CONFLICTUAL NATION BUILDING POLICIES IN POST-COMMUNIST EUROPE: AN ANALYSIS OF ROMANIA'S POLICIES TOWARD MOLDOVA

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Introduction

After the collapse of the Communism nation building projects came emphatically into prominence and have caused considerable strains between the states. A conflictual situation emerged between the external nation-building policies of Romania and internal nation building policies of Moldova as well, and their relationships became more and more tense due to the fact that in spite of Moldova's strong opposition Romania never ceased to treat its neighbor in a "special" way. The conflicting national policies mutually shaped each other and as a consequence altered during the last seventeen years; nevertheless, the tension did not diminished.

Despite the strong impact and the ambiguous nature of the Romanian–Moldovan relationship, the issue has been subject to rather limited scholarly research, especially regarding the developments in Romania's policies directed toward Moldova. This paper tries to fill some of this gap by answering the following main questions: How did the nation building policies of the two countries evolve and how did they influence each other? Beside this interaction what other (domestic and external) factors influenced the development of these policies?

The conceptual framework for analyzing the development of the nation-building policies draws on the model of Rogers Brubaker about the dynamic of different types of nationalism and its further developments regarding the impact of external and domestic influencing factors. Based on this approach, the internal debates from Moldova and Romania will be followed, in an attempt to identify the main motives and political forces behind the nation building policies pursued.

It has to be highlighted that the research is centered on the policies of Romania. The reason for briefly analyzing the Moldovan nation building policies is that they served as a constant counterpoint for the Romanian nation-building policies. Nevertheless, the Moldovan

nation building process is presented only in more general terms, focusing on the main political actors and their conflicting perceptions, the internal dynamic of Moldovan nationalisms, as well as on some materialized policies. Contrastingly, the policies pursued by Romania are submitted to in depth analysis. The different measures taken in the framework of the Moldova-policy of Romania are presented in a detailed manner.

The primary source for this research is represented by the records of the Romanian parliamentary debates between 1990 and 2007 published in the *Monitorul Oficial al României, Partea a II-a* (Official Bulletin of Romania, Section II). This seems to be most comprehensive accessible source for reconstructing the context of the policies pursued by Romania. Of course, it would be better to use also the records of the Governmental debates, but those are not available to the public.

The paper is structured into six chapters. The first chapter contains the literature review and presents the conceptual framework of the analysis. The second chapter serves with some additional notes concerning the historical background of the Romanian–Moldovan relationships. The third chapter contains the description of the rival nation building projects in Moldova after 1989 and their development. The fourth, fifth, and sixth chapters deal with the development of the Romanian nation building policies. The fourth chapter presents the development of Romania's policies toward Moldova focusing on the evolutions in their bilateral relations and the policies launched by Romania for getting tighter the relationship between the two states and people. The fifth chapter presents the functioning of these measures taken by Romania, while the sixth chapter reveals the internal Romanian political debates regarding the relationship with Moldova focusing on the general perceptions about the Moldova-policy, and the main political forces committed to it.

Chapter 1. The conceptual framework of the analysis

The fall of Communism brought the phenomenon of ethnic-kin relations cutting across state boundaries again to the fore. Besides generating fierce political debates, the transnational aspect of nationhood/ethnicity also provoked academic controversies over the norms and reality of nation states, nation-building, minority protection, and other related concepts. Furthermore, the new awareness about this issue gave birth to many scientific researches adopting different approaches. This chapter aims to sketch the conceptual framework of the analysis, thus to provide explanations for the concepts used for denominating the analyzed phenomena, the context of the emergence of the conflictual situation, the main approaches for analysis adopted in the literature, as well as the approach adopted for the proposed analysis.

Following the logic of the title of the thesis this presentation proceeds in four sections. The first sketches the usage of the concept of "nation building" as referring to practices within the state and its trans-border dimension. The second introduces the post-Communist European context of nation building in an attempt to underline its specificity as opposed to the Western European context. The third presents the literature review on transethnic issues. The final section reviews the literature on the nation building policies of Romania and Moldova, defines the main objectives of the research.

1.1. The concept of "nation building"

According to Kolstø, the term "nation building" came into usage in the 1950's and 1960's among history oriented political scientists, such as Karl Deutsch, Charles Tilly, and Reinhard Bendix.[1] The theories labeled by this architectural metaphor were primarily used to describe the process of national integration and consolidation that led to the establishment of

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[1] Pål Kolstø: *Political Construction Sites. Nation-Building in Russia and the Post-Soviet States*. Westview Press, Boulder, 2000, p. 16.

the modern nation states. As Kolstø summarized it, the process under scrutiny contained the conscious strategies initiated by state leaders, as well as the unplanned societal changes that occurred within the borders of a state.[2] It may be noticed that this approach implicitly set the political frontiers as primary in defining the boundaries of the nation.

At this point it has to be mentioned that the literature on nationalisms is divided on how the term nation has been defined in relation to the state.[3] One of the most frequently drawn distinctions is that between the political and cultural, or between civic and ethnic definitions of nation. According to this dichotomy, nations are defined on the basis of political community (citizenship), or on the basis of common ethnicity or culture.

Although, as Brubaker asserted, this distinction is highly problematic from an analytic point of view and contains some embedded normative ambiguities as well,[4] it highlights an important aspect concerning the possibility of the usage of the term "nation building". It may denote policies acting within the state, thus targeting the nation as political community, but it may also purport the policies targeting minority groups living outside the borders defined as members of the nation in ethnocultural terms. Brubaker suggested that while adopting an analytical stance one should handle ethnicity and nation as „practical categories, cultural idioms, cognitive schemas, discursive frames, organizational routines, institutional forms, political projects and contingent events".[5] Now, according to Kántor, in this approach the concept of nation building may be interpreted as a process or politics that may invoke one or

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[2] Ibidem.
[3] For a detailed overwiew see Anthony D. Smith: *Myths and Memories of the Nation*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, 1999, pp. 3–27.
[4] Brubaker Rogers: Myths and Misconceptions in the Study of Nationalism. In: John A. Hall (ed.): *The State of the Nation: Ernest Gellner and the Theory of Nationalism*, Cambridge, 1998, pp. 272–305.
Rogers Brubaker: *Ethnicity Without Groups*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2004, pp. 132–146. In this latter writing Brubaker offered the concepts of *state-framed* and *counter-state* understandings of nationhood and nationalisms [pp. 144–146].
[5] Brubaker cited by Kántor, see below.

another definition of the nation depending on the context, more exactly the particular targets set by different actors.[6]

In order to differentiate between the two aspects of nation building policy the term of *kin-state policy* has to be introduced, which denotes the policies directed toward the members of the nation living beyond the borders. This term was gradually accepted by scholars after in 2001 the European Commission for Democracy Through Law (Venice Commission) introduced the following terms: *kin-minority* for people sharing the ethnicity of the majority in one state but living in another state; *kin-state* for the country having ethnic kin minority groups beyond its borders; and *home-state*, for the minority's country of residence.[7] There are many terms in the literature denoting these categories: "diaspora", "national minority", "nation abroad", "ethnonational kin abroad" for kin-minority; "homeland" for kin-state; or "host-state" for home state, "diaspora policy" for kin-state policy, etc.[8] Nevertheless, I will use the concepts in conformity to the Commission's usage.

1.2. Nation building in post-Communist Europe

This section aims to answer the question of what is particular in post-Communist nation building processes. In the following I will present two arguments about the peculiarity of the post-Communist situation. The first is Brubaker's opinion that the distinguishing feature is the emergence of three different and competing types of nationalisms. The second is Kymlicka's argument concerning the securitization of ethnic relationships.

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[6] Kántor Zoltán: "The Concept of Nations in Central and East European 'Status Laws'". In: Osamu Ieda et al. (eds.): *Beyond Sovereignty. From Status Law to Transnational Citizenship*. Slavic Eurasian Studies, No. 9, Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido University, Sapporo, 2006, p. 44.
[7] Osamu Ieda: "Post-communist Nation Building and the Status Law Syndrome in Hungary". In: Kántor Zoltán et al. (eds.): *The Hungarian Status Law: Nation Building and/or Minority Protection*. Slavic Eurasian Studies, No. 4, Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido University, Sapporo, 2004, p. 8.
[8] Ibidem.

According to Brubaker, the recent reconfiguration of political space is similar to the events following the First World War, because both led to the emergence of three distinct and mutually antagonistic nationalisms: the "nationalizing" nationalism of newly independent states, the homeland nationalism (in this paper kin-state nationalism) and the minority nationalism.[9] The "nationalizing" nationalism involves claims made in the name of the "core nation" defined in ethnocultural terms and targets "compensatory" projects by using state power to promote the specific interest in order to rectify discrimination against the nation before its attained independence. Directly challenging this type of nationalism, the homeland nationalisms (kin-state nationalism) claim to protect the interest of their national kin in these nationalizing states. Caught between these mutually antagonistic nationalisms are the national minorities pursuing their own nationalism.[10]

Although the triadic national interplay has not been confined only to Europe, Brubaker argues that the *locus classicus* was interwar East Central Europe, and a similar situation emerged after the post-communist reorganization.[11] Many studies support this argument, and I will return later to the literature handling the dynamics between these nationalisms. Concerning the nationalizing nationalism of the newly formed states, Culic demonstrated through the analysis of the new constitutions and related legislations that the state building of post-Communist countries was conceived as vigorous nation building.[12] Other studies, for example the report provided by the Venice Commission or Fowler's analysis pinpointed that the interest in institutionalizing kin-state relationship is also widespread through Central and

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[9] Brubaker, Rogers: *Nationalism Reframed. Nationhood and the national question in the New Europe*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996.
[10] Brubaker, op. cit., pp. 1–6.
[11] Brubaker, op. cit., pp. 6–7.
[12] Irina Culic: "State Building and Constitution Writing in Central and Eastern Europe after 1989". In: *REGIO*, 2003, pp. 38–58.

Eastern Europe.[13] Some examples for states that provided both strong internal nation building and kin-state policies are Croatia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Ukraine.

Supplementing the above described theory, Kymlicka argued that the distinct feature of the post-Communist Central and East European situation (as compared to the West) is the securitization of ethnic relations.[14] While in Western countries the minority issues became integrated in the framework of "normal" democratic politics, in post-Communist countries the minorities are commonly perceived as a potential fifth column who are likely to collaborate with neighboring enemies, particularly when the neighbor is the kin-state of the minority concerned. Kymlicka enumerated the following three factors exacerbating the securitization of ethnic relations: minorities are potentially irredentist minorities with loyalty to a neighboring kin-state (or perceived as such); these kin-states are former imperial powers which have historically subordinated the national groups which now form a majority; and there are no security arrangements in the region.

1.3. Approaches to the analysis of transnational ethnic issues

Three approaches to the issue of the transborder dimension of ethnicity can be distinguished: security studies and theories for the emergence of ethnic violence, legal studies and analyzes dealing with the evolution of nation policies. Of course, these approaches may overlap.

Due to the fact that the relationship between the ethnic groups, the state in which they live, and the governments that might claim to represent them is often conflictual, the last

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[13] European Comission for Democracy Through Law: *Report of the Preferential Treatement of National Minorities by their Kin-states* (CDL-INF, 2001). [http://www.venice.coe.int/docs/2001/CDL(2001)095-e.asp], 2007-05-25.
Bridig Fowler: "Fuzziing Citizenship, Nationalizing Political Space: A Framework for Interpreting the "Hungarian Status Law" as a New Form of Kin-state Policy in Central and Eastern Europe." In: Kántor Zoltán et al. (eds.), op. cit, pp. 177–238.
[14] Will Kymlicka: *Multicultural Odysseys: Navigating the New International Politics of Diversity.* Chapter 6. Manuscript [forthcoming Oxford University Press, 2007]

decade witnessed the emergence of a vast literature of security studies and theories for the emergence of ethnic violence.[15] Within this framework considerable attention is given to how the stance of the kin-minorities influences the domestic and foreign affairs of the kin-state.[16]

The second main body of literature focuses on legal issues and the institutional design of the kin-state policies. One branch of this literature focuses on international legal norms, and in this framework bilateral treaties play a very important role.[17] However, even more attention has been paid recently to the unilateral actions promoted by kin-states, targeting the integration of the kin-minority abroad through law, for example citizenship laws, status and/or benefit laws.[18]

The third body of literature deals with the evolution of nation-policies. Consequently, it embraces all the formerly mentioned topics. Concerning the interaction among the nationalism of minorities, the "nationalizing" nationalism of the home states, and the kin-state nationalism, the most important analytical model was developed by Rogers Brubaker, who argued that these three fields are bound together in a single, interdependent relational nexus.[19] In this triangular interaction the central aspect is reciprocal monitoring, which involves selective attention, interpretation and representation. Often, the interpretation of other fields is

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[15] See the literature review on this topic by King and Melvin. Charles King and Neil J Melvin.: "Diaspora Politics. Ethnic Linkages, Foreign Policy and Security in Eurasia." In: *International Security*, Vol. 24., No. 3, 1999–2000/Winter, pp. 108–138.
For a review of theories concerning ethnic violence in Post-Cold War era see Pål Kolstø: "Introduction". In Kolstø, Pål (ed.): *National Integration and Violent Conflict in Post-Soviet Societies. The Cases of Estonia and Moldova*. Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Lanham/Boulder/New York/Oxford, 2002, pp.5 –25.
[16] Shain, Yossi and Barth, Aharon: "Diasporas and International Relations Theory". In: *International Organization*, Vol. 57, No. 3, 2003, Summer, pp. 449–479.
[17] Arie Bloed and Pieter van Dijk (eds.): *Protection of Minority Rights Through Bilateral Treaties. The Case of Central and Eastern Europe*. Kluwer Law International, Hague/ London/ Boston, 1999.
[18] Kántor Zoltán et al. (eds.), op. cit.
Halász Iván: "Models of Kin Minority Protection in Central and Eastern Europe". In: Osamu Ieda et al. (eds.), op. cit, pp. 255–279.
Kiss Ilona and McGovern Catherine (eds.): *New Diasporas in Hungary, Russia and Ukraine: Legal Regulations and Current Politics*. Open Society Institute, Constitutional and Legal Policy Institute, 2000.
[19] Brubaker, op. cit., pp. 1–22, 55–69.

contested and it becomes the object of representational struggles among actors in the given field.[20]

A very important point of this analytical approach is that kin-states – as well as the other two fields – are constructed through political action, not predetermined by the facts of ethnic demography. The major consequence of this claim is that assuming the role of kin-state will differ from state to state, moreover the kin-state policies promoted by the very same state may diverge for "its" minority groups living in different countries. There are three conditions which must be fulfilled for a state to become a kin-state: first, political elites have to define the ethnic kin as "belonging" to the nation; the elite has to assert that the minority group's condition should be monitored and their interest protected and promoted by the state; third, the state has to actually take action along these lines. However, the debate about whether to assume this role or not also depends on the questions about the content of policies directed toward the kin minority.[21]

Following Brubaker's conceptualization, several authors applied the method in analyzing the development of nationalisms, some of them developing the analytical tool further. Several new factors had been introduced, the most important being the international integrative forces.

For instance, the volume edited by Mandelbaum contains the analysis of trans-border ethnic relationships in the case of Hungarians, Russians, Serbs and Albanians in the period stemming from the appearance of "new diasporas" (kin-minorities) and 1999.[22] Special attention is given to the influences of the international environment, which plays different roles in the case of each kin-state: for example, the West is a model for Hungary, acts as a

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[20] Brubaker, op. cit., p. 68.
[21] Brubaker, op. cit., p. 58.
[22] Michael Mandelbaum (ed.): *The New European Diasporas. National Minorities and Conflict in Eastern Europe.* Council of Foreign Relations Press, New York, 2000.

deterrent for Russia, actually intervenes in the Serb and Albanian cases, and also affects the home-state's policies.[23]

The researches collected in the volume edited by King and Melvin attempted to mark out genuinely causal connections within the triadic "relational fields of nationalisms". [24] The volume explores the political salience of trans-border ethnic populations for the domestic politics and international relations of the Soviet successor states. As the editors concluded, despite the different types of policies pursued, the evidence presented in this volume does point to common patterns and a common set of causal factors. The factors that help to explain both the sources and effectiveness of "diaspora" politics are the following: 1) domestic politics within the kin-state (hindering factors are for example powerful ethnic minorities within the state, dissensus within the political elite, in case the "diaspora" presents a direct threat to the position of political actors, etc.); 2) the organization and resources of the minority; 3) the foreign policy priorities and constrains of the kin-state (for example European integration, membership in international organizations, relations with the home state); 4) interethnic relations within the home-state; and 5) the economic resources available to the kin-states.[25]

Similarly, Huber and Mickey argue that kin-state policy is often driven by domestic politics (strategic or geopolitical interests) rather than the concern for the fate of the co-ethnics, policies that can considerably worsen interstate relations. Beside some of the previously enumerated factors they pointed out that shared history in a common state, geographic proximity, and contemporary economic and social ties may also serve as a basis for a country's self-image as a kin-state. Although the study does not contain comprehensive empirical evidence for sustaining the argumentation, the note concerning the actors involved

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[23] Mandelbaum: "Introduction". In: Mandelbaum (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 8–15.
[24] Charles King and Neil Melvin (eds.): *Nations Abroad. Diaspora Politics and International Relations in the Former Soviet Union*. Westview Press, Boulder, 1998.
[25]Melvin and King: "Conclusion: Diasporas, International Relations, and Post-Soviet Eurasia". In: King and Melvin, *op. cit.*, pp. 218–224.

in kin-state policies is worth attention. The study stresses that in addition to government representatives, other actors might be involved in propagating kin-state behaviour as well, for example political parties, media outlets, and different non-governmental entities, such as churches, charitable organizations, or commercial enterprises. [26]

1.4. The nation building policies of Romania and Moldova

The relationship between Romania and the Republic of Moldova has been one of the most challenging interstate problems in post-communist Europe. The shifts and turns of this relationship were centered on the questions of national unity: whether or not the two people formed a single Romanian nation; and (or consequently) whether or not the Moldovan territories annexed by the Soviet Union should reunite with Romania. To sketch it simply, the Romanian side and some part of the Moldovan elite sustains that in ethnocultural terms the majority population from Romania and Moldova belong to the Romanian nation, conversely, the other part of the Moldovan elite argues that between the "core" population of Moldova and the Romanians no ethnic affiliation exists, thus do not form the same nation.

