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Note:	This is one of a series of self-study guides for a country or area, prepared for the use of USAID staff assigned to temporary duty in those countries. The guides are designed to allow individuals to familiarize themselves with the country or area in which they will be posted.

United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

Case No.: 200701753

MAR 25 2010

I refer to your letter dated March 11, 2007 regarding the release of certain Department of State material under the Freedom of Information Act (Title 5 USC Section 552).

We searched for and reviewed the self study guides that you requested and have determined that all except one of them may be released. They are on the enclosed disc. One of the guides is being released with excisions.

An enclosure provides information on Freedom of Information Act exemptions and other grounds for withholding material. Where we have made excisions, the applicable exemptions are marked on each document. With respect to material withheld by the Department of State, you have the right to appeal our determination within 60 days. A copy of the appeals procedures is enclosed.

We have now completed the processing of your case. If you have any questions, you may write to the Office of Information Programs and Services, SA-2, Department of State, Washington, DC 20522-8100, or telephone us at (202) 261-8484. Please be sure to refer to the case number shown above in all correspondence about this case.

We hope that the Department has been of service to you in this matter.

Sincerely,

for Margaret P. Grafeld, Director
Office of Information Programs and Services

Enclosures:
As stated.

63934 Federal Register/Vol. 69, No. 212
Rules and Regulations

Subpart F – Appeal Procedures

§171.52 Appeal of denial of access to, declassification of, amendment of, accounting of disclosures of, or challenge to classification of records.

(a) *Right of administrative appeal.* Except for records that have been reviewed and withheld within the past two years or are the subject of litigation, any requester whose request for access to records, declassification of records, amendment of records, accounting of disclosure of records, or any authorized holder of classified information whose classification challenge has been denied, has a right to appeal the denial to the Department's Appeals Review Panel. This appeal right includes the right to appeal the determination by the Department that no records responsive to an access request exist in Department files. Privacy Act appeals may be made only by the individual to whom the records pertain.

(b) *Form of appeal.* There is no required form for an appeal. However, it is essential that the appeal contain a clear statement of the decision or determination by the Department being appealed. When possible, the appeal should include argumentation and documentation to support the appeal and to contest the bases for denial cited by the Department. The appeal should be sent to: Chairman, Appeals Review Panel, c/o Appeals Officer, A/GIS/IPS/PP/LC, U.S. Department of State, SA-2, Room 8100, Washington, DC 20522-8100.

(c) *Time limits.* The appeal should be received within 60 days of the date of receipt by the requester of the Department's denial. The time limit for response to an appeal begins to run on the day that the appeal is received. The time limit (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal public holidays) for agency decision on an administrative appeal is 20 days under the FOIA (which may be extended for up to an additional 10 days in unusual circumstances) and 30 days under the Privacy Act (which the Panel may extend an additional 30 days for good cause shown). The Panel shall decide mandatory declassification review appeals as promptly as possible.

(d) *Notification to appellant.* The Chairman of the Appeals Review Panel shall notify the appellant in writing of the Panel's decision on the appeal. When the decision is to uphold the denial, the Chairman shall include in his notification the reasons therefore. The appellant shall be advised that the decision of the Panel represents the final decision of the Department and of the right to seek judicial review of the Panel's decision, when applicable. In mandatory declassification review appeals, the Panel shall advise the requester of the right to appeal the decision to the Interagency Security Classification Appeals Panel under §3.5(d) of E.O. 12958.

The Freedom of Information Act (5 USC 552)

FOIA Exemptions

(b)(1) Withholding specifically authorized under an Executive Order in the interest of national defense or foreign policy, and properly classified. E.O. 12958, as amended, includes the following classification categories:

- 1.4(a) Military plans, systems, or operations
- 1.4(b) Foreign government information
- 1.4(c) Intelligence activities, sources or methods, or cryptology
- 1.4(d) Foreign relations or foreign activities of the US, including confidential sources
- 1.4(e) Scientific, technological, or economic matters relating to national security, including defense against transnational terrorism
- 1.4(f) U.S. Government programs for safeguarding nuclear materials or facilities
- 1.4(g) Vulnerabilities or capabilities of systems, installations, infrastructures, projects, plans, or protection services relating to US national security, including defense against transnational terrorism
- 1.4(h) Information on weapons of mass destruction

(b)(2) Related solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of an agency

(b)(3) Specifically exempted from disclosure by statute (other than 5 USC 552), for example:

ARMEX	Arms Export Control Act, 22 USC 2778(e)
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949, 50 USC 403(g)
EXPORT	Export Administration Act of 1979, 50 App. USC 2411(c)(1)
FSA	Foreign Service Act of 1980, 22 USC 4003 & 4004
INA	Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 USC 1202(f)
IRAN	Iran Claims Settlement Act, Sec 505, 50 USC 1701, note

(b)(4) Privileged/confidential trade secrets, commercial or financial information from a person

(b)(5) Interagency or intra-agency communications forming part of the deliberative process, attorney-client privilege, or attorney work product

(b)(6) Information that would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy

(b)(7) Information compiled for law enforcement purposes that would:

- (A) interfere with enforcement proceedings
- (B) deprive a person of a fair trial
- (C) constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy
- (D) disclose confidential sources
- (E) disclose investigation techniques
- (F) endanger life or physical safety of an individual

(b)(8) Prepared by or for a government agency regulating or supervising financial institutions

(b)(9) Geological and geophysical information and data, including maps, concerning wells

Other Grounds for Withholding

NR Material not responsive to a FOIA request, excised with the agreement of the requester

MOLDOVA
A Self-Study Guide

NATIONAL FOREIGN AFFAIRS TRAINING CENTER
School of Professional and Area Studies
Foreign Service Institute
U.S. Department of State

The Self-Study Guide devoted to the Republic of Moldova is intended to provide U.S. Government personnel in the foreign affairs community with an overview of relevant issues which define Moldova's specificity in the variegated context of the successor states of the former Soviet Union. This Guide offers a compact digest of Moldova's history, geography, traditions and culture, economics, government and politics, as well as the place of this small state in the international arena, including its relations to the U.S. and West on the one hand, and with post-totalitarian countries in its neighborhood, such as Russia and Romania, on the other hand. This Guide should serve as an introduction and a self-study resource. The Republic of Moldova is far too complex and diverse a society to be fully covered using only the text in this Guide. The reader is encouraged to explore the questions and issues raised in the Guide by referring to the books, articles, periodicals and web sites listed in the bibliography. Most of the bibliographic

material can be found on the Internet or in the National Foreign Affairs Training Center Library, the Main State Library, or major public libraries.

The first edition of the Self-Study Guide to the Republic of Moldova was prepared by Dr. Andrei Brezianu, Chair of the Moldova/Romania course in the School of Professional and Area Studies of the Foreign Service Institute and former Chief of the Voice of America's Romanian Language Service (1991-2001). Dr. Brezianu's most recent book is the "Historical Dictionary of the Republic of Moldova" (Scarecrow Press, 2000). The views expressed in this Guide are those of the author or of attributed sources and do not necessarily reflect official policy or the position of the Department of State or the National Foreign Affairs Training Center. This publication is for official educational and non-profit use only.

First edition

March 2002

Contents:

The Republic of Moldova Self-Study Guide includes maps, specific bibliographic suggestions, and custom-tailored options and choices for further reading.

PART I: THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE PEOPLE

1. The Land

The Republic of Moldova is one of the smallest successor states of the former Soviet Union. Located between Romania and Ukraine, its territory covers an area of 33,700 square kilometers, between 47 00' north latitude and 29 00' east longitude. Roughly the size of Maryland, its surface --ranking thirty third in Europe-- overlaps with most of the northeastern lands of the historic Principality of Moldova (1359-1859). Stretching on a north-south axis, Moldova is a landlocked country whose lay of land is comprised between the banks of the Nistru River, a tributary to the Black Sea, and the Danube's easternmost affluent, the Prut which separates the country from its western neighbor, Romania. The country's capital is Chisinau (population: over 700,000 inhabitants).

A Land With Several Names

From the 14th century to 1812, the Romanian proper noun **Moldova** applied to the principality of the same name, whose territory used to stretch from the Carpathian Mountains to the Nistru River, and down to the Black Sea. After 1812 --under the borrowed name of **Bessarabia**-- the eastern part of that principality was incorporated into the Russian Empire and became a province of Russia.

After that partition, the name Moldova continued to denote the western half of the principality, whose later union with the Principality of Wallachia laid the foundation of the unitary Romanian state (1859). The transnational designation **Moldavia** (adjective: Moldavian) was in use before the country's declaration of independence. Both are interchangeable.

While the re-born independent state of Moldova declared in Chisinau in 1991 bears the historic name of the Principality of Moldova, the Republic of Moldova occupies only the eastern half of that historic land: its western half --equally known as Moldova-- is a province of Romania.

Land Features

The country's topography features a hilly plateau with decreasing elevations in the south.The relief is dominated by rolling hilly plains in the north, patches of forests in the center and ravines in the south, extending into a fertile plain that descends toward the country's ancient seaboard, lying between the estuary of the Nistru and Chilia, the northern arm of the Danube Delta, --currently the natural border separating Ukraine from Romania. Moldova's highest elevation, Mount Balanesti, 430 meters high is in the country's heartland, the Codri region.

Map of Moldova

Hydrographic Network

The river system of the Republic of Moldova is not very large. It includes several hundred rivers, some

permanent, some intermittent, out of which only seven have a length of more than 100 kilometers. The most important of them is the border-area river Nistru (Russian: Dnestr). 1,325 kilometers in length, it is the second largest river, after the Danube, in the western area of the Black Sea basin.The Nistru rises on the northeastern slopes of the Carpathian Mountains and drains an area of 47,739 kilometers before flowing into the Black Sea through a broad estuary known as Liman. Due to the typical canyon-like elevation of its west bank which overlooks the Podolyan plains lying eastward, the Nistru played the part of a natural frontier for most of Moldova's recorded history. It also served, for many centuries, as historic Moldova's political border to the east. After 1940, the Nistru ceased to mark a political boundary, becoming enfolded into the then newly created Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic, whose successor state, the Republic of Moldova, now lies on both banks of the river for a total length of about 630 kilometers.

Moldova's other main rivers are the Prut --967 kilometers, the Raut --286 kilometers, the Cogalnic --243 kilometers, the Bac --155 kilometers, and the Botna -- 152 kilometers. Moldova has over 50 natural lakes with a total surface of about 50 square kilometers. The underground water reserve, mostly drinking water, is estimated at 200 million cubic meters.

Access to the Sea

Historically, Moldova had access to the Black Sea across the whole length of its southern coast, chiefly through the port-city of Cetatea Alba (formerly Akkerman --in Russian; Bilhorod Dnistrovsky --in Ukrainian), and the smaller ports of Reni and Ismail, both on the Chilia arm of the maritime Danube. Moldova's current landlocked position is a consequence of Soviet-era territorial and administrative arrangements, by which the USSR awarded Soviet Ukraine the southern tip of the province of Bessarabia, turned into a Soviet republic by the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union which, on August 2, 1940, established the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic (MSSR) on most of territory of the historic province of Bessarabia (East Moldova).

A border adjustment accord with Ukraine is expected to restore Moldova's riparian status on the maritime Danube, south of the village of Giurgiulesti, the southernmost point of the country, located some 200 meters away from the river, west of Reni. A future port and oil terminal at Giurgiulesti will be accessible to seagoing ships and tankers, and will be able to reconnect Moldova to seafaring lanes in the future.

Vegetation Zones

Most of Moldova's territory is covered by a slightly raised hilly plain. In the north, the treeless Balti steppe rolls southward where it gradually gives way to the thick forests zone of the Codri (Romanian: "forests"), where hornbeam, oak, linden, maple, wild pear and wild cherry are the most common trees.The rocky banks of the Nistru and the Prut valley carry a natural vegetation made up of oaks, poplars and thickets of shrubs. The forests, which historically used to cover a huge part of the country, now cover about 6 percent of its territory, out of which some 60 percent is agricultural land, with corn and wheat as the dominant crops. Vegetation grows scarcer in the south and south-east, yet vineyards, orchards and sunflower plantations coexist with patches of southern steppe vegetation.The lower south-western region of the country, near the confluence of the Prut with the Danube, is interspersed with frequent saline marshes

Climate

Moldova's has a temperate continental climate. The average annual temperature is +7/10 degrees Celsius. The warm season lasts about 257-315 days a year. Sunny days account for 45 to 50 percent of the year. Winters are relatively mild, with January temperatures averaging around -4 C. Annual rainfalls range from ca. 400 millimeters in the south, to ca. 600 millimeters in the north, with most precipitations occurring in the early Summer and the Fall.

Soils and Agriculture

About 75 percent of the country is covered by the proverbially fertile and humus-rich black soil (also known as "Tchernoziom"), which supports a rich variety of crops. With practically no mountains and no significant mineral deposits, Moldova's topography has traditionally favored intensive agriculture. In the northern highlands clay-textured soils are found, while in the south red-earth soil is predominant.

Agriculture is deployed on an overall surface of ca. 2.5 million hectares of farming land. Its soil basis for production includes about 68 percent arable land, about 18 percent orchards and vineyards and about 14 percent meadows and pastures. Yearly agricultural production is over 2 million tons of grain (chiefly winter wheat and corn), over 800,000 tons of fruit and berries, 1 million tons of vegetables, over 2 million tons of sugar beets, some 200,000 tons of sunflower seeds and some 50,000 tons of tobacco. Moldova's most important agricultural asset is its grape producing capacity, with an annual yield average of ca. 900,000 tons of grapes, and a wine production that accounts for about 25 percent of the country's export earnings.

Despite the small size of its territory, Moldova ranks ninth in Europe in grape production and seventh in Europe in tobacco production.

Mineral and Natural Resources

Moldova's territory lies on deep sedimentary rock with harder crystalline outcroppings in the north and center, where higher elevations are found. The geological infrastructure of the Moldovan plateau rests on granitic spurs, originating from the piedmont of the Carpathian Mountains.They reach longitudinally eastward across historical Moldova's stretch of land, down to the Nistru banks. Mineral resources are scarce. Major mineral deposits and resources consist of cement components and gypsum, limestone, sand and basic raw minerals for bricks and tiles. Sparse oil and brown coal deposits were recently discovered at considerable depths in the south, but their industrial importance is poor due to the high estimated costs of extraction.

Questions and Issues:

* What impact did the Nistru River have on Moldova's history? Reflect on the fact that Russia first established its southern border on the Nistru River in 1792, when the Russo-Turkish Treaty of Jassy made Moldova for the first time a neighbor of the Russian Empire. Was that event an important strategic landmark in Russia's imperial ambitions to move south and gain access to the mouths of the Danube?

* What is the likely impact of the utter lack of mineral and energy resources on the economic independence of the Republic of Moldova, vis-à-vis big owners of such essential resources, such as the Russian Federation?

Suggested Reading:

Dvoichenko Markov, Demetrius. The Impact of Russia in the Danubian Principalities, 1806-1812. *South European Monitor,* v.I, nos.3-4 (1994) pp.24-51

LeDonne, John. *The Russian Empire and the World, 1700-1917: The Geopolitics of Expansion and Containment*. New York: Oxford U. Press, 1997.

