



Moldova's foreign and security policy in the shadow of the EU and Russia

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Moldova's Foreign and Security Policy in the Shadow of the EU and Russia



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Abstract

This thesis is an attempt at explaining the shift which has been seen in the foreign policy of the Republic of Moldova since the Communist party came to power in 2001. After independence, Moldova conducted a vacillating foreign and security policy between a pro-Romanian and a pro-Russian policy. In 2001 the Communist Party of Moldova was elected and after a short period where the government seemed to promote the “Russification” of the country, it radically changed course towards “Europeanisation”. This puzzle is the starting point for this thesis.

The thesis takes its theoretical starting point from the constellation theory and the theory of the state, both belonging to the broader realist tradition. The constellation theory helps explaining how the geopolitics of Euro-Atlantic integration affects the external behaviour of non-pole powers by particularly looking at the challenges emanating from their respective salient environments. Thus, the analysis starts out by looking at the role of the EU/NATO institutions and continues with the near geopolitical environment represented by Russia, Romania and Ukraine. At the domestic level the theory of the state is introduced and such elements as the idea of the state, the institutions and the physical base of the state are argued to have importance for the conduct in foreign affairs. Last but not least the constellation theory’s concept of the historical legacy is looked at in explaining how past geopolitics has influenced the interaction of the various actors.

The thesis concludes that the Communist government has conducted a pragmatic and balanced foreign policy, exactly as the previous governments since independence, despite the apparent change in policy. The rapprochement towards the Euro-Atlantic unipole is due to the present geopolitical considerations, with a more favourable EU/NATO policy opposed to a more aggressive Russian one and the change in domestic support from the Russian-speaking population to the Moldovan majority. The role of past geopolitics with Moldova being under Romanian/Russian (Soviet) occupation is also an important factor for all the actors involved.

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Abbreviations:

BNS	National Statistics Bureau of Moldova
CDPP	Christian Democratic People's Party
CFE	Conventional Forces in Europe
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
ECE	East and Central Europe
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EUSR	EU Special Representative
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSP	Generalised System of Preferences
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPAP	Individual Partnership Action Plan
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NCR	Neoclassical Realism
NIS	Newly Independent States
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PACE	Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
PCA	Partnership and Cooperation Agreement
PCRM	Communist Party of the Republic of Moldova
USA	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

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1. Introduction

Moscow's recent offensive in Georgia has worried former Soviet republics like Ukraine, Moldova and Azerbaijan.¹ They see it as a return to old imperialist policies and fear they could be the next victims of Russian aggression. One of them, the Republic of Moldova², is a country troubled by internal political fighting, with a weak economy and “sandwiched” between the EU and Russia. Foreign affairs are a domain of special importance for the leadership in Chisinau³ since Moldova seeks international recognition and support from the Western community.

After independence Moldova conducted a “multi-vector” foreign and security policy vacillating between a pro-Romanian policy in the first half of the 1990s, when unification with Romania was discussed, and a pro-Russian policy in the latter part of the 1990s determined by the Transnistrian⁴ conflict and the bad economy.⁵ In 2001 the Communist Party of the Republic of Moldova (PCRM) became the first orthodox communist party to be elected back into power since the fall of the former Soviet Union.⁶ In the beginning it seemed that Vladimir Voronin, PCRM leader and the new elected president, was promoting the “Russification” of the country seen in the intention to introduce reforms like the compulsory Russian language training in secondary school the replacement of the curriculum text on Romanian history to one on Moldovan history and Moldovan membership in the Russian-Belarusian union.⁷

But the “Slavic choice”⁸ of the Communist government became gradually less pronounced after it took office. The new leadership’s pro-Kremlin credentials notwithstanding, the Transnistrian

¹ Luchterhandt, Otto (29.08.09): “Ex-Soviet States Fear Russian Aggression”, *Spiegel Online*, accessed on the 10.09.09 at <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,575238,00.html>

² Throughout the thesis I will use the shorter term of Moldova.

³ Chisinau is the capital of Moldova.

⁴ Transnistria, also known as Trans-Dniester, Transdniestria, and Pridnestrovie is a disputed region who was a part of the former Moldavian SSR. Since Moldova’s declaration of independence in 1990, a short war followed in 1992, and now the secessionist province is governed by the unrecognized Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic (PMR), which claims the left bank of the river Nistru (Dniester) and the city of Bendery within the former Moldavian SSR. The modern Republic of Moldova does not recognize the secession and considers PMR-controlled territories to be a part of Moldova’s sovereign territory. The “president” of Transnistria is Igor Smirnov. Accessed 20.11.08 at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transnistria>

⁵ International Crisis Group (2006): *Moldova’s Uncertain Future*, Europe Report no. 175, accessed 05.11.08 at http://www.conflictprevention.net/library/documents/europe/75_moldova_s_uncertain_future_cpp.pdf

⁶ Hill, William (24.10.2008): “Who’s Next? Russia’s Cat and Mouse Game with Moldova”, *Open Democracy News Analysis*, accessed 1.11.2008 at www.opendemocracy.net.

⁷ Emerson, Michael and Marius Vahl (2004): “Moldova and the Transnistrian Conflict”, in Bruno Coppieters et al.: *Europeanization and Conflict Resolution: Case Studies from the European Periphery*, Ghent: Academia Press, p. 22.

⁸ “The Slavic choice” refers to the Moldovan government’s orientation towards Russia as a strategic partner in its foreign policy choices. *Ibid.* p. 23.

dispute proved as intractable for President Voronin as it had for previous administrations, and relations with Moscow quickly degenerated to open hostility, such as the interdiction of Moldovan wine import⁹ by Russia and higher prices for energy to Moldova.¹⁰ Beginning a second term in 2005, PCRM made a radical change and committed itself to a program of cooperation with its domestic opponents focused on “Europeanization”. It promised domestic liberalisation, and introduced a new strategy for resolving the Transnistrian dispute based on increased reliance on Western actors in the negotiation process.¹¹

Taking into consideration that the government has changed from being semi-democratic to being communist, how can we explain this change in foreign and security policy from East to West? And is this only a surface change? The purpose of this thesis is to show how the new geopolitical reality in Europe, the rivalry between Russia and the West, has shaped the foreign and security policy of Moldova after independence in 1991, while focus will be on the period after the election of the Communist party in 2001. Whereas Moldovan foreign policy has become more aligned with Europe, economic considerations, especially concerning gas imports from Russia on which Moldova is totally dependent, have forced the country to balance competing needs and foreign policies.

1.1 Scope of analysis and research question

With this context in mind, it would be interesting to have a closer look at the foreign and security policy of Moldova and at the factors that have influenced the development into one or the other direction.

The research question is therefore:

How can we explain Moldova's foreign and security policy after the Communists came to power in 2001?

The thesis will take its point of departure in the development after Moldova became independent in 1991 as it is since then that one can talk about an independent foreign policy. The focus will though be on the foreign policy after 2001 when the Communists came to power because it is at

⁹ Wine export to Russia constituted 80% of Moldova's total wine export in 2005

¹⁰ Laar, Mart (10.06.2007): “Escape from Moscow”, *The Guardian*, accessed 29.10.08 at www.guardian.co.uk.

¹¹ Crowther, William (2007): “Moldova, Transnistria and the PCRM' Turn to the West”, *East European Quarterly*, volume 41, no.3, pp. 285-289.

that point that Moldova changes its foreign policy in a more radical direction, towards the West, although one might expect another turn considering that there is a Communist government in power. Furthermore, it is also in the beginning of the 2000's that the EU begins to show more interest in Moldova and both Romania and Ukraine have a more favourable policy concerning both finding a solution to the Transnistrian conflict and higher level of trade relations. The period before 2001 is important in order to illustrate this change.

Based on a realistic theoretical starting point, the analysis will focus on the following key factors that have had influence on conducting foreign and security policy. These are international institutions, geopolitics, Moldova's idea of the state, the institutional expression of the state, and the physical base.

In order to answer the research question, the constellation theory and the theory of the state, both belonging to the broader realist tradition, will be used. The purpose of the constellation theory is to explain how the geopolitics of Euro-Atlantic integration affects the external behaviour of non-pole powers by particularly looking at the challenges emanating from their respective salient environments, meaning that it both looks at the state's constellation in the near abroad and in relation to the Euro-Atlantic unipole, though the focus is on the near abroad. Furthermore foreign policy behaviour can also be explained by both present and past geopolitics. As such the theory also looks at the domestic level of explaining foreign policy.¹² With its emphasis on the near geopolitics, the theory will help explaining why Moldova has shaped its foreign policy in a direction that has been more influenced by the great power Russia rather than the EU and NATO. At the domestic level the constellation theory will be supplemented with Barry Buzan's theory of the state.¹³ The theory of the state emphasizes that the idea of the state together with the institutions and the physical base are important factors for the security of a state and implicitly for its foreign policy. Although the constellation theory emphasises the historical legacy as a factor at the domestic level, it is a relational factor and as such it will be an integrative part of all three levels of analysis.

¹² Mouritzen, Hans & Anders Wivel (2005): *The Geopolitics of Euro-Atlantic Integration*, London & N.Y.: Routledge.

¹³ Buzan, Barry (1991a): *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the post Cold War Era*, Second Edition, Boulder: Lynne Rienner, Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

But why study Moldova, one of Europe's smallest and poorest countries? One of the reasons is the EU enlargement, which has brought Moldova in the near neighbourhood of the European Union.¹⁴ In the context of the international fight against terrorism, there are fears that the existence of a failed state like Moldova or uncontrolled areas, like Transnistria, can have repercussions far beyond its respective region.¹⁵ Furthermore the conflict in Transnistria has brought illegal trafficking of drugs, guns and women near the EU and has made the EU interested in helping Moldova develop democratic institutions. A third reason is that Moldova has had some success in changing its course towards Europeanization while holding Russia at a distance and this could be a positive lesson for other former Soviet countries who want to come out of Russia's influence.¹⁶ Last but not least, not much has been written on Moldova and even less on Moldova's foreign policy. Much of the material that exists concentrates on different aspects of the Moldovan foreign policy, like the relationship with Russia, or the relationship with the EU. With this thesis I hope to contribute with new aspects which can give a more complete picture of the subject in question.

1.2 Structure of the thesis

The thesis begins with an introduction to the research question, the theory used and delimitations to the thesis. It is followed by the methodology which contains considerations around scientific tradition, empirical material and the choice of case design. Chapter three will introduce the constellation theory and the theory of the state and it will be argued that the combination of the two is compatible. It continues with a critique of the chosen theories, the analytical framework and theoretical expectations. The analysis will be at three levels: the Euro-Atlantic, the near geopolitical and the domestic one. The focus will be on the near geopolitical level, and international institutions, neighbouring countries and state factors will be discussed at the three levels. The analysis will try to give an answer to the questions asked in the introduction. The concluding remarks will put the analysis into perspective. The research question will be answered and the theory evaluated.

¹⁴ Popescu, Nicu (2006): "The EU and Transnistria. From Deadlock to Sustainable Settlement", *IPF Policy Brief*, accessed 05.11.2008 at: <http://www.policy.hu/npopescu/ipf%20info/IPF%201%20transnistria.pdf>

¹⁵ "The European Strategy of the Republic of Moldova", *Institute for Public Policy*, pp. 6-10.

¹⁶ Johansson, Andreas (2003): "Whither Moldova? Conflicts and Dangers in a Post-Soviet Republic", FOI (Swedish Research Agency): Base data report, p. 27.

1.3 Delimitations and clarification of key concepts

The analysis is temporally delimited to the time of Moldovan independence, after the breakdown of the Soviet Union in 1991. In order to see the change in policy it is important to look at the entire period after the independence. I will though look more into details at the period after 2001 as it is this period where a shift in foreign policy towards “Europeanization” is seen. The history of the country is also taken stock of in the analysis of the domestic level of politics.

As this thesis deals with foreign policy, the foreign policy concept should be defined. When analysing foreign policy several aspects should be considered¹⁷:

1. the goals of foreign policy
2. the process through which foreign policy is made
3. the substance of policy
4. foreign policy outcomes.

This thesis will only deal with the substance of foreign policy. According to Svendsen, “foreign policy should be classified according to its substance” such as the means (i.e. military, economic, diplomatic) employed, its level of activity, whether or not it is bilateral, multilateral, etc.¹⁸ This definition concurs very well with the realistic starting point of the thesis.

Other concepts important to this thesis will be defined in the chapter of theory framework as they are a part of explaining the theory.

¹⁷ Svendsen, Bo Anker (1980): “Eventsdata: En tilfredsstillende operationalisering af udenrigspolitik”, *Politica*, bind 11, p. 21.

¹⁸ Ibid. p. 21

2. Methodology and data

In this chapter the method and the research strategy used for analysis will be presented. These are critical rationalism and case studies. The empirical material will also be commented on.

2.1 Scientific tradition

This thesis takes its methodological starting point in modified critical rationalism¹⁹. Critical rationalism as formulated by Karl Popper²⁰ takes the view that we don't have ultimate answers and scientists must try to approach scientific truths through critical and rational questions to the existing.²¹ What Popper pointed out is that you can never justify any scientific theory, but you can falsify it.²² For the purpose of this thesis, whether a theory is false or not is not so important when evaluating existing theories. As King, Keohane and Verba rightly emphasize, the question is more "how much of the world the theory can help us explain".²³ The advantage of critical rationalism is that, even in a situation where the empirical results do not concur with the expectations, the produced knowledge can contribute to correct future research.²⁴

With regard to this thesis, modified critical rationalism is used to structure the analysis in the way that the thesis starts by stating a research problem and then a solution to it is suggested and confronted with the empirical evidence. In the end the problem is restated based on the analysis and the basic procedure is repeated but from a better starting point.²⁵

2.2 The case study approach: advantages and problems

The thesis is designed as an empirical, qualitative case study analysis of Moldovan foreign policy after the end of the Cold War with an emphasis on the period after the PCRM took power.

¹⁹ Wivel, Anders (2000): *The Integration Spiral. International Security and European Integration 1945-1999*. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Copenhagen: Institute of Political Science, pp. 21-34.

²⁰ Popper, Karl (1968): *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, New York: Harper and Row.

²¹ Gilje, Nils & Harald Grimmen (1998): *Samfunnsvitenskapens forutsetninger*, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, pp. 66-69 on Popper's Critical Rationalism.

²² Popper (1968): pp. 250-252.

²³ King, Gary, Robert Keohane & Sidney Verba (1994): *Designing Social Inquiry. Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, p. 101.

²⁴ Popper (1968), pp. 67-68.

²⁵ Wivel (2000): p. 33.

The case study is a useful analytical framework for research that “investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used”.²⁶ In other words, it is a particularly well-suited approach to studies of phenomena which cannot be understood in separation from the contextual conditions. This fairly well describes the aim of this study, namely to analyse Moldovan foreign policies within the context of the broader geopolitical situation. Furthermore “how” questions are well suited in conducting an explanatory case study²⁷ and my intention is to *explain how* Moldovan foreign policy has developed.

A primary distinction in designing case studies is between single and multiple-case designs.²⁸ The choice of a single case, like the one in this thesis, can be criticised by not having a strong external validity as one cannot generalise to other countries’ foreign policy.²⁹ The purpose of this thesis is to get into depth with the case in question and for this reason case study research is the most appropriate method. The conclusions reached do not pretend universal validity³⁰ but as the case study is aimed at examining case-specific facts and outcomes, this research might be useful in understanding general outcomes of similar cases, in this situation other ex-Soviet countries which have had similar conditions.

Having the chosen theory as a starting point, the introduction briefly mentioned the variables that are essential for the purpose of analysis. Afterwards it will be investigated how these variables have changed during the period of research and decide which ones have had influence on the formation of foreign policy. The choice of theory, on the other hand, depends on the chosen research question. As such the chosen method is both inductive and deductive, in the way that the theory is chosen on the basis of what it is relevant for the case (induction) while the case afterwards is analysed from the perspective of the chosen theory (deduction).³¹ One can criticise the choice of some independent variables rather than others and the effect of those on the analysis.³² I find this a relevant critique. For the purpose of this thesis, it is more significant to

²⁶ Yin, Robert (2003): *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, Sage: Thousand Oaks, p. 23.

²⁷ Ibid. p. 6.

²⁸ Ibid. p. 39.

²⁹ Van Evera, Stephen (1997): *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*, New York: Cornell University Press, chapter 2; Yin (1994): chapter 1.

³⁰ Yin (2003): p. 33-37.

³¹ Bryman, Alan (2004): *Social Research Methods*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 8-11.

³² George, Alexander L. & Bennett, Andrew (2005): *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge & London: MIT Press, p. 25.

choose a few variables which can qualitatively be analysed into details. This means that there can be other factors that have influence but there are always some variables that are more important than others. One way to help choosing the variables with the strongest influence is by making the research over a longer period of time and with different policy changes. In this way several observations are made for the same case.³³ In the case of Moldova, I have chosen to look at both the period before and after the Communists came to power in order to have a better understanding of the policy change from East to West.

In order to comply with critics of using case study two concrete methodological tools will be used: congruence and process-tracing. Van Evera³⁴ believes that these methods are suitable for testing theories but as the purpose of this thesis is not to test the theory it will be drawn on them as systematic analysing tools that can be used to explain the empirical research problem.³⁵ **The congruence method** can be used to explore if a chosen theory has enough explanatory power.³⁶ In this way it is the theory that helps to see if there is “congruence or incongruence between values observed on the independent and dependent variables”.³⁷ In this way one can easily see if the theory will have explanatory power in a chosen case. In the case of Moldova through the congruence method the constellation theory will help show that changes in foreign policy are dependent on Moldova’s environmental constellation.

This method has some disadvantages though. One important problem is whether the independent variable really explains the dependent one or if there is a random coincidence or a third variable on which both variables are dependent.³⁸ To avoid these problems another method will be used, process-tracing.

In **process-tracing** the investigator explores the chain of events by which initial case conditions are translated into case outcomes.³⁹ In order to demonstrate that an explanatory variable causes a dependent variable, a list of causal links between the two variables should be identified, meaning that process-tracing can help demonstrate if the intervening variables explain the independent

³³ Ibid. pp. 32-33.

³⁴ Van Evera (1997): p. 56.

³⁵ George & Bennett (2005): p. 181.

³⁶ Ibid. p. 181.

³⁷ Van Evera (1997): p. 58.

³⁸ George & Bennett (2005): pp. 185-192.

³⁹ Van Evera (1997): p. 64.

variable.⁴⁰ Consequently the variables from the analysis will be selected on the basis of the chosen theory and some aspects of the case will be given more importance than others. By process-tracing the course of action is followed towards a certain decision. In the case of Moldova, process-tracing will help analyse how foreign policy decisions are made. It will be looked at the most important actors, such as the EU, NATO, Russia, Ukraine or Romania and at relevant events in order to see how they interact to decide foreign behaviour. Such events can be lessons from the past which persist through socialisation and other mechanisms and as such have a restrictive influence on foreign policy. All in all, a thick description will be made through the theoretical lenses in order to determine the most relevant factors.

2.3 Data and Sources

The data material used in this thesis comes from many different sources like statistical data, official documents and speeches, newspapers from Moldova and Romania, journals and books. The use of both quantitative and qualitative materials and different methods for gathering data is called triangulation and it is used in order to increase the validity of the analysis.⁴¹ The use of multiple sources of evidence will allow this analysis to address a broader range of historical, attitudinal, and behavioural issues. Thus any finding or conclusion will be more convincing and accurate if it is based on several different sources of information.⁴²

The data material gathered is in Danish, English and Romanian/Moldovan. I have the advantage of being able to read Romanian, which is almost identical to the language spoken in Moldova. It will hopefully give me the possibility to get some angles of the research question which would not have been accessible otherwise.⁴³ I have been able to access sources from Moldova, including newspapers, journals and other research sites, among the most important it can be mentioned: Moldova Azi, Infotag, Democracy and Governing in Moldova, the Institute for Public Policy, Moldova org., Flux, The Tiraspol Times, Jurnal de Chisinau. Two Romanian newspapers have also

⁴⁰ King et. al (1994): p. 86.

⁴¹ Bryman: p. 275.

⁴² Yin (2003): p. 92.

⁴³ I am aware that I can be influenced by the fact that I am Romanian as there are some sensitive issues between Romanians and Moldovans, especially concerning the use of “the Moldovan language” as the official language in Moldova in spite of Romania’s repeatedly protests on the existence of such a language. See Damian, George (15 October 2007): “Romania inghite ‘limba moldoveneasca’” (Romania swallows ‘the Moldovan language’), *Ziua*, accessed on the 1st of November 2008 at <http://www.ziua.ro/display.php?data=2007-10-15&id=227982> ; Damian, George (18 October 2008): “Presiunile Chisinaului pentru ‘limba moldoveneasca’” (Chisinau’s pressures for ‘the Moldovan language’), *Ziua*, accessed on the 1st of November 2008 at <http://ziua.net/display.php?data=2008-10-18&id=244228>.

been used: Ziua and Gandul. Romanian history books written after the revolution⁴⁴ together with Charles King's *History of the Moldovans* will be used to insure the accuracy of the history of Moldova from the origins. Danish and other foreign newspapers and news agencies have also been useful, for ex. Berlingske Tidende, BBC Romanian, Radio Free Europe.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ History books during the Ceausescu regime were an adaptation of the truth in the way the president found it appropriate, with many aspects of the history missing or interpreted according to the viewpoints of the president. After 1989, the history of Romanians was written anew.

⁴⁵ One should be aware of sources that can be biased such as newspapers from Moldova and Romania. The Moldovan government has censored the media but mostly the audio-visual one. Electronic media is freer to write what they choose as not many Moldovans are able to access the internet. The newspapers I have used are all electronic and by choosing several of them the reliability is increased and it has given me the opportunity to see which ones that are pro/contra the governing rule. The Romanian newspapers can also be biased if we take into consideration the turbulent relation Romania has with Moldova. By comparing with other foreign newspapers, I have been able to see the accuracy of these newspapers and used them when accurate.

3. Theoretical framework

The chapter will start by an introduction to the realistic research programme and to why I have chosen to take my point of departure in it. Following I will discuss the constellation theory and the theory of the state and argue that the combination of the two is compatible. Concrete examples related to the empirical analysis will be given along the discussion of the theory. The choice of the two theories over other approaches will be commented on.

3.1 Realism and foreign policy analysis

The theoretical framework takes its point of departure in the contemporary structural realist research programme. Realism is a continuous work in progress and after the end of the Cold War and the subsequent critique of the neorealist perspective on international relations, new realist approaches and theories have come into existence.⁴⁶ The new developments have allowed for more detailed studies on foreign policy.

In order to understand the theoretical framework of this thesis it is important to look at the development of realism since Waltz introduced the neorealist theory with his book *Theory of International Politics* in 1979. This thesis starts, like Waltz, from the premise that the international system is anarchic, meaning that "there is no overarching authority to prevent others from using violence, or the threat of violence, to dominate or even destroy them".⁴⁷ The most important actors in the international system are the states and they are seen as rational actors. In the absence of an overarching authority, states must focus primarily on their own survival and security. As such every state worries about its relative power vis-à-vis other states and tends to base its foreign policy on power calculations rather than factors like ideology or culture. Therefore, the international realm is dominated by power politics.⁴⁸

According to Waltz, power politics are played out in different ways depending on the distribution of power in the international system.⁴⁹ That depends on the number of great powers and Waltz distinguishes between bipolar systems, systems with two great powers, and multipolar systems,

⁴⁶ For a thorough discussion of realist theories see Mastanduno (1997), Rose (1998), Rathbun (2008).

⁴⁷ Grieco, Joseph M. (1990): *Cooperation Among Nations*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, p. 38.

⁴⁸ Hansen, Birthe, Peter Toft & Anders Wivel (2003): "Lost Power. The American World Order and the Politics of Adaptation", *Arbejdsrapport 2003/04*, Københavns Universitet: Institut for Statskundskab, p. 5.

⁴⁹ Waltz, Kenneth (1979): *Theory of International Politics*, New York: Random House, pp. 129-138.

systems with more than two great powers.⁵⁰ Neorealism has been challenged especially after the end of the Cold War, as Waltz foresaw that a situation where one super power dominates the international system would be much more unstable than a system with two or more super powers.⁵¹ Neorealism anticipated that USA' hegemonic position would be on a short term, as one or more states would try to balance USA and create a more stable bi-/multipolarity. That has not happened yet. On the contrary we have seen other states wanting to collaborate with USA instead of challenging its power position.⁵²

Waltz' theory is systemic and as such it explains results of international events and therefore cannot explain specific foreign policy.⁵³ In order to make a comprehensive study of foreign policy one has to combine structural variables with regional and domestic ones. A foreign policy analysis based only on structural variables can thus in many cases only give us a very general understanding of a single state's foreign policy.⁵⁴ As Waltz emphasises it, structural factors can explain why states act in the same way in many areas. The anarchic structure of the international system helps understand why almost all states have chosen a defence and security policy as a part of their foreign policy. It also explains why states under multipolarity usually change alliances more often than under bipolarity, as their change has importance for the changing power balance.⁵⁵ But structural variables do not explain why states act differently in similar situations.⁵⁶ It is important to look at the non-systemic variables' effect on foreign policy.

Neoclassical realism (NCR) incorporates both external and internal variables. According to NCR, the scope and ambition of a country's foreign policy is driven first and foremost by its place in the international system and specifically by its relative material power capabilities. However, the impact of such power capabilities on foreign policy is indirect and complex, because systemic pressures must be translated through intervening variables at the unit level.⁵⁷

⁵⁰ Waltz (1979): p. 69.

⁵¹ Kreisler, Harry (2002): "Theory and International Politics: Conversation with Kenneth N. Waltz" i *Kompendium 1. International Politik 2005/2006*, Københavns Universitet: Institut for Statskundskab, pp. 6-9.

⁵² Wivel, Anders (2008): "Balancing against threats or bandwagoning with power? Europe and the transatlantic relationship after the Cold War", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, vol.21, no. 3, pp. 292-295.

⁵³ Walt, Stephen (2005): "A Few Big and Important Things": The Enduring Legacy of Kenneth Waltz', *Tidskriftet Politik*, årgang 8, no. 3, pp.48-51.

⁵⁴ Wivel, Anders (2005a): "Indenrigspolitik, ideer og etik: Tre udfordringer til neorealistisk udenrigspolitikanalyse", *Tidsskriftet Politik*, årgang 8, nr. 3, p. 61.

⁵⁵ Waltz (1979): pp. 91-121.

⁵⁶ Wivel (2000): p. 140.

⁵⁷ Rose, Gideon (1998): "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy", *World Politics*, vol. 51, p. 146.

Neoclassical realism can, though, be criticised for not having a clear internal logic and for not arguing why some factors are more relevant than others.⁵⁸ Furthermore they seem to be “unable to account for the link between international structure and foreign policy”, a problem that the structural realists also face.⁵⁹ For these reasons I have chosen to use the constellation theory, which is seen as an expansion of NCR.

Revitalizing an explicit focus on foreign policy, the constellation theory reintroduces some of the central insights included in classical realism. By applying their own variant of NCR to non-pole powers – and not only great powers – Mouritzen and Wivel expand the explanatory scope of NCR considerably and make it more suitable for the purpose of this thesis.

