Additional Table 1 (detailing the criteria for the qualitative analysis)

Code	**Structural denotators** identifying specific aural elements (instrumentation, tempo, vocal persona);	**Interobjective Comparison Material** matching these elements to known intertextual references	**Paramusical Field of Connotation** decoding the cultural associations of these references to determine their framing function.
S01	Upbeat rhythm; "modern religious" song structure; unexpected violin solo.	Klezmer music, Neoprotestant religious songs.	Religious salvation/community. Frames the candidate as a "messianic" figure; evokes unity, spiritual destiny, and hope for a "bright future."
S02	Synthesized instrument with bright overtones; simple melodic line (not typical hip-hop beat).	oriental musical conventions, underground hip-hop	Anti-establishment resilience, "toughness," street credibility, and nostalgia for the transition era; frames the struggle against adversity.
S03	Lush orchestration (Indian & Western instruments); overlapping non-synchronized military oath (rhythmic speech).	Hindi pop, Romanian Christmas carol	Sacred duty/nationalism. The dissonance between the "exotic" melody and the local military oath reframes the foreign sound as a "nationalist" prayer; evokes soldierly sacrifice and traditional continuity.
S04	Slow, minor key; synthesized "panpipe" solo; lament-style vocals.	Traditional Romanian folk lament (doina), Manele instrumentation	Exile/betrayal. Represents the "voice of the Diaspora"; evokes the pain of uprooting, class struggle, and the guilt/duty to return and "save" the country.
S05	Aggressive, energetic tempo; male chorus shouting commands; "Call and Response" structure.	National anthem, military drills, hip-hop	Urgent mobilization/awakening. Acts as a literal "alarm" signal; frames the political moment as a crisis requiring immediate, masculine action against corruption.
S06	strong beat, oriental influences, accordion solo, nationalist lyrics, notable Romanians	Pop song, traditional music, traditional instruments,	Memorialization/tradition. Continuity with the past, with specific regional identities, national pride, exceptionalism
S07	Male choir, *a capella*, deep timbre	march, military choir, religious chant	Orthodox authority. Connects the political message to the "voice of the Church" and historical continuity.

Extensive Analysis of Sounds (S01-S07)

S01 – AventuraROLive – *Privim spre libertate* [Looking towards freedom] (15.11.2024)

The first sound is an explicit electoral song, released on the 15th of November 2024, 2 weeks before the first round of presidential elections. It is a lively pop song with references to neoprotestant religious songs (modern songs on religious themes), and an unexpected violin in the style of Jewish klezmer music.

The lyrics are also similar to neoprotestant religious songs, portraying the candidate Călin Georgescu as a loving savior, who understands the common people, and can lead the nation towards a bright future. The audience is referred to as a united national community, both in the country and expats, who love their country but are disappointed by previous leadership.

S02 – B.U.G. Mafia – *În anii ce-au trecut* [In the years gone by] instrumental intro to a live rendition (2003)

The sound cannot be recognized as pertaining to the hip-hop genre, as this fragment is only a simple melodic line played by a synthesized instrument with bright overtones. The timbre and the melody are both reminiscent of an intro of the popular Romanian *manele* genre, with oriental musical conventions.

While the genre and additional meaning cannot be extracted from the fragment used on TikTok, it is common knowledge that the band is associated with 1990s Romanian underground culture and an anti-establishment position. The lyrics refer to resilience in overcoming adversity and may evoke nostalgia, reflections on a better past, connection to a specific Romanian urban experience, and viewing Romanian society's evolution with a critical lens.

S03 – Rahat Fateh Ali Khan and Shreya Ghoshal – *Teri Meri* (2011) overlapping a group of soldiers taking the Romanian Army's military oath

The song is a popular Bollywood romantic song in Hindi from the 2011 film Bodyguard, but the melody of this fragment is directly taken from a Romanian Christmas carol (*La Vifleem colo-n jos* [Over there in Bethlehem]). The melody would be easily recognizable to a Romanian audience, but the treatment is distinct, with a lush orchestration that includes both Indian and Western instruments, and expressive oscillations, ornamentations, and inflections that give it an ambiguous Oriental sound. The lyrics are incomprehensible, both because of the language barrier, but also because of the overlapping sounds of the spoken oath. Sonically, the oath presents a rhythmic pattern with strongly accented beats, but is not synchronized with the beat of the music. The contrast with the flowing, emotional melody creates a startling effect, generating confusion about the source of the sound. The dominant reference in this sound is that of national duty, romanticized military duty and adds an emotional depth to collective commitment to patriotism. The music is at the same time consonant with this meaning, being a traditional Romanian song, and showing the reach of Romanian culture supports this nationalist perspective. But it is also dissonant, carrying obvious markers of Indian influence (language, musical treatment).