2. The People

Major Ethnic Groups

The four major ethnic and linguistic groups in the Republic of Moldova reflect specific trends of historical stratification and acculturation, from the nation's earliest times down to the present. Romanian-speaking Moldovans form the ethnic core of the country (originally the eastern lands of the Principality of Moldova, annexed by czarist Russia in 1812, as Bessarabia). According to the first Russian census, conducted in July 1817, some 87 percent of the then newly acquired province's inhabitants (419,420 out of a total of 482,630) were described as local "Moldavians". The Russian minority amounted to only 1.5 percent of the total population, some 6.5 percent were registered as Ukrainians, and 4.2 percent as Jews. Before the end of the century the natives' number had dwindled to a mere 47.6 percent of the total population which, as a whole -- mainly through internal migration from other parts of the Russian Empire-- had reached a total of 1,936,012 inhabitants. The 1897 census (which distinguished Bessarabia's ethnic populations by native language rather than nationality) had over 900,000 people registered as speakers of "Romanian" (that was the term used), 19.6 percent as speakers of Ukrainian, 8.1 as speakers of Russian and 11.8 as speakers of Yiddish.

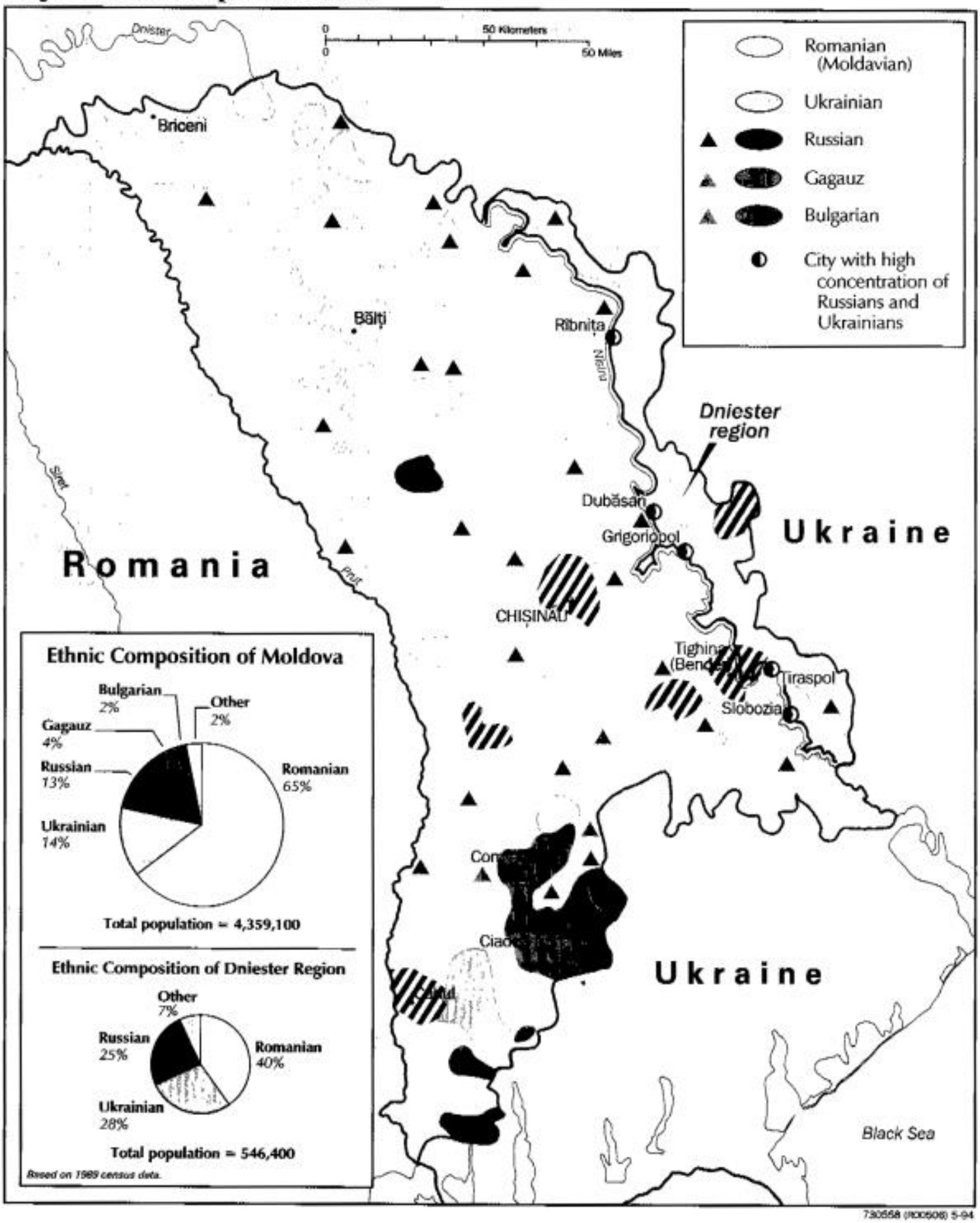
The Soviet nationality census conducted after the 1940 annexation of Bessarabia by the USSR indicated a balance of 65.5 percent Moldavians, versus 6 percent Russians and 16.4 Ukrainians.

Currently, Romanian-speaking Moldovans make up ca. 64.5 percent of the republic's population, Ukrainians being the second largest group, with 13.8 percent. Russian ethnics come in third, with 13.00 percent of the country's total population. Moldova's fourth ethnic group is the Gagauz (or Christian Turks) minority, a population which constitute about 3.5 percent of the country's population, followed by the Bulgarian minority, amounting to some 2 percent of the total.

The Gagauz and Bulgarian ethnic groups settled on the territory of what is today the Republic of Moldova at the invitation of Russia's czars during the 19th century. They display a clear-cut immigration pattern within a limited time-frame (from the beginning of the 19th century until the late1870s).

The second significant group includes non-natives, i.e. foreign-born Russian and Ukrainian ethnics having settled in the country recently, under the policies of internal migration conducted by Moscow over the last decades of Soviet rule over the MSSR. Such non-natives of Moldova account for about 29 percent of the former Soviet republic's Ukrainian minority, and about 30 percent of its Russian minority. Most of them use Russian as their first language of communication and few speak the Republic of Moldova's official language

Major Ethnic Groups in Moldova



A general break-down of Moldova's major ethnic and linguistic groups is as follows:

Latin-roots People: Romanian-speaking Moldovans: 64.5%

Slavic-roots People: Ukrainians:13.8%; Russians: 13%; Bulgarians: 2% (most of them having Russian as their first language of communication).

Turkic-roots People: Gagauz: 3.5% (speakers of a Turkic dialect, but using mostly Russian as their common language of communication).

Overall Ethnic Structure Today
Total population: 4,489,657
Moldovans: ca. 2,795,000 (64.5%)
Ukrainians: ca. 600,000 (13.8%)
Russians: ca. 562,000 (13%)
Gagauz: ca. 153,000 (3.5%)
Bulgarians: ca. 88,000 (2%)
Jews and others: ca. 66,000 (2%)

(Source: *Belarus and Moldova Country Studies*, Library of Congress Federal Reserve Division, 1995)

National Identity:

The Moldovans

Moldova's search for identity is to a large extent a reflection of the influences its population has been exposed to and forced to assimilate after its 1812 annexation by Russia, and, in a more special way, over the latter half of the 20th century, when the combined processes of intensive Russification and Sovietization left their imprint, most glaringly, in the area of linguistic communication.

At two essential junctures in Moldova's history --under czarist rule, and under Soviet domination-- the language issue came to play the role of one of the most powerful catalysts for both political change and national assertion. The thrust and weight of the language debate --combined with the Latin vs. Cyrillic alphabet issue-- proved of defining importance in the Moldovans' attempts to assert their own identity.

In parallel fashion, another significant factor in the Moldovan people's quest for identity has been infuenced by the evolving composition of its once unitary ethnic fabric, gradually changed over time through policies of colonization, conducted in various installments under Russia's two successive rules: czarist after 1812, Soviet after 1940.

A specific trait has been Moldova's acculturation experience under these two dominations, both of which worked to transfigure the local people's inherited culture in an attempt to tone down its specifics and make it

look as close to Russia's as possible, and as distinct possible from its originary roots .

Moldova's ethnic identity uncertainties can tentatively be explained as a consequence of the fact that, right from the outset, both in its Russian and Soviet incarnations, the eastern half of historic Moldova came to be part of a huge core-empire not as a whole, rounded-out entity, but rather as a part of a pre-existing whole split into two, with twin-like identity elements left open-ended across the border in the old core-country, the Romanian province of Moldova and with Romania in general, with which it shares a common heritage of culture and folklore.

Questions and Issues:

***** To what extent do the Romanian-speaking people in the Republic of Moldova share the same ethnic identity with Moldovans living in Romania's historic province of Moldova? Try to account for the similarities and differences between the two.

* Moldova's original identity features were forced to interact with the political, linguistic and cultural ascendancy of the the Russian Empire (1812-1917) and with the political, linguistic dominance of Soviet Russia (1940-1990). How did these two influences modify the ethno-cultural profile of the Moldovan people today?

Suggested Reading:

Crampton, Richard. "Inventing Moldova". *TLS*, March 30, 2001, p. 28

Deletant, Dennis. "A Shuttlecock of History: Bessarabia". *Studies in Romanian History*.

Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedica, 1991

Sunley, Johnathan. "The Moldovan Syndrome". *World Policy Journal*, v. 11, no. 2
(Summer 1994) pp. 87-91

Identity:

The Russophone Ethnics

With a total population which comprises over 35 percent, mostly Russophone, non-Moldovans (including an important group of non-natives) the Republic of Moldova has been faced with several challenges over the past recent years. They have impacted negatively on the process of building a distinct and cohesive national identity, after the demise of Soviet totalitarian rule over the country.

Under Moscow's governing power, non-Moldovan ethnics used to be perceived by most of the population as exponents of the Soviet authority, engaged in achieving an in-depth acculturation process of the Romanian-speaking population of Moldova. Thus, Russians and Ukrainians, especially the more recent settlers, tended to be perceived by the local population as allies and proponents of Moscow's totalitarian policies.

Through education and the imposition of Russian as the official language of the republic, such policies succeeded in creating a situation in which most of the Soviet republic's population had to become bi-lingual. The language spoken by the majority of the population (dubbed "Moldavian") had to be written in Russian Cyrillics, in a concerted campaign to artificially distinguish it from the Romanian language spoken in Romania, with which it is in fact identical. The non-Moldovan ruling elite of the Soviet era seldom cared to learn the language of the majority, which accounts for the fact that Ukrainian and Russian ethnics rarely became bi-lingual in Soviet Moldova.

After the country's achieved independence, the Russian-speaking group came to be looked upon by many as sympathizers or holdovers of Moscow's former power. Hence, the largely shared post-1991 perception that non-Moldovans were generally pro-Moscow and anti-Western, while the Moldovan majority was as a rule and by definition pro-Western, anti-communist and anti-Moscow. Such an attitude favored rifts and disruptions of the nation's fabric and fueled two-way nationalistic feelings, especially among intellectuals. A number of non-Moldovan groups were driven to the erroneous perception that Romanian-speaking Moldovans were bent on joining Romania, ready to surrender the newly-born republic's sovereignty, and reunite with the country's next-door neighbor and cultural kin, post-totalitarian Romania. A minority group of Romanophone intellectuals and academics contributed to entertain that perception.

The early litmus-test of that simmering conflict was the dramatic secession of the Nistru east-bank districts in 1990, and the unilateral declaration of a non-recognized "Moldavian Transnistrian Soviet Socialist Republic" in September of that year (currently the internationally non-recognized "Moldavian Nistrian Republic"), with its capital in Tiraspol. The "Moldavian Nistrian Republic" claims 4,163 square kilometers under its control, including the city of Tighina (Russian: Bendery) on the west bank of the Nistru River.

Located on an enclaved sliver of land on the river's east bank, the separatist entity has preserved the Soviet era symbols of power and the expressions of public worship to Lenin and Marx. It is leftist, pro-communist, pro-Russian, anti-reform and conservative. It seceded from Chisinau over independent Moldova's first laws regarding the return to the Latin alphabet, the establishing of the language of the majority ("Moldavian") rather than Russian as the official language of the country, and the change of the republic's Soviet-style flag to a new one, almost identical to the Romanian tricolor flag. A brief civil war, which resulted in a stalemate, broke out between the separatist region and Moldova's regular army in 1992. Although officially neutral, Russia's 14th Army (currently downgraded to the status of an "Operational Group") took part in the conflict, siding with the rebels.

The Russian army headquartered to this day on Moldovan soil, east of the Nistru, remains a sizable regional force and is the only Russian military presence on foreign territory outside the Russian Federation in Europe. In conjunction with the breakaway Tiraspol authorities, it controls over 40 thousand tons of weapons and ammunition depots of the former Red Army located on the Nistru east-bank. Tiraspol is a historic Russian military settlement. The regional authorities opposed Moldovan independence in 1991-92, and soon after gained control over a narrow strip of land, bounded by the Nistru River and the border with Ukraine, in which the bulk of Moldova's industry and electricity-generating capacity was concentrated.

The Russophone Critical Mass On The Nistru East-Bank

The interplay between Moldovan ethnic identity and its core-components on the one hand, and some of its political-cultural underpinnings, on the other hand, are patent in the secession of the so-called "Moldavian Nistrian Republic" ("MNR"). The ethnic and linguistic distribution in the breakaway enclave contrasts with the population breakdown of the republic of Moldova as a whole: Romanian-speaking Moldovans in the "MNR" amount to some 240,000, whereas the total amount of the Russian-speaking (Ukrainian and Russian) population is estimated at about 325,000, which gives the Russophone population a clear majority. A reflection of this specific composition is shown in the general inclination toward a return to the old political and state structures. Tellingly, a non-binding referendum on joining the Russia-Belarus union held in the "MNR" in 1998, indicated that 66 percent of the voters there supported such a union.

Ethnic Distribution in the Nistru East-Bank Enclave

Total population of the Nistru east-bank region: ca.740,000
Russophone: ca. 59%
Ukrainians ca. 170,000 (28%)
Russians ca. 154,000 (25%)
Moldovans ca. 240,000 (40%)
Bulgarian, Jews, Gagauz and others ca. 40,000 (7 %)

(Source, Charles King, *The Moldovans: Romania, Russia and the Politics of Culture*. Hoover Institution Press: Stanford, 2000)

Questions and Issues:

***** Is the trans-Nistrian conflict a reflection of ethnic divisions within the Republic of

Moldova, or is it a political and ideological motivated conflict?

* Is Russia's military presence in the Nistru east-bank enclave an indication of

Moscow's intentions to control and influnce independent Moldova's policies?

Suggested Reading:

Crowther, William. "Ethnicity and Participation in the Communist Party of Moldavia". *Journal of Soviet Nationalities* I, no.1 (1990): 148-149

King, Charles. "Moldovan Identity and the Politics of Pan-Romanianism". *Slavic Review*, v. 53, no.2 (1994), 345-368

Kolstoe, P. et al. "The Dnestr Conflict: Between Irredentism and Separatism". *Europe-Asia Studies*, v. 45, no. 6 (1993)

Lynch, Dov. *Peacekeeping Strategies in the CIS: The Cases of Moldova, Georgia and Tajikistan*. New York:

St. Martin's Press, 2000

Identity:

The Gagauz Minority

Soviet Moldova's last census (1989) indicated a Gagauz (Christian Turkic population) of over 150,000 (ca. 3.5 percent of the republic's total population) concentrated in a patchwork of rural communities around the southern city of Comrat. In the context of the Soviet Union's breakdown, a separatist movement with strong pro-communist overtones developed within the Gagauz ethnic group, and in 1990 a short-lived "Gagauz Soviet Socialist Republic" was proclaimed in Comrat. Through negotiations with the Moldova's central authorities in Chisinau, a compromise was reached and the Gaugauz ethnic group dropped its secessionist claims. In March 1995, the results of a local referendum secured the autonomy of the territory where Gagauz ethnics are scattered, and the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia (Romanian: Unitatea Teritoriala Autonoma Gagauzia; Turkish: "Gagauz Yeri") was established within the unitary state of Moldova. By virtue of Gagauzia's special status, Moldovan Gagauz elect their own executive and legislative officials, and their governor, the *bashkan*, is by law a member of the Chisinau Parliament.