Using the terminology introduced in the previous subchapters, the conflict emerged between the external nation building policy of Romania, that is, Romania's kin-state policies directed toward Moldova, and the internal nation building of Moldova, in other words the nationalizing nationalism of the newly formed Republic of Moldova.

However, as compared to the relational nexus described by Brubaker this case presents several specificities:

1)   Instead of the triadic construction of two states and a minority group, this case involves just two states, because Moldova, the former province of Romania, with the

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[26] Konrad Huber and Robert W. Mickey: "Defining the Kin-state. An Analysis of its Role and Prescription for Moderating its Impact". In: Bloed, Arie and van Dijk, Pieter (eds.): *Protection of Minority Rights Through Bilateral Treaties. The Case of Central and Eastern Europe*. Kluwer Law International, Hague/ London/ Boston, 1999, pp. 23–28.

dissolution of the Soviet federation gained the status of a sovereign state. Thus, Romania's external nation building policies are directed toward an ethnic kin group that forms the "core nation" of a state.

2) At its turn the nationalizing nationalism of Moldova shows specificities as well, because since gaining independence the Moldovan internal affaires were heavily charged with debates concerning the question "What is the 'core nation' of Moldova? It is Romanian or Moldovan?" The immediate consequences of answering this question were related to defining the relationship with Romania: in case there are ethnic kin relations between the two people, the two states were supposed to build special relations even to reunite, and contrastingly, if the core nation is identified as Moldovan there is no need for tightening the relations. As a consequence, two rival nation building projects were present in Moldova, one of them being in conflict with the external nation building projects of Romania.

Concerning the impact of nationalist discourse and policies on the internal and external status of Romania and Moldova, and on the political stability of Eastern Europe in general, several examples might be selectively mentioned. First, as authors like Neukirch and King noticed, the unification issue dominated the nationality discourse of the Russophones and the Gagauz minority living in Moldova, and among others served as a motive for the emergence of two secessionist movements, the ethnic conflict from Transdniestria escalating to a full-scale armed conflict.[27] Second, the research of Iordachi revealed that the Romanian citizenship law favoring Moldovan citizens had a strong destabilizing effect on Moldova's internal political life, caused considerable strain between the two countries, and also stirred

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[27] Claus Neukirch: "The Case of the Gagauz Territorial Autonomy in the Republic of Moldova". In: Kinga Gál (ed.): *Minority Governance in Europe*. Budapest, 2002. (Series on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues, Vol. I). [http://www.ecmimoldova.org/Gagauzia.115.0.html], 2006-12-16. Charles King: *The Moldovans. Romania, Russia and the Politics of Culture*. Stanford University, Stanford, 2001.

the concerns of the European Union, because of the massive influx of new citizens to the acceding Romania.[28]

Despite the strong impact and the ambiguous nature of this relationship, the issue has been subject to rather limited scholarly research. More prevalent are those studies that deal with the Moldovan nation building before and after 1989, stressing the continuity between the Soviet project of "Moldovanism" and the nationalizing nationalism of the newly independent state. Less literature deals exactly with the dynamics of this relationship between Romania's and Moldova's policies. Finally, the studies aiming to describe the institutional background of Romania's kin-state policies and that of the interstate relations have to be mentioned as well.

The most prominent monograph about Moldovan nation building was written by King, who argued that Moldova exhibited the case of "failed" nationalism, which still oscillates between the Romanian and Moldovan rival definitions of national identity.[29] The analysis focuses primarily on the Soviet nation building projects propagated in Moldova, thus the construction of a distinct Moldovan nation, and the ability of political elites to manipulate culture. However comprehensive this study would be, it dedicates just a narrow space to the interaction between the Romanian and Moldovan nation building policies after 1990. This link is similarly missing in the writings of Bruchis[30], or in the volume edited by Dyer, which contains analyzes of historical, linguistic, and cultural debates over the meanings of the two rival versions of the titular group's identity in Moldova, stressing the artificial nature of Moldovanness.[31]

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[28] Constantin Iordachi: "Dual Citizenship and Policies toward Kin-Minorities in East-Central Europe: A Comparison between Hungary, Romania, and the Republic of Moldova." In: Zoltán Kántor et. al. (eds.), op. cit., pp. 239–269.
[29] Charles King: *The Moldovans. Romania, Russia, and the Politics of Culture*. Hoover Institution Press, Stanford, 2000.
[30] Michael Bruchis: *The Republic of Moldavia. From the Collapse of the Soviet Empire to the Restoration of the Russian Empire*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1996.
[31] Donald L. Dyer (ed.): *Studies in Moldovan. The History, Culture, Language and Contemporary Politics of the People of Moldova*. Boulder, East European Monographs, 1996.

Notwithstanding this, there are a few studies focusing exactly on the nature of this relationship. Iordachi explores the impact of Romanian citizenship policies in a comparative perspective, focusing on the revival of contrasting and overlapping definitions of citizenship in Romania, Hungary and Moldova after 1989, and the resulting diplomatic tensions over dual citizenship (between Romania and Moldova because of the Romanian citizenship law) and symbolic national membership granted to kin-minorities (between Romania and Hungary because of the Hungarian Status Law).[32] Another study is authored by Cojocaru, who offers a documentation of the basic dilemmas of the bilateral relations in the 1989–1992 period.[33] It is centered on the question of unification of the two countries, and presents the shift from the unionist policies to increasing divergence on this topic. The changing patterns of the Romanian–Moldovan relationship are exposed as a complex outcome of the historical legacy, the agency of the political elites in both countries, and the geopolitical context in Eastern Europe. However, the shortcoming of these studies is that they concentrate either on a single issue or a rather limited period of time.

The third approach to this topic appears in studies that deal with Romania's institutional background for its kin-state policy directed toward Moldova. These are studies that may be included into the legal and institutional category in the literature classification presented in the third subchapter. For example the study of Solomon should be mentioned here, which contains a chronological assessment of interparliamentary and intergovernmental cooperation between Moldova and Romania from 1990 to 2000, focusing on the institutional background and the fields of cooperation.[34]

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[32] Iordachi, op. cit.

[33] Gheorghe Cojocaru: *Colapsul URSS şi dilema relaţiilor Româno-Române* [The Collapse of the Soviet Union and the Dilemmas of the Romanian – Romanian Relations]. Omega, Bucureşti, 2001.

[34] Constantin Solomon: "Un deceniu de colaborare dintre Republica Moldova şi România" [A Decade of Cooperation between the Republic of Moldova and Romania]. In: Flavius Solomon and Alexandru Zub (eds.): *Basarabia. Dilemele identităţii* [Basarabia. Dilemmas of Identity]. Fundaţia Academică "A. D. Xenopol", Iaşi, 2001.

My previous research may be included in this framework as well, a study in which I analyzed Romania's kin-state nationalism between 1990 and 2004 from a legal perspective.[35] One of the most important results was that the kin-state policy toward Moldova has materialized in a whole range of supportive measures, moreover, enjoyed a special position among Romania's kin-state policies. Yet the policy itself was characterized by a great deal of incoherence during the studied period and the most important legal norms have been abrogated until 2003.

Despite the existence of detailed information about the institutional background and the content of supportive policies, there are many questions that remain unanswered: Why were some institutions set up? Why some of them became dissolved out of the blue? Why the amounts of the specific fund set up for financing Moldovan projects do fluctuate? Why some rights guaranteed to Moldovan citizens are abrogated? –, and the questions could continue. These puzzling issues could have not been solved in the framework set by this research, due to the fact that by analyzing legal acts we cannot understand the reasoning and the motivation underlying the actual political decision that gained legal force.

Yet, the literature presented in this subchapter does not bring us close enough to answering these questions. The analysis proposed for this paper is a continuation of my previous research aiming to "contextualize" the legal background of the Romanian policies directed toward Moldova.

For this purpose the analytical model set by Brubaker and its further developments seems the most proper approach. Thus, in handling the issue it will be taken into account the dynamic relation between the different fields of nationalisms, the debates occurred within the fields, as well as the influencing domestic and external factors.

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[35] Kiss Ágnes: "Románia határon túli románságpolitikája az 1990–2004 között hatályos jogszabályok tükrében" [Romania's Kin-state Nationalism between 1990–2004: An Analysis of the legal framework]. In: *Magyar Kisebbség* [Hungarian Minority], Vol. 10., No. 35–36, 2005/1–2, pp. 298–353.

Concerning the dynamic relation of nationalisms there will be examined, on one hand, the Moldovan nation building projects and policies, and on the other hand, the Romanian nation building policy. The reason for offering a detailed overview about the Moldovan perceptions and policies is to present the target of Romania's external nation building, which in the mean time – based on the interlinked relationship of nationalisms –can be considered the most important influencing factor in molding the Romanian policies. Regarding the Romanian kin-state policies, besides the feedbacks coming from Moldova a special focus will be directed to identify the international influences and geopolitical interests of Romania that could have provoke the changes occurred in the kin-state policies.

Given the constructed nature of these fields of nationalisms (Brubaker) the analysis will cover the debates occurred within the fields as well. Thus, besides the outputs of the Romanian external nation building policy (being this present in the form of declarations or specific legal measures), the internal political debates from Romania about assuming the role of the kin-state will be examined too. With this dimension of the analysis it can be revealed the opinions and attitudes about the Moldova-policy among the Romanian officials.

A further aim of this analysis is to give deeper insight in the functioning of the supportive system, in other words the measures taken in favor of Moldova or the Moldovan citizens. Of course, the functioning of this system is intimately linked to the previously mentioned issues, namely the dynamic of the relationship between the nation building policies of the two states and the political will of the Romanian officials.

For data collection the primary sources used in this research are the records of the Romanian parliamentary debates for the period between 1990 and 2007, published in *Monitorul Oficial al României, Partea a II-a* (Official Bulletin of Romania, Section II).[36]

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[36] To facilitate and curtail the searching for topics related to Romanian kin-state issues, the online database of the Chamber of Deputies was used as well. The database contains records for the following periods: 1996 – 2007 sittings of the Chamber of Deputies and the joint sittings of the Chambers of Deputies and Senate; and 2002 – 2007 for the Senate. [www.cdep.ro], 2007-05-30.

This source is very rarely used in analyzes regarding the kin-state policies directed toward Moldova, rather the media declarations are favored for monitoring the developments in the bilateral relations and Romania's commitment to assuming the role of the kin-state. However, the parliamentary records contain useful information concerning the "construction" of the external nation building policy: the main political forces behind the Moldova-policy, the debates regarding this issue, information about the functioning of the system, and other. Despite the fact that it can not be sustained that I have found all parliamentary speeches dealing with Moldova, the number of speeches selected (about 600 interventions) and the distribution during the studied period assures a comprehensive material for analysis.

Concerning the delimitation of the filed of research it has to be mentioned that only the activity of the governmental actors will be analyzed, thus, the civil organizations or the churches will be omitted, although as Huber and Mickey suggested they might play an important role in propagating the kin-state policies. Indeed some Romanian civil organizations strongly committed to pursue the idea of common national belonging are in continuous contact with civil organizations with similar profile from Moldova; likewise, the Romanian Orthodox Church has tight relations with the Bessarabian Orthodox Church from Moldova that is the rival institution of the Moldovan Orthodox Church. Nevertheless, due to space restriction the analysis will not include their activity.

Chapter 2. Historical reference points in the relationship between Romania and Moldova

In order to understand the context of the bilateral relations between Romania and Moldova after 1989, as well as the competing nation-building projects within Moldova, some crucial historical events have to be discussed. Instead of an exhaustive elaboration, the following presentation serves with complementary information to those reference points that frequently appear in the discourse about the relationship between the two states and their people. Furthermore, there will be depicted those periods and national policies that had a strong impact on the construction of the Moldovan national identity and serve as a basis for current Moldovanness–Romanianness debates.

The Republic of Moldova is located between Romania and Ukraine being bordered by the Prut River to the west and the Dniester River to the East. In the Middle Ages its territory belonged to the Principality of Moldova, which emerged in the 14th century and achieved its zenith under the reign of Stefan the Great (Ştefan cel Mare, 1457–1504) who managed to defend the territories bordered by the Eastern Carpathian Mountains, the Dniester River and the Black Sea from Ottoman expansion. Nevertheless, from the beginning of the 16th century the Principality became a vassal state of the Ottoman Empire and this situation lasted until 1812, when with the Treaty of Bucharest the Sublime Porta ceded its eastern half, the territory between the Prut and Dniester Rivers, to the Russian Empire where it was given the name of "Bessarabia".[37] As a consequence, these territories were left out from the nation building projects that emerged after the unification in 1859 of the western part of Moldova with the neighboring Wallachia, a union that later took the name of Romania.[38]

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[37] For the history of Moldova/Bessarabia see: Wim P. van Meurs: *The Bassarabian Question in Communist Historiography. Nationalist and Communist Politics and History-Writing*. East European Monographs, Columbia University Press, New York, 1994, pp. 33–104; King op. cit.; Dyer (ed.) op. cit.

[38] According to King, the Moldovans had been absent from the following defining moments in the emergence of the pan–Romanian national consciousness: the rebellion against the Ottomans in 1821, tha standardization and

After the Russian Revolution, in December 1917 the Moldavian People's Republic was declared which was to be part of the envisaged Russian Federation, and then in February 1918 full independence was proclaimed. Having to choose between the Bolsheviks and Bucharest, and under the influence of pan-Romanian nationalism that was spread by intellectuals since the beginning of the century, the Bessarabian National Assembly voted for a union with the Kingdom of Romania on the 27th of March 1918. However, a long list of conditions was attached to the proclamation of unification, the most important two demands being the land reform and provincial autonomy for Bessarabia.[39]

Yet the integration into Romania was far from being unproblematic. Contrarily to the Bessarabian expectations life in Greater Romania turned to be a great disappointment. Bessarabia remained the most underdeveloped region of Romania and the Bessarabian politicians were effectively oppressed by the centralized administrative system. The reforms introduced by Bucharest, for example the Latin script, the Gregorian calendar, and even the new shop opening hours were met with great hostility.[40]

After its incorporation into Romania the question of Bessarabia remained a contested issue between the Soviet Union and Romania. Following a breakdown in negotiations, the Soviets established in 1924 the Moldovan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic on the Eastern Part of the Dniester River, and waited to annex to it the "occupied territories". The propitious opportunity was provided by the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact in 1939 that was accompanied by a secret protocol in which the spheres of influence were divided between Germany and the Soviet Union. According to the appendix of the pact, Bessarabia belonged

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Latinization of the Romanian language and alphabet in the 1850's and 1860's, the creation of the unified Romanian state in 1859, the founding of the Romanian dynastic house in 1866 and 1881, and the achievement of independence from the Porte in 1878. See Charles King: "The Ambivalence of Authenticity, or How the Moldovan Language was made". In: *Slavic Review*, Vol. 58, No. 1., Spring, 1999, p.120.

[39] van Meur, op. cit., pp. 66–61.