3.2 The constellation theory

What distinguishes the constellation theory from other neoclassical realists and the reasons for which it is relevant to this thesis are the following.⁶⁰ First of all the theory theorizes also on the non-pole powers, rather than only the great powers. This is particularly relevant for this thesis as Moldova is definitely a non-pole power if we look at the country in relation to other states in Europe.⁶¹ Second, state location has an important role on foreign policy, in so doing it emphasizes the role of geopolitics. It will be shown that the location of Moldova in a region predominated by power struggles makes geopolitics one of the main explanations for the conduct of Moldovan foreign policy. Third, the concept of polarity is reformulated in order to explain non-pole power behaviour. Polarity is viewed from the perspective of the particular state, whose behaviour one wishes to explain. In this way the theory will help look at the Moldovan foreign policy from the perspective of the polarity in the near neighbourhood, where Moldova has to relate to Romania, Ukraine and Russia as well as the EU and NATO.

⁵⁸ Wivel, Anders (2002): “Realismen efter Waltz: Udvikling eller afvikling?”, *Politica*, vol. 34, no. 4, p. 441; Wivel (2005a): p. 62.

⁵⁹ Wivel, Anders (2005b): “The Security Challenge of Small EU Member States: Interests, Identity and the Development of the EU as a Security Actor”, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, vol. 43, no. 2, p. 357.

⁶⁰ *Ibid* p. 3.

⁶¹ See definition of a non-pole power later in this chapter.

3.2.1 A pole vs. a non-pole state

Terms like 'pole', 'great power' and 'small states' are usually defined in different ways, being no consensus among international relations' researchers.⁶² The theory of constellation defines the difference between a pole and a non-pole power from the perspective of the power they exercise and not from the perspective of the power they possess as it has traditionally been done.⁶³ It is the position of the state in a specific spatio-temporal context that determines whether the state is a pole or a non-pole power.

A pole may consist of one or more closely cooperating 'pole powers' or 'pole states'. In order to be a 'pole power' the states should be essential to the pole's power projection and proper functioning in its sphere. 'Non-pole powers' are all the other states. No matter their position in the structure, the structure will persist as it is, thus the Euro-Atlantic power configuration and its institutional expression is the same and the states are stuck with it no matter what their relation to it.⁶⁴

Mouritzen and Wivel have divided the European non-pole states in several geographical groupings⁶⁵ where Moldova belongs to the Eastern group. These non-pole states have in common a wish to distance themselves from the old Eastern structures and embrace the Western values which actually constitute the Euro-Atlantic pole. This commitment, the lack of alternative to the Euro-Atlantic pole and their relative poorness has given these countries a weak negotiation position towards the Euro-Atlantic unipole.⁶⁶

3.2.2 Polarity

The concept of polarity used by Mouritzen and Wivel is different from the one Waltz uses. According to neorealism the anarchical structure produces system-wide dynamics which are determined by the relative strength of states to one another, and therefore by the distribution of

⁶² For more details see Browning, Christopher (2006): "Small, Smart and Salient? Rethinking Identity in the Small States Literature", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, vol.19, no.4.

⁶³ Mouritzen & Wivel (2005): p. 3.

⁶⁴ Ibid. p. 4.

⁶⁵ The *pole power neighbours* include the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Austria and Germany. The *North* consists of Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, and Finland. The *South* consists of France, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Greece, Turkey, Malta and Cyprus, Ireland. The *East* consists of Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Slovenia, Croatia, Macedonia and Serbia. The *North-East* consists of the Baltic countries.

⁶⁶ Ibid p. 10.

relative power across the system.⁶⁷ Great powers or pole powers set the agenda in international politics, primarily because they can and because they must. Minor states or non-pole powers, i.e. all states that are not defined as pole powers, must follow along. The pole powers' agenda per definition constrains minor states.⁶⁸ In order to be a pole power one has to achieve a high score "on all the following items: size of population and territory, resource endowment, economic capability, military strength, political stability, and competence".⁶⁹

According to Mouritzen and Wivel the systemic polarity looks at the power structure from above and as such cannot explain thoroughly the behaviour of a particular state. Instead they focus on the relational polarity, on "how the poles constrain a particular state's power position and behaviour", meaning the latter's "environmental polarity".⁷⁰ One should therefore commence by taking a 'frog perspective', in this way focusing on the exercise of power rather than the possession of it.⁷¹ This perspective can though have the disadvantage of only looking at one part of the world instead of giving a whole picture. However, it can be argued for the importance of this particular perspective for the behaviour of the state under discussion.⁷²

Moldova's relational polarity is dominated by Russia as the most important pole in terms of power exercise as Russia projects its power by holding Moldova dependent on energy and trade in other economic areas and by its military presence in Transnistria. The EU is increasing in importance for Moldova being seen as an alternative to the Russian dominance and as a factor that can bring a solution to the conflict in Transnistria. Although a neutral country, NATO is important for Moldova in its fight to have the Russian troops withdraw from Transnistria. Non-membership of NATO has kept Russia from militarily intervening in Moldova since the end of the short war in Transnistria. Romania and Ukraine are also two pole powers with influence on Moldova, both economically and in terms of national identity. Thus, one can say that the polarity around Moldova can be seen as multipolarity with some pole powers having more influence than others.

⁶⁷ Mouritzen, Hans (1998): *Theory and Reality in International Politics*, Aldershot & Vermont: Ashgate, p. 25.

⁶⁸ Waltz (1979): pp. 96-99.

⁶⁹ Ibid p. 131.

⁷⁰ Ibid p. 16.

⁷¹ Thorhallsson, Baldur & Anders Wivel (2006): "Small States in the European Union: What Do We Know and What Would We Like to Know?", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, vol. 19, no. 4, p. 654.

⁷² Mouritzen & Wivel (2005): pp. 16-17.

Mouritzen and Wivel argue that Moldova has a bipolar environment polarity, being a “shatter zone between the Euro-Atlantic and the Russian pole”.⁷³ I disagree with them, and as shown above the different actors have different influence on Moldova and this will be shown in the analysis chapter. Actually, Mouritzen and Wivel argue themselves that the near environment is important. In the case of Moldova, besides Russia, Ukraine and Romania are two power poles whose influence cannot be neglected. As I have argued for multipolarity, one might be surprised that USA is not one of the important poles for Moldova, as it has been for most of Central and East European countries. Based on empirical research, I find USA’s role less important than the one of the EU and NATO. USA is together with the EU observer in the Transnistrian conflict but it has not have much influence on the process. At the same time USA has neglected Transnistria and Moldova because not much seems to be at stake in the short term.⁷⁴ There has been no armed fighting or ethnic unrest and USA finds no reason to destroy its relationship with Russia for the sake of Moldova. Another reason for choosing NATO rather than USA is that USA mostly projects its power on Europe indirectly through NATO.

3.2.3 Geopolitics

As seen from above the constellation theory gives focus to the salient environment of the states. In this way it emphasizes the role of geopolitics on states’ behaviour. Geopolitics is defined as “the influence of geography on states’ political character, their history, institutions and especially relations with other states”.⁷⁵ As distance and space are the essential categories of geography, geopolitics helps us understand what distance between states, especially to pole powers, means for their behaviour and the relations between them.⁷⁶ Furthermore, the end of the Cold War has brought back the importance of location for states from a bipolar world view. A re-territorialisation of international politics takes place and this means that local polarities, conflicts, and cooperation prevail. This can be especially seen in regions experiencing state fragmentation like Soviet Union has.⁷⁷ System polarity and interdependence do have though a modifying effect over time.⁷⁸

⁷³ Ibid p.198.

⁷⁴ Smith, Pamela Hyde (2005b): “Moldova Matters: Why Progress is still Possible on Ukraine’s Southwestern Flank”, *Occasional Thesis*, Washington: The Atlantic Council of the United States, p.

⁷⁵ Hay, William (2003): “Geopolitics of Europe”, *Orbis*, vol. 47, no. 2, p. 296.

⁷⁶ Mouritzen & Wivel (2005): p. 2; Mouritzen (2006a; 2006b): 145; 498.

⁷⁷ Mouritzen & Wivel (2005): p. 19.

⁷⁸ Mouritzen (2006a): p. 145.

For Moldova this means that Russia still has a more dominant role in the way Moldova behaves, than the EU or NATO do. Such an example is the neutrality status of Moldova which is conceived in order to keep Russia satisfied but also as an instrument to use against the presence of Russian troops on its territory and as an excuse for not getting involved into CIS⁷⁹ military structures that would imply in many ways the depriving of its independence.⁸⁰

3.2.4 The European power structure

The post Cold War systemic polarity, where capabilities determine the power positions in the international system, sees USA as the only superpower while neither the EU nor any European states can be seen as a systemic pole or as a regional pole when it comes to capability.⁸¹ The constellation theory uses instead relational polarity, where the focus is on power projection instead of power possession, which means that it is possible to identify which power(s) that is/are able to distribute positive and negative sanctions across Europe. In nowadays Europe the only pole existing is the Euro-Atlantic pole which is constituted by the EU and the United States/NATO. When it comes to non-pole states, many of them are affiliated with the pole through the EU and NATO. They function as an institutional superstructure which has important implications for these. One implication is that, considering the decentralized nature of the pole, there are no definitive prescriptions for acceptable foreign policy behaviour and that any prescription is negotiable, at least for EU members and those who wish to become EU members.⁸²

Furthermore the Euro-Atlantic pole projects its power through positive or negative incentives⁸³ States that are outside the superstructure may be rewarded for promoting and safeguarding the pole's basic values and the stability of the region, the main reward being membership of the two

⁷⁹The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) (Russian: Содружество Независимых Государств (СНГ), transliterated *Sodruzhestvo Nezavisimyykh Gosudarstv (SNG)*) is a regional organization whose participating countries are former Soviet Republics (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan).

⁸⁰ Gabanyi, Anneli Ute (2008). "The Republic of Moldova and NATO – an Ambiguous Relationship", *Security Policy Library*, no.3, Oslo: Den norske Atlanterhavskomiteé, p. 6.

⁸¹ Mouritzen & Wivel (2005): p. 24.

⁸² EU has low self-control because of its decentralized nature as EU consists of 27 member states which are autonomous in many areas. Outside actors may play off EU subunits against each other. The weakness of the EU in security and defence affairs and the important role of US allow NATO to play an important role and this decreases the self-control of the Euro-Atlantic pole. Besides, NATO has also a decentralised nature because of the intergovernmental structure, which weakens further more the nature of the Euro-Atlantic pole.

⁸³ Economic sanctions as a punishment and market access as a reward.

institutions. But states can also be punished by military action or sanctions of other kind in case they threaten the stability of the region.⁸⁴

As an outsider and under the geopolitical influence of Russia for most of the 1990s, Moldova did not stir the EU's or NATO's attention until it was close to becoming neighbour to both of them. As a neutral country, Moldova has restrained itself from becoming a NATO member and this has consequently resulted in the increased role of the EU for Moldova. Moldova's rapprochement towards the EU, in defiance of Russia's threats, has made the EU reward the country by including Moldova in the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and signing an Action Plan with it in 2005.⁸⁵

3.2.5 The European Constellations

The general implications for the non-pole powers mentioned above do normally vary with the location of the states. Therefore, it is important to look at the constellation of the individual states. Constellation is defined as "the non-pole power's basic set of relationships to the strong powers in its salient environment".⁸⁶ Constellation is the link between the polarity and each state's specific salient environment and is identified in accordance with the states' institutional affiliation with the EU and NATO. There are four categories: core insiders, near-core insiders, would-be insiders and outsiders, and Moldova belongs to the last category. The way a state approaches or distances itself from the pole is by enlargement of the pole's superstructure. After Romania became EU member in 2007, Moldova has come to border the pole superstructure. According to Mouritzen and Wivel the primary factor that determines European states' influence-capability and action space is EU affiliation. While NATO affiliation is also important, it is seen as secondary in comparison, the reason for that being that EU has a "*finalité*, an integrationist ideology that is absent in NATO".⁸⁷ It is expected that constellations do not only matter in relation to the pole but also in relation to other states. In this case, Moldova has different relation to Romania, which is neighbour and EU member, than it has to Ukraine or Russia.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ Mouritzen & Wivel (2005): p. 28.

⁸⁵ Popescu, Nicu (2005): "The EU in Moldova – Settling Conflicts in the Neighbourhood", *Occasional Thesis*, no.60, Brussels: Institute for Security Studies, pp. 29-43.

⁸⁶ Mouritzen (1991): p. 218, quoted in Mouritzen & Wivel (2005): p. 29.

⁸⁷ Mouritzen & Wivel (2005): p. 31.

⁸⁸ Poulsen-Hansen, Lars & Ole Wæver (1996): "Ukraine" in Hans Mouritzen, Ole Wæver & Håkan Wiberg (eds.): *European Integration and National Adaptations*, NY: Nova Science Publishers, p. 231.

The capability of states to achieve their external goals depends on their possibility to exercise both offensive and defensive power. Offensive power is the ability to influence other actors to do something they would not otherwise do. Defensive power is the ability to avoid being affected by the actions of others.⁸⁹

As an outsider, Moldova is much less influenced by the Euro-Atlantic unipole than insiders or would-be insiders are. Membership for outsiders is either not desired or not feasible in the short or mid-term future. Although Moldova could become a member in the long-term future, there are no guarantees. At the moment Moldova is envisaged by the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)⁹⁰ which could be seen as an alternative to the EU enlargement. As Smith remarks, the ENP was launched to address the 'enlargement fatigue' of the EU.⁹¹ However, although it is not about enlargement, the ENP does not close any doors to European countries like Moldova that may at some future point wish to apply for membership.⁹²

The autonomy of the outsiders is likely to be considerable; nevertheless, they do depend in varying degrees economically or culturally on the Euro-Atlantic unipole as they do not have any other to turn to. If they decide to give up some of their autonomy in order to receive some of the benefits of the pole order, this may lead to a reduced autonomy but without any increase in influence-capability.⁹³ So the question is how to elaborate alternative offers of integration that maintain or achieve a sustainable balance between conditionality and socialisation⁹⁴ without having the membership option in the near sight.⁹⁵ This is an issue that can be felt in the relationship between Moldova and the EU as, although Moldova's rhetoric around its European orientation is very strong, the actual actions of adapting to the *aquis* are very few, as Moldova has no guarantees to a European future. The same can be seen in the relationship with NATO. Although Moldova has

⁸⁹ Mouritzen & Wivel (2005): p. 33.

⁹⁰ European Commission (2004): *European Neighbourhood Policy Country Report –Moldova*, accessed 22nd October 2008 at http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/country/moldova_enp_country_report_2004_en.pdf.

⁹¹ Smith, K. E. (2005a), 'The outsiders: The European neighbourhood policy', *International Affairs*, 81(4), pp. 757-773.

⁹² Ferrero-Waldner, B. (2004): *Press Conference to launch first seven Action Plans under the European Neighbourhood Policy*, Speech/04/529, accessed 22nd October at http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/news/ferrero/2004/sp04_529.htm.

⁹³ Mouritzen & Wivel (2005): p. 34.

⁹⁴ Conditionality and socialisation have to be achieved by the candidate countries in the enlargement process. Conditionality is defined as the contractual relation where aid and institutional ties to the EU are contingent on specific reforms in the candidate countries. Socialisation refers to the multi-levelled process inducing behavioural changes in candidate countries through social learning. See Tassinari (2006): p. 7.

⁹⁵ Tassinari (2006): "Variable Geometries. Mapping Ideas, Institutions and Power in the Wider Europe", *CEPS Working Document*, no. 254, Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies, p. 8.

committed to the Individual Partnership Action Plan, it has not yet implemented any of its provisions.

3.2.6 The shadow of the past: historical lessons and domestic politics

According to the constellation theory the domestic factors that influence foreign policy behaviour often refer to crucial historic experiences, sedimented as lessons in the state's political culture, both in broader layers and in the elite. These lessons are an effect of past foreign policy and they influence the priority given to national autonomy.⁹⁶ They can be positive or negative. The positive ones, repeat a 'success' and can have a restrictive influence on the future decision-makers as factors of inertia. The negative ones refer to past experienced failures that should be avoided in the future.⁹⁷ In general negative geopolitics predominates.

In particular the existence of a past hegemon is important due to the traumatic effect it has on a non-pole power. If the hegemon can be related to the Euro-Atlantic unipole then the Euro-Atlantic unipole's attraction will diminish. On the other side, if there is no connection, then, the Euro-Atlantic unipole will be very attractive as it can give protection against future threats from the hegemon.⁹⁸

It is not easy to prove to what degree lessons of history are the ones influencing the decision-making process and the constellation theory does not go further explaining what elements one should look at in order to determine that. One can supplement with Khong which shows in his book "Analogies at War" how analogies influence the decision makers. He uses what he calls the analogical explanation which "essentially takes an information-processing approach to understanding decision-making".⁹⁹ In making decisions we lean on our experiences. Every person has a subjective view about how the social or political world works.¹⁰⁰ Knowledge structures such analogies or schemes are the fundamental elements for interpreting sensory data, for retrieving information and for guiding human information-processing.¹⁰¹

⁹⁶ Mouritzen & Wivel (2005): p. 38-39.

⁹⁷ Mouritzen (2006b): p. 500.

⁹⁸ Mouritzen & Wivel (2005): p. 170.

⁹⁹ Khong, Yuen Foong (1992): *Analogies at War. Korea, Munich, Dien Bien Phu, and the Vietnam Decisions of 1965*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, p. 40.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.* p. 26.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.* p. 28.

One cannot say that Moldova as a state has a past foreign policy as it has only been a state since 1991 but they definitely have a ghost of the past – namely the Russian Empire/the Soviet Union which they had been a part of since 1812, when Russia took Bessarabia¹⁰² from the Ottoman Empire. Moldova has not been an independent state except for during the 16th century when it constituted together with other parts of Romania and Ukraine, the Kingdom of Moldova.¹⁰³ One consequence of being a part of the Soviet Union is the economic dependency on Russian oil and gas plus trade with other important goods which have Russia as the main exporter. Russia has used these levers as “weapons” in order to keep Moldova in its sphere of influence.¹⁰⁴ Another one is the large Russian-speaking minority which, as in the case of Transnistria, pushes for regional autonomy.¹⁰⁵ There has been a tendency to both balance Russia but also to bandwagon it as Moldova didn't feel they had any other option, considering that the Euro-Atlantic unipole has only recently began to show more interest towards the region. Consequently, although past geopolitics is an important factor at the domestic level, in the case of Moldova it has a great influence on all levels of analysis.

3.3 The theory of the state

Past geopolitics is an important domestic factor, but the constellation theory does not tell us what exactly lies behind it and how to couple it to the present domestic situation. The internal affairs of Moldova are more than past geopolitics and we need a theory to explain the present power play. As a consequence the domestic level will be complemented with Buzan's theory of the state. According to Buzan, states are the most powerful type of unit in the international system and as such they are the most important unit of security in the international realm.¹⁰⁶ Security issues within an international anarchy are highly conditioned not only by the structure of the system and by the interaction of states, but also by the domestic characteristics of states.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰² Bessarabia is the part of the Republic of Moldova which lays between the Prut and Nistru rivers and which constituted until the 18th century the eastern half of the Principality of Moldavia, but inherited its historical name from Russia after it was incorporated into the Empire. Accessed 12.12.08 at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bessarabia>

¹⁰³ Constantiniu, Florin (1997): *O Istorie Sincera a Poporului Roman* (A Sincere History of the Romanian People), Bucuresti: Univers Enciclopedic, pp. 55-141.

¹⁰⁴ Hedenskog, Jakob m.fl. (2005): *Russia as a Great Power. Dimensions of security under Putin*, London & New York: Routledge, pp. 143-146.

¹⁰⁵ Schmidtke, Oliver & Serhy Yekelchuk (2008): "Introduction" in same eds., *Europe's Last Frontier? Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine between Russia and the European Union*, New York: Palgrave MacMillan, p. 3.

¹⁰⁶ Buzan, Barry et al. (1998): "Realism vs. cosmopolitanism. A debate between Barry Buzan and David Held conducted by Anthony McGrew", *Review of International Studies*, vol. 24, pp. 387-398.

¹⁰⁷ Buzan, Barry (1991a): *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, Second Edition, Boulder: Lynne Rienner, Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, p. 146-147.

Although Buzan himself considers his theory as a neorealist one, he argues that the 'straitjacket' militaristic approach to security that dominated the discourse during the Cold War was 'simple-minded'¹⁰⁸ He subsequently broadened it to also include political, economic, social and environmental threats.¹⁰⁹ Furthermore, he incorporates domestic politics and ideas in his theory, in this way he is approaching the neoclassical realists which use domestic politics and ideas "to flesh out the concept of power, the central variable in neorealism".¹¹⁰ We cannot understand power without reference to what happens within states and how people think and what they believe.¹¹¹

From the abovementioned we can see that Buzan fits very well in the broader realist tradition¹¹², just like the constellation theory does, and as such it can be used to supplement the constellation theory. In other words, factors from different levels will be combined to explain the foreign policy of Moldova. The constellation theory contributes with factors mostly at the Euro-Atlantic level and near geopolitical level. Buzan will contribute with factors concerning present power politics at the domestic level. The constellation theory has the advantage of being a theory that is fit for analysing small powers in relation to both the Euro-Atlantic pole and the great powers in the neighbourhood. These elements are not present in Buzan's theory but he does have a well developed model for the factors at the domestic level that influence foreign behaviour. Legacy of the past will constitute a variable at all levels of analysis, thus modifying the constellation theory's placement of it at the domestic one.

Although Buzan's theory includes constructivist elements such as the concepts of nation, identity and ideas, these will be used to see what lies behind the realistic notion of power. In the case of Moldova national identity has been determined by the geopolitical constellation. So, realist and constructivist variables are not necessarily mutually exclusive as they can explain different issues. Buzan defines the state in terms of a political, territorial and societal unit that consists of three components: the idea of the state, the institutional expression of the state and the physical base of the state.

¹⁰⁸ Buzan, Barry (1991b): "New Patterns of Global Security in the 21st Century", *International Affairs*, vol.67, no.3, pp. 431- 451.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. p. 431.

¹¹⁰ Rathbun, Brian (2008): "A Rose by Any Other Name: Neoclassical Realism as the Logical and Necessary Extension of Structural Realism", *Security Studies*, no. 17, p. 301.

¹¹¹ Ibid. pp. 301-302.

¹¹² Buzan (1991a): p. 20-23.

3.3.1 The idea of the state

This is the most central part of the state but also the most abstract and difficult to investigate. A state is based on an idea, which lies at the heart of the political identity of the state, that is, the purpose of the state. The idea of the state defines the character of the state and its power in the international system. The idea establishes legitimacy in the minds of its people. The two main sources for the idea of the state are the nation and organising ideologies.¹¹³ The nation can be characterised as a large group of people sharing the same cultural and possibly the same ethnic or racial heritage.¹¹⁴ If the purpose of the state is to protect and express a cultural group, then life and culture must come high on the list of national foreign and security priorities. Furthermore, national identity is a central component to understanding how Moldova acts in the new post-Soviet political space.

Organising ideologies are a higher idea of the state, and are often closely connected to the institutional structures of the state. An example of an organising ideology is racial preservation or communism. In the case of Moldova, communism was a very strong ideology during the Soviet Union, while after independence the ideologies have changed with different leaderships, like in the beginning democracy was promoted while now the government is communist. In this way none of them has established deeper roots among the population. Since ideologies address the bases of relations between government and society, they define the conditions for both harmony and conflict in domestic politics. As Moldova is a very new state which is compiled by four different ethnic groups, Moldovans, Ukrainians, Russians, Gagauzi, it is difficult to talk about a united idea of the state, not to mention a common national identity. This has an important influence on the external behaviour of the state.

3.3.2 The institutional expression of the state

The institutional expression of the state comprises the entire machinery of the government, including its executive, legislative and judicial institutions.¹¹⁵ There is close connection between the institutional expression of the state and the organising ideology of the state. It is the institutions that put the organising ideologies into action, since the institutions have to be organised in a specific way in order to express the ideology. The state institutions can to a varying

¹¹³ Ibid. pp. 69-70.

¹¹⁴ Ibid. p. 70.

¹¹⁵ Ibid. pp. 82-83.

degree compensate for weakness in the idea of the state.¹¹⁶ At the same time institutions can also be threatened if they do not have the support of the population and many threats to security come from within the state.¹¹⁷ In the case of Moldova the government has been sustained by either the Moldovan minority or the Slavic minorities depending on the rhetoric of the government. At the same time the secessionist republic of Transnistria constitutes the biggest threat to the existence of the Moldovan state.

National and international politics interact with each other and governments have the tendency to interfere in each other's domestic politics as governments largely determine the international activity and orientation of states. These interventions can be expressed by propaganda against the organising ideology, provision of funds and facilities to opposition groups or external economic pressures.¹¹⁸ This situation characterised very well the Russian intervention in the conflict in Transnistria where Russia has used all the mentioned tools in order to discredit the Moldovan government's credibility.

3.3.3 The physical base of the state

The physical base of the state comprises its population and territory, including all of the natural resources and man-made wealth contained inside the border, which for instance is technology and education.¹¹⁹ One situation where the state's territory can give rise to insecurities is when a state defines its national interests and security in terms of territory and population which are not under the control of the state. Moldova's territory is split at the moment because of the secessionist movement in Transnistria. The very weak economy, with most of the heavy industry in Transnistria, and the dependency on Russia for gas and oil resources, has weakened the government's possibilities to act in foreign matters.

3.4 Concluding remarks for the theoretical framework

3.4.1 Critical review of the chosen theories

The constellation theory's emphasis on the geopolitical location of each state and on the relational and environmental polarity means that one does not get a whole picture of international politics,

¹¹⁶ Ibid. pp. 83-85.

¹¹⁷ Ibid. p. 87.

¹¹⁸ Ibid. p.88.

¹¹⁹ Ibid. pp. 90-91.

but a more fragmented one. I see this as an advantage, as the purpose of this thesis is the analysis of a particular state's behaviour and not the overall nature of the international system. The theory does have explanatory power in both International Relations and foreign policy fields, although in different degrees. That is in contrast to Waltz' belief that the two fields are separate.

In the beginning of this chapter it was emphasized the idea that, although neoclassical realism has contributed with studies on how domestic variables affect foreign policy, they have not been very consistent at explaining why some factors are more important than others and have been unable to account systematically for the link between international structure and foreign policy. Although the constellation theory can also be criticized for having a weak inner logic, it is better at explaining the complexity of its assumptions and it explores the general applicability of the theory through multiple case studies. It is important to explore the consequences of the interaction between materialist (military capabilities, economy, geopolitics) and idealist factors (ideas, identity) through theoretical discussion and empirical investigation and the constellation theory does that. Although the theory was chosen on the basis of the empirical evidence, the variables of analysis have been chosen from the perspective of the theoretical frame.

A critical point of the constellation theory is the exact content of 'past geopolitics' that clearly plays a crucial role in explaining differences in state behaviour. Past geopolitics is not an objective entity that is directly influenced by geopolitical facts, and thus it comes close to 'identity'¹²⁰, a concept that was criticized by Mouritzen and Wivel for being too circular.¹²¹ I do not agree with them, as identity is a consequence of geopolitics in the case of Moldova. A foreign policy analysis should not restrict itself to one level of explanation. And actually the constellation theory says that systemic, regional and the lessons of the past, which are seen at the domestic level, together explain foreign policy. But I do not agree that concepts like state, nation and "people" cannot be an explanatory factor because they are softer constructivist factors. In fact Mouritzen and Wivel combine themselves hard core geopolitics with soft values like "lessons of the past". The domestic level is more than past geopolitics, the actual battle of interests of the elite has a major influence and also the actual economic situation influences foreign conduct. The choice of combination of the two theories has been made both from a theoretical and an empirical point of view, combining inductive and deductive factors.

