors that are considered to be a part of the New Wave or New Cinema of Romania are actually hostile to being united under a name and under the idea of a unitary cinema school.

characteristics of (at least the first) New Wave films was that they were being produced on a small budget, outside of the commercial cinema system. As a consequence, the role of a distributor was crucial for them. The films of the New Wave changed the main function of cinema from a social one, to an artistic one.

They could do this because of subsidies that were trying to counter the lack of creativity. In 1956 French films were doing very well in foreign markets: 40% of the total revenue of the film industry was realized abroad. The situation was good in the domestic market as well- it was only in the 60s that American films started crowding out the domestic production. The already favourable conditions were enhanced by subsidies that had been implemented starting in 1948: a "special additional tax" (Marie, 2010, p.100) applied to cinema tickets (regardless of the origin of the film- domestic or foreign). In 1955, a 'quality prize' was instituted, awarded to films that "were acting in the benefit of French cinematography or opened new perspectives within the cinematographic art" (Marie, p. 101). This second criterion was met by the New Wave films, thus the 'quality prize' had an important role in forming this school. The 'tradition' of the subsidies was continued in the French film industry. As a consequence, in the 70s producing a first feature film was "almost as easy as writing a *début* novel, even though the investment require by the two types of *débuts* are not comparable" (p. 230). Naturally, not all the products were of equal quality.

The New Wave directors' link to *Cahiers du Cinema* has made history as much as their films have. This was due to their belief that there is a correlation between directing films and writing about them. Romanian directors show a similar conception: while they do not engage in film criticism per se, they opt for what Gorzo (2012) calls an 'intellectualized' type of cinema, where every film explores ideas on film-making.

Based on the French New Wave, Marie (2010) identifies the following components as defining for a 'school of cinema':

- 1) a doctrine ("a minimal set of critical stances, common to a group of critics or journalists", p. 57)
- 2) an aesthetic programme and a strategy
- 3) a manifesto
- 4) an ensemble of works
- 5) a group of artists
- 6) a medium ("to communicate the critical stances of the group (magazine, books, films with a theoretic goal", p. 57)
- 7) a promotion strategy (as well as the media to implement it)
- 8) a leader
- 9) adversaries

A school need not comply with all of these to be a school, but the more elements it has, "the stronger and more coherent it is" (p. 58).

For the French New Wave, the first two points (the doctrine and the aesthetic) included the author-director (also the author of the script), use of improvisation in acting, natural décors, a small crew, directly recorded sound, highly sensitive film stock, use of unprofessional or young, inexperienced actors.

Director and critic François Truffaut was the one to fully establish the notion of 'auteur'. He claimed that the old type of cinema, deemed 'the quality cinema' could not co-exist with the author cinema. The author-director was the most popular element of their doctrine (established through the article considered their manifesto - "Une certaine tendance du cinéma français", written by Truffaut), still impacting cinematography today (by extension, the polemic about the necessity/role of the script writer are also still actual). Taking a closer look Marie (2010) actually finds that not working at all with script writers was far from being the norm. However, the director was much more involved in shaping the story than before, and the films often had a personal, sometimes even autobiographical, touch.

Filming techniques (while many directors opted for hand-held cameras, especially Godard was experimenting a lot in this area) were one of the main points of criticism. New Wave directors were being accused of being unprofessional and "clumsy" (p. 156). Marie quotes *Positif* critic, Robert Benayoun:

"To save a film that is impossible to show in cinemas (*Breathless*), Godard shot it hazardously, counting on surprising some critics to create a new fashion, that of film badly done, and the critics didn't let him down. An expert in destroying film stock, author of imbecile and abject articles about torture and dilation, Godard, who fancies himself a journalist, represents the most pitiful involution of French cinema towards intellectual illiteracy and aesthetic bluff".

The parallels between the French New Wave and the new generation of Romanian filmmakers have been a fixture ever since these directors have started gaining popularity in international festivals. Critic Jay Weissberg opens his article ("On Waves, Champagne, and Terminology", 2012) with a quote from a 1960 article in *Variety* for which he purposively leaves out the quotation marks: "The so-called «New Wave» of film-making has (a) been vastly overrated and publicized and has (b) brought on a tide of mediocrity in its wake rather than the much-heralded «revolution»" (p. 32). While the original article referred to the French New Wave, the parallels with the current situation of Romanian cinema are obvious and intended. However, Weissberg notes that while a close look actually reveals calling it a "New Wave" was more a way of promoting it, then a title directly deriving from the actual context. The critic argues that a better terminology would be "New Romanian Cinema", nevertheless wondering for long can the term 'new' still apply.

7.1. What is the story? (precursors and revival of Romanian cinematography)

7.1.1. General context

In an earlier article (“New Romanian Cinema. One Critic's Overview”, 2010), Weissberg talks about how the new generation of Romanian film-makers had swept everybody off their feet and he is trying to track back the process to figure out 'why Romania' and 'why now'. The critic believes, like others have, that the new movement was indeed built on an existing void (created by the revolution of 1989). The Romanian directors' relationship to the communist past had evolved from 'looking back in anger' to what the critic identifies as a sort of melancholy which he mostly finds revealed in the camera work that adds to a "sense of uncomplicated directness" (p. 24): long shots and a predominantly hand-held camera which rarely makes for a static shot. Weissberg warns nevertheless that this style has nothing to do with simplicity (since the films deal with heavy issues and concepts), but with truthfulness: "The films themselves are sharp ripostes to the prior fifty years of smoke and mirrors, of buried truths and constant hiding: by stripping stylistic elements down to the bare minimum, these directors maintain a razor-sharp focus on honesty." (p. 25).

Wagnleitner (1994) deems film a "channel of cultural self-interpretation and self-definition" (p. 225). According to Pierre Sorlin "each film that speaks of the past depicts only the time in which it was produced; in other words it represents yet another past" (quoted in Wegnleitner, p. 226). In response, Wegnleitner asks: "Is this restaging of the past through film not really a license for the creation of the future as a result of the history-shaping power of the pictures?". He deems that through film "reel facts become real facts" (p. 226). While for Hollywood it might have been a matter of re-writing history (or writing their own version of it), in the post-revolutionary Romanian films it was a matter of recording it, in most cases, for the very first time. For example, everybody in Romania at that time was aware of the dreadful effects of the illegal abortions which were performed as a result of Ceaușescu's decree (stipulating the interdictions of abortions and contraceptive measures). Everybody knew somebody who had, successfully or not, gone through it. Officially, though, they did not exist, especially for the outside eyes. After the revolution, as the country opened up, the foreign public opinion got to know about them, as well as about the terrible conditions in the over-filled Romanian orphanages (a situation that also had to do with the decree). The foreign press reported based on personal stories, but, to a large extent, it can be said that it was all confirmed (it became, in a way, official) through Mungiu's film, "4 months, 3 weeks and 2 days"⁹. The Romanian audience's reaction to it- its general disapproval, while at the same time

⁹ The film tells the story of an illegal abortion in communist Romania. Otilia helps her friend, Găbița, to get rid of the unwanted pregnancy with the help of an abortionist, Mr. Bebe. They both have to agree to have sex with him on top of what they had agreed to pay. Once the abortion takes place, Otilia has to discard of the fetus, later on attending a dinner at her boyfriend's place, where, naturally, nobody is aware of what she has gone through.

attracting the largest domestic audience for a Romanian film in a very long time- come to confirm this; as is the fact that other aspects of communism have been tackled by other Romanian directors, both before and after Mungiu. The spectrum of communism needed (and maybe still needs) to be became fully visible before it can completely vanish. Part of this process includes, paraphrasing Wegnleitner, real facts becoming reel facts both at home and abroad. As critic Codruța Crețulescu (2010) argues: "Many think that it's best to leave the past in some dark room and that it's best not to open the door again. I don't think that not talking about it will do us any good, no matter how controversial those years might have been. I think it's time to face our past, to tell everything as it was, whether we agree with it or not, whether we like it or not. Last but not least, I think that to some of those people we owe some degree of gratitude for their dignified actions. It's as simple as this." (p. 49).

In terms of the domestic reception of the film, Weissberg (2010) notices that, as for every national cinema, there is something more to it for natives than there is for non-natives. But the bad reception of Romanian cinema by Romanians is linked to both the number of cinemas, but also the fact that it is "an unabashedly art house cinema, and isn't adapted to be a populist movement" (p. 25).

The initial reception of these films by foreign audiences (even specialized ones) was also problematic- because they hardly knew anything about the country since the West had long been disinterested in Romania (before WWII) and the little knowledge of the country in the 1990s was linked to the many irregularities in Romanian orphanages which had been exposed in the international press (Weissberg, 2010). A. O. Scott (2008) notices how Romanian cinema had come to be associated with an exotic experience of some sort. But the growing interest cannot only be attributed to that, he says. In the case of Puiu's "The Death of Mister Lăzărescu"¹⁰, the particularities that made it "sound like something only a stereotypical film snob could love" also had to do with its length (two and a half hours), its title and the subject matter. As grim as this might have appeared, Scott notes that those who viewed it in Cannes "emerged from the experience feeling more exhilarated than depressed". This was due to "the feeling that one of the oldest and strongest capacities of cinema- to capture and illuminate reality, one face, one room, one life at a time- had been renewed". It was the kind of discovery that motivates film critics (and lovers) to attend festivals.

¹⁰ Dante Lăzărescu, a grumpy old man, living with his cats, is feeling sick. He requires the help of the neighbours which are reluctant to be disturbed from making preserves, especially since Lăzărescu has his usual alcohol breath. As his state deteriorates, the neighbours call the ambulance and the nurse, Mioara, suspecting a problem more serious than an indigestion, decides to take the old man to the hospital. Throughout the whole night they drive from one hospital to another- due to a chain car accident there's no space for an old, grumpy, hypochondriac man- as the doctors see him. Lăzărescu spends his last moments laying on a stretcher, waiting to be finally taken in for surgery.

Olivier Pere (Artistic Director of the Locarno Film Festival) also praises the discovery that the first recent Romanian films had provided. From the first paragraph of his article, Pere (2012) establishes that "Romanian cinema is more than ever a sure bet on the international festival circuit" (p.11). He notes that it all began with the two films screened in the Directors Fortnight in Cannes in 2001 and 2002, respectively- Cristi Puiu's "Stuff and Dough"¹¹ and Mungiu's "Occident"¹². The two did not receive much interest from the French press and were never released there. His explanation of the success of the Romanian style of film-making (as established by "The Death of Mr. Lăzărescu") resides in "the novel-like density, ambition and formal power of a film that neither plays to a gallery nor shows off its aesthetic, but rather burrows into the soul and belly of a country (the hospital metaphor is no accident) to seek out a truth that is simultaneously Romanian and universal" (p. 11). Later on, the prizes for Mungiu and Nemescu (the jury awarding it to "California Dreamin'"¹³ included Puiu as a member) that followed took everybody by storm since for most of the time cinema had been around, the contribution of Romanian cinema to its history "might charitably be called marginal" (A. O. Scott, 2008).

7.1.2. *The name*

A. O. Scott (2008) argues that, in general in cinema, 'waves' should be understood as a metaphor that stands for "newness, iconoclasm, a casting off of tradition and a rediscovery of latent possibilities- and they are predominantly coined by critics. Such labelling is often resisted by the film-makers who are not likely to appreciate their individuality being subordinated to a wider group. This is also the case for Romanian directors- Roddick (2007) quotes Cristian Mungiu as insisting against the 'New Wave' badge on the basis of the directors having different values and belonging to different schools of cinema.

Pere (2012) also dwells on the idea of "New Wave", which, in the terms of its reference (the French New Wave) does not necessarily apply; there are not as many stylistic connections, as there is a sense of a generation, of creative individuals who have happened to make films in the same space and time, and who derive from the same history and culture.

Andrei Gorzo (2012) somewhat echoes this opinion. However, while most critics try to

¹¹ A young man from Constanța, looking to expand his little shop, agrees to transport a package to Bucharest for a local 'business-man'. He sees it as an easy job, a one-off deal of him offering his services. But he soon starts to realize that he is more involved than he would have thought when others also manifest their interest in the content of the package.

¹² This film deals with the Romanian's fascination with the West. Three stories, that end up inter-connecting and influencing each other, talk about the dream of a better life, of success and wealth, that young people associate with the West.

¹³ In 1999, a NATO train guarded by American soldiers is transiting Romania with weapons destined for Kosovo. They are held for 5 days in the middle of nowhere by a train-station chief that requires more than just the verbal approval of the Romanian authorities. Fascinated with the distinguished guests that their little town is hosting, the locals go out of their ways to make them feel welcome. But some, especially the girls, hope that the soldiers will take them along, to a better life, when they leave.

determine whether one or the other is more appropriate, Gorzo claims that the Romanian New Wave (RNW) and the New Romanian Cinema (NRC) (a name that Weissberg, 2012 finds most suitable for it, especially as it has evolved) both exist, but they mean different things. The latter he defines as "a series of stylistic premises shared by a series of films that has seen international success, premises that, as a result of this success, have come to constitute the mainstream style in contemporary Romanian cinematography" (p. 267) (this style will be dealt with in more detail in a subsequent section). The New Wave, in turn, defines a generation of film-makers that have recently had success with their films. While they partly overlap, there are some directors that are part of the RNW, but not of the NRC. Gorzo's example is Cătălin Mitulescu. But there are plenty of others.

