

**Why Do States Join Military Alliances?
The Case of Romania**

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Abstract

Alliances continue to remain fundamental at the core of international politics. How states make their alliance choices is important for international order and security. The end of the Cold War brought ethnic conflicts and political instabilities in the Balkan region. Based on its size and geographical configuration, Romania again confronted its history in the alliance dilemma of whether to “balance” against threatening states or to “bandwagon” with the states that posed the greatest threats in order to appease their power. Stephen M. Walt (1987) predicted that in a case like that of Romania, the statesmen would most likely choose to bandwagon because of two motives: (i) for “defensive” purposes in order to maintain its independence in the face of a potential threat and (ii) for “offensive” reasons in order to acquire territory. After reviewing Romanian historical records on alliances since 1878, the evidence is compelling that the case of Romania conforms to Walt’s (1987) theory only to the extent that “balancing is not universal.” Thus, it depends on which perspective balancing or bandwagoning is considered from in forming alliances. Romania either formed alliances to balance threats, or allied with the threat. Territorial security was one of the most recurrent motives prevalent in Romanian historical records that prompted Romania to form alliances. As expected, Walt’s (1987) last three factors did not provide a great explanation for Romanian alliances. Modest support was found for ideological solidarity, but little for economic ideology and transnational political penetration.

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To my beloved husband who is my best friend and supporter.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to assess the validity of Stephen Walt's (1987) alliance theory by using Romania as a case study. According to Gunther Hellmann and Reinhard Wolf (1993) "military alliances, are among the most important institutions shaping international politics" (Hellmann and Wolf 1993:13). The alliance concept continues to be important to international politics. As a concept "alliance" is a broad term that brings challenges in establishing its definition or accentuating its clarity.

Some scholars argue that "the specific character of alliances differs in various historical periods in that the character of alliances has evolved from a stage of limited agreement to an international document codified by a treaty" (Salmon 2006:814). This study employs Walt's (1987) alliance definition that encompasses "a formal or informal arrangement of security cooperation between two or more sovereign states" (Walt 1987: 1). In this study, Romanian behavior is examined in context to a series of alliances that encompass various written or mutual agreements and degrees of commitments that Romania has undertaken from 1878, when it won its independence, until it became a full member in the American alliance. The behavior of Romania is examined also within two prominent military alliances: the Warsaw Pact and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

The fundamental difference between military alliances and international organizations lies in the costs and benefits of who chooses to form the alliance agreements. The Warsaw Pact was a defensive military organization similar to NATO that "was founded on 14 May, 1955 in response to the West German rearmament and

integration into NATO” (MacGregor 1986:2). This organization emerged under the Soviet military influence in order to counterbalance NATO and served according to MacGregor (1986) “as a Soviet military device to limit national sovereignty in Eastern Europe” (MacGregor 1986:3). Romania was a member of the Warsaw Pact since its inception in 1955. However, historical evidence suggests that when the Soviet influence began to annihilate Romania’s voice within this Pact, a systematic withdrawal occurred from the Romanian part embracing in this way what is known to be a balancing behavior in the Waltian terms.

Within this alliance, Romania frequently denounced the Soviet threat by condemning its expansionist movements such as the military invasion in Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan. Outside of the Warsaw Pact, Romania pursued an independent military doctrine apart from the Soviets. The level of this independence compelled Romania to pursue close economic relations with West Germany and the U.S., being the only country from the Warsaw Pact who enjoyed a privileged economic status with the west. The gradual retreat from this organization gave Romania a level of freedom in pursuing a foreign policy independently from Soviet control. NATO’s military defense organization is distinct from the Warsaw Pact in that it “was founded on the prerogatives of The North Atlantic Treaty that was signed with respect to the reaffirmation of the *Charter of the United Nations* principles” (*NATO Transformed* 2004: 2).

The legal framework of NATO constitutes “the acknowledgement of a direct relationship between the North Atlantic Treaty and the Charter of the United Nations, NATO represents in this sense the *consensus* of fifty nations to give the responsibility to the *Charter of the United Nations* for international peace and security” (*NATO*

Transformed. 2004:5).¹ Currently NATO serves as a military alliance organization of twenty six countries from North America and Europe that are “committed to fulfilling the goals of the North Atlantic Treaty where principles like *solidarity, freedom* and *security* rest at the core of this political and military alliance since the aftermath of the Cold War” (*NATO Transformed*.2004:20).²

The proverb that “history tends to repeat itself” continues to have greater relevancy in international alliances especially from the perspective of states abilities to attract allies and their behavior to engage within alliances. Skeptics saw Romanian aspirations in 1990, when it began pursuing an alliance with NATO, unrealistic and disappointing since Romania was incompatible with NATO’s values and principles. Regarding Romanian behavior, it is essential to remark that the consequences of defecting from a NATO alliance can be more detrimental than were those of the Warsaw Pact, since as an organization NATO is a bureaucratic institution that depends on the “consensus of states” and on the U.S. power that in the 21st Century aims to change the landscape of security in the world.