[40] Cristina Petrescu: "Construcția identității naționale în Basarabia" [The construction of national identity in Bessarabia]. In: Monica Heintz (ed.): *Stat slab, cetățenie incertă. Studii despre Republica Moldova* [Week State, ambiguous citizenship. Studies about the Republic of Moldova]. Curtea Veche, Bucuresti, 2007,pp. 127–153. Charles King: "Moldovan Identity and the Politics of Pan-Romanianism". In: *Slavic Review*, Vol. 53, No. 2., Summer, 1994, p. 348.

to the Soviet sphere of influence. Without fear of German interference the Soviet Union in June 1940 forcefully annexed Bessarabia and finally the armistice as well as the final peace treaty (Paris, 1947) sealed its sovereignty in Bessarabia. Already in 1940 the Soviet Supreme decided that the new Moldavian Union Republic should comprise only the western half of the former Autonomous Republic and the central portion of Bessarabia. The remaining territories (northern and southern parts, as well as the eastern parts of the Autonomous Republic) were incorporated into the Ukrainian Union Republic. This status quo lasted until 1991.[41]

The most salient information from this short presentation of the history of Moldova is that except for barely 30 years in the first half of the 20th century, the Moldovans lived in the last 200 years incorporated in the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. It becomes obvious that the main shaping factors in the construction of the Moldovan national identity have to be searched in the period of tsarist and Soviet rule. As different authors exhaustively described, the tsarist and Soviet national policies were targeted to construct a distinct Moldovan identity, and what is even more important, this distinguished identity was constructed against the Romanian one. The purpose of these policies was to assure the loyalty of the annexed territories in order to prevent irredentist claims.[42]

According to van Meurs, the Soviet national policies propagated four myths in relation to the Bessarabian issue: 1) "the lesser evil formula" (the incorporation in the Russian Empire was the better option as compared to Ottoman rule) that was later changed to the "elder brother" conception (the Soviet Union rescued the weaker and younger sibling from its enemies, in this case the Moldovans from the "fascist", "bourgeois nationalist", "colonialist", "imperialist", etc. Romanians); 2) the friendship of peoples (the Moldovan people had been

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[41] van Meurs, op. cit., pp. 79–84.
[42] See King: "The Ambivalence of Authenticity, or How the Moldovan Language was made". In: *Slavic Review*, Vol. 58, No. 1., Spring, 1999, pp. 117–142.

striving for unification with the Russian people for ages); 3) the establishment of the Soviet rule, and 4) the Moldavian nation and language.[43]

The interpretation of these myths was not fixed, rather the actual interpretation of a particular myth varied depending on a multitude of actors on the political and historical level.[44] However, each of them contributed to defining a distinct Moldovan identity.

From these myths the far most important from the Soviet nation policy viewpoint is claiming the existence of a separate *Moldovan language*, because they had regarded linguistic criteria as fundamental for defining the national identity. Consequently, as long as the notion of a separate Moldovan language could be maintained, the idea of a non-Romanian, Moldovan nation remained a viable proposition.[45] To this end, first of all, the Cyrillic script was introduced, as the outward symbol of a different language. Furthermore, to underline the differences, many linguistic studies (about grammar, phonetics, etc.) were propagated and even some Moldovan – Romanian dictionaries appeared. To emphasize the distinctiveness of the language many Slavic worlds were introduced, the language was cleansed from Romanian words and replaced with "Moldovan" neologisms. Several institutions were set up, charged among other things with the developing of the Moldovan language and grammar, like the Moldovan Scientific Committee (1926), and later the Moldovan Academy of Sciences (1961).

In spite of these efforts a revival of pro-Romanian movements appeared in the late 1980's. The explanation, according to King, lies in the artificial nature of the propagated principles about a distinct Moldovan language and nation, as well as in the fact that after the re incorporation into the Soviet Union the efforts to propagate these ideas were much weaker than the activity in the Moldovan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic in the 1924–1940 period.[46] By the 1980's there was little to separate Moldovan from Romanian except the

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[43] van Meurs, op. cit., pp. 149, 194–196, 199, 229.
[44] van Meurs, op. cit., p. 196.
[45] King, op. cit., pp. 123–134.
[46] King, op. cit., p. 140–142.

Cyrillic script. Nevertheless, the propagators of the Moldovannes survived too and keep counter-pointing the Romaniannes discourse.

Concerning the relationship between Romania and Moldova and between the two people, after 1989 three standpoints can be distinguished (these are presented in more detail in the next Chapter 1.): 1) the two people are similar, belong to the Romanian nation and should reunite, a point of view that was propagated by radical pro-Romanian forces on both sides of the Prut river in early 1990's; 2) the two people belong to the Romanian nation but should live in different states, an approach adopted by the majority of pro-Romanian forces; and 3) the Romanian and Moldovan are two distinct people, they speak different languages and have to live in different states, advocated by the adepts of Moldovannes.

Corresponding to their approaches the two radical groups (the first and the third) emphasize different historical events and experiences. For the first group the Great Unification from 1918 bears specific relevance, when Bessarabia, the "doleful daughter of Romania" returned to the "Mother-country", or "the brothers from the two sides of Prut" united. Their aim is to reconstitute Greater Romania, which is considered to represent the "natural borders" (granițele firești) of the Romanian people. In this train of thought the most unfair event in history is represented by the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact.

The third group that echoes the old Soviet principles obviously skips the interwar period, or contrastingly, stresses the bad experiences of those times, and finds the legitimacy of an independent state in the 1917 declaration of independence or in the existence of the Principality of Moldova from the 15th century. While this second option is free from nostalgic overtones of the Communist era, it may carry messages of territorial claims on the detriment of Romania and Ukraine. However bizarre it would sound, during the debates between Romania and Moldova several times indeed appeared this vision of "Ştefan's Moldova" or "crummy Moldova" (Moldova dodoleață), the latest event begin in 2007 (see Chapter 4.).

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Chapter 3. Conflicting nation building projects in Moldova

This chapter presents the development of the rival nation building projects from Moldova since the late 1980 aiming to identify the general trends in the Moldovan nation building policies. The chapter is constituted by five subchapters from wich the first one contains the presentation of the nationalist movement and policies from Moldova between 1989 and 1991, the year of gaining the independence. This is followed by three subchapters presenting separately the minority reactions to the emerging nationalist discourse, and the development of the pro-Romanian and pro-Moldovan forces. The subchapters contain information about the main political parties representing the rival ideas, their political success, and the policies pursued from their emergence up to recent years. The chapter is closed by a summary of the general trends.

3.1. The nationalist movement in Moldova (1989–1991)

In the late 1980's – the heyday of glasnost and perestroika –, many nationalist movements emerged in the republics of the Soviet Union accompanied by major political changes that led to the breakdown of the Communist empire and the formation of new states.[47] A movement came into being in the spring of 1989 in Moldova too, called the *Moldovan Popular Front*. This umbrella organization embraced different opposition forces, as the *Moldavian Democratic Movement in Support of Perestrojka* (1989) created by the reform-oriented intelligentsia, the *Alexe Mateevici Literary and Musical Club* (1987–1988) which was the organization of Moldovan intellectuals representing the Moldovan national movement, many other local organizations and interest groups, as well as the organizations of

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[47] Ronald Grigor Suny: *The Revenge of the Past. Nationalism, Revolution and the Collapse of the Soviet Union.* Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1993, pp. 127–160.

different nationalities, especially Gagauz and Ukrainian who had also suffered under the soviet-style Russification policy and were perceived as potential allies by the Moldovans.[48]

The two basic organizations, the Democratic Movement and the Mateevici Club mutually complemented and reinforced each other: the nationalist movement provided the mass support that the Democratic Movement lacked, in return, this offered a bridge to the moderates within the Communist Party. As a consequence, the election for the Moldavian Supreme Soviet in March 1990 produced a spectacular victory of the Popular Front, and in April reform communist Mircea Snegur was elected Chairman of the Supreme Soviet.[49]

The political program of the Popular Front encompassed all of the current national, political, and socio-economic demands. Among these the primarily national claim – as a clear response to the Soviet national policies –[50] was related to language issues.[51] Due to the public pressure the Latin alphabet was reintroduced and *Moldovan* was made the only official language (August 1989). Soon, a new flag resembling the Romanian and a new anthem similar to that of Romania's was adopted (April 1990), and the name of the country was changed from Russian "Moldavia" to Romanian "Moldova" (May 1990). Finally, on the 27th of August 1991 the Moldovan Parliament declared the full independence of the Republic. One of the clauses of the declaration of independence called for the „liquidation of the political and legal consequences" of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, clause that might be interpreted as pointing toward the union with Romania at least bearing in mind the ideas propagated by the Popular Front.[52]

Having served as an important mobilization resource for a short time, the cultural fever proved to be an impediment in keeping the unity of Moldova's various interest groups.

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[48] van Meurs, op. cit, pp. 94–96; Neukirch, op. cit., p. 2.

[49] van Meurs, op. cit, pp. 95–96.

[50] Remarked by Charles King. Charles King: "Moldovan Identity and the Politics of Pan-Romanianism". In: *Slavic Review*, Vol. 53, No. 2., Summer, 1994, p. 349.

[51] van Meurs, op. cit, pp. 96–97.

[52] Cited by Andrei Panici. Andrei Panici: "Romanian Nationalism in the Republic of Moldova." In: *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics*. Vol. 2, Nr. 2, January 2003, p. 39.

Already by mid-1989, when the nationalistic agenda clearly gained the upper hand against more general demands for democratization and transparency, the leaders representing the different national minority groups from Moldova defected from the movement. Moreover, fault lines appeared among the Moldovan/Romanian political elite as well. While in the first case the conflicts were framed in an interethnic discourse, in this latter case the controversies were centered on the question of the identity of the titular nation, thus the Romaniannes–Moldovannes debate came to the forefront closely connected to the issue of unification with Romania.

Although the leaders representing the national minority groups did not take part directly in the contentions of identity, their movements definitely influenced the evolution of the nation building policies from Moldova. Actually, this dynamic can be derived from the theoretical model set up by Brubaker. Because of their important role, I dedicate the following subsection to the description of the minority reactions to the nationalist discourse. This will be continued by two other sections, the first containing the presentation of the evolution of pro-Romanian forces in the Moldovan political life, while the second the pro-Moldovan forces.

3.2. Minority reactions to the nationalist discourse

According to the 1989 census the Moldovans made up 64.5% of the total population of 4.2 million, the remainder being constituted mostly by Ukrainian (13.8%) and Russian (13%) people, as well as tiny proportions of Gagauzi (3.5%), Bulgarian (2%) and other, much smaller minority groups. The developments of Moldova's political life were perceived by the minorities as threatening their position, and the demands for union with Romania stirred fears even further.[53] The gravest discontent arose because of language issues.

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[53] Claus Neukirch: "The Case of the Gagauz Territorial Autonomy in the Republic of Moldova." In: Kinga Gál (ed.): *Minority Governance in Europe*. Budapest, 2002, Series on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues, Vol. I. [http://www.ecmimoldova.org/Gagauzia.115.0.html], 2006-12-16, pp. 2–3.

The *Moldovan Language Law* passed in August 1989 stipulated that everyone in a position requiring communication with citizens must speak both Moldovan and Russian and compulsory language tests were foreseen within five years. As the Moldovan population could speak Russian to some extent, but only a fraction of non-Moldovans could communicate in the new state language, this affected mostly Russian-speakers, who feared marginalization and discrimination.[54] The situation got even more tensioned after the adoption of the national symbols resembling those of Romania and the declaration of independence.[55]

As a response to the Moldovan legislation different political parties representing the minorities were constituted, but two radical reactions could be witnessed as well: the secessionist movements of the Gagauzi, and the Russophones from Transnistria. It has to be stressed that beside the ethnic overtones of the conflicts an important role is played by ideological reasons, namely a strong pro-Communist attitude opposing the regime change.

One of the most powerful minority organizations is the "Unitate-Edinstvo" Movement constituted in 1992, which represents the Russians and Ukrainians from the country, as well as different Russophile interest groups. At the 1994 elections the organization formed an electoral block with the Socialist Party of Moldova with similar electoral profile and became a considerable force in the Parliament.[56] This formation categorically opposes to getting tighter the relations between Romania and Moldova and militates for integration with Russia instead. Furthermore, the organization was the undeclared ally of the Democratic Agrarian Party, the main proponent of Moldovanism in the early 1990's.[57]

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[54] Charles King: *The Moldovans. Romania, Russia and the Politics of Culture.* Stanford University, Stanford, 2000, pp. 120–129.
[55] Minorities at Risk: *Chronology for Slavs in Moldova.* [http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/mar/chronology.asp?groupId=35902], 2006-12-18.
[56] Association for Participatory Democracy "ADEPT": *1994 Parliamentary Elections.* [http://www.parties.e-democracy.md/en/electionresults/1994parliamentary/], 2007-05-21.
[57] Marian Enache and Dorin Cimpoeşu: Misiune diplomatică în Republica Moldova, 1993-1997. [Diplomatic mission in the Republic of Moldova, 1993-1997.] Polirom, Iaşi, 2000, p. 262.

The secessionist movements emerged much earlier. In November 1989, the *Gagauz Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic* was proclaimed, whose status changed later to *Gagauz Soviet Socialist Republic* as a sovereign republic within the Soviet Union.[58] Several months later, in September 1990, the *Dniestrian Socialist Soviet Republic* was declared too. Neither of them was recognized by Moldova or the Soviet Union but their orders to retract the declarations were not met by the secessionist parties.[59]

Apart from the fact that both groups claimed independence based on the principle of self-determination, their cases are highly different. The Gagauz are a small of Christian-Orthodox Turk people living in the Southern part of Moldova, in an extremely poor region.[60] Conversely, Transdniestria has inhabitants belonging to different ethnic groups but an absolute majority (53.8%) constituted by Russians and Ukrainians, and due to the privileged position in the Soviet industrial policies it is one of the richest regions in Moldova.[61] While Transdniestria became the site of a violent although short lived war that lasted in the period December 1991 – June 1992,[62] the conflict erupted in the region inhabited by the Gagauz minority did not escalate to a fully-fledged military confrontation.

Yet, the most important difference is that at the end of 1994 the Gagauz region became reintegrated into Moldova, while Transdniestria did not. After several years of negotiations Gagauz Yeri gained the status of an autonomous territorial unit bestowed with large-scale competencies. As a clear response to the fears of the perspective of union with Romania, Article 1(4) from the *Law on the Special Juridical Status of Gagauzia* enunciates that "[i]n case of a change of the status of the Republic of Moldova as an independent state, the people

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[58] Neukirch, op. cit., p. 3.
[59] Minorities at Risk: *Chronology for Slavs in Moldova*.
[http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/mar/chronology.asp?groupId=35902], 2006-12-18.
[60] Neukirch, op. cit., p. 4.
[61] King, op. cit., pp. 185–186.
[62] Fight between Moldovan and Transdniestrian forces left over 1.000 dead or wounded and produced 130.000 internally displaced persons and refugees who fled to Ukraine, Russia, and the rest of Moldova. The Moldovan assault on Transdniestrian forces in Bender on the 19th of June 1992 resulted in the bloodiest reprisal, then on the next day the 14th Army of Russia intervened alongside Transdniestrian troops. See: King, op. cit., pp. 189–196.

of Gagauzia shall have the right of external self-determination."[63] Contrastingly, all negotiations failed in the case of Transnistria, which since then functions as a *de facto* state. It turned to be a hardliner communists and Moscow-backed Russian nationalist entity.[64]

3.3. Promoters of Romaniannes

Since 1990 some factions of the *Moldovan Popular Front* explicitly called for union with Romania. The claims were based on the linguistic and ethnic affiliation between the two people, arguing that the majority from Moldova should be called Romanians and the language spoken by them is actually Romanian. Another argument of high account was the historical-political fact that Moldova was part of Romania between the two World Wars as the result of the "free choice of people". In 1992, the Front transformed itself from a mass movement to a political party and included in its statute an overt commitment to union: "The Christian Democratic Popular Front maintains its status as a national, unionist movement, whose major objective is the reintegration in the Unitary Romanian State." In order not to add legitimacy to the existence of a separate state, the Front even rejected the name "Republic of Moldova" in favor of "Bessarabia".[65]

The radicalization of the Popular Front (CDPF) led to its political marginalization. On one hand, as a consequence of the obstinate attachment to the pro-unification agenda the party split, on the other hand the popular support of the Front's program considerably decreased. Several members and parliamentary deputies defected to other newly formed parties and finally in April 1993 the *Congress of Intelligentsia* seceded from the CDPF, a group

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[63] For a detailed accounts about the settlement of the Gagauz conflict see: Neukirch op. cit.; Jeff Chinn and Steven D. Roper: "Territorial Autonomy in Gagauzia." In: *Nationalities Papers*, Vol. 26, No. 1, 1998, p. 95–100.
[64] For a detailed account about endeavors for settlement of the Transnistrian conflict see: International Crisis Group: *Moldova. Regional Tensions Over Transnistria*. Europe Report No. 157, Chişinău/ Brussels, 2004 [http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/europe/moldova/157_moldova_regional_tensions_over_transdnie stria.pdf], 2006-12-21.
[65] Charles King: "Moldovan Identity and the Politics of Pan-Romanianism." In: *Slavic Review*, Vol. 53, No. 2., Summer, 1994, p. 351.

representing the less radical face of unionism. While still committed to close relations with Romania, its statutes mention only "gradual economic and spiritual integration with Romania" rather than immediate political union.[66] This split represented a great loss for the CDPF, due to the fact that the mostly respected former leaders subscribed to the Congress,[67] furthermore, some of them moved to Romania, for example the president of the organization Mircea Druc and Leonida Lari Iorga. Both made political carrier in Romania. (see Chapter 4. for details).

