European influences in Moldova

The role of the European Union on nation-building in Moldova

Master Thesis Human Geography

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Summary

The past decades the European continent faced several major changes. Geographical changes but also political, economical and social-cultural shifts. One of the most debated topics is the European Union and its impact on and outside the continent. This thesis is about the external influence of the EU, on one of the countries which borders the EU directly; Moldova. Before its independency from the Soviet Union in 1991, it never existed as a sovereign state. Moldova was one of the countries which were carved out of history by the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact in 1940 as it became a Soviet State. The Soviet ideology was based on the creation of a separate Moldovan republic formed by an artificial Moldovan nation. Although the territory of the Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic was a former part of the Romanian province Bessarabia, the Soviets emphasized the unique and distinct culture of the Moldovans. To underline this uniqueness they changed the Moldovan writing from Latin to Cyrillic to make Moldovans more distinct from Romanians. When Moldova became independent in 1991, the country struggled with questions about its national identity, including its continued existence as a separate nation. In the 1990s some Moldovan politicians focussed on the option of reintegration in a Greater Romania. However this did not work out as expected, or at least hoped for, because the many years under Soviet rule and delinkage from Romania had changed Moldovan society deeply. Most of the Moldovans were quite happy with Moldova as a sovereign state. In 2001, the communist party became the governing party and its leader Vladimir Voronin president. Their policy was based on the Soviet notion of the unique Moldovan culture. This position made the relationship with Romania tenser.

In 2003 the Moldovan government stated that it would set course to become integrated in the European Union and therefore work on implementing several reforms to meet the EU requirements. In 2004 Moldova became involved in the European Union's 'European Neighbourhood Policy' (ENP), launched immediately after the enlargement of the EU to 25 member states in 2004. The ENP aimed at creating secure and prosperous countries at the EU borders by offering the neighbouring countries involved all kinds of help, but most importantly; financial aid. Although the ENP was quite ambitious, most of the neighbouring countries were not satisfied with the possibilities and the one-size-fits-all approach taken. As a result the European commission, following a Polish-Swedish proposal, launched the Eastern Partnership in 2009 specifically acknowledging the fact that the Eastern partners had a different status than the southern neighbours.
The Eastern Partnership is a more differentiated approach and can eventually lead to integration in the EU free market, for instance. The Eastern Partnership is also conducted by a county-specific action plan, which is the same as in the ENP. Although the Eastern Partnership is aiming at political and economical reforms, this thesis tends to analyse how these reforms influence the nation-building process in Moldova, as the country is still struggling with national identity issues.
In 2009 Moldova has had parliamentary elections which replaced the communist government by a liberal coalition called 'Alliance for European Integration'. The coalition has a pro-European policy and is willing to reform to meet EU standards and implement European values. This stand is quite successful, although it is questioned if the coalition will remain stable.

The several European values which are outlined in the action plan for Moldova will replace the Soviet government administration structure by a structure based on European values, like democracy and the rule of law. These reforms create a different relationship between government and civilians and will eventually have an effect on the nation as Moldova becomes more prosperous and freer.

Any European country, as stated in article 49 of the EU treaty, can apply for EU membership. Although Moldova has the ambition to do that, this is not likely to happen any time soon. It will even take a lot of time for them to come up with the necessary requirements. Nevertheless it seems that Moldova is willing to reform. The aftermath of the first election round of April 2009 made that perfectly clear. The election results showed a victory of the communist party. Youngsters and students were protesting against that victory, claiming fraud and demonstrating for change and a pro-European orientation. Eventually a second election round was needed in July 2009. The results led to an alliance of opposition parties called 'Alliance for European Integration'.

Even if Moldova is applying for EU membership it will not be taken into account as long as the Transnistrian conflict is not solved. This is one of the priorities of the EU action plan. Remarkable is that the conflict had no role in the election campaign of 2009; apparently solving the conflict is not a high priority in Moldova itself. This is an example of one of the main critiques on the EU's external policies. The EU argues that the action plans are based on mutual commitment and joint ownership but the European commission decides what is prioritized and what is actually formulated in the action plan. For this reason some scholars find the EU imperialistic towards their neighbouring countries. They claim that the EU is creating a binary logic of the mature EU and immature neighbouring countries in this situation, as the EU decides what is prioritized. This creates an unequal relationship in the long run.

The question if the EU Eastern Partnership is influencing nation-building in Moldova cannot be answered with a straightforward answer. It is rather hypothetical in the stage of the current developments. From my literature research and expert interviews I conclude, though, that it might have an indirect influence and reinforce the nation-building process. All this depends on the implementation of EU reforms. Although Moldova has already made substantial progress, there is still a long way to go. Nation-building is not about 'building a nation' but is about the process to construct a national identity among the people living together within a certain territory. Therefore a sense of belonging to a national culture is important. Although the EU ambitions in their external policies are high, I question if such changes can be achieved without giving these countries any perspective on EU membership.

Acknowledgements

Hereby I present my master thesis for my study Human Geography, specialization Europe; borders, governance and identities. This thesis is a symbiosis of my study and internship. The European Union policies and related questions about borders and territorialities were central in my master specialization. During my internship at the Advisory Council on International Affairs, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I was involved in the process of crafting an advice for the Dutch government on the 'Eastern Partnership'. This was before the actual launch of the partnership in May 2009 and the advice served the Ministry and parliament to take position in the discussions on the Eastern Partnership. As an intern working for the executive secretary I was involved in the actual writing of the advice and responsible for a certain amount of literature research.

Furthermore I was present at every council meeting to write the minutes of the discussions taking place. During these meetings I became intrigued by the Moldovan situation. Before I knew little about the country and I found it fascinating to learn how Moldova was established by Soviet rule and divide tactics. Learning about Moldova's history and lack of national identity, I wondered how the increasing influence of the European Union had its impact on Moldova. As the Moldovan government has set course for European integration, the country is willing to reform to fulfil the EU requirements. Although the latest Eastern Partnership is primarily focussed on political and economical development, I questioned if it could contribute to reinforce nation-building in the country and strengthen national identity. And that is how the idea for this master thesis was formed.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed and helped me with writing this thesis. Special thanks to the experts I interviewed and who were more than willing to offer me their knowledge on the topic. I also want to thank my thesis supervisor for his patience and useful feedback on my writings.

Marieke van Seeters

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Abbreviations

A
AIV : Advisory Council on International Affairs (of the Netherlands)

B
BSEC : Black Sea Economic Cooperation

C
CEPS : Centre for European Policy Studies

E
EaP : Eastern Partnership
EC : European Commission
ENP : European Neighbourhood Policy
EU : European Union

G
GUAM : Regional organization with Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova

H
HDI : Human Development Index

M
MASSR : Moldovan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic
MEP : Member European Parliament
MSSR : Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic

N
NAFTA : North American Free Trade Agreement
NATO : North Atlantic Treaty Organization

O
OECD : Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSCE : Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

P
PCA : Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

U
UK : United Kingdom
UNPO : Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation
USSR : Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

W
WTO   : World Trade Organization
WWII   : World War Two

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Introduction

Borders of states are a socially constructed phenomenon; they are fluid and have deep consequences for our everyday lives. By social construct is meant that these borders are constructed in our minds. For example children in school learn about state borders from atlas maps, where specific colours represent specific countries. The lines drawn on the map are artificial but have large consequences as they create separation and in- or exclusion. The lines determine territorially who is included and who is not, they are the basis of othering and the concept of nation-state. For centuries mankind has shown an inclination to separate; separate animals from humans, white from black, men from women, children from elderly and so on. The tendencies to group humans and objects into categories are a human feature; it is how we make sense of the world around us. These structures not only help to understand the world, they also represent power structures and dominant discourses. Currently, the major social construct throughout Europe is the European Union.

In the past decades the European continent underwent major changes, in its geography but also in a political and economical sense. One of the most important transformations is the increasing impact of the European Union (EU). The first steps to establish this Union were taken right after World War II and its first aim was to secure peace in Europe. In the lifespan of over fifty years, the European Union, through several phases of expansion and adaptations, now consists of 27 member states and is integrated more profound politically and economically. The EU has also created a substantial external policy to enhance its relationship with neighbouring countries, put into practice through the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). In this thesis the external influence of the European Union is examined on the specific case of Moldova. Why is Moldova interesting in this respect? First of all the country is relatively unknown in scientific and social debates and is therefore interesting to pay more attention to. The second aspect of interest is the European Neighbourhood Policy of the EU in which Moldova is included. This policy, together with the latest EU enlargement round in 2007, has brought Moldova closer to the EU and vice versa. These changes reshaped the field of political and economical cooperation and affected the current relationship between Moldova and the EU.

Moldova's history is quite interesting; it was object of fluid and volatile geopolitical shifts, as it had never existed as a state within its current borders (Hamilton & Mangott, 2007). After gaining independency from the Soviet Union in 1991, Moldova (see map 1) was left landlocked between Romania and Ukraine. In 2004, the European Commission included Moldova among the sixteen states in its new European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), designed to enhance relations within countries on the EU periphery (International Crisis Group, 2007). Romania's accession to the European Union in January 2007 has brought the EU frontier to the border of Moldova, Europe's poorest economy and a country that remains divided and plagued by corruption (International Crisis Group, 2007). Together with Ukraine and Belarus, also bordering the EU, Moldova is located along key military, transportation and energy corridors linking Europe to Eurasia. As a result having a good relationship with Moldova, is a key security issue for the European Union (International Crisis Group, 2007).

In 2009 a specific Eastern Partnership was launched to address the fact that six countries of the neighbouring countries, including Moldova, ask for a different approach than countries in the Mediterranean (see chapter 2).

In this era of globalisation and a fast changing world, certain key structures are being changed. Through international cooperation and contacts hard borders are becoming softer, for example through the EU Schengen treaty or all kinds of trade networks and agreements. Since its foundation, the EU has been subject to many scientific studies and debates, some were supporters and other were opponents of the existence of this supranational institution. In recent publications questions arose if the EU might be acting like an empire (Engel-di Mauro, 2006; Hardt & Negri, 2000; Böröcz, 2001; Kuus, 2004). The concept of empire in Hardt & Negri's work (2000) ' a regime that effectively encompasses the spatial totality, that rules over the entire civilized world, and is not limited by territorial boundaries', emphasized that it is not be confused with imperialism. Although, other scholars do link the EU with imperialism like Engel di- Mauro (2006) states in his work:

> "The expansionist character of spreading "democracy" and the "free market" not to mention the shifting and accumulating acquis communautaire might invoke negative connotations if equated with imperialism".

In this thesis these strands in the scientific debate will be examined on the EU's external policy, specifically in the European neighbourhood policy and the Eastern Partnership.
In the following six chapters the question if the EU's Eastern Partnership program is influencing nation-building in Moldova will be examined through combining (Moldovan) historical facts, politics, EU's external policy and the current scientific and media debates and form a well-reasoned argument to answer the question.
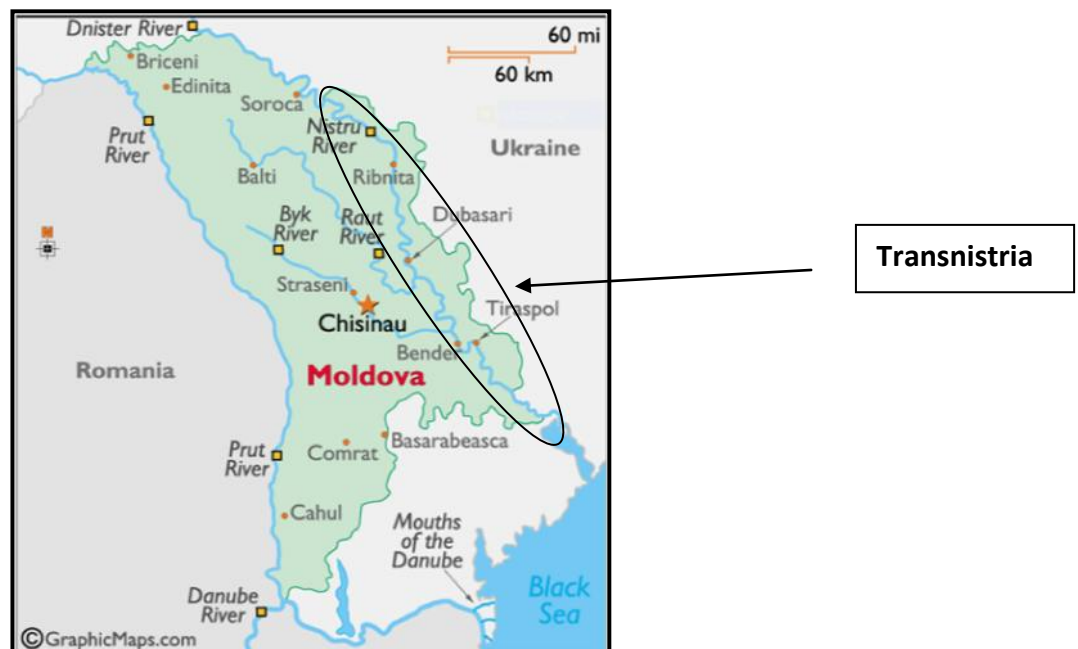
Map 1: Moldova; Transnistria located on the east bank of the Dniester River.
Source: www.graphicmaps.com

Chapter 1
Research framework

1.1.   Research concept

Why is it interesting to gain insights in the European influences on nation-building in Moldova? In my view there are three main reasons to this end. The first reason is that Moldova has declared its ambition to become an EU member state in the future and it is willing to meet the EU-requirements to become a potential candidate (Verdun and Chira, 2008, Stent, 2007). This decision implies for Moldova major changes in its economical, political and legal system.

The second reason concerns the EU's European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) of 2004 and the subsequent Eastern Partnership (EaP) programme of 2009 in which Moldova is involved. The ENP has the objective to avoid new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and its neighbours and its principal aim is 'to strengthen the prosperity, stability and security of all concerned' (ENP strategy paper, 2004). This means increased cooperation between Moldova and the EU, through a partnership and cooperation agreement.

The third reason of interest is referring to the question of national identity. Moldova is a former Soviet Union republic. It became an independent country following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Like other post-Soviet states, it struggled with questions about national identity and statehood. But in no other post-Soviet republic inhabitants have continued to argue about the existence of the nation itself (King, 2003). The question of 'who are the Moldovans' became a leading topic amongst scholars in the beginning of the 1990s. Most of the writings lay emphasize on the historical and cultural parallel between Romanians and Moldovans, based on the notion that a distinct Moldovan nation did never exist before (Crowther, 1997; Smith e.a. 1998; van Meurs, 1998; King, 2000). Most of the scientific studies sought for a definition of the Moldovan nation, acknowledging its Romanian roots but also emphasizing the Moldovan distinction. As Berg and van Meurs (2002) argue, nation-building and state formation in post-communist Eastern Europe have been complicated tasks, given that in many of these states the identifications of state and nation are not synonymous.

The writing of this thesis is based on the above mentioned reasons which also guide the basic objective of this thesis; namely to understand the specific link between the process of nation-building in Moldova and the role that the EU plays in Moldova. The title of this thesis already assumes that there might be a connection between those two.
The structure of the report is as follows; Chapter 1 discusses the research design, Chapter 2 deals with the theoretical framework. Chapter 3 contains information on the historical background of the Moldovan state, while Chapter 4 describes Moldovan nationhood. Chapter 5 focuses on the role of the EU in Moldova, explicitly through the Eastern Partnership and examines the influence on the process of nation-building. Finally, Chapter 6 provides a conclusion, including a presentation of my personal opinion towards the issue of nation-building in Moldova.

1.2. Research objective, questions and main concepts

This research aims to establish how outside influences affect the process of nation-building and national identity formation within a certain territory. In particular, the impact of the EU-Eastern Partnership on Moldova will be studied.

Therefore the central goal is:
To gain insights in the influence of the European Union on nation-building in Moldova by analysing the effects of the Eastern Partnership.

Why the Eastern Partnership and not the European Neighbourhood Policy? The EaP intends to go further than the ENP. The EaP came into being as some countries in Eastern Europe were not satisfied by the ENP and the level of what could be accomplished. Also the fact that the ENP was based on a one-size-fits-all approach led to dissatisfaction in countries involved in the ENP. Above all the EaP also acknowledges the position of its eastern neighbours (e.g. Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova), as distinct from the southern neighbours which are now included in the Union for the Mediterranean (AIV, 2009). The EaP is functioning as an extension of the ENP; the ENP is still in progress.

From the central goal the following key question is derived:
How and to what extent does the EU's Eastern Partnership influence the process of nation-building in Moldova?

The key question implies three elements namely; the European Union, Moldova and nation-building. In this thesis I choose to use the term nation-building instead of national identity because I am referring to a process guided by state institutions, instead of guided by nationalism. In my view this terms suits best in this context, nevertheless I do not omit the concept of national identity, on the contrary; it is a vital part of answering the key question. The common feature in the three elements is territoriality, as is it tangible evidence for the existence of nation, state and national identity (Herb &Kaplan, 1999), this will be explained further. To guide the central question, several sub questions are derived.

Sub questions:
1. How can nation-building in Moldova be explained and what can be said about Moldovan national identity?
2. What does the Eastern Partnership imply for Moldova?
3. Which elements of the Eastern Partnership influence nation-building in Moldova?

The concepts used in these sub questions are defined as follows (in chapter 2 they will be further discussed):

Nation
The concept of nation can be defined as a group or race of people who share history, traditions, culture, sometimes religion and usually language. The people of a nation generally share a common national identity and part of nation-building is the building of that common identity (Østerud in Goldmann, 2001). It is not claimed that nation-states are the only bearers of national identity; nation-states are simply our present concern.