Romania continues to balance and bandwagon with NATO its threats to territorial security. More than a decade after dialogue with NATO began, Romania obtained its membership in NATO and received the privilege of hosting one of NATO’s Summits on its soil in April 2008. The case of Romania is important to study in connection with alliances since historically, Romania is characterized as a “paradox” that often flips its position from balancing to bandwagoning when threats to territorial security are involved. There are contemporary competing views regarding Romania and

¹ Italics in original.

² Italics in original.

its motives in joining the NATO alliance. Some scholars view Romania as an opportunistic country that wanted to benefit from NATO's spread of democratization,³ others suggest that Romania wanted to return to its western identity while socializing⁴ with the west, while few Romanian scholars envision motives like external threats to territorial security which prompted Romania to choose the alliance with NATO.⁵

Since security and assessing security became an imperative for the 21st Century, this study aims to contribute to the realm of alliance literature with a newly investigated case that scrutinizes various alliances pursued by Romania from its independence until the end of the Cold War. An increased focus is accorded to the Romania-NATO alliance as well as to various motives, that from the scholars' perspectives, this alliance was pursued. For instance, it becomes interesting to unravel whether during the span of time since the initial dialogue with NATO began until Romania earned its full membership in NATO; from Romanian perspective, the motivation to adhere to the alliance remained constant or had changed.

Walt (1987) argues that "failure to understand the origins of alliances can be fatal for strategizing security" (Walt 1987:2). Moreover, since NATO enlargement appears to co-opt the entire European continent into its organization and since its structures continue to reinvent themselves through a series of programs, it is important to study individual cases like Romania just in the probability that NATO's security tasks are divided and Romania is involved in strategizing its position relative to threats or other former allies.

³ See Harvey Waterman and Dessie Zagorcheva "NATO and Democracy."

⁴ See Schimmelfennig, "NATO Enlargement: A Constructivist Explanation."

⁵ Western scholars may argue that Romania qualifies more as an "aggressor" state than a "country that balances threats." Walt (1987) suggests that "states that are viewed as aggressive are likely to provoke others to balance against them" (Walt 1987:25). Romanian historical records reveal that in order to maintain its territorial integrity Romania either balanced or bandwagoned. No evidence indicates that Romania formed alliances in order to conquer foreign territories.

Will Romania ally in order to balance a threatening power or will Romania bandwagon with the most threatening power? This analysis provides a voluminous insight regarding these questions and aims to underscore one of the recurrent motives that prompted Romania to adopt a particular behavior.

This study is divided into six chapters that unfold as follows: Chapter Two examines the balance of threat theory and its critics that pertain to it. Chapter Three provides a geopolitical insight of Romania that will familiarize the reader with Romanian setting and its politics. Chapter Four analyzes the Romanian behavior of forming alliances from 1878 when Romania won its independence from foreign domination until the end of the Cold War. Chapter Five examines the democratization, western identity and territorial security perspectives that appear to play a role in the alliance formation between Romania and NATO. Chapter Six concludes this thesis by underscoring that Romania conforms to Walt's (1987) alliance theory that "balancing is not universal" and "weak states tend to bandwagon more" (Walt 1987: 173). This chapter also addresses some of the thesis limitations and discusses further research avenues that may be considered in perspective.

CHAPTER 2: THE GENESIS OF BALANCE OF THREAT THEORY

Among the purposes that a literature review serves is to identify the important intellectual traditions that will guide a particular research study in developing a conceptual framework. The purpose of this theoretical examination is to investigate Stephen M. Walt's (1987) balance of threat theory in order to create a framework that will be suitable in assessing Romanian behavior of forming alliances. Thus, this framework will serve as a theoretical ground to validate Walt's (1987) predictions by using Romanian historical experiences as a case study. Since Romanian history is so rich in information, it provides a fertile ground for testing Walt's (1987) balancing, bandwagoning, ideological solidarity, foreign aid and political penetration hypotheses. The ensuing investigation surveys first Walt's (1987) theoretical perspectives on alliances and then reviews a series of critiques effected by scholars of international politics vis-à-vis Walt's (1987) theoretical approach.