The autonomous territorial unit comprises three towns --Comrat (its administrative center), Ciadar-Lunga and Vulcanesti, twenty three villages, and three suburban townships. Gagauz Yeri encompasses an area that has been described as a piece of Swiss cheese, pockmarked by compact settlements whose population constitutes a multiethnic quilt which includes 5.5 percent Bulgarians, 5.1 percent Russians and about 4 percent Ukrainians, most of them living in rural communities, interspersed with Romanian-speaking Moldovan villages. In this complex patchwork, the ethnic Gagauz population forms the absolute majority in only two subterritorial units -- Comrat and Ciadar-Lunga. In the last Soviet-era census conducted in 1989, over 70 percent of Gagauz ethnics named Russian as their second language, after their Turkic mother-tongue. Until 1990 only 33 books had been published in Gagauz, most of the cultural life of the Gagauz minority being traditionally conveyed in Russian.

Questions and Issues:

* What are the main differences between Moldova's Gagauz minority and the country's Russian minority in terms of cultural status and political importance?

* What is the explanation of the fact that the push for Gagauz separatism was solved by independent Moldova early on, while the Nistru east-bank secession continues to be unsolved?

Suggested Reading:

Chinn, Jeff, and Robert Kaiser. *Russians as the New Minority: Ethnicity and Nationalism in the Soviet Successor States.* Boulder, CO.: Westview Press, 1996

King, Charles. "Gagauz Yeri and the Dilemmas of Self-Determination". In *Transition*, v. 1, no. 19 (1955) pp. 21-25

Identity and Nationhood

The question of Moldova's identity as a nation raises the issue of its minorities and of their historic integration into a common societal fabric, within the confines of a what is now an independent state, set apart from its former core-powers --Russia and, more recently, the USSR. The stronger profile of Moldova's former dominant elites (Russian and Soviet) on the one hand; and the less powerful and less articulate profile of the Gagauz population, on the other hand, are part of an equation in which historic Moldova's smaller core-power, Romania, continues to play its own part with a polarizing role.

The term nation denotes any sovereign state with a political autonomy and settled territory, such as the Republic of Moldova. In a narrower definition, however, a nation can also be described as a community of people sharing a common language, inhabiting a fixed territory, having common customs and traditions and having become sufficiently conscious to recognize similar interests and a mutual need for a single sovereign leadership. Applied to the issue of the differences and similarities between Moldova and what is now its western core state and neighbor, Romania, the first part of the more specific definition carries connotations that may be applied, in twinlike fashion to Moldova as well as to Romania, since the native population in both countries shares common roots, the same language and literature, and similar legacies of folklore and traditonal beliefs. However the second part of the definition fails to apply in similar fashion to other fundamental concepts, such as a mutual acknowledgment of common interests and the need for a single leadership. These terms are not conterminous, since present-day Moldova's interests currently include the interests of its strong Russophone minority on the one hand, and the interests of another compact group, the Gagauz ethnic patchwork, established today as an entity in its own right in the south of the country.

The Russophone population issue at large (and its flaring point in the Nistru east-bank separatist enclave) on the one hand; and the Gagauz autonomy issue, on the other hand, contribute to set Moldova and Romania apart --if not in terms of the broader sense of nationhood, certainly in terms of statehood and separate profiles as political bodies.

Despite these clear-cut distinctive features, a minority of Moldova's society --mostly historians, writers and other members of the intelligentsia-- sometimes advocate the view that "Moldovan" should simply be a semantic label applied to regional identity, not one connoting nationhood. The debate was particularly heated in the early 90s when it gave rise to a current of thought and social-cultural initiative known as "unionism" or "pro-Romanianism". In objective fashion, the place of Russian acculturation and of the Gagauz ingraft in historic and present-day Moldova, should be part of the debate and contribute to a well-founded understanding of the Moldovan identity and its specificity in the context of post-totalitarian eastern Europe.

***Questions and Issues**:*

* What role did Russification play in creating the overall appearance that nationhood does not fully apply to describe present-day Moldovan identity?

* How does the following statement apply to the peculiar situation of Moldova's identity as a country: "Countries tend to bandwagon with countries of similar culture and to balance against countries with which they lack cultural commonality. This is particularly true with respect to core states. Their power attracts those who are culturally similar and repels those who are culturally different [...] Core states may attempt to

incorporate and dominate some peoples of other civilizations who, in turn, attempt to resist or to escape such control" (S.Huntington, in *The Clash of Civilizations*, p.155)

* Comment on the following statement: "We are ethnic Romanians by inheritance but Moldovans by citizenship". (Moldova's president Petru Lucinschi in a Reuters interview: February 1999).

***Suggested Reading**:*

* King, Charles. "Moldovan Identity and the Politics of Pan-Romanianism". In *Slavic Review*, v. 53, no.2 (1994) pp.345-368

Acculturation and Specific Identity:

The Moldovan Context

Historically, Moldova's pristine cultural traditions came to interact with the powerful political, linguistic, and cultural ascendancy of the Russian Empire for over a century (1812-1918); the same process was aggressively resumed on all planes, political, linguistic, cultural and ideological, during almost half a century of Soviet totalitarian rule (1940-1941 and 1944-1990).

The peculiar type of acculturation that took place over those periods of time explains several distinctive traits and accentuated reactions that characterize modern Moldovan culture today, and its search for a clear cut identity. It is against the backdrop of these endeavors that one can better assess the underpinnings of the strong emphasis on the Latin origin of the language, or on the pre-Russian traditions of Moldova. Powerful symbols that epitomize this revival and the rebuttal of Russian acculturation include, among other things, the bronze monument titled "To Rome" featuring the Capitoline she-wolf suckling Romulus and Remus, a statue that dominates the entrance of the Chisinau Museum of History; the Roman eagle in Moldova's national emblem; and the Latin language motto "Virtus Romana Rediviva" (Roman Virtue Reborn) on the great seal of the city of Chisinau.

Great Seal of the City of Chisinau (founded 1436)

Regardless of those reactions to the past, Russia's impact over Moldova's identity (in its two core state incarnations --czarist and Soviet) is a phenomenon hard to ignore. The cultural changes that occurred in the wake of the interaction between Moldova's traditional society, and Russia's manifold influences over 150 years of attempts to forcefully assimilate Moldova are visible in the social, linguistic and ethnic fabric of Moldovan society.

But although superior in political power and cultural ascendancy, Russia failed to fundamentally modify the bedrock of Moldovan identity, and in the case of Moldova, acculturation did not result in total cultural fusion or assimilation. In the words of a high-ranking Moldovan official: "It is obvious that in numerous positions, the history of our country coincides with the history of the Romanian state of today, but nevertheless Moldova is another country" (Presidential Briefing, July 24, 2001)

Questions and Issues:

* What is the explanation of the fact that Russian influence resulted in a higher degree of acculturation in Moldova's urban population, while Moldova's rural areas remained the repository of the land's ancient traditions?

Suggested Reading:

Kenez, Peter. *The Birth of the Propaganda State: Soviet Methods of Mass Mobilization*. Cambridge,U.K.: Cambridge Univrsity Press, 1985

King, Charles. *The Moldovans: Romania, Russia and the Politics of Culture*. Stanford, Ca.: Hoover Institution Press, 2000

Livezeanu, Irina. “Urbanization in a Low Key and Linguistic Change in Soviet Moldavia”. In *Soviet Studies*, 33, no. 3 (1981, p.334)

3. Moldovan Culture

The Language

Moldovans speak Romanian (dubbed “Moldavian” by the land’s former rulers, Russia and the Soviet Union). Romanian is the language of communication of the majority of the country’s native population and the mother tongue of about 65 percent of its residents. Romanian spoken in Moldova is the same as the language spoken across a wider geographical area by some 24 million people in Romania, limited parts of Yugoslavia (Voivodina) and Hungary (the Gyula area), differentiated here and there by hues of regional accent. According to Romance Linguistics the differences in accent encountered in the Romanian language fall into three broad categories --Moldovan, Transylvanian and Muntenian. Such differences make Romanian sound regionally different, the same as English spoken in Massachusetts usually differs from English with a southern drawl, characteristic to Georgia.

For political reasons, Russia in the 19th century, and the Soviet Union in the 20th century called the language spoken in Moldova “Moldavian”. The roots of the issue date back to the beginnings of the process of Russification, in the wake of the annexation of the eastern half of historic Moldova by Russia in 1812. Linguistic authority and common sense converge in the conclusion that, the same as there is no such thing as a “Mexican” or”Nicaraguan” language separate from Spanish, there is no such thing as a “Moldavian” language. The semantic fallacy of Moldavian as a separate language is exemplified by the impossibility of ever compiling a Moldavian-Romanian dictionary. Historically, Romanian is the lineal descendant of Vulgar Latin, the non-literary speech of the legionaries and colonists drawn from various parts of the Roman Empire who began the Romanization of Dacia in the second century of the Christian era. It developed from the “lingua franca” spoken around the lower Danube and the Carpathian Mountains from about the middle of the first millenium of the present era.

The frequency of the Latin element in modern Romanian amounts to about 85 percent. The non-Latin lexical elements fall into two categories: the numerically small but semantically important Thraco-Dacian substratum (connected, but not identical with elements found in Albanian); and the manifold loan-words borrowed over the course of centuries of political, cultural and ethnic contacts with other peoples. An important element in the second category is Slavonic, Church Slavonic having been for centuries the vehicle of communication in Eastern Orthodox cultures, including Romania’s. However, Romanian started to absorb such borrowings long before the populations of former Romanized Dacia embraced Slavonic-rite Orthodoxy, in the ninth century. That specific process began much earlier, at the time of the Slavic populations’ invasion of former Dacia and East-Central Europe, in the seventh and eight centuries. As a result of the Romanized local population’s cohabitation with these early Slavic settlers, many Slav borrowings entered the basic word-stock, giving the Romanian language its specific flavor in the family of the Romance languages. Other borrowings in the Romanian language are of Hungarian, Greek and Turkish origin.

The Alphabet

At the time of Moldova's struggle for independence from the Soviet Union, with the notable exception of the language issue, no other issue was more ardently debated than that of the alphabet. In the 1989 popular demonstrations for freedom, the recurring slogan chanted was: "Limba! Alfabet!" ("Language! Alphabet!"). Such unusual demands reflected the deep-seated frustration of a people whom the Soviet regime had forced to use Russian as the official language and Russian Cyrillics in the writing of their mother-tongue, a Romance language, just like Spanish or Italian, naturally suited for the Roman script.

In Moldova's cultural and historical context, the alphabet issue illustrates the unique situation of a neo-Latin language forcefully written for decades in an alien script --Russian-Cyrillic-- in order to make it look different from Romanian in writing, and thus blur and hinder communication between speakers of Romanian on the two sides of the Moldo-Romanian border.

On August 31 1989, while still part of the Soviet Union, Moldova abrogated Russian as the official language of the republic and established by law the return to the Roman script. In the Nistru east-bank districts of the Republic of Moldova, the 1989 Language and Alphabet Law was rejected and became instrumental in the secessionist movement of the trans-Nistrian enclave, where Russian-Cyrillic continues to be the only officially recognized alphabet.

Suggested Reading:

Bruchis, Michael. *One Step Back, Two Steps Forward --On the Language Policy of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in the National Republics: Moldavian, a Look Back, a Survey and Perspective, 1924-1980.* Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1982

Dyer, Donald. *The Romanian Dialect of Moldova: A Study in Language and Politics*. Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press,1999

Fouse, Gary. *The Languages of the Former Soviet Republics. Their History and Development*. Lanham MD: University Press of America, 2000

King, Charles. "The Politics of Language in the Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic". In *Studies in Moldovan*, D. Dyer ed. Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1996

Religion:

Moldovan Orthodoxy

The Orthodox Church is Moldova's main religious denomination, to which over 86 percent of the population belongs. Moldova is thus one of the most homogeneous Orthodox countries in the world. Despite its many successive incarnations, the Orthodox Church represents the oldest and most enduring institutions in the country whose first metropolitan, the bishop of Cetatea Alba, was annointed in 1401. Under the Russian czarist

rule (1812-1917) ecclesiastical jurisdiction over Bessarabia was devolved to Russia's Orthodox Synod in St. Petersburg, under whose direction the local church's ties to its originary metropolitan see of Jassy, across the Prut, were severed. Russian was imposed as the language of liturgy and the Orthodox Church became one of the czarist empire's most powerful instruments in pursuing the policies of Russification.

Under the Soviet rule (1940-1990) the Orthodox Church was the target of communist atheistic propaganda. In spite of decades of atheistic propaganda and destruction of churches under the Soviet rule present-day Moldova boasts some 853 Orthodox churches and over a dozen monasteries, most of them reopened after the country's declaration of independence.

Currently Moldova's Orthodox Church is canonicaly split between the metropolitanate of Moldova, subject to the jurisdiction of Russia's patriarchy, and the metropolitanate of Bessarabia, which put itself under the jurisdiction of Romania's patriarchy.

Moldova's Other Religious Denominations

Other religious denominations include Baptists, with some 184 communities, Adventists, with over 60 communities, Pentecostals, with about 34 communities, Roman-Catholics, with some 11 communities and Jews, with 6 communities.

Questions and Issues:

***** Does the division between Moldova's Church subject to the jurisdiction of Russia's patriarchate, and the one subject to the jurisdiction of Romania's patriarchate indicate a deeper polarization inside Moldova's post-Soviet society?

* Do you think Moldova's Orthodox revival will contribute to moving the public spirit and the political class closer to the West, or closer to forces that would like Moldova to re-enter Russia's sphere of influence in Moscow's near abroad?

Suggested Reading:

Bourdeaux, Michael, ed. *The Politics of Religion in Russia and the New States of Eurasia.* Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1995

Dima, Nicholas. "Politics and Religion in Moldova: A Case Study". In *Mankind Quarterly*, v. 34, no. 3 (Spring 1994) pp.175-194

Moldovan Traditional Culture and High Culture

Traditional Moldovan culture is rooted in Romanian culture from which it can hardly be separated. Beginning with the folk myths relating to Roman Emperor Trajan, the conqueror of Dacia, and the memory of his "vallum" ("Valul lui Traian" whose vestiges cut across Moldova from the Prut River to the banks of the Nistru; or the widely popular legend of Dochia, thought to evoke the name of Dacia; and continuing with such folklore

creations as the “Miorita” epic, the oral and written traditions relating to the historic cradle of Moldova in Transylvania’s Maramures, and the long history of leading figures, heroes and warriors; and ending with commonly shared literary masterpieces, all of Moldova’s major cultural landmarks are not Moldova’s exclusively. They straddle the Prut and are shared with Moldova’s next of kin, west of the border, where the same language is spoken and the same heritage has been preserved. In the realm of high culture, that is corroborated by Moldova’s pantheon of classic writers, identical to Romania’s. It includes literary and cultural personalities such as historian and polymath Demetrius Cantemir (1673-1723), cultural trailblazer and writer Gheorghe Asachi (1788-1869), humorist Ion Creanga (1837-1889), historian, playwright and novelist B.P. Hasdeu (1838-1907), cultural innovators Mihail Kogalniceanu (1917-1891) and Alecu Russo (1819-1859), playwright and poet Vasile Alecsandri (1818-1890), novelist and and historian C. Stere (1865-1936); and, last but not least, Moldova’s (and Romania’s) national poet Mihai Eminescu (1850-1889).