S04 – Marian Hulpus – *Imnul diasporei* [The Diaspora's Anthem] (2020)

Musically the song is a slow, basic song with a simple sequence of chords in a minor key, following a standard arranger keyboard rhythm, and a solo accompaniment of a synthesized panpipe-like instrument (commonly encountered in traditional Romanian music) providing solo licks in the intro, outro and between verses. Generically it bears the strongest resemblance with *manele* (mainly due to the timbre of the instruments, and the ornamentation in the melody), but its simple nature makes it difficult to categorize. Despite the name, it does not carry any parameters of musical expression that are anthemic (major keys, suitable for group singing, stately rhythm etc.) but sounds more like a lamentation.

The meaning is held more in the paramusical field, specifically the title and the lyrics. The full song is long (over 7 minutes) and has 8 verses. The most common fragments used in our sample are from the second to last verse ("We are the power of the country/We are the voice of the diaspora/The parliament will tremble/When we rise up"). The full lyrical content explicitly addresses the diaspora with themes of class struggle, the corruption of the

establishment, remembrance, the resilience of cultural identity, a common national identity, forced uprooting in search for a better life, betrayal by leadership, estrangement, and a duty and a call to action to return and improve the conditions that caused the uprooting.

S05 – Morometzii – *România, trezește-te!* [Romania, wake up!] (2004)

The title and recurring line echoes the national anthem (Awaken, Romanian). The hip-hop song is a direct call to action, suggesting a critique of the nation's current state, a call for national awakening, social change, and political awareness and came about during a period of rapid progress in Romania's recent history, before the accession to the EU. The lyrics address a collective – Romania as a synecdoche for the individuals – with anecdotes of everyday corruption and poverty due to inaction, with an appellative function that calls for personal responsibility. Musically, this sound has a strong sudden impact with an energetic tempo, building a sense of urgency and collective momentum, with the line "România, trezește-te!"(Wake up, Romania!) sung loudly and forcefully by a group of male voices, followed by a line sung by a single male voice giving reason or motivation, this pattern repeating several times. This acts as an anaphone of a "call" or "warning" intended to rouse emotion and inspire action. The artist's name is also a reference to a well-known piece of Romanian literature (studied in schools from the fall of communism in 1989 to the present day) implying a connection to ordinary people and bringing forth a cultural artifact that is specifically Romanian and familiar to virtually everybody.

S06 – Jador, Costi, Vlăduța Lupău – *Mare e lumea* [The World is Large] (2021)

A modern pop song with a strong beat with oriental influences and musical references to traditional music. This is what is heard in the fragments used on TikTok, specifically, a solo accordion that plays a leitmotif with traditional Romanian influences, and vocal chants heard in traditional songs. The lyrics reference the population of the different historical regions of Romania, in a call for unity, sentiments of national pride, communal bonding and common roots with allusions to emigrant Romanians, and hints of Romanian exceptionalism. This exceptionalism is underlined by the music video, which shows notable Romanians (inventors, scientists, historical figures, sportspeople), historical and natural landmarks, and traditional Romanian costumes.

S07 – The TRONOS Psaltic Group of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchy – *Se-aude glas peste Carpați* [A Voice is Heard over the Carpathians]

While sung by a religious choir, generically, this song is a march. It has been sung by military choirs accompanied by marching bands. This rendition is *a capella*, sung by a male choir. The vocal timbre is resonant, solemn and non-individualistic, carrying a message of collective action. The authorship of the song it unknown, but it is likely part of the nationalist revolutionary heritage of the 19th Century. It references the desire for unification of the Romanian Principalities, freedom to express Romanian national identity, release from foreign oppression, a hegemony under a Christian ideology. This latter connotation is brought out in this rendition by the performance of a religious choir.