For example, director Radu Gabrea has no stylistic affinities with the New Romanian Cinema and age-wise he is not part of Cristi Puiu, Corneliu Porumboiu and Radu Muntean's generation. His films lean towards another aesthetic, and though not dwelling with trivial subjects, the 'glossy-er' aspect of his productions seem to be a bit more popular with the public. Gabrea's films are not as awarded as much as those of his younger colleagues, nevertheless they travel quite a bit. One of his films, "Red Gloves", was screen 4 times in a 800-seats venue in Sao Paolo, being well received. Benefits of this experience were also reaped by the homonymous novel the film had adapted- an editor bought the Brazilian rights to the book (Chirilov, 2012b).

The director talks about his opinion and connection with the younger generation:

"As far as the New Wave is concerned, this has been a great success for Romanian cinema, and I am proud for having essentially contributed to their financing back in the '90s, when I was running the National Film Office known today as the Romanian Film Centre (CNC). But I also notice some systematic self-imitation: Almost everyone, except for Cristian Mungiu, got stuck on repeat, as if craving for «the jackpot». The critics, old and young, don't realize that the emperor is slowly losing his clothes. (...) As far as I am concerned, I am absolutely fine. I continue to be part of the landscape, I continue to do what I loved all my life and, I assure you, I am here to stay". (Chirilov, 2012b, p. 53).

The director's latest film, "Three Days Till Christmas", deals with the final days of the Romanian revolution of 1989 and the trial and execution of the Ceaușescus. The younger directors have been repeatedly accused of diving ever too often in Romania's grim past, but Gabrea believes that the subject is not super-saturated; telling the truth about those days is part of a healing process Romania needs to undergo.

Similar to Radu Gabrea, though younger, Nae Caranfil is an island within Romanian cinema. He puts forward a consistent film-making style that has more to do with commercial, rather than with art-house conventions, in a mix that, oddly enough, succeeds to please both audiences and critics. It should be noted though that he has fairly long periods of silence in between his

productions (unlike many of the New Wave directors) and he prefers working on more substantial budgets. This is especially the case for his latest film, "Closer to the Moon", involving a Romanian producer, but also an American one, Michael Fitzgerald. The film is in English as its cast includes several internationally well-known actors- most notably Vera Farmiga. The subject is based on true-events- the robbing of Romania's National Bank by a group of Jewish intellectuals who, after they were caught, were forced to play their own parts in a propaganda film. Despite the national dimensions of the story, the foreign producers (and consequently the cast) decided to invest in the project. It being spoken in English is partly motivated, the director states, by a business perspective: it will make the film available to a wider audience, an important factor for a production that certainly required a budget much bigger than the average Romanian film (Crețulescu, A., 2012).

Rejecting the way in which every film coming from Romania tends to be automatically thrown together under the same label, critic Alex. Leo Șerban (2010) notices that what had collectively been deemed the Romanian New Wave was in fact made up of quite diverse films, but what he found they had in common was "an uncanny and unprecedented creative frenzy with no genre boundary". He goes on to add: "Regardless of pros and cons, for or against, one thing is certain: this 'New Wave' of Romanian film (which isn't cutting any slack to Romania's self-perception) is the best export seller of all arts, and the main politician (with no political party to support it) representing our country. Fortunately, the film buffs vote for it." (p.9).

7.1.3. The timeline

In 1971, Alistar Whyte wrote (in "New Cinema in Eastern Europe") that Romania had "produced some interesting cartoons but in the field of feature film there has been little of importance" (quoted in Roddick, 2007). Roddick argues that this was not necessarily the case, but Whyte's remark does go to show that "Romanian cinema from the 1960s to the 1980s was as closed to the outside eyes as the country itself". This is no longer the case, since "most of the interesting film-making in Europe at the moment is happening in the Balkans", with Romania being the only country where "the first real 'wave' has broken".

Roddick (2007) noted that the films made between 1990 and 2007 were still very much influenced by the realities of pre-revolutionary Romania. This was particularly true for the films reaching foreign audiences, a fact due not to the country itself, but rather to the distributors and producers of art-house cinema there. The domestic audience, however, did not share their tastes, a fact proven by the fact that the most successful film of 2006 had been "Lovesick" (directed by Tudor Giurgiu) which Roddick describes as "a wryly comic romance in which two female students find themselves becoming lovers". The overall figure for cinema admissions for that year had been 2.7 million (much lower than the 95 million prior to 1989).

The same year that Nick Roddick's piece was published in Sight & Sound Magazine, Romanian Cultural Institute in New York had organized a panel themed "Romanian Cinema: The Golden Age?". While little was known about Romanian films prior to Puiu, in fact the recent success had been preceded by a first Palme for Ion Popescu Gopo's animation "Short History", in 1957 (50 years before Mungiu's) (Scott, 2008).

But many critics (Roddick, 2007; Weissberg, 2010; Pere, 2012) look towards director Lucian Pintilie, and especially his film "Reenactment"¹⁴, as a reason for the fact that the Romanian Cinema or Wave of today could be preceded by a 'New' in the first place. Pere argues that he is an important piece of the cultural legacy that has been passed to the film-makers active today. He writes: Pintilie, "from *Reenactment* (1968) onwards, was the sole representative of Romanian cinema, its foreign ambassador, producing a body of work that was critical, lucid and courageous" (p. 13). The courage and the tone were not the only influences the directors of the NRC might have taken from Pintilie- as critic Mihai Chirilov notices in an interview with the director (2012), like "Reenactment", the stories in recent Romanian films tend to dwell with a defined amount of time- most often a 24 hours span.

Weissberg (2010) also acknowledges that there are links to the past of Romanian cinematography- not a movement or school as such, but rather one auteur: Lucian Pintilie. The director's films prior to 1989 (and especially "Reenactment") were a direct attack to Ceaușescu's regime and he soon had to leave for France. But this particular film, Weissberg considers, echoed to post-revolutionary Romania and had a strong impact on the new generation of directors. The critic praises Pintilie, manifesting his surprise at the fact that the director is very little known outside of Romania and France- but, then again, he notices, Romanian culture is little known to "the Anglophone nations" (p.23); he notices that very little Romanian literature has been translated into English, and while this is not necessarily true¹⁵, it is indeed the case that what has been translated is hardly available nowadays.

In March 2012, MoMA, in partnership with the Romanian Cultural Institute in New York organized a complete retrospective of Lucian Pintilie's films- the first in the US¹⁶. The museum acquired "Reenactment", the film which opened the event, for its permanent collection. The film was one of the few (if not the only) mentions of Romanian cinema that the US movie-goers had

¹⁴ Two young men are forced to reenact their drunken fight from a previous night in order for it to be recorded on film by the Miliția (police). The recording is then to be presented to other young men their age as a counter-example for a suitable behaviour. The situation is absurd, but it reaches tragical notes in the end, when one of the two boys ends up dead.

¹⁵ As shown in a study of ICR London- <http://www.icr-london.co.uk/article/romanian-books-in-english.html>

¹⁶ Another retrospective of a Romanian film-maker's work was dedicated to Liviu Ciulei, during the 6th edition of RFFNY (2011).

ever encountered before the fame of the New Wave- and that was mainly due to the film's release in close proximity to Theo Angelopoulos' "The Reconstruction", which was similar not only in title, but also in topic- but not much so in style. While the Greek film saw limited release in the US, Pintilie's film was never distributed (Kardish, 2012). Nevertheless, Kardish's anecdote could be extrapolated to the idea that the little knowledge foreign audiences might have had of Romanian films prior to 1989 was also of art-house cinema.

Gorzo (2012) also investigates whether influences on the New Wave can be identified in the past of Romanian cinematography. He argues that the norms of classical cinema and film-making, elsewhere refined by WWII, did not really reach Romania in their full form. Instead it was more under influence of socialist realism, of a soviet origin. A late classicism was attained with films such as "The Mill of Good Luck" (Victor Iliu, 1956- film nominated for a Palme D'or in 1957) and "The Forest of the Hanged" (Liviu Ciulei, in 1965). A brief period of synchronization with European art-house cinema was attained through films such as "Proba de microfon" (Mircea Daneliuc), "Secvențe" (Alexandru Tatos) or, the one most often cited as a precursor of NRC, "Reenactment". What all these films have in common is the demystification of cinema, by exposing the tools and process of its making.

Still, Gorzo (2012) doubts that Pintilie can be appropriated as an influence on Puiu (which he sees as the one to have started the style of film-making at the basis of the NRC), arguing that the two directors have very different style, an idea he proves by analysing the editing (in "Reenactment" as compared to Puiu's "The Death of Mr. Lăzărescu"). While Pintilie uses editing mostly in a classical manner, maintaining the idea of a space and time continuity, Puiu's use of editing is described as each cut being "(...) an ellipsis (even if only of a few seconds), assumed as a violence on the *film of life*" (p. 235). While in Pintilie's film the editing ensures mobility (time and space-wise), in Puiu's film the mobility is limited to that of an observer. Gorzo also argues against the link between the two other films mentioned and Puiu's films, ultimately aiming to prove that "in the moment it appeared, the species of *vraisemblance* represented by "Stuff and Dough" was really *new* in Romanian cinema" (A.G.'s emphasis).

According to Roddick (2007) as well, the international acclaim that Romanian directors achieved had only been previously known to Lucian Pintilie in the 1990s. The dry spell that followed cleared in 2005, with Puiu's "The Death of Mr. Lăzărescu" (called here "cinematic humanism in its purest form"), which not only achieved a prize in Cannes, but also notable international distribution which Roddick deems "a real distinction given that it boasts one of the most uncommercial [sic] titles ever put on a poster". As Gorzo (2012) puts it, using the phrase coined by Alex Leo Șerban: "NRC was made in Puiu-land".

Scott Foundas, like many others, got acquainted with Romanian cinema through Puiu's "The Death of Mr. Lăzărescu": "two-and-a-half hours, with «Death» in the title, from a country long absent from the world cinema spotlight" - that is to say, generally seen as an unlikely contender for the Un Certain Regard Prize it eventually won (Foundas, 2010).

What Foundas (2010) sees as a defining characteristic of Puiu's is his openness towards risk-taking which he finds essential for making art. And this is mainly done through conveying a point-not achieving that is more scary for the director than producing a bad film in any other terms. He identifies the way he makes films with the R&D process of pharmaceutical companies, which then pass on their findings to a big medicine producer to implement: "I think auteur cinema is like this. I don't think the commercial cinema would survive without the commercial cinema. I like commercial cinema, but I want to see people facing this fact, that cinema will not survive without the authors" (Puiu in Foundas, p. 31).

Future peaks of the NRC included Mungiu's Palme d'Or for "4 months, 3 weeks and 2 days", as well as Nemescu's "California Dreamin'", a film that did not necessarily confine with what had already been established as cinematographic norm in Romania. The fact that Mungiu's film became the most well known product of the RNW and, by extension, of the NRC, is natural, due to the notoriety of the prize it has won. However, Gorzo (2012) believes that the film's fame is also in good part due to the controversial, shocking even, subject. While Mungiu's film shows Puiu's influence, he proposes a more mainstream version of that style.

7.1.4. The Style

Looking at the way to conceptualize cinema in a purist/ essentialist vein has evolved with time, Gorzo (2012) identifies three main programs: the Arnheim-Kuleshov (based on montage), the Bazin-Krakauer (post WWII, based on the photographic realism of cinema, which also roots it in objectivity- being a mechanical process) and the one stemming from Clement Greenberg's ideas on art- based on the idea that the purpose for which a work of art is made should dictate the way it is created.

Based on the director's own confession on the kind of cinema he aims to make, Gorzo (2012) places Puiu in the second program, the Bazin-Krakauer. It is not a fully adopted program though, as the directors has often declared that his art is not intended to be objective in any sense. While in the beginning of the 2000s this style of cinema was somewhat new for Romania, it was by no means a singular case. Puiu's films were inscribed in an international tendency which manifested mostly in the festival and art-house medium, but also had an influence on commercial productions. This tendency is deemed as "new realness" by critic John Hobberman (quoted in Gorzo, p. 233).

If there is any form of Romanian cinema 'school', Gorzo (2012) argues, it is based in Puiu's very intellectualized way of making cinema: "Until him, the Romanian cinematographic medium did not use to waste nights debating the morality or immorality of a camera movement or that of an editing cut." (p. 240). And while many claim that the realness of dialogue was the most innovative move of the NRC, Gorzo insists that this conceptualization is the base. This has influenced both the other directors, but also the way their films are seen and analysed by critics. Gorzo traces its origins in the anti- picturesque attitude promoted by the critics at Cahiers de Cinema and the film-makers of the French New Wave. The author identifies this only as a point of departure for Puiu, arguing that his next feature, "Aurora" brings under question also the style he had previously used.