Holidays

Traditional Moldovan culture is rooted in the peasant folklore and the Orthodox religious celebrations. Folklore calendar traditions include the New Year fertility ritual “Plugusorul” featuring the symbol of ploughing under the auspices of old “Badica Traian” (Graybeard Trajan), the early March “Days of Dochia”, a period of nine days when Winter sheds its last snows and gives way to Spring time, the Christian movable feast of Easter (Paste), with all-night church vigils and midnight mass, Saint Elijah (Sfantul Ilie) August 2 when people go on processions in the fields and pray for rain, and Christmas (Craciun) celebrated either on the western date December 25, or according to the Julian calendar on January 7.

Secular holidays include “Women’s Day”, March 8; “Labor Day” (or May Day, May 1); “Victory Day”, May 9; Moldova’s National holiday – “Independence Day”, August 27; and “National Language Day”, August 31, celebrating the 1989 passing into law the establishment of the official language replacing Russian and the return to the Latin alphabet.

Questions and Issues:

* To what extent does the shared cultural heritage of Moldova’s and Romania’s traditions indicate a confluence and kinship, and to what extent, divergent historical paths between the two countries have created a cleavage?

* Moldova shares with Romania both old folklore traditions and more recent higher culture achievements in literature and the arts. Which of the two posed higher barriers to Russia’s endeavors to assimilate Moldova, both under the czars and during the more recent decades of Soviet domination?

Suggested Reading:

Dyer, Donald ed. *Studies in Moldovan: The History, Culture, Language and Contemporary Politics of the People of Moldova.* Boulder, CO.: East European Monographs, 1996

King, Charles. *The Moldovans: Romania, Russia, and the Politics of Culture*. Studies in Nationalities. Stanford, CA.: Hoover Institution Press, 2000

Williams, Nicola. *Romania and Moldova: From Tarzan's Birthplace to Ovid's*

Grave. Melbourne: Lonely Planet Publications, 1998

The Moldovan Family

Moldovan society has preserved to a very large extent the traditional pattern of extended families living together. Historically, that mode was disrupted brutally during the Stalin-era deportations when many families were separated on their way to Siberia, Kazakhstan and other parts of the former Soviet Union. Between 1956-1961 some 15,000 Moldovan families were allowed to return from their places of deportation back to their native places in Soviet Moldova.

In Moldova's traditional society extended families tended to live together, often comprising more than one generation. Today the pattern is still alive and contributes to alleviate the economic hardships of transition. Family bonds remain strong especially between grandparents ("bunel" and "bunela") and grandchildren, as well as between mothers and daughters.

In 2001 a "National Strategy Plan for the Protection of the Family" was approved by the government of Moldova. Its full implementation is expected to take five to ten years.

Suggested Reading:

Hassard, Daniel. *From Russia to Romania: Three Generations of Women and Translocation --Two Studies in Human Adaptability*. Youngstown, OH: D.A. Hassard, 1994

Part II: HISTORY AND ITS LEGACIES

1. Early History

Founding of Moldova

According to ancient chronicles, Moldova was founded in approximately 1352 by Voivode Dragos, a Wallachian nobleman from Maramures who took possession of the province in the name of Hungary's king, to whom he was a vassal. Moldova's history of statehood begins in 1359, when another Wallachian nobleman from Maramures, Bogdan I proclaimed himself independent of the Hungarian Crown. But Moldova had borne its name and had been inhabited by its own local population before Dragos and his successors organized it as a principality. As far back as 1334, a Latin document already mentioned one of its cities as "**civitas Moldaviae**". Out of 755 villages mentioned in official documents before the year 1449, --607 (i.e. 80.3 percent) had had their boundaries established before Moldova became a principality under Bogdan I.

Map of Moldova and Bessarabia before the 18th century Russian conquests and the Peace Treaty of Bucharest (1812)

What's in a Name:

Bessarabia

Moldova's seaboard and the lowland areas north of the Danube Delta were initially under the authority of the Wallachian dynasty of the Basarabs, whose progenitor, Basarab I founded in 1330 the Principality of Wallachia, south of Transylvania. Moldova acquired the "Land of the Basarabs" from Wallachia in the 1400s, which accounts for the fact that only the southern tip of Moldova, as distinguished from the major part of its

landstretch, was traditionally known as Basarabia (Latinized form: Bessarabia), a name after 1812 extended to the entire area.

2. Moldova and the Ottoman Power

A Maverick Struggle for Self-Rule

The Medieval Principality of Moldova maintained a fragile independence for some time, defending itself against the inroads of the Tatar tribes of the Golden Horde, Moldova's primal neighbors to the east; and later on, against the first Ottoman incursions from the Black Sea, the basin of which came under total Turkish control after the 1453 fall of Byzantium and the demise of the Eastern Roman Empire.

While the Ottoman Empire continued its aggressive expansion into the Balkans and eastern Europe during the 15th century, Moldova's most famous ruler, Stephen the Great (1457-1504), attempted to maintain the principality's independence. In spite of stubborn resistance and a number of small-scale victories against the Turkish invader, Moldova was eventually forced to capitulate. It surrendered the country's seashore, consented to pay an annual tribute and entered into a vassalage relation with Ottoman Turkey whose sultan became the overlord of the principality. In exchange for the tribute, Ottoman Turkey pledged not to interfere in the framework of church and state in the country. Due to that status, Moldova was never turned into a *pashalik* or Turkish province. It preserved self-rule in domestic affairs, continued to have its own reigning princes, approved and nominated by Ottoman Turkey, which almost continuously acted as Moldova's suzerain power until the mid-19th century.

During the 16th and 17th centuries, Moldova intermittently tried to shake off Ottoman suzerainty by attempting to take advantage of Turkey's conflicts with the Habsburg and Russian Empires. But being located along the direct invasion route to Turkey's provinces south of the Danube --just the same as neighboring Wallachia-- Moldova soon became an area of warfare and military occupation for a long series of intermittent Russo-Turkish Wars.

Russia's Rise to Power

With Russia progressively projecting rising power west and south-west, Moldova first came under Russian military occupation, briefly, in 1739 and, later on, together with Wallachia, during the 1768-1774 Russo-Turkish War, which ended with the Treaty of Kuchuk Kainarji. Russia's armies again occupied Moldova between 1787 and 1791, during a war that ended with the Treaty of Jassy, which brought the border of imperial Russia to the Nistru. In 1782, in the interlude between between those two wars, Russia's Empress Catherine the Great proposed to Austria's Emperor Joseph II what is called the "Greek Project", devised to establish a Russo-Austrian sphere of influence against the Ottoman Empire in East-Central Europe and the Balkans.The plan included the creation of two buffer states: a reconstituted Dacia encompassing the twin-Principalities of Moldova and Wallachia to be ruled by an Orthodox sovereign acceptable to both Russia and Austria and a restored Greek Empire south of the Danube, to be ruled by Catherine's grandson, Konstantin.

The Greek Project did not materialize and, the Danubian principalities of Wallachia and Moldova came again under Russian military occupation between 1806-1812, at the time of the first Russo-Turkish War of the 19th

century.

3. Czarist Russia and Moldova

The 1812 Annexation

The Peace of Bucharest which ended the 1806-1812 Russo-Turkish War and the third Russian occupation of the Danubian Principalities, resulted in the partition of Moldova, the eastern half of which was surrendered by Ottoman Turkey to Imperial Russia, into which is was incorporated as Bessarabia --from then on the name of the entire stretch of land between the Nistru and Prut Rivers.

The moment of the splitting of Moldova was a historic milestone, paving the way for a new course of social action, political change and over 100 years of unprecedented acculturation of its eastern half under the influence of Russia. Russian rule over the eastern half of historic Moldova was briefly interrupted over part of the annexed territory in the aftermath of the Crimean War (1853-1856), when the Congress of Paris returned three of Bessarabia's Danubian districts to the Principality of Moldova, still a vassal of Ottoman Turkey at that time. Southern Bessarabia was a component of Moldova when the principality merged with Wallachia to form -- under Moldova's Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza (1859-1866)-- the United Principalities, the core-state of modern Romania (1862). The status of southern Bessarabia changed again after the 1877-1878 Russo-Romanian-Turkish War, when the Treaty of Berlin, while recognizing Romania's independence, compelled it to cede to Russia the Danubian three districts, and thus restored Russia's full authority over the the lands between the Nistru and Prut Rivers and the czars' empire riparian status on the Danube.

Questions and Issues:

* Why did Russia content itself with only half of the Principality of Moldova at the time of the 1812 Russo-Turkish Peace Treaty of Bucharest?

* What was the international importance of Russia's advent to the mouths of the Danube? Assess the importance of that move in reverse --as mirrored in the later decision of the other European powers to remove Russia from the Danube border, in the aftermath of the Crimean War.

* Did Ottoman Turkey have the legal right to surrender the eastern half of the Principality of Moldova to Russia? Take into account the fact that, from the standpoint of international law, Moldova was not a province or possession of the Ottoman Empire, but rather a self-governing Principality, subject to Ottoman Turkey's suzerainty.

***Suggested Reading**:*

Jewsbury, George. *The Russian Annexation of Bessarabia, 1774-1828: A study of Imperial Expansion*. Boulder, CO.: East European Monographs, 1976

Russia's Imperial Rule: 1812-1917

Russia's czarist rule brought imperial absolutism to Moldova alongside the immigration of alien groups, encouraged by the czars to settle in their newly acquired province. Although a certain measure of economic progress and urbanization of the province's towns --including the future capital, Chisinau (renamed Kishinev)-- are recorded as a positive part of the Russian reorganization of Moldova, historians point out that the region continued to be one of the most backward areas of the Russian Empire, with a population that had one of the highest mortality rates rates in Europe, twice that of the Russian average. Russian governors treated Bessarabia like a colony, czarist censorship stifled public opinon, the native language of the majority of the population was banished from education and public life, ethnic tensions flared up, especially anti-semitic outbursts, that culminated in the notorious 1903 Easter massacre, which, among other things, gave the Russian word "pogrom" international circulation for the first time in history.

Questions and issues:

* What are the basic dissimilarities between the status of Bessarabia (East Moldova) before and after 1812?

Suggested Reading*:*

Focas, Spiridon. "Bessarabia in the Political Order of Southeast Europe in the 19th Century". In *Acta Historica* (Rome), v. 8 (1968), pp.119-144

Seton-Watson, Hugh. *The Russian Empire, 1801-1917.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990 *The Tragic Plight of a Border Area: Bessarabia and Bukovina*. Maria Manoliu-Manea, ed. Los Angeles: Humboldt State Univesrity Press, 1983

The Shedding of Russia's Imperial Sway:

Moldova and the Bolshevik Revolution

Russian absolutist administration of Bessarabia crumbled in the final stages of World War I, triggered by the Russian revolutions of February and October 1917. After the flight of the last Russian governor from Chisinau and the formation of a provisional government of Russia in Petrograd, a Moldovan National Committee was organized in the capital in April 1917. It called for autonomy, land reform, and the return to the Romanian language in education, judicial and public administration.

On November 15 1917, Bolshevik Russia promulgated "The Declaration of Rights of the Peoples" of the former Russian Empire, including "the right of total separation". On December 2 1917, Moldova's general Assembly ("Sfatul Tarii"), elected from all of the province's ethnic groups and social and economic strata, convened in Chisinau. Out of the 138 members of the newly elected body 70 percent were Moldovan and 30 percent represented the province's ethnic minorities, Ukrainians, Russians, Bulgarians, Jews etc. The Chisinau Assembly proclaimed the establishment of the Moldovan Democratic Republic, as a loose constituent of the Russian Federation.

In the first days of January 1918, as the Bolshevik revolution was gaining momentum across the board, communist para-military units from across the Nistru occupied Chisinau and dispersed the fledgling republic's

governing body. Soon after, with the help of four brigades sent in from neighboring Romania, the Moldovan military units (whose core-battalions –"Cohortele Moldovenesti"-- had been formed in Odessa and Chisinau between April-November 1917) mounted a counter-offensive and forced the Bolshevik units out, throwing them back, east of the Nistru.

With Bolshevik power out, and Ukraine threatening to annex the region, Sfatul Tarii reconvened in Chisinau on January 24 1918, broke all ties with Russia, increasingly plunged at that time into revolutionary anarchy, and declared the independence of the Moldovan Democratic Republic.

Later on, on March 27 1918, as the Bolshevik revolution was plunging Ukraine into increasing disorder and misrule, Sfatul Tarii proclaimed the conditional union of the Moldovan Democratic Republic with Romania "in accordance with historical right and ethnic right, and the principle that peoples should determine their own fate". The vote was 86 in favor, 3 against and 36 abstentions.

Eight months later, on November 27 1918, Sfatul Tarii proclaimed Bessarabia's unconditional union with Romania which, in the meantime, alongside its western allies, had emerged on the side of the victors in World War I.

The Bessarabia-Romania union was formally acknowledged by the Peace Treaty of Versailles (October 28, 1920), ratified by Great Britain in 1921, France in 1924, and Italy in 1927. Russia's successor state -- established on December 30, 1922 as the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)-- refused to adhere to the Treaty's provisions, seeking instead to pursue one of its articles that called for Romania and Russia to negotiate at a later stage on any matters of dispute, through the arbitration of the League of Nations. Such talks, held between 1924-1932, ended in deadlock over the USSR's insistence that a plebiscite be held in Russia's former province, a claim which Romania opposed, citing sovereignty over internal matters.

Questions and Issues:

the 1918 Bessarabia-Romania union be described as an act of annexation according to international law?

* Assess the applicability of the principle that, under international law, annexation is validated only when consented to by the state whose territory is annexed (in whole or in part) or, in the case of territory not formerly held by another state, when consented to by the international community.

Suggested Reading:

Armstrong, Hamilton Fish. "The Bessarabian Dispute". In *Foreign Affairs* II no. 4 (1924), pp. 609-656

Bacon Walter. *Behind Closed Doors: Secret Papers on the Failure of Romanian-Soviet Negotiations, 1931-1933.* Stanford, CA.: Hoover Institution Press, 1979

Dobrinescu, V.F. *The Diplomatic Struggle Over Bessarabia*. Iasi: Center for Romanian Studies, 1996

Mosley, Philip E. "Is Bessarabia Next?". In *Foreign Affairs* XVIII, no. 3 (1940), pp. 557-562

4. 1918-1940: The Romanian Interlude

An Uneasy Integration

In historic hindsight, Bessarabia's 1918 union with Romania was the one critical move that prevented the tottering Moldovan Democratic Republic from becoming a Soviet republic at the end of World War I, a course followed by all other former provinces of the Russian Empire (with the exception of the Baltics). Importantly, Moldova's next-door neighbor to the east, Ukraine, united with Russia's Soviets on December 28, 1920 and was established as a full-fledged Soviet Socialist Republic in 1922.

Bessarabia's union with Romania has been viewed as part of the surge for self-determination of Central Europe's nationalities in the wake of the collapse of the Habsburg, Russian and Ottoman Empires. Though never fully secured by international treaty (not only Russia, but also Japan and the United States failed to ratify the Versailles provisions regarding Bessarabia), the 1918 union was inspired and supported by the Wilsonian principles, spelled out by American president Woodrow Wilson to serve as the basis for territorial settlements at the end of the first World War. Another cause of Bessarabia's decision to join Romania was the revulsion the majority of the local population and of the intellectual elite vis-a-vis the prospects of a Bolshevik take over in the former czarist province.

Roadblocks in the Old Country

While part of Romania between the two world wars, Bessarabia's lot improved, as the Bucharest government sought to integrate the former Russian province into the structures of modern Romania. Agrarian reform, already voted by the Chisinau Sfatul Tarii in 1918 and endorsed by the Romanian Parliament in 1920, redistributed some 1. 8 million hectares to over 350,00 farmers. Public works projects were accelerated. By 1930 literacy had risen to nearly 30 percent. New roads, bridges across the Prut, airports, modern telephone networks were inaugurated in the 30s. In 1939 a state-of-the-art radio station began broadcasts from Chisinau.