¹²⁰ Forsberg, Tuomas (2007): "Book Review", *Cooperation and Conflict*, no.42, pp. 475-477.

¹²¹ Mouritzen & Wivel (2005): pp. 7-8.

3.4.2 Analytical framework and theoretical expectations to the case of Moldova

In this thesis a theoretical discussion is combined with an empirical investigation in order to explore how the materialist aspects of the world interact with our ideas and perceptions of these aspects in the production of foreign policy.¹²² In order to do this the analysis will be divided into three stages that have been generated on the basis of the chosen theories. The analysis will start with the Euro-Atlantic level where parsimony is sought and then gradually complexity will be added at the near geopolitical and domestic levels in order to get a comprehensive picture.

I have chosen to call the first level of analysis the Euro-Atlantic level as it comprises an analysis of the influence of the EU and NATO. It would not be accurate to call this level for systemic especially because USA is not analysed. It is rather a level between the system and the unit from where the two organisations project their power on Moldova. The two organisations function as an institutional superstructure that has important implications for Moldova, no matter what their relation to it. Although the EU can also be seen as in the near environment of Moldova, it has a special status, as a pole for the whole of Europe, projecting its power through its institutions and that is it will be treated separately. The analysis will continue with the near geopolitical constraints by looking at the individual constellation in the specific environment of Moldova. In order to do that, I have chosen to look at the relation of Moldova with Russia, Romania and Ukraine. Last but not least the effect of the present domestic politics will be taken into consideration at the domestic level. Although the shadow of the past normally belongs to the domestic level it is a consequence of historic events, typically wars of the past, the explanatory level being thus environmental and relational as well. As such, the shadow of the past is an important factor at all levels of analysis. Furthermore, the variables at the domestic level are seen by NCR as intervening variables. This thesis will deal with them as independent variables. This choice is made based on the empirical evidence which will show that all three levels of analysis have had equal importance.

It is not easy to make concrete expectations to how Moldova will react in certain situations. As it will be shown in the analysis, Moldova has not always acted as one might expect and that is why I have chosen to use the theory and my expectations to structure the empirical material. That will give me the opportunity to make a thick description of my case while looking at the facts through

¹²² Wivel (2005a): p. 371.

the theoretical apparatus that chooses what it is important to analyse without making definite hypothesis formation.

One expectation in Moldova's behaviour from my theoretical perspective is that, being an outsider to the Euro-Atlantic unipole, it will experience a variable influence-capability towards the Euro-Atlantic unipole, having a relatively high autonomy. The external behaviour is heterogeneous, both bandwagoning and balancing being used when appropriate. Often the behaviour towards the Euro-Atlantic unipole is dependent on the attitude of the past hegemon towards the state in question. In the case of Moldova the more Russia will show its power e.g. by threatening with higher energy prices or with banning the wine import, the more Moldova is expected to turn to the EU for protection and trade.

As for the particular constellation of each state, many neighbours and non-pole powers may engage in parallel action, meaning similar action patterns and sharing similar identity values and most important sharing the main concern, which is the pole's. There might be strong incentives to cooperate or not due to proximity, but the mutual relationship will be overlaid by pole relations. As such both attitudes of cooperation for a common purpose and competition in relation to the common power pole can be located.¹²³ For example Moldova and Ukraine share a common history and a common hegemon impersonated by Russia, have a common location and parallel foreign policies, including EU and NATO approaches.

Another relationship can be one of stability projection which can be projected by a pole of attraction, threatening the deprivation of positive incentives, or by a hegemonic power in its sphere of interest, threatening with primarily negative incentives. From this theoretical perspective one will expect that stability projection from the EU/NATO has not been strong on Moldova. As an outsider Moldova has a certain autonomy which the Euro-Atlantic unipole cannot restrain as long as it has no positive incentives to offer Moldova. Following the same pattern of thought we would expect Moldova's stability to be more influenced by the neighbouring countries, Romania, Russia and Ukraine. They are both in the near environment of Moldova and have a common past. I expect Moldova to rely on Romania for a rapprochement towards the Euro-Atlantic unipole while trying to avoid conflict with Russia that can help project stability in relation to the Transnistrian

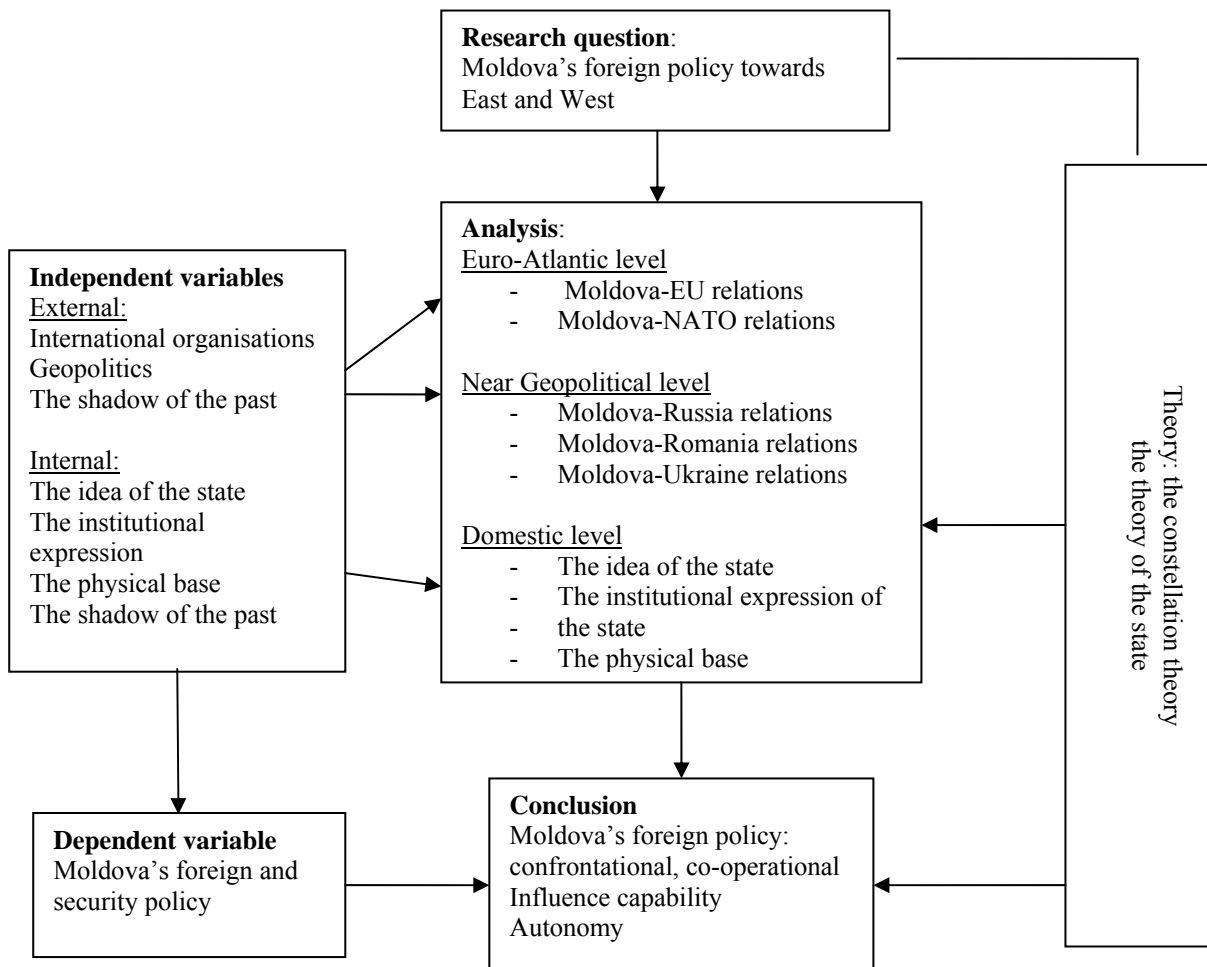
¹²³ Mouritzen & Wivel (2005): p. 190-191.

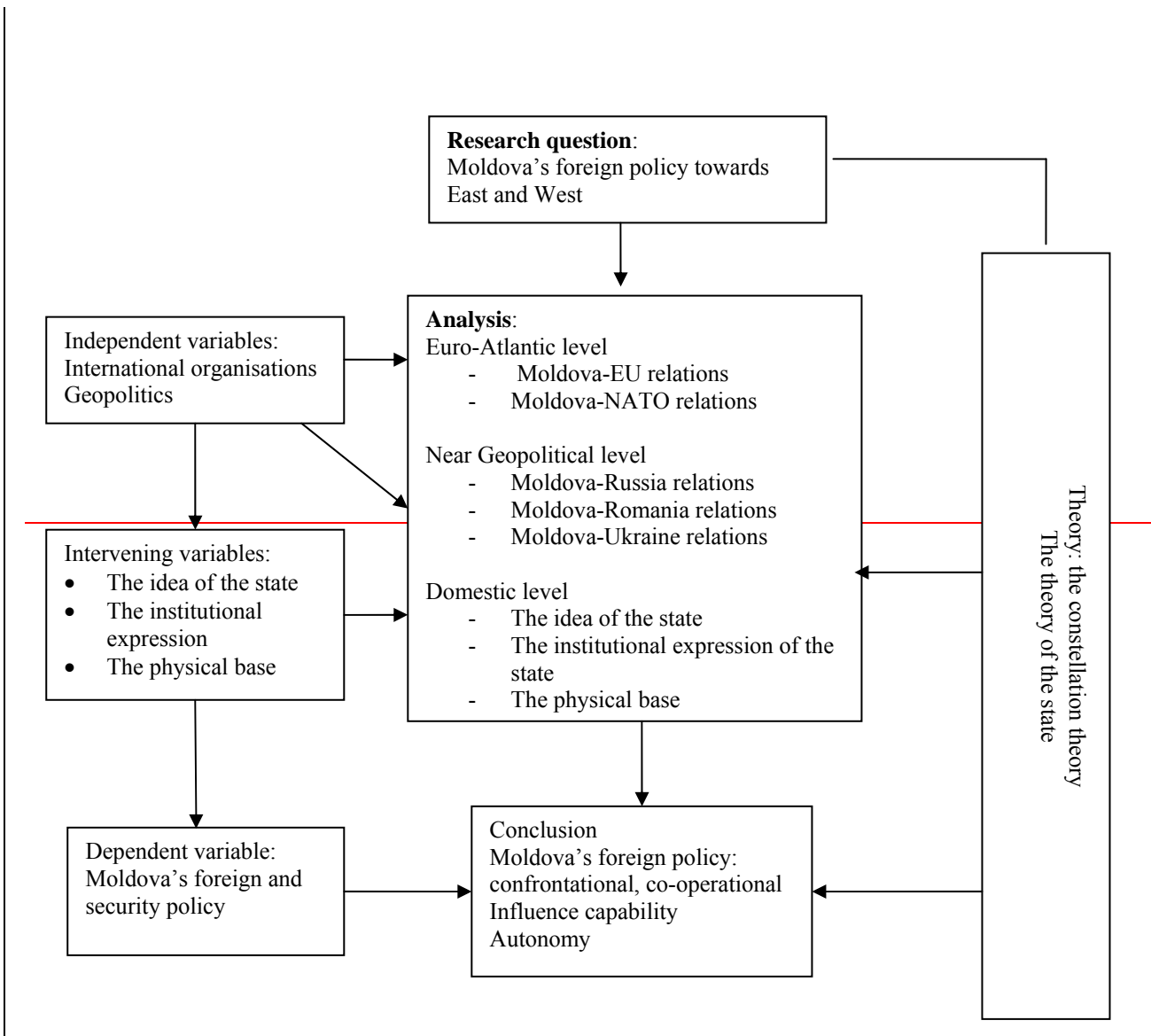
conflict. Ukraine is expected to have an influence on Moldova's aspirations towards the EU and NATO.

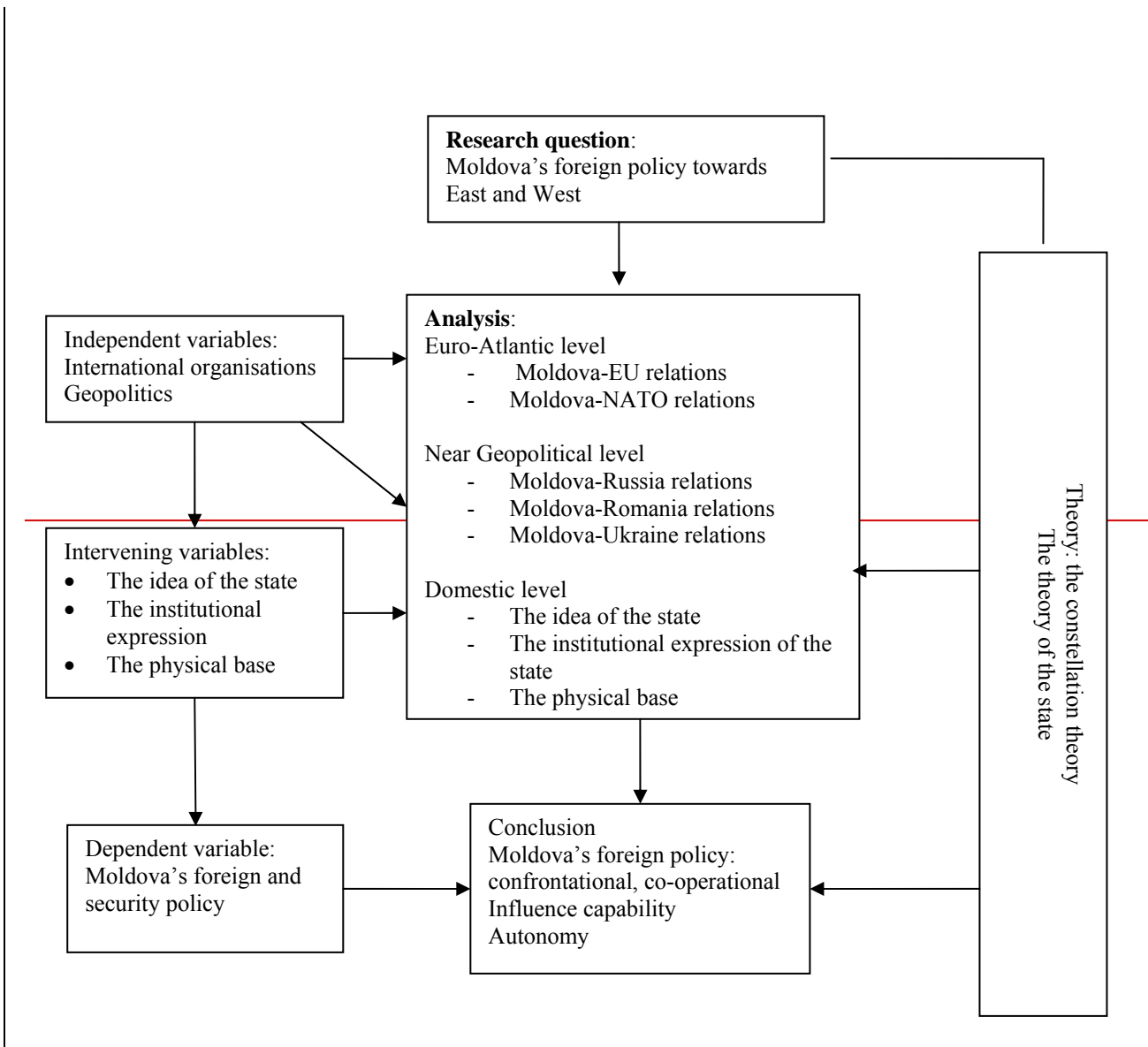
I would expect the shadow of the past to affect the foreign policy of non-pole powers by inducing scepticism towards cooperation with pole powers that have dominated them in the past, but enthusiasm towards cooperation with pole powers that may help to free or safeguard them from domination. The shadow of the past affects which constellations states are willing to join and how they are likely to behave within the constellations.¹²⁴ Consequently, I expect past history to be relevant at all levels of analysis. Buzan's model of the state will give a comprehensive picture of Moldova as a state and how the difference between a strong and a weak state can have a decisive influence on foreign policy. I expect that Moldova's divided national identity and changing ideologies will contribute to weaken the decision-makers possibilities to act and inertia will be one of the consequences. Remaining in Russia's sphere of influence will be a dominant tendency as changing strategy can bring further loss of popular support and poverty.

¹²⁴ Mouritzen & Wivel (2005): pp. 234-235.

Figure 1: Structure of the thesis







4. The Euro-Atlantic level

At the Euro-Atlantic level the relationship with the EU and NATO will be discussed and the role of Moldova as an outsider to the two organisations and what it means will be emphasized. The polarity around Moldova with Russia on the one side and the EU/NATO on the other constitutes a decisive argument in Moldovan foreign behaviour.

As mentioned in the theoretical chapter (Chapter 3), in order to give a comprehensive picture of Moldovan foreign policy it will be looked at three levels of analysis. The Euro-Atlantic level is the level where parsimony is sought while more complexity will be added at the near geopolitical and the domestic levels. The EU and NATO function as an institutional superstructure for non-pole powers like Moldova. According to the constellation theory, the EU and NATO project their power towards non-pole states differently depending on their affiliation with the two institutions. Furthermore, the EU affiliation is the primary factor determining the influence capability and action space of European states. Although NATO affiliation is also seen as important, the EU covers practically all spheres of societal life, while NATO only focuses on the politico-military one.¹²⁵ As such, we expect Moldova to be more influenced by the EU than by NATO, one of the reasons being the country's neutrality. Consequently, the analysis will place more weight on the relationship with the EU.

As an outsider, Moldova is expected to be less influenced by the Euro-Atlantic unipole than insiders and would-be insiders are. As membership perspectives are not feasible in the near future, the autonomy of these states is quite considerable, not being constrained to accomplish the EU's *acquis* or NATO's Partnership for Peace Programme. On the other side, their influence-capability is also rather weak, depending on factors such as the country's size (capabilities), local conflict patterns or affiliation to other international organisations.

Nevertheless, the outsiders can be influenced in varying degrees economically or culturally by the EU and NATO. In the relationship with the EU, it is expected that the weak economy of Moldova combined with the troubles from the Transnistrian conflict and the more influence from the great power in the near environment, will be the key factors explaining Moldova's attitude.

¹²⁵ Mouritzen & Wivel (2005): pp. 30-31.

Being a decentralised power, the pole allows for more active participation and influence of the non-pole power than it would if it was centralised. Consequently, there are also less effective sanctions from the pole. There are no prescriptions for acceptable foreign policy behaviour, and therefore it is difficult for the EU to sanction outsiders like Moldova. However, the EU can project its power by economic means, either by providing economic sanctions or market access, depending on the actions of the outsiders. Regarding Moldova, the EU has mostly used positive incentives to project its power.

As to NATO, I expect the relationship to be much weaker than the one with the EU, as a consequence of Moldova being a neutral country. The support from NATO is though important in the fight to remove the Russian troops from Transnistria. Just like with the EU, Moldova has a great amount of autonomy, but if it wants NATO support, it has to implement at least some of the provisions in the Individual Partnership Action Plan.

4.1 Moldova-EU relations

Moldova can be seen as an outsider in its relationship with the EU, since the prospects for joining the EU within the foreseeable future are minimal. Although the EU has cautiously raised the level of its incentive for the Europeanization of Moldova, by including it as a first candidate for the New Neighbourhood Policy, it has not granted Moldova a membership perspective.¹²⁶

While Moldovan foreign policy during the mid- and late 1990s was oriented towards Russia, Moldovan elites attempted to place the country within a European geography in the hopes of stimulating economic links. In 1993 and 1994, President Snegur sent letters to the EU Commission, urging the EU to develop a framework for relations with Moldova.¹²⁷ With the war raging in the former Yugoslavia, EU foreign policy was less receptive to formalizing relations with a country that had just experienced a civil war.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ Emerson, Michael (2004): "Europeanisation & Conflict Resolution. Testing an Analytical Framework", *CEPS Policy Brief*, no.59, Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies, p. 4.

¹²⁷ Roper, Steven (2008): "Post-Soviet Moldova's National Identity and Foreign Policy", in Oliver Schmidtke & Serhy Yekelchik: *Europe's Last Frontier? Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine between Russia and the European Union*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, p. 87.

¹²⁸ Roper (2008): p. 88.

In 1994, Moldova was among the first NIS (Newly Independent States) to sign a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with the European Union which applied the standard framework for cooperation offered to all Soviet successor states.¹²⁹ In 2001 Moldova was included among the sixteen states in the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), designed to enhance relations with countries on the EU periphery.¹³⁰

During the 1990s, neither the EU nor the Moldovan leadership was willing to commit to specific actions.¹³¹ The Moldovan leadership's desire to fully integrate within Europe and the EU was limited due to the nature of the domestic political environment. For example, the government of Ion Sturza from 1998 declared European integration as its foreign policy priority. However, by late 1999, the PCRM¹³² parliamentary group brought down the Sturza government, and Moldova never achieved any significant steps towards European integration.¹³³ The division within the Moldovan domestic politics reflected a deeper division within the society over the orientation of the country. Just as the EU was divided in how to deal with southeastern Europe, Moldovan elites were equally divided over whether to pursue a pro-European foreign policy or a pro-Russian one.¹³⁴

Moldova's forceful lessons from history, being under the occupation of the Russian Empire/Soviet Union for almost all their existence and having a strong Russian-speaking minority, have limited the Moldovan balancing of Russia.¹³⁵ There were basically no others to balance with, as neither the EU nor NATO was paying too much attention to the area. At the same time, Russian stability

¹²⁹ The European Commission (2003): *Wider Europe – Neighbourhood: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours*. COM(2003) 104 final, 11 March 2003, accessed 20.11.08 at http://europa.eu.int/comm/world/enp/pdf/com03_104_en.pdf.

¹³⁰ The other fifteen are: Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine. The ENP is the EU's response to countries with membership aspirations but no prospects of early accession talks, a means "to offer more than partnership and less than membership without precluding the latter". Romano Prodi, "A Wider Europe: a Proximity policy as the key to stability", speech given to the Sixth ECSA-World Conference, Brussels, 5-6 December 2002. Accessed 20.11.08 at <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/02/619&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

¹³¹ Zagorski, Andrei (2007?): "EU Policies Towards Russia, Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus", *Occasional Thesis Series no.35*, Royal Military Academy Sandhurst: The Conflict Studies Research Centre, p. 10.

¹³² The Communist Party of the Republic of Moldova

¹³³ Roper (2008): p. 88.

¹³⁴ Vahl & Emerson (2004?): pp. 19-20.

¹³⁵ Yekelchik, Serhy (2008): "Out of Russia's Long Shadow: The Making of Modern Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova » in Oliver Schmidtke & Serhy Yekelchik: *Europe's Last Frontier? Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine between Russia and the European Union*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 10-28.

projection managed to stop violence in the Transnistrian conflict quite early in the conflict while Euro-Atlantic stability projection was mainly not attempted on outsiders in the 1990s.¹³⁶

A radical change in the relationship between Moldova and the EU was the polemic around the Russian proposal to a solution to the Transnistrian conflict, the so-called Kozak Memorandum. The EU High Representative Javier Solana intervened in late November 2003 advising President Voronin not to accept the Kozak memorandum, a plan for a constitutional settlement proposed by Russia. This proposal would have given the Transnistrian side a *de facto* veto on constitutional changes in Moldova and thus the perpetuation of the Russian military presence for decades.¹³⁷ Voronin was forced to back off by pressure from the streets and most important by pressure from the United States and the EU. This was a shrewd strategy which ensured his re-election as President in April 2005.¹³⁸

For most of the 1990s Moldova's strategy was to bandwagon Russia, in this way hoping to reach a solution to the Transnistrian conflict. Although Russia has had peacekeeping forces in Transnistria since the beginning of the conflict, they have not been able to find a solution to the conflict that would satisfy all parts and therefore Moldova has now turned to the EU for help.¹³⁹ The Moldovan president has understood that the EU has much to gain from resolving the conflict in Transnistria and that the EU can help Moldova coming out of poverty. Thus he dares to challenge the Russian dominance by balancing with the EU.¹⁴⁰

The signing of the Action Plan by the EU and Moldova in 2005 is an important step of what appears to be Moldova's intentions towards membership in the EU. The EU-Moldova Action Plan outlines detailed changes that must be met on the side of Moldova while it maintains the characteristic general and cautionary wording so as to not commit the EU to any significant

¹³⁶ Mouritzen & Wivel (2005): p. 202.

¹³⁷ Löwenhardt (2004) (Unpaginated), International Crisis Group (2004): 25, Emerson (2005) (Unpaginated), Christensen (2007): p. 83-87.

¹³⁸ Popescu, Nicu (2006): "The EU and Transnistria. From Deadlock to Sustainable Settlement", *IPF Policy Brief*, Budapest: The Central European University, accessed 03.08.2008 at <http://www.policy.hu/npopescu/ipf%20info/IPF%201%20transnistria.pdf>, p. 5.

¹³⁹ Poland Centre for Eastern Studies (2004): "Armed Conflicts in the Post-Soviet Region: an Overview, *Journal of Foreign Policy of Moldova*, issue 9, accessed 05.10.2008 at www.ceeol.com, pp. 13-18.

¹⁴⁰ Chirila, Victor (05.10.2008): "Cooperarea Regionala a Republicii Moldova in Sud-Estul Europei: Obiective, Realizari, Esecuri si Perspective" (The Regional Cooperation of the Republic of Moldova in South-Eastern Europe: Objectives, Fulfillings, Failures and Perspectives), Chisinau: APE (Asociatia pentru Politica Externa; Foreign Policy Association), accessed 06.11.2008 at www.ape.md.

political or economic costs in the future. However, this document further highlights the importance that Moldova has gained in EU policy dealings.¹⁴¹ This point was made clearer by the appointment of an EU Special Representative (EUSR) to Moldova in March 2005. Javier Solana said that “designating Ambassador Adriaan Jacobovits de Szeged (...) is a clear sign of the continuous commitment undertaken by the Union to regulate on long-term the conflict in Transnistria”.¹⁴²

There are several reasons for EU to pay more attention to Moldova. First is the migration issue as, after Romania became EU member, half a million Moldovans or more have gained Romanian passport and in this way are EU citizens, representing a demographic threat to Moldova and possibly to the EU.¹⁴³

Since the mid-90s Moldovans have been active in the EU job market either legally or illegally, an estimated 95 percent of which are employed illegally.¹⁴⁴ It is an important factor for the Moldovan economy without which it would be difficult for many Moldovans remaining in Moldova to live.¹⁴⁵ More about that at the domestic level.

Last but not least, Transnistria matters for the EU for several reasons.¹⁴⁶ First, the ongoing nature of the conflict poses soft security challenges to the enlarged European Union. Illicit trafficking in arms, humans and drugs, organised crime, money laundering and smuggling have flourished under the authoritarian rule of the Transnistrian leadership.¹⁴⁷ Second, Transnistria lies on the border of the EU, geographically being the closest unresolved conflict, less than 100 kilometres from Romania. Third, the conflict is ‘solvable’. This conflict does not raise the difficult problems of inter-ethnic hatred or inter-communal violence seen in other conflicts in the Caucasus.¹⁴⁸ Together

¹⁴¹ EU-Moldova Action Plan (2004), *Journal of Foreign policy of Moldova*, issue 11, accessed 05.10.2008 at www.ceeol.com.