Nation-building
In this thesis the concept of nation-building refers to the process of constructing a national identity using the power of the state. The utilization of the nation by state elites in which a sense of territorial or homeland identity and of belonging to a national culture is important, aided by the spread of a common vernacular and national educational system (Johnston e.a. 2000). Nation-building in the context of this thesis refers to a *process* to construct a national identity. It is not a definition of the Moldovan national identity, as in my opinion this is impossible, as identity is a hard to capture and dynamic value.

National identity
National identity, from a political point of view, is 'any given set of language practices, myths, stories, and beliefs propagated to justify a dominant group in maintaining power, or to justify a competing group in replacing them or shifting power among them' (Goldmann, 2001).

National identity is dependent on territory as only territory provides tangible evidence of the nation's existence and its historical roots. A nation needs a clearly demarcated national territory to demand its own state (Herb & Kaplan, 1999). The term 'national identity' refers in my view to a sense of belonging to a group of people which share certain commonalities like language, history and cultural expressions which are enhanced within a certain territory. The modern state has challenged the primacy of national identity although it has enabled national identity to assume its present characteristics and dominance (Herb & Kaplan, 1999).

1.3. Social and scientific relevance

Social relevance

Currently globalization has a great effect on the construction of identity. It has intensified the emergence of macro-regional identities but globalizing processes have also enhanced the awareness of differences among groups of people, and even spurred new national identities and reinforced sub-national identities (Herb & Kaplan 1999). In this sense identity plays an important role in people's everyday life. Eastern Europe, for example, has changed significantly in the past twenty years. The majority of the countries in Eastern Europe have a Soviet heritage and are in transition after their independency from the Soviet Union. Some had democratic revolutions to eliminate Soviet legacy, like the orange revolution in Ukraine and the rose revolution in Georgia, and some countries are still dependent on aid from Russia. Also Moldova is a country in transition, while their new government of 2009 is ready to lead the country to prosperity and development. On the other hand Moldova is still suffering from an unresolved conflict with separatist Transnistria, on the east bank of the Dniester River. The Transnistria-region separated from Moldova in 1990 and has Russia as an ally (Crowther, 1997). Since Moldova's independency in 1991, debates are ongoing about the 'Moldovan identity' as the country did not exist as a sovereign state before. On the question of the existence of the Moldovan nation several researchers (King, 1994, Crowther, 1997) described the tension between Moldovanism and Romanianism. In the first years after independency, the Moldovan government was trying to include the country into Greater Romania, based on the thought that Moldova was indeed Romanian. After 2001 (when the Communist party became the governing party) the discussion changed into a debate about the Moldovan national identity, as the country had abandoned the idea of a Greater Romania, and emphasized the existence of a Moldovan nation. The contribution of this thesis is the understanding, in a social sense, of nation-building and national identity, its social consequences and importance for everyday-life like inequality and suppression, conflict but also national stability.

Scientific relevance

In the scientific debate on the Moldovan national identity several researchers focussed on the dichotomy in Moldovanism and Romanianism (King, 1994; Crowther, 1997), pointing at the cultural and historical communality and identification of the Moldovan population with Romania. The current debate on Moldovan national identity has not completely moved beyond the Romanianism debate, although certain aspects of the discussion changed since the early days of independence (Belina & Arambasa, 2007; King, 2003).

The theoretical concepts in this thesis are based on the debates on notions of nation and state-building, national identity formation and the link between nation and state. Due to globalization some theorists (Herb & Kaplan, 1999) argue that the power of the sovereign state might disappear to institutions as the European Union. This seems unlikely to happen soon as state power is still dominant in world politics. In this thesis I will focus on the presupposed link between nation-building, within a certain territory (Moldova), and the external influence from the EU on that process. The scientific relevance is to understand how external influences affect processes of nation-building within a given sovereign state.

1.4 Research strategy, material and method

The research is based on a theory examining method and therefore the following hypothesis will be tested:
The European Union has an indirect influence on Moldovan nation-building and identity formation through the Eastern Partnership and European Neighbourhood Policy. The position of Moldova after Romania joined the EU has shaped a momentum for a renewed discussion about the Moldovan identity.

The information needed to test the hypothesis will be derived from several sources to create optimal triangulation. Scientific literature will form the basis of the concepts of nation-building, national identity and the European Union in this thesis. Historical writings on Moldova from scholars like Charles King and William Crowther will be fundamental to gain insights in the historical facts.

The European discourse related to this matter will be examined through EU documents as well as the scientific debates related to the European Neighbourhood Policy. The overall method used is based on discourse analysis, whereby the EU texts are analysed in the political context. To compare this discourse I use the Dutch government statement on the Eastern Partnership, to see if a member states' stand is corresponding with the EU documents.

To enrich the desk research of secondary literature sources, official documents and press reports, expert interviews will be held to also have a non-literary view. Three experts will be consulted in their field of expertise on Moldova and the European Neighbourhood Policy. One expert is a former Dutch top diplomat who among other worked for the EU and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OCSE) as a special representative for Moldova, the other is a Dutch policy desk officer for the Dutch government for South-East Europe at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the third resource person is a researcher at the European policy think tank CEPS, who among other topics specialises in the ENP and Moldova.

Chapter 2
Theoretical framework

2.1. Nation and states

The prevailing ideology that nation and state must coincide has led multicultural states to engage in the construction of a single nation and the assimilation of minority groups into the culture of the politically dominant group (Berg &van Meurs, 2002). This body of thought led to situations where minority groups defend their separate identity by seeking political control over their own affairs. In Moldova this resulted in a separation of Transnistria. The dominant ideology of the nation and state coinciding and their quest on the Moldovan national identity, triggered the region of Transnistria to seek a separation as they were afraid to be included in a 'greater Romanian state'.

The concept of the nation
The term 'nation' has been subject in scientific debates for a long time and several concepts have been developed to define the term. Out of the numerous concepts and definitions two main theoretical stands can be derived from these debates (Storey, 2001).
These schools of thought are:
- The primordialist view: this view sees nations as organically grown and claims that the world is inevitably and fatally divided into nations.
- The constructivist view: this view argues that nations are artificial creations, founded on a myth. They are imagined communities. Nations are therefore defined as: 1) the product of structural change, 2) the project of elites, 3) a discourse of domination and 4) a bounded community of exclusion and opposition.

In this thesis nations are approached in a constructivist view, following the theory of Benedict Anderson (1991) which defined nations as imagined communities. In his work Anderson examines nations as imagined political communities, imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. According to his theory, nations are imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, or even hear them, yet in the mind of each lives the image of their communion. The creation of a distinct Moldovan nation by the Soviet Union is my argument to follow a constructivist vision on nations. In my opinion the creation of the explicitly different Moldovan nation from Romanians by the Soviets is therefore artificial and a project of elites.

The concept of State
The term "state" can be used for different meanings. It can refer to a geographic sovereign political entity with a permanent population, a defined territory, a government and the capacity to enter into relation with the other states, as well as a set of social institutions claiming a monopoly of the legitimate use of force within a given territory (Weber in Mann, 1986).

One of the more striking accompaniments of the emergence of the modern industrial state has been a marked increase in the volume and scope of government activity. The state is responsible for the supply of a growing array of services some of which, such as the defence of the national territory, it is argued, are more effectively provided by the public rather than the private sector. Besides acting as a supplier of public goods, the state acts as a regulator- providing and maintaining the framework within which the market economic system can operate- and as the forum within which the competing claims of different interest groups can be resolved (Paddison, 1983). Theories of the role of the state vary from those who argue that the state is a relatively passive actor within the overall framework of socio- economic activities to those who argue, using Marxist arguments, that its central function is the support of the capitalist economic system. To the political geographer the importance of these interpretations lies in the accompanying theoretical approaches that they generate (Paddison, 1983).

Although the control of a territory is always included in definitions of the state, territoriality is often taken for granted. Modern states, as in the concept of Max Weber, are combining two principles that were originally separated; territoriality and sovereignty (Taylor & Flint, 2000; Gottman, 1973). The first refers to the control of territories as a division of political power and the second to the final and absolute authority in a political community. Typical for the territoriality of modern states are the reification of the state as a fixed unit of sovereign space, the polarity between domestic and foreign affairs and the conception of the state as a container of society (Mamadouh, 2001).

Nation states
Often the concept of nation and state are symbiotically linked as national identity sustains state identity (Herb & Kaplan, 1999). The state needs the nation for legitimacy and the nation needs the state to fulfil its aspirations. As in national identity Herb & Kaplan (1999) refer to spatial identities which are identities of state and nation tied to territory and space. But the spatial identities of state and nation differ sharply. State identities involves membership in a polity, it is concerned with the consolidation of administrative authority. Therefore its spatial identity will entail such issues as the jurisdictional aspects of the state, the maintenance of internal order, the symbols of government as they exist on the ground and finally, the vigorous demarcation and control of the border. The spatial identities of states are much clearer than those of the nation. National identity is an intermediary identity between the familial scale and the global scale. Often the national identity in control of a state runs up against other 'stateless' national identities with territories of their own. In the Moldovan case these are for example the Gagauz, who have limited autonomy in their region (King, 2000).

Effects of globalisation on nation and states

Although the globalizing world has created a great amount of supranational institutions like the EU, North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) or the Association of Caribbean states, world politics is continuously dominated by states. The modern state system is premised on the idea that the surface of the earth should be divided into discrete national territories that are the foci of citizen identity. From the outside 'nation' has come to be conflated with the state; the national voice is considered analogous to the existing government to the point where a world association of state governments is termed the United Nations. This reality compels modern 'stateless' nations to accommodate themselves to a state-centric order and gain recognition as states in making. The global community has come to see a world of nation-states as the best guarantor of political stability and to this end has promoted the process of nation-building (Herb & Kaplan, 1999).

This effect of the institutionalized term of nations is confusing as in United Nations, when it in fact considers States, is a symbol of the overall mixture of the concepts of nation and state. While the United Nations should be represented by *nations,* it is in fact represented by states which lead automatically to dissatisfactions amongst unrepresented nations (see: UNPO.org). The state has enormous advantages; it enjoys a monopoly of power within its borders and is endowed with the singular ability – through education, media, propaganda and infrastructural power- to inculcate a sense of collective identity among its residents.

2.2. Nation-building and national identity

Nation-building

Nation-building in science has two different meanings. One approach defines nation-building as 'the use of armed force in the aftermath of a conflict to underpin an enduring transition in democracy' (Dobbins 2003 in OECD, 2008). This definition is substantially different from the second approach which defines nation-building 'as the process of encouraging a sense of national identity within a given group of people, which relates more to socialization than state capacity' (OECD, 2008). According to the dictionary of human geography (Johnston e.a., 2000) there are two central components to nation-state formation. One is the process of state-building which is bound up with the territorialisation of state power that refers to centralizing processes to penetrate society and to implement logistically political decisions throughout its territory. The second central component is nation-building which involves in particular the utilization of the nation by state elites in which a sense of territorial or homeland identity of belonging to a national culture is important, aided by the spread of a common vernacular and national educational system.

National identity

Determining identity is highly subjective and fluid, it is not something that one can measure and define very well. Literature on nationalism and national identity has been dominated by a focus on the historical origins of the nation and its political lineaments. This often leads to assumptions that nation is equivalent to society (Endensor, 2002), which is a mistake. It is possible that it is equivalent but currently most states are multi-ethnic and have a dominant majority and several minority groups.

There are two components of national identity: the first is a collective identity, which refers to national characteristics and so-called national traits and may include such things as language. The second meaning is the individual member's sense of self as a national. It refers to a feeling of belonging to a nation (Verdery 1996 in Storey, 2001).
According to Herb & Kaplan (1999) four characteristics are important for national identity. National identity is
1. bound up with territory that helps to define it.
2. not an enduring constant but a set of cultural attributes bundled with articulated political objectives.
3. existing as an identity distinct from the state.
4. situated within a hierarchy of geographically based identities that coexist and sometimes compete with it.

In the theoretical debates on national identity some researchers attempted to define it like Smith (1998) did as follows:
"A national identity involves some sense of a political community, some common institutions, a single code of rights and duties and an economic and a social space with clearly demarcated boundaries with which the citizens identify. National identity also requires that the 'homeland', whose geography is usually lauded, is also a repository of historical memories" .

Both Smith and Herb & Kaplan claim in their work a certain space with which the citizens identify. Smith refers to a space with 'social space with clearly demarcated boundaries', while Herb & Kaplan only refer to a certain 'territory', which is not always clearly demarcated. Territory is a defining concept in political geography as it brings together the ideas of power and space. The concept of territory is explained in the dictionary of human geography as follows:

"Territory is a general term used to describe areas of land or sea over which states and political entities claim to exercise some form of control (Johnston et al, 2000)".

This difference between the definition of Smith and Herb & Kaplan is the concept of territory. In the latter territory is one of the characteristics of national identity while in the former 'social space' is indicated as the demarcated space for national identity. Territory is referring to a clear geographical area, a place on the earth, while the term 'social space' is fuzzy in terms of a clear-cut geographical area. As I show in chapter 4 the Moldovan national identity is certainly not coinciding with state boundaries, this is thus identity distinct from the state. With the theoretical debates on national identity, nation-building and territory in mind I try to unravel how and on what level the European Union influences nation-building in Moldova. As I described in this paragraph national identity and nation-building are not the same things. They both refer to a process within a certain territory but are 'developed' differently. In nation-building, a given state is important, while national identity is referring to an identity distinct from the state. Despite their differences, both processes can occur at the same time. In this thesis national identity, refers thus to the identity of the Moldovan nation, where nation-building is guided by the Moldovan state.

2.3. The European Union; territoriality and external policies

Previously I spoke about territory as it is an important feature of the existence of state and nation. Territoriality is not specific to states; it is a common strategy to many individuals and groups, an indispensable means to power at all levels: from the personal to the international (Mamadouh, 2001). But among the many uses of territoriality, the modern state system has been the most comprehensive (Taylor, 1994; Storey, 2001). State territoriality in geography refers to a form of behaviour that uses bounded space to control activities (Taylor, 1994). Nowadays the European Union has an increasing impact on territorial issues in its member states. The European Union has been established by treaties between states, in accordance with international law practices. The supranational character of the EU implies that decisions taken by its supranational institutions (e.g. European Commission, European Parliament, European Council) are binding for the member states (Mamadouh, 2001). Supranational in this sense can be understood as where power is transferred or delegated to an authority by governments of member states (Tallberg, 2002).

This supranational character is sometimes blurred by the fact that the executives of the member states are collectively one of the key institutions involved in this decision-making process (the European Council) which shares the legislative powers with the European Commission and the European Parliament (Mamadouh, 2001). Furthermore in most international organizations member states are represented by their own executives. In general the EU always depends on the member states and their administrative bodies for the implementation of its policies. Likewise, membership of the political community is mediated through membership of the national communities: EU citizenship is subordinated to the citizenship of one of the member states (Mamadouh, 2001). This is a fundamental difference from the situation in a federal state, where sovereignty is shared between the federal and the federated entities. Therefore EU territoriality is mediated through the members. The borders of the EU territory are the borders of the EU member states; this implies that the European Union has no border of its own. Although the process of further integration has transformed state borders into internal and external borders of the European Union. The establishment of an internal market with free movement goods, capital and people has dismantled obstructions to cross-border interactions over both the short and long distance. For instance, the Schengen treaty of 1985 served as the agreement to remove border controls at the borders separating the member states.

The territory of the European Union differs much from the territory of a state: it is expanding without threatening other states, and it is variable. Certain EU programmes and policies apply to external territories, through policies like the European Neighbourhood Policy. The enlarged Union of 27 member states has increased the political, geographic and economic weight of the EU on the European continent (European Commission, 2003). Although one of the main principles of the EU treaty of Rome 1957, article 49 (EU Wider Europe, 2003), is that every European country can apply for membership, the EU Commission has become aware of the effect that it could produce a binary logic of inclusion and exclusion on the European continent. Although, as Smith discusses in her work (Smith, 2005), when the geographical definition of 'Europe' has become fuzzy nowadays, setting limits to EU membership is becoming problematic. The enlargements have created new dividing lines in Europe between insiders and outsiders.

According to Scott (2009) the construction of the European Union is in large part an attempt to create a coherent political, social and economic space within a clearly defined multinational community. A central aspect of this re-territorialisation process is the definition of rules, norms and practices that aim to 'Europeanise' national spaces; from this derive the objectives and values that create a common set of discourses in which various policy issues can be negotiated. In effect, a border is being drawn around the EU-27 in order to consolidate it as a political community and thus manage regional heterogeneity, core-periphery contradictions and political-organisational flux (Scott, 2009).

The next two paragraphs will address the two main policies concerning the EU's eastern external policies. The European Neighbourhood Policy functions as a general policy responsible for the EU neighbourhood. Subsequence policies were derived from it as one is the 'Eastern Partnership', which is described in the paragraph 2.3.2.

2.3.1. The European Neighbourhood Policy

In their document of 2003 on ´Wider Europe´ the European Commission described the goal of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) as a search to create a 'ring of friends' around the EU by offering close cooperation from political dialogue to economic integration (Milcher & Slay, 2005).

"The communication proposes that the EU should aim to develop a zone of prosperity and a friendly neighbourhood – a 'ring of friends' - with whom the EU enjoys close, peaceful and co-operative relations (EU Wider Europe, 2003)".