The popular support of the unification vanished spectacularly. While in 1989 the Popular Front was able to attract hundreds of thousands of citizens to the Grand National Assembly, only a few hundred supporters turned out for similar rallies in the summer of 1993 when Moldova joining the Commonwealth of Independent States was discussed or in 1995 when the new Government started its anti-Romanian campaign.[68] The biggest defeat arrived with the 1994 parliamentary elections when all parties advocating union with Romania disgracefully failed, while the parties committed to independence succeeded. The *Alliance of the Popular Christian Democratic Front*, which was an electoral coalition upholding the idea of unification[69], got only 7.5 percent of the total votes and just 9 seats in the Parliament.[70]

However, in what it concerns popular support, it became obvious soon after the declaration of independence that the population of Moldova didn't favor unification with Romania. According to a 1992 survey, only 19,7% of the Moldovans supported the idea.[71] A public opinion poll from early 1993 indicated that 67% of the total population favored independence, while 18% suggested adherence to the Commonwealth of Independent

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[66] King, op. cit. 351–352.
[67] Ibidem.
[68] Charles King, op. cit., p. 351.
[69] The Alliance of the Popular Christian Democratic Front was composed by the Christian Democratic Popular Front, the Council of the Voluntary Combatants of Moldova and the Christian Democratic Youth Organization.
[70] Association for Participatory Democracy "ADEPT": 1994 Parliamentary Elections. [http://www.parties.e-democracy.md/en/electionresults/1994parliamentary/], 2007-05-21.
[71] William Crowter: "Nationalism and Political Transformation in Moldova." In: Donald L. Dyer (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 40, 46.

States.[72] Likewise, a government sponsored "sociological survey"[73] – which is frequently referred to as the referendum about the issue of unification – carried out one week after the 1994 parliamentary elections, seemed to yield a clear pro-independence result, with about 90% of participants opting for it.[74]

Facing this situation the Popular Front changed its rhetoric and gradually abandoned pro-unionist appeals. The 1999 party program only mentioned that "a particular importance have good neighborly relationships with […] two adjacent countries", Ukraine and Romania, Moldova being linked with the latter "in special relations determined by the historical community and [...] linguistic, ethnic and cultural identity".[75] Instead of the union, the Party focused on politics of anti-Russification, the protection of language culture and history, of course, all of these having the adjective "Romanian",[76] but in an attempt to broaden its electorate also included on its agenda the protection of the interests of the peasants from Moldova.[77] Its partners in fighting the promoters of extreme Moldovenism were the parties that accepted the idea of ethnic affiliation with Romanians (for example in 2005 the Electoral Bloc „Moldova Democrată")[78] and some important cultural institutions, like the Academy of Sciences, the Writer's Union and the Historian's Union. Surprisingly, in 2005 the Popular Front even negotiated its votes for the reelection of Vladimir Voronin, the State President that was known for his notorious anti-Romanian feelings.[79]

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[72] van Meurs, op. cit., p. 101.
[73] According to Michael Bruchis and Charles King, this survey called "Counseling with the people"(La Sfat cu Poporul) was scientifically suspect and the provided data are not reliable. See Michael Bruchis: *The Republic of Moldova. From the Collapse of the Soviet Empire to the Restoration of the Russian Empire*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1996, pp. 94–95.
[74] King, op. cit., p. 357.
[75] CDPP: Program (1999). [http://www.parties.e-democracy.md/en/parties/ppcd/program/], 2007-05-20.
[76] Cătălina Zgureanu-Guragaţă: "Ce fel de discurs politic „naţionalist" pentru Republica Moldova (1991-2005)?" [What kind of "nationalist" political discourse for the Republic of Moldova (1991-2005)?] In: Monica Heintz (ed.), op. cit., p. 70.
[77] Enache and Cimpoeşu, op. cit., p. 265.
[78] Zgureanu-Guragaţă, op. cit., pp. 71–72.
[79] Ibidem.

3.4. Promoters of Moldovannes

As a result of the Front's militancy a corresponding radicalization could be witnessed among the groups supporting independence and opposing the idea of unification with Romania. The most drastic defender was the *Democratic Agrarian Party* formed in November 1991 mostly by members of the former agrarian nomenclature. The most radicals emphasized – faithful to the Soviet theories – that the Moldovans are a distinct people from the Romanians, they speak a different language, and repeatedly stressed that Moldova should not become neither "a province nor a gubernija of another country". Moreover, they denounced pan-Romanianism as a betrayal against the Moldovans.[80]

In spite of the fact that several electoral alliances attempted to play down the identity issue and focus the attention of the electorate to economic problems, the seminal political event of the 1994 campaign, the congress "Our Home – the Republic of Moldova" (the 5th of February) funded by the Government, ensured that the national identity would remain in the centerpiece. The most attention was received by the address of State President Mircea Snegur, who since his election had been careful to distance himself from both the radical unionist and Moldovanist forces.[81]

This midway-handling is clearly reflected in his speech entitled "Our Home", which contains references to the following "historical truths": the Moldovan and Romanian people have common Roman roots and the language spoken by them is the same, however, there are "nuances" that differentiate them and confers them their "originality"; furthermore, the "viability of the many centuries' tradition of [Moldovan] statehood".[82] This latter argument serves as the decisive legitimizing factor for Moldova's independence. The historical peak-points underlined by Snegur in the fight for independence are Moldova under Stephen the

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[80] Charles King, op. cit., pp. 352, 354.
[81] King, op. cit., p. 354.
[82] "Our Home" speeach by Mircea Snegur published in Enache and Cimpoeşu, op. cit., pp. 304–311.

Great, the declarations of independence from 1917, 1918 and 1991. Nevertheless, he did not forget to mention this kind of aspirations during the Greater Romania times. Finally, to the "blood-brothers beyond the Prut" he addressed the following message: "Our Moldovan people does not want anymore to be a swap nor somebody's victim. She does not want to hear how her country is wanted as a territory, as an affluent land, as it would not have as real masters the descendents of our ancestors."[83] In sum, as King noticed, Snegur attempted to portray himself and the Government as the guarantor of Moldova's independence and territorial integrity.[84]

The reason of the Government's tack in the identity question is clear. As Snegur himself clearly exhibited in his speech, as well as according to the analysis of different authors, the aim of embracing an indigenous Moldovan nationalism as the basis of the Moldovan state was, on one hand to alleviate the fear of pan-Romanianism in the eyes of the separatist minorities,[85] and on the other hand to counterbalance the Russophile movements.[86]

Although Snegur did not manage to protect his Presidential seat on the long term, the 1996 presidential elections being won by Petru Lucinschi, his speech surely aided the pro-independence and pro-Moldovan Agrarian Democratic Party and sealed the political fate of the CDPF.[87] In the 1994 parliamentary elections, the DAP gained 43.18 percent of he total votes meaning 56 seats, absolute majority in the Parliament. It was followed by the Russophile Socialist Party and "Unitate-Edinstvo" Movement Bloc that won more seats than the Alliance of the Popular Christian Democratic Front and the Peasants and Intellectuals Bloc (the core member being the Congress of Intellectuals) together.[88]

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[83] Translated by Kiss Ágnes.
[84] King, op. cit., p. 355.
[85] See the status of negotiations with the Gagauzi separatists in 1994.
[86] See Enache and Cimpoeşu, op. cit., pp. 70–72, King op. cit., pp. 356–357.
[87] King, op. cit., p. 356.
[88] Association for Participatory Democracy "ADEPT": *Parties and other social-political organizations from the Republic of Moldova.*
[http://www.parties.e-democracy.md/en/electionresults/1994parliamentary/], 2006-12-14.

The new parliament started reversing many of the reforms introduced under the Popular Front in the early 1990s. The national anthem was changed; an amendment to the constitution made in July 1994 stated that 'the state language of the Republic of Moldova is the Moldovan language, containing no reference to the relationship between the Moldovan and Romanian languages. Furthermore, the education system was submitted to a "reform" by changing two subjects in the curriculum: Romanian language and Romanian history became Moldovan language and Moldovan history, with the appropriate adjustments in content.[89] Of course, none of these passed unnoticed, but generated vehement protests from the opposition and the pro-Romanian intelligentsia.[90] The situation got even more tense after 2001, when under the rule of the Party of Communists Moldovanism became a declared state nation policy.

At the 1998 parliamentary elections the Party of Communists emerged with the largest number of seats (40 out of 101) and even stronger at the 2001 elections (56 seats out of 101). At the following presidential elections (2001, 2005) Vladimir Voronin, the candidate of the PC was elected, nevertheless, both times with the help of pro-Romanian forces. Their principles of nation policies are perfectly mirrored in the document entitled *Concept of the state national policy of the Republic of Moldova*[91] issued by the Government in 2003 and becoming a law at the end of the year.[92] The aim of the nation policy is the "integration of the *multinational* people of the Republic of Moldova". The titular nation is considered to be the Moldovan, and the state language is the Moldovan. However, the novelty is that Russian becomes the language of "interethnic communication" too.

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[89] Dan Dungaciu: *Moldova ante portas*. Tritonic, Bucuresti, 2005, pp. 93-95.
[90] Enache and Cimpoeşu, op. cit., pp. 89–90.
[91] European Comission for Democracy Through Law: *Draft Concept on the State National Policy of the Republic of Moldova.* [CDL (2003) 49]. [http://www.venice.coe.int/docs/2003/CDL(2003)049-e.asp], 2007-05-21.
[92] For a detailed analysis of the *Concept* and its political implications see Dan Dungaciu: *Moldova ante portas*. Tritonic, Bucureşti, 2005, pp. 91–113.

What is even more interesting, that the Romanians are referred to among Ukrainians, Russians, Gagauzians, etc. as "the representatives of other nations". Thus, the debate about the national identity of the *whole* people forming the majority of Moldova was resolved on Governmental level by simply admitting that there is a separate Romanian group besides the Moldovan. Considering the Romanians as forming a minority group in Moldova seemed to be "proved" by the data of 2004 census, which resulted as following: Moldovans made up 75.8%, while Romanians composed just 2.2% of the total population.[93]

As a clear mixture of these ideas, several days after the publication of the *Concept* the *Moldovan – Romanian Dictionary* appeared, authored by Vasile Stati. Beside these, protests were provoked by new regulations related to the teaching of history, fights that dominated all 2003–2005 period.[94]

Beside these fights over symbols there was a clear shift in Moldova's external political affairs since the accession to the economic structures of the CIS has been ratified on the 8th of April 1994. Activities targeting to renew the ties with Russia were mirrored in decisions like reinstalling the previous pattern of territorial administration, restoring the 7th of November as a holiday commemorating the October Revolution, and others.[95] Except the economic interests and the ideological ties with Moscow, Moldova's orientation was defined by the problem of Transnistria, one of the main negotiating partners being Russia.

The relationship with Romania became more rhapsodic with more and more crisis points, especially after 2001. Romania was attacked with expansionism and interference in Moldova's internal life, and pro-Romanian forces were suspected with complicity (see Chapter 5.). At the end of 2006, President Voronin characterized the Bucharest–Khisinew

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[93] Biroul Naţional de Statistică al Republicii Moldova [National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova]: *Totalurile recensământului populaţiei din anul 2004* . [Totals of the 2004 census] [http://www.statistica.md/recensamint.php?lang=ro], 2006-12-13. Transistria was not included in the census.
[94] Sergiu Mustaţă: "Identitatea naţională între istorie şi politică. Un studiu de caz privitor la Republica Moldova (2001–2005)" [National identity between history and politics. A case study about Moldova (2001–2005)]. In: Heintz (ed.), op. cit, 176–190.
[95] Argentina Gribincea and Mihai Grecu: *Moldova: Situation Analysis and Trend Assessment.* October 2004. p. 3. [www.moldova.org/download/eng/515/], 2007-05-25.

relations as following: "Romania is trying to impose certain rules of the game and principles on Moldova, which it is trying to force-feed on us during all our 15 years of independence. If one were to objectively assess this situation, this should be qualified as 'interference in the domestic affairs of a sovereign state".[96]

3.5. General trends of nation-building in Moldova

The previous sections revealed that since the late 1980's the questions of national identity have been constantly present in Moldovan political debates. Due to the fact that the presidential, parliamentary and local elections are scheduled in a non-concomitant way, from 1991 to 2005 nine years were campaign years in which the nationalist rhetoric occupied an important place.

As a summary of the general trends of the nationalist discourse and the evolution of the Moldovan nation building policies several assessments can be made.

1) The debates about the national identity of the titular nation of Moldova faithfully reproduced the Soviet nation building principles, the core element being the language-issue, which would have defined the national belonging.

2) The Romaniannes–Moldovannes conflict was tightly correlated to the debates concerning the relationship with Romania. This issue provoked a split even among the pro-Romanian forces, the majority opting against the political union, and in the mean time effectively radicalized the pro-Moldovan forces.

3) Concerning the balance between the political forces of the promoters of Romaniannes and Moldovannes a shift can be observed after the 1994 elections when the pro-unification forces became politically marginalized, and the more moderate pro-Romanian

[96] "EU membership gives Romania new opportunities in its relations with Moldova." In: Center for European Policy Studies, 19th of January 2006. [http://www.ceps.be/Article.php?article_id=556], 2007-04-09.

forces remained in minority as well. Since then Moldovanism gained more and more ground, becoming a state policy in 2003 under the rule of the Party of Communists. In the meantime pro-unionist appeals disappeared from the political agenda.

Finally, the principles of Moldovanism that implied the delimitation from Romania targeted to secure the territorial integrity of Moldova under the menace of separatist movements, the integration of powerful minority organizations, as well as geopolitical interests related to Russia.

The dynamic model among different types of nationalism as developed by Brubaker is confirmed by the developments of nation building policies from Moldova. The nationalizing nationalism burst out in the heyday of the nationalist movement, but it was tempered by the emergence of minority nationalisms in a way that could not been looked over. From the fight about the identity of the "core nation" as winning forces emerged those groups that could serve with the most soothing perspective abut the future of the country, an independent Moldova based on the existence of a separate Moldovan ethnicity.

However, an unanswered question remains concerning the dynamic of the nationalisms. How Romania's kin-state nationalism did influence the developments from Moldova? And conversely, how these developments affected the kin-state policies of Romania? The following chapters try to answer these questions.

Chapter 4. The evolution of Romania's policies toward Moldova

Concerning the Moldovannes–Romanianness debate, there is a perfect consonance among the Romanian politicians: the ethnicity of the people of Moldova is Romanian as is the language spoken by them. Considering the evolution of rival national policies from Moldova, this chapter aims to answer the following questions: How did the relationship between Romania and Moldova evolve? Furthermore, what kinds of policies were launched by Romania?

The chapter is divided in two subchapters. The first subchapter provides an overview of the general trends characterizing the relationship between the two states during 1990 and 2007. It starts with the presentation of the Romanian expectations regarding Moldova's independence, than turns to discuss the conflictual situation that were centered on identity issues. The second subchapter presents the Romania's policies, the supportive system that was built with the intention for gradual integration.

4.1. The relationship between Romania and Moldova (1990–2007)

Romania was the first state to acknowledge the existence of the Republic of Moldova, only a few hours after the new state proclaimed its independence.[97] However, official contacts between the new regime of Romania and the Moldovan SSR were already established in the early month of 1990, right after the latter proclaimed its independence as a union republic.[98] Owing to the insistence of the Popular Front, on the 6th of May 1990 the Moldovan SSR

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[97] Ministry of Foreign Affairs: *Republic of Moldova. Political and Diplomatic Relations.* [http://www.mae.ro/index.php?unde=doc&id=5664&idlnk=1&cat=3], 2007-04-07.
[98] For example already in January 1990 the first protocols were signed between the ministries of Romania and the Moldovan SSR. See: Nicolae Chirtoacă: "România – Moldova: de la 'podul de flori' la zidul de beton." [Romania – Moldova: from the "bridge of flowers" to the concrete wall]. In: Institutul pentru Politici Publice: *Noua frontieră Schengen şi impactul asupra relaţiilor dintre România şi Republica Moldova* [The new Schengen border and its impact on the relationship between Romania and the Republic of Moldova], October 2002, pp. 47–50.

opened the frontier with Romania, an event called the day of the "bridge of flowers over the Prut".[99]

The Romanian officials closely monitored the introduction of the Romanian national symbols and different voices could be heard demanding the (re)unification of the countries taking as a reference point of the negotiations concerning the unification of Western and Eastern Germany.[100] Snegur's visit in Romania and his speech envisioning a "cultural confederation" keyed up the interest toward the issue even more,[101] but discussions with revisionist aspirations culminated on the commemoration of "73 years since Bessarabia's unification with the Country" and with the talks about nullifying the effects of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact (1992).