¹⁴² Lungu, Diana (2005) “Reformele interne vor consolida parteneriatul dintre Moldova si Uniunea Europeana”, interviu cu Javier Solana, Înaltul Reprezentant al UE pentru PESC (The domestic reforms will consolidate the partnership between Moldova and the European Union”, interview with Javier Solana, the EU High Representative for the CFSP), 15 April 2005, http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/OT/sghr_int/84582.pdf

¹⁴³ Villarroel, Elizabeth (2005): *Moldova: The Quest for Balance*, Jagiellonian University in Krakow: Centre for European Studies, p. 55

¹⁴⁴ Ibid p. 55.

¹⁴⁵ Money transfers from nationals working abroad amounted to 70 million US\$ in 1996 and 220 million US\$ in 2001, equalling 1/3 of the value of Moldovan exports.

¹⁴⁶ Popescu (2005): pp.15-16.

¹⁴⁷ Nilsson (2008): pp. 35-36.

¹⁴⁸ The conflict in Transnistria is not a classical ethnic or religious conflict. Of an approximate population of 537.000 (2005) in Transnistria, Romanian-speaking Moldovans represent 32 percent, while Ukrainians and Russians represent

with the absence of fighting, it gives the EU the chance to forge a strategy that can break the political and economic structures sustaining the conflict. The regional dynamics have also changed with Ukraine and Romania becoming more positive towards finding a solution.¹⁴⁹ Last but not least, Transnistria is a locus of tension in the EU-Russia strategic partnership. Addressing this conflict would be the first step to building a common space on external security with Russia and would set a precedent for EU-Russia cooperation in crisis management.¹⁵⁰

Since December 2003, the settlement talks have been blocked, partly because of Russian recalcitrance. The EU is not formally included in any of the formally institutionalised conflict management formats in Transnistria.¹⁵¹ Rather than seeking to join these formats, the EU has been in direct dialogue with the involved actors, in this way bringing an added value to the conflict resolution process. This includes active diplomacy by the EUSR for Moldova and the launch of the EU Border Assistance Mission.¹⁵² The challenge facing the EU now is to seek to relaunch serious talks and provide for settlement while finding accommodation with Russia. As the EU has admitted, the success of the Action Plan with Moldova depends on the settlement of the conflict.¹⁵³

In October 2008, Kalman Miszei, the EUSR for Moldova, announced Brussels' intention to launch the mandate for negotiations to establish an updated legal framework for the relations between the EU and Moldova.¹⁵⁴ In this way it has given a "clear message to Russia by specifying the EU's interests and objectives concerning Eastern Europe".¹⁵⁵ The ultimate goal is to keep Russia from gaining influence on Moldova again.¹⁵⁶ Many of the EU's actions point in that direction, like

29 and 30 percent respectively. Populations in both Transnistria and Moldova are almost exclusively Orthodox Christians. See www.wikipedia.org/en/transnistria

¹⁴⁹ Ghiduleanov, Irina & Tamara Galusca: *Frozen Conflict in Transdnistria. Security Threat at Future EU Borders*, Linköpings Universitet: Ekonomiska institutionen, pp. 47-48.

¹⁵⁰ Lynch, Dov (2005): "Shared Neighbourhood or New Frontline? The Crossroads in Moldova", *Russie.Cei.Visions no.2*, Paris: IFRI, p. 5

¹⁵¹ Vahl, Marius (2005): "The Europeanisation of the Transnistrian Conflict", *CEPS Policy Brief*, no. 73, Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies, p. 2.

¹⁵² Nantoi, Oazu (2007): "New Initiatives are the Key to Success" in *Quo Vadis Moldova?*, European Integration Study Centre (Lithuania) & Institute for Development and Social Initiatives 'Viitorul' (Moldova), Lviv: Multi-M, p. 59-62.

¹⁵³ Vitu, Liliana (2007): "The EU and Moldova: vague perspectives and clear shortcomings" in *Quo Vadis Moldova?*, European Integration Study Centre (Lithuania) & Institute for Development and Social Initiatives 'Viitorul' (Moldova), Lviv: Multi-M, p. 63-69.

¹⁵⁴ Pop, Valentina (07.10.2008): "EU to start Moldova talks despite of elections fears", *EUobserver*, accessed 10.10.2008 at <http://euobserver.com/9/26881>.

¹⁵⁵ Nilsson, Niklas (2008): "EU and Russia in the Black Sea Region: Increasingly Competing Interests?", *Romanian Journal of European Affairs*, vol.8, no.2, Bucharest: European Institute of Romania, p. 32.

¹⁵⁶ Cenușă, Denis (2008): "The Republic of Moldova and uncertain course to the EU", *Moldova Azi*, 28th of October, accessed same day at www.azi.md/news?ID=51724.

simplifying the visa regime for Moldova. Such facilities would make the Moldovan passport more attractive in a situation where Russia keeps making citizenship granting procedures more and more flexible.

Furthermore, the Transnistrian conflict has also had an essential impact on the Brussels's decision to consider the possibility of accelerating negotiations on the EU-Moldova agreement. By accelerating the process, the EU wants to block Russia's attempts to influence the Transnistrian conflict settlement and to impose the "2+1" format instead of "5+2".¹⁵⁷ Also, Brussels' attitude may be a result of anxiety related to possible foreign re-orientation of Moldova in the context of influencing the preferences of the electorate by Russia through prices for energy, mobilization of the Russian-speaking electorate etc.¹⁵⁸

In this way the EU rewards Moldova for keeping stability at its borders. As an outsider, Moldova has in many ways given up some of its autonomy, by adopting parts of the *acquis*¹⁵⁹, in order to gain benefits from the EU, like an increase in trade with EU countries as seen in Table 1. Moldova benefits from the most favourable preferences available to developing countries under the EU's Generalised System of Preferences scheme (GSP).¹⁶⁰

Table 1: Moldovan export to CIS and the EU countries

Export total 100 %	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
in CIS countries	29.0	29.1	30.2	29.3	29.4	30.5	30.6	30.7
in EU countries	59.35	61.32	54.436	54.39	51.41	50.541	40.351	41.51
	25	22	26	20	41	41	51	51

Source: Based on figures from the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova

<http://www.statistica.md/category.php?l=en&idc=336&>

Source: Based on figures from the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova

<http://www.statistica.md/category.php?l=en&idc=336&>

¹⁵⁷ "2+1" format includes Russia as mediator and Moldova and Transnistria as the parts in the conflict, "5+2" includes Russia, Ukraine, OSCE as mediators, the EU and USA as observers and Moldova and Transnistria as parties in the conflict. In September 2008 OSCE had a meeting where they tried to set in place a format where the EU and USA are not only observers but also mediators. But this has not happened yet. See <http://www.osce.org/item/32885.html>

¹⁵⁸ Cenușa (2008): p. 1.

¹⁵⁹ The entire body of European laws is known as the *acquis communautaire*. This includes all the treaties, regulations and directives passed by the European institutions as well as judgements laid down by the Court of Justice. The term is most often used in connection with preparations by the 12 candidate countries to join the union. They must adopt, implement and enforce all the *acquis* to be allowed to join the EU.

¹⁶⁰ Gutu, Oxana (2006): "Moldova's Convergence with the *acquis*. A pro-Growth and Pro-Integration Strategy", *CEPS Working Document* no. 238, Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies, p. 4.

In return to restricted autonomy, Moldova wants to see some guarantees from the EU that they do not do it for nothing. There is always the possibility to turn to Russia and the CIS countries. In this way Moldova has the offensive power to influence the EU to do something they would otherwise not do.¹⁶¹ One of the major shortcomings of the ENP is the “apparent disproportion between the number of commitments and tasks that the neighbours must make and carry out and the benefits promised by the EU”.¹⁶² The general notion of the document and its lack of prospects for membership and other concessions has the potential in turn to paralyze further implementations of the ENP.¹⁶³

Moldovan officials have expressed their intention “to hurry slowly to the EU”, invoking the need to have clear prospects of the European cause for Moldova, including signing a document called “Association Agreement”.¹⁶⁴ At a meeting of the Moldova-European Union Cooperation Council in May 2008, Voronin stressed the fact that the new agreement with the EU shall clearly stipulate its EU membership perspective as it would “encourage a qualitative and lasting development of our relations with the EU”, even though Moldovan authorities do not have any plans to seek clear accession terms.¹⁶⁵

On the other hand, Moldova’s autonomy can be seen in a number of issues that it “delays” to solve like corruption, trafficking in human beings and reforms in economy and justice.¹⁶⁶ Instead of defending his country, the head of Moldovan Foreign Affairs has expressed his indignation over the fact that the EU would not have used all the possibilities to support the European aspirations of Moldova, making allusions to Brussels’ assurances with regard to Moldova’s European future.¹⁶⁷ Furthermore the shift in external trade towards the EU has been slow and disappointing,

¹⁶¹ Mouritzen & Wivel (2005): p. 33.

¹⁶² Emerson, Michael, Gergana Noutcheva & Nicu Popescu (2007):” European Neighbourhood Policy Two Years on: Time indeed for an ‘ENP plus’, *CEPS Policy Brief* no. 126/March 2007, Bruxelles: Centre for European Policy Studies, pp. 6-7.

¹⁶³ Villarroel (2005): p. 59

¹⁶⁴ Minzarari, Dumitru (28.12.2007):”Sindromul Stockholm al guvernarii comuniste” (The Stockholm Syndrome of the Communist Government), *Moldova Azi*, accessed 03.10.2008 at www.azi.md/news?ID=47571.

¹⁶⁵ Botan, Igor (2008):”Republic of Moldova shall join EU one day, somehow...”, *Governing and Democracy in Moldova*, e-journal, year IV, issue 120, accessed 29.10.2008 at www.e-democracy.md.

¹⁶⁶ This was revealed at a recent meeting of the EU-Moldova Parliamentary Cooperation Committee. See http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2004_2009/documents/re/719/719605/719605en.pdf

¹⁶⁷ Interview with Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung on 06.10.08, accessed 01.12.08 at: <http://www.allmoldova.com/index.php?action=newsblock&rid=1070524729&id=1223470102&lng=eng>

one of the most important reasons being, according to a World Bank study, barriers stemming from domestic policies and laws rather than the EU.¹⁶⁸

4.1.1 Summary of Moldova-EU relations

As expected, Moldova's relation with the EU has been a distant one considering the outsider role of the country. As membership is not an option in the near future, the autonomy of Moldova has been extensive. Nevertheless, the EU has been able to influence Moldova with regard to economic reforms and by impeding it to sign the Kozak Memorandum, a solution to the Transnistrian conflict which would have been more favourable to Russian interests than to Moldovan or EU ones. Moldova has mostly used a strategy of bandwagoning towards the EU in situations where it has seen an advantage in doing that; however, being careful not to "upset" the great power Russia, which still has a greater influence in the region.

4.2 Moldova-NATO relations

The Constitution of Moldova was adopted in 1994 and stipulates the permanent neutrality of the country and the interdiction of foreign armed forces on her territory.¹⁶⁹ Furthermore, in 1995, the National Security Concept, the Military Doctrine and the Foreign Policy Concept were adopted, all mentioning permanent neutrality as stipulated in the Constitution and considering it a cornerstone for the foreign, military and security concepts.¹⁷⁰

At that time, it seemed to be a wise option for at least two reasons. First, the new state did not have a military history at all, so permanent neutrality was seen as a substitute for a strong army (Table 2). It was the cheapest and most convenient means to defend its sovereignty and independence. Permanent neutrality can be seen as the strategy to survive between two stronger neighbours and as a response to Russia's pressures to include Moldova in various security designs. Second, the

¹⁶⁸ The World Bank (2005): *Moldova Trade Diagnostic Study*. To stimulate trade, domestic constraints on trade and investments need to be addressed. Lack of trade finance; relative lack of information for exporters and services to exporters; corruption; poor infrastructure; time-consuming and costly customs clearance procedures; and lack of a modern and transparent standards and conformity assessment system, to list but a few, require decision-makers' immediate attention. Accessed 01.12.2008 at www.worldbank.org.md.

¹⁶⁹ Article 11 of the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, 29 July 1994, accessed 05.12.2008 at <http://www.presedinte.md/const.php?lang=eng>, p. 6.

¹⁷⁰ *The decision of the Parliament of Moldova concerning the military doctrine of Republic of Moldova*, Nr. 482-XIII from 06.06.1995, accessed on 05.12.08 at www.army.md; *The Foreign Policy Concept of Moldova approved by the Parliament*, Nr. 368-XIII, 08.02.1995, *Law on National Security Concept* first adopted on 15.03.1995, last version 22.05.2008, accessed on 05.12.08 at <http://www.mfa.gov.md/news/691/>

presence of Russian troops on the left bank of the Nistru¹⁷¹ River was also a reason for being neutral as the constitutional provision served as an additional argument for the withdrawal of the Russian soldiers and military equipment from the Moldovan territory.¹⁷²

Table 2: Moldova's relative capabilities

Year 2005	Moldova	Russia	Ukraine	Georgia
Military Budget (mio. \$)	150	28.492	2.405	214
GDP (mia. \$)	3.82	765	86	6
Population (mio.)	4.2	143	47	4
SIPRI: Military Expenditure Database	150	28.492	2.405	214
World Bank: Key Development Data & Statistics	3.82	765	86	6
CIA World Fact Book: Intelligence Unit	4.2	143	47	4

Sources: SIPRI: Military Expenditure Database; World Bank: Key Development Data & Statistics; CIA World Fact Book; Economist Intelligence Unit

The geopolitical significance of the Moldovan neutrality became evident after the North Atlantic Alliance's decision on its enlargement towards Eastern Europe. For Romania and Bulgaria who sought NATO membership, Moldova's neutral status, followed by the withdrawal of the foreign troops from its sovereign territory was surely more acceptable than its integration into the CIS military structure. Taking into consideration an eventual use of the 14th Army¹⁷³, western oriented Ukraine has also supported the Moldovan neutrality.¹⁷⁴

NATO extension towards Eastern Europe has become an argument used by both Moscow and Tiraspol¹⁷⁵ to sustain the Russian troops' stationing in Transnistria.¹⁷⁶ Thus, Russian State Duma

¹⁷¹ Nistru is the Romanian name of the river which separates Moldova from Transnistria. In Russian is called Dniester.
¹⁷² Marandici, Ion (2007): "Moldova's Neutrality: What is at Stake?" in *Quo Vadis Moldova?*, European Integration Study Centre (Lithuania) & Institute for Development and Social Initiatives 'Viitorul' (Moldova), Lviv: Multi-M, p. 47.
¹⁷³ The 14th Guards Army was formed as a unit of the Soviet Army circa 1956 from the 10th Guards 'Budapest' Rifle Corps, formerly part of the Odessa Military District with headquarters in Chisinau. In the 1980s the army headquarters was moved to Tiraspol, within the then Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic. While the official policy of the Russian Federation early after the outbreak of the widespread armed conflict in 1992 was one of neutrality, many soldiers and officers of the 14th Army were sympathetic to the PMR cause and had defected to the PMR and actively participated in the fighting as part of its armed forces the Republican Guards. Furthermore, a considerable amount of the army's materiel was taken without resistance or given to the PMR armed forces. Accessed 03.11.08 at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/14th_Army_involvement_in_Transnistria
¹⁷⁴ Albu, Natalia (2007): *Influenta procesului de globalizare asupra securitatii nationale a Republicii Moldova* (The Influence of the Globalisation Process on the National Security of the Republic of Moldova), Doctor Thesis, Chisinau: Universitatea de Stat din Moldova, accessed 09.12.08 at http://www.cnaa.acad.md/files/theses/2007/6757/natalia_albu_thesis.pdf, pp. 67-70.
¹⁷⁵ "Capital" of Transnistria.

has rejected the ratification of the 1990 Moldovan-Russian Treaty of friendship and co-operation and has pleaded against the Russian troops' withdrawal from Moldova, because, in its opinion, these are necessary to counteract the NATO expansion towards East.¹⁷⁷

Despite its commitment to permanent neutrality, Moldova joined the Partnership for Peace Programme on 16 of March 1994. Moldova's avowed interest in participating in the PfP process was the strengthening of political dialogue and practical cooperation with NATO as a means of enhancing Moldova's security, modernizing and reforming the country's defence system in keeping with Euro Atlantic standards and enhancing Moldovan capacities for participation in peacekeeping operations. On July 6, 2006, the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) Republic of Moldova-NATO was approved by the Government.¹⁷⁸ The document states that the implementation of the IPAP does not mean that Moldova aims to join NATO, but only strives to reform the military and security sectors.¹⁷⁹

NATO has not shown much interest in Moldova, considering it to be in the influence sphere of Russia and being occupied by the enlargement with Central and Eastern European countries. But at the Istanbul Summit in 2004, Moldova was mentioned for the first time in a separate article of the Istanbul Communiqué.¹⁸⁰ One important conclusion of NATO's Istanbul Summit concerned the provisions of the adapted Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty as a cornerstone of European security, specifically the "Istanbul Commitments" approved at the OSCE's Istanbul Forum in 1999. One of the commitments specified an unconditional withdrawal of all Russian troops from Moldova's Transnistria region and liquidation of the stock of Russian-supplied combat hardware and munitions deployed to Transnistrian secessionist forces.¹⁸¹ None of these

¹⁷⁶ Socor, Vladimir (2007): "Russian Troops in Moldova – Main Remaining Obstacle to CFE Treaty Ratification", *Journal of Foreign Policy of Moldova*, issue 3, accessed 03.11.08 at www.cceol.com

¹⁷⁷ Druta, Mihai (2001): "NATO Enlargement's Impact on Moldovan Neutrality, *NATO-EAPC Individual Research Fellowships*, Final Report, Chisinau, accessed 03.09.08 at <http://www.nato.int/acad/fellow/99-01/druta.pdf>, pp. 63-64.

¹⁷⁸ Monitorul Oficial al Republicii Moldova, no. 134-137, 25.0.2006, pp. 26-44, accessed 13.01.09 at <http://www.lex.md/>. Launched at the NATO Prague Summit in 2002, IPAPs are open to those countries that have the necessary political will and ability to deepen their relationship with NATO. Such plans are designed to bring together all the various cooperation mechanisms through which a partner country interacts with the Alliance, sharpening the focus of activities to better support their domestic reform efforts. <http://www.lex.md/>

¹⁷⁹ Ibid. p. 26.

¹⁸⁰ NATO Istanbul Summit, Communiqué, article 32: "We remain committed to partnership with the Republic of Moldova and encourage it to make use of Partnership instruments to take forward its aspirations of promoting stability in the region as a Partner of this Alliance.", accessed 08.12.08 at <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2004/p04-096e.htm>

¹⁸¹ For more details see: Socor, Vladimir (2004): "The Mother of All Zero-Sum Games", *The Wall Street Journal Europe*, March 12, 2004 and "Who's Hanging Tough in NATO?", *The Wall Street Journal Europe*, May 28-30 2004, accessed 08.12.08 at <http://usmoldova.org/WSJSOCORMAR12.html> & <http://www.atlant.dk/ata/socor%20artikel.htm>

provisions has been implemented, and this issue provoked sharp debates and criticisms in Istanbul regarding Russia's reluctance to fulfil its obligations.

This gave the Moldovan president Vladimir Voronin the courage to balance Russia with NATO knowing how important Moldovan neutrality is for Russia. At the Istanbul Summit, he stressed that "complete and unconditional implementation of the Istanbul 1999 OSCE decisions regarding withdrawal of foreign troops and ammunitions from Moldova is the most important condition for the improving of the situation in the eastern part of the country".¹⁸² Along with the surprising three-hour visit to Chisinau¹⁸³ of U.S. Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld – the highest-ranking U.S. official to visit Moldova – this was a clear sign that finally something was happening that could lead to a thaw in the Transnistrian conflict. Not much has happened since.

Neutrality of Moldova may be considered a strategy for better accomplishing the national interests, which at the moment are determined by the constellation around Moldova, with EU and NATO members in the West and Russia in the East.¹⁸⁴ For the analyst Vladimir Socor, Moldova's neutrality seems more an invention of the Russian Federation that would like to have guarantees that Moldova would not join NATO in the future.¹⁸⁵ The neutrality of Moldova can in the end prove to be more expensive than joining a strong military alliance, which would provide more security for Moldova. The problem is that Moldova cannot increase its security and military capabilities and at the same time, take into account a possible NATO membership, as long as the Russian military is present in Transnistria and as long as the conflict remains unsettled.¹⁸⁶

Taking into account the current geopolitical situation in Europe, especially the NATO-Russia relations regarding the Alliance's enlargement to the East in the near and medium future, the Republic of Moldova can maintain its political independence only as a neutral state, having an equidistant position towards the political-military bodies of the West and the CIS. On the one

¹⁸² Quoted in Ciobanu (2008): p. 145.

¹⁸³ Moldova's capital.

¹⁸⁴ Marandici (2007): pp. 49-50.

¹⁸⁵ Socor, Vladimir (04.10.2006): "Voronin's six points plan to Putin: a calculated risk", *Eurasian Daily Monitor*, Issue 183, accessed 13.10.08 at

http://www.jamestown.org/publications_details.php?volume_id=414&issue_id=3876&article_id=2371505

¹⁸⁶ Marandici (2007): pp. 50-51.

hand, Moldova's adherence to NATO is not a real solution.¹⁸⁷ Moreover, Chisinau's tentative to promote a course of integration into the Euro-Atlantic Alliance could justify Russia's pressure, including military, on the Moldovan State. On the other hand, Moldova's adherence to the Eastern political-military structures would finally lead to a voluntary renunciation of the state independence.¹⁸⁸

The only alternative for Moldova at the moment is the rapprochement towards the EU, which first, serves Moldovan interests better than NATO, as the EU has a more inclusive character, gaining economic and social advantages rather than only security ones. Second, the EU has more interests in Moldova than NATO has, as the EU is directly influenced by conditions in Moldova. Third, Russia is more inclined to accept the EU's influence on Moldova as it also needs the EU for its energy delivery and because the EU does not pose any security threat to Russia as NATO does. Furthermore, NATO is not a real alternative for Moldova at the moment as Moldova is a neutral country and NATO has also stronger incentives to keep its relationship with Russia on a friendly tone than protecting the Moldovan interests.

4.2.1 Summary of Moldova-NATO relations

As the theory predicted, NATO has a weak influence on Moldova, mostly because Moldova finds itself in the Russian sphere of influence and NATO would rather keep good relations with Russia than help Moldova keep territorial integrity. Some progress has been made by signing the IPAP Programme but Moldova has not been too keen at complying with its wording as it cannot see any real advantage.

4.3 Concluding remarks for the Euro-Atlantic level

The Euro-Atlantic level has helped explain the frame conditions for the events that play out at the regional and the domestic levels. At this level it has been looked at Moldova's relation with the Euro-Atlantic unipole and how it has influenced the country's external behaviour. We have seen that the outsider role of Moldova to both the EU and NATO has both given them autonomy and restraint. But this is only one facet of foreign policy. The relationship with the two organisations

¹⁸⁷ Cooper, Jason (02.10.2007): "As Moldova aligns with NATO, Transdnier fears new attacks", *Tiraspol Times*, accessed 15.03.2009 at

http://www.tiraspoltimes.com/news/moldova_aligns_with_nato_as_transdnier_fears_new_attacks.html

¹⁸⁸ Albu (2007): p. 143.

only gives a partial picture and we need to look at the close environment and internal conditions to see the whole image.

Moldova has a very weak influence on the international scene, the two institutions being too far away and too strong for Moldova to really challenge them. Moldova can gain some advantages by accomplishing with some of the EU and NATO requests. It has been shown that the EU is only invited to get involved in the solution of the Transnistrian conflict when it suits the Moldovan interests best. Nevertheless, there have been instances when the Euro-Atlantic unipole has intervened with the result that Moldova has complied with the West's requests. When Moldova has seen support from the NATO allies, it has also dared to balance Russia by requesting the unconditioned withdrawal of troops from Transnistria.

It seems that the actions undertaken by the Communist government towards Europeanization, which are in many ways contrary to the Communist ideals, have been a tactical manoeuvre in order to politically survive and ensure the re-election in the 2009 parliamentary elections. This rapprochement is due to the favourable geopolitical considerations of the EU and European Neighbourhood Policy opposed to the aggressive policy Russia is trying to promote in its "near abroad".¹⁸⁹

As for the relationship with NATO, Moldova has declared itself a neutral country since 1994. Therefore, Moldova has a strong autonomy towards NATO. The advantages from its relation with NATO have not been many. The Russian troops continue to station on the territory of the Republic of Moldova against NATO's request of withdrawal. Consequently, the great power Russia has more to say in Moldovan affairs than international organisations do because it is closer to the geopolitical environment of Moldova.

¹⁸⁹ Panainte, Sergiu (2008): "An Association Agreement EU-Moldova: Before or After the Elections?", in *Political & Security Statewatch*, no.10(17), October 2008, Chisinau: IDIS Viitorul (The Institute for Development and Social Initiatives), p. 7.

5. The near geopolitical level

The near geopolitical level is the level with most explanatory power according to the theoretical provisions. According to the constellation theory the near geopolitical environment around Moldova should explain a great deal of the conduct in her foreign policy.¹⁹⁰ As such, geopolitics is the independent variable with the strongest explanatory power. Based on empirical evidence, I have chosen to look at the relation of Moldova with Russia, Romania and Ukraine. Both present and past geopolitics are important and we would expect Russia, as the closest super power to have the strongest influence on Moldova's foreign policy. Romania represents the Euro-Atlantic unipole in the region and is expected to support Moldova in her wish to come close to the EU and NATO. It does project some power on Moldova in terms of support for the EU and NATO membership and trade relations but their common turbulent past has not been beneficent for the relationship of the two countries. Ukraine has the same goal of being a part of the Euro-Atlantic unipole and as such is expected to willingly help Moldova make progress both economically and politically particularly with regard to the conflict in Transnistria, which borders Ukraine.

Moldova's relational polarity can be seen as multipolarity with some pole powers having more influence than others. Moldova is expected to conduct a policy of bandwagoning towards Russia in the 1990s when Russia was the most powerful pole in the region. After the EU has become more involved in the region, Romania and Ukraine have gained importance. It is further anticipated that the relationship to these countries in the near environment is more important for Moldova as a weak state, than the relationship to the Euro-Atlantic pole, where Moldova is an outsider.¹⁹¹ This is because as an outsider to the EU, Moldova has fewer benefits than from bilateral relations with its neighbouring countries. However, the closer the EU comes to Moldova's near environment, the more significance the EU has in Moldova's foreign behaviour. As mentioned in the theory chapter (Chapter 3) the historical legacy is expected to be an important factor at all levels of analysis, not only at the domestic level, as the constellation theory predicts. Moldova has been a part of Russia, Romania and Ukraine at a particular moment in the past and is dependent on them for different

¹⁹⁰ Mouritzen & Wivel (2005): p. 29.