This 'ring' formed by the neighbouring countries should be a common space where all countries share the same values designed by the EU and have a consistent security and foreign policy with the EU (Slay, Milcher &Collins, 2006). Sixteen countries are involved in the ENP those are: Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, Palestinian Territories, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine (see map 2).

Since the European Neighbourhood Policy was implemented in 2004, the EU has emphasized that it offers a means to reinforce relations between the EU and partner countries, which is distinct from the possibilities available to European countries under article 49 of the Treaty on European Union. Its objective, method and key areas are described in the EU strategy paper as follows:

"The objective of the ENP is to share the benefits of the EU's 2004 enlargement with neighbouring countries in strengthening stability, security and well-being for all concerned. It is designed to prevent the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and its neighbours and to offer them the chance to participate in various EU activities, through greater political, security, economic and cultural co-operation. The method proposed is, together with partner countries, to define a set of priorities, whose fulfilment will bring them closer to the European Union. These priorities will be incorporated in jointly agreed Action Plans, covering a number of key areas for specific action: political dialogue and reform; trade and measures preparing partners for gradually obtaining a stake in the EU's Internal Market; justice and home affairs; energy, transport, information society, environment and research and innovation; and social policy and people-to-people contacts (ENP Strategy Paper, 2004)".

With the ENP, EU-European space is being differentiated from the rest of the world by a set of geopolitical discourses and practices that extol the EU's core values. This differentiation is, in turn, attenuated by the offer of 'privileged partnership' and the joint development of cooperation policies. Furthermore, the EU has played a key role in shaping the post-Cold War political order in Europe. Through the process of enlargement and the development of new political relations with neighbouring states, the EU has exerted considerable influence on political institution-building and socio-cultural processes beyond its borders (Scott, 2009) Because of geographical proximity, long-standing (e.g. post-colonial) economic, social and political interrelationships and deepening mutual interdependencies, the EU is keen to have a stabilising role in post-Soviet, Eurasian and Mediterranean regional contexts. The very norms, values and *acquis* that define EU-Europe (e.g. the virtues of co-operation, democratic ownership, social capital and general values such as sustainability, solidarity and cohesion) are also projected upon the neighbourhood.

Map 2 shows the sixteen countries involved in the ENP, based on the EU-25 of 2004, currently Bulgaria and Romania are EU member states.

Map 2: countries involved in the ENP (Source: EU commission, 2006)

2.3.2. The Eastern Partnership

In December 2008 the European Commission set out a proposal for an Eastern Partnership (EaP) as a more differentiated approach in shaping EU's relations with countries in Eastern Europe and in the Southern Caucasus. The countries in the EaP are: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. While the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), launched in 2004, is still in progress the new partnership has the ambition to go beyond the ENP. The ENP has caused turmoil in different countries, like the Ukraine, as it was seen as too much a one-size-fits-all approach and several countries were disappointed by the few possibilities in the ENP (AIV, 2009). The Eastern Partnership was officially launched in May 2009. Most and for all the EaP is an acknowledgement that those countries have a different status than the southern neighbours. In fact, three of them (Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova) are European countries.

Although the ENP and the EaP tend to overlap, the European commission stated that the Eastern Partnership is certainly not a replacement for the European Neighbourhood Policy but it can be seen as a regional initiative from the EU to deepen its relations with its Eastern neighbours. It started as a Polish-Swedish initiative proposed in June 2008 to counterbalance the project of the Union for the Mediterranean, advocated by the French President Nicolas Sarkozy, to deepen relations with the Southern neighbours (Cianciara, 2008). The Poles made clear to France that it would only support the Union for the Mediterranean under the condition that a similar initiative could be designed for the Eastern neighbourhood (Cianciara, 2008). It seemed like a battle between member states to set their own priorities before they would support other proposals in their aspirations to be important in shaping the neighbourhood policies in their own interests.

The principal aim of the EaP is to strengthen regional cooperation with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and to a certain extent Belarus (EU Eastern Partnership, 2008). The Eastern Partnership will be based on a mutual commitment to the rule of law, good governance, respect for human rights, respect for protection of minorities, the principles of the market economy and sustainable development. Although this was also the basis of the ENP, the level of what can be accomplished is going further than what can be achieved in the ENP, according to the European Commission (AIV, 2009). New contractual relations, in the framework of Association Agreements, can provide a response to the aspirations from the neighbouring countries to come closer to the EU. These agreements will be designed and differentiated according to the objectives and capacities of the countries involved. The agreements will include the goal of finally establishing a 'deep and comprehensive free trade area' and that will only be possible as the countries have joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) (AIV, 2009). Belarus and Azerbaijan are not a member of the WTO at this moment, so the free trade area is unreachable for them.

In the EU document (EU Eastern Partnership, 2008) on the Eastern Partnership the first sentence is pointing at the interest from the European Union towards its Eastern neighbours:
'*The European Union has a vital interest in seeing stability, better governance and economic development at its Eastern borders. At the same time, our partners in Eastern Europe and the Southern Caucasus all seek to intensify their relations with the EU. The Union's policy towards them must be proactive and unequivocal: the EU will give strong support to these partners in their efforts to come closer to the EU; and will give all necessary assistance with the reforms this entails, through a specific Eastern dimension within the European Neighbourhood Policy*'.

One can conclude that the EU is benefiting from stability, better governance and economic progress at its Eastern borders. One of their reasons for their interest lies within this objective. From the above citation can be derived that the European Commission assumes that all of the six countries seek to intensify their relation with the EU.
An essential difference with the ENP will be the commitment from the EU to accompany more intensively partners' individual reform efforts. To sum up: the Eastern Partnership has to fill the gap in the ENP for a more differentiated approach and joint ownership with the Eastern partners involved. It is based on a regional approach and is more ambitious than what could be accomplished in the ENP.

Chapter 3

The birth of the Moldovan State

In this chapter I will discuss the historical background and recent developments in Moldova concerning the Moldovan state and nation. It will assist to answer the question "How can nation-building in Moldova be explained?" The historical facts are needed to understand present-day Moldova and these can be linked to theories on nation-building.

3.1. Historical overview

To understand Moldova's current situation, it is necessary to have a good historical insight. The Moldovan state and nation-building process is embedded in its historical and cultural context and it is therefore only possible to analyze the situation with knowledge of this context. To make a distinction in several periods I choose here to differentiate in three periods; the pre-Soviet period, the Soviet period and the post-Soviet period. The reason for making this distinction in relation to the Soviet period is that the Moldovan state was highly influenced by the Soviet Union. Not only was it created in this period, also the state ideology was based on Soviet principles. The Soviets were the founders of the Moldovan nation-building project in the 1920s (King, 2000). It was Soviet rule and tactics which lay the fundament of present-day Moldova. Although there is historical evidence for a Moldovan people (King, 2003), their national identity has historically been 'malleable': they were dispersed between the Ottoman, Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires and did not have their own political entity until the Soviet era (Stent, 2007).

Pre-Soviet period

The roots of the current republic of Moldova stretch back to the historic principality of Moldavia. Bessarabia, the territory located between the Dniester and Prut rivers (see map 3), was the eastern region of the traditional principality, most of which is now part of Romania. Along with Walachia to its west, historic Moldavia was one of the two main regions in south-eastern Europe populated by Romanian-speaking people.

After the First World War the kingdom of Romania extended its territory, encompassing more nationalities.

In 1919 on a journey to Bessarabia, Emmanuel de Martonne, professor at the University of Sorbonne, already observed that the question of identity was more perplexing than the territorial problem (King, 2000).Not only were over forty separate languages represented in Bessarabia by the end of the nineteenth

Map 3: South East Europe 1878
Source:http://www.compudavafoundation.org/moldova/history/modern.htm

century (due to all the occupations in the past and various population groups), but the identity of the region's largest ethnic group- normally called Moldovans or Bessarabian-

Romanians- also remained in some doubt (Crowther, 1997). This history of shifting borders and political allegiances has long been reflected in the overlapping and situational identities of Bessarabia's inhabitants, including their descendants in present-day Moldova (Crowther, 1997).

In historical works on the early state of Moldavia, Dimitrie Cantemir (ca. 1714) provides one of the richest descriptions of the early Moldavian lands. There is a legend about the Moldavian state, called the Dragos legend (King, 2000). This legend tells the story of the Romanian prince Dragos who on a hunting trip, lost his dog Molda after he tried to capture an aurochs. He took the head of the aurochs as a personal head; this aurochs-head can still be seen today on the seals of both Romania and the Republic of Moldova (King, 2000). Also on the flag of Romania this head is visible (see figure 1), next to it the Romanian flag (figure 2) which has the same colours as the Moldovan flag.

Figure 1: Moldovan flag, in the middle the aurochs-head	Figure 2: The Romanian flag, similar colours to the Moldovan flag

Regardless of that legend the Moldavian state did emerge in the early fourteenth century and was probably founded by a Wallach prince (King, 2000). Moldavia had been an important Christian principality in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, under the Ottomans it became an often ignored part of 'Turkey in Europe' (King, 2000). Moldova eventually became a vassal state but was not further incorporated into the empire until the eighteenth century when the incorporation accelerated when the Ottoman power declined and became conscious of the growing power of Austria and Russia.

Like Ukrainians and Belarusians, Moldavians moved between different imperial systems. From 1538-1812, they were under Ottoman rule; in 1812, Russia annexed Bessarabia after the Russian- Ottoman war (1806-1812). The Russians, convinced of the weakness of the Ottomans and frightened of Napoleon's designs on the Balkans, occupied the eastern half of Moldova in 1806 (King, 2000). Russian became their official language and Moldovan remained the language of peasants (Stent, 2007). Box 1 provides six maps of several stages of border changes and imperial changes in the past centuries. These maps show that present-day Moldova has changed seize, has been carved up and was part of e.g. the Russian and Ottoman empires in the past three centuries.

The territory between the Prut and the Dniester River, as where present-day Moldova is located, is a smaller area than it once was. The most important change is the fact that it is now landlocked, while it bordered the Black Sea first. This area is now incorporated in Ukraine.

Box 1: Border changes in present-day Moldova and Romania from late 18th century –present

Map 1: 1793-1813

Principalities of Moldavia during Ottoman occupation. Transylvania, Moldavia and Wallachia represent Romanian speaking population.

Map 2: 1856-1859

Bessarabia is annexed by the Russian empire

Map 3: 1920-1940

Kingdom of Romania

Map 4: 1940-1941

World War II/ Molotov-Ribbentrop pact

Map 5: 1945 after WWII

Romania has lost the marked land strips

Map 6: 1947- present

Present borders of Moldova and Romania

Sources: **http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Atlas_of_Moldovawww.lib.utexas.edu**.(University of Texas)

Soviet period

In 1918, with the redrawing of Europe's borders and the creation of a new Romanian state, Bessarabia was incorporated in Romania (see box 1, map 3), while a smaller territory carved from Ukrainian and Transnistrian lands became the USSR's Moldovan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (MASSR) from 1924-1940. In their attempts to attract Bessarabians in Romania to immigrate to the USSR, the Soviet authorities focused on creating a separate Moldovan language in the MASSR, competing with Romania for the loyalty of this newly-defined nationality.

The establishment of the MASSR in 1924 served two important ends in the emerging foreign policy of the Soviet Union. First, the new republic facilitated the penetration of Soviet propaganda into the kingdom of Romania, paving the way for a Romanian socialist revolution. Second, it ensured that the Bessarabian question remained a topical issue in international politics and a thorn in the side of Romanian diplomats at the League of Nations. Moldovan nation-building in the MASSR was not a mere by-product of Soviet expansionism, but rather a result of indigenous identity, and the agendas of cultural and political elites inside the autonomous republic itself. Cultural planners were keenly aware of the political importance of the policy that came to be known as "Moldovanization" but they were more than mere executors of a policy elaborated by the Soviet centre (Teague, 2004).

The Soviet tactic resulted in a new people and language suddenly springing onto the world stage. In the MASSR, established on the western border of Soviet Ukraine in 1924, Moldovan histories, textbooks, grammars, newspapers and other publications were hailed by the Soviet authorities as the first fruits of a Moldovan nation in the making (King, 2000). Persons whose language and ethnicity had previously been termed "Romanian" seemed overnight to become "Moldovans" and Soviet propagandists began to agitate for the unification of all Moldovans, who lived mainly in portions of Ukraine and the Romanian province of Bessarabia, into a single Soviet Moldovan state (King, 2000). One of the first tasks was to select a dialect that would serve as the basis for a Moldovan literary standard. Eventually there was little difference to distinguish in grammar from Romanian except for the Cyrillic alphabet. The choice of the Cyrillic alphabet had been a topic of debate among Soviet scholars even before the foundation of the MASSR. The alphabet, however, was never imposed on the Moldovans, as is often argued (King, 2000).

Through the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact of 1939, the non-aggression pact between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany whereby the USSR was awarded Bessarabia (see box 1, map 4), the Soviets switched from encouraging revolution in Romanian Bessarabia to outright annexation, thus creating a larger Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic (Teague, 2004). Especially after 1940, when parts of the Romanian provinces Bukovina and Bessarabia were annexed by the Soviet Union and mostly absorbed into an enlarged Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic (MSSR), two independent people seemed to arise where before there had only be one. Along with Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, Moldova was among those territories whose fates were determined by the Molotov-Ribbentrop agreements (Teague, 2004).

After World War II the ethnic structure of Moldova's population was changed significantly. Ethnic Romanians (mostly upper and middle class) fled to return to Romania and at the same time substantial migration from other Soviet republics occurred to meet labour demands generated by an ambitious industrial effort.

From the interview with Slagter (Interview Slagter, 2009) it became clear that the borders in the Soviet Union were meant to bring certain ethnic groups together. Slagter argues that according to communist ideology, cultural expressions were disguised symbols of class struggle. Therefore it was necessary to take distance from one's own culture. Ethnic homogeneity was seen as dangerous as it strengthens class struggle. This explains the tactical motives imposed on Moldova by the Soviets.

Between 1940 and the collapse of the Soviet Union, Moscow's major goal was to construct a new Moldovan identity that further distinguished Moldovans from Romanians. This meant that Moldovans were divided over their identity and relations with both Romania and Russia by the time of independence in 1991 (Stent, 2007).

Post-Soviet period
As suddenly as the MASSR was established it all came to an end. In August 1989, the Moldovans rejected the key feature that had long distinguished them from Romanians: the use of the Russian alphabet. When the Soviet Union fell apart in 1991, many people assumed that the two Moldova's would automatically unite within a greater Romania (Lewis, 2004). Many publicly affirmed that the peoples of Romania and Soviet Moldovan shared a single, pan-Romanian national identity. Moldovan, now written like Romanian in the Latin alphabet, was declared the sole official language of the republic. Its identity with Romania was recognized by law. While gatherings in Tallinn, Vilnius, Riga and other Soviet capitals celebrated the revival of indigenous cultures and identities in the late 1980s, crowds in the Moldovan capital of Chisinau seemed to do exactly the opposite, rejecting the existence of a separate Moldovan nation and adopting the Romanian tricolour, national anthem and official language (King, 2000). Moldovan nationalism ultimately proved to be rather strange: a nationalism that succeeded in gaining an independent state but seemed to fail in making an independent nation. However, since the declaration of independence in 1991, Moldova's government and population at large have been far less sanguine about their Romanian identity than either the pan-Romanians or western analysts (who predicted a quick political unification of Moldova with Romania) had imagined. In the 1990s relations between Chisinau and Bucharest cooled considerably. A full scale war in 1992 between the central Moldovan government and groups intended on separation and reintegration with Russia polarized the population and intensified debates over cultural identity and relations with both Bucharest and Moscow.

History had taken the two Moldovan societies in such different directions that most of their inhabitants were aware more of their differences than their similarities (Lewis, 2004). The history shared with Romania had been rather painful. The Moldovans had been maltreated by the Romanians for long time; they were often seen as a 'farmer's people' who spoke in a Romanian dialect (Interview Jacobovits, 2009).

3.2. Moldova after independency

The birth of Moldova in 1991 was violent and contested. In the late Gorbachev period, when the Moldovan-speaking population was reasserting its separateness, the mainly Russian-speaking population of Transnistria and the Turkic-speaking Gagauz minority declared separate republics within Moldova. Although all constituent Soviet republics were multi-ethnic, it was more difficult for Moldova than any other former Soviet State to keep its population in one state. Between 1990 and 1992 there was major fighting between secessionist Tiraspol and the central government forces from Chisinau and by the time a ceasefire was declared in 1992, Russian forces from the fourteenth Army had come to aid of the separatists and were occupying Transnistria (Stent, 2007). Currently the conflict with Transnistria is not solved, although it has come to some rest, Transnistria has its own government and political administration. Remarkable is that Transnistria is not recognized by any member of the United Nations, also not by Russia.

Two ideological models
In the first years after independence two ideological models were competing for post-Soviet nation-building in Moldova: Romanianism and Moldovanism. In the Soviet-theory Moldovanism was based on the notion that the language between Romania and Moldova was distinct and therefore Moldova had a separate identity distinct from Romania (Roper, 2006). Although contemporary Moldovanism acknowledges that the two languages are not different, the similarity in language does not mean that Moldova doesn't have a distinct identity.

Moldovanism
The Soviet attempts, which started after 1924 and were fully implemented after 1940, to strongly emphasize the local Moldovan identity and transform it into a separate ethnicity, as well as its reiteration in the post-independence Moldovan politics, especially during the Communist government (2001-2009), is often referred to as Moldovanism. The Moldovanist position refutes the Romanian-Moldovan ethnic unity, and also at times the existence of a common language. Since Moldovan is widely considered merely as a political term used to designate the Romanian language, the supporters of a distinct language are often regarded as anti-scientific or politicians. A typical example is the Moldovan-Romanian dictionary.
In this context Moldovanism calls for the promotion of a Moldovan version of culture, history and symbols at least in its classical version, for a multi-vector foreign policy orientation.