The issue of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact got onto the parliamentary agenda due to the fact that the Popular Front was planning to organize a conference on this topic and the Romanian Parliament decided to honor this event by a declaration. The Government cautiously stated that "the geopolitical situation and international norms has to be taken into account" and stressed that an "emotional handling may imply territorial revisionism." It also argued that the treaty with the Soviet Union permits direct relations with the republics, relationships that may evolve to the "spiritualization of the frontiers". Yet, the declaration was adopted.[102] In its final form the Declaration was far from reflecting the radical viewpoints of the different members of the Parliament: for example it was not included that the effects have to be erased not just *de jure*, but *de facto* as well. Yet, it was enough to stir the concerns of the Supreme Soviet of Ukraine.[103] Actually, the Ukrainian reaction was not unrealistic because the discussions were not focused only to the situation of Bessarabia, but the Greater Romania

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[99] Chirtoacă, op. cit., p. 47.

[100] Sittings of the Chamber of Deputies of July 7, 1990. *Monitorul Oficial al României, Partea a II-a*, Anul I, Nr. 57, 1990.08.06, p. 33 [Official Bulletin of Romania, Section II, Vol. 1, Nr. 57, 1990.08.06, p. 3]; Sittings of the Chamber of Deputies of June 28, 1990. *M.O.R. II*, Vol. I, Nr. 21, 1990.06.02, p. 1–2.

[101] Speech of Mircea Snegur in the Romanian Parliament. Joint sittings of the Chamber of Deputies and Senate of February 12, 1991. *M.O.R. II*, Vol. II, Nr. 52, 1991.02.13, p. 1–2.

[102] Sittings of the Chamber of Deputies of June 24, 1991. *M.O.R. II*, Vol. II, Nr. 153, 1991.06.25, p. 1–17.

[103] Sittings of the Chamber of Deputies of July 30, 1991. *M.O.R. II*, Vol. II, Nr. 197, 1991.07.31, p. 4.

vision appeared, which also involved some parts of the historical Moldova (Northern and Southern Bessarabia, Northern Bukovina and the Hertza region) that are Ukrainian territories since 1940.

The proclamation of Moldova's full independence was met by another declaration, this time formulated by the Government. Several days later it was adopted by the Parliament in a plenary meeting after all political groups joyfully welcomed Moldova's decision. The boldest statement of the Declaration is the following: "The proclamation of an independent Romanian state on territories annexed by force as a consequence of the secret accord convened in the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact represents a decisive step for the peaceful removal of its damnable results that were directed against the interests of the Romanian people."[104]

Although – exactly as in the case of the Moldovan pro-Romanian forces – there were variances concerning the timing of the union, namely immediate integration or after gradual approach, the possibility of reestablishing the interwar situation was a generally shared view among the Romanian politicians. Moreover, the evolution in this direction would not have surprised the Governments of the world's biggest states: the President of France François Mitterand and the German Minister of Foreign Affairs Hans-Dietrich Genscher opposed the idea of unification, while the Congress of the USA adopted a resolution that recommended the Government to support Moldova's efforts in case it wants to merge with Romania.[105] One way or other, the unification was considered highly probable.

In spite of expectations the "decisive step" of Moldova was not taken in the direction of the union. On the contrary, a firm decision for keeping the distance from Romania could be witnessed. In the next sixteen years the relationship between Romania and the Republic of

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[104] Sittings of the Chamber of Deputies of July 30, 1991. *M.O.R. II*, Vol. II, Nr. 197, 1991.07.31, p. 4. (All citations from the *M.O.R.* translated by Kiss Ágnes)
[105] Dungaciu, op. cit., pp. 10–15.

Moldova was encumbered with disputes centered on questions of identity, which have been considered by both sides decisive for defining the relationship between the two countries.[106]

The main conflicting conceptions about the relationship are perfectly mirrored in the negotiations of the basic bilateral treaty. The idea of a basic treaty was raised by Mircea Snegur in 1991, the topic was retaken several times in 1992 and debated for the first time by the committee of experts in September 1993.[107] However, no serious steps could be made in the following rounds of negotiation because both of the parties were determined to hold their ground, consequently, the negotiations were repeatedly blocked.[108] As a consequence, there is still no basic treaty between the two states.

Taking for granted the "special" nature of the relation, the Romanian side argued for a treaty of "integration and brotherhood".[109] The draft emphasized the "special and privileged relations" between the two states, condemned the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact, and contained references to the ethnic affiliation between the two people by using the "Romanian" denominator, for example "the Romanian people on both sides of the Prut river", "Romanian language", "two Romanian states", and others.[110] As the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Teodor Meleşcanu argued in 1993, this treaty is a "special instrument" that is adapted to the realities (two sovereign states), but in the meantime "gives a perspective to the shared ideals of the citizens living on the both sides of the Prut River".[111]

Contrastingly, the Moldovan party consistently argued in favor of a more conventional treaty (type Treaty on Friendship, Good Neighborhood and Cooperation) rejecting all

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[106] It has to be emphasized that excepting the fields that have to do with identity-issues (bilateral treaty, citizenship law, education, etc.) the cooperation was not tensed.
[107] Enache and Cimpoeşu, op. cit. p. 223.
[108] For negotiations in the period 1991 – 1997 see Enache and Cimpoeşu, op. cit., pp. 223–227.
[109] Sittings of the Senate of December 10, 1992. *M.O.R. II*, Vol. III, Nr. 39, 1992.12.11, p. 2–3.
[110] Enache and Cimpoeşu, op. cit., pp. 223–227.
[111] Speech of Teodor Meleşcanu. Sittings of the Chamber of Deputies of Ferbruary 4, 1993. *M.O.R. II*, Vol. IV, Nr. 10, 1993.02.05, p. 5–7.

"unionist" overtones that could be interpreted on the detriment of Moldova's sovereignty,[112] and advocated for hiding or more preferably omitting allusions of common cultural roots. It is very important to highlight that Moldova's declared intentions in keeping the distance from Romania were not to infringe the relationship with Russia and Ukraine. An interesting supplement is the Moldovan suggestion to include references to the "inexistence of mutual territorial claims" envisioning the creation of Greater Romania or Greater Moldova.[113]

In 2000, the *Treaty on Privileged Partnership and Co-operation between Romania and the Republic of Moldova* had been finally drafted by the two Ministers of Foreign Affairs. The treaty "written in the common language" of the two countries contain references neither to the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact nor to the name of the language itself,[114] thus contained big concessions from the Romanian side. Nevertheless, the treaty has never been signed or ratified.

The reason is that the relationship between the two states became more and more tensioned due to different hostile declarations coming from Kishinew. It might be mentioned that the Ambassador of Moldova accused Romania in the front of the Council of Europe that it did not revise its history perception about the Holocaust in spite of the fact that "in Moldova under the Romanian occupation a Jew was killed in every two minutes" (2003); President Voronin stated that "Romania is the last empire in Europe made up of Moldova, Dobrodgea and Transilvania" (2004).[115] Furthermore, in a letter addressed to the Commissar for European Enlargement he complained that Romania was interfering in the internal affairs of the Republic of Moldova and spending huge amounts of money on its territory without

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[112] The Moldovan side rejected even to include references to the Declaration of Independence. See Enache and Cimpoeşu, op. cit., p. 224.

[113] Enache and Cimpoeşu, ibidem.

[114] Speech of Mihai Răzvan Ungureanu (state secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs). Sittings of the Chamber of Deputies of October 2, 2000. [http://www.cdep.ro/pls/steno/steno.stenograma?ids=4971&idm=9&idl=2], 2007-05-25.

[115] For the hostile declarations see Dungaciu, op. cit., pp. 50–52; and Monica Heintz: "Republic of Moldova versus Romania: The Cold War of National Identities." In: *Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, No. 1, Vol. II, 2005, pp. 71–81.

coordinating it with Moldovan officials. Sometimes even more offensive messages appeared: "Roşca's [CDPF leader] aim is to create a Romanian province and to invade it with hundreds of thousands of Roma" (2004). In early 2007 the attack continued. One of the topics that shocked the Romanian public opinion and officials was President Voronin's declarations according to which in Romania live ten million citizens of Moldovan ethnicity, a group that is not under the protection of Romanian minority norms. That is why Moldova will grant them citizenship under preferential treatment and offer other kinds of support too.[116]

The most recent development regarding the bilateral treaty is dated May 2007, when a new initiative for signing the "Basic Political Treaty" came from Moldova. As it was expected, the proposal from Kishinew was radically new. With the ratification of this treaty Romania would recognize the "illegal incorporation of Bessarabia from 1918", the existence of a distinct Moldovan people and Moldovan language,[117] thus perfect consonance with the conceptions of the Moldovan official nation policy launched in 2003.

As the debates on the basic treaty prove, the relationship between the two states was influenced by contradicting perceptions regarding national identity. The Moldovan officials were determined to reject all references to common belonging in order to remove all bases for a possible political union. Furthermore, it was clearly stated that priority is given to the Russian interests. In contrast, it is obvious that the Romanian side advocated the idea of "special" relations. Although no official declaration addressed to Moldova or other Governments confirmed that Romania would like to reintegrate Moldova in the country, the irredentist voices on both sides of the Prut were loud enough to stir the Moldovan concerns.

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[116] "Voronin se vrea protectorul moldovenilor din România" [Voronin pretends to be the protector of the Moldovans from Romania]. In: *Adevărul*, 26th of February, 2007. [http://www.adevarulonline.ro/articole/voronin-se-vrea-protectorul-moldovenilor-din-romania/304135], 2007-05-23.
[117] "Moldova vrea tratatul de bază cu România" [Moldova wants the basic treaty with Romania]. In: *ATAC*, 12th of Mai, 2007. [http://www.atac-online.ro/europolitic_17/moldova-vrea-tratatul-politic-de-baza-cu-romania_7073], 2007-05-23.

Moreover, the "politics of small steps" targeting "integration" launched by Romania raised serious doubts regarding its intentions.

4.2. The "small steps" politics toward integration

Since it became clear that the political union might face considerable opposition in Moldova, in the spirit of "special relations" the Romanian officials and the moderate pro-Romanian forces from Moldova adopted the approach of gradual process for the integration of the two states. To this end, two strategies were adopted: on one hand, building up an institutional system that would facilitate integration; and on the other hand, a more unexpected one, promoting the Romanian political career of several well-known personalities from Moldova. In the following I will shortly present both of these strategies.

4.2.1. The institutional system of integration

Although there are many legal measures that facilitate the cooperation between the two states, several of them are specifically mentioned by Romanian officials when talking about "integration" of the two states and people, thus are considered the basic support for getting tighter the relations. A further specification regarding this issue is that the "institutional system" does not mean that it was projected as a comprehensive, interlinked measures, but different initiatives coming with the same purpose: to foster the integration of the two states.

In this institutional system built up with the intention of integration, two types of measures can be distinguished: bilateral initiatives, which imply an agreement between the

Romanian and Moldovan officials, and the unilateral initiatives of Romania.[118] The first category contains the following measures: inter-parliamentary and inter-ministerial consultation networks (1992); passport-free travel for Romanian and Moldovan citizens across the border between the two states (1991), tax-free import and export between the two countries (1991, 1994).

The main Romanian unilateral initiatives were: the Romanian citizenship law (1991); preferential treatment in the Romanian education system (since 1990), as well as casual Governmental donations. An important component of this kind of measure is the financial support for activities that "speed up the economic integration, the consolidation and development of the common cultural and spiritual sphere". However, Law 36/1993 that established the specific Fund stipulated that these activities should be "convened with the Moldovan authorities".

Some of these measures turned out to be problematic, issues that will be discussed in detail in the fifths chapter. Nevertheless, there were no essential changes in this structure up to 2001, when the passport free border crossing was abrogated, the application of the citizenship law was suspended and amended, than in 2003 the inter-ministerial committee charged with the Moldova-issues as well as the specific Fund were dissolved.[119]

At this point, although far-reaching conclusions about Romania's supportive policies cannot be drawn, it is nevertheless that the system was worked up before the pro-Moldovan forces came into power and it was narrowed down in the period when the relationship between Romania and Moldova considerably worsened.

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[118] Kiss, op. cit.
[119] Kiss, op. cit.

4.2.2. Promoting the Romanian political career of personalities from Moldova

Promoting the political career of personalities from Moldova in Romania might be considered as a second strategy targeting integration. For the adoption of this strategy the most spectacular cases are Mircea Druc, Moldovan Prime Minister between May 1990 and May 1991, and Leonida Lari-Iorga. Both were leading members of the Popular Front who emigrated to Romania and achieved high public profile.

Druc ran in the 1992 presidential elections; however, lacking the support of powerful political parties gained only 2.75 percents of the vote. In the next year he founded the Romanian National Party for Reunion (later Party of Reunion – Daco-Latin Option)[120] that merged in 1999 with the ultra-nationalist Party of Romanian National Unity[121] (PRNU), then in 2004 turned over to the other extremists, the Greater Romania Party[122] (GRP). Likewise, Lari-Iorga achieved high public profile in Romania being member of the Chamber of Deputies since 1992. She was embraced by the Christian Democratic National Peasant's Party (CDNPP).[123] According to Ion Diaconescu, a leading member of the CDNPP, Lari-Iorga was nominated by the Party "with the specific purpose of advancing the issue of union with Bessarabia."[124] Since 1996 she has been a candidate of the GRP. For some reasons she did not run in the 1992 Romanian presidential elections, although, according to deputy Toader Constantinescu (member GRP) there were some negotiations on this topic with the same reason: the union.[125]

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[120] Partidul Reîntregirii Opțiunea Dacolatină (POD).
[121] Partidului Unității Naționale Române (PUNR).
[122] Partidul România Mare (PRM).
[123] Partidul Național Țărănesc Creștin și Democrat (PNȚCD).
[124] Speech of Ion Diaconescu. Sittings of the Chamber of Deputies of March 25, 1993. *M.O.R.* Parte a II-a, Vol. IV, Nr. 60, 1993.03.26, p. 15 .
[125] Speech of Toader Constantinescu. Joint sittings of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate of June 19, 1996. [http://www.cdep.ro/pls/steno/steno.stenograma?ids=5014&sir=&sep=and&idv=77&idl=1], 2007-05-24.

Both of the strategies adopted, but especially building up the institutional system prove Romania's commitment to the envisioned "special relations." These could never be separated from revisionist overtones, due to the fact that stated one way or another served the "integration" of the two states. As it was highlighted in this chapter, this was exactly what Moldovan officials rejected and the relationship between the two states was always tensed because of this. It is worth to repeat that these measures were introduced before the strong anti-Romanian forces snatched the political power in Moldova and several of them were based on bilateral agreement. Details about the functioning of the integration system that will serve further information about Romania's commitment will be served outlined in the next chapter.

Chapter 5. The functioning of the supportive system

This chapter aims to provide a deeper insight in the functioning of the supportive system set forward to integrate the two states. For this purpose, in the following the content of different measures, the specific problems regarding their functioning, as well as the primary influencing factors that lead to changes will be shortly described.

The measures enumerated in the previous chapter will be discussed in the following order: the interministerial committees and the interparliamentary committee, the funds and the financed projects, the Governmental donations, the preferences in the domain of economy, benefits granted in the Romanian education system, the border crossing benefits and finally the Romanian citizenship law. Since the entitlements included into the citizenship law caused most of the tension between the two states, its effect, as well as the implementation will be more lengthily presented.