¹⁹¹ Ibid. pp.18-19.

political, economical and cultural reasons. I anticipate this to be reflected in Moldova's attitude towards these countries.¹⁹²

5.1 Moldova-Russia relations

As mentioned above, Russia is expected to have the strongest influence on Moldova among the three countries analysed here. This is due to, in terms of present geopolitics, Moldova being dependent on Russia concerning its economy, especially energy policy, and the resolution of the Transnistrian conflict. Furthermore the Russian minority plays a dominant role on the political stage in both Moldova and Transnistria promoting Russian interests. As long as Russia wishes to keep Moldova in its sphere of influence, Moldova will have difficulties avoiding Russia's domination. Russia's interests in Moldova can be linked to the country's quest at bringing itself to the heights of a 21st century world power, as stated by Kremlin's consultant Gleb Pavlovsky during a press conference in 2005 when he said that, "one should be aware that, at least until the end of President Putin's tenure and probably until the end of the presidency of his immediate successors, Russia's foreign policy priority will be to turn Russia into a 21st century world power".¹⁹³ Moldova is, however, just a "minor irritation on its 'traditional periphery', not as problematic as Ukraine, Chechnya or the Caucasus, but in the same basket of troubles".¹⁹⁴ Moldova has become an increased and growing priority for Russia especially after "the Ukrainian Orange revolution broke the proverbial camels back".¹⁹⁵ In addition, "thanks to Cold War habits of mind, Russia's interest in hegemony over Moldova [has] increased noticeably [since] Romania joined NATO"¹⁹⁶ and now the EU.

Accordingly, Moldova is expected to balance between the two power poles, Russia and the Euro-Atlantic pole, mostly the EU, and not provoke high tensions in its own salient environment. In the 1990s Moldova bandwagoned Russia that was the most powerful pole in the region. As soon as the balance of power changed towards the EU, Moldova abandoned its attitude of non-provocation and bandwagoned the EU, while careful not to provoke Russia.

¹⁹² King, Charles (2000): *The Moldovans. Romania, Russia, and the Politics of Culture*, Stanford University: Hoover Institution Press, pp. 1-7.

¹⁹³ Socor, Vladimir (2005): "Kremlin Redefining Policy in 'post-Soviet' space, *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Washington DC.: Jamestown Foundation, vol.2, issue 27, accessed 27.12.2008 at:

[http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=27502&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=176&no_cache=1](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=27502&tx_ttnews[backPid]=176&no_cache=1)

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Villarroel (2005): p. 45.

¹⁹⁶ Smith (2005b): p. 7.

After independence, Moldova oriented its foreign policy towards Romania and the nationalist feeling of getting reunited with the other Romanian historical provinces was very strong. As a consequence the Russian-speaking population felt there was the danger of Moldova reuniting with Romania and thus the conflict in Transnistria started in 1990. During the two years that the armed conflict lasted, Russia was not neutral in deeds as it was in speech, as the Russian 14th Army which had its headquarters in Transnistria, helped the rebels keep the Moldovan troops out of Transnistria.¹⁹⁷ The civil war had an immediate impact on Moldovan domestic politics and in July 1992 almost all members of the pro-Romanian government resigned.¹⁹⁸

The political fallout from the civil war continued throughout the 1990s and forced a reorientation in Moldovan foreign policies away from Romania and towards Russia. In the 1994 parliamentary elections, the Democratic Agrarian Party, a party of former nomenklatura¹⁹⁹, captured an absolute majority of seats. Together with President Snegur, they promoted foreign-policy realignment with Russia while relations with Romania and much of Europe stagnated.²⁰⁰ In April 1994, Moldova joined the CIS, although not the military component of the organisation, invoking its status of neutrality.²⁰¹ The foreign policy orientation towards Russia during the 1990s is not surprising given Moldova's dependence on Russia for several reasons. First of all powerful political factors, like an influential minority, politically and economically active²⁰², then cultural elements as the dominant role played by the Russian language and culture in the Soviet Union and afterwards.²⁰³ Last but not least, economic links like import/export trade and dependency on gas and electricity

¹⁹⁷ Lynch, Dov (2004): *Engaging Eurasia's Separatist States. Unresolved Conflicts and De facto States*, Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, p. 33.

¹⁹⁸ Roper (2008): p. 83-84.

¹⁹⁹ Nomenklatura were a small, elite subset of the general population in the Soviet Union and other Eastern Bloc countries who held various key administrative positions in all spheres of those countries' activity: government, industry, agriculture, education, etc. The nomenklatura was analogous to the ruling class, which Communist doctrine denounced in the capitalist West. See: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nomenklatura>

²⁰⁰ Roper (2008): p. 85.

²⁰¹ Vitu (2004): p. 19.

²⁰² Although numerically the Russian minority is only second in Moldova, members of this community posed most challenges to the Moldovan authorities after independence, having organised the movement "Interfront" at the end of the 1980s, which advocated for the preservation of the Soviet Union and special social status. The issue of the Russian population, a minority of 13% in Moldova, is important as it forms a card to be played by Moscow to remind Moldova that Russia is sensitive to the direction of its foreign policy orientation. See Munteanu, Igor (2002): "Social Multipolarity and Political Violence", in Pål Kolstø (ed.): *National Integration and Violent Conflict in Post-Soviet Societies. The Cases of Estonia and Moldova*, New York, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, pp. 208-217 & 223-224.

²⁰³ Nowadays Russian is by far the dominant language in the Moldovan media. The superior power of attraction by the media from Russia, supported with stronger financial incentives as opposed to Romania, makes the competition between the two languages fairly unfair. See Vitu (2004): p. 19-20.

imports from Russia²⁰⁴, and military reasons such as the illegal presence of Russian troops on Moldova's territory since 1992 until this moment²⁰⁵. The economic and military factors are the most important ones and they will be commented on more thoroughly beneath.

In the 1990s Russia was Moldova's largest export market by a significant margin. Especially after the 1996 election of pro-Russian President Petru Lucinschi, Moldovan exports to Russia continued to be very high until the Russian economic collapse of 1998.²⁰⁶ Although Moldovan economic relations with Russia have deteriorated, Russia is still the largest export country for Moldovan products. (Table 3) Furthermore, imports from Russia are significant, especially in the energy sector, where Moldova is totally dependent of Gazprom.²⁰⁷ (Table 4) Russia has significantly increased the price of gas exports to Moldova²⁰⁸ (Table 5) and in April 2006, the country banned Moldovan wine imports, for supposed health reasons.²⁰⁹ After the import ban, President Voronin announced that Moldova would reorient its wine exports to the EU as well as China.²¹⁰

Table 3: Gas prices paid to Russia by Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus in 2005-2007 (in USD)

	2005	2006	2007
Ukraine	39	35.8	31.8
Moldova	17.3	17.3	17.3
Belarus	100	100	100

Table 3: Moldovan export to Russia (in place) and Romania (in place)

Export total 100 %	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Russia	58.7	55.3	41.3	44.5	43.6	37.1	39	35.8	31.8	17.3	17.3
Romania	6.75	9.6	8.8	8	6.7	8.8	11.4	10	10.2	14.7	15.7

Source: Based on figures from the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova
²⁰⁴ Since Putin came to power, energy dependence and trade ties became two important factors of Russia's relations with the former Soviet states. See Smith, M.A. (2000). "Russian Foreign Policy 2000: the Near Abroad", Conflict Studies Research Centre, accessed 15.01.09 at www.csrc.ac.uk

²⁰⁵ Russian First Vice-Minister, Veaceslav Trubnikov, declared during his visit to Chisinau that the withdrawal of Russian troops and munitions would be possible only after the settling of the Transnistrian conflict. "Veaceslav Trubnikov: Rusia este impotriva stabilirii unui termen concret de evacuare a trupelor sale din Moldova" (V.T: Russia is against establishing a certain date for the withdrawal of the Russian troops), *Moldova Azi*, 7 November 2003, accessed 03.01.09 at <http://old.azi.md/news?ID=26556>.

²⁰⁶ In 1998 Russia was the main export country with 336, 8 million dollars followed by Ukraine with 48, 7 million dollars. See Alla Skvortova: Country Report Moldova, pp. 21-22.

²⁰⁷ In 1994 Moldova was dependent on Russia for 90 percent of the fuel needed for its electric-power generation plants: diesel oil (88,000 tons), gasoline (65,000 tons), fuel oil (365,000 tons), and natural gas (2.8 billion cubic meters). By March 1995, Moldova owed Russia US\$232 million for fuel, with half of this amount owed by Transnistria. See Fedor (1995), <http://countrystudies.us/moldova/28.htm>

²⁰⁸ Next to Georgia, which pays 235 USD, of the CIS countries Moldova pays the highest price for gas.

²⁰⁹ Chivers, C.J.(10.04.2006): "Russisk vinblokkade mod Moldova og Georgien", *Berlingske Tidende*, accessed 19.09.07 at www.infomedia.dk. As wine exports were more than 10 percent of GDP, and 80 percent of all wine went to Russia, this was a severe balance of payments shock. Wine exports to Russia have resumed as of October 2007, but recovery is likely to be gradual. See IMF Country report No. 08/134, accessed 25.03.09 at <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2008/cr08134.pdf>

²¹⁰ Roper (2008): p. 86

Table 4: Consumption and import of gas from Russia

Table 4: Consumption and import of gas from Russia

Year/billion m ³	2007
Consumption	2.44
Import Gazprom*	2.44/2.7
Import Gazprom	2.44/2.7

Table 4: Consumption and import of gas from Russia

Table 5: Gas prices paid to Russia by Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus in 2005-2007 (in USD)

Year/billion m ³	2007
Consumption	2.44
Import Gazprom*	2.44/2.7

	2005	2006	2007
Ukraine	95	110-160	130
Moldova	80	110-160	170
Belarus	47	47	100

*According to CIA World Fact Book Moldova imported 2.44 billion m³ in 2007 while

Gazprom says 2.7 billion m³. Sources: <http://e>
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-v>
 om says 2. billion m³. Sources: <http://e>
<http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-v>

Source: Gromadzki, Grzegorz (2007): *Energy Game. Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus between the EU and Russia*, Warsaw: Stefan Batory Foundation.

*According to CIA World Fact Book Moldova imported 2.44 billion m³ in 2007 while Gazprom says 2.7 billion m³
 Sources: <http://e>
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-v>

Table 5: Moldovan export to Russia (1st place) and Romania (2nd place)

Export total 100 %	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Russia	58.2	53.3	41.3	44.5	43.6	37.1	39	35.8	31.8	17.3	17.3
Romania	6.73	9.6	8.8	8	6.7	8.8	11.4	10	10.2	14.7	15.7

In addition to the economic links, the continuing presence of Russian troops on Moldovan soil provided another important source of Russian leverage over Moldovan foreign policy. The

agreement to withdraw all Russian forces was initially signed in 1994, and while there are fewer than 1.500 troops remaining by 2008, there is still a massive amount of ammunition and equipment in Transnistria.²¹¹ The main problem is that the status of these forces has not changed fundamentally since 1995. Moldova's dependency on Russian energy and the Russian market limited the country's ability to resolve the status of these forces or press for a conclusion to a basic treaty.²¹² Thus, the Russian commitment in the OSCE Istanbul Declaration to remove all forces from Moldova by the end of 2002 was viewed as a significant development. In the Istanbul Declaration, Moscow committed to remove its forces without any conditions and without any connection to resolving Transnistria's status. The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has since

²¹¹ 40.000 to 50.000 of arms and ammunition would have remained in Transnistria after the USSR breakdown. See Buttin, Félix (2007): "A Human Security Perspective on Transnistria: Reassessing the Situation within the "Black Hole of Europe", *Human Security Journal*, issue 3, p. 17.

²¹² Munteanu, Igor (1999): "Social Multipolarity in Moldova", *The Conflict Studies Research Centre*, Camberley: Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, pp. 26-28

consistently argued, however, that a military withdrawal must coincide with a political agreement on Transnistria.²¹³

As the theory predicted, Russia has used both positive and negative incentives to keep Moldova in its sphere of influence. In the 1990s by having extensive economic trade and by projecting stability in Transnistria, while after Voronin's turn to the West, by economic sanctions and the refuse to withdraw the Russian troops from Transnistria.

In the late 1990s there were some attempts to reorient foreign interests towards the European Union but it didn't last long and after the elections in 2001, a communist government conducted by Vladimir Voronin was installed in power. Voronin declared its aim of, once again, approaching Russia saying that Moldova will be present where its national interests lie, especially in Russia and the CIS.²¹⁴ Voronin expressed wishes like joining the Russian-Belarusian union and having Russia take a key position in solving the Transnistria conundrum. Furthermore, he advocated the use of Russian as an official state language. After assuming office, Voronin said "Russia and Moldova synchronize their steps on major issues of foreign policy".²¹⁵ With this sharper Eastern reorientation towards Moscow, Voronin hoped it would result in more effective Russian mediation of Transnistria's reintegration into Moldova.²¹⁶

However, by 2004, there was still no resolution of the Transnistrian conflict. The OSCE had unsuccessfully tried to resolve the issue for more than a decade after the United Nations turned the problem over. The OSCE supported a federal solution to the reintegration of Moldova, as did the United States in 2003-04. In October 2003, the U.S. ambassador to Moldova, Pamela Hyde Smith, said that "The federal solution is the only effective plan launched in the last ten years."²¹⁷ The basic problem was to figure out how to divide the powers between the central government

²¹³ See Radio Free Europe (15 April 2004): "Russian Deputy Chief of Staff Blames Moldova for Transdnierster Evacuation Halt", accessed 30.12.08 at <http://www.rferl.org/content/Article/1143138.html>

²¹⁴ "Communists win in Moldova" (21 February 2001), *BBC News*, accessed 12.09.08 at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/1190180.stm>

²¹⁵ See "Moldovan President Says Foreign Policy coordinated with Russia" (20 November 2001), *ITAR-TASS* (in English), accessed 12.09.08 at <http://nl.newsbank.com>

²¹⁶ Popescu, Nicu (2006): "'Outsourcing' *de facto* Statehood. Russia and the Secessionist Entities in Georgia and Moldova", *CEPS Policy Brief*, no. 109, July 2006, Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies, accessed 12.09.08 at www.ceps.be, p. 2.

²¹⁷ Quoted in Wiener, Robert (2004): "The Foreign Policy of the Voronin Administration", *Demokratizatsiya –The Journal of Post-Soviet Democratization*, Washington DC.: Heldref Publications, accessed 29.12.08 at <http://www.demokratizatsiya.org/html/TOCS.html>, p. 5.

and Transnistria and Gagauzia²¹⁸. See figure 2 for the regions of Moldova. Moldova favoured an asymmetrical federation in which power would be concentrated in the central government. Igor Smirnov, the “leader” of Transnistria, favoured a federal solution in which power would be equally divided - a confederation rather than a federation.²¹⁹ In November 2003, Voronin seemed prepared to sign a Russian-sponsored settlement (“Basic Principles of the State Structure of a United State”), as spelled out in a memorandum presented by Dmitry Kozak, the deputy chief of staff to the Russian president.²²⁰

Figure 2: Map of Moldova including the regions of Transnistria and Gagauzia
Figure 1: Map over Moldova and the regions of Transnistria and Gagauzia



²¹⁸ Gagauzia is an autonomous region of Moldova. Its name derives from the word "Gagauz", which in turn derived from the name *Gok-oguz* used to describe descendants of the Turkic Oghuz tribe. Accessed 29.12.08 at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gagauzia>

²¹⁹ Wiener (2004): p. 6.

²²⁰ For the text of the Kozak Memorandum, see "Russian Draft Memorandum on the Basic Principles of the State Structure of a United State in Moldova (Kozak Memorandum)," accessed 30.12.08 at http://eurojournal.org/comments.php?id=P107_0_1_0_C

Before Voronin could sign the Kozak Memorandum, there was a firestorm of protests by opposition political forces in Moldova. They formed the National Committee to Defend Moldova's Independence and Constitution in opposition to the plan contained in the Kozak Memorandum, as a majority of Moldovans were opposed to federalization.²²¹ Important external actors, such as the United States, the European Union, and the OSCE also expressed their opposition to the Kozak Memorandum.²²² Opponents of the Russian plan argued that, if accepted, it would have resulted in the "Transnistriazation" of Moldova.²²³ The plan would have transformed Moldova into a Russian protectorate, since Russia would have possibly been the sole military guarantor, with its troops staying up to twenty years in Moldova. The political system outlined in the Kozak Memorandum would have given Transnistria a veto over decisions reached in the new federal structure and recognized Transnistrian sovereignty.²²⁴ The internal opposition combined with pressure from the United States²²⁵, the European Union, and the OSCE, forced Voronin to cancel his earlier intention to sign the Kozak Memorandum.

The failure of Voronin to sign the Kozak Memorandum resulted in the first serious breach in Russian-Moldovan relations since Voronin assumed office in 2001. Russian officials used very strong language reprimanding Voronin.²²⁶ Voronin explained that although the Russian plan was a good one, it was necessary to consult with the European organizations before signing on to it, since Moldova was a European state.²²⁷ The EU may have interpreted this to mean that Moldova had replaced its eastern orientation with a European orientation. Nevertheless, Moldova was simply continuing to pursue its national interest through a policy of balance of power, not jumping on the European Union bandwagon but signalling Russia that Moldova might turn to bandwagoning the EU if Russia did not help with a solution in the Transnistrian conflict. In early January 2004, Voronin stressed that a solution would not be feasible without the Russians, but also

²²¹ Villarroel (2005): p. 33.

²²² For criticism of the Russian plan by Stephen Minikes, U.S. Ambassador to the OSCE, see "U.S. Representative Criticizes Kozak Memorandum," *Moldova Azi*, February 16, 2004, <http://old.azi.md/news?ID=27876>

²²³ Wiener (2004): p. 5.

²²⁴ Volnitchi (2007): p. 26.

²²⁵ The U.S. planned to extend \$40 million in aid to Moldova in 2004. See "U.S. to Continue Financial Help to Moldova," *Moldova Azi*, June 4, 2004, <http://www.azi.md/news?ID=29405>

²²⁶ The result was a statement from Kozak accusing Voronin of "lacking political courage". Nygren, Bertil (2007): *The Rebuilding of Greater Russia*, Oxford, New York: Routledge, p. 89.

²²⁷ Wiener (2004): pp.5-6.

pointed out that "there are certain forces in Russia that are not interested in solving the problem."²²⁸ After Voronin's refused to sign the Kozak Memorandum, Russian withdrawal of material supposedly halted because of the obstruction by the Transnistrian authorities.²²⁹

By orienting his foreign policy towards Russia, Voronin had hoped to get financial concessions and strong stand against Transnistria.²³⁰ But he was disappointed. All along the Russians have been hard bargainers over gas debt rescheduling, have insisted that Moldova repay their energy debts in cash or equity equivalent to avoid creating a precedent for other CIS states, and have acted in Russia's best interest in Transnistria.²³¹ Consequently, for these and other reasons, over the past five years, Voronin has been much more willing to integrate closely with the West, as shown by his policy of trying to gain eventual EU accession and his acquiescence to some of the PACE²³² resolutions. Ultimately, Voronin's foreign policy is based on what he sees as being best for Moldova, for maintaining the PCRM's overwhelming control of power, and for Voronin.²³³

Relations between Moldova and Russia degraded considerably when Voronin refused to sign the memorandum. After the victory of the Communist Party in the parliamentary elections in May 2005, the Moldova-Russia relations deteriorated further when Russia stopped the import of crop and meat products from Moldova. In 2006, a ban on import of Moldovan wines followed, putting the economy of the country in a very difficult situation.²³⁴ Furthermore negotiations around the Transnistrian issue were also stalled. In August 2006 Putin and Voronin met in an attempt to normalise relations but nothing new came out of this meeting.²³⁵

²²⁸ Ibid. p. 6.

²²⁹ See Radio Free Europe (15 April 2004): "Russian Deputy Chief of Staff Blames Moldova for Transdnier Evacuation Halt", accessed 30.12.08 at <http://www.rferl.org/content/Article/1143138.html>

²³⁰ Kilroy, Austin (2006): "Promoting Stability on Europe's Borders: a Comparative Study of Kosovo, Transdnier and Abkhazia", *Special Series*, 06/38, Defence Academy of the United Kingdom: Conflict Studies Research Centre, p.9.

²³¹ Quinlan, Paul (2004): "Back to the Future: An Overview of Moldova Under Voronin", *Demokratizatsiya – The Journal of Post-Soviet Democratization*, Washington DC.: Heldref Publications, accessed 29.12.08 at <http://www.demokratizatsiya.org/html/TOCS.html>, pp. 6-7.

²³² The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

²³³ Quinlan (2004): pp. 8-9.

²³⁴ Chivers, C.J.(10.04.2006): "Russisk vinblokade mod Moldova og Georgien", *Berlingske Tidende*, accessed 19.09.07 at www.infomedia.dk. In 2005, 80% of Moldovan wine export went to Russia.

²³⁵ Comments on this meeting were very diverse from the *Timpul* and *Independent Moldova* newsthesiss which saw the meeting as "a new stage in the dialogue between the two countries" to *Flux* newsthesiss that reported that the visit of Voronin to Moscow "was widely covered by the Russian mass media, and was regarded as a complete failure". See Volnitschi (2007): p. 27.

Despite the meeting of the presidents, there has not been any further noticeable change in the relations between Moldova and Russia for the past two years. As events in Kosovo and Georgia developed in 2008, Moldova sought to portray itself as more moderate and reasonable than Tbilisi. Moldova did not recognize Kosovo, emphasized the neutrality of the country, and ostentatiously announced that it had no need to seek NATO membership.²³⁶ Chisinau²³⁷ was rewarded in March 2008, when the Russian Parliament advocated recognizing the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, but recommended only a special status for Transnistria within Moldova.²³⁸ On August the 25, Russian president Medvedev met with Voronin in Sochi²³⁹ and reaffirmed Russia's dedication to seeking a peaceful resolution to the Transnistrian conflict. Voronin seemed again to be more favourable towards the Russian mediation and he told Medvedev that he had learned the lesson: "Thank God, during all these years ... we had enough brains and reserve not to allow a similar [the Georgian conflict] deterioration of situation."²⁴⁰

Although Voronin's rhetoric has been more violent against the Russian dominance in Transnistria, it does not seem that President Voronin has learned any lesson, as he is still trying to get a solution in place on the Russian premises.²⁴¹ As emphasised in the theory chapter, historical analogy is often used by decision-makers in order to justify their actions. Previous decisions or existing routines have a strong power when "similar" situations are being faced.²⁴² In the case of Moldova, Voronin's attitude is determined by the common communist past with Russia and the remembrance of the "good old days" when the Russian bureaucrats enjoyed many favours but also knew that lack of compliance would lead to sanctions. Besides, Voronin thought it would be easier to deal with Russia as it is a power he knows. Unfortunately, analogies often lead to failure as decision-makers are blind for the special circumstances that surround the actual situation.²⁴³

Within the last two years, the media has talked about a "package agreement" between Chisinau and Moscow. This time, though, the final approval of this unseen agreement should take place in

²³⁶ Whitmore, Brian (09.06.2008): "Moldova: Back in the Kremlin's Shadow", *Czech Business Weekly*, accessed 25.08.08 at www.cbw.cz

²³⁷ Chisinau is the capital of Moldova.

²³⁸ Hill (2008): p. 2.

²³⁹ Russian resort at the Black Sea.

²⁴⁰ Dyomkin, Denis (25.08.2008): "Russia warns Moldova against 'Georgian mistake'", *Reuters*, accessed 25.08.2008 at http://www.alertnet.org/the_news/newsdesk/LP640028.htm

²⁴¹ Bunce, Valerie (1999): "The Political Economy of Postsocialism", *Slavic Review*, vol.58, no.4, pp.756-793, accessed 25.01.09 at www.jstor.org/stable/2697198, pp. 776-777.

²⁴² Mouritzen (1998): pp. 94-95.

²⁴³ Mouritzen (2008): pp. 1-2.

the 5+2 format. Not many have seen the final version of this agreement, but according to the Moldovan expert Oazu Nantoi, it comes down to the fact that “the Kremlin can get more from Chisinau by ceding the ‘Transnistrian pawn’ than by supporting the regime run by the Russian puppet Igor Smirnov”.²⁴⁴

Nevertheless, not much has happened since. Russia has tried to get the two parties to meet but Smirnov has invoked several excuses not to meet with Voronin.²⁴⁵ Finally, the parties met on December 24 2008 in Tiraspol²⁴⁶ where Voronin presented Smirnov with a package of propositions which envisaged the status of Transnistria as an autonomous republic.²⁴⁷ Two days after the meeting, at a press conference, the Transnistrian ‘President’ declared that no solution to the Transnistrian conflict was possible without the recognition of the republic’s independence by Moldova.²⁴⁸ So, back to square one.

5.1.1 Summary of Moldova-Russia relations

As expected, Moldova chose, in the 1990s, to bandwagon Russia due to the relative strong capabilities that Russia possesses in the region and Moldova's total dependency on economic trade with Russia. From the second period of Voronin’s presidency, Moldova changed its strategy towards bandwagoning the EU and NATO. The initial extremely cautious rhetoric was replaced by less cautious formulations, as the power trend shifted. This is due to several reasons such as, the intervening of the Euro-Atlantic unipole in the resolution of the Transnistrian conflict by refraining Moldova to sign the Kozak memorandum as it saw that as a threat to safeguarding the borders to the Euro-Atlantic unipole. Furthermore, inaction from Russia’s part in solving the conflict and domestic opposition contributed to that. EU’s involvement in the conflict is also due to Voronin’s pro-Europe attitude and the concessions he made concerning PACE resolutions. Thus,

²⁴⁴ Nantoi, Oazu (22.08.2008): “A Lesson for the Republic of Moldova”, *Moldova Azi*, accessed 25.08.08 at <http://www.azi.md/news?ID=50764>

²⁴⁵ Necsutu, Madalin (10.10.2008): “SUA si UE exclude de Smirnov” (USA and EU excluded by Smirnov), *Ziua*, accessed 14.10.08 at <http://www.ziua.net/display.php?id=243809&data=2008-10-10>; “Voronin nu se gaseste cu Smirnov” (Voronin and Smirnov cannot agree on meeting), 08.11.2008, *Ziua*, accessed 12.11.08 at <http://www.ziua.net/display.php?id=245190&data=2008-11-08>

²⁴⁶ Tiraspol is the unrecognised capital of Transnistria.

²⁴⁷ The two presidents could not agree to continue the negotiations into the format 5+2 but instead agreed to at least continue them in the format 2+1 which includes Transnistria, Moldova and Russia.

²⁴⁸ “Igor Smirnov insistă: Diferendul transnistrean poate fi soluționat, doar dacă va fi recunoscută independența Transnistriei” (Igor Smirnov insists: The Transnistrian differentia can be resolved only if the independence of Transnistria will be recognized), 29.12.2008, *Moldova Azi*, accessed 02.01.09 at <http://www.azi.md/ro/story/789>

Moldova was already rewarded in 2001 by the inclusion in the ENP programme and in 2005 the EU and Moldova signed the Individual Action Plan.

At the same time, Russia has also projected its power through positive and negative incentives, mostly by negative incentives such as cutting gas supplies and refusing to handle Moldovan wine. As expected, Moldova has been inclined to be more sensitive to the power influence of the nearest power pole than to the Euro-Atlantic unipole. As an outsider to the Euro-Atlantic unipole, Moldova does not have to submit itself to the two institutions' reforms as the prospects of gaining membership are very distant. Conclusively, due to its position between two power poles Moldova is forced to balance between the two depending on the shifting in the balance of power.

5.2 Moldova-Romania relations

The relationship with Romania is important for the reason that they have a shared past and because Romania is a member of both the EU and NATO. This has been a help for the reorientation of Moldova's foreign policy towards the West, in the context of the change in the geopolitical situation with both the EU and NATO showing more interest in solving the conflict in Transnistria. Romania is expected to have an increasing role as a trade partner, as Moldova's trade with the CIS countries is decreasing.