About a dozen Bessarabian politicians served with distinction as members of Romania's successive governments during the interwar period, but were never able to return to the high status they had at the top of the Bessarabian national movement in 1917-1918.

The new status of the province was not without dysfunctions and flaws. Many of these had been inherited from the czarist empire. For example, only about 90 miles of paved roads existed in the province before its union with Romania. There were 657 miles of railroads but --built for strategic reasons-- they connected Bessarabian towns and cities with Russia, not with each other.

In the 20s and 30s, 87 percent of Bessarabia's population lived outside the cities, nearly 93 percent of Romanian-speakers lived in the countryside, while Russian ethnics and Jews formed over 50 percent of the urban population. In Bessarabia's towns and cities the Romanian presence was numerically negligible. As a consequence of over one century of policies of colonization, the province was home to over 350,000 Russian ethnics, over 300,000 Ukrainian ethnics and over 200,000 Jews. The latter alone accounted for over 26 percent of Bessarabia's city residents.

At the same time, pro-Soviet, pro-Russian and pro-communist propaganda was active underground, mostly in the cities, but also in the countryside. The Romanian authorities attitude toward any appearance of subversion was, more often than not, harsh and heavy-handed. Locals of diverse ethnic background frequently complained about the patronizing and distrustful behavior of the new administration, which made Bessarabians feel in many cases like second-rate citizens of Romania. In addition, Romanian carpetbaggers offered pro-Russian and Bolshevik propagandists handy ammunition to criticize the evil nature of Romania's rule over Bessarabia.

Throughout the Romanian interlude, Soviet-trained agents were active across the province, Soviet planes episodically dropped leaflets in the countryside, and there were a number of shooting incidents along the Nistru. Bolshevik-inspired incursions, both from across the Nistru and from the Black Sea, culminated in the Tatar Bunar communist rebellion (1924).

Questions and Issues:

* What were the main causes of the uneasy acclimatization of Bessarabia into Greater Romania between 1918-1940?

* Which of the following three contributed most to Bessarabia's decision to join Romania in 1918: The specter of Bolshevik anarchy? Fear of looming annexation by Ukraine? Or the majority's wish to reconnect to the province's pristine cultural roots ?

Suggested Reading:

Clark, Charles Upson. *Bessarabia: Russia and Romania on the Black Sea*. New York: Dodd Mead, 1932

Lungu, D.B. "Soviet-Romanian Relations and the Bessarabian Question in the 1920s". In *Southeastern Europe*, VI no.1 (1979, pp. 29-45

Lungu, D.B. *Romania and the Great Powers, 1933-1940.* Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1989

5. A Soviet-Made Moldova On The Border

The MASSR Experiment : 1924-1940

The Soviet determination to seize back from Romania the czars' former province of Bessarabia materialized in the creation of a pilot political entity under the name of "Moldavia" abutting Romania's border with Soviet Ukraine. Under the custom-tailored name of the Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (MASSR) the creation of the new body was passed into law by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in Moscow, on October 12, 1924. Moscow's design was to establish an institutional bridgehead for the its future moves into the area west of the Nistru.

The Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (1924-1940)

Carved out of Soviet Ukraine on the Romanian border, the largely artificial Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic covered a 8,300 square kilometers area, with a population of over 560,000 inhabitants (1926 est.), mainly Ukrainian ethnics. Ukrainians formed nearly 49 percent of the total population, while less than a third (some 30 percent) were registered as “Moldavians”. Most of the latter were the descendants of a sparse Romanian-speaking rural population which had migrated there from across the Nistru in the 18th and 19th centuries. Other ethnics in the MASSR included Russians (9 percent), Jews (8 percent) and Germans (2 percent).

With its capital in Balta, later Tiraspol, the MASSR was a largely artificial political construct planned to lay the ideological, cultural and logistical groundwork for the future expansion of Soviet power into Romanian-held Bessarabia. It is no coincidence that, as far back as 1924, the MASSR declared Chisinau its “real” capital.

On August 2 1940, upon the annexation of Bessarabia, the Soviet Union dissolved the MASSR, and only a tiny strip of its territory --3,400 square kilometers in surface-- along the Nistru east-bank, was attached to the newly created Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic (MSSR).The greater part of the short-lived MASSR --nearly 5,000 square kilometers in surface-- was then returned to Soviet Ukraine.

Questions and Issues:

* Analyze and assess the relation between the MASSR as a pilot political construct, and today's separatist "Moldavian Nistrian Republic" on the east bank of the Nistru River.

* Is it fair to say that the actual parent-state of the Republic of Moldova is the 1924 Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, rather than Bessarabia, or the eastern half of historic Moldova?

Suggested Reading:

* King, Charles. "The Moldovan MASSR on the Eve of the War: Cultural Policy in 1930s Transnistria". In *Romania and World War II,* Kurt Treptow, ed. Iasi: Center for Romanian Studies, 1996

6. 1940-1991: Soviet Rule Over Moldova

The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact

In one of the most important diplomatic preliminaries of World War II, Germany and the Soviet Union concluded a 10-year nonaggression pact, signed on August 23 1939 by Viacheslav Molotov, Stalin's commissar of foreign affairs on behalf of the USSR, and Joachim von Ribbentrop, Hitler's foreign minister on behalf of Nazi Germany. Although the pact became null and void in June 1941 when Nazi Germany went to war against the USSR, the provisions of its Secret Additional Protocol shaped much of Eastern Europe's history --including Moldova's-- in the post-World War II years. Article 1 of the Secret Additional Protocol apportioned the Soviet and Nazi spheres of influence in the Baltic states --Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania (annexed by the USSR on 17-21 June 1940). Article 2 described the future partition of Poland, with the border between the USSR and the Nazi Reich running across the middle of Poland (this provision was enforced by both signatories through military occupation on 1-17 September 1939, thus triggering the beginnings of the second World War in Europe). Article 3 referred explicitly to Bessarabia. It stated the USSR interest in annexing Bessarabia from Romania, and Nazi Germany's consent to that annexation. Today's borders of Poland and Moldova's status (now, a country in its own right for the first time since the 19th century) are among the indirect lingering consequences of the 1939 Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact. The republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania regained their full pre-1940 status in 1990-1991.

The incorporation of Bessarabia into the USSR was carried out through military occupation in the last days of June 1940, preceded by a 48-hour ultimatum to Romania. In the case of Moldova (Bessarabia) the territorial provisions of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact were eventually consented to by both the predecessor state -- Romania, and the international community, in the form of the 1947 Paris Peace Treaty. The provisions of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact as embodied in the status of the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic, a part of the USSR after 1940, became null and void on August 27 1991, by virtue of Moldova's declaration of independence which put an end to Soviet rule over Moldova.

Questions and Issues:

* Why is the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact still raised between the Republic of Moldova and Romania as an issue

in the on-going discussions about finalizing the basic treaty between the two countries?

* What are the reasons for the current difference in international standing between the Baltic states --Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania-- (now restored to their pre-annexation status after the downfall of the Soviet Union), and the status of post-Soviet Moldova, which enjoys a different status from the one the land had before the 1940 annexation?

Suggested Reading:

Graham, W. Malbon. "The Legal Status of Bukovina and Bessarabia". In *American Journal of International Law*, v. 38 (October 1944), pp.667-773

Matei, Valeriu, ed. *The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact* (Documents). Chisinau: Universitas, 1991

Spector, Sherman David. *Romania at the Paris Peace Conference*. Iasi: Center for Romanian Studies, 1995

The Soviet Take Over:

The incorporation of Romanian-held Bessarabia into the USSR was carried out through military occupation between June 28-July 3 1940.Thirty-two Red Army divisions took part in the operation. On August 2, 1940 the Supreme Soviet of the USSR passed into law the creation of the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic on most of Bessarabia's territory. Russian was declared the official language of communication and Russian Cyrillics became mandatory in the writing of Romanian (dubbed "Moldavian" and described as separate from Romanian). On August 15 1940, a Soviet decree passed into law the nationalization of all privately owned land, industries, businesses and trading companies. Confiscation of private land began immediately and the first kolkhozes (Soviet collective farms) were established in the countryside. By October 1940, 487 private entreprises had been taken over by the state in the MSSR's towns and cities.

A Constitution based on the 1936 Soviet Constitution was promulgated in February 1941. It established the Communist Party as the unique political power over the land, and the MSSR Supreme Soviet as the republic's legislative authority. In terms of social and economic initiatives, the elimination of private property continued full scale.

Over 13,000 Soviet specialists and Communist Party activists, including 500 teachers from Russia and 380 from Ukraine moved to the MSSR, assigned to instruct and teach in the new republic. On the other hand, the policy of deportations, started immediately after the annexation, continued unabated, reaching a total of over 100,000 people, mostly landowners, merchants, teachers, priests and members of the urban bourgeoisie. Only in the first months of 1941, over 20,000 persons, were deported to Kuzbas, Karaganda, Kazakhstan and other distant parts of the USSR, amid reports of atrocities and exterminations. In the city of Balti, almost half of the population of about 55,000 was deported to the interior of the USSR in June 1941. Definitive figures are hard to assess, but the number of Moldovan deportees throughout the Soviet rule is considered to range anywhere between 200,000 and 500,000. (According to the 1958 edition of the *British Encyclopedia* (vol.15, p. 662), by mid-1955, the Soviet authorities had deported about half a million persons from the MSSR).

World War II

On June 22, 1941, Germany and Romania attacked the Soviet Union and a Romanian-German military coalition briefly recaptured Bessarabia between June 1941 and March 1944. The Red Army reconquered the land in the Spring of 1944. On August 23 1944, Romania overthrew the military dictatorship that had led the country to war against the Soviet Union and turned its arms against Nazi Germany, fighting as an ally of the USSR until the end of World War II.

The Paris Peace Treaty signed on February 10, 1947 restored the January 1 1941 borders between Romania and the Soviet Union, and thus sanctioned the incorporation of Bessarabia into the USSR. Except for the Romanian wartime occupation (June 1941-March 1944) the de facto incorporation of Bessarabia into the Soviet Union had been in effect since its 1940 annexation.

Moldova's Post-War Transformation

The post-World War II era in Moldova's history began with the continuation of Stalin's policies launched in 1940, including the forced collectivization of the republic's farmland. Between 1944-1948 in a follow-up of the operation begun immediately after the 1940 occupation, 578 kolkhozes were created in the Moldavian SSR. They included the properties of over 100,000 farming families, accounting for 22 percent of the republic's private land. By May 1 1949 the number of collectived farms had risen to 925. By deportations and other means of eradiction of private property, the forced collectivization process was completed by the end of 1950.

Sovietization and Russification continued full-scale in the 1950s under the direct supervision of Leonid Brezhnev, whom Stalin had appointed in 1950 to serve as secretary-general of the Moldavian Communist Party's Central Committee with discretionary authority over the new Soviet Republic.

In the 1950s and 1960s a moderate process of socialist industrialization was implemented on orders from Moscow. One of its relevant characteristics was that most of the new industrial units were located in the Nistru east-bank strip of land, where from the outset, the Russophone population had outnumbered native Moldovans. Steel mills and cement factories were built in Rabnita, which became one of the MSSR's industrial centers. Energy-producing plants and other industrial units were built at Dubasari, Rabnita and Cuciurgan, on the east bank, and the city of Tiraspol became the MSSR's second industrial center after Chisinau. One of the consequences of this long-range policy is that, to this day, Moldova's industrial units, placed by the Soviet Union on the narrow strip of land on the left bank of the Nistru account for about 90 percent of the country's energy production and 28 percent of its industrial enterprises, holding only 16 percent of the country's territory and 14 percent of its population.

Apart from this territorial distribution imbalance, Soviet era planners' emphasis continued to be on the republic's agricultural potential. A "Moldavian experiment" in agriculture was launched in he early 1970s calling for a dramatic increase in the RSSM's agricultural production, which soon brought Moldova the reputation of one of the USSR's breadbaskets and its main vineyard and orchard. While holding a record low of less than 0.2 percent of the Soviet Union's territory, the MSSR ranked sixth in the USSR's food production.

Questions and Issues:

authoritarian rule over Moldova? What were the fundamental differences between them in: (a) mode of acquisition and (b) administration?

* With the benefit of hindsight, whose interests were best served by the 1940 inclusion of the Nistru east-bank sliver of land into the Moldavian SSR : Russia's or present-day Moldova's ?

Suggested Reading:

Bruchis, Michael. *Nations-Nationalities-People: A Study of the Nationalities Policy of the Communist Party in Soviet Moldavia*. Boulder, Co.:East European Monographs, 1984

Clem, Ralph. *The Soviet West: Interplay Between Nationality and Social Organization.* New York: Praeger, 1975

Deletant, Dennis. "The Soviet View of Bessarabia". In *Slavonic and East European Review 56,* no.1 (1978) pp.115-118

7. The Fall of the Soviet System in Moldova

Political Context: *Glasnost*

The *glasnost* policies launched by Kremlin leader Mikhail Gorbachev (1985-1991), to promote more openness in the debate of Soviet policies and more freedom of the media triggered an explosion of open discussions that ended in challenging the Communist Party's policies not only in Russia proper, but also in the other Soviet republics, more especially so in the Baltics. The *glasnost* climate exerted a huge impact on Soviet-held Moldova, where it provoked an open debate about the country's language issue and alphabet issue. A groundbreaking periodical called *Glasul* (Romanian: "The Voice") was printed illegally in the Latin alphabet by Moldovan intellectuals in Latvia. Unavailable in Moldova under Moscow's policies of Russification, Roman characters were nevertheless available in Soviet Latvia, where the alphabet issue had no direct political relevance to Soviet policies, as was the case of Moldova. Carried clandestinely, the approximately 60,000 copies of the March 1989 edition of *Glasul* was smuggled and distributed in the MSSR where it had the effect of a watershed, giving a huge impulse to Moldovan intellectuals' struggle for cultural and political emancipation from the USSR.

In the wake of Gorbatchev's *glasnost* policies, as the anti-totalitarian sentiment was cresting throughout the Soviet Union, a largely symbolic proclamation of sovereignty was declared in Chisinau, on June23 1990, preceding Moldova's further moves toward independence.

Moldova's New Statehood: 1991

In March 1991 the MSSR refused to take part in a referendum on preserving the USSR. On May 23 that same year, the name of the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic (applied to the land after its1940 Soviet incorporation into the USSR) was changed to the Republic of Moldova, the old vernacular form --Moldova-- superseding the long-standing use of Moldavia in foreign languages and international documents. At the same

time, the name of the the Supreme Soviet was changed to the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova. Such a dramatic pursuit of independence put the Chisinau local authorities increasingly at odds with the Kremlin, and led to growing tensions between the ethnic non-Russophone majority and the Russophone minorities in the republic. These tensions led to sporadic violence, involving mostly the Nistru east-bank districts of the republic, where Russia's 14th Army was stationed. A brief armed conflict ensued and the republic's east bank districts -- already at odds with Moldova's central government over the language, flag and alphabet issues-- declared their secession from Chisinau.

Moldova's independence was pronounced in an explosion of popular enthusiasm on August 27 1991, in the immediate aftermath of the failed communist putsch in Moscow. In a huge show of solidarity, around 600,000 people from all parts of the country gathered on that day in downtown Chisinau in front of the Soviet-era executive headquarters prompting the republic's legislative body to declare Moldova's separation from the USSR and the end of the Kremlin's rule. On December 26, 1991, the USSR itself was disbanded. As a prelude to its formal dissolution, on December 8, 1991 the three Slavic republics -- Soviet Russia, Soviet Ukraine and Soviet Belarus announced in Minsk the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), as a "coordinating body" meant to oversee common interests of its members in the areas of the economy, foreign policy and defense.