5.1. The interministerial committees and the interparliamentary committee

In December 1992, returning from the negotiations that took place in Kishinew, Senator Eugen Dijmărescu stated that this "program of integration"[126] appears in an "important moment, when Moldova is under the pressure to direct her sight toward Moscow".[127] Thus, as a compensatory gesture to the growing Russian influence, on the 23rd of January 1992 by the Governmental Decree Nr. 28/1992 the *Interministeral Committee for Romania's relations with the Republic of Moldova*[128] was formed. Several months later, on the 20th of June its parallel institution in Moldova was set up too. The main task of these institutions was to analyze the evolution of the relationship between the two states and to

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[126] References to both types of committees.
[127] Speech of Eugen Dijmărescu. Sittings of the Senate of December 10, 1992. *M.O.R. II*, Vol. III, Nr. 39, 1992.12.11, p. 2–3.
[128] Comitetului Interministerial pentru Relațiile României cu Republica Moldova.

make proposals for its development. Indeed, the two committees met yearly and discussed different policies; consequently, the interaction gained an intergovernmental aspect.[129] It is important to highlight that in this framework were discussed the Moldovan projects financed by Romania. However, in 2003 Kishinew dissolved its committee, refusing to negotiate the projects, and proposed forming a standard mixed intergovernmental committee for cooperation instead. This was "unacceptable" for the Romanian party, which dissolved its committee too as a response.[130]

The functioning of the interparliamentary committee proved to be even more problematic. On the 27th of November 1992 a Protocol was signed that established the *Interparliamentary Committee Bucureşti – Chişinău*[131] constituted by members of both of the Parliaments in equal number. According to the Protocol, the Committee's aim was "to speed up the complex process of legislative harmonization in order to sustain the economic integration, the development of the common spiritual and cultural sphere and in other domains" (Art. 2). For this end exchanges of draft laws and consultations were envisioned. Nevertheless, the first meeting only took place in July 2000, and there are no references in the parliamentary debates that would indicate any further activity of the Committee.[132]

Shortly, the institutions were set up for tightening the relations between the states and counterbalancing the Russian influence. Nevertheless, one of the two pillars of the system, the Interparliamentary Committee never worked. The other pillar, the interministerial committees were better capitalized (see next section); but in the period when the Romanian–Moldovan relations considerably worsened they were denounced by the Moldovan side.

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[129] Solomon, op. cit., pp. 224–230.
[130] Speech of Gheorghi Prisăcaru. Sittings of the Senate of November 3, 2003.
[http://www.cdep.ro/pls/steno/steno.stenograma?ids=5565&idm=2,09&idl=2], 2007-05-26.
[131] Comisia Interparlamentară Bucureşti–Chişinău.
[132] Solomon, op. cit., p. 223.

5.2. Funds and projects

In mid-1992 the *Humanitarian Fund "Moldova"*[133] was established, that was nourished by donations of the Government, economic entities and physical persons. The reason was to help the Moldovan Government during "hard times", namely facing the Transnistrian separatist movement.[134] The interesting aspect of this support was that the bank account could be directly accessed by the Moldovan Government. It was a short-lived project that faced much criticism, due to the fact that, according to different Romanian politicians, the money was used against the integration.[135]

This Fund was replaced by Law Nr. 36 from 1993 by the *Fund at disposal of the Government of Romania for the relationship with the Republic of Moldova*[136] (Moldova Fund) that was maintained from the state budget. Different projects targeting the "economic and cultural integration" have been financed from this money, projects that were convened with the Moldovan Government in the meetings of the interministerial committees. As compared to the Humanitarian Fund from financial point of view the Moldova Fund is much more stable, furthermore the utilization presupposes cooperation between the two Governments.

Unfortunately there is no access to enough information about the realizations of these projects. The Governmental Decrees from Romania approving financing are not at all accurate in this respect, sometimes only the programs are mentioned while sometimes concrete projects to be financed appear. Nevertheless, the following domains or programs can be identified for the 1993–2003 period[137]:

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[133] Fondul Umanitar "Moldova".

[134] Sittings of the Chamber of Deputies of May 28, 1992. Monitorul Oficial al României Parte a II-a, Vol. III, Nr. 99, 1992.05.29, p. 1-4.

[135] Speech of Ion Aurel Stoica. Sittings of the Senate of March 3, 1994. *M.O.R. II*, Vol. V, Nr. 46, 1994.03.04, p. 18–22.

[136] Fondul la dispoziția Guvernului României pentru relațiile cu Republica Moldova.

[137] Kiss, op. cit. 330–333.

- education, training and research (scholarship for professional practice in Romania; school libraries; professional education, scholarships, etc.);

- "Romanian culture"[138] (libraries, editorials, book edition, theatres, festivals, subscription for periodicals from Romania, etc.);

- Media (retransmission of the broadcast of the Romanian Television (TVR1));

- technical expertise, support and information exchange (predicting earthquakes, meteorology, scientific periodicals, etc.);

- development of infrastructure (constructions, reparations, factory equipments, etc.);

- environmental protection (sylviculture, water culture, environmental monitoring, etc.);

- meetings;

- providing different products (petrol products, machines, etc.).

What is readily noticed when taking a look at this list is that there are many projects that served the interest of Moldovan state institutions. Knowing the Romaniannes – Moldovannes conflict between the two states the following questions emerge: How was the money divided among the different domains? Were the Moldovan officials willing to leave enough space for spreading the "Romanian" culture, which could have undermined the theories of Moldovanism – for example – by sponsoring pro-Romanian media outlets?

As it was already stated, comprehensive accounts about the materialized projects do not exist. Consequently, it is not possible to estimate how much money was spent for different domains. The only source is the synthesis of the Romanian ambassador from Moldova, Marian Enache, who estimated for the 1993–1997 period that most of the money were spent

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[138] Wording used in the Romanian Governmental ordinances.

as economic support, thus not for the "consolidation of the common spiritual and cultural sphere".[139]

Concerning the amount of money of the Moldova Fund it can be assessed that there were great fluctuations during its existence. In nominal value it constantly grew, from 6,000 million ROL[140] in 1993 to 120,000 million ROL in 2003, however turned into real value this means a decrease from about 8 million to 3.5 million USA dollars. The least amount was granted in 1994 (about 600 thousand USA dollars) and 1997 (about 700 thousand USA dollars). In the total state budget the amount of the Moldova Fund fluctuated between 0,009 and 0,06 percents, excepting the peak of 0,4 percent from 1993.[141]

Due to the fact that the Moldovan officials have refused to cooperate for two years and dissolved their Committee, in 2003 the Moldova Fund was dissolved as well as the Interministerial Committee from Romania. First a "minor" amendment was suggested, namely to delete the word „convened", referring to the joint decision by Romanian and Moldovan officials, but finally the whole Fund was dissolved.[142] Nevertheless, the support for Moldova did not disappear but with the Emergency Ordinance 112/2003 was integrated into the general framework of financing Romanians living abroad, thus under the heading of the Department for Romanians Living Abroad.

It is important to highlight that from now on the financed projects preponderantly turned to a cultural profile, the majority representing financial support for the edition of Romanian periodicals "with pro-Romanian orientation",[143] but radio and TV editorials,

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[139] Enache and Cimpoeşu, p. 232–234.
[140] ROL: old Romanian lei.
[141] Kiss, op. cit. 319–320.
[142] Sittings of the Senate of May 12, 2003.
[http://www.cdep.ro/pls/steno/steno.stenograma?ids=5500&idm=10&idl=2], 2007-05-26.
Sittings of the Senate of November 13, 2003.
[http://www.cdep.ro/pls/steno/steno.stenograma?ids=5570&idm=10&idl=2], 2007-05-26.
[143] Several periodicals are frequently mentioned in the parliamentary debates as "pro-Romanian" or more frequently "pro-unionist", for example "Florile Dalbe", "Literatura şi Arta", "Glasul Naţiunii", etc.

schools and churches were supported as well.[144] Moreover, this financial support can be considered more substantial compared to the previous period. For example about 1.9 million USA dollars (about 5.554.000 RON[145]) were spent for this purpose in 2006.

Summing up the evolution of the support for financing different projects and the funds guaranteed several observations can be made.

1) In what it concerns cooperation there were two shifts: using the Fund set up in 1992 was wholly conferred to the discretion of the Moldovan officials, then came ten years of a system that presumed cooperation, which was abolished due to Moldovan opposition, and finally, from 2003 the financing is determined exclusively by Romanian officials.

2) There was a clear shift between the financed domains, from economic to cultural implying also a shift from sponsoring state institutions to civil organizations.

3) All these shifts reflect the changes in the relationship between the two countries: Romania wanted to cooperate, while the Moldova Government rejected it.

4) Taking into consideration the evolution of nation policies from Moldova with Moldovanism becoming a state nation policy, this shift to cultural profile can be interpreted as a pro-Romanian counterbalance.

5.3. Governmental donations and projects financed by the DRRLA

Although from the previous section the impression that the Romanian Government tried to reach always an agreement with the Moldovan officials might be conveyed, there were as well unilateral initiatives that were not subject to negotiations. These are the casual

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[144] See in this respect the financed projects for 2005 and 2006 financed by the Department for the Relations with Romanians Living Abroad [Departamentul pentru Relațiile cu Românii de Pretutindeni]:
DRRP: *Centralizarea proiectelor finanţate de DRRP în cursul Anului 2005*. [Synthesis of the projects financed by the DRRLA in 2005]. [http://www.mae.ro/poze_editare/2006.08.09_DRRP_Proiecte2005.pdf], 2007-05-25.
DRRP: *Centralizarea proiectelor finanţate de DRRP în Anul 2006*. [Synthesis of the projects financed by the DRRLA in 2005]
[http://www.mae.ro/poze_editare/DRRP_proiecte_2006.pdf], 2007-05-25.
[145] RON: the new Romanian lei.

governmental donations and the projects financed from the Fund aimed to support the Romanians living abroad through the Department for the Relations with Romanians Living Abroad.

As in the case of the projects financed from the Moldova Fund there is no comprehensive account about the donations realized, or the financing from the Fund for Romanians Living Abroad. Nevertheless, the following governmental donations might be mentioned: books for libraries and schools since 1993, donations for state institutions (for the Moldovan Government, the Military Academy "Alexandru cel Bun", orphanages, etc.) and civil organizations (for the Victims of the Communist Regime and the Veterans of the Romanian Army, that is a strong pro-Romanian organizations from Moldova).[146] When referred to these donations in parliamentary accounts just the books are usually mentioned.

Regarding the donations there were some disappointing feedbacks. According to the report of Liviu Maior, the Romanian Minister of Education, in 1994 the donated textbooks were brought back to Romania and sold on low prices in the Romanian markets.[147]

Based on information presented in this section the following assessment can be made: not all financed projects were negotiated by Moldovan officials, but other sources were used besides the Moldova Fund too. Taking into account the tensed relationship between the two states, it might be assumed that this handling could have alarmed the Moldovan Government, even if there were some donations to state institutions.

5.4. Preferential treatment in the domain of economy

In this chapter I will focus only on two issues that demonstrate the preferential treatment in the domain of economy: soft loans and tax exemptions.

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[146] Kiss, op. cit., 223–224.
[147] Speech of Liviu Maior. Sittings of the Senate of June 20, 1994. *M.O.R. II*, Vol. V, Nr. 144, 1994.06.30, p. 7-14.

For the request of the Moldovan Government in 1993 a long term loan of 20 billion ROL (about 26.3 million USA dollars) was granted for petroleum and related products, the scale being extended to other materials in the next years. The loan was preferential, there was no interest attached and it was for eight years. According to Romanian officials, the reason was to help Moldova facing financial hardship; however, another important argument was that Moldova did not ratify the accession to the CIS.[148] Although it was noticed that for example the gas bought in Romania was sold in Ukraine, being a loan, the fate of the financial support could not been monitored.[149] Despite being familiar with the misusages, the Romanian officials turned out to be very patient, and in 2004 when Moldova still owed 9.4 million dollars, extended the deadline of reimbursement for another fifteen years.[150] It is worth mentioning that based on bilateral agreement some parts of the money were spent for retransmitting the broadcast of the Romanian public television.

Regarding tax exemptions it has to be known that since 1991 the export and import between Romania and Moldova is free from taxes. Due to this situation different products were introduced in Romania, which were not produced in Moldova. Although this misusage was known, the Covenant with Moldova regarding tax exemptions was voted by the Parliament, reasoning that it serves the purpose of "integration", and Moldova got the status of the "most favored nation".[151] The tax evasion continued and a great deal of foreign products originating from the CIS countries and Central European states entered the Romanian market in amounts that clearly exceeded the Moldovan producing capacity.

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[148] Speech of Dan Mogoş (representative of the Ministry of Finance). Sittings of the Chamber of Deputies of February 29, 1993. *M.O.R. II*, Vol. IV, Nr. 151, 1993.09.03, p. 12-13.
[149] Sittings of the Senate of December 27, 1993. *M.O.R. II*, Vol. IV, Nr. 267, 1993.12.14, p. 8-13.
[150] Sittings of the Senate of May 23, 2005.
[151] Sittings of the Senate of September 19, 1994. *M.O.R. II*, Vol. V, Nr. 184, 1994.09.29, p. 13-15.
[http://www.cdep.ro/pls/steno/steno.stenograma?ids=5871&idm=6&idl=2], 2007-05-26.

Nevertheless, this topic was seemingly avoided in the Parliamentary discussions, being put forward just on a few occasions.[152]

5.5. Benefits in the Romanian education system

In the field of education Romania grants different benefits for the Romanians living abroad, namely separate framework for schooling, different scholarships and services. For example the foreign students of Romanian ethnic origin are exempted from admission exames and living in student hostels is free from expenses. However, the Moldovan youth was the most favored group because they have got extra assistance from the Moldova Fund.[153]

Since 1990 there is a quota for schooling for Moldovan students, representing about 70–85 percents from the total of publicly financed places reserved for foreign students with Romanian ethnic origins in the 1990–2002 period. Although in the 1999–2000 and 2000–2001 academic years there was a sharp decrease, with the protocols signed between the ministries of education from Romania and Moldova the number of places granted for Moldovan students was high, about 4000 and 2100 places, respectively.[154] From 2002 Kishinew refused to sign the protocol,[155] and later Romania kept the framework of schooling lower, for example, in 2006 only 1250 scholarships were awarded.[156]

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[152] See the following records: Sittings of the Chamber of Deputies of April 29, 1996.
[http://www.cdep.ro/pls/steno/steno.stenograma?ids=441&idm=10&idl=2], 2007-05-26.
Sittings of the Chamber of Deputies of March 1, 1999.
[http://www.cdep.ro/pls/steno/steno.stenograma?ids=2861&idm=15&idl=2], 2007-05-26.
[153] Kiss, op. cit., p. 336.
[154] Kiss, op. cit., p. 335–336.
[155] Sittings of the Senate of November 18, 2002.
[http://www.cdep.ro/pls/steno/steno.stenograma?ids=5475&idm=23&idl=2], 2007-05-26.
[156] Ministerul Educației, Cercetării și Tineretului [Ministry of Education, Research and Youth]: "Admiterea tinerilor din Republica Moldova la universitățile din România". [Admissions for the youth from the Republic of Moldova to universities from Romania]. [http://www.edu.ro/index.php/pressrel/5608], 2007-05-26.

5.6. Passport free border crossing between Romanian and Moldova

For ten years Romania applied the "open border" policy with regard to Moldova. According to the Covenant from 29th of August 1991 between the two Governments the citizens of Moldova and Romania could cross the border with their identity card. However, according to the commitments regarding the accession to the European Union the borders had to be closed, consequently by the Covenant from 29th of June 2001 the passport and visa regime was established. Nevertheless, by an ordinance issued by the Romanian Government, until the 1st of January 2007, thus the date of accession to the EU, no visa was required from the Moldovan citizens but only a valid passport. This treatment was a preferential, because since 2004 visa is required from the citizens of all former Soviet states.[157]

5.7. The citizenship law

As the issue of citizenship was by far the most important factor in shaping the relationship of the two countries, and there were sever changes introduced since 2000, in this section I will review the legislation on this issue.[158]

The *Law on Romanian Citizenship* from 1991 introduced a new form of access to Romanian citizenship, which could be generically called „restoration of citizenship".[159] Article 37 (1§) states that „[f]ormer Romanian citizens who, before 22 December 1989, lost their Romanian citizenship for various reasons" can reacquire Romanian citizenship by request „even if they have another citizenship and they do not settle their domicile in

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[157] Adrian Pop, Gabriela Pascariu, George Anglițioiu, Alexandru Purcăruș: "România și Republica Moldova – Între politica europeana de vecinătate și perspectiva extinderii Uniunii Europene" [Romania and the Republic of Moldova – Between the European neighborhood policy and the perspective of the extension of the European Union]. Institutul European din România: *Studii de impact II*. [Study of impact II], p. 37.

[158] In the analysis of the Romanian legislation on citizenship and the presentation of its impact I heavily rely on the research made by Constantin Ioradachi (op. cit.). Nevertheless, my analysis is more focused on the changeing detailes, the motivation for the ammendments introduced, and the administrative side of granting the citizenship.

[159] Formulated by Constantin Iordachi.

Romania".[160] The law specifically stipulated that this right is also granted to those who „have been involuntarily stripped of Romanian citizenship" as well as "to their descendants" (2§).

As Iordachi observed, the law has consecrated two major innovations in the Romanian citizenship legislation. First, it allows Romanian citizens to hold dual citizenship; second, it goes beyond the commonly accepted standard on repatriation, enabling individuals who reacquire Romanian citizenship to retain not only their first citizenship, but also their domicile abroad.[161] Beside these novelties, the law included several facilities for the applicants. First, they were not supposed to live in Romania to be entitled for citizenship. Second, the procedure was based only on a (legalized) personal declaration, thus the examination by the special committee functioning beside the Ministry of Justice to determine the conditions of the application was eliminated (Art. 37, 1§). Finally, the applicants were exempted from consular taxes (Art. 38, 2§).