As far as the existence of a New Romanian Cinema goes, the ability to quickly recognize a film as being Romanian contributes as proof towards it (Gorzo, 2012). Scott (2008) also notices that, whether part of a wave or not, the now established Romanian directors had adopted a style, resumed here as "a penchant for long takes and fixed camera positions; a taste for plain lighting and everyday decor; a preference for stories set amid ordinary life" in addition to focusing on a single action, usually confined to the time span of one day. A common theme is "the emptiness of authority", often found in male characters holding on to power (in films such as "The Paper Will be Blue"¹⁷ by Radu Muntean or "California Dreamin"). The author agrees that all this falls under realism, "but its motivation seems to be as much ethical as aesthetic, less a matter of verisimilitude, than of honesty".

Jay Weissberg (2012) also talks about certain common elements between the Romanian films of the recent years. One of them is the editing which more often than not stays in the realm of veracity, a tendency that the critic traces back to the excessive manipulation of image during communism. Another element considered is the use of dialogue, which is far from memorable ("I'll be damned if I can repeat a snippet of conversation" - p. 33); but its power stands in its ability to convey points through all that banal chit-chat. Talking about the style that these new directors have created, Roddick (2012) also mentions dialogue as being the most prominent innovation: "surely Romania's contribution to the language of modern cinema has left more of a mark on contemporary film style than the much-trumpeted Dogme Manifesto?". He notes the dialogue is the centre piece of long takes, revealing layer upon layer the longer it goes on. But this does not apply across the board in Romanian films. He offers Tudor Giurgiu's "Of Snails and Men"¹⁸ as a counter example-

¹⁷ The film tells the story of the most intense moments of the 1989 revolution through the experience of Costi, one soldier serving his military duty at the time. After an argument about their duty to help the people and not the dictator, he flees his group to join those fighting over the National Television, but ends up in a villa where he is mistaken for a terrorist. His lieutenant and the rest of his platoon go to search for him.

¹⁸ In the beginning of the 1990s, the workers of a car factory try to avoid losing their jobs as their company is going bankrupt. They decide to sell their sperm to raise enough money to keep the firm on the floating line.

"It doesn't always work, but it is stylish, excellently acted and without a single long, dialogue-heavy take".

If there is a style, Weissberg posits, it certainly is a collection of pastiches of other styles (the French and American New Wave just being the most obvious). In an earlier article, from 2010, he noted that the portrayal of grim landscapes in the films of the New Wave is not so much a case of "fetishizing", but rather one of placing the characters within a certain environment beyond any doubt. The critic also notices that Romanian cinema is more 'national' than that of other countries, because it dwells in spaces and cities that go beyond the capital. Another particularity is that, both in terms of directors and, especially, in terms of actors, it does not care much for stars. Weissberg identifies this as a reaction against the personality-cult that the former dictator had been so keen on.

Chirilov (2010) deals with yet another binding element of the Romanian New Wave- what Cristian Mungiu has referred to as "the mandatory table scene in Romanian film" (quoted here on page 19). According to Chirilov, this is not necessarily a recent development: "With Lucian Pintilie, the senior leader of Romanian cinema, the table scene is a must and, most of the time, it works as a microcosmos of Romanian society." (p. 21).

Another particularity in the style of the NRC is the lack of music. Breazu (2010) talks about this topic, more specifically about extra-diegetic music: "Everything is inside and viscerally connected to what happens in the story, which is definitely the first peculiarity to detect in all recent Romania productions" (p. 10). It is all linked, Breazu considers, to the director assuming a type of insider role- that of a non-intrusive observer. The films deal with realism, although it is not all the same kind. One example, in Breazu's opinion, is "The Way I Spent The End of The World"¹⁹ directed by Cătălin Mitulescu, a director that Gorzo (2012) place in the NRC, but not in the New Wave. While this film also uses music super-imposed on the image- the images convey a "more indulgent" kind of realism (Breazu, p. 11).

Gorzo (2012) discusses the idea that it is bizarre to have such a film-making style as the mainstream one, since its norms are different to what is regarded elsewhere as mainstream (Hollywood), and this is why the audience have always reacted coldly to these films. A film industry nevertheless requires both, but the commercial, crowd-pleasing cinema does not exist yet in Romania. Its existence is conditioned by the existence of what Gorzo calls a 'game changer', a role that Puiu played in terms of art-house cinema. Right now, the author claims, we must simply accept that this is our official cinema (as strange as it is); as for the accusations that films such as

¹⁹ In 1989, Eva and her boyfriend, Alexandru, accidentally break Ceaușescu's bust in the school hall. They are asked to appear in front of the whole school for self-criticism, but the girl refuses. She is expelled and re-enrolled in a high school on the outskirts of the city. With her new friend, Andrei, she decides to flee Romania, swimming across the Danube. Her little brother, Laliu, decides to murder the dictator which he sees responsible for his sister's decision to leave.

Puiu's or Porumboiu's explore 'ideas on cinema', Gorzo highlights that all there is in terms of contemporary Romanian film exists to begin with because these people wanted to explore these ideas.

The existence of this style they have created through their films can be a mixed blessing of sorts for the Romanian cinematography; while, on the one hand, it helped put these directors and their films on the map, if over-used, it can be too much of a good thing. Pere (2012) notes that eleven years from its first break in Cannes, the New Romanian Cinema risks to be identified with this style or method, as many have seen it like a recipe for success and tried to apply it themselves. Nevertheless, Pere notices, prime exponents of Romanian cinema, such as Porumboiu and Puiu, have broken from this path with their second features, managing to keep their films fresh and innovative, characteristics that had attracted attention to Romanian films in the first place.

Undoubtedly, a common element, at least for the first period of the New Wave, was the link with the country's communist past. Radu Muntean's "Boogie"²⁰ was one of the first films to break away from the past, but in a certain way it made that its topic- the transition to a new state of things. (Chirilov, 2010). The director emphasizes that Romanian cinema had already started to show more diversion, in terms of genres, and down to the way the films look, with each director developing its own aesthetic. So in this respect, Romanian cinema has a lot to offer for the future, but this cannot be accomplished, he claims, unless the National Film Centre "works properly" (p.35)- however he does not develop on what exactly it working properly would imply (Ludu Dumbravă, 2010).

This diversification in style has also been noted by the critics. Weissberg (2012) questions whether this state of facts still coincides with the 'New Wave' label. Ultimately, he concludes that the number of directors in the spotlight has increased, as the style of Romanian film-makers has greatly diversified. For example, while the protagonists of the films are still mainly male, more and more female character are brought to the forefront and Romanian films have also started portraying and addressing more social classes, showing that they are by no means inextricably linked to the past.

The diversification is apparent also in the genres approached by the film-makers as the domestic audience's interest grows. The Anim'Est film festival was started by a team of enthusiasts who managed to find only two Romanian short animation films to include in their selection for the first edition. The audience however was about 3000 people confirming that animation films can have an audience in Romania. So the festival went on, and as its offering expanded (including up to 40 "(very) short movies" (Mărculescu, 2012, p. 69), so did its public (reaching 20,000 attendees)

²⁰ Bogdan (Boogie) is on holidays at the sea side with his wife and their son. He runs into some old friends and talking to them he reminisces of the fun times of drinking and partying. His life now is nothing like that. He decides to take this night to do it all one more time, before he goes back to his family in the morning.

and the press' interest. A competitive section for Romanian films was instated and the best were grouped on a DVD for distribution.

What Mărculescu (2012) highlights as the most important achievement of Anim'Est though, is having built confidence for animators and interest on the part of movie-goers. It led up to "Crulic- The Path to Beyond"²¹, the first Romanian animation feature in a very long time. The film represents an achievement technically and artistically (using several types of animation techniques), as well as conceptually, being a strong proof against the preconception that animation films are only destined for children.

In a certain way, the festival popularity of Romanian cinema has started a fad, which Weissberg (2012) identifies in films such as "Weekend" (2011), (directed by British director Andrew Haigh); however this being a clear, direct influence is doubtful. Ultimately, Weissberg considers that regardless of the existence of a clear style, a school, or a movement, the quality of contemporary Romanian cinema stands in being a picture representative of its time: "We can change terminology if we like, but this wave carried cinema along a new path. As a style, it's not better or worse than what came before, but it is where we are now; no doubt in forty years it will look very much of its period. And that's a good thing" (p. 33).

7.2. Who is telling the story and who is the character?

Cultural diplomacy evolves constantly through trial and error, developing the means of communication used, but also re-evaluating the role of government. Wang (2006) argues that credibility is an issue: "Without source credibility, no amount of communication and information will ever be effective and, worse, could even be counter-productive" (p. 94). As highlighted before, the credibility of cultural diplomacy is enhanced by its perceived distance from the government (Cull, 2008).

It can be argued that more focus (both from inside and from outside) is placed on this aspect in a former communist country such as Romania, where democracy (including freedom of expression) are still, to a certain extent, in a process of consolidation. The current situation of the Romanian Film Centre and that of the Romanian Cultural Institute (the two institutions identified here as the most relevant in terms of Romania's cultural diplomacy through cinema) are not conveying the idea of a distancing from the government. Thus the present strategies of the two institutions is not supporting their image of a credible story teller in terms of cultural diplomacy.

Moreover, ICR allocates only a relatively marginal role to film (and especially to the Romanian New Wave). As for CNC, neither in legislation, nor in practice does it show a clear

²¹ The film tells the story of Claudiu Crulic, (unjustly) convicted for robbery in Poland, who died while on hunger strike, protesting against the decision

strategic focus on using this asset for cultural diplomacy. Notably, the legislation in use quotes the “remarkable successes obtained in international festivals” as the factor that “proves the necessity to continue financing the production of Romanian film, including through facilities offered by the state to those investing in production”. This paragraph in the text is the only indicator towards the fact that films are, at least in theory, an important asset for the country in terms of its image outside. However, it does not go on detailing in any way what the specific benefits of festival success are. Nor does the text mention any production strategy with an international outlook. In a way it is an acknowledgement that CNC plays a secondary role here- these directors and their films have made a name for themselves and they should just be left to their devices, while making sure that they have access to some basic funding, however limited.

This supports the idea that the films (and the film-makers) are the story tellers, while the governmental institutions are characters in this narrative. Looking at cultural diplomacy more from a perspective of projection of culture, the visibility of Romania through cinema is mostly concentrated in film festivals and through critical reviews. These focus on the artistic value of these cultural products, with ICR hardly being mentioned (although it might be the case that it has contributed to support the presence of films in certain festivals), and CNC indicated as only one of the many factors in the New Romanian Cinema equation.

7.3. What is the social role of the story?

In order to attract publics from other countries, and not just their governments, which is an important measure of the effectiveness of public and cultural diplomacy, one must first ensure that what is being promoted is attractive (enough), because if they are not "public diplomacy that 'broadcasts' them cannot produce soft power. It may produce just the opposite" (Nye, 2008, p. 25). As the story outlined above proves, the films of the Romanian New Wave in particular, and those inscribed in the New Romanian Cinema in general, are attractive. This is proven through presence and prizes in the festivals (see Annexe 5), through the interest of film critics, as well as international distributors, and, increasingly that of domestic audiences as well. These are all different types of publics, which roughly identify with those targeted by ICR and CNC.

Nevertheless, there is still a gap, since the films of the New Wave especially, do not match the interest of a mass audience. This audience is important for the cultural diplomatic goals of the Romanian Cultural Institute. It can be argued that different types of culture reach the different types of foreign publics. Thus, what the film does not cover, the others do. It is mostly an instrument for cultural relations, while the other cover the area of cultural diplomacy, as defined by Signitzer & Coombs (1992).

The activity of the Institute concentrates more on the creation and execution of cultural agreements, with the goal to "convey a favourable image of one's culture with a view toward facilitating diplomatic activities as a whole" (Signitzer & Coombs, p. 142). Through their realist aesthetic, the films of the New Wave are more inclined towards showing a veridical, unconcealed image of the country, which is consistent with cultural relations.

7.4. Does the story match the official goals?

"The Cultural Test". Eligibility Criteria for the Allocation of Direct Financial Support details the cultural component a film project must present in order to obtain support from CNC. This has less to do with cultural, artistic values, and more with the strength of the presence of the Romanian culture in the film. The first criteria is the cultural content, including whether the film is considered to take place in Romania, whether the main characters are Romanian citizens or are residents of Romania, whether the film is based on a Romanian subject and the material (whether script, novel, play etc.) is Romanian and whether the dialogue is mainly in Romanian (or in one of the languages of one of the minorities in the country). The category also include points for the "contribution to the universal and/or European culture", which can be partly realized through including an actor or actress which "has been nominated for a prize in a major festival". The second criteria is cultural contributions, expecting significant contributions to the cultural heritage, cultural diversity and Romanian culture. The next factor is the Romanian nationality or residence of member of the team (the producer/ co-producer, the director, the screenwriter, the composer, the actors in the main parts, the majority of the cast, the department heads, the majority of the team. Lastly, the cultural criteria factors in the contribution to local cultural hubs, with the biggest score allocated to production that spend 40% of their production budget in Romanian filming, music, sound and image post-production studios or special effects.