On December 21, the other non-Slavic republics, including Moldova, joined the CIS, under certain conditions. Moldova declined to join the political and military structures of the CIS, but adhered to its comercial and economic structures. The Baltic states and Georgia declined to join.

Questions and Issues:

* How were the ethnic, linguistic and political elements linked in Moldova's quest for independence from the Soviet Union?

* Did the shift in name --from **Moldavia** to **Moldova**-- carry a special connotation in the Soviet republic's efforts to separate itself from Moscow's rule?

* Is Moldova's new statehood totally firm and secured ? Assess the weak links in Moldova's new identity, taking into account its limited statehood experience, and the Nistru east-bank districts declared secession from the central government and pro-Russian orientation.

Suggested Reading:

Barbour, William, and Carol Wesseker, eds. *The Breakup of the Soviet Union: Opposing Viewpoints*. Dan Diego, Ca.: Greenhaven Press, 1994

King, Charles. *Post-Soviet Moldova: A Borderland in Transition*. Iasi: Center for Romanian Studies, 1997

Part III: THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA TODAY

1. Constitution and State Structures

Moldova's Constitution

Independent Moldova's Constitution was adopted on July 29, 1994 and took effect on August 27 of the same year. It defines Moldova as a sovereign, neutral, and democratic country, and declares its permanent neutrality; it mandates a free market economy based on the protection of private property rights; and it guarantees the personal rights of all citizens of the country, regardless of ethnic or social origin, language, or religious and political affiliations. Moldova's Constitution guarantees the rights of political parties and of other public organizations. Public administration is carried out on the principles of local autonomy and government powers are based on democratic elections.

The 1994 Constitution described Moldova's system of government as semi-presidential. It called for the president's direct election by all members of the electorate over eighteeen years of age.

A referendum on changing Moldova's semi-presidential system of government, as stipulated by the 1994 Constitution, was held in May 1999. In keeping with the amendments consequently brought to the Constitution, in 2001 Moldova became a parliamentary republic, whose head of state is now elected by the Parliament. Critics of the move argue that with one party's solid majority in the Parliament, and the president elected by that very same Parliament, it is possible to envisage a slide toward a brand of direct presidential rule, less likely to be challenged in a relevant way by the legislative body.

The Parliament of the Republic of Moldova

The Legislature

Moldova's parliamentary system is based on a unicameral legislature. The one-chamber Parliament --a successor to the former Supreme Soviet-- has 101 seats. Deputies are elected by universal suffrage for a four-year term. The Parliament meets in two ordinary sessions per year. There are eleven permanent committees, whose tasks cover the following areas: agriculture and food processing industries; culture, science, education and youth; ecology and development of the territory; economy, industry, public finances and budget; foreign affairs; national security; health, family and social protection; human rights and national minorities; law; public communication and mass media. A number of special committees may supplement the Parliament's permanent committees. Special committees in Moldova's XVth legislature currently debate such issues as the Nistru east-bank conflict, changes in the Moldova's Constitution, and adjustments to the administrative organization of the territory. The numbering of Moldova's current legislatures reflects institutional continuity with Soviet-era legislatures (the last Soviet-era Supreme Soviet --at the time of Moldova's declaration of independence-- is considered the republic's XIIth legislature)

The Judiciary

Independent Moldova's judiciary is a successor to the Soviet era judicial system and reflects in many ways practices of the former legal institutions. The General Prosecutor's office directs investigations, orders arrests and prosecutes criminal cases. A network of local courts and higher level appeals courts constitute the territorial basis of the system. The Supreme Court is the top authority on civil, criminal and administrative law. It also passes judgment on cases involving the Constitution and other litigations and special suits, such as disputes over the competence and jurisdiction powers of state bodies, including the presidency, and the other branches of government.

The Executive Branch

The government of Moldova is headed by the prime-minister, nominated by the president. Currently the cabinet has fifteen ministries: Economy, Finance, Industry, Energy, Transportation, Foreign Affairs, Agriculture, Education, Public Health, Labor and Social Protection, Culture, Justice, Ecology and Territorial Organization, Defense, and Internal Affairs. Subordinate units in Moldova's government include the following state departments: Statistic and Sociology, National Relations and Language Functioning, Energy Resources and Fuels, Standards, Metrology and Technical Supervision, Information Technologies, Youth and Sports, Inter-ethnic Relations, Border-Guard Troops, Privatization, Civil Protection and Emergency Situations, Customs.

Suggested Reading:

Dawisha, Karen, and Bruce Parrot, eds. *Democratic Changes and Authoritarian Reactions in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova.* Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1997

Local Government

Moldova is administratively divided into 11 territorial units --Balti, Cahul, Chisinau, Dubasari, Edinet, Lapusna, Orhei, Soroca, Tighina, Ungheni and Taraclia-- called *Judete* (singular:*Judet*), and an autonomous

territory --Unitatea Teritoriala Autonoma Gagauzia (the Gagauzia Autonomous Territorial Unit), home to most of the Gagauz (Christian Turks) minority. The chief governing authority in each *judet* is the prefect; the local governor of the Gagauz autonomous unit --in keeping with Gagauz tradition-- is called *bashkan*.

Prior to the administrative-territorial reform of 1999, the country was divided into 40 small-size districts (*raioane*).The Soviet-era territorial division is still enforced in the Nistru east-bank region where the secession of the self-declared "Moldavian Nistrian Republic" obstructed the implementation of Moldova's 1999 territorial-administrative reform, a precondition for continued IMF and World Bank loans to post-Soviet republic.

Moldova's leftist government which took power after the 2001 elections has given consideration to a return to the old Soviet-style administrative division of the republic's territory.

Administrative Map of the Republic of Moldova (2001)

2. Domestic Politics

Political Parties:

The Comeback of the Left

Moldova's political spectrum reflects the legacies of the Soviet-era when the Communist Party was the one and only dominant poltical force in the republic, exerting discretionary control over all administrative, economic, and cultural affairs of the MSSR, from the advent of Soviet communist rule to 1990.The Communist Party was formally banned in Moldova in 1991, after the aborted Moscow putsch against Mikhail Gorbatchev. It was re-established in 1994 under the slightly altered name of the Party of Moldova's Communists. Whereas its influence in public life dwindled in the immediate aftermath of the demise of the post-Soviet era, its appeal to Moldova's electorate rebounded dramatically after 1997, as a consequence of the failure of the center-right parties to deliver on

promises to improve the economic situation of the country and of the people at large.

Rallying 51 percent of the popular vote in the 2001 general elections the Party of Moldova's Communists came back to power as the leading force of a revived left, currently reflected in the composition of the Chisinau Parliament, where the Communists and their allies hold an absolute majority of 71 out of 101 deputies.

The former ruling center-right coalition, formed in the wake of the 1998 elections by three parties (the Democratic Convention, the Bloc for a Democratic and Prosperous Moldova and the Party of Democratic Forces) dissolved in the meantime as an opposition force, the only two center-right parties currently represented in the Parliament being the "Braghis Alliance" with 19 seats, and the Christian-Democrat Popular Party, with 11 seats.

Political Parties:

The Extra-Parliamentary Opposition

Moldova's extra-parliamentary opposition consists of over half a dozen smaller parties. In the wake of the 2001 defeat of the center-right formations, seven of them (the Party of Revival and Accord, the Democrat Party, the National Liberal Party, the Social-Democrat Party, National-Peasant Christian-Democrat Party, the Party for Order and Social Justice and the Party of Democratic Forces) merged to constitute the centrist Democratic Forum of Moldova. The newest emerging political formation in the country's extra-parliamentary opposition is the centrist pro-western Social-Liberal Party which made his debut in May 2001. It advocates the integration of the Republic of Moldova in the European Union and a clear break with the communist past. Its chief objectives include rallying the young generation, women and ethnic minorities under its banner and distancing Moldova from the looming prospect of closer integration with the Russian Federation and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Its political platform is center-left, youth-oriented and pro-European. It strikes one of the sharpest political contrasts with the mostly old-guard Party of Moldova's Communists.

Public Communication and the Media

The lack of a free press tradition in Moldova is one of the legacies of Soviet totalitarian rule. In the Soviet era all Moldovan media were state-owned, state controlled and subject to drastic political and ideological supervision. The appearance of the Romanian-language, Latin-character periodical *Glasul*, printed illegally in Latvia and smuggled into Moldova in 1989 was a groundbreaking infringement of Soviet censorship over the media. In the immediate aftermath of the country's declaration of independence, most of the press and media outlets were privatized, but under financial pressure, they gradually got under the control of groups of interests whose views they tend to express. The Constitution and the law provide for freedom of speech and of the press, although with some restrictions. Print media express a wide variety of political views and commentary. The frequently encountered inability to distinguish fact from opinion in Moldovan journalism is still at work more often than not in public communication.

In all, Moldova's print media include over 200 newspapers (out of which some 90 in the Romanian language), and over 60 magazines (out of which about half in Romanian). Most papers have a circulation of less than 5,000. The daily circulation is about 24 copies per 1,000 persons. The main official newpapers are the Chisinau daily *Moldova Suverana*, published by the government and its Russian-language version *Nezavisimaya*

Moldova. The country's largest circulation papers include the independent *Saptamana* and *Flux*, *Mesagerul* published by the Party of Democratic Forces and *Tara*, published by the Christian-Democrat Popular Party. Other print media include *Sfatul Tarii* published by the Parliament, *Viata Satului* a government publication that targets rural readers. Minority-language publications include *Kishinovskye Novosti, Telegraf, Russkoye Slovo* and *Kodry* all published in Russian. Also in Russian is *Komratskye Vedemosti* published in Comrat, the administrative center of the Gagauz Autonomous Territorial Unit where *Ana Sozu* and *Karlangaci* are also published in Gagauz. Other ethnic minorities publications include *Prosvita* and *Homin* in Ukrainian, *Rodno Slovo*, in Bulgarian and *Undser Kol*/ *Nash Golos*, published in Yiddish and Russian. Tiraspol separatist publications include *Rabochyi Tiraspol* and *Dnestrovskaya Pravda*, the newspaper of the Tiraspol soviet.

The Audio-Visual Media

Although the number of media outlets that are not operated publicly by the state or a political party is growing, most of these independent media still are in the service of a political movement, commercial interest, or foreign country (mostly Russia and Romania) and secure large subsidies from these sources.

There are dozens of independent radio stations, some of them re-broadcasting programs from Romania and Russia. Three independent television stations cover the Chisinau metropolitan area, and one covers the northern city of Balti. The government owns and operates several radio stations and a national television station that covers most of the country. A number of local governments, including Gagauzia, operate television and radio stations.

Moldova's national TV broadcasts daily in Romanian and Russian. As of June 1995, 89.3 percent of Moldova's households had television sets, which means one TV set per 3.7 persons. Over 15 percent of Moldova's households receive cable television. Cable receivers have access to approximately 18 hours of daily broadcasting aired by the Russian-language television radio company "Ostankino". In addition to its programs in the Romanian language, Moldova's national TV carries five hours per day of Russian-language programs, three hours per month of Ukrainian, Gagauz and Bulgarian and one and one-half hours per month of Hebrew- and Yiddish-language programs.

There are some 800,000 radio receivers in Moldova. In addition to its programs in the Romanian language, Moldova's national radio carries five hours per day of Russian-language broadcasts and one hour per month of Gagauz-, Bulgarian-, and Yiddish-language programs.

By 1999, over 90 private TV and FM radio stations with low transmitter power had obtained licenses to broadcast in the Republic of Moldova. Their operations are regulated by Moldova's Telecommunications Law, passed in December 1995. According to that law, the radio frequency spectrum constitutes a national patrimony which is administered by the State Committee on Radio Frequencies, subordinate to the government.

Moldova's Non-Governmental Organizations

One of the Soviet-era legacies is the virtual absence of civic organizations within Moldova's society before independence. The endeavors to lay the groundwork for non-governmental organizations and thus contribute to building the basis for a strong and stable civil society have been relatively successful in spite of this drawback. A law on NGOs was passed by Moldova's Parliament in 1996. Today, Moldova's several hundreds of NGOs

include organizations dealing with the areas of agriculture, business, education and culture, the environment, public health, law, human rights,women's issues the media, etc. In Chisinau alone these include the 21st Century Fund, the Altair International Ecological Agency, the Anti-HIV Association, the "PRAES" Association for Social Development, the "Bluebird" Charitable Fund European School, the Eurasia Foundation, the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, the Independent Journalism Center, the Independent Press Association, the International Center for Economic Transformations Research, the Mold-Eco Foundation, the Gender in Development (GID) Project, the Open Information Society, the Pro-Basarabia/ Pro-Bucovina Association, the Chisinau Russians' Community, the Republican Organization for the Empowerment of Moldova's Youth, the Moldovan Scientists Association, the Pro-Moldova Patriotic Movement, the Philanthropic-Social Foundation for the Protection of Disabled People and Pensioners, the Socium-Moldova Foundation, the Women's Organization of Moldova, the Association of Electronic Press, the Association of Independent Press, etc.

3. Economic Structure

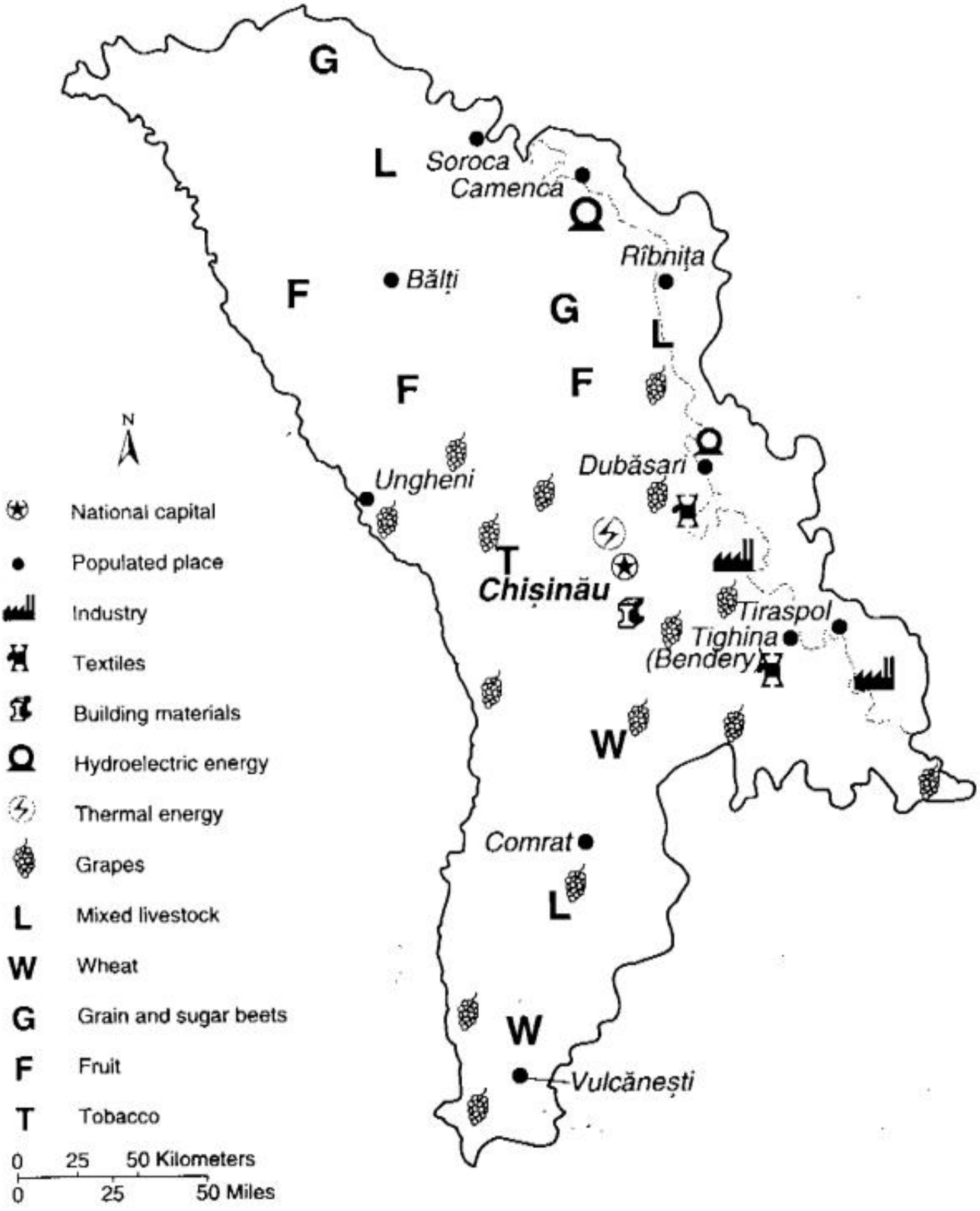
General Profile

Moldova's national economy is agro-industrial, with agriculture accounting for over 44 percent of the net material product. Its major products are vegetables, fruits, wine and liquors, tobacco, grain, sugar beets, and sunflower seeds. About 46 percent of the country's industrial sector is based on food processing, which operates in close cooperation with agriculture. Electric energy production accounts for 17.7 percent, engineering and metal processing for about 10.8 percent and light industry for about 6 percent of Moldova's total output. Moldova's economy is chronically affected by dysfunctions generated by the trans-Nistrian separatist conflict, as most of the country's industry and energy-producing units are located on the east bank of the Nistru River.