Since the inhabitants of Moldova and some regions from Ukraine were stripped from their Romanian citizenship following the Soviet occupation, based on these articles they may apply for restoring it. However, according to the analysis of the parliamentary discussions, it is questionable whether the Romanian officials aimed specifically at enabling them to retrieve the citizenship. Firstly because during the debates on the draft law (December 1990) nobody mentioned the beneficiaries and the relevant article passed without comments.[162] And secondly, when referring to supportive measures, this entitlement never appeared as such, at least before 2001.[163] It might be suggested that the Moldovan applications are just some unintended consequences of the law. Nevertheless, calling back the context in which this law emerged, Iordachi's suggestion seems as well acceptable, that the authors might have

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[160] Law No. 21/1991 was reedited in 2000, and the content of Art. 37 appeares under Art. 35.
[161] Constantin Iordachi, op. cit., pp. 244–245.
[162] Joint sessions of the Chamber of Deputies and Senate of December 13, 1990. *M.O.R. II*, Vol. I, Nr. 141, 1990.12.17, p. 13.
[163] Iordachi, *op. cit.*, p. 245.

envisioned dual citizenship as a strategy of unifying ethnic Romanians into a single political community, and as a preparatory step toward a closer integration between Romania and Moldova that could lead in the future to a possible reunification.[164]

Iordachi's research revealed that the Romanian citizenship law favoring Moldovan citizens had a strong destabilizing effect on Moldova's internal political life, caused considerable strain between the two countries, and later also stirred the concerns of the European Union.[165] The conflict between Romania and Moldova emerged from the situation that Moldovan legislation allows dual citizenship only in cases of international agreement, which was absent in case of Romania. Moreover, the amount of applications for Romanian citizenship caused genuine concern among Moldovan policy-makers, who feared that Romania was using dual citizenship as a strategy for increasing its control over Moldova.[166]

It is also important to highlight that dual citizenship undermined, rather than strengthened, the domestic desire for a 'political union' with Romania.[167] As Iordachi argues, on one hand, dual citizenship offered the Moldovan intelligentsia and politicians an "exit option", while on the other hand, the majority of Moldovan citizens applying for Romanian citizenship were actuated by material interests. Unlike the Moldovan passport, a Romanian passport granted its holder visa-free travel in Central Europe. In this respect it is very telling that most of the requests for Romanian citizenship were filed starting in 1998, after Romania was invited to enter negotiations to join the European Union. And the number of applications for Romanian citizenship from Moldova and Ukraine peaked in January 2001, when Romanian citizens were granted visa-free travel in the Schengen space. In addition, upon their acceptance as Romanian citizens, Moldovans were also issued a certificate of 'repatriation' which entitled them to a tax-free transfer of their goods over the border.

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[164] Iordachi, *op. cit.*, p. 247.
[165] Iordachi, *op. cit*, pp. 239–269.
[166] Iordachi, op. cit., p. 253.
[167] Iordachi, op. cit., pp. 249–250.

Bucharest was quick to answer back. Arguing that „the compensatory aspect of the restoration of citizenship originally considered by the Citizenship Law No. 21/1991 is present less and less" and "taking into consideration the new visa-free travel opportunity in the Schengen space",[168] in January 2001 the Government decided to suspend for a period of six months the restoration of citizenship falling under Article 35 of the law by Ordinance No. 167/2001. This decision triggered a street demonstration of Moldovan citizens applying for Romanian citizenship, and attracted criticism in the press from politicians and journalists committed to supporting the Moldovan citizens.[169] After six months, as a response the Government issued Ordinance No. 68/2002, which reinstituted the restoration of citizenship. Nevertheless, the procedure did not take the former simplified shape. Article 35 has been abrogated; consequently, the methods applied were similar to those for the persons who never possessed Romanian citizenship. The decision was to be taken on the basis of a dossier examined by the Citizenship Office operating within the Ministry of Justice. Only the tax-exemption remained.

According to media reports, this procedure led to the creation of mafia networks in Moldova for collecting citizenship dossiers and transporting them in huge packages to Bucharest.[170] For the second time, the Government suspended for another six months the stipulation on repatriation by Ordinance No. 160/2002. Beside the arguments sustaining the first suspension, new elements appeared in the motivation, most importantly the explosive growth in the number of requests (13,000 applicants in the period between August and November 2002) motivated by traveling in the Schengen space and the claims for restitution of property by the new citizens.[171]

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[168] *Motivaţie* [Motivation], issued by the Government in January 2001.
[http://www.cdep.ro/pls/proiecte/upl_pck.proiect?idp=2998&cam=2], 2007-04-08.
[169] Iordachi, op. cit. p. 256.
[170] Ibidem.
[171] *Motivaţie* [Motivation], issued by the Government in November 2002.
[http://www.cdep.ro/pls/proiecte/upl_pck.proiect?idp=3628&cam=2], 2007-04-08.

At the end of the six-month period, the government issued Ordinance No. 43/2003, stipulating the new conditions. This was confirmed by the Parliament as Law No. 248/2003, and since then this is in force. The main alleviation included is that former citizens can file their citizenship requests at Romania's embassies and consulates abroad (Art. 12 §2).

However, Ordinance 43/2003 introduced several restrictions too: 1) the entitlement is granted to the descendants of former citizens only up to the second generation (Art. 10^1); 2) those who acquired visa for settlement in Romania may apply for citizenship only after spending four years in the country (Art. 10^2); 3) the category previously mentioned cannot use the Romanian passport for traveling abroad, only between Romania and the country of origin (Art. 37^1); furthermore, 4) knowledge of the Romanian language and fundamental notions about Romanian culture and civilization are required (Art. 10^1).

These restrictions definitely reduced the group of entitled persons. The fact that Romanian citizenship can theoretically be acquired faster (less than 4 years) if someone does not have his/her residence in Romania, is a clear indication that the Government targeted to keep Moldovan citizens out of Romania.

The evolution of the citizenship law can be summed up like this: first, we witness a severe reduction of entitlements if we compare the stipulations from 2003 to the Citizenship Law from 1991. Except for the consular tax-exemption, the procedure is similar to application of other categories, and the circle of entitled persons was reduced. It is important to emphasize that moving to Romania is not encouraged. Second, arriving to this settling involved a great deal of insecurity. The enforcement of the entitlements enshrined in the 21/1991 Law was suspended two times, totally for one year between January 2001 and May 2003. Third, the amendments are motivated by abuses with the entitlement of acquiring Romanian citizenship, the high number of the applicants, and the pressure of the European

Union. There is no reference, not in a single case, to the concerns of the Moldovan Government. Fourth, the leading force behind the citizenship policy is the Government.

As a preliminary conclusion it might be stated that the Romanian legislation is not that favorable to Moldovans as it is frequently heard. Despite the clear reference in the Citizenship Law to the former citizens of Romania, this is barely more than a formal "commemoration". The "small steps" strategy toward the union in the last years turned out to be small steps in the opposite direction. Yet, to make sure about the correctness of this statement, other facts have to be checked. It can be put the question of how many Moldovans actually gained the Romanian citizenship.

There are various unofficial estimates regarding the number of Moldovans who gained Romanian citizenship. For example, according to *Infotag*, between 1991 and 2000 about 300,000 Moldovans obtained it.[172] Contrastingly, according to the data of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, between 1991 and 2002 the number of repatriated persons is 85,552.[173] It would be more appropriate to say that this figure represents the period between 1991 and 2000, because in the following two years citizenship was granted only for 3 persons and to 8 in 2003.[174] For the next years the figures are somewhat larger, 2,424 citizenships awarded between 2004 and 2007, but fall considerably behind the numbers from the previous decade.[175]

It has to be emphasized that these figures represent the number of persons who were granted citizenship, and not of those who applied for it. Unofficial estimates report about

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[172] Cited by Iordachi, op. cit., p. 253.

[173] Ministry of Internal Affairs: *Informare privind numărul de persoane, cetăţeni moldoveni care au dobândit cetăţenia română în ultimii 14 ani.* Nr. SGG 1273, 2004. 04. 14, 2–3. JEAKGY, Cluj, record K 791.

[174] The drastic decrease cannot be explained by the suspension of the enforcement of the relevant articles from the Citizenship Law, because the cases that should have been processed in this period were submitted before the amendment, which had no retrospective force.

[175] The data were collected from the *Monitorul Oficial al României I.*(Offical Bulletin of Romania, Section I.) by Constantin Dolghier. Since all cases of granting citizenship are made public by a Governmental Decree published in the *M.O.R.* the data can be considered reliable. Constantin Dolghier: *Redobândire cetăţenie România* [http://cetatenie.info.tm/index.php?page=8&action=viewall&mo=mo3], 2007-04-08.

500,000 applications[176], or, as President Traian Băsescu recently said, the total number of Moldovans seeking to obtain Romanian citizenship could exceed 800,000 in 2007.[177] The reality is that between June 2001 and March 2007 a total of 28,028 Moldovan citizens were taken into evidence in Bucharest,[178] meaning that their dossier is under process of examination.[179] The number of applications submitted to the Consulate from Kishinew is much higher, perhaps topping 500,000, and there is probably a large amount submitted directly in Bucharest.

The balance of the previously presented figures from the period between 2002 and 2007 can be drawn as follows: several hundreds of thousand applications were submitted in Kishinew, 28,028 dossiers were taken into evidence in Bucharest and 2,435 persons actually acquired the citizenship. Moreover, compared to the number of the persons that gained the citizenship between 1991 and 2002 (85,552 persons) the immediate conclusion is that the process was successfully obstructed. Seemingly the restrictions imposed by the amendments of the Citizenship Law were not enough to impede Moldovan applications; yet, the process was slowed down at the administrative level. At the beginning of 2006 the dossiers under examination were those submitted in 2002.[180] Curiously enough, the "facility" to submit the dossier in the country of origin turned out to be an effective tool to slow down the process.

To sum up, on one hand, as compared to the entitlements enshrined into the Citizenship Law from 1991 some major restrictions were introduced; on the other hand, awarding the citizenship was obstructed on administrative level. As it can be interpreted from the motivation issued by the Government, but as different authors revealed as well, the main

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[176] BBC News: *Romania tackles Moldova visa rush*. 16th of January, 2007.
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6268853.stm], 2007-04-08.
[177] ONG.MD: *Efectele sociale ale aderării României la UE asupra Republicii Moldova* (The social effects of Romania's accession to the UE on Moldova),
[http://www.ong.md/index.php?mod=home&hmod=postbyid&id=75], 2007-04-08.
[178] Dolghier, op. cit.
[179] The names appear in the Official Bulletin Section III.
[180] Speech of Ilie Ilaşcu. Sittings of the Senate of April 26, 2006.
[http://www.cdep.ro/pls/steno/steno.stenograma?ids=6101&idm=8&idl=1], 2007-04-08.
Ilaşcu cites the information received from the Ministry of Justice.

motive for halting the process of granting the citizenship was not to complicate the accession process.[181]

This chapter reviewed the main measures that were considered by the Romanian officials the pillars of the "small steps policy", in other words the policies put forward with the purpose of integrating the two states. The presentation revealed that the functioning of the system was far from being unproblematic, and from different motives some big changes occurred. The main findings and comments might be shortly summarized in the following points:

1)   Concerning the measures taken by common agreement of the Romanian and Moldovan officials it can be assessed that several served the interests of the Moldovan state and its citizens in general, like the visa and passport free border crossing, the tax exemptions for the import–export products, but the financed projects from the Moldova Fund as well. Consequently, it is obvious that the Moldovan Government was willing to cooperate. Nevertheless, the cooperation in the interparliamentary committee and the interministerial committees was obstructed, the latter being dissolved by the Moldovan initiative, when the relationship between the two states considerably worsened.

2)   Following the functioning of the unilateral initiatives of the Romanian state various conclusions can be drawn: first, the benefits in the Romanian education system seem one of the most stable initiatives, although the number of scholarships decreased; second, after 2003 Romania spends considerably more money as in the previous years for financing cultural projects from Moldova, an initiative that might be considered as a support for pro-

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[181] George Dura: "A Tale Of Two Visa Regimes: Repercussions Of Romania's Accession to the EU on the Freedom of Movement of Moldovan Citizens". In: UNISCI Discussion Papers, January 2006, pp. 257–274. [www.ucm.es/info/unisci/UNISCI10Dura.pdf], 2007-04-08.

Romanian forces in Moldova where the state nation policy bacame the theory of Moldovannes; third, the entitlements from the 1991 Citizenship Law were cut back.

3)   The influencing factors behind the changes occurred are the Moldovan opposition and the restrictions imposed by the EU accession. It is important to highlight that while Romania was willing to negotiate about the visa requirements, when coming to the citizenship that implies a Romanian passport too there were made severe amendments to the citizenship law and also administrative obstruction in order to grant less citizenship. The main reason behind these measures was to avert hindering factors in Romania's accession to the EU.

4)   As a last point, it worth mentioning that there were some disappointing experiences, namely the misusages regarding the granted support, nevertheless the Romanian Government did not ceased to send donations and to sustain the preferential treatment in the domain of economy.

Chapter 6. Political debates in Romania about the relationship with the Republic of Moldova

In order to broaden up the perspective about Romania's supportive policies directed toward Moldova additional information has to be introduced about the internal debates from Romania regarding this issue. In the following I will present the general perceptions about the supportive policies, the main political forces committed to it and the main topics emerging in the discussions regarding Moldova.

6.1. Political forces and the Moldova-policy

By following the parliamentary debates the first thing that becomes evident is that there are no Romanian political forces that question the legitimacy of kin-state policies directed toward Moldova or the need of having good relations between the two states. There is an unquestioned conviction that the people of Moldova are part of the Romanian nation. It is also obvious that considering Moldova a "Romanian land" is a generally shared view, which is often mentioned as one of the Romanian historical provinces. Radical politicians emphasize this point by using the name "Bessarabia" when referring to the Republic of Moldova. Nevertheless, this view is also supported in the common knowledge by the symbolism associated with the national holiday, the 1st of December that is the commemoration of the 1918 Great Union. Moreover, there is another separate commemoration in March – although not an official holyday –, for the "Union of Bessarabia with the Country". Consequently, it is almost impossible for a politician to avoid this topic.

When coming to the questions of Romanian-Moldovan unification, well known nationalist parties like the Greater Romania Party (GRP), the Party of Romanian National Unity (PRNU) and the Socialist Party of Labor (SLP) immediately appear in the foreground.

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However, centrist parties that are not considered radical also played an important role in the Parliamentary debates concerning this issue, most importantly the National Liberal Party (NLP) and the Christian Democratic National Peasant's Party (CDNPP), the later even including in its 1992 program the union between Romania and Moldova. Finally, the leftist Party of Social Democracy of Romania (PSDR, the former National Salvation Front) has its own spokespersons for the Moldovan-issues, particularly after the fusion with the SLP.

Referring to the situation from the 1990-1994 period, King remarked that "across the political spectrum in Romania, irredentism is a necessary plank in every party's platform".[182] It may be safely stated that the situation did not change much over time. This is not to say that the rhetoric did not alter and revisionism is the utmost purpose of some factions from every party rather, most of the determining political forces have their people that monitor the Romanian policies toward Moldova, as well as the nation policies of Moldova. Due to this situation, concerning the policies regarding the relationship with Moldova clear delimitations cannot be drawn along ideological lines. Nevertheless, as measured by the frequency of tackling the Moldova-policy, the vanguard fighters are the representatives of the extremist parties.

It is worth mentioning that despite the radical parties represent a considerable political force in Romania, and participated in different Governmental coalitions, they never managed to form a majority. This may serve as an explanation for Romanian foreign policy not becoming radicalized.

6.2. The main topics of the Parliamentary discussions

Regarding the content of parliamentary discussions the following main topics can be identified: union with Moldova; the Transnistrian conflict; the Moldovan nation policies and

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[182] King, op. cit, p. 263.

Moldova's foreign policy; and the kin-state policies of Romania. Clear delimitation in time cannot be made because all these coexisted, being logically interlinked.

6.2.1. The question of the union

The unionist calls meant specifically to influence the decisions of the Government were the loudest between 1990 and 1993, especially when the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and Moldova's independence was discussed. Nevertheless, the proposals for the adoption of declarations, resolutions addressed to the Moldovan Government tackling directly the issue of unification were quickly rejected by the parliamentary majority, which argued for the policy of "small steps" and emphasized the priority of international legal norms.[183] As it became clear after the 1994 elections from Moldova that the chances of union considerably decreased, the politicians committed to the merger turned against the governmental policies accusing it of not exploiting the favorable historical moments. One of the peak points was the period when the basic treaty with Ukraine was discussed (1995 – 1998), considered in the unionist train of thought the third big mistake (or "capital treason") of the Romanian foreign affairs in the field of nation policies: the first is the 1991 treaty with the Soviet Union, while the second is the recognition of Moldova as an independent state.