Romanianism
The term Romanianism was coined to point at the groups striving for unification with Greater Romania in the first years after Moldova's independency. Soon after independency the Popular Front (this was a popular Moldovan political party in the early days of independence) started to lose its mass support, most of all because it pressed for immediate unification with Romania. Most Moldovans, however, learned to appreciate independency and realistically weigh the cultural advantages of unification and its political and economic disadvantages (van Meurs, 1998). Romanianism in a nutshell is advocating placing culture, history and symbols in a pan-Romanian context and has an unequivocal Western orientation in terms of foreign policy.

In the beginning of the 1990s also in the political spectrum in Romania, several nationalist political parties called for the reintegration of the former Romanian lands which had become parts of Ukraine and Moldova. For many Romanians, the return of 'the sacred land of Bessarabia' was essential to eradicating the consequences of World War II and the legacy of communism (King, 1994). The Romanians' patronizing attitude eventually pushed the Moldovan leadership into adopting a stronger line on Moldovan identity. Former Moldovan president Snegur made that perfectly clear in his "Our home" speech:

> *"Our Moldovan people no longer wish to be a bargaining chip or the victim of someone else. They no longer wish to hear how (someone else) claims their country as its own territory (..) as if it had no genuine owners (King, 1994)".*

The turning point of Moldovan politics indicated a strong Moldovanist, pro-independence line, while politicians in Romania were still advocating the reintegration of the lands lost in 1940. Furthermore in that same period (at the beginning of the 1990s) threats of territorial separatism coming from the Gagauzi and Transnistrians stressed the concept of Moldovan citizenship as the foundation of Moldovan statehood (King, 1994).

3.3. Current situation

Basic facts and indicators

Moldova, with a population of 3.3 million people (Transnistria excluded), remains one of the poorest countries in Europe despite recent progress from its small economic base. It enjoys a favorable climate and good farmland but has no major mineral deposits besides. As a result, the economy depends heavily on agriculture, featuring fruits, vegetables, wine, and tobacco. The dependence on agriculture results in a 40 % share of agricultural occupations in labour force (industry 16% and services 43,3%). Moldova must import almost all of its energy supplies and is most of all dependent on Russian energy. This has been problematic in the past as Transnistria functions as a transit country for Russian gas and electrics to Moldova. In 2005 it was cut off power and gas for a while due to disputes over pricing (CIA Factbook, 2010). The economy in 2010 still remains vulnerable to political uncertainty, weak administrative capacity, vested bureaucratic interests, higher fuel prices and the skepticism of foreign investors as well as the presence of an illegal separatist regime in Moldova's Transnistria region (CIA Factbook, 2010).

To discuss Moldova's current situation I also draw attention to the comparison of some economic and social indicators by comparing Moldova with six other European countries (The Netherlands, Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation and Ukraine). Hereby I try to get insights in Moldova's circumstances on a European level. In the table 1 information about these seven European countries is derived to show the mutual differences in remittance inflows, emigration rate, GDP per capita, population living below $2 a day, population living below the national poverty line, government expenditure on health and public expenditure on primary education per pupil. This data is derived from the Human Development Index from the United Nations Development Program (see: hdrstats.undp.org).

Moldova is ranked 117th on the Human Development Index, this implies that Moldova, in relation to other European countries, is settled in last place in this index. The other countries in the comparison belong to the EU's eastern border, are a reference point (Netherlands) or have a special position towards Moldova as neighbours or former occupier (Russia and Romania). In comparing Moldova to these countries, it shows Moldova has a remarkable amount of remittances that lives up to 38% of the GDP. This implies that lots of Moldovans work abroad and send money home. Due to unemployment and low living standards lots of Moldovans intend to find jobs abroad to improve their living circumstances (The World Bank, 2009). These people vary from educated, non-educated and students. Some of them leave their children with elderly family members to improve their living standards (The World Bank, 2009). Russia , for example, has a new policy to attract labour workers from e.g. Moldova and Ukraine. This also moves Russians in Moldova to work in their land of origin (Politcom, 2010). Furthermore GDP per capita is very low compared to neighbouring countries Romania and Ukraine and almost one third of the Moldovan population lives below $2 a day. Table 1 draws a clear picture of the position Moldova is in and that it will take some efforts to grow to the level of Ukraine or Romania.

	*	Remittance inflows as a % of GDP 2007	Emigration rate % 2000-2002	GDP Per capita (PPP US$) 2007	Population living below $2 a day % 2000-2007	Population living below the national poverty line (%) 2000-2006	Government expenditure on health per capita (ppp US$) 2006	Public current expenditure on primary education per pupil (ppp US$)
Rank	Very High Human development							
6	NL	0.3	4.7	38,694	..	..	2,768	5,572
36	CR	0.8	3.5	29,144	<2	..	1,309	2,242
	High human development							
41	P	2.6	5.1	15,987	<2	14.8	636	3,155
63	R	5.6	4.6	12,369	3.4	28.9	433	941
71	RF	0.3	7.7	14,690	...	19,6	404	...
	Medium human development							
85	U	3.9	10.9	6,914	<2	19.5	298	..
117	M	38.3	14.3	2,551	28.9	48.5	107	..

Table 1. Source: UNDP human development index. Human development report 2009 data.

The * marked table refers to the countries represented these are:
NL: Netherlands
CR: Czech Republic
P: Poland
R: Romania
RF: Russian Federation
U: Ukraine
M: Moldova

Year	Russia (71)	Romania (63)	Moldova (117)
1990	0.8210	0.7860	0.7350
1995	0.7770	0.7800	0.6820
2000	/	0.7880	0.6830
2005	0.8040	0.8240	0.7120
2006	0.8110	0.8320	0.7180
2007	0.8170	0.8370	0.7200

Table 2. Trends in Human Development Index. Source: UNDP Human development report 2009.

In table 2 trends in Human Development Index (HDI) are drawn to show how Moldova, Russia and Romania have developed in the past twenty years, in brackets is their rank in HDI based on 182 countries in the world. This index is based on a composite index measuring average achievement in three basic dimensions of human development; a long and healthy life, access to knowledge and a decent standard of living (hdrstats.undp.org, 2010). The HDI sets a minimum and a maximum for each dimension, called goalposts, and then shows where each country stands in relation to these goalposts, expressed as a value between 0 and 1. It is not a comprehensive measure of human development but it does provide a prism for viewing human progress and the complex relationship between income and well-being. Remarkable is the decline of all three countries in the period 1990-1995, right after the fall of the Soviet regime. In Moldova the circumstances in 1990 (0.7350) were better than in 2007 (0.7200). But the same situation counts for Russia, the HDI was also better in 1990 than it is in 2007, although there is some progress in the last three years (2005-2007). Romania shows a positive development in HDI over the past twenty years. But Romania is not a post-Soviet state and was therefore not hit hard by the Soviet fall in the beginning of the 1990s.

Political situation
Moldova's trajectory in the nineteen years since independency has been problematic. The country remains poor, and the existence of Transnistria as a haven for smuggling and non-transparent economic activity further complicates its economic development (Stent, 2007). The EU's role in influencing the future of Moldova and the other countries in the Eastern Partnership has two main components; its willingness to offer closer association to these countries and how it balances the need for good relations with Russia against encouraging to seek closer Euro-Atlantic integration. According to Stent (2007) it is undeniable that the prospect of membership and the necessity of working through every chapter of the *acquis communitaire* enabled them to move from post-communism to democracy and free markets. In the absence of these concrete incentives and the prospect of integration, the EU's ability to influence developments in these countries will remain limited.

In April 2009 parliamentary elections were held and these led to a victory of the Party of Moldovan Communist of president Voronin. The announcement of the election results led to riots in Chisinau, attacks on the parliament and presidential palace and a subsequent crackdown by the government against youth, media and opposition parties (Popescu, 2009). The riots led to a huge polarization of the Moldovan society. The protesters were mostly students gathered together to claim that the election results were false. The aftermath was chaotic; the Moldovan president Voronin accused the Romanian government of instigating the violent protests (Trouw, 25/04/2009). In July 2009 new elections were held and now the opposition won and formed the coalition Alliance for European Integration, until now there is still no president chosen. They need the Communist party to elect a president and the Communist party is slowing-down this process.
The communist party is still driven on Soviet nostalgia and their notion of a multicultural society. According to Slagter (Interview, 2009) this is based on the Soviet notion of the multicultural society and erasing certain historical and cultural backgrounds. This is what they tried in Moldova in the first place. They have tried to erase the Romanian historical and cultural background and imposed the thought of the separate Moldovan nation. This tactic appeared to be rather confusing as the Moldovans are still questioning their national identity.

Chapter 4
The Moldovan state and nation; two separate things

This chapter will answer the second part of the first sub question of what can be said about Moldovan national identity. It will emphasize on two strands; Romanianism and Moldovanism. These strands were leading in the debates about the Moldovan nationhood in the 1990s.

4.1. Who are the Moldovans?

The Moldovan myth invented by the Soviets consisted of four parts; an independent Moldovan language, an independent Moldovan nation, an independent state and an independent Moldovan culture (van Meurs, 1998). This notion matches the constructivist view of nations (see chapter two) as it is argued that nations are artificial creations founded on a myth. In the Moldovan case this myth was an elite project produced by Soviet leaders.

As King stated in (2000):
"*The curious history of the Moldovans is not about Stalinist denationalization followed by national rebirth, nor is it about the struggle of an ancient Moldovan nation for self-determination. Rather, it is a history of fretful and sometimes violent projects to define the boundaries of the Romanian nation, the desiderata of authentic national culture and the meaning of nationhood itself*".

This artificial dichotomy between Moldovan and Romanian nationhood has been at the forefront of debates for several years. In no other post-Soviet republic except Moldova have inhabitants continued to argue about the existence of the nation itself. What stands out in the Moldovan case is the unsettled nature of the essentials of nationality as there has never been general agreement on who the Moldovans are (King, 2000).

When the Soviets began their nation-building project in the 1920s their official position, expounded in innumerable works in linguistics and historiography, was that Moldovans formed a distinct historical nation. While related to the Romanians, the Moldovans were nevertheless held to be a separate people with their own customs, traditions and most importantly; language. According to Soviet scholars the Moldovans had emerged as a result of the cultural 'symbiosis' of two groups: the indigenous tribes of the Carpathians and the region between the Prut and Dniester rivers, Romanized during the period of Roman occupation in the second and third centuries AD and the Slavs, who arrived in the region in the sixth and seventh centuries (King, 2003).

In a population census held in1989, 64% of the population described themselves as Moldovan, 14% as Ukrainian, 13% as Russian, 3.5% as Gagauz, 2% as Bulgarian and 1.5% Jewish. Many Jewish members, as well as some Russians and Ukrainians, have left since that time (Lewis, 2004).

A 1992 survey, by American professor William Crowther, showed that 87% of the Romanian-speaking population of Moldova considered themselves 'Moldovan' rather than Romanian (King, 2000). According to a 2002 study, among self-declared Moldovans, more than 80% consider themselves as different from Romanians, and only 5% see no difference at all (Kolsto, 2002). In the last census of 2004 (see Annex I), 75% considered themselves Moldovan and only 2.2 % Romanian. This shows that Moldovans sees themselves as distinct from Romanian and emphasize the sui generis Moldovan nationhood.
According to Dura (Interview, 2010) if you want to describe the Moldovan identity it is more a sub-national and regional identity. It is an identity in fluctuation and therefore still an artificial identity.

History of the Moldovan nation
Before and during the 17th century, the inhabitants of the principality of Moldavia called themselves "Moldovan", while speaking a language identical to that of Wallachians and Transylvanians. However they all also called themselves Romanians and their language Romanian, as indicated by several sources since the 16the century (King, 2000).

In 1812 the eastern part of the principality of Moldavia, Bessarabia, which includes the current territory of Republic of Moldova (except Transnistria) was occupied by the Russian empire. This sole event seems to have a decisive impact on the much later Romanian-Moldovan identity controversy. While the other Romanian-speaking provinces moved faster towards a pan-Romanian national conscience, Bessarabia had its own distinct dynamic.
In 1918 Bessarabia joined the kingdom of Romania. The unified Romanian state promoted a common identity for all its Romanian-speaking inhabitants. Owing partly to its relative underdevelopment, compared to other regions of greater Romania, the integration process of Bessarabia in the unified Romanian state was less successful than in other regions and was soon to be disrupted by the Soviet occupation (King, 2000). In 1940, when Bessarabia, along with northern Bukovina was forcefully incorporated into the USSR, the Soviet authorities took several steps to eliminate the Romanian identity of Moldovans. For instance by the physical elimination of pan-Romanian supporters, deemed as enemies of the people (Bugai, 1999). The Moldovan native language had to be written in Cyrillic script, introduced by the Soviets, and its name had to be 'Moldovan language' forbidding the use of the name "Romanian language". The harsh anti-Romanian Soviet policy left its own trace on the identity of Moldovans (King, 2000).

4.2. Moldovanism and Romanianism

As stated before, two main strands were at the forefront in Moldova after independency. These were Moldovanism and Romanianism, where Moldovanism lay emphasize on being distinct and different from Romanian, the advocates of Romanianism tend to question this distinctiveness and see Moldovans as a regional variation of a common Romanian history and pan-Romanian culture.

Thus Moldovan and Romanian identities are seen by Romanianists as complimentary, while for Moldovanists they are competitive (Protsyk, 2007). These two approaches of the titular group's identity entail differences in domestic and foreign policy. While Moldovanism calls for a Moldovan version of culture and a multi-vector foreign policy orientation, Romanianism advocates a pan-Romanian context and has an unequivocal Western orientation in terms of foreign policy (Protsyk, 2007).

This had thus its consequences on the thinking about Moldovan national identity in politics. Debates over Moldovanism and Romanianism provided the strongest inspiration for political action in the early 1990s. The Romanist orientation of key leaders in the Popular Front, a mass political movement that dominated political life in Moldova at the beginning of the 1990s, explains the political salience of a policy agenda associated with a Romanian identity complex. This resulted for example in a language law changing the state language from Cyrillic to Latin alphabet and the adoption of the Romanian anthem.

What at first sight seemed as a movement in the late 1980s for Romanian national rebirth after decades of Soviet rule was in fact an intense and multifaceted debate about the fundamentals of Moldovanness. Even in the late 1990s, individual citizens were divided over the identity question, with most referring to themselves and their language as 'Moldovan' but an important minority opting for 'Romanian'. Why this situation has obtained is still disputable. Three major schools of thought have emerged to explain it (King, 2003):

1. Conspiratorial theory or Moldovan identity: this view is actually a mirror image of the Soviet version. In their view the true heritage of the Moldovans is simply Romanian. All Moldovans, if given a chance, would undoubtedly recognize and embrace their Romanian heritage.
2. Denationalisation theory: in this view Moldovans are certainly Romanians, but decades of Soviet cultural policy have had a deleterious effect on Moldovan's national consciousness. Therefore Moldovans have lost touch with their past, and only a sustained effort at nation-building can expunge the legacies of the Soviet period. This view is supported by the country's most prominent scholars.
3. Historical theory of Moldovanness: According to this version many Moldovans continue to think of themselves as a nation apart simply because, in fact they are one. On this view the history of the present Republic of Moldova can be traced back to the distinct political and cultural identities of the Moldovan lands in the Middle Ages and the Ottoman Period. This view has been supported by the communist government of Voronin.

The results of the 2004 census underscored the successes of the Moldovanist project. The choice of ethnic self-identification in the census was highly politicized due to the presence of 'Moldovan' and 'Romanian' answer options in the census question that asked about ethnic affiliation (see annex I). Only 2.2. percent of citizens chose to identify themselves as Romanians in 2004, while 75.8 percent stated that they were Moldovans (Protsyk, 2007).

4.3. Minority groups and Transnistria

The search for the meaning of the Moldovan identity in the last decade, has led to political conflict and ultimately civil war. Moldova is geographically and culturally situated between Europe and Eurasia, and this location has made the development of a cohesive Moldovan identity problematic. The 1992 civil war and separatist state of Transnistria demonstrates the difficulties that Moldovans had in coming to terms with their identity. Transnistria has its own flag, monetary unit, police force, government and parliament (Homan, 2009). Transnistria's ethnic composition (see table 3) is unlike the rest of Moldova, and the region does not share the same interwar history as the rest of the country as part of so called ''Greater Romania'' (Homan, 2009). As a result of these historical and cultural differences, the population composition is also different than in Moldova (see table 3).

|	Moldova	Transnistria
Population	Moldovan 78,2% Ukrainian 8,4% Russian 5,8% Gagauz 4,4% Bulgarian 1,9% Other 1,3% Based on population census 2004	Moldovan 31,9 % Russian 30,4% Ukrainian 28,8 % Data of 2005
Language (official)	Moldovan Recognized regional languages: Gagauz, Russian, Ukrainian and Bulgarian.	Russian, Moldovan (only in Cyrillic form) and Ukrainian
Politics	Unitary parliamentary representative democratic republic. President is head of the state and elected by the Moldovan parliament. In 2009 majority in parliament for the Alliance of European integration. Two former rounds to elect a president have failed. A third round is scheduled for 2010.	Multi- party system with elected president by popular vote. President Smirnov in power since 1990.
Religion	Eastern Orthodox Church (93,3%)	Eastern Orthodox Church (91%)

Table 3: Composition of population, language, politics and religion in Moldova and Transnistria. Sources: National Bureau of Statistics of Moldova and 2004 census of Transnistrian region (2004) derived from www.statistica.md

As a matter of fact many of the ethnic Russians and Ukrainians that currently reside in Transnistria were not born in Moldova and only recently came to the country in the 1980s and 1990s. This makes government policies towards how to establish the importance of Moldovan language acquisition difficult (Roper, 2006). Russian remains an important official state language in Transnistria; this creates a struggle for the Moldovan government. As table 3 shows the Moldovan language is only applicable when written in Cyrillic. This implies that Transnistria cleary refutes a Moldovan-Romanian identity construction. The struggle over identity is an important issue for any country that is considering implementing regional autonomy or a federal structure as these options provide for competing local identities. An important debate within Moldovan civil society over the issue of federalization has involved how a federal system devolves power to local Transnistrian elites that reject contemporary Moldovan identity (Roper, 2006). Due to the absence of ethnic divisions, there is not real hostility towards each other. The conflict is mostly based on political contradictions between the pro-Russian elite in Transnistria and the nationalistic, governing elite in Chisinau (Homan, 2009). Although the problem with Transnistria is not solved, it seems that it has come to a certain rest. As (Interview Dura, 2010) one of the experts stated the Transnistria problem was not even in the election debates of 2009 parliamentary elections. It seems as if the Moldovan society has moved on.