These specifications cannot be directly linked to any kind of strategy developed by the Film Centre in order neither to promote the country's image, nor necessarily to promote these films as Romanian cultural products. In Belanger's terms, it is an action towards the protection of culture, rather than one of projecting it. While they are both manifestations of cultural diplomacy, the latter would be the traditional path, and, as argued before, the sensible one to follow since circumstances have already built a favourable context. The legislation does use the films' success in festivals as an argument in supporting the production of films, but it goes no further than that (see Annexe 4). There is no clear delineation of which kinds of productions exactly CNC wants to help produce and promote, neither are there clear specifications as to the content of these films.

While the normative act seems to suggest a focus on the films' cultural value rather than them as an entertainment commodity, in practice the situations is often the other way around. From

his position as a director and producer, but also as a festival organizer and the head of Romanian Film Promotion (a private entity, part of European Film Promotion), Tudor Giurgiu (2012) is often contacted directly, or through CNC for screening rights of various films. He writes about the numerous requests he had received to allow the screening of films without any monetary compensation in events to which ICR and/or CNC are associated. He argues for the importance of “an exercise in solidarity”, but he explains why he is becoming more and more reluctant to respond to such requests. Firstly, many of these events are doubtful in terms of the exposure they offer to Romania and the films coming from here. One example is a “cultural happening” in the country's embassy in Cuba which Giurgiu rejected, arguing: “I do not see what major interests of promotion through film Romania might have in Cuba, I do not understand why the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Romanian Embassy associate themselves with some novices in organizing some happenings [sic], as they themselves have entitled them, I do not see why I have to validate through my presence an unimportant event with ambitions to be a festival”. He also argues that often it is at least apparent that such events have associated their image with CNC or ICR without this institutions necessarily having knowledge about it, thus “causing more harm than good”.

Giurgiu's second motive for rejecting many requests he receives is directly linked to the requests regarding the content of the films. An example that he uses, which is not an uncommon situation he says, is being asked for films that “should not present a negative image of Romania (drugs, sex, drunkards, gypsies, vulgar language)”. The author argues that, as it happens with such requests, films which were confirmed as valuable through prizes in local and international festivals could not be screened, leaving room for films that matched the content request. Giurgiu argues that he does not aim to necessarily put in perspective the cultural value (what he does not say directly, he at the very least implies, though), but the absurd selection criteria. He notices the initial rejection of the first films of the New Romanian Cinema in certain circles within the country on the account of the vulgar language. However, Giurgiu posits, in films that “have become the best cultural export product of this country all across the globe”- such as Puiu's, Mungiu's or Porumboiu's- “there are sex scenes, people walk around naked on screen, there is bad language or the subject has to do with drugs”. The author argues that all of these do not make them any least important for Romanian culture, because “The notoriety benefits which they have brought to the country were extraordinary”.

The question Tudor Giurgiu asks is the one that no law, internal rule or action of the Romanian Film Centre seems to answer: “(...) what do we actually want to export? Which is that Romania that *must* be known to foreigners? Do we want to, again, add make-up and powder, do we really need to invent another eternal and fascinating Romania?”.

7.5. Outlook for the future

An important element in the exposure of Romanian cinema, both at home and abroad, were film festivals. As their fame has grown in international events, the local events also increased in number, augmenting the exposure of these films locally along with maintaining a debate through allowing for Romanian audiences to meet the film-makers and interact with them.

Presently the biggest and best established festival, TIFF, was a supporter of the contemporary film-makers from the beginning. As Roddick (2012) notes, TIFF engages in "building an audience that trusts its programmers and will hopefully create a lobbying force to drag Romania's cinema infrastructure into the 21st century". The critic, like other foreign visitors of the festival, is drawn back every year mostly by the Romanian Days- a section that has been part of the festival from the very beginning "and which has progressed in lock-step with the Romanian New Wave". But the films on offer expand beyond those which could be stylistically included under the label of a 'New Wave'. Roddick's most interesting experience of the 2012 edition of the festival was Radu Gabrea's "Three Days Till Christmas" (based on the last days of the dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu and his wife). It was a controversial take in the eyes of the public- some considered the couple had been portrayed too sympathetic, others liked the fact that Gabrea hadn't used the same stereotypes).

It could be said, Chirilov (TIFF Artistic Director) argues (2012, in an article titled "The Mungiu Case"), that TIFF and Cristian Mungiu grew up together in the spotlight. The same year that Mungiu's film, "Occident" was screened in the Director's Fortnight section in Cannes (2002), TIFF was just starting out: "At that time, Romanian film seemed to have one foot in the grave, with dim prospects for recovery. TIFF too was just starting out and in an entirely unfavourable context at that. However, we were all young, idealistic and resourceful. No one and nothing could have stopped us in our tracks, not even the government, which had decided to make our life difficult by refusing any financial support for the festival" (p. 2)

By 2007, TIFF had established its Romanian Days section as an important element not only for local audiences but also, more importantly, for foreign ones (in the persons of the festival's international guests- film-makers and critics alike). But as he became better known, Mungiu's relationship with the festival deteriorated- in 2012, he refused to screen his latest film, "Beyond the Hills" in Cluj. This was a move that Chirilov deems unfair to the festival and its audience, which had grown along and had supported Romanian cinema. He adds: "(...) it is disheartening that, in the increasingly adverse and fractured context in which Romanian cinema finds itself today from an institutional standpoint, the desire to do right by it is unrequited, and the normalcy everyone dreams of remains a distant utopia" (p. 3). And to justify the title of this edition of APERITIFF ("The Death of Mr. New Wave"), Chirilov comments: "Everyone, including the film-makers, is striving to

distance themselves from the much-debated New Wave label and seems to question now its legitimacy and relevance." (Chirilov, 2012a, p.3).

Addressing the critique that Romanian film criticism lacks in theoretical reflection, Gorzo (2012) believes that part of the blame lays with the UNATC (and, implicitly, with him, as an employee of this school) which focuses too much on teaching artistic professions. It is its "duty to produce and disseminate more knowledge on cinema in these years of blooming for Romanian cinema" (p. 302). But the blame is shared with journalistic critics and publishers, which haven't shown interest spreading the concepts in and, respectively, publishing, the important books of cinema theory. There is a lot of room for development in this area, but at least the past years have created a much needed awareness for Romanian films.

With or without a Wave, the Romanian cinematography still seems to be in high tide, with new directors putting forwards interesting films. In an article titled "Ten to Watch", film critic Iulia Blaga (2012) pays a closer look to these film-makers, proving that while certain directors, who were at the forefront of the re-birth of Romanian cinema, are quite well known to international art-house audiences, there are several others activating in the Romanian film industry.

One of them is Marian Crişan- the winner of a Gold Palm for short film "Megatron" (2008). In 2010, Crişan put forward his début feature which involved not only a Romanian production company, but also a French and a Hungarian one. Undoubtedly, the exposure and presence in festivals was relevant not only in competitive sections, but also in the professional markets associated with these events.

Director Adina Pintilie has also been a fixture in short competitions of the film festival circuit, one of the most important of her presences being in the Rotterdam Film Festival. The first draft of her début feature, "Touch Me Not" was developed in the Binger Filmab Amsterdam, and it was later awarded the PreMEDIA Support Grant (in 2010, shooting was due to start in the following two years).

The reputation created for Romanian cinema as a whole has ensured that even relative newcomers- such as Bogdan George Apetri, can attract foreign co-producers; his feature début, "Outskirts" involved an Austrian partner.

There are also directors who are moving closer to a more commercial, popular cinema. One of them is Alexandru Maftai, who directed "Hello. How are you?", one of the few romantic comedies in Romanian cinema as a whole, and certainly the first one after 1989. The film is a Romania- Italy- Spain co-production. Another project of his, an adaptation of Mircea Cărtărescu's book "Why We Love Women" failed both attempts to obtain funding from the National Film Centre.

Alexandru Mavrodineanu's short film "Music in The Blood" (Romania, France co-production) was selected for the international competition of the Clermont Ferrand festival.

Igor Cobileanski did not gain as much exposure in festivals as he did online. After one of his short films reached over 500.000 views on YouTube, it was acquired by a German distributor.

Valentin Hotea experienced certain success in festival with his school short films, but has done little in terms of cinema after. In 2010 he had received a development grant for his feature debut, so his chances of starting shooting in the near future were "slim to none" (Blaga, 2012, p.45).

The future of Romanian cinematography and the country's chance to present itself abroad through film, stands not only in these film-makers, but also in the institutional support. Whether the films are strong enough to keep authoring the story or there will be a shift and the institutions such as CNC and ICR will take the lead remains to be seen. However, even with things staying in place as they are, there are pleas for a re-drawing of the institutional strategy in order to ensure that the existing and emerging talents are properly supported in order to both strengthen the local industry and Romania's image abroad as the source of valuable cultural products.

The young director Adina Pintilie (2012) also criticizes the way CNC deals with first-time directors. The script for her first feature failed to accumulate the necessary points to obtain funding, despite its quality having been confirmed by other grants such as the ARTE France Award in Rotterdam, the Production Award at Torino FilmLab and being selected for the Cannes Atelier Cinefondation. The director blames the rejection of her project on both corruption and "the lack of film literacy among most CNC commission members" (p. 55) who fail to support an innovative proposal. In an article on independent Romanian films, Cristi Luca also mentions Pintilie's case, highlighting that support from CNC is not crucial because it ensures the actual production budget, but because it offers a base on which to further build by managing to attract co-producers.

Director of photography Vivi Drăgan Vasile talks about the vicious circle that the poorly-drafted legislation and the lack of funding creates for the Romanian film industry. He does so from the perspective of somebody who has been a fixture in Romanian cinematography since before 1989. While he expresses his deep appreciation for what the directors of the Romanian New Wave have managed to achieve, he reiterates the idea that an industry cannot exist (let alone survive) without films meant for the audience: "There are no films for children, no musicals. Not one in 20 years. I won't even mention historical films. If you need four horses, you're in trouble". He develops on the deep consequences of the issue of lack of money: "There is no money, so no one dares to dream anymore. The screenwriter or director may pick up the pen to start making a movie and begin: 'From the balcony, you could see a red helicopter...' What did I write? Forget the helicopter... 'You could see a crow'. A crow? That means post-production. No, delete it! 'From my balcony, you could see the city... just as it was.' That works out perfectly!" (Chiriac Hentea, 2012, p.77).

Weissberg (2010) partially agrees with the fact that the Romanian film industry cannot be sustainable if it is to rely solely on art house cinema, regardless of the quality of these films. It is not just a matter of a film industry, but also that of a national cinema which, in the critic's vision should include varied genres; Weissberg adds: "If this is achieved, it could be the first time a nation's film industry is founded on the strength of its most intellectual product, but then again, Romanian film is proving itself to be full of surprises" (p.25).

8. What is the present story accomplishing?

As it became apparent in chapters 6 and 7, the films of the New Romanian Cinema have gained popularity first and foremost abroad, through being selected and awarded in films festivals. The domestic audience was also attracted, at first, by this newly acquired fame. It was not really a lasting trend, though, as they soon found out that these films were not the kind to provide 90 minutes of entertainment on a Friday night. The situation does, sometimes, show signs of improvement- “Child's Pose”, winner of the Golden Bear at Berlinale this year, has passed the 100 000 viewers milestone (a performance managed only by two other films since 1989, both in 2002) (<http://cineuropa.org/nw.aspx?t=newsdetail&l=en&did=239540>). The only one which has stayed relatively constant is the interest coming from outside of Romania. This, as argued before, can provide a motivation to support these films and include them into a cultural relations strategy for the country. To further strengthen this idea, a look at the perception of these films as cultural products, and at how the country is perceived due to them adds to the understanding of the social role that Romanian cinema is playing.

8.1. How are the films perceived as cultural products?

While the commercial value of the films of the New Romanian Cinema in general, and the New Wave in particular, is highly uncertain, their cultural value is confirmed time and time again through prizes and reviews praising the Romanian style in cinema.

There is no country where these films can really be regarded as products for a wide audience. Nevertheless, there are countries where the public with a deeper interest in cinema is larger than the one in Romania. For example, Ramona Mitrică claims that the British perceive the recent Romanian films as works of art, because they have "open tastes towards cultures in other areas". While the talent is undeniable, luck also played a role in the rise of the Romanian directors- "Romania's time has come".

Dwelling on the idea that for a country that wants to portray itself in the best image, it might be that it being open about its flaws that makes the films more attractive, Renata Clark stated: “ (...) I don't think their popularity is related to what they show, but to the level of artistic quality. It is attractive for the audience to see that Romania produces such great cinema, and that makes it an interesting country- also because it is able to look at those flaws, it has the strength to show them, it's not afraid to show them- for me that is a positive thing. I don't think it should serve as a discouragement, but as an encouragement.”

The creativity invested in them might be the card Romania needs to play to use these films to the benefit of its image. The awards and recognition gained by the directors of the NRC “puts

Romania on the map as a place where there's a huge amount of creativity. And that is something that has been sustained- it's not just one [singular case], it's been going on for quite a number of years. Romania has been on the cultural scene in terms of films.” (interview with Bronwen Riley, 2013). Ms. Riley argued that this applies not only to film, but music could also be an example. As for the films, she says, the true gain from them, despite from the appreciation abroad, is actually one with local implications; it stands in the creativity and the independence that might lack elsewhere. This reaches farther than on the screen: “I think that's something that's still there in Bucharest- you can taste it! It's one of the most exciting and potential creative cities”.