The unionist laments gradually faded around 2000 when a more "EU-conform" policy was adopted. See, for example the new slogan lunched by Corneliu Vadim Tudor (GRP leader): "Greater Romania in the unified Europe!"[184] Similar rhetoric was adopted by other political groups as well. Nevertheless, the vision of the "ideal Romania" never disappeared. Several examples might be mentioned even from early 2007, statements formulated by deputies with different ideological affiliation from left to extreme right: SDP Deputy Eugen Bejenariu stated that "the manifestations of Voronin and his supporters […] harm the good

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[183] Sittings of the Chamber of Deputies of February 2, 1993. *M.O.R. II*, Vol. IV, Nr. 8, 1993.02.03, p. 9-22.
[184] Joint sittings of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate of November 28, 2002.
[http://www.cdep.ro/pls/steno/steno.stenograma?ids=5372&idm=1&idl=2], 2007-05-26.

relations between the two Romanian states that are *temporarily separated* […].”; NLP Deputy Emil Strungă said that “Today, [...] although we speak the same language and share the same history, Romania and the Republic of Moldova are *two states artificially separated by the Prut River* (sic!)”; finally, GRP Deputy Leonida Lari-Iorga held a speech simply entitled “Bessarabia belongs to Romania”.[185]

Summing up, there was a period in the early 1990’s when the unionist calls aimed to influence the decisions of the Government and the parliamentary majority to take radical steps toward the merger; nevertheless, these attempts failed. Starting from 1994 the unionist discourse turned to a never-ending laments and criticism of the actual governmental parties and the previous Government. Around 2000 even the radical parties adapted their viewpoints to the EU-discourse; nevertheless, the unionist thoughts survived.

6.2.2. The Transnistrian conflict

The topic of the Transnistrian war dominated especially the 1992 discussions; since than, the frozen conflict and the situation of ethnic Romanians living there have remained recurrent topics. The Romanian Parliament sent different declarations to the parliaments of the world and different international organizations, furthermore asked the Government to act in the same way. The messages repeatedly condemned the Russian interference and asked for support in favor of Moldova’s territorial integrity. However, when in July 1992 Kishinew

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[185] All emphasis added by Kiss Ágnes.
Speech of Eugen Bejenariu. Sittings of the Chamber of Deputies of March 6, 2007.
[http://www.cdep.ro/pls/steno/steno.stenograma?ids=6249&idm=1,06&idl=2], 2007-05-25.
Speech of Emil Strungă. Sittings of the Chamber of Deputies of March 27, 2007.
[http://www.cdep.ro/pls/steno/steno.stenograma?ids=6273&idm=1,02&idl=2], 2007-05-25.
Speech of Leonida Lari Iorga. Sittings of the Chamber of Deputies of March 13, 2007.
[http://www.cdep.ro/pls/steno/steno.stenograma?ids=6256&idm=1,67&idl=2], 2007-05-25.

asked for joint military troops[186], the Parliament replied with a cautious and evasive answer, waiting for the reactions for the other appointed states.[187]

There was an incident of the Transnistrian war that specifically captured the public opinion, namely the imprisonment by Transnistrian forces of six leaders of the Popular Front's pro-Romanian wing. The "Ilaşcu Group" – named after their leader Ilie Ilaşcu – was charged with terrorist activities against the authorities of Transnistria and was subject of a political trial. At the end Ilaşcu was sentenced to death, however, he was never executed and was released in 2001. In the Romanian public opinion Ilaşcu very quickly became hailed as a national hero, the "Bessarabian patriot" fighting for the territorial integrity of Moldova and against the "Russian and Slavic expansionism". During their imprisonment a bunch of declarations emerged speaking up for them. The approach to this issue is reflected in the following statement cited from a 1993 declaration of the Romanian Senate: "The charges against the citizens of the Republic of Moldova, charged of being Romanians, represent hostile actions against the Romanian people, infringing the fundamental human rights and our national dignity."[188] In order to rescue Ilaşcu, he was nominated for Nobel Peace Prize (by the CDNPP), it was proposed to be granted Romanian citizenship, and, what is even more curious, he was elected Romanian Senator in 2000 as the candidate of the GRP, despite the Romanian Constitution forbidding dual citizens being elected into public offices.[189]

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[186] Joint minlitary troops of Byelorussia, Bulgaria, Russia, Romania and Ukraine.
[187] Sittings of the Chamber of Deputies of July 7, 1992. *M.O.R. II*, Vol. III, Nr. 13, 1992.07.10, p. 11-16. *M.O.R. II*, Vol. III, Nr. 13, 1992.07.11, p. 2.
[188] *Declaration–Appeal of the Senate regarding the judicial stageing from Tiraspol.* Sittings of the Senate of May 25, 1993. *M.O.R. II*, Vol. IV, Nr. 107, 1993.05.26, p. 16.
[189] During his imprizonment he was a deputy in the Moldovan Parliament as well being the candidate of the CDPP in 1994 and 1998.

6.2.3. The nation policies and the foreign affairs of Moldova

The nation policies and the foreign affairs of Moldova have been constantly monitored since 1993. The greatest concern of the Romanian officials was the orientation toward Russia and the headway of Moldovanism. The first signs of distancing from Romania and tightening the relations with Russia were represented by signing the founding documents of the CIS, an issue that shocked the Romanian officials. As it was presented before, the Russian presence and influence served as an important argument for setting up the supportive system.

The policies targeting the spread of the conception of Moldovanism and the anti-Romanian campaign were presented in a detailed manner and firmly disapproved. Starting from the policies pursued under the Sangheli Government in 1993, the most important events were thoroughly depicted (like the 1994 election campaign, changing the national symbols, changing history curricula, etc.) but specially the policies launched by Voronin. Furthermore, different political groups declared their sympathy with the protesters from Moldova, like in the case of the student protests from 1995, which was considered by some Romanian politicians – adopting the language of the pro-Romanian forces from Moldova–, the "rebirth of national emancipation" from Moldova.[190]

6.2.4. Romania's kin-state policies

Concerning Romania's external policies the Government was much criticized on one hand for "missing the train of unification", and on the other hand for not opposing more firmly the Moldovanist-policies of Kishinew. Consequently, setting up the institutional arrangements meant to bring closer the two states was welcomed by all Parliamentary parties.

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[190] Sittings of the Senate of April 10, 1995. *M.O.R. II*, Vol. VI, Nr. 59, 1995.04.20, p. 10-11, 35.
Speech of Ion Dedu (deputy in the Moldovan Parliament). Sittings of the Senate of April 12, 1995. *M.O.R. II*, Vol. VI, Nr. 63, 1995.04.21, p. 21-22.

There was a general consent that it serves to counterbalance Moldova's orientation toward Russia.

Concerning the functioning of the system the main problem was considered that the aids did not arrive to the wanted destination, namely to the pro-Romanian institutions. More specifically, the utmost concern formulated by Romanian politicians was the fate of the „unionist" press from Moldova.[191] In order to resolve this situation it was recommended to renounce to negotiations with the Moldovan Government rather finance directly the Moldovan institutions. Although this kind of suggestions appeared already in 1993, the Law 36/1993 was amended only in 2001.

Further proposal and criticisms appeared concerning the Citizenship Law, however only around 2006 when Ilie Ilaşcu turned to militate against blocking on administrative level awarding citizenship for Moldovan applicants.[192] Another topic, the perspective of the new visa regime under the EU came in the forefront in 2006, when it was proposed to be negotiating about with EU officials.[193] However, it is important to highlight that proposals of radical innovations did not emerge all over the period, neither in the sense of cutting down the support, nor for broadening the possibilities.

Furthermore, two puzzling questions have to be discussed. How dealt the Parliament with the constantly fluctuating amounts of the Moldova Fund? Second, what was the reaction of the Parliament to the Governmental Ordinances amending the Citizenship Law? It is clear that there was a majority in favor of the amendments, since the Ordinances were approved by laws, however still remain the questions: What were the parliamentary debates about before passing the law, and how much support was given to the initiatives of the Government?

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[191] Although this was a general concern the most prominent speakspersons are the poets Adrian Păunescu (SLP) and Leonida Lari-Iorga (GRP).
[192] Speech of Ilie Ilaşcu. Sittings of the Senate of March 19, 2007.
[http://www.cdep.ro/pls/steno/steno.stenograma?ids=6267&idm=2,05&idl=2], 2007-05-25.
[193] Speech of Alexandru Ioan Mortun (PNL). Sittings of the Senate of February 27, 2006.
[http://www.cdep.ro/pls/steno/steno.stenograma?ids=6044&idm=1,11&idl=2], 2007-05-25.

Seeing the fluctuation of the Moldova Fund one might suppose that there were serious debates in the Parliament on this topic. Interestingly enough, this cannot be sustained. The proposals were directed just to ensure that the financial support arrives to the "unionist" press. For this end it was repeatedly recommended to specify in the law on budget the name of media outlets with pro-Romanian orientation. Arguing that this would have bothered the Moldovan officials this request was never accomplished.

Concerning the amendments of the Citizenship Law the records show that except some minor wrangling related to grammar and stylistic issues, no serious debates preceded the final vote, which always ended with overwhelming majorities in favor of the ordinance.[194] Furthermore, we may conclude that the whole topic about granting citizenship to Moldovans remained a rather marginal issue in parliamentary debates, being developed mostly by deputies of the GRP, among them Leonida Lari Iorga and Ilie Ilaşcu.

Moreover, the only draft for amending the current citizenship regulation was submitted to the Parliament in May 2006 by GRP deputies.[195] Arguing that the process of granting the citizenship has become way too long, the draft contained some proposals about setting deadlines and broadening the personnel involved in the issue.[196] The assessments of the Government were unfavorable,[197] and it was rejected by both chambers of the Parliament. In the Senate the arguments against accepting the draft were that the administrative arrangements are designed in a way that there is no possibility for shortening the period, there are not enough available judges in Bucharest, the procedure does not take more time than in

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[194] It has to be mentioned, that the debates in the Chamber of Deputies were issued in emergency procedure, meaning that just several minutes were reserved for the „debates".
[195] Propunere legislativă de modificare şi completare a Legii nr. 21/1991, a cetăţeniei române. [http://www.cdep.ro/pls/proiecte/upl_pck.proiect?idp=7397&cam=2], 2007-04-08.
[196] Expunere de motive. [Assessments, issued by the Government] [http://www.cdep.ro/proiecte/2006/400/30/7/em437.pdf], 2007-04-08.
[197] Punct de vedere [Point of View], issued by the Government. [http://www.cdep.ro/proiecte/2006/400/30/7/pvg437.pdf], 2007-04-08.

other countries, and anyway, it is a bad thing to broaden the bureaucracy.[198] In the Chamber of Deputies there was no debate at all.[199] Although the draft law had many aspects to criticize, the fact that there were no constructive proposals, not just regarding this draft but in general since 2003, is a clear sign of indifference or of considering the situation convenient. Seemingly there is no political will to change the situation.

With this new information the political commitment to the Moldova-policy has to be redefined. Seemingly there were no oppositional forces in the Romanian political sphere to the issue of the "integration program" set up in the early 1990, and it was continuously sustained during the decade without recommendations for changing it. Moreover, the policies directed toward Moldova were embraced by members of parties covering the whole ideological spectrum. Nevertheless, with the new regulations of citizenship policy, there can be witnessed a shift in favor of the accession to the European Union on the detriment of the nation building policy.

The Moldova-policy was constantly on the political agenda due to the activity of the commitment of different politicians belonging to. Finally, in spite of the frequent critiques of the policies pursued by the Government, no recommendations were made for changing the system.

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[198] Sittings of the Senate of pril 26, 2006.
[http://www.cdep.ro/pls/steno/steno.stenograma?ids=6101&idm=8&idl=1], 2007-04-08.
[199] Sittings of the Chamber of Deputies September 14, 2006.
[http://www.cdep.ro/pls/steno/steno.stenograma?ids=6153&idm=14&idl=1], 2007-04-08.

Conclusions

The present work was dedicated to investigate the dynamics between the nation building policies of Romania and the Republic of Moldova, and to serve with deeper insights into the developments of Romania's policies directed toward Moldova. In Central and Eastern Europe serious conflicts emerged due to the national policies pursued by some states and minority groups, likewise in the case of Romania and Moldova. The conflict emerged between the external nation building policies of Romania that overlapped with the internal nation building policies of Moldova. As the analysis of this paper revealed, this conflictual situation had a big impact all over the past seventeen years on defining the nature of the bilateral relations between the two states.

The conceptual framework of the analysis was given by the theoretical model of Brubaker concerning the dynamics among the different types of nationalisms, which assumes that the kin-state, the home-state and the minority nationalisms are interlinked, consequently, mutually influence each other. Moreover, the model's further developments were taken into account too, namely the influence of different external and domestic factors for pursuing national policies. Given the constructed nature of nationalism, an important component of Brubaker's approach, the internal debates within the fields of nationalisms were also investigated.

The bases of the nation building policies are represented by two viewpoints in defining the ethnicity of the people from Moldova: the Romanian side argues that the people of Moldova belong to the Romanian nation, contrastingly, the Moldovan officials sustain that they form a distinct Moldovan nation. The sharp edge of the debates was the question of reunification of the two states, which would have meant reinstalling the status quo of the interwar period.

The dynamics of the nationalisms of Romania and Moldova can be sketched as it follows: the pan-Romanian ideals being present in Moldova and Romania mutually reinforced each other and generated a radicalization among the minorities from Moldova and the promoters of Moldovanism. The principles of Moldovanism that implied delimitation from Romania were envisioned to secure the territorial integrity of Moldova under the menace of separatist movements, the integration of powerful minority organizations, but served as well as a tool for the validation of geopolitical interests related to Russia. An interesting aspect of this "dynamic" is that Moldovanism became a declared state nation policy in a period when the unionist intentions were not anymore in the forefront in either of the states, the pro-Romanian forces from Moldova being politically marginalized since the 1994 elections.

In spite of the Moldovan objections Romania never ceased to treat its neighbor in a "special" manner and the nation building project materialized in diversified supportive measures on behalf of Moldova and the Moldovan citizens. The reason behind these efforts was the gradual integration of the two states and to counterbalance the Russian influence. The measures included Romania's unilateral initiatives (the citizenship law, the benefits in the education system, etc.), but also bilateral initiatives (import-export tax exemptions between the two states, passport free border crossing, etc.). Of course, the bilateral initiatives served the Moldovan interests too, consequently the main controversies emerged because of the unilateral measures adopted by Romania.

Concerning the functioning of the supportive system the analysis revealed the following facts: the system was built up until 1994, thus before the pro-Romanian forces from Moldova became politically marginalized. Furthermore, there were some cutbacks after 2001, when the relationship between the two states considerably worsened. Thus, the changes reflect the shifts in the Romanian–Moldovan relations (e.g. dissolving the interministerial committees and the Moldova Fund). However, the changes occurred are not due solely to the

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Moldovan opposition, but also to the Romanian geopolitical interests, most importantly to the integration into the European Union. One of the results is the amendment of the citizenship law. However, the dissolution of the Moldova Fund did not affect financing the Moldovan projects, just the source was changed. Moreover, the financed domains became preponderantly cultural, what met perfectly the needs of the pro-Romanian forces from Moldova since Moldovanism became the state nation policy. Furthermore, although there were severe misuses in these measures (for example in the domain of economy), Romania did not withdraw them.

Concerning the internal debates from Romania the research uncovered that there are no Romanian political forces that would question the legitimacy of kin-state policies directed toward Moldova and the "integration program" set up in the early 1990 has been sustained during the decade without any recommendation for changing it. Furthermore, in what it concerns the policies regarding the relationship with Moldova, clear boundaries cannot be traced along ideological lines among the Romanian political forces. Nevertheless, regarding the frequency of tackling the Moldova-policy the vanguard fighters are the representatives of the extremist parties. Although there is a general commitment toward the Moldova-policy, with the new regulations of citizenship policy a shift in favor of the accession to the European Union could be witnessed.

With the information presented, the main questions proposed for this paper can be considered as answered. The analysis provided information about the developments of the Romanian and Moldovan nation building policies in a dynamic relationship, as well as about the development and functioning of the Romanian supportive system. Although the results cannot be generalized for analyzing other conflictual nation building cases, this being one of the limitations of this paper, the empirical research yielded information abut the construction of nation building policies, and the functioning of the kin-state policies which have not been

discussed in the relevant literature about Romania and Moldova until now. Furthermore, the relevance of the chosen case is given by its political actuality, since the political debates are still in the forefront and keep to define the relationship between the two states.

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