Following the Hitler-Stalin understanding, the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact of 1939, and the subsequent Soviet annexation in 1940 of the "sacred" Romanian territories of Bessarabia and Bukovina²⁴⁹, the frontier between Romania and Soviet Moldova remained sealed for 50 years. Soviet Moldova and Socialist Romania barely cooperated during the era of communist regimes. The linguistic and ethnic policies of Russia in Moldova were shaped in a way which supported the policy of the building of a distinct Moldovan nation different from the Romanian one. Aware of the strong pro-Romanian sentiments of the population in Moldova, Moscow drastically limited and controlled cross-border economic and cultural contacts.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁹ Bukovina is the north-western part of the Principality of Moldavia which was one of the three Romanian historical provinces until the 18th century when they were split. Nowadays the province is split between Ukraine (Northern Bukovina) and Romania (Southern Bukovina). The Eastern part of the Principality known as Bessarabia was annexed by Russia in 1812 and is now a part of the Republic of Moldova together with the unrecognized Republic of Transnistria. Accessed 15.09.08 at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bucovina>

²⁵⁰ Prohntichi, Valeriu (2002): "Moldova-Ukraine-Romania: a regional portrayal of economy and trade", *South-East Europe Review for Labour and Social Affairs*, no. 02, accessed 15.09.08 at www.ceeol.com, p. 37.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Moldova faced two options: unity with Romania or independence while cultivating strong ties with Russia under the umbrella of CIS. In the period immediately after its independence, Moldova looked towards Bucharest and the country's linguistic law recognized "Moldovan-Romanian linguistic identity".²⁵¹ But when Moldova openly made its strategic move towards Moscow, relations with Bucharest worsened.²⁵²

One of the reasons for this turn towards Moscow was Romania's lack of interest in becoming "Great Romania" again. Actually, Romania was one of the first countries to recognize the independence of the new state.²⁵³ First of all, Romania was nearly as poor as Moldova and the economic burden of 5 million people would not have eased the democratic development of any of the two countries.²⁵⁴ Besides, Romanians had mixed feelings about Moldovans and vice versa. Many Romanians see the Moldovans as "Russified" and hold the condescending view that they are in need of assistance to overcome their cultural disabilities. This has been a source of growing resentment among the majority of Moldovans.²⁵⁵ Thus, Moldova chose to bandwagon Russia because it was the strongest and safest power pole in the region in the 1990s.

On the other side, Moldova realised that Romania wanted to keep good relations with Moscow and would not be able to support them especially when Russia gave clear signals that they wanted Moldova to remain in their sphere of influence.²⁵⁶ Last but not least, Moldovan political elites did not want to share power with Bucharest. Here we notice the analogy the political elites made between being a part of Romania and being a part of the Soviet Union when everything was dictated from Moscow.²⁵⁷ In this new context, it became important to reaffirm Moldovan separateness. The Moldovan Constitution declared that the national language of the Republic of

²⁵¹ Schmidtke & Chira-Pascanut (2008): p. 141.

²⁵² Volnitchi (2007): pp. 31-32.

²⁵³ Vitu (2004): p. 34.

²⁵⁴ Ibid. p. 38.

²⁵⁵ Fedor (1995): p. 8.

²⁵⁶ Cebotari, Svetlana (2007): *Politica externa a Republicii Moldova in contextual proceselor integrationiste: interese si prioritati* (Foreign Policy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of integration processes: interests and priorities), Chisinau: Universitatea de stat din Moldova (The State University of Moldova), pp. 80-81.

²⁵⁷ Mouritzen, Hans (05.09.2008): "Rusland-Georgien-Vesten: pas på de historiske analogier!", *Weekendavisen*, accessed 20.11.08 at www.diiis.dk.

Moldova is Moldovan.²⁵⁸ Fully integrated into the CIS economic system, Moldova did not consider other alternatives in foreign affairs for more than a decade.²⁵⁹

Consequently, in spite of the special historical relations, Romania's and Moldova's post-communist development has been undermined by tensions, which did not permit the conclusion of a bilateral political treaty for more than eight years. The two countries were unable to complete the draft document mainly because of Romania's insistence that the treaty should include a clause denouncing the 1939 Ribbentrop-Molotov pact which forced Romania to cede the province of Bessarabia to the Soviet Union.²⁶⁰

In the late 1990s, being preoccupied with its objectives of integration into the European Union and NATO, Romania seemed to neglect relations with Moldova. However, important measures of the government and civil society contributed to the rapprochement of Romania and Moldova in this period. The Bucharest government helped Moldova with non-reimbursable electric power, fuel and grain. At the same time many Moldovans came to study at Romanian universities.²⁶¹ After Voronin came to power, the relations between Moldova and Romania became even more tensed as the Moldovan government proposed, at the end of 2001, replacing the study of the history of Romania with that of the history of Moldova and making the Russian language compulsory.²⁶²

The Romanian government was, predictably, critical of the PCRM decision to make Russian language instruction compulsory. The Romanian Foreign Ministry called the decision "political interference in education and culture meant to give the Russian language a privileged status."²⁶³ The poor historical relationship between the two countries contributed to a concern among Moldovan-speakers that, eventually, the country would revert to a pre-1989 status quo in which

²⁵⁸ Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, article 13, 29 July 1994, accessed 05.12.2008 at <http://www.presedinte.md/const.php?lang=eng>

²⁵⁹ Munteanu (2005): p. 4.

²⁶⁰ Baleanu, V.G. (2000): "In the Shadow of Russia: Romania's Relations with Moldova and Ukraine", Camberley, UK: The Conflict Studies Research Centre, Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, p. 16.

²⁶¹ Sava, I.N. (2001): "Romanian-Russian Relations in the Context of the Euro-Atlantic Integration Process", Defence Academy of the United Kingdom: Conflict Studies Research Centre, p. 6.

²⁶² Way, Lucan (2002): "Pluralism by Default in Moldova", *Journal of Democracy*, no.13, pp. 127-141.

²⁶³ Radio Free Europe (18.01.2002), *RFE/RL Newsline*.

Russian was the dominant and preferred language of communication. This fear, combined with imminent EU restrictions on Moldovan travel, created a huge demand for Romanian passports.²⁶⁴ In 2001, the EU pressured the Romanian government to require an international passport for all Moldovan travellers. Moldovans began to worry that the Romanian border would once again be closed to them and began to apply for Romanian citizenship.²⁶⁵ This complies with the theoretical prediction that EU power projection is strong in the relation between a would-be insider which Romania was at that time, and an outsider.²⁶⁶

But after 2003, Voronin understood that Romania would be a help in the process of European integration. Moldova declared in 2005 it wanted to make the most of its “special relationship” with Romania, which was to become its interior voice and supporter in Brussels.²⁶⁷ Traian Basescu, which was elected Romanian president in 2004, also declared his support for Moldova’s European integration.²⁶⁸ However, after a period of stability, new tensions arose and culminated during 2007. Chisinau accused the government of Romania of “undermining Moldova’s independence”. One of the main accusations was that Romania did not recognize the Moldovan language as distinctive from the Romanian language.²⁶⁹

The Moldovan opposition leader, Iulie Rosca, stated that these declarations were a part of the coordinated policies of Moscow that does not want to lose influence over Moldova and intends to keep Moldova as far as possible from NATO and the EU, including from Romania.²⁷⁰ This chill in Romanian-Moldovan relations coincides with a decisive thaw in relations between Chisinau and Moscow, following Russia’s announcement on 29 November 2006 that it would end the economic blockade on Moldovan wine. Hence, President Voronin’s declaration with regard to Romania issued two days after the end of the Russian blockade can by no means be interpreted as an

²⁶⁴ Roper (2008): p. 89.

²⁶⁵ Socor, Vladimir (09.03.2007): “Moldova Refuses Mass Conferral of Romanian Citizenship”, *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 4, Issue 48, accessed 10.01.09 at [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=32576](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=32576)

²⁶⁶ Mouritzen & Wivel (2005): p. 194.

²⁶⁷ BBC Romanian (21.12.2008) :“Presedintele Voronin il lauda pe Traian Basescu” (President Voronin praises Traian Basescu), accessed 05.01.08 at http://www.bbc.co.uk/romanian/news/story/2005/12/051221_voronin_basescu.shtml

²⁶⁸ BBC Romanian (28.12.2005), Interview with the Romanian president, Traian Basescu, , accessed 05.01.09 at http://www.bbc.co.uk/romanian/news/story/2005/12/051228_interviu_basescu.shtml

²⁶⁹ “Romania-Moldova Relations Further Deteriorate: Two Romanian Diplomats Expelled from Moldova”, 12.12.2007, *Moldova.Org*, accessed 05.01.08 at <http://economie.moldova.org/news/romaniamoldova-relations-further-deteriorate-two-romanian-diplomats-expelled-from-moldova-80149-eng.html>

²⁷⁰ BBC Romanian (30.10.2007) :“Rusia intretine tensiunile dintre Romania si Moldova” (Russia entertains tensions between Romania and Moldova), accessed 05.01.09 at http://www.bbc.co.uk/romanian/moldova/story/2007/10/071030_rosca_rusia.shtml

isolated gesture.²⁷¹ This is not the first time when Romania has been obstructed by Russia to have an influence in Moldova. At the moment, Romania has no significant role in the conflict in Transnistria. In 1997 Russia and Ukraine declared themselves as “guarantor countries” in order to exclude the West and Romania from a meaningful role.²⁷² This shows how strong a power projection Russia has on Moldova.

In 2008 Moldova’s president showed again a friendly attitude following the Russian war in Georgia and the NATO summit in Bucharest in the fall 2008. Voronin said that he wanted good relations with often tense neighbour, Romania.²⁷³ It seems that Voronin was afraid of Russia’s new policy towards ex-Soviet states and wanted to bandwagon NATO, Romania being a gate for closer relations with NATO.²⁷⁴

But one can never count on Moldovan attitude. In the eve of the Parliamentary elections on the 5th of April 2009, several Romanian citizens have been negated access to Moldova in most of the cases without any explanation.²⁷⁵ It seems that Voronin is afraid that Romanians would want to join opposition forces and try to persuade Moldovans not to vote for the Communist Party.²⁷⁶

Moldova needs Romania’s support in the process of joining the European Union, as well as for solving a number of economic problems. There have been some fears that Romanian accession to the EU would have a negative impact on the foreign trade of Moldova, since trade is now governed by EU regulations.²⁷⁷ But this has not happened. On the contrary trade with Romania has increased. According to the Moldovan National Statistics Bureau (BNS), Romania is one of the

²⁷¹ Dura, George (2007): “EU membership gives Romania new opportunities in its relations with Moldova”, *EuroJournal.org – Journal of Foreign policy of Moldova*, issue 1, accessed 03.09.08 at www.ceeol.com, pp. 1-2.

²⁷² Socor, Vladimir (16.01.2006): “Putin-Yushchenko Joint Declaration on Moldova Criticized by Romania”, *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, vol.3, no.10, the Jamestown Foundation, accessed 25.08.08 at www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2370667

²⁷³ “We have absolutely nothing against the Romanian people and state. Romania is our neighbour, a member of the European Union. That is why, it would be senseless to craft any other policy than a friendly policy with a neighbouring state – a member of the European Union,” Voronin stressed. Roncea, Victor (05.03.2008): “Sperietura ruseasca” (Fear of the Russian), *Ziua*, accessed 24.09.08 at www.ziua.net/prt.php?id=234135&data=2008-03-05

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

²⁷⁵ M.R. (31.03.09): “Ministrul roman de Externe asteapta explicatii” (The Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs is waiting for explanations), *Jurnal de Chisinau*, accessed 31.04.09 at <http://www.jurnal.md/article/12901/>

²⁷⁶ Popa, Stela (31.04.09): “Regimul Voronin sfirseste disperat si jalnic” (The Voronin Regime will end up desperate and pitiful”, *Timpul*, accessed 31.04.09 at <http://www.timpul.md/article/2009/03/30/regimul-voronin-sf%C3%A2r%C5%9Fe%C5%9Fte-disperat-%C5%9Fi-jalnic>

²⁷⁷ Volnitchi (2007): p. 33.

main external economic partners and ranks second in terms of imports from Moldova (Table 5) and third in terms of exports to Moldova.²⁷⁸

Romania's membership of the EU is certainly a strategic advantage for Moldova. The identity of languages and the fact that Romania has already translated the whole bulk of the *acquis communautaire* would essentially facilitate the period for the community law implementation. Romania would also be a great partner in providing technical assistance and advisory services to Moldova in the accession process. Romania is playing a critical role in the emerging regional architecture of security and stability of the ECE²⁷⁹, therefore, Moldova's place and relevance would be a very good argument in shortening the road towards the EU.²⁸⁰ But this implies a significant and strategic reconsideration of the Moldovan-Romanian relations which Moldova has to consider.

5.2.1 Summary of Moldova-Romania relations

The Moldovan-Romanian relationship has been one of a cost-benefit nature. In the 1990's Moldova felt it had a relatively high security, as it was protected by Russia and as such they could allow themselves to show a more aggressive attitude towards Romania. Nevertheless, Moldova changed its attitude as they did not get the expected response from Russia and the relative security was getting lower. In the 2000's Moldova began a soft bandwagoning of Romania, realising that they could benefit from a change in trade towards the EU. From the theoretical point of view, Romania has an influence on Moldova because it is in the near environment and because Romania now is a part of the Euro-Atlantic unipole. Furthermore, each time Russia used negative sanctions, Moldova's relations with Romania drilled.

According to our theory, although Moldova is an outsider, the EU can still exert a big influence on the free movement of Moldovans. The EU has the possibility to punish Moldova through economic sanctions if Moldova does not comply with EU rules. As an EU member, Romania is one of Moldova's main trade partners and Moldova cannot afford to lose her. As Russia is a very unstable partner, all the time threatening with power exertion, Moldova needs to find alternatives, the best being a good relation with the EU countries and especially with Romania.

²⁷⁸ National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova, accessed 06.01.2009 at <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=en&idc=263&id=2193>, pp. 428-435.

²⁷⁹ East and Central Europe

²⁸⁰ Munteanu, Igor (2005): "Moldova and the EU Neighbourhood Policy", *IDIS Viitorul*, Chisinau: Institute for Development and Social Initiatives "Viitorul", accessed 10.01.2009 at www.viitorul.org, p. 14.

5.3 Moldova-Ukraine relations

Ukraine is an important neighbour for Moldova as Ukraine has the capacity to play a central role in maintaining stability in the region. Moldova has a direct border with only two states, Ukraine and Romania. As such the relationship between the two countries is expected to be influenced by their common border, not the least the one in Transnistria. Besides, Ukraine's common border with Transnistria means that Ukraine has an interest in finding a resolution to the conflict in the de facto state. Furthermore, the historical legacy is strong, as a large Ukrainian minority lives in Moldova and a large Moldovan minority in Ukraine. Last but not least, Ukraine is expected to play also an important role in Moldova's aspirations towards the EU and NATO membership.

Moldova's relationship with Ukraine is, just as the one with Russia and Romania, a complicated one. Historically, areas that were traditionally part of the region of Moldova or Romania²⁸¹, and that continue to be inhabited in part by ethnic Romanians/Moldovans, were annexed by Ukraine when the Moldovan SSR²⁸² was formed. The potential claims on these territories created tension between the two neighbours in the early years of Moldova's independence, when the Popular Front made public demands for restitution.²⁸³

Another potential problem is the presence of a large ethnic Ukrainian minority in Moldova. Ethnic Ukrainians have sided with the local ethnic Russians in the dispute over Moldova's language law, and many ethnic Ukrainians have supported the separatist effort in Transnistria. However, the government of Moldova took significant measures to meet the demands of the Ukrainian minority for cultural autonomy and appears to have met with substantial success in defusing opposition to Moldova's Language Law.²⁸⁴

As in the case of the Moldovan-Russian relation, the Moldovan-Ukrainian one was influenced substantially by the Transnistrian conflict. Given their own dispute with Russia concerning the status of Crimea, Ukrainians had little interest in supporting the presence of Russian military units

²⁸¹ Northern Bukovina, Herta, and southern Bessarabia

²⁸² Moldovan Socialist Soviet Republic.

²⁸³ Munteanu (1999): p. 30.

²⁸⁴ Fedor, Helen (1995): *Moldova: A Country Study*, Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress, accessed 02.09.08 at <http://countrystudies.us/moldova>

at its western frontier.²⁸⁵ However, as far as the process of political settlement of the Transnistrian conflict is concerned, Ukraine has had a controversial and unsteady stance. In the first years of the conflict, because of its separatist movements in Crimea, Ukraine had a very weak position and accepted totally the scenario imposed by Moscow authorities in dealing with the breakaway region.²⁸⁶ By the mid 1990s, once the stability came to Crimea and to Ukrainian-Russian relationship under president Kuchma, Kiev started a more active and independent policy and proposed its own scenario of settlement known as the “step by step” solution. De facto, that meant a gradual recognition of the separatist administration without a guarantee that a compromise would be reached.²⁸⁷

Furthermore, each time Chisinau moved closer to Moscow, Kiev started to support the separatist leaders. Also, the position of the Tiraspol’ administration got closer to Kiev, every time the Ukrainian authorities proposed a solution to the dispute. Boris Tarasiuk, ex-Foreign Minister of Ukraine, recognized that the Ukrainian authorities before Yushchenko became president, “established a contraband chain” and de facto covered the contraband through Transnistria.²⁸⁸ With no effective capabilities of the Moldovan state to defend its sovereignty, mercenaries from Russia and Ukraine²⁸⁹ were able to build up a powerful military springboard on the Transnistrian territory. The separatist enclave continues to rely heavily on various groups of politicians and oligarchs in both Ukraine and Russia, rising huge profits that come from drugs and human trafficking, arms-smuggling from the ex-USSR military hardware depots²⁹⁰.

This situation has somewhat changed after Yushchenko became president. Ukraine’s attitude took a new turn after the Orange Revolution in December 2004, as it moved closer to the West. Kiev presented its own plan for the settlement of the conflict in April 2005, known as “The Yushchenko Plan”, while advocating for the inclusion of the USA and the EU in the negotiation mechanism.

²⁸⁵ Ghiduleanov & Galusca (2005): p. 43.

²⁸⁶ Urse, Cristian (spring 2008): “Solving Transnistria: Any Optimists Left?”, *Connections: The Quarterly Journal*, Partnership for Peace Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes, p. 71.

²⁸⁷ Vitu (2004): p. 33.

²⁸⁸ Castle, Stephen (15.10.2005): “Over Tea and Biscuits, EU Plots to bring Order to Moldova’s Frontier”, *The Independent*, accessed 12.01.2009 at <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/over-tea-and-biscuits-eu-plots-to-bring-order-to-moldovas-frontier-510983.html>

²⁸⁹ UNA/UNSO (The Ukrainian National Assembly, Ukrainiska natsionalna assembleya, or UNA and its paramilitary wing, the Ukrainian Self Defence, Ukrainiska natsionalna samooborona, or UNSO) paramilitary organizations acted in 1992 on the same part with Russian military and Cossacks on behalf of the secessionist regime of Transnistria.

²⁹⁰ Rurac, Ira (2002): *Separatismul si impactul lui asupra procesului de edificare a statalitatii in republica Moldova* (Separatism and its impact on the process of edification of statehood in the Republic of Moldova), Chisinau: Institutul de Politici Publice, accessed 11.01.09 at <http://www.ipp.md/biblioteca.php?l=ro&idc=35>, pp. 29-30.

Ukraine went even further, and in December 2005 concluded the border agreement with Moldova that has been strongly condemned by both Moscow and Tiraspol.²⁹¹

The Yushchenko Plan's purpose was to create Transnistrian autonomy within Moldova. However the plan had many flaws. First of all, it failed to call for the withdrawal of Russian troops, ignoring their presence altogether. Secondly, it stipulated OSCE-supervised "democratic" elections in Transnistria in October 2005, despite the obvious absence of conditions for such elections there. Last but not least, it would empower Russia, Ukraine, and the OSCE, "possibly assisted by" the USA and the EU, to arbitrate disputes over interpretation/implementation of Moldova-Transnistria power-sharing arrangements - a system clearly weighted in Russia's favour, and in no way balanced by the codicil on "possible assistance."²⁹²

On the 9th of June 2005 Moldova's Parliament diplomatically stated that while it "highly appreciated Ukraine's offer, they clearly did not embrace the main tenets of the Plan", stating that it was in full support of future elections in Transnistria but at the exchange of the withdrawal of Russian troops from Transnistria by the end of 2005.²⁹³ The major shortcoming of the Yushchenko Plan was the lack of coordination of its initiatives with its Western allies and the short time table for implementing the plan.²⁹⁴

In many ways, the Moldovan-Ukrainian relationship has been influenced by each country's individual relationship with the great power Russia. Each time Russia has projected its power in a negative way the two countries have come closer to each other and have cooperated in getting EU support.

Such an example is the control of borders that plays a significant role in sustaining the Transnistrian regime. The European Union Border Assistance Mission was established on November 30, 2005 at the request of Moldovan and Ukrainian governments for assistance in creation of an 'international customs control arrangement and an effective border monitoring

²⁹¹ Urse (2008): p. 71.

²⁹² Socor, Vladimir (05.10.2006): "Ukraine in Search of a Regional Policy", *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 3 Issue 184, Washington DC.: Jamestown Foundation, accessed 11.01.09 at [http://www.jamestown.org/articles-by-author/?no_cache=1&tx_cablanntnewsstaffrelation_pi1\[author\]=132](http://www.jamestown.org/articles-by-author/?no_cache=1&tx_cablanntnewsstaffrelation_pi1[author]=132)

²⁹³ Lynch, Tammy (2005): "Yushchenko Undercutting Moldova in Transnistria?", *The NIS Observed: An Analytical Review*, vol. X, no.8, Boston University: Institute for the Study of Conflict, Ideology & Policy, accessed 12.01.2009 at <http://www.bu.edu/iscip/digest/vol10/ed1008.html#western>

²⁹⁴ Villarroel (2005): pp. 43-44

mechanism on the Transnistrian segment of the Moldova-Ukraine State border'.²⁹⁵ The objectives of the mission are to assist with the harmonisation of border management in line with the EU and more specifically "to help prevent smuggling, trafficking, and customs fraud, by providing advice and training to improve the capacity of the Moldovan and Ukrainian border and customs services".²⁹⁶

The mission is significant because it indirectly addresses the conflict by re-establishing Moldovan legal primacy over the whole of its territory – at least in the economic/business sector. And while the focus is clearly on the areas surrounding Transnistria, the additional benefit stems from increased Ukraine-Moldova co-operation and training by the EU.²⁹⁷

This spirit of Ukrainian support for the Moldovan authorities continued in the first half of 2006. While visiting Chisinau in June 2006, the Ukrainian foreign minister stated that restoring Moldova's territorial integrity and sovereignty is one of his country's foreign policy main tasks.²⁹⁸ Kiev's position was no longer as vocal after the Yanukovich government took power, and rumours about illegal trafficking to and from Transnistria have once again begun to spread. Nevertheless, the EU Border Assistance Mission remains in place, and its mandate has been extended up to November 2009.²⁹⁹

With a recent history dominated by government instability, Ukraine remains a key factor to the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict. However, this lack of stability prevents her from also being an actor in this game. The present government has again had to deal with issues related to Russian gas deliveries and will also have to deal with other bilateral challenges that will render Transnistria a marginal topic of discussion for Kiev.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁵ The Council of the European Union (20.12.2007): *European Union - Factsheet - EU Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine*, accessed 27.12.08 at

http://consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/07_1_205_Factsheet_BM_Moldova_Ukraine-update.pdf

²⁹⁶ European Commission (29.11.2005): *Solana and Ferrero-Waidner to Launch Border Assistance Mission in Odessa 30 November*, accessed 27.12.08 at http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/ceeca/news/ipO5_1488.htm

²⁹⁷ Pajalic, Marko (2008): *Capacity Building for Peace? The European Union's Impact on Security Sector Reform in Moldova and Georgia*, Vancouver: The University of British Columbia, p. 60.

²⁹⁸ Socor, Vladimir (26.06.2006): "Orange Two Government Can Meet the Transnistria Challenge", *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 3 Issue 126, Washington DC.: Jamestown Foundation, accessed 11.01.09 at

[http://www.jamestown.org/articles-by-author/?no_cache=1&tx_cablantnewsstaffrelation_pi1\[author\]=132](http://www.jamestown.org/articles-by-author/?no_cache=1&tx_cablantnewsstaffrelation_pi1[author]=132)

²⁹⁹ Urse (2008): p. 71.

³⁰⁰ Ibid. p. 72.

Ukraine has also an important role in Moldova's aspirations to the European integration. Ukraine's rapprochement with the EU can generate not only more significant advantages for Moldova, but also serious threats and challenges. First of all, the progress of Ukraine in European integration could have synergetic effects on the other states in the region, particularly on Moldova. One of the objectives of the European Neighbourhood Programme is, besides deepening the relationship with Ukraine, to contribute to the gradual integration of other Eastern European States into the European zone.³⁰¹ At the moment, Brussels intends to extend the Ukrainian model of creating the Free Trade Zone with the EU to the other Eastern European states. Consequently, the same principle could be applied in the case of Moldova.³⁰²

Nevertheless, the progress of Ukraine can also have some negative effects on Moldova. If the economic relations with the EU will deepen, then the Ukrainian economy will have to adjust to the European quality standards and overtake some of Moldova's EU markets. Another negative effect could be caused by preparation for accession/bilateral negotiations with the EU in the same format with Ukraine. This might be rather unfavourable to Moldova, as the process will last much longer. Ukraine is a large country, in which there are many diverging groups which may oppose further EU integration of Ukraine.³⁰³

Last but not least, Ukraine is one of the primary foreign economic partners of Moldova. Ukraine occupies the third place in Moldovan export, with its share in 2007 of 167, 8 million more than 50% compared with 2006, and the lead source of imported goods with deliveries amounting to 687 million, 32% more than in 2006.³⁰⁴

5.3.1 Summary of Moldova-Ukraine relations

The Moldovan-Ukrainian relationship has been determined by their geopolitical environment which is both dominated by Russia and the EU and as such a balance of power attitude has taken place. Each time Russia has sanctioned Ukraine with negative incentives its relationship with Moldova has been cold. On the other side, cooperation has dominated when the EU has used

³⁰¹ The European Commission (18.06.2007): *Revised EU-Ukraine Action Plan on Freedom, Security and Justice Challenges and strategic aims*, accessed 11.01.09 at http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/action_plans/ukraine_enp_ap_jls-rev_en.pdf

³⁰² Cenușa (2008): p. 1.

³⁰³ Munteanu (2005): p. 14.

³⁰⁴ National Statistics Bureau of the Republic of Moldova, *Moldova in Figures 2008*, accessed 16.01.09 at <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=en&idc=263&id=2195>

positive incentives. This is somehow in contrast to what the constellation theory predicts. According to the constellation theory, the relation between two outsiders should be rather immune to Euro-Atlantic stability projection.³⁰⁵ But it is not the case of Moldova and Ukraine on which particularly EU power projection has determined their pro-European orientation.

5.4 Concluding remarks for the near geopolitical level

The near geopolitical context has proved to have a major influence on the foreign development of Moldova with its relational polarity having Russia as the main actor and Romania and Ukraine as major pole attractions. Moldova is dependent on all three of them for different reasons but trade and the solution of the Transnistrian conflict are common for them all.