8.2. How is Romania perceived due to them?

The question of Romania's image as it is presented by these films has rarely been dealt with deeper than the primary level. Gorzo (2012) notes that those who review these films badly meet on common ground, their main accusation being that these films are “selling-our-misery-to-the-Occident-who-sees-it-as-something-exotic” (p. 296).

An active film critic himself, Andrei Gorzo has often stepped in to defend the films. One such situation he dwells with more extensively in his book and is revolving around Andrei Ujică's “The Autobiography of Nicolae Ceaușescu”²². Critic Florin Poenaru considered Romanian viewers laughing while watching this film were falling into “self-colonization” and “(pseudo) emancipation” (quoted in Gorzo, 2012, p. 289). The notion is used with an obvious negative connotation by Poenaru who essentially argues that reacting with laughter Romanians are submitting themselves to taking the perception of a Westerner, in a mixture of embarrassment and 'putting on a brave face', to show that they have surpassed the trauma of those times. It is essentially what W.E.B. Du Bois addresses as “double consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others” (quoted in Banks, 2011, p. 115). Here it is seen as something positive- linked to considering all the possible cultural perspective during and exchange experience. It is more in this vein that Gorzo contradicts Poenaru: interpreting the laughter as self-deprecating is on par with concluding that, for “The Death of Mr. Lăzărescu”, “the West has awarded [Puiu] not for being a director, but for washing dirty Romanian laundry in public” (p. 299). Gorzo highlights that a real appreciation of these films needs to move beyond the story (narration) to the way it is told (narrative²³).

Ramon Mitrică argued that even if one were to judge these films based on the specific image of Romania that they show, we should not interpret it as a negative one, especially since before

²² Based on archive footage, most of it never seen, Andrei Ujică reconstructs the rise to power and eventual decay of Nicolae Ceaușescu. The footage includes excerpts taken out of official news reports, but also private videos of the dictator passing time hunting or playing volleyball.

²³ Gorzo uses the concepts of “narrative” and “narration” as they have been explained by David Bordwell.

these films many foreigners had no image of Romania. She also argued that none of these films are inherently Romanian to begin with; she exemplified with Mungiu's "Beyond the Hills"²⁴ which, she said, has a "European subject" and "creates debate"; "they are films about things that are generally valid".

Talking about how Romania was depicted in the films from before 1989 as opposed to the ones from nowadays, Bronwen Riley emphasized the clear existence of a change of perspective and tone. The ones prior to the revolution "all showed a communist perspective, they were all approved" and were "all jolly, quite nationalistic"; indeed there were some who were against the grain, but they were only "quietly subversive". Despite agreeing that the recent films, by far, show a more bleak picture of Romania, she stated that "before the fall of communism and also in this subsequent period there is always a sense of darkness and a sense of despair in all the films I've seen. Even the funny ones.". Nevertheless, with some reserves, she finds the recent films as being representative of Romania and how Romanians live. She exemplified it with a scene from Cristi Puiu's "Aurora"²⁵ :

"there is this scene where he leaves his daughter with a neighbour. And I find the interior of the neighbour's flat and the way that they behave so completely true to life, and to what I'd experienced and there was something shocking about the sense of reluctant suspicion that goes through different phases. There is the reluctant suspicion of the neighbour when the man knocks on the door and asks her to take care of the child. And she initially says 'no, I can't do that', but then her generosity shines through, and she likes the child... There are all these things, like the man sitting there with his, I don't know, his son who is trying to get him to buy a kitchen that he probably doesn't need and can't afford, which I've seen ripped up all over Romania, in terms or architecture and interiors. And then the couple that are making love in the bedroom, but with everybody aware of that.. I found that scene very Romanian, and I don't think you can find it in any British film to the same extent. It would maybe be in, but very differently. I found that very typically Romanian. It was very true to life, and it brought back a lot of experiences to me. Obviously the bleakness of the film, killing everyone, was very dramatic. But I thought that moment looks just like something from the [Romanian reality]. And I thought the interiors, the way they're draft, bring it home. They show an absolute reality."

Another accusation brought to many of the recent Romanian films was that they are either

²⁴ The film, based on real events, tells a story of faith and intolerance. Alina and Voichița grew up together in an orphanage. The first immigrated to Germany in search of a better life, and now she has come back to take her friend along. But Voichița is about to become a nun and is not willing to give up on the oath she has taken with herself and with God. The priest of the convent agrees to let Alina stay for a few days, but as she grows insistent, the convent community starts fearing that she is somehow possessed. Despite their good intentions, the process they make the girl undergo in order to purify her soul ends up killing her.

²⁵ "Aurora" explores the idea that killers live among us and in every one of us. Ill and depressed, Viorel goes on a killing spree that includes his former in-laws and his ex-wife, before turning himself in to the police.

set in the communist period, or are heavily referencing those time. On a primary level, a country that aims to show itself as democratic should not bother making films reminiscing its communist past. While she agrees that these films confirm expectations and preconceptions of Romania as a country that has been brutalized by dictatorship, Riley notices “you can't avoid a spill over from the communist period. It was a very crushing time”. Maybe the question is, she suggests, one of time and one should wonder if, still relatively soon after the revolution and with Romania still struggling to set comfortably in democracy, “jolly films” about Romania *can* be made.

In a way, what she seems to imply is that this would not yet be possible, unless it would be done at the expense of honestly portraying the country. While it is not very positive, Romania's image in these films is true to a great extent, and beyond that “It's exaggerated, (...) as a way to make a point”. She adds “And I think [in the films] it's not about the unhappiness, it's about reacting against it. It might not be comfortable, but it something that created a spark, that sparks a reaction”. In a way, the directors of the New Romanian Cinema are themselves on a cultural diplomatic mission, a negotiation process on the state of facts, involving the Romanian population and the authorities alike. This is consistent to a mission of “bridging controversies within an idea of cultural diplomacy” which “might speak about an artist who keeps the position of awake observer being on the elitist margin, moving from the margin to the center and back, being shape shifter, rather than diplomat” (D. Milosevic, quoted in Banks, 2011, p. 120). The issue here is not necessarily that of elitism, but rather that of innovation, which requires a distance and a stage of vision of ensemble to give birth to the new idea/process etc. Going beyond Romanian cinema, all art forms and movements were 'on the outside' before advancing into the mainstream. The cinema is the perfect example- when it started out it was accessible to elites. Then, as they turned away, it became a fair attraction. Furthermore, it applies to different stylistic stages in the evolution of cinema. It is a cyclical, recurrent pattern.

Thus, in terms of the image of Romania, it should be more a concern domestically than outside of the country. There, the films have put Romania firmly on the cinema and cultural maps in the 2000s as a country with significant creative potential and the strength to treat its flaws with full honesty, as a step toward improvement.

9. How can the story send the desired messages?

Looking at cultural diplomacy and Romanian cinema through a narrative lens, as suggested by Griffin (2009), revealed first and foremost the story itself. The films of the Romanian New Wave, whether in the style associated with the New Romanian Cinema or not, have become increasingly popular in the art-house and festival circuit. Starting in 2001 at a slower pace, and fully in bloom starting with 2005, these movies have gone on to be nominated and awarded in prestigious festivals. Moreover, the NRC brought freshness and creativity to film-making, a fact which has not gone unnoticed, especially by foreign critics. Despite their international success, domestically they are not as enthusiastically received by audiences in particular. This is also partly due to a small overall interest in movie going, although this has seen a slight increase lately.

Most of these films are produced on small budgets and for most of them support from the Romanian Film Centre is essential in order to get off the ground. However, the centre has limited funding to offer and the competitions to access them are often marked by controversies about the just allocation of the sums. Furthermore, the CNC is not actively pursuing any strategy for the distribution and exploitation of the films it supports, neither domestically, nor abroad. As an institution that aims to promote Romanian culture as a whole, the Romanian Cultural Institute, through its subsidiaries, organize film-related events. But there is no strategy specifically dedicated to capitalize on the success and popularity of the films at that level either.

The legal and institutional context reveals that in the story of Romanian films abroad, these films and their creators are the story-tellers, while institutions such as CNC and ICR are characters. The story that they putting forward is one of honest, rather than positive portrayal. This is rooted in their realist aesthetic, but also in an assumed mission towards a buying back time of sorts- a reaction to all the image and perception manipulation of the communist regime. While concerns have been raised as to the perception of Romania this film might create through their overall quite bleak tone and look, it seems that abroad their creativity prevails, ultimately indicating that Romania is finding itself on a good track- that of freely acknowledging its past and present faults as a means of stirring debate, with the ultimate goal of bringing about change. "Public diplomacy is an important tool in the arsenal of smart power, but smart public diplomacy requires an understanding of the role of credibility, self-criticism, and the role of civil society in generating soft power" (Nye, 2008, p. 108).

In the terms of Signitzer and Coombs (1992), the films of the NRC are consistent with the instruments of cultural relations, and not cultural diplomacy. On the other hand, the latter, aiming to advance an unremittingly positive image of Romania, is more in tune with what the authorities envision as a suitable endeavour to portray the country through culture- emphasizing on traditions,

legends and unspoiled natural landscapes.

Belanger (1999) highlights that the state's cultural mission on the international scene no longer simply entails promoting an already existing culture abroad. It involves a more visibly active role in protecting and developing national culture" (p. 678). Perhaps such a perspective offers at least a partial motivation for the Romanian authorities to keep supporting the films of the NRC and to be more involved in doing so. In both subject and style they have become a part of characteristic, national culture, which should be preserved. In a narrative perspective, these films are telling now a story that was not told at its due time. Romania needs to hear it. But so do foreigners because it is a mean for them to understand the evolution process that the country has undergone and thus have the proper context to understand what it has to offer today.

Furthermore, Griffin stresses the importance of both the old and the new- culture must be promoted both through novelty and familiarity (which can also be interpreted as tradition), regardless of the dimension being national or international. Their novelty- in terms of being contemporary, but also their stylistic innovations- offers, thus, another reason for the films of the NRC and the New Wave to be more actively integrated in the way Romania communicates its culture abroad.

Not only should adequate institutions be devising a strategy to support and promote these films and film-makers, but it is advisable that they do so with a narrative mind-set. According to Griffin (2009), "The path that the cultural manager has to go down is one of thinking about (or rethinking) culture as more narratological [sic] than ideological" (p. 267). This is because audiences of all kinds are more likely to be responsive to stories, rather than decoding concepts. Nevertheless, the two are not opposed, but rather evolving one from the other: a concept is a story gradually reduced to abstraction and validated though the "test of time". What Griffin suggests is a reversion of the process- re-building the dynamic layers around a concept to bring it back to the state of story.

The uniqueness of culture and the implications of this fact on developing theories and policies applicable across the board have been repeatedly emphasized here. Nevertheless, when rethinking (or rather creating) a strategy around promoting Romania abroad through the contemporary products of its film industry, the authorities can build around previous successful processes. Belanger (1999) talks about the one through which the foreign policy of Canada was revised (to ultimately include culture as a security- related matter). It included the following steps:

- 1) Government's initiative (which resulted in constituting a dedicated Committee)
- 2) Consultation process (experts, stakeholders, including Canadian representatives abroad)
- 3) Public debate
- 4) Committee's report
- 5) Government's response and policy statement

The Committee's conclusion was that "[a] country cannot project its arts, culture and knowledge if it does not produce and subsequently distribute them". This implies that domestic and foreign cultural diplomacy are intertwined (the same stand for protection and projection of culture).

In terms of the initiative, also given the current controversies around CNC and ICR, the government must be very tactful in their approach in order to avoid the credibility issues associated with a perceived closeness between cultural policies and the government (Wang, 2006). This is why the consultation and public debate stages need to be given the just importance. But also because, as Nye (2008) stresses, "Conveying information and selling a positive image is part of it, but public diplomacy also involves building long-term relationships that create an enabling environment for government policies" (p.101). While Nye's affirmation refers firstly to such relationships being developed internationally, they are at least equally important domestically. Solid, long-term connections need to be maintained among the directors, producers, writers, actors etc. and the institutions that help them advance their interests along to those of the country.

Cull (2008) stresses the importance of the inter-relationship between research and the implementation of policy in the domain of public diplomacy. He exemplifies each of the categories of public diplomacy in his taxonomy through five success stories, and five failed attempts at each of these types of diplomacy. In terms of cultural diplomacy, the success story involved the US and is actually based on the country presenting its negative aspects, but all this through a successful cultural event (a photo exhibition). The counter-example is the 'house of lies' built by Soviet propaganda. Cull follows with recommendations of steps to follow in the digital information age. In a wider diplomatic perspective, he advises making use of diaspora communities on the territory of a country (whether immigrants or refugees); providing them with basic services (to avoid them being exploited) will result in good exposure through their blogs. This approach is presented as a win-win situation, in which the country does not have to sacrifice other values by going for a lax immigration policy. In terms of broadcasting, Cull encourage exploiting the potential virality of YouTube videos.