Although for their perspective on EU membership in the future, it is still a problem that needs to be solved. The EU is not likely to make the same mistake as in Cyprus and integrate another country with an internal conflict into the EU (Interview Dura, 2010).

Besides Transnistria, there is another region within Moldova that has a special status namely Gagauz. The Gagauz are a Turkic-speaking people that came to the region during the 18th century (during the Ottoman occupation, see chapter 3).The region has its own government and their main conversation language is Russian (Homan, 2009). Other important minority groups in Moldova are the Ukrainians, Roma's, Bulgarians and Russians (see map 4). Map 4 shows how Moldova's population composition was dispersed over the country in 1989. The multicultural and multilingual aspects can be seen as important features of Moldova. These are aspects of the Moldovan national identity that have always been there. Moldovans have always been able to speak several languages and this has never been a real issue (Interview Jacobovits, 2009).
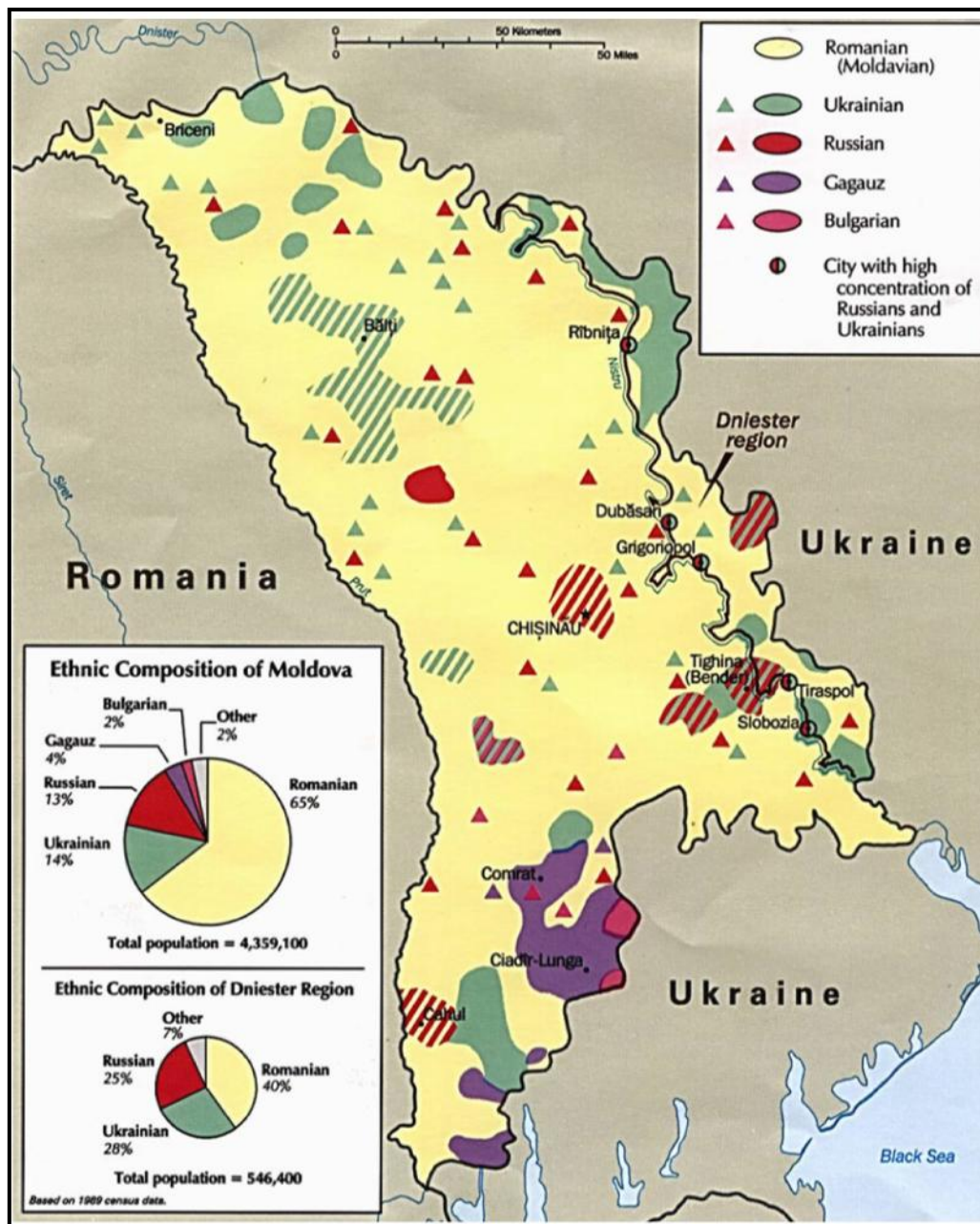
Map 4: Major ethnic composition Moldova at the 1989 census
Source: /www.fpa.org/

4.4. Moldovan national identity in relation to Romania

Constructing a nation from what used to be the ethnically and culturally diverse population of the Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic has proved to be a difficult process (Protsyk, 2007). This process has taken place simultaneously with other major and social transformations involving building state institutions and creating the foundations of a political democracy and a market economy.

Moldova was the only Soviet republic whose core nationality shared a potential national identity with a population (Romanians) beyond the borders of the Soviet Union and it remains the only Soviet successor state whose titular population is divided over the essentials of its own history and culture (King, 2003). In the early days of independence the issue of unification with greater Romania played a major role in structuring the political discourse, also argued by Protsyk (2007), cited below:

"*Independent Moldova inherited from the Soviet Union a number of serious challenges rooted in the cultural and ethnic make-up of its population. The very idea of independence was questioned, not only by large segments of the minority and titular ethnic groups, which supported the preservation of the Soviet Union, but also by a substantial portion of the titular group's political and cultural elite, which saw unification with Romania as the ultimate goal of Moldova's political transformation*" (Protsyk, 2007).

From the three expert interviews I conducted there was overall agreement that the majority of the Moldovan population sees itself as Moldovans and not as Romanians. This was also the result of the census in 2004 (see Annex 1). The relationship between Moldova and Romania has been moving up and down since World War II. The maltreatment by the Romanians has contributed to a distance between Romanians and Moldovans (Interview Jacobovits, 2009). Moldova has a more rural culture than Romania and that might also be one of the reasons why not everyone is in favour of rapprochement to Romania, they see them more as arrogant urban dwellers (Interview Slagter, 2009).

According to Protsyk (2007) Moldova's scores on quantitative indicators which measure the strength of national identity- for example the strength of national pride, the level of support for independence and the level of national unity- are similar to the scores of countries that generally considered to have been more successful in their pursuit of nation-building goals after the fall of communism. Ethnic characteristics based on a belief of common descent and/or shared historical, linguistic and religious experiences are thus essential for creating a sense of a 'natural' political community. When there is a high degree of disagreement about the content of the ethnic identity of a titular group, as in the case of Moldova, nation-building projects face some additional challenges (Protsyk, 2007).

Chapter 5
Moldova and the European Union

In this chapter two main elements of this thesis will be analysed. The first is the European discourse on Eastern Europe, in its external policies. Quotations from EU documents and Dutch Ministry communication to parliament will be compared on their stand on the Eastern Partnership. The other element is the specific effect of the Eastern Partnership on nation-building in Moldova. The Eastern Partnership was officially launched in 2009 and concerns the following six countries: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. Only three of the countries are geographically on the European continent (Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine), the others are in the Southern Caucasus. This distinction is also made in the EU documents (Eastern Partnership, 2008). This implies that two sub questions are taken into account in this chapter; what does the Eastern Partnership imply for Moldova and what elements of the Eastern Partnership could influence nation-building and how could they be of influence?

5.1. The concept of Eastern Europe

The concept of Eastern Europe as a variant of the East was invented in the eighteenth century, when Eastern Europe was demarcated as being a part of Europe by geography but still in process of becoming fully European in political and cultural sense.
Inventing Eastern Europe was a project of philosophical and geographical synthesis carried out by the men and women of the Enlightenment. Obviously, the lands of Eastern Europe were not in themselves invented or fictitious; those lands and the people who lived in them were always quite real, and did indeed lie relatively to the east of other lands that lay relatively to the west. The project of invention was not merely a matter of endowing those real lands with invented or mythological attributes, though such endowment certainly flourished in the eighteenth century (Wolff, 1994).

The region's difference from Western Europe became conceptualized as a distance from an idealized Europe (Kuus, 2007). Eastern Europe was included in the geographical entity called Europe but simultaneously excluded from it as a political or cultural entity. Eastern Europe became a repository of negative connotations within Europe. Conceptually it became a halfway house between Europe and Asia; not simply backward, but a learner, an experiment and a testing ground, a gigantic specimen to which the most advanced legal and administrative ideas could be applied with a completeness impossible in western Europe (Kuus, 2007). According to Kuus Eastern Europe has undergone a number of transformations since its inception, but its premise of otherness has persisted.
This conceptualizing of Eastern Europe as 'the other' is important as this discourse is also used in policy documents concerning the EU's external policy. The European Union is continuously shaping Europe in an 'us' and 'other'. Van Houtum & Pijpers (2007) already pointed at this colonial mind-set in the way of (b)ordering the world in their work reflecting on the European Union as gated community. According to them the 'us' is the 'good' world and the 'other' is the 'bad' desperately seeking for help and order to develop into the 'good' direction. It seems like the EU will show them the way and lead them to a good and ordered world.

This discourse can for instance be observed in a letter from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to inform the parliament on the Eastern Partnership in March 2009, stating that the countries involved are 'learners':

'*In this transition process the EU is playing a more and more important role; as trade partner, as investor, as donor and as an example*' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009).

This sentence is crucial because it is the basis of the Dutch vision towards the Eastern partners. In the transition process (the process to help the countries engaged in the Eastern Partnership to become safe, stable and prosperous in the long run) the EU is functioning not only as trade partner, investor and donor but also as an example; the Eastern partners are learners and the EU could be their teacher. This creates an unequal relationship and points directly at the concept of Eastern Europe in the era of the enlightenment to conclude that not much has changed since then. The comparison of Eastern Europe and Western Europe still tends to turn out in a relationship with the mature and immature. This is also what Kuus claims in her work I cite here:

"*There are two key nuances to these patterns of representation. First, the framework of the incompetent immature East is based not on a clear-cut dichotomy of Europe and the East but on a gradation or a scale of Europeanness and Eastness, maturity and immaturity. It breaks up the East into the more developed Central Europe and the less developed Eastern one. (..) Second the framework of Europe vs. the East operates through the narrative of values, be it 'European', 'Western', 'civilization' or simply 'shared'*" (Kuus, 2007)

According to her, and I agree here, it is values more than socioeconomic characteristics that function in political rhetoric to distance Central Europe from the East. The quotation below from the Dutch Foreign Affairs letter represents the importance of these values in the Eastern Partnership. One could say that with the help from the EU the transformation process in the Eastern countries has a bigger chance of success. The problem that these countries have with, for example, democracy could lead to tensions with EU norms and values.

Its goal is to give a new impulse to the transformation process so the region can develop as a space of safety, freedom and prosperity. This is in the EU interest and also in the Dutch. A lot of these countries have major problems with democracy, good governance, rule of law, transparency and development of the free market. This could lead to tensions with EU norms and values when the relations are further intensified' (Ministry of foreign affairs, 2009).

Whereas the typification in the eighteenth century in 'Eastern' and 'Western' served to distinguish geographical and ideological points of reference. Today, the division between Eastern and Western Europe has been transformed by competing agendas and cultural processes into one that distinguishes between those that are members of the EU and those that are on the EU periphery (Roper, 2006).

5.2. The Eastern Partnership for Moldova

Over the years the EU has strengthened and intensified its relationship with Moldova through several policy programs, for example the Black Sea Synergy and the European Neighbourhood policy (see ec.europe.eu). In May 2009 the Eastern Partnership was introduced. This partnership is an extension of the ENP and has the objective to be more ambitious and to have a more tailor-made approach. The Eastern Partnership is based on mutual commitments to the rule of law, good governance, respect for human rights, respect for and protection of minorities, principles of market economy and sustainable development (EU commission communication, 2008). The European Commission has explicitly noted that the level of ambition of the relationship will take into account the extent to which these values are reflected in national practices and policy implementation (EU commission communication, 2008). In other words, the level of the adjustments to EU standards will be the guideline of how deep the relationship between Moldova and the EU can go. The changes that the Moldovan government has to make are based on the European values like rule of law and market economy. As the Moldovan form of government is based on Soviet principles with a strong hierarchy and actual power at the top levels (Serebrian, 2004 and King, 2003) the changes are also changes of identity. As the Soviet culture in politics is a part of the Moldovan state identity, the changes to a European school of thought will change that. I believe that the influence of the EU can affect the process of nation-building in Moldova.

The EU interest for an Eastern Partnership has two main goals namely (De Ville e.a., 2009):
1. To ensure safety at the borders of the EU. This concerns an active participation in solving internal conflicts in participating countries, the battle against human trafficking, migration control and fight against terrorism and drugs trafficking.
2. The second goal implies the economic and commercial objectives. The EU has major energy interests in countries like Azerbaijan for their energy resources, at the other hand are the eastern countries important for the transportation of energy from third countries (Russia and the Middle East). By extending the internal market to the eastern neighbours will lead to increasing economical development and to that extent help those countries to become stable.

The EaP for Moldova has also the perspective of free mobility of persons in relation to visa liberalisation or even visa exemption. This would strengthen the European identity of these countries (Interview Slagter, 2009). For example the exchange of knowledge by promoting student exchanges programs. Although one of the side-effects of these exchange programs is the question of how these students are going to apply their gained knowledge and skills when they return (Interview Slagter, 2009).

On EU policy level the Eastern Europe policy is highly determined by Germany. That is the driving force behind the policy, as France is the driving force for the southern neighbours. Germany has absolute no interest in a conflict with Russia about their former states (Interview Jacobovits, 2009). As well Russia as the European Union both strive for a united Europe. The Russian policy is aimed to persuade their former states to have an agreement with Moscow on their (internal) economic or defence policies.

On the matter of Transnistria; Russia has no benefits if this problem is being solved. The current situation is creating opportunities for Russia to put pressure on Moldova. If the EU is striving for a solution in the Transnistria conflict than it should be more prepared to act (Interview Jacobovits, 2009).

According to Russia, the EU is trying to extend its sphere of influence through the Eastern Partnership. At an EU meeting the Russian minister of foreign affairs, Sergei Lavrov, said that EU delegates emphasized that the EaP was not meant to be against Russia. He would like to believe that objective but doesn't (Pop, 21/03/2009) According to a Dutch newspaper it is due to the fact that Poland and Sweden were the initiator of the EaP. Those two countries are more progressive on EU matters and tend to concern less about Russia like Germany, France and the Netherlands do (NRC Handelsblad, 08/05/2009). The momentum for the EaP initiative by Poland and Sweden was well chosen as Ukraine and Georgia were facing major problems threatening security in the region (New York Times, 05/05/2009). Russia was intervening in the Georgian region South Ossetia. Support from EU member states was therefore merely based on the notion to secure stability in the region. Political instability and deteriorating economies in some of these states has alarmed powers in the West, especially Germany, and intensified concern that the East-West divide will only deepen if troubled countries fall back into alignment with Russia. Countries like Belgium, Germany, France, Netherlands and Luxembourg are not in favour of a further enlargement of the EU, while member states like Poland would like to see that the Ukraine becomes a member of the EU (NRC Handelsblad, 08/05/2009).

But how far should the Eastern Partnership go? European member states are already divided over enlargement with Turkey and the Balkan countries. (NRC Handelsblad, 07/05/2009). The EU is internally split over the Eastern Partnership. East European member states see it as a first step for the Eastern neighbours to become an EU member in the future but opponents of further EU enlargement argue that the partnership can function as an alternative for EU membership. Although the EU is quite ambitious for the Eastern partners in their documents, the presence of member state delegates was disappointing at Prague summit in May 2009 to launch the Eastern Partnership (NRC Handelsblad, 07/05/2009). Only ten EU countries were represented by their minister or ambassador, the rest was represented by lower government officials. French president Sarkozy, Prime Minister Gordon Brown (United Kingdom) and Italian president Berlusconi all had other things to do (NRC Handelsblad 07/05/2009).