Moldova's foreign policy shows an element of continuity among the various "post-communist" administrations, in that it is balanced and pragmatic in pursuit of its national interest, seeking equilibrium between its East and West interests, given its geographical location.³⁰⁶ Geopolitics has been an important determinant of foreign policy under Voronin, just as it was in the previous regimes.

Moldova seems to have been more influenced by EU power projection than the constellation theory predicts. The Euro-Atlantic unipole constitutes an organisational superstructure that all outsiders have to relate to and although Russia has had a determining role in what happens in the region, the Euro-Atlantic unipole has not been as invisible as the theory predicts. Mouritzen and Wivel claim that "Euro-Atlantic stability projection has not had the slightest effect on the Transnistrian conflict".³⁰⁷ That is not true. As it has been shown in the Russian-Moldovan relations, there have been instances where the Euro-Atlantic unipole has intervened with success. This

³⁰⁵ Mouritzen & Wivel (2005): p. 194.

³⁰⁶ For example, Voronin's predecessor, speaking at the fifty-fifth session of the UN General Assembly in 2000, stated: "Being realistic, we realize that the security of the twenty first century will depend on how the big states succeed in understanding and cooperating with each other and on the degree of harmonization of their interests. At the same time, we would like this to take place under conditions of respect for small states' legitimate interests." For Lucinschi's speech, see <http://daccessods.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/NOO/633/24./PDF/NOO63324Pdf?OpenElement>.

³⁰⁷ Mouritzen & Wivel (2005): p. 198.

discrepancy is probably due to the fact that Mouritzen and Wivel only look at events that happened before 2001 and right after. In the mean time the situation has changed.

6. The domestic level

The chapter will be structured after Buzan's theory of the state and it will be dealt with three variables which are the idea of the state, the institutions of the state and the physical base of the state. The idea of the state comes from two main sources - a nation and its organising ideologies. It is expected that Moldova's split identity between the Soviet and the Romanian roots will play an important role. Furthermore, communism was a very strong ideology during the Soviet Union and it still is in many ways especially since the Communist party has taken power. The institutional expression of the state comprises the entire apparatus of the government, including its executive, legislative and judicial institutions. The institutions of the state are very close connected to the organising ideologies. The focus will be on the ruling government and the Communist majority and it will be looked at in relation to the opposition parties. Other institutions will be touched upon in order to show the weakness of these and the authoritarian grip on power. The physical base of the state comprises its population and territory, including all of the natural resources and man-made wealth.³⁰⁸ The lack of natural resources and the existence of almost all heavy industry in Transnistria together with weak military capabilities will be emphasised. The shadow of the past will be incorporated in the analysis, where relevant.

6.1. The idea of the state

The kind of nation and the idea of a national identity will be emphasized as having explanatory power for how Moldova behaves. National identity has the power to either reinforce or undermine the state. Moldova can be seen as a multination-state, according to Buzan, as it comprises two or

³⁰⁸ Buzan (1991): pp. 57-96.

more complete nations within its boundaries.³⁰⁹ Nationality issues pose a constant source of instability. Lacking a natural unifying principle, Moldova has, since the independence of the country, been threatened by dismemberment, separatism and political interference. Thus, a weak idea of the state together with changing ideologies, such as democracy and communism, have created a fragile political foundation which is expected to reflect in the altering external behaviour. Ideologies are connected with the historical legacy or path dependency and they have been used in the Moldovan domestic politics to make analogies to past communist legacy.³¹⁰ As the idea of the state and the institutions are close connected, it can create confusion. That's why I have decided only to look at the national identity and the kind of nation under this section, while ideologies will be analysed in relation to the state's institutional structures.

Moldova's history of shifting borders and political alliances has long been "reflected in the overlapping situational identities of [its] Bessarabia[n] inhabitants,"³¹¹ including their descendants in present day Moldova. It is due to these complex shifts in borders and political allegiances that it is difficult for modern Moldovans to look back towards a sole political identity. As King argues, "There is little in history to which the Moldovans can stake a unique propriety claim. Moldova's most prominent historical figures are also those of the Romanians, and the territory of the present-day Republic has not existed within a truly independent Moldovan state since 1525."³¹²

In order to understand modern Moldovan identity, it is important to examine Moldova's contemporary history. Following the Russo-Turkish war of 1806-12 and the conclusion of the Treaty of Bucharest, the Moldovan area between the Prut and the Nistru (Dniester) Rivers (known as Bessarabia) was annexed by Russia in 1812. Russia began a policy of assimilation of the local population, and from 86 percent at the time of incorporation, the Moldovans were reduced by almost 40 percent and only made up 14 percent of the urban population.³¹³ In early 1918 Romanian troops crossed the Prut River and occupied Bessarabia under the pretext of restoring order along its borders after the fall of the tsar.³¹⁴ Faced with a choice between Moscow and Bucharest, the Bessarabian National Assembly voted for union with the Kingdom of Romania in March 1918 and

³⁰⁹ Buzan (1991): pp. 75-76

³¹⁰ Wiener (2004): p. 1.

³¹¹ King (2000): p. 12.

³¹² Ibid p. 12.

³¹³ Roper (2008): pp. 80-81.

³¹⁴ King, Charles (1994): "Moldovan Identity and the Politics of Pan-Romanianism", *Slavic Review*, vol.53, no.2, accessed 17.12.2008 at <http://dacoromania.org>, pp. 346-348.

in December joined several former Austro-Hungarian territories inside the newly enlarged borders of greater Romania.

The integration of the Romanian-speaking population of Bessarabia raised problems far more difficult than those encountered in other regions. The population was overwhelmingly rural, mostly illiterate and not very mobile. The transition from the Tsarist-type of local government to the Romanian-type of centralized modern state with a corrupt administration alienated the Bessarabians, many of whom felt that they were rather occupied by their alleged brothers than united with them.³¹⁵ Furthermore, Bessarabia had missed the previous unification of the Romanian regions into the first Romanian state, as they were already under Russian occupation, and thus had not such strong feelings of being Romanian as the rest of the Romanian provinces. The Romanian-speaking population of Bessarabia continued to consider itself as Moldovan.³¹⁶

In 1924, Soviet authorities created the Moldovan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (MASSR) by combining Transnistria with territory in present-day Ukraine. The MASSR served as a propaganda vehicle and base for Soviet activities in Romanian-controlled Bessarabia.³¹⁷ In 1939, Germany and the Soviet Union signed the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, which included secret protocols that conceded the Soviet Union Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina. The Soviet Socialist Republic of Moldova was formed by joining Bessarabia with six counties that had constituted the MASSR.³¹⁸ Due to the Soviet immigration policy, the percentage of ethnic Russians in Moldova almost doubled from 6.7 percent in 1941 to 13 percent by 1989, being the highest growth of ethnic Russians in a Soviet republic.³¹⁹ As elsewhere in the Soviet Union, ethnic Russians enjoyed disproportionate representation in important political and economic institutions. One major outcome of the Soviet industrialisation was that skilled industrial and technical jobs were often created in such a way that they could not be filled by natives, inducing a continuous net inflow of Russian speakers into Soviet Moldova.³²⁰

³¹⁵ Hitchens, Keith (1996): *Romania 1866-1947*, Bucharest: Humanitas, pp.298-300, 363-379.

³¹⁶ Petrescu, Cristina (2005): "Contrasting/Conflicting Identities: Bessarabians, Romanians, Moldovans" in *Nation-building and contested identities: Romanian and Hungarian case studies*, Iasi: Polirom, accessed 17.12, 2008 at <http://dacoromania.org>, pp. 2-3.

³¹⁷ Villarroel (2005): pp. 15-16.

³¹⁸ Constantiniu (1997): pp. 425-428.

³¹⁹ Munteanu, Igor (1999): p. 7.

³²⁰ Munteanu (1999):pp. 7-10.

Throughout this period, the Soviet leadership encouraged the creation of a distinct Moldovan nation in order to emphasize close cultural ties to Russia. The local leaders began creating a distinct Moldovan language in order to reinforce the idea of two separate nations. As part of the Russification policy, the alphabet for the Romanian language in Moldova was changed back to Cyrillic in 1939, and Russian once again became the language of interethnic communication, higher education, and public life.³²¹

As elsewhere in the Soviet Union, reforms introduced by Mikhail Gorbachev in the mid-1980s provided an opportunity for the Moldovan titular majority to express its desire for greater cultural freedoms and its resentment over Russification policies.³²² In the beginning, the reform movement was not organized primarily around the issue of identity or ethnicity, as several ethnic groups had joined the Moldovans to express their claims. Rather, the division in the society was between established political elites and those who aspired to power in order to pursue a pro-reform agenda.³²³

In August 1989, the Moldovan Supreme Soviet proclaimed Moldovan, using the Latin alphabet, as the state language. At the same time, the Popular Front emerged as a nationalist movement which had a more pro-Romanian agenda. With the adoption of the language law, fault lines began to develop within the Moldovan national movement. For many ethnic Moldovan intellectuals, the adoption of the language law represented a historical affirmation of the “true identity” of Moldova’s ethnic majority.³²⁴ This shift in focus and the exclusive elevation of the Moldovan language created an immediate response from the Russian-speaking community who connected the adoption of the language law with the union with Romania. The promotion of the Moldovan language threatened elites, especially in Transnistria. Ethnic Gagauzians, Ukrainians and Bulgarians united with ethnic Russians to form the International Movement for Unity. Factory strikes and demonstrations against the language law were organised. As King argues, Transnistrians were the group most opposed to the changes because it was a clear sign of the shifting balance of political power from Russian-speakers to Romanian-speakers.³²⁵

³²¹ Skvortsova (2002), in Kolstø, p. 173.

³²² Roper (2008): p. 82.

³²³ Kolstø, Pål, Andrei Edemsky & Natalya Kalashnikova (1993): “The Dniester Conflict: Between Irredentism and Separatism”, *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 45, Nr. 6, Taylor & Francis, p. 975.

³²⁴ King (1994): p. 351.

³²⁵ King (2000): pp. 178-208.

Despite the widely predicted union with Romania, this was not materialised. The emerging ex-Soviet Moldova was more inclined to forge its own identity as an independent state.³²⁶ The first president, Mircea Snegur, realised that the only way to hold together the many ethnic minorities in Moldova, was by emphasizing the “Moldovan” national identity and the Moldovan language as separated from the Romanian one, in this way portraying himself and his government as the guarantors of Moldovan independence and territorial integrity.³²⁷

Surveys carried out by William Crowther have shown that less than 10 percent of the ethnic Moldovan population supported union with Romania in the short or long term and, when given a choice between the ethnic tags “Romanian” and “Moldovan”, some 87 percent of Moldovan/Romanian-language speakers chose the latter.³²⁸ This can be seen as a consequence of the analogy the Moldovans made with the period between the two world wars when they were a part of Romania and felt very alienated from the rest of the population.

Although there still is a pan-Romanian bloc supported by the small creative intelligentsia, most of Moldovans support an independent state and a special “Moldovan identity”. The successive governments have been commended by international observers for creating a civic, inclusive state rather than the ethnically defined nation-states favoured by the country’s neighbours.³²⁹ The multiethnicity of Moldova is even emphasized in the country’s foreign policy concept from 1995.³³⁰ The ethnical groups of Moldova can be seen in the figure below.

³²⁶ Ibid. p. 20.

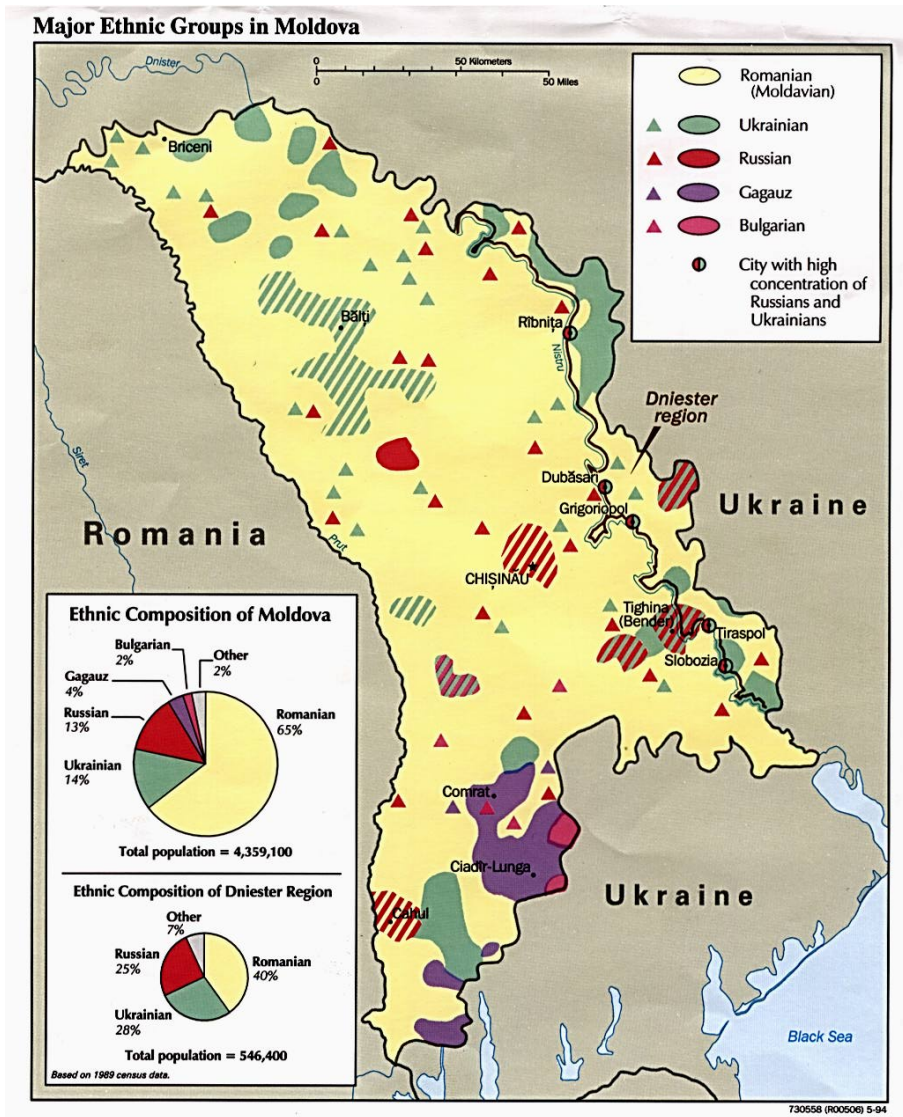
³²⁷ Villarroel (2005): p. 22.

³²⁸ King (1994): pp. 353-357.

³²⁹ King (2000): p. 169.

³³⁰ Ibid. p. 170. This policy has been determined by the demographic conditions, according to King. In the 1990s, the villages remained largely Moldovan while the major cities had a large Slavic population. Moldovans formed 80.2 percent of the rural population, but only 46.3 percent of the urban

Figure 3: Ethnical groups in Moldova³³¹



Thus, in accordance with the constellation theory, the past hegemon has important consequences for non-pole powers. However, in contrast to the constellation theory, I believe the shadow of the past is no less important than present-day political realities in determining, how Moldova will

³³¹ <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/commonwealth/moldovaethnic.jpg>

redefine its domestic and external identity.³³² What is important in the context of Moldova is that the past hegemon, Russia, still has a major influence on the country because of Russia's geopolitical interests in the region. Negative historical experiences, such as the Russian/Soviet authoritarian rule are still reflected in the attitude of the successor, Russia. Moldova is a direct descendent of Soviet Union and as such, there have been many dependency elements that have contributed to the incapability of Moldova to come out of Russia's sphere of influence.³³³ Many Central and East European states have had the possibility to balance Russia with the EU and NATO because Russia's power projection has been weaker in relation to these countries.

6.1.1 Summary of the idea of the state

In many ways the tension between state and nation is for Moldova the weakest and most vulnerable link. According to our theoretical assumptions, unless the idea of the state is firmly planted in the minds of the population, the state as a whole has no secure foundation. Equally, unless the idea of the state is firmly planted in the "minds" of other states, the state has no secure environment and no foreign manoeuvre space.³³⁴ Moldova fits very well this description. The split Moldovan identity has been undermining the state, making it vulnerable to separatism and to external interference in domestic politics. The multiethnicity of Moldova has impeded the successive governments to have a clear orientation towards East or West.

The analogy of the language law with the union of Moldova with Romania made the Russian-speaking minorities revolt and the Transnistrian conflict erupt. Furthermore, the incompetent and arrogant treatment of the Romanian authorities between the two World Wars and immediately after independence, made many Moldovans wish independence and a separate "Moldovan" identity from the Romanian one. This confirms the theoretical expectations that past analogies help decision makers shape their policies.³³⁵

6.2. The institutions of the state

According to Buzan, "the institutions of the state comprise the entire machinery of government, including its executive, administrative and judicial bodies, and the laws, procedures and norms by

³³² Ibid p. 3.

³³³ Katchanovski, Ivan (2006): *Cleft Countries. Regional Political Divisions and Cultures in Post-Soviet Ukraine and Moldova*, Stuttgart: *ibidem*-Verlag, pp. 39-44.

³³⁴ Buzan (1991): pp. 77-78.

³³⁵ Khong (1992): pp. 26-30.

which they operate".³³⁶ As argued in the previous section, the idea of the state in Moldova is weak. In many ways, the institutions of the state can compensate for weaknesses in the idea of the state. I will focus mostly on the government's role as an institution which has changed since the Communists came to power, having gained more and more power transforming itself into an authoritarian regime. The government will be seen in comparison to the institution of the Parliament where the relation between the Communist majority and the opposition parties plays a significant role. Other institutions will also be looked upon, the purpose being to show the weakness and corruption that are connected with the Moldovan institutions.

As Buzan argues, organising ideologies are very close related to the machinery of the government as it is the government that implements them.³³⁷ Throughout the 1990s, the Moldovan political scene was very volatile with parties splitting in many different fractions and frequent government changing. (Figure 4) There were no clear ideologies, the closest to an ideological dividing line being the identity question.³³⁸

Figure 3: Elections in Moldova 1990-2005

2005	*	□	○	▼
2004				
2003				▼
2002				
2001	*	□	○	
2000				
1999		□	□	▼
1998	*	□		
1997		□		
1996			○	
1995				▼
1994	*	□		
1993				
1992		□		
1991		□	○	
1990	*	□		

* Parliamentary elections
□ Presidential elections
○ Change of government
▼ Local elections
Source: Compiled by the author from different sources
Source: Compiled by the author from different sources
different sources

³³⁶ Ibid. pp.82-83.

³³⁷ Buzan (1991): p. 83.

³³⁸ Villarroel (2005): pp. 21-22.

In this period, Moldovan leaders were caught between a Romanian-leaning nationalist movement on one side and pro-Russian forces on the other. In the early 1990s, for example, pro-Romanian nationalists refused to support Snegur's efforts to concentrate presidential authority because of his opposition to Romanian unification. President Lucinschi³³⁹ faced also strong opposition from both nationalists and pro-Russian communists. In response to Lucinschi's efforts to increase presidential power, these disparate groupings combined to transform Moldova into a parliamentary system.³⁴⁰

Nonetheless, the emergence of a highly organised and cohesive Communist Party (PCRM) led to notable regime closure despite the establishment of a parliamentary regime. The overwhelming victory of PCRM in the 2001 Parliamentary elections with 51, 7 percent of the votes, was due to several factors.³⁴¹ Collapse of the Moldovan economy and continual infighting among the parties and leaders associated with the government, led to support for alternatives in the personification of the Communists. They attracted mostly older people who were badly placed to withstand the transition and nostalgic for the previous regime. The Russian-speaking population gave them their unconditioned support. Finally, PCRM was able to maintain a greater level of organisational cohesion than its competitors.³⁴² The Voronin administration used its dominance and cohesiveness to gain virtually unilateral control over state media and the judiciary, both of which had maintained autonomy in the 1990s by playing off competing political parties against one another.³⁴³

There was consistent evidence of repeated pressure on the free media, with closures of critical journals and intimidation against critical journalists in the state-run television and radio company.

³³⁹ Moldova's president 1996-2001.

³⁴⁰ Way, Lucan (2005): "Authoritarian State Building and the Sources of Regime Competitiveness in the Fourth Wave. The Cases of Belarus, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine", *World Politics*, vol. 57, no. 2, p. 253.

³⁴¹ <http://www.parties-and-elections.de/moldova2.html>

³⁴² March, Luke (2005): "The Moldovan Communists: from Leninism to Democracy", *EuroJournal.org – Journal of Foreign Policy of Moldova*, issue 9, accessed 03.11.08 at www.cceol.com, pp. 11-13.

³⁴³ Roper (2007): pp. 278-279.

³⁴⁴ Promises for reforms were made but they have been repeatedly postponed. In the judiciary sphere, Voronin increased his powers of appointment over new judges. Furthermore, he dismissed the human rights ombudsman and attempted to limit the powers of the Constitutional Court.³⁴⁵ The role of the state in the economy continues to be substantial, and therefore maintaining good relations with leading politicians, remains critical to carrying on high level business activities.³⁴⁶

The triumph of the Party of Moldovan Communists underscores the need to realize the importance of the relationship between the historical and cultural context of a country, especially the "legacies of the past" approach.³⁴⁷ An example of the influence of path dependency on Moldova occurred at the Fourth Congress of the Party of Moldovan Communists in April 2002, when President Voronin talked about the "rebirth of socialism" and the historic mission of the Communist Party of Moldova, the only country in Europe that returned the Communists to power.³⁴⁸ This is in accordance with Khong who argues that policy makers form their analogies leaning on their personal experiences and most of all on the impact of major historical events. Voronin used the 1990s political chaos and the "old good times" in order to get elected.³⁴⁹

As Khong emphasizes, most policy makers have such trust in their analogies that they use them even when defects have been pointed to them. Some of the most controversial propositions Voronin had, was the amending of the constitution to declare Moldovan as the state's official language so that Russian *de facto* became Moldova's second official language, thus making the study of Russian obligatory in all schools as well as replacing the study of the *History of the Romanians* with that of the *History of Moldova*.³⁵⁰ These reforms were highly controversial largely

³⁴⁴ The government's control over the electronic media was particularly evident in local elections of 2003, when state-run media was openly biased in favour of PCRM candidates, violating the electoral code. See March (2005): p. 16.

³⁴⁵ Freedom House (2006): *Nations in Transit 2006: Moldova*, accessed 20.03.09 at <http://www.freedomhouse.hu/pdfdocs/moldova2006.pdf>

³⁴⁶ Soimaru, Vasile (26.03.2009): Guvernarea comunista – mare spalatoare de bani publici (Communist Government – big public money laundry), *Timpul*, accessed 27.03.09 at <http://www.timpul.md/article/2009/03/26/guvernarea-comunist%C4%83-mare-sp%C4%83toare-de-bani-publici>

³⁴⁷ The historical legacy or path dependency of a country's past has an important effect on the foreign policy behaviour of a state. Mouritzen & Wivel (2005): pp. 38-39.

³⁴⁸ Conant, Eve (07.05.2001): "Moldova's Red Revival. A Miserable Former Soviet Republic Decides That Maybe The Old Days Weren't As Bad As It Thought They Were", *Newsweek*, accessed 13.12.08 at: <http://www.newsweek.com/id/79301/page/1>

³⁴⁹ Khong (2002): pp. 32-33.

³⁵⁰ March (2005): p. 15.

due to the unresolved question of Moldova's national identity and because they were seen as central gains of the national independence movement.³⁵¹

Under the leadership of the pro-Romanian and pro-Western Christian Democratic People's Party (CDPP) and its leader, Iurie Rosca, rallies were held almost daily in Parliament Square in the centre of Chisinau from January 9 to April 29, 2002. The government tried to oppress the demonstrations by suspending the CDPP for one month and lifting the parliamentary immunity of Rosca. Further pressures came from journalists which threatened to go on strike because of the widespread censorship. The growing domestic opposition and pressure from the EU and the Council of Europe which could lead to diplomatic isolation, made the government agree on a compromise solution proposed by PACE.³⁵²

By mid-2002 the Moldovan Communists recognized the constraints of their own economic vulnerability created by 75 million dollars of Eurobond debt. With conditional support from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, Moldova was able to negotiate debt restructuring with its main Western creditors, in this way avoiding a financial disaster and managing to stave up its foreign exchange position.³⁵³

Consequently, the economy began to improve, growing by 6.2 percent in 2001 and approximately 7 percent in 2002.³⁵⁴ The PCRM benefited both from the economic upturn and from the improvement in governance which resulted from its control over both parliament and the presidency. Support for the Communists increased following the improvement of the public perception of conditions. Most striking was the support from the ethnic Moldovans, which increased from 23.5 percent in early 2001 to 47.7 percent in April of the following year. One

³⁵¹ Quinlan (2004): p. 488.

³⁵² The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Under PACE Resolution 1280, adopted on April 24, 2002, the CDPP would end its demonstrations. In return, the government agreed to a number of specific and overall measures such as suspending criminal proceedings against the leaders of CDPP, refraining from further lifting of parliamentary immunity, and maintaining a moratorium on the status and the obligatory study of the Russian language and on making changes to the history curriculum. The resolution also called for freedom of the media, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, the autonomy of local authorities, and the independence of the judiciary. More details at PACE, Democratic Institutions, res. 1280, April 24, 2002, accessed 14.02.09 at <http://assembly.coe.int/Documents/AdoptedText/ta02/ERES1280.htm>.

³⁵³ Crowther (2007): p. 282.

³⁵⁴ Nikulina, Elena & Neil Parison (2003): "Moldova: Public Economic Management Review", Report no. 25423-MD, Washington D.C: The World Bank, p. 5, accessed 18.02.09 at http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2003/04/23/000094946_03040504054182/Rendered/PDF/multi0page.pdf

additional reason for this increase in Moldovan support was the repaying of pension arrears in this way reversing the drop in living standards in Moldovan villages that were populated by a majority of ethnic Moldovans.³⁵⁵

At the parliamentary elections in 2005, Voronin and his party gained 56 seats which were enough for the Communists to govern but they needed 62 for electing the president. In order to re-elect Voronin the Communists needed 6 seats which they got by striking a deal with some of the opposition parties. The Communists' success in these elections was first of all due to the steady increase in the economy but also to the recognition of the electoral salience of the "European issue".

Having cut relations with Russia, Voronin adopted a new strategy in dealing with Russian manipulation by emphasizing the protection of the Moldovan national interests. The Moldovan government, in response to the possibility of a Russian threat, expelled a number of Russian citizens accused of interfering in the election process. Predictably, the Russian State Duma responded by calling for imposition of economic sanctions.³⁵⁶ This triggered reactions from important Western circles which mediated a consensus between Voronin and a part of the opposition in order to re-elect Voronin as president. Rosca, which came under intense domestic criticism for his support of the Communists, argued that he had acted after advising with foreign supporters of democracy, including the Presidents of Ukraine and Georgia, and with the intent of supporting Voronin's opposition to Moscow.³⁵⁷

The strategic shift undertaken by the PCRM in the context of the 2005 elections reshaped Moldova's political environment. By moving away from Moscow and committing itself to a pro-European course, the PCRM consolidated its base of popular support. Much of the agenda agreed upon before the presidential vote was enacted in the course of 2005. Relations with both Romania and Ukraine warmed and the EU emerged as the central priority of the government.³⁵⁸

³⁵⁵ Crowther (2007): p. 283.