In addition, adapting to the audience is also crucial when creating a strategy: the domestic audience might be receptive to something that a foreign audience is not receptive to. The vice versa might very well be true- what is not effective in terms of the local audience can still have the desired effect on a foreign one, a situation exemplified, through a certain extent, by the contemporary Romanian cinema. Despite the need for an international perspective, restructuring an institution such as the Romanian Film Centre obviously needs to factor in the domestic audience as well. Turning Romanians into supporters of their national cinema can provide important benefits not only for the domestic market, but also for the international success of these films. Domestic spectators can be an important factor in creating word of mouth, especially online, increasing the

chances of a film being distributed abroad, as a result, increasing its revenue and the likelihood that the CNC is reimbursed in a timely manner. Besides this a solution for encouraging more commercial productions is needed in order to boost the domestic market. One possibility is to support such projects while they are in their development phase (such as the script stage). Once they are off the ground, being commercially viable, they should have it easier to find private investors to cover the actual production budget.

For the benefit of both more and less commercial films, CNC should consider the opportunities to be found in signing co-production agreements. Countries such as France and Germany are already fairly frequent contributing in co-producing with Romania, but this is done as a result of the efforts of directors and producers. Their tasks in finding partners interested in their projects would be increased through such agreements.

Last, but not least, beyond film production, distribution and exhibition, the relevant authorities should consider a strategy to promote Romania as a shooting location. A few internationally known films have already been shot in Romania: "Cold Mountain", "Borat" and "Seed of Chucky". There is potential for such other collaborations, especially due to Castel Film Studio, which in addition to an underwater filming tank and sets, boasts the largest soundstage in Europe (Scott, 2008). This also has implications on the level of devising incentives at fiscal policy level. Furthermore, this could be tied-in with the touristic brand of Romania, promoting the landscapes and locations such as the castles as shooting locations.

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Annexe 1- Nation Branding Strategies of Romania

sources: Nicolaescu, L. (2008). Imaginea României sub lupă! Branding și re-branding de țară.

Retrieved from <http://www.biblioteca-digitala.ase.ro/biblioteca/pagina2.asp?id=cap4>

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Tourism

The Eternal and Fascinating Romania (1995)

The project was consisting of printing an album with maps and touristic information and cost 5, 97 million dollars. The plan was to print a first batch of 97 000 copies, which were to be spread in over 100 countries. Only about 10 000 copies were printed and the project was soon abandoned after the production of this album started being investigated for bribery and abuse of office. The scandal around the project spoke much louder than what it was trying to achieve.

Dracula Park (2001)

“Dracula Park” was not an actual strategy, but more of a product that was to tap into the most famous legend about Romania, aiming to attract one million tourists. Over 10 000 people invested in the project, but, as the previous one, it ended up in court.

Romania Simply Surprising (2001)

In essence, this brand was not much different in what it was promoting from the current one. The slogan and logo were different, but the emphasis was still on traditions, heritage and nature. It also included a spot produced by the Romanian subsidiary of the Ogilvy advertising agency. The World Tourism Organization critiqued it for failing to clearly position Romania as a brand and for sending mixed messages.

Nicolaescu notes that this campaign did have a suitable media plan, the clip being aired all around Europe during the holiday period, targeting 30 to 55-year-old with a medium level of education. This campaign was meant to inform them on the improvement of the Romanian tourism services and convince them to visit the country to learn more about it.

Imagine Romania (2005)

The Initiative Group for Promoting Romania's Country Image (a union of several youth organization) had an attempt at shaping the nation brand. The aim was to organize seminars and workshops to debate the image of Romania. This was to lead, later on, to initiating projects to promote the country, but “its effect was minimal” (Nicolaescu, chapter 4, p. 3)

Romania- The Land of Choice (2009)

This strategy revolved around the idea that foreigners knew next to nothing about the country. The promotional clips starred three well-known sport personalities of Romania: Nadia Comăneci, Ilie Năstase and Gheorghe Hagi. They humorously talk about Romania as the country where women are allowed to marry four men, where people ride zebras and fish grows in trees. The punch-line was “You really don't know anything about Romania, do you?”.

Foreign policy

Fabulospirit (2007)

The campaign associated with this version of the country brand promoted Romanians as “spiritual people, who enjoy life”. It aimed to stimulate Romania being the initiator of communication, sending positive messages across its borders, as opposed to responding, in defence, to accusations coming from outside. It was never fully rolled out because of a change of leadership in the Ministry the following year. The cost was 110 000 Euros.

Romanians in Europe (2008)

This project was dealing specifically with the image of Romanian immigrants in Europe after several consecutive incidents involving them. The clips presented Romanians living in several European states talking about their life there in a clear attempt to portray them as equal to the natives of their adoptive countries. A total of 7,9 million Euros were allocated to the project.

Products

Made in Romania [sic](2007)

The goal of this campaign had primarily local goals. It aimed to stimulate the loyalty of Romanians to local products, for the benefit of the local producers. The unions of dairy, meat and wine producers were in fact the initiators of this campaign. The government did not support them, but, the Chamber of Commerce launched a similar campaign around the same time. It even had the same name, but used the Romanian phrasing: “Fabricat în România”.

Foreign investment

Romania- an attractive destination for foreign investors (2004)

This extensive project was initiated by ARIS (the Romanian Agency for Foreign Investment). It aimed to stimulate the development of policies favourable to foreign investment and to promote Romania as a viable option for investing. It included regular consultations with the authorities to create, annually, a portfolio of priority investments, the creation of the ARIS website²⁶

(with versions in English, but also in German, Turkish, Spanish, French, Danish, Italian and Russian), the creation and dissemination of a newsletter (reaching 5000 people in 30 countries), organizing press conferences with foreign investors already in Romania, the creation and dissemination of “Romania's Investment Guidebook”.

All these were complemented by a research endeavour (investigating what are the primary areas in need of investment in Romania) as well as a promotional campaign “Romania, Your Business Partner” (including print and electronic promotional material centred on “10 reasons why it is worth to invest in Romania”).

Annexe 2: Framework programmes for the strategy of Romanian cultural institutes abroad

source: <http://www.icr.ro/bucuresti/anunturi/programe-cadru-pentru-strategia-institutelor-culturale-romanesti-din-strainatate.html>

I. Framework Programme for the Promotion of the Romanian Identity Profile

Supporting projects:

1. Travelling exhibition "The historic adventure of the Dacian gold: recent discoveries"
2. 1900 years from the building of the symbolic monument "Traian's Column"
3. Travelling exhibition "Traditional cultural values in Romania", with plastic and musical illustrations
4. The programme "Romania: cultural country brand" (generic days dedicate to Eminescu, Blaga, Enescu, Brâncuși, Eliade, Ionescu, Grigorescu, Cioran and others"
5. Celebrations of the National Culture Day (January 15) and the National Day (December 1), in partnership with the Romanian Embassies in the respective capitals
6. The programme "The European day of Languages"
7. The series of travelling conferences "Latin Orthodoxy"
8. The series of conferences "Oriental Latinity. Romanian as a European language"
9. Film screenings and debate "The memorial of the victims of communism and resistance in Romania. Sighetul Marmației"
10. Travelling historic documentaries (travelling film "A century for Romania")

II. Framework-Programme for the Promotion of Romanian Creativity

Supporting programmes:

1. Anniversaries and commemorations of several Romanian personalities in 2013: Aurel Vlaicu, Maria Tănase, Constantin Silvestri and others
2. Events dedicated to the personality of George Enescu (concerts, exhibitions, conferences, presentations), aiming to promote the George Enescu International Festival
3. The travelling exhibition "Creative industries"
4. The series of presentations "Scientific research in nowadays Romania", with books exhibitions
5. The series of conferences "Contribution of Romanian thinkers in the universal reflection", with books exhibitions
6. The series of conferences "Romanian social sciences in universal context", with books exhibitions
7. The launch of the volume "Romanian Innovations", with exhibition

III. Framework-Programme for the Positioning of Contemporary Romanian Creation in Inter-cultural Dialogue

Supporting projects:

1. Travelling exhibition "Romanian painters of nowadays"
2. Travelling exhibition "Romanian sculpture before and after Brâncuși"
3. The Romanian presence at the major international book fairs (The Book Salon in Paris, The Book Fairs at Göteborg, Torino, London etc.)
4. The on-going travelling generic programmes "The Romanian Cinematheque"
5. The programme "Literature Night", in collaborations with the EUNIC clusters
6. The travelling series of conferences "Democratic and European Romania" presented by representative Romanian and foreign authors
7. The series of conferences "The 2008-2012 crisis. Romania's answers"
8. The travelling photography exhibition "Romania 7 years after entering the European Union" with displays
9. Travelling tours of Romanian theatre plays (Travelling tour of the play "D'ale noastre" of the Bucharest National Theatre, including Marsilia- European capital of culture in 2013)

Annexe 3- Romanian Film Centre Statistics

source: www.cncinema.abt.ro

The Cinema Public Fund

1. Total Incomes of the Cinema Public Fund (in RON)

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Cinema public fund	44 000 000	32 000 000	31 000 000	30 000 000	39 000 000

2. Financial Sources of the Cinema Public Fund

2.1. Budgetary support (in RON)

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Budgetary support	-	-	-	-	-

2.2. Other Incomes (in RON)

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Other incomes	44 000 000	32 000 000	31 000 000	30 000 000	39 000 000

Film Production 2008-2012

1. Feature length

Fiction features

Film production/ sources of finance	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
A. Fiction feature films	9	18	19	11	19
Made with CNC support	7	11	8	8	4
100% nationally-financed films	7	11	8	8	4
Co-productions	2	6	10	3	10
Majority co-productions	2	2	8	2	8
Minority co-productions	0	4	2	1	2
Made without CNC support	0	1	1	0	5
100% nationally-financed films	0	0	1	0	5
Co-productions	0	1	0	0	0
Majority co-productions	0	1	0	0	0
Minority co-productions	0	0	0	0	0

Documentary features

Film production/ sources of finance	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
B. Documentary feature films	11	7	10	4	7
Made with CNC support	6	7	8	4	6
100% nationally-financed films	5	3	6	2	4

Co-productions	1	4	2	2	2
Majority co-productions	1	1	2	1	2
Minority co-productions	0	3	0	1	0
Made without CNC support	5	0	2	0	1
100% nationally-financed films	5	0	2	0	0
Co-productions	0	0	0	0	1
Majority co-productions	0	0	0	0	0
Minority co-productions	0	0	0	0	1

Animation features

Film production/ sources of finance	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
C. Animation feature films	0	1	0	1	1
Made with CNC support	0	1	0	1	1
100% nationally-financed films	0	0	0	1	1
Co-productions	0	1	0	0	0
Majority co-productions	0	0	0	0	0
Minority co-productions	0	1	0	0	0
Made without CNC support	0	0	0	0	0
100% nationally-financed films	0	0	0	0	0
Co-productions	0	0	0	0	0
Majority co-productions	0	0	0	0	0
Minority co-productions	0	0	0	0	0

2. Short films

Fiction shorts

Film production/ sources of finance	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
A. Fiction short films	6	13	5	11	9
Made with CNC support	6	11	5	10	8
100% nationally-financed films	6	10	5	9	8
Co-productions	0	1	0	1	0
Majority co-productions	0	0	0	1	0
Minority co-productions	0	1	0	0	0
Made without CNC support	0	2	0	1	1
100% nationally-financed films	0	2	0	1	0
Co-productions	0	0	0	0	1
Majority co-productions	0	0	0	0	1

Minority co-productions	0	0	0	0	0
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Documentary shorts

Film production/ sources of finance	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
B. Documentary short films	5	10	5	0	0
Made with CNC support	1	4	3	0	0
100% nationally-financed films	1	4	2	0	0
Co-productions	0	0	1	0	0
Majority co-productions	0	0	1	0	0
Minority co-productions	0	0	0	0	0
Made without CNC support	4	6	2	0	0
100% nationally-financed films	4	6	2	0	0
Co-productions	0	0	0	0	0
Majority co-productions	0	0	0	0	0
Minority co-productions	0	0	0	0	0

Animation shorts

Film production/ sources of finance	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
C. Animation short films	0	1	1	0	1
Made with CNC support	0	1	1	0	1
100% nationally-financed films	0	1	1	0	1
Co-productions	0	0	0	0	0
Majority co-productions	0	0	0	0	0
Minority co-productions	0	0	0	0	0
Made without CNC support	0	0	0	0	0
100% nationally-financed films	0	0	0	0	0
Co-productions	0	0	0	0	0
Majority co-productions	0	0	0	0	0
Minority co-productions	0	0	0	0	0

Distribution

Origin of first-time release feature films

Film origin	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
National films	15 (7,5%)	19 (9%)	20 (10,9%)	24 (12,5%)	22 (12,4%)
Made with CNC support	13	15	18	22	15
European films	55 (27,6%)	57 (27%)	57 (31%)	49 (25,5%)	48 (25,8%)
American films	124 (62,3%)	131 (62%)	102 (55,4%)	114 (59,4%)	113 (60,7%)
Others	5 (2,5%)	4 (1,9 %)	5 (2,7 %)	5 (2,6%)	2 (1%)
TOTAL	199	211	184	192	186