There are indications that official data fail to capture a substantial portion of the country's economic activity, with some estimates maintaining that nearly half of the country's overall economic activities are unofficial. Financial analysts say that the recorded GDP curves may be an effect of the inadequate record of exports to other successor states within the CIS, which either transit through or originate from the breakaway Nistru region controlled by the Tiraspol secessionist authorities.

A general decline of the economy translated into a dramatic deterioration of the purchasing power of the population making Moldova one of the poorest countries of Europe over the 1991-2000 period. The poor state of the economy was one of the leading factors that contributed to the left's victory in Moldova's 2001 elections when the communists were voted back to power.

Under the statistical data of Moldova's National Bank, at the beginning of 2001, Moldova's foreign debt was $ 1,539 million, which translates into $341.3 per head of inhabitant (up by 16.3 percent from $293.45 in 1997).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Moldova's privatization effort has been governed by the Privatization Law of 1991, according to which all Moldovans have the right to privatize state property by using their National Patrimonial Bonds to purchase shares of major, midsized and small enterprises as well as state-owned homes. The privatization effort has been generally slow and hampered by numerous bureaucratic hurdles. It was somewhat more expeditious in the areas of housing and the return to private ownership of the land. The pace of privatization subsided amidst the political uncertainties that led to the February 2001 anticipated elections, and in the immediate aftermath of the Party of Moldova's Communists return to power as a result of these elections. The IMF froze its $142 million, three-year lending program after the elections, as the left was swept to power and some communist deputies talked of scrapping privatization plans, introducing protectionist trade tariffs and abandoning economic reforms demanded by the IMF.

But in the first half of the year 2001, Moldova's economy displayed signs of recovery. The gross domestic product expected to rise by seven percent after increasing 1.9 percent in 2000 and dropping 4.4 percent in 1999. The International Monetary Fund was encouraged by Moldova's inchoate economic progress after the new government took over, and agreed to resume lending, if the Chisinau government met some legislative conditions, such as adopting the needed laws on bankruptcy and financial disclosure.

Main Economic Coordinates

Agriculture

Moldova's economy is based primarily on agriculture which, together with food production, accounts for about 50 percent of the country's GDP. Under average conditions, Moldova's yearly agricultural production is around 3 million tons of grain (chiefly winter wheat and corn), 800,000 tons of fruit and berries, 1 million tons of vegetables, over 2 million tons of sugar beets, 200,000 tons of sunflower seeds, over 400,000 tons of meat (live weight), over 1 million tons of milk, and around 55,000 tons of tobacco. Moldova is an important producer of grapes, with an annual yield of approximately 870,000 tons (1995 est.).

From the total area of the Republic of Moldova, over 58 percent are agricultural

grounds. The agriculture, beverages and food industries employ about 36 percent of the country's available labor force. Approximately half of Moldova's agricultural and food production is traditionally exported to the former Soviet republics. In the first half of 2001, the main importer was Russia, followed by Ukraine, Italy and Romania .

Sequels of Collectivization

Due to the drawbacks of Soviet collectivization, chronic lack of incentives and the many malfunctions generated by the centralized system of production, Moldova's agricultural production started to display a decline ever since the late 1980s. The trend continued into the 1990s while privatization of the agricultural sector lagged behind. In April 1997 only 8.6 percent of the total land subject to privatization had been transferred into so-called joint-venture companies which de facto continued to be run by the same Soviet-era kolkhoze managers and administrators. Moldovan farmers tended to withdraw their lands and properties from

such companies in order to create, like before 1940, their own individual farms.

By 1993 Moldova had only a small number of privately-owned farms (about 500); by 1995 this number increased to almost 14,000. These small farms held only 1.5 percent of Moldova's agricultural land, but their output increased from 18 percent of the country's total agricultural output in 1990, to a significant 38 percent in 1996. In 1997 the Chisinau Parliament approved a law that for the first time since the forced Soviet collectivizations of the 1940s, made possible the sale of land, and in 1998 the World Bank approved a $5 million credit for a Rural Finance Project meant to develop and test a banking system apt to provide financial services to small private farmers and rural entrepreneurs in Moldova. As of 2001, only 10 percent of Moldova's total agricultural land was privatized.

In the year 2000, out of the country's approximately 1,000 large collective farms, over 900 had applied for the government's land privatization program. By the end of the year 2000 approximately 630,000 landowners had received title to almost 1.7 million plots of land. In 2001, the United States expressed its willingness to further support Moldova's agriculture, stressing the need for a successful finalization of agricultural reform.

Industry

The industrial sector accounted for about 23 percent of the net material product of Moldova's national economy in 1998 (down from 38.9 percent in 1993). The decline continued into the late 1990s, but signs of relative recovery were noticeable in the first half of the year 2001, when the rhythm of industrial production was 112.1 percent up from the preceding year's comparable figures in the same time-frame. Industrial growth in the first six months of 2001 was as follows: construction --143 percent; chemical industry --118 percent; machinery --123 percent; timber --123 percent; glass --106 percent; food processing --114 percent. Under average conditions, the country's industrial sector furnishes less than one third of the gross domestic product. It comprises about 600 major and midsized enterprises and provides over 250,000 jobs.

About 46 percent of the industrial sector is based on food processing which operates in close interaction with agriculture. It includes over 200 enterprises producing wines, canned fruit and vegetables, meat and dairy products, sunflower seed oil, sugar, perfumes and cosmetics. Its average potential capacity per season includes the processing of 1.4 million tons of grapes,1.6 decaliters of brandy, over 10 million bottles of sparkling wines, 500,000 tons of sugar and 50,000 tons of tobacco.

Electric energy accounts for about 17.7 percent of Moldova's total industrial output. Engineering and metal processing, which includes agricultural machinery and foundry equipment, accounts for about 10.8 percent. Light industry, which includes refrigerators and freezers, washing machines, textiles and shoes, accounts for about 6 percent.

Most of Moldova's industry was created during the Soviet era and is strategically located on the east bank of the Nistru River, on the territory of the separatist "Moldavian Nistrian Republic". Although holding about 14 percent of Moldova's total population, the breakaway region accounts for 28 percent of the country's enterprises, 21 percent of its total industrial employment and over 33 percent of its total industrial output, which includes power transformers, military weaponry, cement and steel.

Energy

Moldova's energy sector relies mainly on imported coal, oil and natural gas, with local resources accounting for a very small share of the fuel and electrical power needs of the country. The energy sources consist of a system of small hydroelectric plants on the west bank of the Nistru and on the east bank of the Prut. Local thermal power plants are providers of electricity in Balti, Chisinau and Rabnita. Moldova's largest power-producing plant is Cuciurgan, located on the east bank of the Nistru, on territory held by the breakaway "Moldavian Nistrian Republic'. In recent years, Cuciurgan alone produced roughly 30 percent of Moldova's consumption of energy. The other two main producers of energy, Dubasari and Rabnita are also under the control of the Tiraspol separatist authorities which frequently resort to power outages as a means of exerting pressure on the country' central authorities. Moldova is currently exploring alternative energy sources and working on projects to develop its own energy supplies, such as solar power, wind and geothermal. Moldova also plans to take part in the building of the second reactor of the Romanian nuclear power station in Cernavoda if that project proves advantageous.

Aggravated by the trans-Nistrian secession, Moldova's lack of independent energy resources is one of the most onerous bequests of the decade-long Soviet rule over the republic.

Suggested Reading:

The Economist Intelligence Unit, Country Profile, Moldova 2000-2001

The Republic of Moldova in Figures, 1998. Statistical Pocket Book. Chisinau:1999

Structural Challenges:

In the wake of Moldova's accession to independence, three pivotal areas ended up in generating a vicious circle; they currently continue to pose the hardest challenges for the take off of the country's post-Soviet economy:

I. The energy factor

Due to the country's lack of energy reserves and domestic resources, the Republic of Moldova is heavily dependent on a couple of important causal factors which it cannot adequately control:

The first causal element is the fact that most of the country's own energy producing plants are located on the territory of the breakaway "Moldavian Nistrian Republic". The Tiraspol secessionist leadership practices a policy of pressure and blackmail on the country's central authorities --at times in the form of electric power blackouts which episodically paralyze the capital and the rest of the country in demonstrative manner.

The second cause is Moldova's complicated relationship with its main traditional supplier of energy, Russia. Russian natural gas monopoly and main provider of Moldova's energy companies is Gazprom. For a variety of economic reasons, Moldova's payments to Gazprom have been chronically lagging behind, and the Russian firm has frequently threatened to cut supplies, unless the Moldovan firms pay off their debt. However, most of the gas supplies go to state-controlled industrial firms in the breakaway Nistrian republic, whose separatist

authorities routinely stall payment. In 1999, Moldova's total debt to Gazprom was over $ 600 million, out of which Chisinau's owed about $210 million, while Tiraspol separatist entity owed over $400 million.

II. The shadow economy factor

It accounts for about two thirds of the national economy and encompasses four distinct operating areas: the *unofficial economy*, comprising business entities and persons engaged in both legal and illegal activities for which they avoid paying taxes; *the informal economy*, representing transactions among economic factors based on personal contacts and relationships that substitute for, or replace officially documented transactions; *the fictitious economy*, encompassing off-book transactions conducted by state officials who take advantage of their positions to manipulate expenses and income in order to reduce tax liabilities; and *the criminal economy*, encompassing underground activities conducted in such areas as drug trafficking, prostitution, illegal import-export transactions, bribery, extortion and smuggling.

The internationally unrecognized political entity on the east bank of the Nistru River is the haven of most of these activities. It is in that specific context that the breakaway "Nistrian republic" plays the role of the main linchpin in the vicious circle of challenges that hampers the progress of the Moldova's post-Soviet economy.

III. The privatization factor

Privatization is not fully transparent, ownership rights are often unclear and hard to protect legally. Whereas privatization programs continue to be under way, recent structural downturns in the areas of industry and agriculture, as well as the lack of control over the economy in the breakaway Nistru east-bank districts, continue to generate chronic dysfunctions which have resulted in the slowing down of the overall pace of reform. In parallel with the privatization efforts made throughout the 1990s, actual bureaucratic measures intermittently halted the process and, in many cases, made it ineffectual locally. Part of the explanation is the complicated political situation, with frequent changes of leadership in Chisinau, but also in the economic consequences of the political and military conflict in the trans-Nistrian region.

The disruption of traditional ties between economic units on the two banks of the Nistru River continue to exert a negative effect on the overall pace of privatization. Both unaccomplished privatization and the lack of clear cut legislation on private ownership and its guarantees constitute chief obstacles to increased foreign investments in the Republic of Moldova. In 2001, foreign investments in Moldovan companies amounted to approximately $660 million.

Suggested Reading:

The Economist Intelligence Unit, Country Profile, Moldova 2000-2001

4. Society

Demographic Trends

In terms of demographics the Republic of Moldova is facing the symptoms of growing crisis, prompted and accentuated over the 1991-2001 interval by the decline of the economy and acute worsening of living conditions. According to recent statistics, life expectancy at birth is 61.0 for the male population and 69.9 for the female population. Population growth rate is around --0.02%; the birth rate stands at around 14.32 per 1,000 population; the death rate at around 12.33 per 1,000 population (1997 est.). These figures compare unfavorably with the last statistics of the Soviet era (1989) when Moldova's birth rate was 18.9 per 1,000 population and the death rate 9.9 per 1,000 population, with a rate of natural increase of 1.0 %. Social instability associated with the difficulties of the transition and the deterioration of the standard of living account in large measure for that dramatic drop.

On the other hand, migration, mostly illegal, has been on the increase. Government estimates claim that currently between 600,000 and 800,000 Moldovans are illegally working outside the country. Estimates indicate these migrants work in Russia, Romania, Ukraine and Bulgaria. There was news of occasional arrests of illegal Moldovans in South Africa and South Korea. In the year 2000 2,240 Moldovans working illegally abroad had been extradited back to the country.

Health

Moldova has over 300 hospitals with a total of over 50,000 beds, to produce a ratio of 124.7 hospital beds per 10,000 people. Outpatient care is provided by some 500 medical centers. Medical staff consists of over 17,000 doctors and about 48,000 nurses and other medical professionals. Pharmaceutical supplies rely mostly on imports. A return to the state-owned pharmacies network is to be put in place by Moldova's new leftist government under the pledge that medicines prices will be subsidized by the state. In the decade after independence most pharmacies were privatized but the price of medicines spiraled out of control, creating huge difficulties for the poorer segment of the country's population needing medications.

Poverty and Social Safety

According to a survey conducted by the Moldovan government for the first quarter of the year 2001, 40 percent of the country's population live under the poverty threshold. The percentage is 49 percent in the rural population of the Republic of Moldova. The monthly disposable income per person is about $15.5 (193 Moldova *lei*) and 92 percent of the population lives on less than $1 per day. A majority cannot afford to buy fish, meat, milk and other dairy products on a regular basis. Malnutrition is widespread and can be recognized in the rates of anemia for children, and the growing percentage of young men not physically fit for military service. According to the most recent surveys, infant mortality and the rate of death in childbirth are on the increase, and the overall life expectancy is decreasing.

The leading cause of other deaths stems from cardiovascular diseases, cancer, respiratory and accidents. Moldova ranks second among the countries with the highest rate of accidental deaths --including traffic accidents, domestic accidents and falls (in terms of annual deaths per 100,000 persons, South Korea ranks first, with 120.2, Moldova second, with 114.0 and Russia third, with 112.3). The number of HIV infected people has increased over the past years and a growing number of AIDS cases were recorded. In 1991 the government set up the Social Assistance Fund to provide assistance to the needy, and the Social Security Fund, composed of the Pension Fund, the Social Insurance Fund and the Reserve Fund. Nevertheless arrears in the payment of pensions have been routine, creating permanent difficulties in the daily lives of most pensioners (over 800,000

people).