³⁵⁶ Smith (2005): p. 3.

³⁵⁷ Botan, Igor (07.04.2005): "Presidential elections", *Democracy and Governing in Moldova, e-journal*, III year, no. 48, Chisinau: ADEPT, accessed 26.01.09 at <http://www.e-democracy.md/en/comments/political/200504071/>, p. 2.

³⁵⁸ *Ibid.* p. 6.

This redirection was, tactically, immanent for keeping the support, as the proportion of Russophones in the Moldovan population was decreasing. Any loss of enthusiasm among the Russian minority was counterbalanced by increased support from Moldovans.³⁵⁹ The opposition parties and leaders were in the words of Crowther “de-legitimated” because Voronin “stole” the EU orientation, which was the leading issue of the opposition. Divided among themselves, associated with corruption, and compromised by the past political manoeuvring, none of the opposition leaders was well positioned to assume leadership of the country.³⁶⁰

Nevertheless, recent events have determined a turn of the electorate away from the Communists. First of all, the Communists are in a dilemma: if they seek rapprochement with Europe, they will be required to enact more reforms and their popular support is likely to decrease.³⁶¹ Besides, any open move towards Europe risks a renewed involvement from Russia either by economic punishment or by involvement in the parliamentary elections, which will be held on April 5, 2009.³⁶² Thus, the Communists are torn. They want energy security with the help of Romania, a wealthier European future and to still be on good terms with the Kremlin. This indecisiveness has been reflected in the opinion polls conducted at the end of 2008. Up to half the total number of respondents said they had not yet decided who to vote for. PCRM can count on 23 to 30 percent of the vote, while three opposition parties are likely to gain the minimum 6 percent required to win parliamentary representation.³⁶³

The opposition parties have been able to find capable people to run in the elections and this has, together with the Communists’ indecisiveness and the many mistakes the PCRM has done lately, led to the electorate moving away from the Communists. An increase in pro-Romanian voters has been felt recently. This was proven by the thousands of people who came to give the last honours to the most respected Moldovan poet Grigore Vieru³⁶⁴, a fighter for the union with Romania. It is,

³⁵⁹ Crowther (2007): p. 286.

³⁶⁰ Ibid. pp. 288-289.

³⁶¹ Lupan, Vlad (22.01.2009): “The Ukrainian Gas Crisis Is Over; Moldova Now Feels the Heat”, *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, accessed 23.01.09 at www.rferl.org/articleprintview/1373284.html

³⁶¹ “Moldova’s Most Popular Politicians are Voronin, Chirtoaca and Lupu”, *Moldova Azi*, 16.12.2008, accessed 16.02.09 at <http://www.azi.md/en/story/603>

³⁶² Ibid

³⁶³ Ibid

³⁶⁴ Grigore Vieru (1935-2009) was one of the most beloved Moldovan poets who fought for the reinstatement of the Romanian language. When Moldova proclaimed its independence in August 1991 Vieru was prominent among those who argued, in vain, for the unification of Moldova and Romania. Nevertheless, he was widely recognised as the republic’s greatest poet and the day of his funeral was declared a day of national mourning.

though, hard to say whether the opposition has the capacity to win the elections, due to the split imposed by unfair law³⁶⁵, the denigration campaign launched by the Communists and the limited access to the media.³⁶⁶

6.2.1 Summary of the institutions of the state

According to our theory, the stability of the institutions of the state is important for the security of a state. Lack of support from the population and other internal issues can be a threat to the cohesion of the state in its external behaviour. In the case of Moldova, the weak idea of the state combined with weak institutions in the 1990s, created a weak governmental authority which showed split in the external orientation and led to the country being vulnerable to both internal and external threats, personified by the Transnistrian conflict and the Russian domination.

Furthermore, Buzan argues that the weakness in the idea of the state can be compensated by strong institutions. The institutions are also very close connected to the ideologies of the state, since it is the institutions that put the organising ideologies into action. This can be confirmed for Moldova, as the change in government in 2001 has led to a more stable internal situation. The Communists' strong ideology combined with their control of both the institutions of the state and the opposition has brought more welfare and consequently the support of the population. On the other side, it has also brought a decline in the democratic progress of Moldova.

Last but not least, national and international politics interact and governments have the tendency to interfere in each other's domestic politics. This is also the case of Moldova, where Russia has sanctioned Moldova and interfered in Moldovan politics, as soon as Moldova showed a wish to change its orientation towards Europe.

6.3. The physical base of the state

The physical base of the state comprises its population and territory, including all of the natural resources and man-made wealth contained within its borders.³⁶⁷ It is the most concrete component of the state and threats to physical objects are necessarily more direct and obvious than the ones to

³⁶⁵ Parties have to gain minimum 6 percent of votes in order to gain seats in the Parliament.

³⁶⁶ Bogatu, Petru (11.02.2009): "The fellowship of the List", *Moldova Azi*, accessed 19.02.09 at www.azi.md/en/print-story/1308

³⁶⁷ Buzan (1991): p. 90.

ideas and institutions. The territory's seizure both by other states and by internal secessionist movements can affect the security and implicitly the foreign policy of a state. Some regions are more important than others because of resources, the cultural identity of occupants or other strategic or economic reasons.³⁶⁸ The Moldovan population living in Transnistria and the fact that most of the heavy industry lies in the separatist region, make this piece of land of very strategic and economic importance for Moldova. Furthermore, the lack of natural resources makes Moldova totally dependent on energy import from Russia. (Table 4)

Another threat for a state is migration in or out of the territory. In Moldova, the most acute threat comes from the migration of most of the well educated people to the EU and Russia. The dispute over boundaries can also create a threat for the state and a foreign policy issue. In this case, disputes with Ukraine over the Transnistrian border are expected to be important.

We could say that the physical base of Moldova, in many ways is very weak, both with concern to natural resources, man-made goods and population. I comment on each of these issues. Among the most pressing difficulties facing the republic's economy is a near total lack of energy resources. (Table 6) Moldova's own primary energy sources consist of small hydroelectric power plants on the Nistru River at Dubasari and Camenca (Kamenka, in Russian); minor thermal electric power plants at Balti, Ribnita (Rybnitsa, in Russian), Ungheni (Ungeny, in Russian), and Chisinau; and firewood, all of which combine to meet only 1 percent of domestic needs.³⁶⁹

Table 6: Energy and fuel balance of Moldova (thousand tonnes of coal equivalent)

	2006
Internal sources total	131
Liquid fuel	10
Solid fuel	112
Hydroelectricity	9
Import	3082
Liquid fuel	862
Solid fuel	150
Gas	1716
Electricity	354
Export	6
Internal consumption	3242

³⁶⁸ Buzan (1991): p. 92.

³⁶⁹ Fedor (1995): pp. 5-6.

Another source of problems is the fact that almost 90 percent of power and 100 percent of power transformers are produced in politically troubled Transnistria. In addition, Transnistria's adversarial "government" has frequently disrupted the flow of fuels into Moldova from Russia and Ukraine. In 1994 Moldova was dependent on Russia for 90 percent of the fuel needed for its electric-power generation plants: diesel oil (88,000 tons), gasoline (65,000 tons), fuel oil (365,000 tons), and natural gas (2.8 billion cubic meters). By March 1995, Moldova owed Russia US\$232 million for fuel, with half of this amount owed by Transnistria.³⁷⁰

Next to Georgia, of the CIS countries Moldova pays the highest price for gas. (Table 3) In exchange for price rises spread out until 2011, Chisinau allowed Gazprom to take substantial parts of the Moldovan gas market. Moldova can be seen as a case study of Russia's strategy for taking control of the energy sectors in ex-Soviet states. Russia's main aim is to make these countries economically dependent and therefore allow Russia to gain important political influence.³⁷¹ (Tables 7 & 8)

Table 7: Gas sales structure to the CIS and Baltic States in 2007, bcm

Country name	Sales volume
Ukraine	59.2
Belarus	20.6
Kazakhstan	10.0
Lithuania	3.4
Moldova	2.7
Armenia	1.9
Georgia	1.2
Latvia	1.0
Estonia	0.9
Total	100.9

Source : Gazprom,
<http://eng.gazpromquestions.ru/?id=4>

Source : Gazprom,
<http://eng.gazpromquestions.ru/?id=4>

Table 8: Consumption by the CIS and Baltic States in 2007

Country	Consumption billion m ³
Ukraine	64.6
Belarus	19.4
Kazakhstan	19.8
Lithuania	3.8
Moldova	2.44
Armenia	2.05
Georgia	1.49
Latvia	2.04
Estonia	1.003

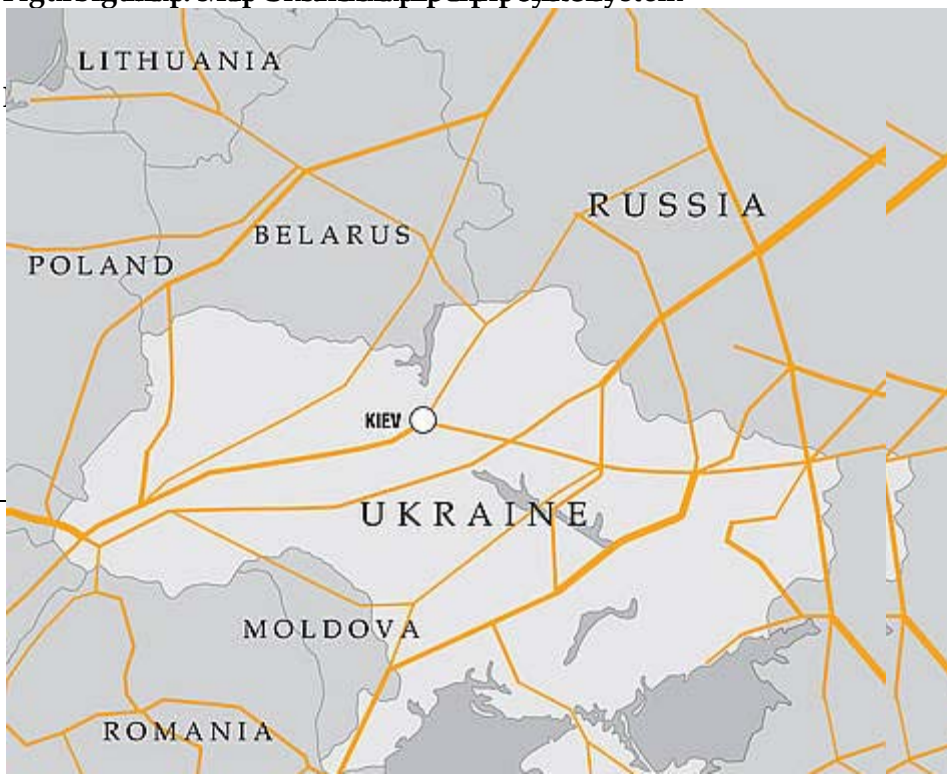
onczuk (2007): *Energy*
 foundation, pp. 25-26.

EU

90

In the 1990s, Gazprom managed to take over most of the shares in Moldovagaz, the most important energy company with a monopoly on the Moldovan gas network. Hence, Gazprom took control both of the transit gas pipeline transporting Russian gas to the Balkan countries and over virtually all of Moldova's internal gas network. In 2006, Gazprom took also control of two combined heat plants and power lines along which electric energy can be exported to the Balkan countries. See Map over pipeline system. So, Moldova is at the moment totally dependent on Russia for its energy. This has happened because Moldova was not able to pay even the low price for gas, which they had to pay in the 1990s, thereby incurring debts of hundreds of millions of dollars. Consequently, Moldova allowed Russian companies to take control of most of the energy system of the country in exchange for the debts.³⁷²

Figure 5. Map of Ukraine's pipeline system



³⁷² Ibid. p. 26.

In regard to the man-made goods, most of heavy industry lies in Transnistria. In early 1990s, Transnistria accounted for about 40 percent of Moldova's GDP. It produced more than 35 percent of its total industrial output, including 90 percent of electricity, all steel, rolled metal, and heavy industrial equipment, as well as a large part of the food processing industry.³⁷³ This over-industrialisation of Transnistria was a strategy from the Soviet leadership, which hoped, that by dividing the Soviet Republic of Moldova in two parts, heavy industry in Transnistria (which had been a part of USSR since 1918) and agriculture in Bessarabia, it could isolate the ethnic Moldovans and control the country through the Russian elites that were installed in all the political and economical key positions. The economic potential of the separatist republic has been used by the separatist leaders as the main argument in favour of Transnistria's claim to statehood.³⁷⁴

Furthermore, contraband and smuggling of weapons, alcohol, oil, drugs, pharmaceuticals, tobacco and other goods through Tiraspol-Odessa route and through Romanian ports, brings approximately US\$ 2 billion a year to the Smirnov regime, helping sustain the authoritarian

³⁷³ Fedor (1995): p. 6.

³⁷⁴ Ciobanu (2008): p. 94.

regime.³⁷⁵ Thus, one might say, that the main obstacle for finding a solution to the conflict is the economic interests of varying political elites. The Transnistrian “state” is run by the “president” and his sons and a few others who constitute the political elite, and they advance their own interests without showing any form of legitimate process. A parallel can be drawn to Moldova, where the President’s family is deeply embedded in the activities of the economic elite, the son of the President being one of the richest businessmen in Moldova. It is not clear how genuine the Moldovan President’s attempts to challenge Transnistrian smuggling have been. New customs stamps have been issued, with Transnistrians thereby losing their right to act as collectors of Moldovan Customs dues.³⁷⁶

While Voronin and other Moldovan elites have advantages from the illegal business, Moldova’s economy will not improve if necessary measures to combat this trafficking are not taken. In this way, Voronin will both lose popular support and EU support as the issue of border security is a crucial one to the EU, who has pressured for tightening the Transnistrian border with Ukraine. As a result, the European Border Assistance Mission has been established in order to monitor the Transnistrian segment of the Moldova-Ukraine border.³⁷⁷ The mission establishes indirectly Moldovan primacy over the whole of its territory, at least in the economic sector, and it is beneficial for the cooperation with Ukraine and EU.³⁷⁸

Another important issue is the migration one, as more than half a million Moldovans have Romanian passport, thereby being EU citizens and representing a demographic and economic problem for Moldova. Furthermore, migration to Russia is even higher. Many of the Moldovans working in the EU are illegal and this is an important factor for the Moldovan economy as about 36% of Moldova’s GDP is formed from remittances (the highest ratio of remittances to GDP in the world).³⁷⁹ (Table 9)The negative effect from this outflow of labour is the distraught of socio-

Table 9: Geographic origin and amount of remittances

Host Country	Migrants percentage	Amount of remittances in million euro
Russian Federation	41	181
Italy	33	145
Western Europe	14	62
Turkey/Israel	4	18

for
[Transnistria](#)

economic infrastructure, further reduced competitive production and consolidated patterns of consumption based on the migrant remittances.³⁸⁰

6.3.1. Summary of the physical base of the state

The physical base of the state is an important element in a government's strategy concerning foreign matters. This is confirmed in the case of Moldova where the lack of resources and control of parts of its territory have proven to be two sources of great insecurities as Moldova is dependent on Russia both for energy supplies and for the solution of the conflict in Transnistria. Furthermore, the migration of most of the well educated people to the EU and Russia, the weak economy with most heavy industry in Transnistria, and the illegal trafficking from Transnistria through Moldova to EU countries, have determined changing policies of the government. We have seen both a Russian orientation constrained by the dependence on trade with Russia and the CIS countries, and a European orientation caused by the need of EU support in order to shift external trade to the EU countries. In this way, a combination of weak physical base and negative/positive incentives from the Euro-Atlantic unipole, respectively, the great power in the region, have determined Moldova's foreign policy.

³⁸⁰ Munteanu (2008): p. 6.

6.4 Concluding remarks for the domestic level

In this chapter I have argued that the domestic level is important in order to give a comprehensive picture of the foreign policy of a state. In order to do that, I have used Buzan's theory of the state which comprises the idea of the state, the institutions of the state and the physical base of the state. This has been combined with the constellation theory's emphasis on the shadow of the past. The weak idea of the state reflected in the split identity between the Romanian and the Russian roots has had an important effect on the government's possibilities to infer controversial reforms and to act in the Transnistrian conflict.

The invocation of a strong ideology such as communism to make analogies to the Soviet legacy has brought popular support. Voronin understood that popular support is important and he has changed strategies according to the change in public opinion, in this way not being necessarily faithful to the communist ideology he invoked at the beginning of its rule.

The close relationship between domestic and international politics has been emphasized in the way that many of the decisions taken by the Voronin government, as in the case of the Kozak Memorandum, were a combination of internal and external pressures.

The physical base of the country is also a determinant factor for Moldova's foreign trade and orientation. Lack of resources, seizure of the territory by an internal secessionist movement, migration of its citizens to the EU and Russia and illegal trade have determined a hesitant and changing foreign policy between the great power, Russia, and the Euro-Atlantic unipole.

Consequently, the domestic level has brought understanding concerning the role of the state in foreign policy, but it cannot stand alone. Only by examining the interaction between materialist and idealist factors at different levels can we get a better understanding of a country's foreign policy.

7. Conclusion and perspectives for the future

In this final chapter, the research question will be answered and the theoretical implications will be reflected upon. Subsequently, it will be looked at elements in the thesis that can be criticised and the possibilities for an analysis of Moldova's foreign policy from a different viewpoint will be discussed. Finally, future perspectives for Moldovan foreign policy and reflections on the further development of the chosen theories will be touched upon.

7.1 Conclusion

The research question will be answered on the basis of the chosen theoretical framework, by looking at the influence of the Euro-Atlantic unipole, impersonated by the EU and NATO, the near geopolitical environment, represented by Russia, Romania and Ukraine and the domestic setting seen through analysis of the idea of the state, its institutions and its physical base.

The research question of this thesis is: how can we explain Moldova's foreign and security policy after the Communists came to power in 2001? The answer is that Moldova, since independence in 1991, has conducted a balanced and pragmatic foreign policy in pursuit of its national interest. Equilibrium between its East and West interests has been sought, given its geographical location between Russia and the Euro-Atlantic unipole. So, the question from the introduction if it is a surface change can be partly answered by yes. The Voronin government's change towards Europeanisation is only surprising because there is a Communist government in power but it is not surprising if we look at the geopolitical past and present environment, including the behaviour of all administrations after 1991. On the one hand, this rapprochement is due to the present geopolitical considerations, with a more favourable EU/NATO policy opposed to an aggressive Russian policy and the need for domestic support. On the other hand, past geopolitics with a history of Romanian/Russian (Soviet) occupation has importance for all the actors involved.

The Euro-Atlantic level

The relationship of Moldova with the EU and NATO has not been very close as Moldova in the 1990s was more under the influence of Russia as the closest great power, while the EU and NATO did not show much interest in the little, almost forgotten republic.

As an outsider to the EU, Moldova has experienced a relatively high autonomy, because the EU has a decentralised nature giving no definitive prescriptions for acceptable foreign policy behaviour. As such, Moldova's behaviour has been very heterogeneous, both bandwagoning and balancing being used when appropriate. The positive attitude towards the EU has also been influenced by the behaviour of the past hegemon, Russia. When Russia has projected its power through negative incentives such as higher energy prices or ban on wine products, the EU has used positive incentives such as including Moldova in the ENP Programme and signing an Action Plan with it. In order to comply with more EU policy regulations, Moldova must see substantial advantages which cannot be seen at the moment.

When it comes to NATO, Moldova has declared herself a neutral country and has stated in its constitution that no foreign armed troops are permitted on the territory of the country. Neutrality means that the cooperation with NATO is very weak. The lack of interest from NATO in the 1990's, Russia's pressure to include Moldova in various security designs and a lack of military capabilities have determined this attitude.

Thus, Moldova is split between a European and a Russian orientation, the determining factor being the geopolitical advantages and up to now it has been difficult to see more advantages from the EU and NATO than from Russia.

The near geopolitical level

As expected, the geopolitical variable is the one with most explanatory power. In order to show that, I have looked at the relationship of Moldova with Russia, Romania and Ukraine.

Russia has had the strongest influence on Moldova. As a general strategy, Moldova has chosen to bandwagon Russia due to the relative strong capabilities that Russia possesses in the region. Moldova is dependent on Russia for receiving energy, for exporting its products to the Russian market and not least for finding a solution to the Transnistrian conflict. From the analysis, we can see that Russia has not contributed to peace in the separatist conflict and it has threatened Moldova each time they have not complied with Russian interests. Such an attitude has, surprisingly, determined Moldova, after the Communist government of Voronin came to power in 2001, to change strategy and begin to balance Russia with the EU. The EU has shown itself more active concerning the solution of the Transnistrian conflict and has allowed Moldova to enter the European trade markets. Still, Moldova has been inclined to be more sensitive to the power influence of the nearest power pole than the Euro-Atlantic unipole.

The relationship to Romania has been very turbulent considering their problematic shared past and the split in the identity between the pro-Romanian and the pro-Russian population. Moldova's strategy towards Romania has changed from balancing for most of the 1990's to both bandwagoning and balancing in the 2000's. Besides receiving a substantial aid from and being able to send students to study for free at Romanian universities, Romania is also one of Moldova's main trade partners, which Moldova cannot afford to lose. Furthermore, Romania is the gateway to closer relations with the EU.

Ukraine is an important partner for Moldova as it has the capacity to play a central role in maintaining stability in the region. The relationship between the two countries has been relatively peaceful, Moldova choosing to bandwagon Ukraine. Ukraine is important regarding border security, especially the one with Transnistria. Concerning the solution of the conflict, Ukraine has

also been useful as it has an advantage in ending this conflict which threatens the borders of Ukraine. Furthermore, the country occupies the third place in Moldovan exports and has an important role in Moldovan energy security as energy from Russia is delivered through Ukrainian pipelines. Moreover, progress of Ukraine towards the EU and NATO accession can generate both positive and negative effects on Moldova.

The domestic level

The weak idea of the state reflected in the split identity between the Romanian and the Russian roots combined with weak institutions was a constant source of instability in the 1990s. Lacking a natural unifying principle, Moldova has, since independence, been threatened by dismemberment, separatism and political interference from Russia. The multiethnic character of Moldova has also impeded the successive governments to have a clear orientation towards either East or West.

The invocation of a strong ideology such as communism to make analogies to the Soviet legacy combined with a stable internal situation coming from strong authoritative institutions and control of the opposition has brought popular support to the Voronin government. Voronin has changed strategies according to the change in public opinion, in this way not being necessarily faithful to the communist ideology he invoked in the beginning of his rule.

This thesis has also shown that one cannot always separate domestic from international politics and that governments have a tendency to interfere in each others domestic politics, in this case Russia being the most obvious example. Such interventions are the provision of funds and facilities to Transnistria or to the opposition parties, external economic pressures and others. Many of the decisions taken by the Voronin government as in the case of the Kozak Memorandum were a combination of internal and external pressures, this time from the Western actors.

Physical factors like the lack of resources, seizure of the territory by an internal secessionist movement, migration of its citizens to the EU and Russia and illegal trade have determined a hesitant and changing foreign policy between the great power, Russia, and the Euro-Atlantic unipole.

7.2 Reflections on the thesis

By choosing one theoretical model rather than another, there can be important factors that are not taken into consideration. A factor like the US policy towards Moldova has been neglected. One would expect USA to be an important actor in Central and Eastern Europe but the empirical evidence has shown that this is not the case for Moldova. Besides, the expectation that the environment around Moldova is multipolar, of the given reasons in the analysis, has showed to be well-founded. Moreover, analysing a single case means that the validity of the results is not necessarily universal, or can be applied to other case studies. The purpose of this thesis is not to generalise to other countries but to go into depth with the case in question. However, this research might be useful in understanding general outcomes of similar cases, notably other ex-Soviet countries.

The chosen theoretical model implies the combination of several levels of analysis. Not restraining to one level and adding more variables can be seen as leading to ad hoc analysis. I have tried to be consistent with my rationalistic method and the variables for analysis have been chosen from the perspective of the theoretical frame. Furthermore, it is not easy to discern the three levels from each other. The events analysed relate themselves to more than one level of analysis, in this way the analysing variables can influence each other, being difficult to discern the level of influence each variable has on foreign policy behaviour. The same can be said at the domestic level where the idea of the state and the institutions are inseparably intertwined. The meaning with this thesis is exactly to show that foreign policy cannot be explained by only looking at one level of analysis or by separately analysing our variables, as many elements play into each other to give a comprehensive picture of our subject. Thus, one might say that the geopolitics in the near environment have had most influence on Moldova, in the 1990s being the great power Russia and the CIS countries who were closest to Moldova. However, the closer Moldova has come to the EU, the more the EU has showed an interest in Moldova, the more EU has become a near geopolitical factor.

The choice of theory can be criticised as some would say that Buzan's theory is more constructivist, with the emphasis on ideas and identity, than realist. Nevertheless, the contemporary structural realist research programme includes analysis at the domestic level, as well as ideas. In a realist model, ideas and identity are tools that help decision-makers explain their realist decisions. As argued in this thesis, the spatio-temporal context is decisive for the behaviour of Moldova. Thus, constructivist and realist variables are important in different issue areas. As expected, the

importance of geopolitics stressed by realists is more important in security politics whereas the constructivist factors matter most in identity politics, providing important insights into how non-poles value national autonomy in relation to influence vis-à-vis the EU/NATO and important pole powers in the region.

From an empirical point of view, the thesis has taken its point of departure in electronic resources and books from both Moldovan and foreign experts. A research on the ground might have given a more nuanced picture of the actual situation in Moldova. Nevertheless, although much of the media in Moldova is controlled by the state, there are surprisingly many independent researchers and newspapers that give a rather comprehensive picture of Moldova.

7.3 Perspectives for the future

Moldova is at a place where few can question its vulnerability to changes in the geopolitical affairs surrounding the landlocked territory. It is necessary to understand how Moldova came to be where it is today in political terms, in order to fully define the roles of the EU, NATO and Russian policies towards Moldova and thus Moldova's policy towards these international actors. Moldova is in a state of infancy when discussing political maturity meaning that if it is given the proper attention from the Western actors, the Moldovan leadership can only flourish.

EU and NATO have to begin to cultivate Moldova's aspirations before Moldova becomes tired of trying to amount attention from the West, at which point it could redirect its look to the East again. Russia has demonstrated through its recent actions in Moldova and in the region that Moldova continues to increase in priority. Moreover, due to Russia's historical role within its periphery and the wish of Russia to regain control of this region, Moldova is in a place where Russia will not spare it attention. For the same geopolitical reasons Moldova is currently getting added attention from its Western neighbours.

Moldovan society has changed and both civil society and the citizens have begun to put pressure on the government, and due to this, the government has also begun to take more into consideration the public support for their policies. The Moldovans need to realize that they are the ones that can bring about the life that they look for across its Western border. In the near future,

Moldova stands a great chance at achieving most of the goals that it has set for itself if it loses its fear of friction and begins to challenge the status quo.

I have not designed the model of my analysis as a test of the theories used. As shown, many of the predictions of the constellation theory do concur with the empirical evidence but it has also been shown that in the case of Moldova past geopolitics is just as important as present geopolitics and the shadow of the past is present at all levels of analysis. Thereby, the constellation theory needs further development at the domestic level, a better explanation of the concept of “the shadow of the past” is required and adding more elements such as identity and ideas would give a more comprehensive picture of the internal situation.

8. Literature

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