Origin of released feature films

Film origin	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
National films	36 (9,8 %)	47 (10,6%)	73 (17,1%)	72 (15%)	56 (13%)
European films	101 (27,6 %)	138 (31,2%)	147 (34,5%)	152 (31,6%)	131 (30,5%)
American films	218 (59,6%)	248 (56,1%)	189 (44,4%)	229 (47,6%)	221 (51,4%)
Others	11 (3%)	9 (2%)	17 (4%)	28 (5,8%)	22 (5,1%)
TOTAL	366	442	426	481	430

Exhibition

General overview 2008-2012

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Number of active cinemas	75	74	68	75	81
Seats	46 782	49 871	50 733	56 728	58 096
Admissions	3 797 586	5 279 932	6 508 747	7 235 382	8 348 538
Gross box office (RON)	53 114 230	86 940 607	111 640 783	124 706 985	144 793 811
Average admissions per inhabitant	0,18	0,24	0,30	0,38	0,43
Average ticket price (RON)	13,99	16,47	17,15	17,24	17,34

General statistics exhibition 2012

Number of active cinemas	81
Number of screens	26
Number of seats	58 096
Number of seats per screen	220
Number of multiple screens and multiplexes	26
Number of art cinemas and EURIMAGES	8
Number of screenings	371 456
Admissions	8 348 53
Average admissions per inhabitant	0,44
Admissions / screening	22
Gross box office – in RON	144 793 811
Average ticket price – in RON	17.34

Admissions according to the origin of the film (2012)

Country	All films			First-release films		
	No. of titles	Admissions	Box office	No. of titles	Admissions	Box office
Romania	56	297 487	3 898 578	23	288 363	3 857 292
USA	221	7 290 028	128 223 180	113	8 871 058	121 597 383
EU	131	747 095	12 537 973	48	688 440	12 065 103
UK	20	135 295	2 378 252	8	129 024	2 298 469
France	42	323 679	5 367 138	18	310 725	5 280 076
Germany	11	73 876	882 569	12	39 148	618 885
Italy	7	5 415	64 560	4	5 049	60 862
Spain	9	18 252	310 079	1	16 348	292 622

Other EU	42	73 876	882 569	12	39 148	618 885
Other	22	13 928	134 079	2	2 401	21 054

Admission according to origin (all released feature films) 2008-2012

Film origin	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
National films	135 851 (3,6%)	121 591 (2,3%)	159 834 (2,5%)	99 860 (1,4%)	297 487 (3,6%)
European films	379 020 (10%)	308 746 (5,9%)	527 948 (8,1%)	389 573 (5,4%)	747 095 (8,9%)
American films	3 255 512 (85,7%)	4 807 616 (91%)	5 793 458 (89%)	6 716 597 (92,8%)	7 290 028 (87,3%)
Others	27 203 (0,7%)	41 979 (0,8%)	27 507 (0,4%)	29 352 (0,4%)	13 928 (0,2%)
Total	3 797 586	5 279 932	6 508 747	7 235 382	8 348 538

Annexe 4- Norm regarding the establishment of the set-up state support for cinematography

source: www.cncinema.abt.ro

(...)

III. The aims and objectives of the Norm

(...)

(9) In the present set-up, the state support is allocated to aid the execution of cultural products important for the process of educating the civil society, these being presently clearly disadvantaged by the competition with productions from the extra-community space.

IV. The necessity of granting financial support

(10) (...) Romanian film, as a cinematographic product, is, on one hand, a *cultural commodity* since it spreads ideas and symbolic values, and on the other hand, it was attributed the role of *cultural service* because it responds to an idea of need of cultural order.

(...)

(13) (...) The remarkable success obtained in international festivals demonstrates the need to continue financing the production of Romanian films, including through state allocation of facilities to those who invest in production.

(...)

V. Definitions

(...)

(14) (x) Difficult film- a film with reduced chances of cinematographic exploitation, which is characterized by: high level of creative risk, renewal of cinematographic language through novel modalities of narrative and expression, as well as by offering an artistic alternative to commercial cinema. Difficult films match at least 3 of the following objectives

- they are films of cultural interest, of great complexity and whose productions presents a high level of difficulty, for example, historic films;
- they implement new cinematographic technologies in a creative and innovative way;
- they promote new and inventive ideas in the form and content of the financed films, thus determining the evolution of the cinematographic art (for example reportage films, films with non-professional actors, films without dialogue- based exclusively on images, unusual experimental techniques);
- they have minimal of not at all chances for commercial success due to the experimental way in which they are made;

- they promote débuts in feature film, short film or pilot films under 10 minutes, with the exception of advertisements that can have commercial potential;
- they support the development of creative communities and the production of a film by a minimum of 2 countries.

(...)

VII. The mechanism and description of the measures of state support

(16) In the present framework, the Romanian state allocates financial support that takes the following forms:

- redeemable financial credit, without interest (*direct credit*) for the production of Romanian films, or made with Romanian participation;
- irredeemable financial allocations (*indirect support*)

(...)

(20) The direct credit for production of feature fiction films, documentaries and animation films is allocated as follows:

- a) up to 50% of the established total sum at the beginning of the preparation stage;
- b) the remainder of the sum is allocated during the production of the project, as follows:
 - up to 20% at the request of the producer or the delegate producer, halfway through the shooting period, on the basis of production reports signed by the director and the producer/ the delegate producer;
 - up to 20% at the request of the producer at the end of the shooting period, on the basis of production reports and the proceeding on the finalization of shooting, signed by the director and the producer;
 - 10% at the request of the producer once the following cumulative conditions are complied with: the delivery of the standard copy of the video matrix; the delivery of an audit that certifies the correct employment of the allocated credit, the financial participation of the co-producers/ financiers of the project, as well as the contribution of the producers and the presenting of a distribution contract or a distribution commitment, in the case of the distribution being handled by the producer.

(...)

7.1.1. Eligibility criteria for beneficiaries

(...)

(a) For the producers of Romanian films

(...)

- to prove they have, at that specific time, a contribution to of a minimum of 6% of the total budget of the film, in cash, services, or goods. (...) If the project is selected, at the time of signing

the contract with CNC, the producers must bring documents that prove he also has the rest of funds necessary to produce the film; (...)

- to prove that they do not have debts to the state or local budgets, social security budgets and Cinematography Fund, with the exception of maturity rates owed to CNC.

(...)

7.1.2 Eligibility criteria for projects

(...)

(24) The following are not eligible:

- projects that propagate the defamation of the state or the nation (...)

7.1.3. The cultural product

(25) The cinematographic projects that can benefit of support as direct credit in the current framework must have the quality of “cultural product”.

(26) (...) To ensure the directing of the support towards the cinematographic productions with real cultural potential, these projects will pass to the next stage, that is, the evaluation based on a scoring grid in the Cinematographic projects' selection competition (...) taking into account their intrinsic cultural qualities by analysing the quality of the script, the director and the producer (...)

(27) (...)

* the quality of the script

a) for fiction features or shorts:

(...) - the potential of international representation

b) for animation films:

(...) - the potential for international representation

c) for documentaries:

(...) - the potential for international representation

(...)

* the quality of the director and the producer

(30) At this stage the quality of the director and the producer according to, among others, the following:

- the number of spectators in Romania for one of the films made in the entire career as a director;
- the number of selections and prizes obtained in international film festivals accredited by FIAP (...);
- the commercial success (the number of countries in which a film made during their respective careers was distributed in theatres, as well as the TV broadcasters that have bought the film).

(...)

7.1.4. Organising the selection competition. Allocating the direct credit to winning projects

(36) The competitions to select cinematographic projects to allocate direct credit are organized twice a year. (...)

(39) According to the provisions of the *Order or Ministry of Culture and Cults no. 2335/2006*, the selection of cinematographic projects is done by 3 committees, as follows: a committee of 5 members for fiction features and shorts; a committee of 3 members for documentaries; a committee of 3 members for animations.

(...)

(50) The direct credit is reimbursed to CNC from the revenue obtained exclusively through the revaluation of the film produced with this specific credit. (...)

(60) The period to reimburse the direct credit for production is 10 years.

(...)

7.2. Indirect support

(62) Based on article 77 of the *GO no. 39/2005 concerning cinematography* indirect support consisting of irredeemable allocations is given as follows:

a) to co-producers and financiers involved in producing a film which has benefited of direct credit, in quantum of 150% of the profit toll, corresponding to the sum of the investment (...);

b) to legal persons residing in Romania, according to the law, which participate in the production of a commanded film (...);

7.2.1. Eligibility criteria

(65) (...) the beneficiaries of the indirect support are legal persons paying taxes on the territory of Romania, which participate in the production of a cinematographic film as a co-producer and/or financier

(...)

XI. The intensity of state support

(85) The maximum intensity of the state support allocated on the basis of the present framework as direct credit and/or indirect support is of 50% of the production budget, with the exception of cinematographic projects with “reduced budget” or “difficult film”. In these cases, the intensity of the state support will not be greater than 80% of the production budget.

(86) The direct credit and indirect support can be accumulated (...)

(87) The maximum value of state support that can be allocated based on the present framework, as direct credit or indirect support, is of 16 000 000 RON/ cinematographic project.

Annexe 5- Awards

sources: www.cncinema.abt.ro, www.imdb.com

2012

Dupe dealer/ *Beyond the Hills*

(feature, director: Cristian Mungiu, co-production Romania, France, Belgium)

- * Best script, Best actress (ex aequo Cosmina Stratan and Cristina Flutur) - Cannes 2012 (Official Competition)
- * Best script nomination-European Film Awards
- * Best film-Vukovar
- * Best Film- Herceg Novi Film Festival, Montenegro
- * Fedeora Award-Haifa International Film Fest
- * Film Critics Jury Awards- Listapad,Minsk
- * Special Jury Prize- Gijon IFF
- * Astor de Oro Prize for Best Film- Mar del Plata IFF
- * Audience Award- Salonic IFF

Crulic/ *Crulic- The Path to Beyond*

(animation feature, director: Anca Damian, co-production Romania, Poland)

- * Grand Prix- Animation Film Festival Annecy
- * Silver Puma Award for the Best Director, Audience Award- FICUNAM, Mexico
- * Special Prize of the Human Rights Jury- Istanbul
- * Main Prize- Gdansk Doc Film Fest
- * Special Jury Prize, Best Sound, Best Music- Gdynia Film Fest
- * Best Long Feature in Animator- Poznan
- * Best Film –Sopot
- * Best Director- Mlodzi I Film
- * Cabrito de plata- Best Long Animated Feature-Monterrey
- * Special Jury Prize(silver Dolphin)- Festroia
- * Best Movie- Milwaukee Film Fest
- * Special Prize- Se Ma For Film Fest
- * Grand Prix- Lodz
- * Audience Award- Nurt
- * Best Sound,Best Music- Gopo Romanian Awards

Superman, Spiderman sau Batman/ *Superman, Spiderman or Batman*

(short, director: Tudor Giurgiu, Romania)

- * Best Short- Munchen Kaliber 35 International Film Fest
- * Best Short Drama-Aspen
- * BAFTA Award – Aspen
- * Best Film- Manhattan Shorts IFF
- * Best Short- European Film Awards 2012

Toată lumea din familia noastră/ *Everybody in our family*

(feature, director: Radu Jude, co-production Romania, Netherlands)

- * The Heart of Sarajevo for Best Film- Sarajevo IFF
- * Bayard d'Or du Meilleur Film, Bayard d'Or du Meilleur Comedien (Șerban Pavlu)- Namur
- * Grand Prix- Zagreb IFF
- * Grand Prix CinEast-Luxembourg
- * Best Romanian Feature-Transylvania IFF

- * Best Narrative Feature- Philadelphia FF
- * Audience Award, Best directing -B-Est IFF, Bucharest
- * Anonimul Trophy - Anonimul IFF, Romania
- * Special Mention of the Jury- Odessa IFF
- * Best Direction and Best Actor (Șerban Pavlu)- Art Film festival, Slovakia
- * FIPRESCI Award- Miskolc IFF

Tatăl meu e cel mai tare/ Daddy Rulz

(short, director: Radu Potcoavă, Romania)

- * Special Jury Mention-Sarajevo

Turn Off the Lights

(feature documentary, director: Ivana Mladenovici, Romania)

- * Best Documentary- Sarajevo

24 găleți, 7 șoareci, 18 ani/ 24 buckets, 7 mice, 18 years

(short, director: Marius Iacob, Romania)

- * EDN Talent Grant- Sarajevo

Totonel

(short, director: Alexandru Nanau, Romania)

- * Work in Progress Award- Sarajevo

Despre oameni și melci/ Of snails and men

(feature, director: Tudor Giurgiu, Romania)

- * Special Jury Prize- Warsaw
- * Best film (ex aequo- Punto de Encuentro)- MEETING POINT section, Valladolid

Vaca finlandeză/ Finnish Cow

(short, director: Gheorghe Preda, Romania)

- * Canal Plus Award- Montpellier IFF

Chefu'/ The Party

(short, director: Adrian Sitaru, Romania)

- * Grand prize- Uppsala
- * Onda Curta Award- Indie Lisboa
- * Artemisia Award- Ozu Film Festival, Italy

Apele tac/ Silent River

(short, director: Anca Miruna Lăzărescu, co-production Germany, Romania)