The action plan
The action plan which was designed for each country involved in the ENP functions also as guideline for each country in the EaP. Each country in the EaP has a country-specific action plan with several steps to be taken to adjust to European values. The action plan set out a comprehensive set of priorities in areas within the scope of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA). Some priorities in the action plan for Moldova are (EU action plan Moldova, 2006);
- Sustained efforts towards a viable solution to the Transnistria conflict.
- Further strengthening the stability and effectiveness of institutions guaranteeing democracy and the rule of law.
- Ensuring respect for the freedom of the media and the freedom of expression
- Further reinforcing administrative and judicial capacity.
- Progress towards a system of efficient, comprehensive state border management on all sectors (especially on smuggling and trafficking routes from Transnistria)
- Ensuring the efficient management of migratory flows, including initiating the process towards conclusion of a readmission agreement between the European Community and Moldova.

In a 2008 progress report by the European commission was stated (EC progress report on Moldova, 2008):

"Moldova remains a partner having made substantive progress in governance and reform over the last years. Overall, during the reporting period, Moldova made progress in most areas of the ENP Action Plan. Major achievements during the reporting period were the pursuit of the reform of the judicial system, the agreement to publish reports of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture, positive cooperation with the EU Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM), active leadership in regional cooperation fora, and enhanced cooperation with the EU on regional and international issues.

Nonetheless, Moldova made no or limited progress in the effective implementation of a number of reforms which constitute key priorities under the ENP Action Plan. These include in particular ensuring the fundamental freedoms of citizens, addressing some market and regulatory issues, and enforcing effectively national strategies in areas such as the fight against corruption, drugs and trafficking in human beings, or in sectors such as transport and energy. As noted in the last report, inadequate allocation of resources, delays with the adoption of secondary legislation or insufficient political backing constitute lasting impediments to the implementation of internal reforms. "

This means that Moldova's perspective of a deep and strengthened relationship is taken some more years. As the progress report is arguing there was progress in certain fields but also some important steps have not yet been taken. Maybe the new government could take more care of that.

European values
The Eastern Partnership is based on European values of democracy, rule of law, good governance, respect for human rights, respect for and protection of minorities, and the principles of the market economy and sustainable development (EC commission, 2008).

The emphasize on European values and fulfilling the conditions of the *acquis communautaire* have led to the comparison of the EU with colonialism and imperialism.
As Böröcz (2000, p.14) states in his work:
"*Viewed from central and eastern Europe, however, it needs to be emphasized that the EU is unique, and quite distinct from the eastern half of the continent, in its key member societies having inherited the entirely of the European colonial legacy. Just on this basis, any analysis of the European Union's behaviour vis-à-vis the surrounding world should seriously consider two empirical expectations: (1) that the formation of the EU might in fact represent a global imperial strategy of sorts, and (2) that the specific histories of colonialism and empire, with their deeply coded and set patterns of inequality, hierarchy, exclusion and power- and especially their techniques pertaining to the projection of that power to the outside world- are reflected in a deep and systematic form in the socio-cultural patterns of the governmentality of the European Union.*"

I think that Böröcz's argument needs some more nuance. The equation of socio-cultural patterns of the governmentality of the European with imperial and colonial histories is in my view quite exaggerated. Although the European Union is indeed causing more separation through its neighbourhood policy discourse and the aim to provide new borderlines throughout Europe is in this respect a failure. The European external policies like the EaP and ENP are ambitious in their documents, nevertheless their impact and influence in the countries concerned is strongly dependent on their government's participation.

The European discourse is based on creating a European continent founded on the same principles of how a society should be functioning. These standards are based on a western idea of society. Although the European Commission is claiming that the EaP is conducted in joint ownership and the principals of conditionality, all the rules and regulations are determined by the EU. The action plans are controlled by the EU and their principles are the priorities of action. For example, for Moldova a high prioritized action is to solve the conflict in Transnistria (paragraph on action plan). This is important for the EU as their aim is to have secure and stable neighbours. However as became clear from the latest elections the Transnistria conflict was not an important factor in the election campaign. In fact it was hardly mentioned (Interview Dura, 2010). That means that the EU might have different priorities than the neighbouring countries themselves. This means that the EU is determining what is happening and what the first steps are to be taken. While Moldova itself could have other concerns which are more realistic to be solved on short notice.

5.3. Effects on nation-building in Moldova

The implementation of the EU action plan is referring to a certain Europeanization. Although the conversion towards a European-oriented society is difficult as the Moldovan society is still suffering from a hierarchical communist society. The European action plan is guiding how the Moldovan nation is supposed to be ruled, based on the European idea of democracy and rule of law (Interview Jacobovits, 2009). The EaP itself has no direct influence on nation-building in Moldova, it is also not its aim (Interview Dura, 2010).

But in the process the EaP can reinforce the nationhood of countries. It could reinforce their independence possibly and particularly vis-à-vis Russia, as it is for example dependent on Russia for its energy and natural gas. The Moldovan communists were not so eager on the Romanians advocating their interests in the EU (Interview Dura, 2010). In 2006, 1 million Moldovans applied for a Romanian passport, which could offer them free movement throughout Europe (Volkskrant, 12/10/2006). Although Romania has offered Romanian passports, only 120,000 passports are provided up till now and that is not much. Former president Voronin was upset about this policy because it could be disruptive for the Moldovan nation (Interview Dura, 2010). In fact if Moldova was a prosperous country no one would have to leave the country and it would also look less to Romania for its identity. The EU contributes to nationhood as the aims are to make Moldova more prosperous or stable and more democratic. According to Dura (Interview, 2010) the EaP could reinforce nation-building on the long-term but it is not that strong to reinforce statehood. Questionable is the overall impact of the EaP in Moldova, as I have shown in section 5.2, the attendance of member states executives at the EaP summit was rather disappointing. The EaP seems priority in only a few of the European member states.

The parliamentary elections of 2009 have changed Moldovan politics. After eight years of communism, the government is now formed by a coalition of four liberal parties allied in Alliance for European Integration. Voronin is not longer the president and it is now time to elect a new president. The new coalition has to be careful not to be too pro-Romanian, argues Dura (Interview, 2010). So far the cooperation with Romania is promising. There are plans for visa agreements for Moldovans so that they can travel more easily to Romania and they are tearing down the barbed wire, which still existed from Soviet days on the Romanian border (Interview Dura, 2010). Romania lobbied hard for the association agreement for Moldova in the EU, which is now negotiated (see: ec.europa.eu/external_relations/moldova).

These signs are encouraging; the government has taken a few steps to address the action plan, in the media for example. In just half a year improvements can be noticed. The short term strategy is that they want to reform for immediate aid. In the long term, they aim at membership, but it is less clear how they want to achieve it (Interview Dura, 2010). Most of the ruling parties view Moldovan identity as European, while the members of the communist party tend to embrace a Russian or Ukrainian orientation. Although there is a generally accepted belief that Moldovan identity is distinct, there is no agreement among elites or the general population as to the exact nature of this identity. For some, the elevation of the Russian language to a state language represents part of Moldovan identity, while others see this action as a challenge to their view of identity (Roper, 2006).

Chapter 6
Conclusion

This last chapter serves as a conclusion of my search on how the EU's Eastern Partnership is of influence in the process of nation-building in Moldova. Although the Eastern Partnership is merely an economic and political initiator of development in Moldova, these changes can indirectly affect nation-building. Yet Moldova has inherited a government institution based on communist principles, democracy changes the relationship between nation and state. This affects the nation-building process. As I referred to in chapter one and two, nation-building is not about 'building a nation' but is about the process to construct a national identity within a certain territory using the power of the state. Therefore a sense of belonging to a national culture is important. As Moldova has questioned its *raison d'état* since the beginning of independence in 1991, the European initiative could shape a momentum to end these discussions. Maybe the perspective of development and prosperity could lead to a Moldovan nationhood without questioning the legitimacy of the state's existence anymore. It is the poorest country in Europe with barely chances for youth to find jobs, therefore they have set their hopes on the EU to help them become more prosperous and freer. When Romania joined the EU in 2007, 1 million Moldovans applied for a Romanian nationality, mostly their motives were economical and it shows that the country needs help to develop economically.

To return to the key question of this thesis *'How and to what extent does the EU's Eastern Partnership influence the process of nation-building in Moldova?'* the following can be concluded:

The Eastern Partnership has no direct influence but if it has it is indirect. Although the scientific literature and results of the expert interviews were quite optimistic about the influence of the action plan and Moldova's cooperation in the Eastern Partnership in relation to economical and political development, the effect on nation-building processes is doubtful. It is clear that the Eastern Partnership and the relationship with the EU created a moment for change. The country has now replaced its communist government by a liberal one. Although the population seems to be quite divided about the pro-European direction. By conducting the EU action plan and meeting the requirements of the European values, Moldova is already changing at a government level. This creates a different relationship between government and civilians. These changes could eventually affect nation-building as the Soviet legacy is disappearing and the Moldovan society is becoming freer and more prosperous.

The 'old' discussions about Romanianism and Moldovanism still influence politics. The Soviet ideology on Moldovanism was implemented by Moldovan politics, especially during the Communist government (2001-2009). The Moldovanist position refutes the Romanian-Moldovan ethnic unity, and also at times the existence of a common language. In this context Moldovanism calls for the promotion of a Moldovan version of culture, history and symbols at least in its classical version, for a multi-vector foreign policy orientation. This was a rather different policy than in the 1990s when the Popular Front was in those days striving for unification with Greater Romania. This policy was based on what was later called Romanianism; advocating to place culture, history and symbols in a pan-Romanian context and an unequivocal Western orientation in terms of foreign policy.

On the question on what the Eastern Partnership implies for Moldova, I can be short. It is not much different than the European Neighbourhood Policy. It is rather an acknowledgement of the fact that the countries at the EU's eastern border have a different status than the southern neighbours. It has promising details for free movement of persons and a deep and comprehensive free trade zone but that is not likely to be achieved in the near future. Most of the reforms in the action plan are based on government structure changes. This means that the old Soviet structures, which were very top-down, should be erased. This might take a long time before changes can be witnessed in the everyday-life of the Moldovan population.

So the EaP does not necessarily make Moldova more Moldovan but it makes it more European. It reinforces the state and reinforces the statehood and how people identify with the state. As I have shown in chapter five on Moldova's progress in implementing the action plan, they still have a long way to go before they can enter the zone of free trade and movement of people throughout Europe. The influence of the action plan on nation-building is rather quite hypothetical in this stage of developments. It all depends how Moldova lives up to EU standards of government for it to be able to benefit from what the EU is offering. It is also dependent on the sustainability of the current liberal government for the action plan to become a success. Moldova's aspiration to become more integrated in the EU is more a desire than a concrete possibility. But I think that when the country is becoming more prosperous and free, the discussions about Moldovanism and Romanianism will eventually disappear. Moldova will be less dependent on Romania and will focus on its own society.

Another confusing aspect of ENP and EaP documents is the objective to avoid new borderlines but indeed causing them. The borders of the EU territory are the borders of the EU member states which implies that the European Union has no border of its own. Although the process of further integration has transformed state borders into internal and external borders of the European Union. This creates confusing language frameworks in ENP and EaP document when discussing EU borders as it can be equated as borders of states. This leads to a new concept of 'supranational borders'. Although the objectives of the EU are ambitious and of good intention, its discourse on Eastern Europe is sometimes quite 'westernized'. It is based on the unequal dichotomy of the immature and the mature. The EU which becomes Moldova's teacher to become a stable, prosperous and free country. I judge these language frameworks in EU and member state documents to be sometimes quite imperialistic and unequal. Therefore the EU's claim that the action plans are based on joint ownership is a farce to me.

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Annexes

Annex 1

Moldova 2004*

Nationality	In 1000s	In %
Moldovans	2.741,770	70
Ukrainians	444,183	11,28
Russians	367,933	9,34
Gagauz	152,755	3,88
Bulgarians	78,170	1,98
Others	140,485	3,57
No answers	13,533	0,34

Moldova 1989

Nationality	In 1000s	In %
Moldovans	2.790,7	64.4
Ukrainians	560,4	13.8
Russians	599,7	12.9
Gagauz	152,7	3.5
Bulgarians	87,7	2
Jews	65,6	1.5
Others	78,1	1.8

Moldova 1979

Nationality	In 1000s	In %
Moldovans	2.525,6	63.9
Ukrainians	505,7	14.2
Russians	560,6	12.8
Gagauz	138	3.4
Bulgarians	80,6	2
Jews	80,1	2
Others	58,8	1.4

Moldova 1970

Nationality	In 1000s	In %
Moldovans	2.303,9	64.5
Ukrainians	506,5	14.1
Russians	414,4	11.6
Gagauz	124,9	3.4
Bulgarians	73,7	2
Jews	98	2.7
Others	47,2	1.7

Moldova 1959

Nationality	In 1000s	In %
Moldovans	1.887,5	65.4
Ukrainians	420,8	14.6
Russians	292,9	10.2
Gagauz	95,8	3.3
Bulgarians	61,6	2.1
Jews	95,1	3.3
Others	25,5	1.1

Moldova Right Bank 2004

Nationality	In 1000s	In %
Moldovans	2.564,565	75.8
Ukrainians	284,199	8.4
Russians	199,616	5.9
Gagauz	148,866	4.4
Romanians	74,433	2.2
Bulgarians	64,283	1.9
Others	33,833	1
No answers	13,533	0.4

Transnistria 2004

Nationality	In 1000s	In %
Moldovans	177,204	31.9
Ukrainians	159,984	28.8
Russians	168,316	30.3
Bulgarians	13,887	2.5
Gagauz	3,888	0.7
Belorussian	3,888	0.7
Germans	2,222	0.4
Others	26,109	4.7

Sources: Airat R.Aklaev "*Democratisation and Ethnic Peace. Patterns of Ethnopolitical Crisis Management in Post Soviet Settings*", Ashgate Publishing Company, Vermont, USA, 1999.

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Annex 2

Interview with George Dura, researcher at the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS) in Brussels, specialized in European neighbourhood Policy, EU relations with Russia, Moldova, Ukraine & Belarus.

Telephone interview held on: 22-01-2010

1. ***When Moldova became independent, questions arose if the Moldovan nation really existed in discussions on Moldovanism and Romanianism, how can Moldovan national identity then be described?***

If you want to somehow describe it, you can describe it as a sub-national and regional identity and not so much as national identity, I would see it as a subgroup of a larger group. In status terms you could call something national identity, it doesn't mean that it really exists, but it is there and it is described in the national constitution. But it would be of the artificial kind, the one we sort of have in Belgium as well. I mean there is no trouble naming it but it doesn't stick with the people necessarily or it will be an identity which will be in constant fluctuation, which will never be settled. It will only be settled after a very long time. Let's assume that Moldova remains an independent state in the way it currently is, even if the Transnistrian conflict isn't solved, and we go back to this question fifty years from now maybe then we can already start talking more about a Moldovan national identity. I think the timeframe is just too short, I mean obviously you are aware of the history and historical facts. I think the people on the ground are quite confused, not what they are but what they should be. I think they are pretty happy to have a regional identity, I mean they are Moldovans no one disputes that. But as a national identity, it depends on their point of view of history, many will say I am Moldovan regionally but I am still a Romanian at heart. Maybe if they have never lived in Romania or even if they are not old enough to have lived in the interwar Romania for instance. I think you can see it in several ways but the bottom-line is, today it is still an artificial national identity. If you look at the latest moves of the current government, as much as the previous communist government but also the other ones, as much as they have tried to promote a sort of a Moldovan nation, based on multi-ethnicity and not necessarily having a strong Moldovan element in it. It was more of a melting pot, you could call Moldovan.

2. ***Do you think that the accession of Romania to the European Union is also influencing the fact that there is now more emphasize on the Romanian aspect in the national identity question?***

It definitely is of influence but more politically. It is always a question; do you want to know what people think or what politicians say or do. The accession of Romania has had an impact on what is said and done in Moldova. As long as the communists where in power it was rather negative, the communists always said 'we don't want Romania to be our advocate in the EU, we can do it on our own'. We have other EU partners to help us, like Hungary or the Baltic states. Romania thus complicates matters for us, we have unresolved identity questions and we need to find our own way. That was under the communists. The people didn't see that way or most of the people, they saw it more as an opportunity to find a

better life, to go abroad, to go to Romania or through Romania go further. This was their dream but at the same time the reality on the ground was different because with Romania joining, the people found it much harder to travel to Europe and Romania because of visa requirements. The hopes of the people were high but actually the reality was quite different and the communist politicians in Moldova were negative. I think they were scared that Romania was even more influential than it actually was in the end. I think Romania hasn't changed its approach to Moldova, it is still the same but now the things have changed in Chisinau, the government is more eager to cooperate with Romania as it has good relations and trade relations, have people to people contacts. Not so much of the identity part but just out of realistic and selfish reasons, just to make sure that the country modernizes advances becomes open to the world have educated citizens, who can travel etcetera. They realize that Romania can help them here because of the contacts between their citizens because of trade and because of Romania's voice in the EU that can sort of help EU policy on Moldova etcetera. A lot of it depends on who is in power in Moldova.

3. *So you are actually suggesting that it is more an economic and political issue rather than it is a question of Moldovan nationhood?*

Definitely, even Moldovans who have applied for citizenship over the years, the minority did it for emotional reasons and felt more nationalistic or Romanian. They have a more emotional bond with Romania, maybe 10 to 20% of them but those are my assumptions, it is not scientifically proved. The majority does it for personal reasons in terms of migration. They were anticipating Romania's accession and thought they could travel in the EU and be a Romanian citizen.