Environment

Moldova's environment has deteriorated markedly during the last decades of Soviet rule when, in keeping with the requirements of socialist central planning, the Chisinau leadership was directed to launch an ambitious plan, called the "Moldavian Experiment" (1971-1974) intended to boost the republic's agricultural and livestock production. One of the chief factors of Moldova's environmental degradation during the years that followed were the excessively heavy pesticide applications that polluted the soil to such a degree that over half a million acres had to be taken out of rotation. Another factor was the excessive growth of livestock industrialization (especially swine and cattle), which led to a massive concentration of offal, much larger than the bulk of animal production as such. The gradual impact of this imbalance on the environment translated over the years into ammoniacal, bacteriological, and nitrates pollution, as well as soil and underground pollution that affected underground waters.

After independence, in order to counter these developments the government took action as early as 1990, and, in 1993, specific laws were passed on environmental protection, water resources, and protection of the underground. In 1999 the World Bank contributed $125,000 to Moldova's program for protecting and preserving the biodiversity of its environment.

Education

Moldova inherited the Soviet education system, marred by decades of ideological indoctrination and governed by the requirements of socialist central planning. Beginning in 1995, the Parliament adopted a new set of regulations to reform and modernize education and make it more adequate to prepare Moldova's future workforce and decision makers, in keeping with the challenges of transition, civil society and the market economy.

A specific aspect of Moldova's education reform was the return to the local population's pre-Soviet traditions in schools, colleges and universities. To counter the effects of the decades of cultural Russification, Moldova turned to Romania with which educational cooperation has been intense after independence. Romania's Ministry of Education currently provides thousands of grants and scholarships for Moldovan students to study at Romanian universities . For the 1999-2000 academic year, several thousands graduate and undergraduate students from Moldova were scheduled to study in Romania.

Women's Issues

In the context of Moldova's traditional culture, Moldovan women have suffered more than men the consequences of the country's economic decline and social disruptions, more especially in the aftermath of independence and the difficulties of transition. Moldova's government supports educational efforts to increase public awareness of the condition of women and the law provides that women shall be equal to men. However, according to statistics, women have been affected disproportionately by unemployment and social discrimination.

One of Moldova's most serious problems is trafficking in women for forced prostitution abroad. Moldovan

young women and girls are trafficked to various locations, including Turkey, Kosovo, Italy, Greece and Israel. According to certain sources, as many as 10,000 Moldovan women are currently working as prostitutes in foreign countries. The International Organization for Migration (OIM) reports that more than 50 percent of the women working in forced prostitution in Kosovo are from Moldova. To combat trafficking in persons, a Human Trafficking Task Force was established by the government in 2000 with the objective of implementing a project of the OIM on trafficking women and girls from Moldova.

5. National Security

Moldova's Ministry of National Security

Moldova's Ministry of National Security replaced the Soviet-era Committee for State Security, the KGB branch of the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic. In 1991, the local assets and personnel of the former KGB taking orders from Moscow were transferred to the new authorities in Chisinau and, in 1994, Moscow and Chisinau reached an agreement on intelligence cooperation, pledging to work together on a broad range of security issues, including exchange of information, combating terrorism and illegal arms sales. According to data made public in 1997, only 30 percent of the officers currently working at the Ministry of National Security were hired as KGB officers before 1990. The overall staff was reportedly reduced by 30-40 percent since then. With regard to public access to files of the former KGB in Moldova, the policy of the government has been to keep them secret. Only close relatives of people who suffered deportation under the Soviet rule are permitted access to the files, provided the documents contain no other names.

Moldova's Armed Forces

Moldova's armed forces are part of the structural inheritance of the state system of the former Soviet Union. Under Moldova's old Soviet-style Constitution, defense was devolved to the Soviet armed forces which the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic was mandated to equip and provide with manpower. Under those circumstances, between 1989-1989 over 9,000 young Moldovans were drafted by the USSR to fight in Afghanistan. After 1991 the government took steps meant to create a brand new reliable army, apt to ensure the country's security, independence and territorial integrity.

Moldova has some 8,000 servicemen, organized into three motor rifle brigades, one artillery brigade and one reconnaissance and assault division. In 1994 Moldova's air force consisted of one fighter regiment, one helicopter squadron and one missile brigade.

Moldova is a member of the U.S. Partnership for Peace initiative. In 1997 the first ever Partnership for Peace exercise involving American and Moldovan troops took place in northern Moldova; the event marked the first time U.S. troops were present in the teritory of a former Soviet republic. In the following years Moldova's military took part in various U.S. Partnership for Peace exercises and military applications.

Soon after the victory of the left in the July 2001 general elections Moldovan troops took part in joint military exercises with Russian troops at the Kantemirovskaya Division's training grounds in the Moscow region. Various reports have suggested that the exercise could be an indication of a new line in the government's attitude toward Russia and the CIS. Other reports indicate that the joint military exercise could also be a first

step toward the future creation of a joint Russian-Moldovan peace-keeping battalion, for possible deployment, some time in the future, on the secession-plagued east bank of the Nistru River. Such a move would politically justify and extend Russia's military presence in the troubled Tiraspol enclave, beyond the OSCE-scheduled deadline for evacuating it from Moldova by 2002.

Suggested Reading:

Gribincea, Mihai. "Challenging Moscow's Doctrine on Military Bases". In *Transition*, v. I, no.19 (1995) pp. 4-8

6. Foreign Policy

Moldova's foreign policy efforts have been complicated by its geographic position and its history --partly shared with its huge former ruler in the east, partly shared with its much smaller western neighbor, Romania. The uncertainties of Moldova's status are those of the one and only successor state of the USSR to inherit legacies from both an ancient root-country --the Principality of Moldova (and a modern core-state --Romania) on the one hand; and the recent legacies of a much more powerful core-state --Russia-- on the other hand. These polarizations have recently surfaced in two divergent initiatives (apparently inspired by the model of the Russia-Belarus union). While in Chisinau Moldova's Liberal Party launched a vaguely articulated project advocating a "state-union" between Moldova and Romania, in Tiraspol, the "Zubr" parliamentary group launched the idea of making Moldova and Ukraine joint partners in the Russia-Belarus state-union. Albeit vague and abstract, the concept of a "Russia-Belarus-Moldova" state-union has surfaced in a statement made in August 2001 by President Vladimir Voronin, who described it as a "possibility", taking into account the fact that --in his words—"Moldova is open to any form of collaboration with the other member states in the CIS". Voronin was careful to note that Ukraine's attitude vis-a-vis a possible "Moldova-Russia-Belarus" state-union should also be taken into account.

On the other side of the issue, a west-oriented Moldova, aspiring to became a member of the European Union featured prominently in the year 2000 on Moldova's foreign policy agenda, peculiarly during the visits the country's former Foreign Minister, Nicolae Cernomaz made to Washington and Brussels. With Cernomaz soon after removed from office, observers have wondered if Moldova's new government is not after all inclined toward cultivating stronger ties with Russia and the CIS.

The expectation that Moscow could use its critically important leverage in order to impose a durable solution to the trans-Nistrian secession conundrum has been cited as an explanation for that inclination, should a throwback in the direction of Moldova's former ruler ever materialize in the future, taking its inspiration from the yet to be defined Russia-Belarus state-union.

Relations with the United States:

Related to Moldova's population and compared to U.S. assistance going to othe former Soviet republics, American assistance going to Moldova ranks second among that received by other member states of the CIS. Moldova's first two Presidents (Mircea Snegur and Petru Lucinschi) visited Washington during their tenure in office and were received at the White House. In August 2001, the Bush administration emphasized its current

expectations from Moldova's new government in a letter to Moldova's President Vladimir Voronin. The letter stressed that Moldova's future is with the West, Europe, and the trans-Atlantic community, and that the United States looks forward to the Chisinau government's pledge to move ahead with democratic reform and continue the country's transition process towards a market economy.

The same was pointed out by Secretary of State Colin Powell who reaffirmed the United States willingness to further support economic reforms and democratization in Moldova, stressing the need of a successful finalization of agricultural reform. A U.S -Moldova bilateral Agreement on Protection and Preservation of Certain Cultural Properties was signed in 2001, to protect and preserve the cultural heritage of all national, religious or ethnic groups residing in Moldova and were in one way or another, victims of genocide.

Regarding the trans-Nistrian region, the United States supports the OSCE 1999 Istanbul Summit accord demanding the withdrawal of Russia's troops from Moldova's east-bank separatist territory by 2002, and the removal and scrapping of the weapons and ammunition stockpiles left there by the former 14th Soviet Army by 2001.

Through USAID, Moldova receives from the United States a large variety of programs to support land privatization reforms, agricultural yield growth, democratization and market economy reforms.

Moldova takes part in the programs of the U.S. Partnership for Peace and is a signatory of the U.S. Cooperative Threat Reduction Agreement. In 1998, American technical assistance to Moldova stood at about $25 million and in 2001, through USAID, the United States plans to provide an extra several million dollars contribution in humanitarian assistance to help Moldova's needy population living under the poverty threshold.

Moldova and Russia:

The CIS Connexion

Although Moldova signed the Minsk Agreement and the Alma Ata Declaration in December 1991, the Chisinau Parliament --strongly influenced at that time by the pro-Romanian Popular Front bloc of deputies-- dragged its feet on ratifying the documents. It was only in April 1994 that a new Parliament finally approved, with reservations, Moldova's membership in the CIS and Moldova signed the CIS charter on economic union. The Republic of Moldova declined to join the political and military structures of the CIS.

However, soon after the advent of the left and the victory of the party of Moldova's Communists in the 2001 elections, Moldova's new government signed a Military-Strategic Cooperation Agreement with Russia. After their August 2001 talks, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Moldova's President Vladimir Voronin agreed that the two countries are ready "for all forms of collaboration" within the CIS, especially in the economic and military fields.

Alongside the former Soviet republics of Georgia, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, and Azerbaijan, Moldova is part of the so-called GUUAM group of successor states that share specific economic and trade interests, somewhat distancing themselves from the main priorities existing within the broader structures of the Commonwealth of Independent States. The world after September 11, 2001 has added a new dimension to the importance of the GUUAM group. Almost overnight, one of the GUUAM member-countries --Uzbekistan, has become militarily

and diplomatically a de-facto ally of the United States by hosting American troops that take part in the war waged against Taliban-ruled Afghanistan.

However, Moldova's long-abiding commercial interests and its quasi-total dependence on energy supplies, traditionally delivered from Russia, are among the chief priorities tying Moldova to the CIS structures and, in a more special way to the Russian Federation.

Russia expressed interest in a specific part of Moldova in 2000, when the Russian Federation's Duma defined the Tiraspol enclave as a region of special strategic interest for Russia; and again in 2001, when leftist forces in Russia's legislature suggested that Moscow, Minsk, Chisinau and Tiraspol start consultations for an eventual creation of a "common state-union" that should join Russia, Belarus and Moldova in a way that would put an end to the Moldavian Nistrian Republic's secession from Chisinau.

An important component of the Moldova-Russia relation is the continued presence of Russia's military on the territory of the Republic of Moldova. Russia's former 14th Army, currently downgraded to the status of an "Operational Group, continues to be headquartered in the Tiraspol separatist enclave. The Russian army remains a sizable regional force and is the only Russian military presence on foreign territory outside the Russian Federation in Europe. In conjunction with the breakaway Tiraspol authorities, it controls over 40 thousand tons of weapons and ammunition depots of the former Red Army located on the Nistru east-bank. According to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) the 40,000-42,000 tons of stockpile of Russian arms in the separatist region of Transnistria is a "candy store" for terrorist groups. In this connection it has reportedly been "item of interest" well before the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States, and that the potential for misuse of the arsenal had increased since then.

The stockpile has been stored in eastern Moldova, at Colbasna close to the

Ukrainian border, since Soviet forces withdrew from Hungary and Czechoslovakia in the late 1980s and 1990s. There has been virtually no withdrawal of ammunition since then, although parts of the stockpile have been dispersed to help arm Transnistrian separatist forces, to assist local arms production, and for sale to third parties. In 1991, 2,596 railcars of ammunition and rockets were present in Colbasna. By 1994, Russia declared only 1,362 railcars were present -- apparently because the stockpile was divided in 1994 between the Russian armed forces in Transnistria and the separatist army (currently 4,500 strong). The two parts of the stockpile are now guarded by 100 Russian and 300 Transnistrian troops, with no independent monitoring of the ammunition which passes from one half of the stockpile to the other.

The Colbasna stockpile has already fuelled conflict in Moldova and elsewhere. During the 1991-92 war between the Moldovan state and Transnistria, some 15,000 firearms, 18 tanks, and nearly 100 artillery guns and armored vehicles passed to the Transnistrian army. In 1994, Transnistrian authorities sold "Grad" rocket launchers to Abkhazia (which had just fought a successful war of separation from the Georgian state). Moldovan investigations have revealed that Tiraspol, the capital of the separatist territory, also attempted to sell "Igla" ground-to-air missiles to an unidentified buyer in 1996- 97. The same report alleged that the Rabnita Steel Mills had succeeded in converting materials from the stockpile into arms for export. The stockpile is one aspect of the Russian military presence in Transnistria which has continued in the post-Soviet period despite Moldovan opposition. Tiraspol is a historic Russian military settlement. As shown above, the regional authorities opposed Moldovan independence in 1991-92, and soon after gained control over a narrow strip of

land, bounded by the Nistru River and the border with Ukraine, in which the bulk of Moldova's industry and electricity-generating capacity was concentrated.

Moldova and Romania

Romania was the first state to recognize the independence of Moldova on the day it was proclaimed, 27 August 1991. However, a basic treaty between Chisinau and Bucharest has been slow in being finalized because of disagreement on a number of points, most of them related to the way of describing the nature of the relationship between two countries which, while being separate political entities, share identical origins and a common history, the same language and quasi-identical cultural legacies.

Romania's diplomatic action in favor of the Republic of Moldova played an important part in the latter's admission in the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe in 2001. In spite of differing views on the issue of whether the countries constitute "two Romanian states" (a view which Chisinau declines to accept) Moldova acknowledges that its relations with Romania are privileged. A controversial Treaty of Cooperation between Moldova and Romania was signed on April 28, 2000.

Moldova and Europe

Moldova became a member and of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe, and of the World Trade Organization in 2001, two moves which were interpreted as signals of the country's desire for deeper integration in the global economic system and in the community of Euro-Atlantic interests and shared values.

Visiting Brussels in July 2001, President Vladimir Voronin stated that "European integration remains on Moldova's top priority foreign policy agenda". Along these lines, western expectations are that, requirements fulfilled and all other conditions permitting, the Republic of Moldova could eventually become a full member of the European Union by the year 2015.

Questions and Issues:

* How did the organizing principles of Moldova's foreign policy evolve after the country's accession to independence, and what were the main driving factors involved in Moldova's apparent wavering between East and West?

* Do you think Moldova may face the risk of losing its statehood, either by inclusion in a future state-union with Russia and Belarus, or by eventually, in one way or another, joining Romania?

* Assess the impact of the trans-Nistrian secession in Moldova's foreign policy uncertainties.

Suggested Reading:

King, Charles. *The Moldovans*, Hoover Institution Press, Stanford, CA.: Hoover Institution Press, 2000

Part IV: Resources

1. ***Belarus and Moldova Country Studies*** (Federal Research Division, Library of Congress 1995)

[***Readers' Guides*** available at the School of Professional and Area Studies]

2. Reference Works:

The Historical Dictionary of the Republic of Moldova (Scarecrow Press, 2000)

The Encyclopedia of Eastern Europe (Garland Publishing, Inc. 2000)

3. Suggested Periodicals:
Foreign Affairs
Foreign Policy
Post-Soviet Affairs
Problems of Post-Communism

4. Web Resources:

See the Moldova page on the FSI/ School of Professional and Area Studies