- * Second Prize and Best Story Award -Short Film festival Zubroffka, Poland
- * Best Narrative Short- Santa Fe Independent Film Festival
- * River Pursuit Award- Silent River Film Festival
- * Audience Award- Festival des Films de Femmes, Mediterranee
- * Audience Award-Brazilian Student Film Festival
- * Audience Award- Film Caravan-Travelling Shorts Festival
- * Camera Award- Deutscher Kamerapreis
- * Jury Award- Film Festival Voiron
- * Best Actors Award (Andi Vasluianu and Toma Cuzin) and Best Cinematography- Cellul'art Kurzfilmfestival-Jena
- * Grand Prix- Mediawave, Gyor
- * Golden Beaver Award- European Short Film Festival

- * Grand Jury Prize-European Film Festival, Lille
- * Premio Volumina- Ca'Foscari Short Film Festival
- * Prix du Jury- Festival du Cinema Mediterranee, Tetouan
- * Best Short Film, Best Upcoming Director- Gopo Romanian Awards
- * Grand Prix- International Student Film Festival, Belgrade

Tatăl fantomă/ The Phantom Father

(feature, director: Lucian Georgescu, Romania)

- * Special Prize of the Festival- Shaken Stars- Almaty IFF
- * The METAMORFOZE Award- Procult Cinefestival, Roma

Din dragoste, cu cele mai bune intenții/ Best Intentions

(feature, director: Adrian Sitaru, co-production Romania, Hungary)

- * Best Film Award- Cleveland IFF

Eva

(feature, director: Adrian Popovici, Romania)

Atlantis Award- Moondance IFF-SUA

De ce fierbe copilul în mămăligă/ Aglaja

(feature, director: Cristina Deak, co-production Hungary, Romania, Poland)

- * Golden Orange Award- Antalya

Other Awards (by director)

-Marian Crișan-

Megatron

(short, 2008, Romania)

- * Palme d'Or (Best Short Film)- Cannes Film Festival
- * Best Short Film- Stockholm Film Festival

Morgen

(feature, 2010, Romania, France Hungary)

- * SIGNIS Award- Buenos Aires International Festival of Independent Cinema
- * Don Quijote Award, Junior Jury Award, Prize of the Ecumenical Jury, Special Jury Prize- Locarno International Film Festival
- * The Church of Iceland Award (Special Mention)- Reykjavik International Film Festival
- * Romanian Union of Filmmakers Award (Best Cinematography)

- Radu Jude-

Alexandra

(short, 2006, Romania)

- * Short Film Prize- Cottbus Film Festival of Young East European Cinema
- * Main Prize- Oberhausen International Short Film Festival

Lampa cu căciulă/ The Tube with a Hat

(short, 2007, Romania)

- * 2nd place Best Short Film- Almeria International Short Film Festival
- * Grand Prix- Bilbao International Festival of Documentary and Short Film
- * Golden Moon of Valencia- Cinema Jove- Valencia International Film Festival
- * Short Film Prize- Cottbus Film Festival of Young East European Cinema
- * Silver Dragon- Cracow Film Festival

- * Hamburg Short Film Award- Hamburg International Short Film Festival
- * Golden Danzante- Huesca Film Festival
- * Best Narrative Short- Los Angeles Film Festival
- * Short Film Grand Prize- Montpellier Mediterranean Film Festival
- * Golden Gate Award- San Francisco International Film Festival
- * Short Filmmaking Award- Sundance Film Festival
- * Grand Prix (Best Short Film)- Uppsala International Short Film Festival

Cea mai fericită fată din lume/ *The Happiest Girl in the World*

(feature, 2009, Netherlands, Romania, France, Japan)

- * CICA Award- Berlin International Film Festival
- * Golden Tower- Palic Film Festival
- * FIPRESCI Prize- Sofia International Film Festival

Toată lumea din familia noastră/ *Everybody in Our Family*

(feature, 2012, Romania, Netherlands)

- * Blue Angel (Best Director, Best Male Performance- Șerban Pavlu)- Art Film Festival
- * Best Actor in a Leading Role, Best Actor in a Supporting Role, Best Actress in a Supporting Role, Best Directing, Best Feature Film, Best Screenplay- Gopo Romanian Awards
- * Best Narrative Feature- Philadelphia Film Festival
- * Heart of Sarajevo- Sarajevo Film Festival

- *Cristian Mungiu*-

Occident

(feature, 2002, Romania)

- * Grand Prize, Prix Meuter-Tira- Mons International Festival of Love Films
- * Romanian Union of Film-makers Award (Best Actor- Alexandru Papadopol)
- * FIPRESCI Prize- Sofia International Film Festival
- * Audience Award- Thessaloniki Film Festival
- * Transilvania Trophy- Transilvania International Film Festival

Lost and Found

(omnibus feature, 2005, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro, Bulgaria, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Romania)

- * Burgas Municipality Award 'Silver Sea-Gull'- Sofia International Film Festival

4 luni, 3 săptămâni și 2 zile/ *4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days*

(feature, 2007, Romania, Belgium)

- * Award of the Argentinean Academy (Best Foreign Language Film)- Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences of Argentina
- * Cinema Prize of the French National Education System, FIPRESCI Prize, Palme d'Or- Cannes Film Festival
- * COFCA Award (Best Foreign Language Film)- Central Ohio Film Critics Association
- * CFCA Award (Best Foreign Language Film)- Chicago Film Critics Association
- * Chlotrudis Award (Best Original Screenplay)
- * European Film Award (Best Director, Best Film)
- * Best Actor in Supporting Role, Best Actress in Supporting Role, Best Actress in Leading Role, Best Directing, Best Feature Film- Gopo Romanian Awards
- * Goya (Best European Film)- Goya Awards
- * Hollywood World Award- Hollywood Film Festival
- * LAFCA Award (Best Foreign Film, Best Supporting Actor)- Los Angeles Film Critics Association Award

- * National Board of Review, USA- Top Five Foreign Films
- * NYFCC Award (Best Foreign Film)- New York Film Critics Awards
- * FIPRESCI Prize (Best Actress)- Palm Springs International Film Festival
- * White Elephant (Best Foreign Film)- Russian Guild of Film Critics
- * FIPRESCI Film of the Year- San Sebastian International Film Festival
- * Best Balkan Film- Sofia International Film Festival
- * Best Actress, Bronze Horse- Stockholm Film Festival
- * Best Foreign Language Film- Toronto Film Critics Association Award
- * Turia Award (Best Foreign Film)
- * Best Foreign Language Film- Vancouver Film Critics Circle

-Radu Muntean-

Furia

(feature, 2002, Romania)

- * Best Actor (Dragoş Bucur)- Romanian Union of Filmmakers Awards

Hârtia va fi albastră/ *The Paper Will be Blue*

(feature, 2006, Romania)

- * Golden Orange (Best Foreign Language Film)- Antalya Golden Orange Film Festival
- * Special Prize (Best Director)- Cottbus Film Festival of Young Easter European Cinema
- * Best Actor in Supporting Role, Best Sound- Gopo Romanian Awards
- * Special Jury Award- Marrakech International Film Festival
- * Jury Special Prize- Namur International Festival of French-Speaking Film

Boogie/ *Summer Holiday*

(feature, 2008, Romania)

- * Best Actor in Leading Role, Best Actor in Supporting Role, Best Actress in Leading Role, Best Directing- Gopo Romanian Awards
- * Best Screenplay- Hamptons International Film Festival
- * Special Mention- Palic Film Festival
- * Best Actor, Best Actress, Best Director- Romanian Union of Film-makers Award

Martî, după Crăciun/ *Tuesday, After Christmas*

(feature, 2010, Romania)

- * Best Actor, Best Actress, Grand Prix Asturias- Gijon International Film Festival
- * Best Actress in Leading Role- Gopo Romanian Awards
- * Best Actress- Mar del Plata Film Festival

- Corneliu Porumboiu-

Călătorie la oraş/ *A Trip to the City*

(short, 2003, Romania)

- * 2nd Place Cinefondation Award- Cannes Film Festival

A fost sau n-a fost?/ *12:08 East of Bucharest*

(feature, 2006, Romania)

- * Golden Camera, Label Europa Cinemas- Cannes Film Festival
- * Chlotrudis Award (Buried Treasure category)- Chlotrudis Award
- * Golden Swan (Best Film, Best Screenplay)- Copenhagen International Film Festival
- * Special Prize (Outstanding artistic contribution)- Cottbus Film Festival of Young East European Cinema
- * Best Actor in Leading Role, Best Directing, Best Feature Film, Best Screenplay- Gopo Romanian Awards

* Audience Award, Best Romanian Film, Transilvania Trophy- Transilvania International Film Festival

Polițist, adjectiv/ *Police, Adjective*

(feature, 2009, Romania)

* Best Actor, Best Director- Buenos Aires International Festival of Independent Cinema

* FIPRESCI Prize, Un Certain Regard Jury Prize- Cannes Film Festival

* Best Actor in Leading Role, Best Actor in Supporting Role, Best Directing, Best Feature Film- Gopo Romanian Awards

* Transilvania Trophy- Transilvania International Film Festival

* Best Foreign Language Film (3rd place)- National Society of Film Critics, USA

-Cristi Puiu-

Marfa și banii/ *Stuff and Dough*

(feature, 2001, Romania)

* FIPRESCI Prize, Best Actor (Alexandru Papadopol)- Thessaloniki Film Festival

* Special Prize, “Findling” Award- Cottbus Film Festival of Young East European Cinema

* Abasto Award- Buenos Aires International Festival of Independent Cinema

Un cartuș de Kent și un pachet de cafea/ *Coffee and Cigarettes*

(short, 2004, Romania)

* Golden Bear, Prix UIP for European Short Film- Berlin International Film Festival

Moartea domnului Lăzărescu/ *The Death of Mr. Lăzărescu*

(feature, 2005, Romania)

* Prize of the Ecumenical Jury, Special Student Jury Prize, Special Mention of the Jury- Bratislava International Film Festival

* Un Certain Regard- Cannes Film Festival

* Silver Hugo Award- Chicago International Film Festival

* Golden Swan for Best Actor (Ion Fiscuteanu), Jury Special Prize- Copenhagen International Film Festival

* Los Angeles Film Critics Association Award (Best Supporting Actress- Luminița Gheorghiu)

* Amnesty International Awards, Propeller of Motovun- Motovun Film Festival

* Golden Bayard (Best Actress- Luminița Gheorghiu, Best Francophone Film), Special Mention- Namur International Festival of French- Speaking Film

* 2nd Prize Best Film- National Society of Film Critics Awards, USA

* 3rd place New York Film Critics Circle Awards

* Norwegian Film Critics Award- Norwegian International Film Festival

* FIPRESCI Prize (Best Actor- Ion Fiscuteanu)- Palm Springs International Film Festival

* Golden Puffin (Best Film)- Reykjavik International Film Festival

* Special Citation- San Francisco Film Critics Circle

* Don Quixote Award, Special Jury Prize- Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival

* Audience Awards, Best Director, Best Actor (Ion Fiscuteanu), Best Actress (Luminița Gheorghiu), Best Romanian Film, FIPRESCI Prize- Transilvania International Film Festival

* Prize Trieste- Trieste Film Festival

Aurora

(feature, 2012, co-production Romania, France, Switzerland, Germany)

* Gil Parrondo Award (Best Art Direction)- Gijon International Film Festival

* Best Directing, Best Feature Film, Best Screenplay- Gopo Romanian Awards

* East of the West Award- Karlovy Vary International Film Festival

- *Adrian Sitaru* -

Valuri/ *Waves*

(short, 2007, co-production Romania, France)

- * BAFTA/LA Award for Excellence- Honorable Mention, Best Cinematography, Best Direction- Aspen Shortfest
- * Best Short Film- Dresden Film Festival
- * Best Short Film- Gopo Romanian Awards
- * Onda Curta Prize, Young Director Award- Imago- International Young Film and Video Festival
- * Best Short Film- Las Palmas Film Festival
- * Leopards of Tomorrow- Best Film- Locarno International Film Festival
- * Golden Bayard (Best Short Film)- Namur International Festival of French-Speaking Film
- * Heart of Sarajevo (Short Film category)- Sarajevo Film Festival

Pescuit sportiv/ *Hooked*

(feature, 2008, co-production Romania, France)

- * Best Actress- Buenos Aires International Festival of Independent Cinema
- * Best Screenplay- Mons International Festival of Love Films
- * Grand Prize- Ourense Independent Film Festival
- * New Voice/ New Visions Grand Jury Prize- Palm Springs International Film Festival
- * Best Actress, Silver Alexander (Special Jury Award)- Thessaloniki Film Festival

Colivia/ *The Cage*

(short, 2010, Romania, Netherlands)

- * DAAD Short Film Awards- Berlin International Film Festival
- * Best Short- Warsaw International Film Festival

Din dragoste, cu cele mai bune intenții/ *Best Intentions*

(feature, 2011, co-production Hungary, Romania)

- * Best Actor in Leading Role, Best Actor in Supporting Role- Gopo Romanian Awards
- * Best Actor, Best Director- Locarno International Film Festival