4. *How is the Eastern Partnership of influence on Moldovan state and nationhood?*

First the European neighbourhood policy and then the Eastern Partnership are not about nation-building that is not why they are intended. In the process they may reinforce the nationhood of countries. I am a bit sceptical if they actually do, I think they reinforce their independence possibly and particularly vis-à-vis Russia. We see this also in the case of Georgia and Ukraine. The ENP doesn't work to well, for example in the case of Azerbaijan, and the ENP is not popular. But countries which are poor, like Moldova or Ukraine, wanted to have an alternative to Russian influence. The ENP was rather successful, rather I say. So in this sense, yes it helps them reinforce their nationhood in a sense but it definitely is not a tool for nation-building. Sure the society has become more democratic and become more prosperous, those are the objectives. They become more integrated with European mainstream, economically, politically and socially. Not only having the Russian world view but having a more westernized way of seeing things. If this reinforces the statehood, I think it makes societies more open to debate on those things. You can have a normal debate without having people out on the street fighting. When societies become more prosperous and free they become less interest in those identity issues and again look at Belgium, I think the Belgian's were for a long time not concerned about who or what they were. (..) Romania's influence on Moldova in recent years has done a bit the contrary. It has sort of undermined it by offering a lot of passports or saying they will offer. Up to now, there may be about 120,000 passports given, so that is not that much. Moldovans who get their Romanian passports they still keep their Moldovan passports, they are still Moldovan

citizens. It can be disruptive for a nation. Voronin was very upset about this policy. He went to Brussels to advocate Romania undermining their statehood, it is an attack against our sovereignty and all that. Of course in some sense it is but it is used for political purposes and I think the reality is a bit different.

The ENP or Eastern Partnership have not a direct nation-building quality in them, it is not their aim and it is not even a direct effect. It makes Moldova more European not necessarily more Moldovan. It reinforces the state and reinforces the statehood and how people identify with the state. If Moldova was a prosperous country no one would leave Moldova.

5. *How is the relationship between Moldova and Romania shaped, as it is going back and forth, sometimes intense and sometimes in turmoil. Romanian president Basescu is promising Romanian passports but not really coming forward. How is this reflected in society?*

This is a tricky aspect of Moldovan and Romanian foreign policy. Bacescu (Romanian president) came into power in 2004 and is proactive in the Black Sea area. The policy against Moldova changed also with Romania's perspective to EU membership. They became more aware of the Moldovan Romanians. It was a new approach and policy, they tried to be more proactive and even in the beginning they supported the communists to come into power. Because they had a pro-European message. The differences in conviction, mentality and approach were just too great. The communist's theory on Moldova was very much rooted in Soviet and Stalinist theories on Moldovan statehood. The Romanian policy fell on death-ear, it was not very effective. This is what we want to do, we want to see Moldova in the EU, we want to help Moldova with this and that. But the Moldovans were not interest because it meant that they had to accept the vision of the Romanians. In the elections of 2009, Romanian parties were helping their sister parties in Moldova by sending experts and obviously money, this was done in a more or less transparent way. The communists were accusing them for steering at a coup d'état (..).

6. *What is the new government thinking about that? Will they let Romania help them or not?*

I don't know how long the new government is going to stay in power, it is a coalition between several parties and they have to be careful not be too pro-Romanian. So far they have shown that they can cooperate with Romania, without ideological issues. They have plans to open two more consulates at the border for Moldovans to get their visa and the second is the visa agreements for Moldovans so that they can travel more easily to Romania. Romania is sending a new ambassador to Moldova. They are tearing down the barbed wire, which still existed from Soviet days on the Romanian border. It is another sign that they want to open up to Romania. The Romanian discourse is also more moderate towards Moldova. The atmosphere is okay between the two countries right now. Romania lobbied hard for the association agreement for Moldova in the EU. There is now more an equal negotiation sphere, where before there were more mixed messages.

7. *Moldova has the intention to become an EU member in the future, this is not likely to happen soon, Moldova is already preparing to come up with several requirements to European values. Do you think that they still will be willing to adjust to European values if there is no perspective to membership in the near future? Will they still go on adjusting to European model if there is no perspective?*

Personally I think so. The previous government was saying we want membership and EU integration but they were not doing much. This government was told, we won't offer you EU membership, this is what we can offer: a new agreement on visa, free trade. We advise you to take it. The signs are encouraging, the government has taken a few steps to address the action plan, in media for example. Only in half a year things are a lot better. People feel freer to speak up. We know that there is no membership now, but we will do our homework. I think that they were for now more interested in aid, they needed EU aid/ IMF aid. This is the short term strategy, they want to reform for immediate aid. In the long term, they are thinking for membership, it is less clear how they want to achieve it. I don't know how they will approach the question, will they be a model of ENP state or will they actually start to push more for membership. For now they don't have to do it as they have European members to lobby for their membership, like Romania, Sweden or the UK. They don't even have to do it themselves. They can just focus on their immediate reform.
How Moldova will join is also a different question, I think the Transnistrian conflict is a major issue. I don't think the EU wants a second Cyprus, to have another unresolved conflict with troops on its territory. This is a problem if Moldova wants to progress to membership, it has to solve the problem. If the problem deteriorates, depending on who is in power, will say that Moldova will cut off Transnistria and join the EU without Transnistria. Cut off Transnistria and join Romania and then we don't have to go through the accession process. I don't think those scenario's are very likely, they should be in mind as a reminder that the conflict should be solved. Reminder to the EU that it should be more involved. A lot of EU members are aware of the fact that Romania wants to see Moldova join the EU. If the EU doesn't want Moldova to join they will leave the conflict as it is. Hence if they have a major interest to solve the conflict. Romania would be glad to get rid of Transnistria because it would be a major problem.

Annex 3

Interview with mr. A. Jacobovits de Szeged, former Dutch (top) diplomat and was OSCE and EU Representative for Moldova.

Interview held on 22-08-2009

1. *Hoe kan de Moldavische identiteit omschreven worden, bestaat deze eigenlijk wel?*

Ik denk dat de bevolking als geheel zich echt Moldavisch voelt, dat wil zeggen thuishorend in dat gebied; Bessarabië.

2. *Kun je stellen dat Moldovaren hetzelfde zijn als Bessarabiërs of is dat iets anders?*

Het is geografisch niet helemaal hetzelfde, Bessarabië was het land tussen de Prut en de Dniester. Maar er is een stuk afgehakt door de Sovjets daardoor zijn ze dus een landlocked country geworden. Het eigenlijke Bessarabië ging tot de zee. Er was een groot stuk zwarte zee bij, dat is eraf gesneden, er is wel een stuk bijgeplakt wat nu Transnistrië is. Dus het is niet helemaal hetzelfde maar ruwweg is het natuurlijk wel hetzelfde land, behalve het stuk langs de zee wat eraf is gehaald. En die bevolking daar is natuurlijk wel veranderd in de loop der tijden, vooral door de Joodse exodus. Want er waren ontzettend veel Joden in Chisinau en omgeving en die zijn om allerlei redenen verdwenen, door de Duitsers natuurlijk maar ook door de Russen daarvoor al. Een groot deel van de Joden is ook door de Russen naar Siberië gebracht. Dus dat element is veranderd. Maar het Moldavische boerenelement, dat is gebleven. Over het algemeen zijn het mensen die op het land daar gewoond hebben en die zullen zich dus, ja wat je het wil noemen Bessarabisch of Moldavisch voelen. En niet Roemeens, want dat is belangrijk om dat te onderstrepen, ze hebben dus tussen de wereldoorlogen voor Roemenië gekozen maar zijn door de Roemenen behoorlijk genegerd. Zo'n beetje van die kerels die niet goed Roemeens spreken maar een beetje zo'n land aan de grens waar iedereen armer is, die een beetje anders spreken een accent hebben enfin er niet helemaal bij horen. Het was als een soort arme bevolking die we er ook nog bij hebben gekregen. Dus er werd niet een enorme inspanning gepleegd om dat gedeelte wat was achtergebleven te ontwikkelen. Vervolgens in de Tweede Wereldoorlog, eerst zijn de Sovjets binnengevallen op grond van Ribbentrop-Molotov en toen de Duitsers en de Roemenen samen dat weer terug veroverd hebben zijn dus al die lieden die geheuld hadden met de communisten die zijn gestraft daarvoor, dus daar is enorm huisgehouden door de fascistische Roemenen tegen de zogenaamd communistische Moldaviërs. Er is daar flink opgeruimd en huisgehouden dus er is een enorme spanning ontstaan tussen de Roemenen en de Moldaviërs, die voelden zich gemaltreteerd door de Roemenen. Dus het heeft zeker bijgedragen tot een soort afstand. En ook nu, er zijn natuurlijk mensen die graag bij Roemenie willen horen maar in principe is men anders. Men wil een eigen Moldavië en de regering heeft dat nu erg gestimuleerd. (..).

Dus de Moldavische regering heeft zich afgezet van Roemenië. De taal heet dan ook Moldavisch. Terwijl als je mensen vraagt wat spreekt u zeggen ze Roemeens. Er zijn weinig mensen die dan Moldavisch zeggen. Wat spreken jullie thuis? Roemeens.

Het is een beetje wat er gebeurd is met Joegoslavië. Men zet zich dus echt af, men wil ook over het algemeen niet bij Roemenië horen maar men wil wel bij de EU horen. Niet omdat het zo gezellig is daar maar omdat daar het geld is.

Er is toch wel sprake van een zekere apartheid, natuurlijk degene die van Russische of Oekraïense origine zijn die voelen daar toch wel wat minder voor, spreken soms ook de taal niet. Maar toch is het niet zo krampachtig vind ik als in andere landen van de voormalige Sovjet-Unie waar men de eigen taal bevorderd. Terwijl in Moldavië zie je Russisch opschrift, reclames in het Russisch, dat is ondenkbaar tegenwoordig in de Oekraïne, al het Russisch wat daar was met reclames enzovoort, dat is verwijderd. Terwijl in Odessa is het Oekraïns echt een tweede taal (Odessa is een stad in de Oekraïne, aan de Zwarte Zee, waar van oudsher veel Russen wonen).

3. *Heeft dat misschien te maken met het feit dat in Moldavi*ë *de communistische partij aan het roer zit, terwijl men in de Oekraïne heeft gekozen voor een democratische, liberale weg?*

Nou ik denk dat men gewoon gewend is geraakt aan die vele talen daar, ik hoop dat het niet iets krampachtigs gaat worden want dat kan natuurlijk wel. Vooral als anderen gaan aandringen op een erkenning van de eigen taal, de Oekraïners bijvoorbeeld. Iedereen spreekt net zo makkelijk Russisch als Moldavisch of Roemeens. Maar ze voelen zich wel Bessarabisch, niet Roemeens. Men wil ook niet meer bij Roemenië horen omdat men daar teveel door is verwaarloosd, genegeerd, gestraft is. Dus het is toch een eigenheid denk ik. En de regering (ten tijde van het interview regering Voronin) stimuleert dat, deze is natuurlijk helemaal niet gecharmeerd van Basescu's beleid.

Het is natuurlijk wel zo dat de EU wel invloed heeft op de hele *nation-building* door het actieplan. De uitvoering van het actieplan is natuurlijk al een Europeanisering. Het hele actieplan is natuurlijk vol van aanpassing aan de EU maar eigenlijk aan de westerse waarden, democratie, meerpartijenstaat, onafhankelijke rechtspraak, maar ook dingen als grensbewaking, die op Europese leest geschoeid worden. Alles, er is een enorme invloed en er is natuurlijk een zeker verzet tegen van de overheid om je politieke tegenstander, de mogelijkheid te geven om op televisie op te treden. Die omschakeling is moeilijk en zeker bij lieden zoals Voronin en de zijnen die opgegroeid zijn in een hiërarchische communistische maatschappij, waar de chef de baas is en die bepaalt, de verticaal van de macht zoals het heet. Heel geleidelijk aan zie je dat, als we een nieuwe regering zouden krijgen, de oppositie van 4 partijen een regering zouden vormen, dan denk ik dat je nog meer in de richting gaat van de EU. Dat hele actieplan dat gaat langzaam, en het is natuurlijk een beetje tegen de aard van de huidige machthebbers in, maar het gebeurt wel en ik denk niet dat het de identiteit zo veranderd van de mensen maar het beïnvloedt de natie in hoge mate en de wijze waarop het bestuurd wordt.

4. *Naar aanleiding van de protesten in april 2009 waarin vooral jongeren pleitten voor een Europese koers. Kun je stellen dat er sprake is van een tweesplitsing binnen de populatie waarin de jongeren graag Europa in het vizier houden, omdat er voor hen natuurlijk veel kansen liggen, en het oudere deel zich vasthoudt aan communistische waarden?*

Ja, ik denk het wel. Het is zeker zo dat de jeugd gewoon naar de EU wil maar dat is ook het beleid van de regering dus wat dat betreft, en de jeugd wil verandering ook want het gaat niet vooruit. Er zijn weinig mogelijkheden voor jongeren om iets te doen daar. Een kwart van

de bevolking werkt in het buitenland dus men wil verandering. Maar ik denk dat dat een algemeen fenomeen is in democratieën dat je naar een tijdje een regime gehad te hebben dat je verandering wil. Sommigen dachten dat de communisten bij de tweede verkiezingen nog meer stemmen zouden krijgen. En dat is dus niet gebeurd. Dat geeft toch wel aan dat er iets veranderd in dat land (..).

Voronin heeft in 2003 tijdens zijn nieuwjaarsrede gezegd, wij gaan een Europese koers volgen en willen lid worden van de Europese unie enzovoort. Hij had erg veel hoop op steun van de EU en VS voor de hereniging met Transnistrië. En dat heeft de Europese unie hem niet gegeven. Ik chargeer nauwelijks denk ik als ik zeg dat één het hele Oost-Europa beleid wordt bepaald door Duitsland, dat is de *driving force*, en Duitsland wil geen ruzie met Rusland. Rusland en de EU willen allebei één Europa. Als we dat allebei willen wat zijn dan de problemen daar? Er zijn allerlei problemen maar een politiek probleem is Transnistrië. Onopgelost is wat dus spanning geeft. Het Russische beleid is erop gericht in de hele voormalig Sovjet-Unie om ervoor te zorgen dat geen van die voormalige staten, met uitzondering van de Baltische (die zijn ze kwijt geraakt), besluiten neemt op het gebied van buitenlands beleid maar ook veiligheids- of economisch beleid zonder dat dat eerst het akkoord van Moskou heeft (…).

5. ***Hoe zit het met het conflict in Transnistrië, voor de EU is dat wel cruciaal dat dat wordt opgelost?***

Ik denk dat dat niet wordt opgelost want Rusland heeft daar geen belang bij. Zolang er geen druk wordt uitgeoefend door de VS en de EU op het hoogste niveau dan gebeurt er niks. Noch de VS of de EU is bereid gebleken om daar een serieuze kwestie van te maken. Transnistrië is voor Rusland een manier om Moldavië onder druk te houden. Het is wel interessant dat tijdens de verkiezingsstrijd het probleem van Transnistrië überhaupt niet is besproken. Het speelde helemaal niet. Met name de jongeren die zeggen, dat Transnistrië is alleen maar vervelend en hindert alleen de toenadering tot de EU. Zelfs het economische argument voor Transnistrië, vanwege de staalfabrieken en elektriciteitscentrales is te verwaarlozen. Je zou op andere gebieden iets kunnen doen, denk aan de sanering van de landbouw en de dienstensector. (..)

6. ***Hoe worden de minderheden daarin vertegenwoordigd zoals de Gagauzen, Bulgaren etc?***

De enige serieuze minderheid zijn de Gagauzen, die zijn het moeilijkst. Want zij zijn dus echt Russisch georiënteerd. Hebben een eigen taal, er wordt daar ook veel meer Russisch gesproken. Als tweede taal spreekt men Russisch en niet Moldavisch. Bovendien zijn er ook Gagauzen in Transnistrië. Het is alleen maar een pseudoautonomie. Men voelt zich toch een beetje genegeerd door de Moldavische regering. Maar naarmate die autonomie meer inhoud krijgt, zetten zij zich nu een beetje af omdat ze vinden dat ze onvoldoende autonomie krijgen. Het is wel zaak voor de nieuwe regering om daar aandacht aan te schenken, de Gagauzen zijn natuurlijk Russisch georiënteerd en je moet ze wel meekrijgen.

7. Wat verwacht Moldavië van de Europese unie?

Ze hopen natuurlijk dat ze lid zullen worden van de Europese unie en ze verwachten dat het heel lang zal duren. Maar ze hebben de hoop niet opgegeven. En dat is natuurlijk cruciaal. Men wil een signaal hebben dat men het perspectief van toetreding heeft. Als we dat allemaal doen wat we moeten doen in het actieplan wat dan? Mogen we er dan bij? Dat weten we niet zegt de EU, misschien wel, misschien niet. Men wil gewoon toetreden, men voelt zich Europees.

8. Denkt u dat het er ooit van komt?

Ik denk dat het heel lang gaat duren, helaas. Men kan het niet doen zonder de Oekraïne, dat is dan wel weer een veel grotere hap. Er is grote corruptie in Moldavië en met die Fransen die er niemand meer bij wil hebben. (Frankrijk heeft aangegeven geen EU-uitbreiding meer te willen).

De Europese Unie heeft zeker invloed op *nation-building* door middel van het actieplan, door alle veranderingen die moeten worden doorgevoerd. In de natie, in het bestuur van de natie. Men beseft dat men dat door moet voeren, dus het heeft een enorme invloed. Als psychosociale invloed niet want men voelt zich al Moldaviër. De aard van de natie zal veranderen door de Europese unie.

9. Wat is typisch Moldavisch?

Geografisch, wij zijn het land tussen de Prut en de Dniester. Een typische Moldaviër die sprak allerlei talen, werd daar ook mee opgegroeid. Toch zie je wel steeds meer Russische opschriften verdwijnen zoals in reclames, dus ik denk dat ook de regering dat Moldaviseert. Maar het is gelukkig nog geen issue. Net zoals in Riga of Kiev daar zie je geen reclames meer met Russisch opschrift.

Annex 4

Interview with Drs W. Slagter (MBA) Senior Desk Officer, Eastern Europe and Central Asia division at Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Interview held on 27-08-2009.

1. *In hoeverre speelt die generatiekloof nou een rol in die identiteitsvorming. Dat de jongere generatie heel progressief is en de oudere generatie eigenlijk conservatief is?*

De indruk is dat het een duidelijke rol speelt, maar dat zou iets zijn waar meer sociologisch onderzoek voor nodig zal zijn met name ook in hoeverre dat interessant zou zijn om te onderzoeken. Dan zit je op het gebied van veldonderzoek.

2. *Ja, dat is sowieso interessant en ik vind het ook een interessante vraag wie die jongeren nou precies zijn? Zijn dat nou de Moldaviërs of zijn dat nou ook mensen die Oekraïns zijn of Gagauz?*

Ik kan er niet direct antwoord op geven, maar ik heb de indruk dat het vooral Moldaviërs zijn maar ik weet dit niet zeker, het generatieaspect speelt heel duidelijk een rol. In die zin dat de achterban, de communistische partij, dat zijn vooral de ouderen die achtergebleven zijn, die nog hun pensioentje moeten krijgen. En jongeren zien natuurlijk in dat het zo niet langer gaat. En Moldavië als zodanig is ingeklemd tussen Oost en West en biedt gewoon te weinig ontwikkelingsmogelijkheden. Maar goed nogmaals dat zou veldonderzoek ter plaatse vereisen.

3. *Wat mij vooral opviel in de literatuur is dat er met betrekking tot de kwestie over wie de Moldaviërs zijn, er vaak wordt geschreven over een tweesplitsing tussen 'Moldovanism' en 'Romanianism'.*

Het is zo dat je een groep hebt voor wie een separate identiteit een belangrijk onderdeel vormt van het proces van staatsvorming. Dat is ook de groep van met name de Communistische partij die dat zover doorvoeren, het 'wij spreken geen Roemeens maar Moldavisch'. Wat compleet onzin is want het is gewoon precies dezelfde taal. Het verschilt nog minder van mekaar dan Nederlands en Vlaams. De communisten hebben het idee als wij onszelf Roemeens noemen wat is dan onze *raison d'état*? Dus die proberen heel duidelijk een eigen identiteit te ontwikkelen en grijpen daarbij ook terug op de geschiedenis. Het is een beetje een gechargeerde interpretatie van de geschiedenis om vooral duidelijk te maken 'wij zijn geen provincie van Roemenië'. Er zijn grote groepen die dat vooral niet zien. Wij voelen ons cultureel en historisch het meest verwant met Roemenië. Niet dat daarmee is gezegd dat ze zich meteen willen aansluiten bij Roemenië maar in het proces van verdere toenadering en coherentie speelt ook het aspect van de Europese Unie een rol.

4. *Hoe zou u de nationale Moldavische identiteit omschrijven? U heeft al gezegd Roemeense cultureel historische achtergrond, multiculturele samenleving, maar wat zijn nog meer dingen die daar voor spreken?*

Moldavië is denk ik nog meer als Roemenie een rurale cultuur. En dat is ook een van de redenen waarom in Moldavië lang niet iedereen zo happig is op toenadering tot Roemenië. Die zien ze toch meer een beetje als arrogante stadsbewoners. Hetzelfde proces heb je gezien in Slowakije. Waarin Slowakije zich los heeft gemaakt van Tsjechië. In belangrijke mate een gelijke cultuur. Allebei spreken ze ongeveer dezelfde taal. Tsjechisch en Slowaaks ligt ongeveer even ver van elkaar als Nederlands en Vlaams. De voedingsbodem voor het Slowaakse nationalisme is dat ze zich vaak een beetje veronachtzaam voelden door de Tsjechen en Tsjechië is door Praag natuurlijk altijd een beetje het culturele centrum geweest.

5. *In verschillende wetenschappelijke stukken die ik las stond ook dat een belangrijk onderscheidend element de taalwetten waren in 1991 die het cyrillische schrift vervangen door het Latijns. Bent u daar mee eens?*

Dat kan wel, ik heb te weinig inzicht in de specifieke achtergrond daarvan om daar iets over te kunnen zeggen. Maar het past natuurlijk wel in het kader van het afschudden van de Sovjet erfenis. Het is een proces dat zich overigens in meer landen heeft voorgedaan. De Sovjet-Unie heeft in de tijd het Cyrillische schrift opgelegd aan een heleboel volkeren en talen bijvoorbeeld Kazachs, Turkmeens, Oezbeeks. Daardoor werd ook meteen de band met het eigen historisch verleden verbroken. Tegen die achtergrond is het Cyrillisch schrift opgelegd aan een heleboel volkeren en een onderdeel geworden van de nationaliteitenpolitiek van de Sovjet-Unie. In feite is dat vooral uit de koker van Stalin gekomen. Die is zijn carrière begonnen als commissaris voor de minderheden in 1918 en als etnisch Georgiër had hij er een bepaald andere kijk op dan veel etnische Russen. Hoe zorg ik er nou voor dat al die verschillende volkeren bij elkaar blijven in dat grote rijk?

In de Oekraïne bijvoorbeeld bannen ze eigenlijk alle Russische slogans in het Cyrillisch uit de straten van Kiev. Daar zijn ze heel erg op tegen. In Moldavië is dat veel minder daar zie je nog wel wat Russische opschriften. Denkt u dat gaat veranderen, denkt u dat net als in de Oekraïne daar een aversie tegen ontstaat?

Dat zou kunnen. Ik denk het niet, er is wel een zekere mate van etnische harmonie weten te behouden in Moldavië. Omdat ze allemaal met elkaar blijven samenleven. In die landen waar nogal sterke anti-Russische taalpolitiek wordt gevoerd, zoals bijvoorbeeld in de Baltische staten en ook in de Oekraïne tot op zekere hoogte, leidt dat heel duidelijk tot een negatieve reactie van het Russischtalige bevolkingsdeel. De vraag is of je dat wil? Het heeft er natuurlijk wel toe geleid dat het minderhedenprobleem als zodanig in Moldavië niet echt speelt. Maar het zou kunnen, naarmate in Moldavië meer nationalistische elementen de overhand zouden krijgen die veel duidelijker af willen van die Sovjet erfenis. Dan zou het goed kunnen zijn dat de taalpolitiek daar een onderdeel van vormt. En dat kan weer leiden tot spanningen binnen de samenleving. De keerzijde van de medaille is dat daardoor, maar dat is ook min of meer bewuste politiek, zich niet echt een Moldavisch nationalisme kan ontwikkelen.

6. Als je op dit moment de huidige situatie bekijkt, wat zijn nu de grootste problemen in Moldavië? Om dat gevoel te krijgen, dat gevoel van eenheid van een natie.

Het is natuurlijk zo dat de staatsorganen in Moldavië een product van het Sovjet verleden zijn. Dus vandaar dat er nogal wordt vastgehouden aan bepaalde elementen uit de Sovjet traditie. Het is niet voor niets dat Moldavië één van de weinig landen, zo niet het enige land, is waar de communistische partij de macht heeft weten te behouden. Dat drijft ook om een stukje Sovjet nostalgie.

Denkt u dat dit een van de obstakels is voor het nationale identiteitsgevoel?
Zij cultiveren een beetje de Sovjet dimensie van nationale identiteit. Elementen van de Sovjet traditie zijn enerzijds de bepaalde kijk en praktijk van een multiculturele samenleving. Eigenlijk komt dat neer op het uitwissen van de historische en culturele achtergronden van verschillende volkeren. Maar er zit ook een element van verdeel en heers bij. Het Sovjet nationaliteiten beleid was er heel erg op gericht om eigenlijk al die verschillende onderdelen van het Sovjet rijk bij elkaar te houden, door op zekere hoogte rivaliteit tussen bepaalde groepen aan te moedigen. Vanuit die optiek zijn ook de grenzen getrokken. Die grenzen zijn heel bewust getrokken om verschillende bevolkingsgroepen bij elkaar te brengen. Want waar de Sovjet-Unie juist van af wilde, en dat komt voort uit de Marxistische theorie van de natie, allemaal onderdelen van de klassenstrijd, de manifestaties van de klassenstrijd, de nieuwe samenleving en de klassenstrijd geen rol meer speelt dan heeft dat ook geen betekenis meer. Culturele uitingen zijn in feite verkapte symbolen van klassenstrijd. Daarom willen zij dat men zoveel mogelijk afstand neemt van de eigen cultuur en de eigen historische achtergrond en opgaan in de grote smeltkroes van het socialistische wereldrijk. Anderzijds zal dat er op termijn toe leiden dat de scherpste kantjes van de nationale identiteit zullen verdwijnen. Men wil af van die homogeniteit. Etnische homogeniteit werd gezien als gevaar dat de culturele identiteit versterkt, daardoor symbolen die een rol spelen in de klassenstrijd. Dus de grenzen in de Sovjet-Unie die zijn heel bewust gekozen om zoveel mogelijk verschillende groepen bij elkaar te brengen. Heel bewust is Transnistrië bij Moldavië geplakt. Nu is de Sovjet-Unie weggevallen en daarmee is nu een heel belangrijk kader voor de multiculturele samenleving weggevallen waardoor in feite de concurrentie die strijd tussen verschillende bevolkingsgroepen juist steeds sterker wordt.

7. Hoe wordt het proces van nation-building beïnvloed door het Oostelijk partnerschap?

Het Oostelijk partnerschap is enerzijds een beetje een erkenning van het feit dat de Oostelijke partnerlanden toch een beetje anders zijn dan de Zuidelijke buurlanden van de Europese Unie. We hadden vroeger het Europees Nabuurschapbeleid waarbij alle landen op een hoop werden gegooid. Marokko, Egypte, Syrië, Oekraïne. Nou dat stuit veel van de Europese landen tegen de borst. Zij zeggen wij zijn gewoon Europees. Het Oostelijk partnerschap is in zekere zin een erkenning van het feit dat daar een verschil in zit. Dus in die zin een beetje erkenning van een Europese identiteit. Dat betekent niet dat het Oostelijk partnerschap een toetredingsperspectief inhoud. Waarbij overigens gezegd moet worden dat ze dat perspectief hypothetisch gezien wel hebben. Er is een duidelijk artikel in het Europees verdrag dat ieder land in Europa dat aan de volwaarden voldoet een

lidmaatschapsaanvraag kan indienen. We zullen hun aanvraag in behandeling moeten nemen. Als zij een aanvraag indienen, maar zover zijn ze natuurlijk nog lang niet.

Nu het Oostelijk partnerschap is gelanceerd is het niet veel meer dan het Europees nabuurschapbeleid. Nou ja, er zitten een aantal onderdelen in die wat verder gaan.
Inderdaad, je hebt gelijk het is een beetje oude wijn in nieuwe zakken. Maar het Oostelijke partnerschap vormt wel een erkenning van de separate Europese identiteit. In die zin om even terug te komen op de Europese identiteit en *nation-building* is het wel een ondersteuning van een separate Europese identiteit.

8. ***Welke elementen specifiek kunnen daar van invloed op zijn? Welke onderdelen uit dat partnerschap zijn onderdelen waar je zegt van ja die hebben nou invloed daarop? Kun je dat zo noemen of is dat lastig?***

Dat is vrij gemakkelijk te noemen. Als zij dat zouden willen zou het de ontwikkelingen behoorlijk kunnen stimuleren door bijvoorbeeld veel vrijer verkeer van personen toe te laten. Visumliberalisatie of misschien zelfs visum vrijstelling. Zoals we bijvoorbeeld ook hebben met een land als Noorwegen. Dat zal de Europese identiteit van die landen versterken. We kunnen natuurlijk ook zeggen, we moeten meer studenten hier naartoe halen. Dat zou waarschijnlijk nog het meest haalbaar zijn. Dan zou je heel specifiek richten op het bevorderen van onderwijssamenwerking. Maar dat zou een mogelijkheid kunnen zijn een gericht programma om studenten naar Europa te halen op te leiden. Je kunt je voorstellen dat je bijvoorbeeld een uitwisselingsprogramma doet waarbij ze een jaar in Europa studeren en dan weer teruggaan of iets dergelijks.

In welke zin zou het het land veranderen?
Als je op een gegeven moment een kritische massa hebt die in Europa zijn opgeleid en die er Europese ideeën en praktijken op nahouden. Die carrière maken in het bedrijfsleven en bij overheid. Dat zal natuurlijk toch wel degelijk leiden tot bepaalde veranderingen in de samenleving.

De Europese unie streeft met name naar stabiliteit en veiligheid in de regio. Ik heb de indruk dat ze dat vooral proberen te doen door het verspreiden van de Europese waarden. Dat dat een van de sleutelrollen is om met het verspreiden te zorgen voor een veilige regio.
Ja, inderdaad. Wij gaan ervan uit dat uiteindelijk democratisering en mensenrechten de voornaamste pijlers zijn van stabiliteit.

Dus je krijgt eigenlijk een combinatie tussen een veiligheidsaspect en een identiteitsaspect. Voorheen had je de relatie tussen de natie en de staat. Nu zit je duidelijk daarboven en probeer je daar staat om te vormen zodat het veiliger wordt.
Als we het hebben over democratisering en mensenrechten dan hebben we het eerst en vooral over een andere relatie tussen staat en burgers. Die landen komen natuurlijk uit een Sovjet traditie waarin de burgers gewoon gehoorzaamheid verschuldigd waren aan de staat. Inspraak werd niet op prijs gesteld. En dat is de mentaliteit die nog altijd heerst. Een beetje een feodale mentaliteit. Als wij het hebben over Europese waarden dan hebben wij het over een andere verhouding tussen burgers en staat. Burgers die voor zichzelf opkomen, die inspraak eisen en een overheid die daar nota van neemt en dat betrekt in de besluitvorming.

Die een afweging maakt, die eerst eens luistert naar wat de burgers vinden en willen en op basis daarvan bepaalde afwegingen maakt.

Je ziet het hier in Nederland bij ieder besluit van de overheid gaan enorme discussies aan vooraf. Opiniepagina's staan vol, iedereen heeft er een mening over.

De Communistische regering heeft in 2003 aangegeven 'we willen eigenlijk een nauwere band met de Europese Unie', maar deze veranderingen die u net beschrijft die zijn toch eigenlijk desastreus voor henzelf? Want dat zou betekenen dat zij een kritisch publiek krijgen wat ze nu niet hebben. Dat is toch een beetje raar dan dat ze daar mee in hebben gestemd?

Dat is een andere visie op leiderschap. Wat wij tegenwoordig zien als een goede leider is niet iemand die zegt zo moet het en met zijn vuist op tafel slaat, maar is iemand die heel goed luistert naar verschillende meningen en probeert dat proces van meningsvorming te beïnvloeden en te sturen maar die wel de mogelijkheid biedt tot inspraak. Dat vergt een bepaalde cultuuromslag. Ook in Oost-Europa, ook vanuit communistische partijen die die cultuuromslag wel gemaakt hebben. Die zijn er wel degelijk. Kijk naar Polen.

(..)

In de oude Sovjet-Unie draaide het er allemaal om of je macht had of niet. Een heel belangrijk element in een bepaalde cultuur is machtsafstand. Hoe mensen zich verhouden tot machtshebbers. Belangrijke elementen in culturen die ook de economische en bestuurlijke indeling bepalen. De ene cultuur die stimuleert een meer gelijkwaardige verhouding. Waarbij sprake is van communicatie is tussen de leiders, de beleidsmakers en anderen. En culturen waarin dat eigenlijk zoveel mogelijk wordt onderdrukt.

Het maakt onderdeel uit van identiteit maar zeker ook van nation-building.

Denkt U dat de oppositie een goede coalitie zou kunnen vormen?

Ja, dat is heel moeilijk te zeggen ik heb natuurlijk geen inzicht in wat voor partijen het zijn. In Moldavië zitten al drie verschillende liberale partijen in het parlement. Zo'n klein land en dan nog drie verschillende variaties. Dat is heel moeilijk te zeggen of die partijen in staat zullen zijn persoonlijke verschillen te overbruggen en echt een visie te ontwikkelen op hoe het land verder moet gaan. Het risico is er wel degelijk dat ze zich verliezen in allemaal persoonlijke rivaliteit en belangengroepen. Iets wat je ook sterk hebt gezien in de Baltische staten. Waar uiteindelijk ook de politiek gedomineerd wordt door een paar kleine belangengroepjes die elkaar het leven zuur maken.

Dat heeft geleid tot een enorme crisis in Letland. Ik denk dat het daarvoor noodzakelijk is dat de EU, als er een nieuwe regering komt, ook de nodige ondersteuning biedt. Economisch, politiek, financieel, technisch om ervoor te zorgen dat echt een andere kant uit helpt. Als ze dat niet doen is de kans heel groot dat ze zichzelf verliezen in geruzie.

Ik heb verder geen vragen meer en wil je bedanken voor je tijd.

Afsluiting gesprek