The body of literature on the alliance theory suggests that the amount of writing on alliances is relatively voluminous. However, it is deficient in describing the clear motives that states have when they engage in pursuing alliances. Scholars like Walt (1987), argue that the alliance theory relies heavily on the distribution of balance of power concepts like capabilities, leaving a significant gap regarding other various reasons that states may have in joining alliances. Additionally, balancing versus bandwagoning constitutes a subject of intense debates for the scholars of international politics. Walt (1987), a prominent figure in the alliances study, mentions that the motives that states have when engaging in the process of forming alliances, especially those associated with

“when states will form alliances and what determines their choice of allies,” are imperative to know from the perspective of the U.S. foreign policy prescriptions. In many respects, the alliance literature attests to the fact that alliances represent the central feature of international politics and that in principle all alliances are responses to threats and profit gains. In Walt’s (1987) view, “knowing the causes that justify the reasons for states to form alliances is primordial in assessing a state’s strengths, reliabilities and future tendencies vis-à-vis the interventionist missions abroad or militaristic spending at home” (Walt 1987: 3). Walt (1987) expands on the balance of power theory. The balance of power theory is known in the field of international politics mainly for explaining the behavior of states. However, scholars like Douglas J. Macdonald (1989) contend that this theory is incomplete since in analyzing the behavior of individual states “much of the best theorizing about international politics has centered on an analytical focus and on the stratification of capabilities among the aggregation of states” (Macdonald 1989: 795).

Walt (1987) considers it interesting to develop a more general and abstract feature of the balance of power that will explain “the states conduct or behavior on the eve of forming alliances in more detail” (Walt 1987:5). By emphasizing the motives of alliance formation, it can determine the behavior of states. For Robert O. Keohane (1988) the balance of threat theory advanced by Walt (1987) “requires so much information—about perceptions as well as objective facts—that it has relatively little theoretical power of its own” (Keohane 1988:172). According to Keohane (1988), mainly this theory is repetitive since “it restates what we already believe more than providing us with new insight” (Keohane 1988:172). This project confronts the

voluminous information problem also. However, it manages to escape this limitation by providing a variation within the range of information about perceptions when examining Romania's alliance with NATO. The justification for expanding balance of power theory in balance of threat rests in Walt's (1987) argument that, based on the feed-back that he received from numerous scholars when writing the final chapter on his doctoral dissertation, he realized that in fact the different kinds of balancing that were frequently occurring in his analysis were in fact the "balancing of threat" and not the "balancing of power" that were in discussion.⁶

In Walt's (1987) view, testing a series of hypotheses derived from the balance of power theory cannot help but enrich the validity on the empirical grounds of the traditional balance of power theory. In essence, the balance of power theory suggests "that weaker states will form alliances to oppose stronger powers" or that "states ally in order to balance the *power* of others" (Walt 1987:18).⁷ Walt (1987) finds this alleged prediction interesting for testing due to the fact that he believes mainly that "states ally to balance against *threats* rather than against power alone" (Walt 1987:5). With respect to the "proximate threat" Glenn H. Snyder (1991) considers that Walt's (1987) new reformulation of *threats* capabilities instead of those of *power* does not represent a "major revision" or refinement of the traditional theory as Walt (1987) intended to portray it, according to Snyder (1991), an increased attention towards the structural differences would have enriched this theory (Snyder 1991:126).⁸ Important to note is that in the balance of power theory both variables, bandwagoning and balancing, are defined

⁶ See Stephen's M. Walt interview: "Conversations with History;" Institute of International Studies, UC Berkeley.

⁷ Italics in original.

⁸ Italics in original.

in terms of the distribution of states capabilities that are reflected in the size of the population, economic capacity, military power, political cohesion and the like. Walt's (1987) theoretical approach is different in the sense that instead of considering states "distribution of capabilities," he considers the states "distribution of threats" which encompasses a combination of capabilities [power] and intent [motives and perceptions].

Therefore, the distribution of threat concepts that conceives the aggregate power, proximity, offensive capability and perceived intentions are among the motives that determine why states form alliances (Walt 1988:281). For Snyder (1991), Walt's (1987) newly introduced capabilities factors like geographic proximity, offensive capabilities and the perceived intentions of others appear to be implicitly stated components of the element of "power" or "capability" (Snyder 1991: 126). Regarding capabilities and their definitions in terms of threats, Randall L. Schweller (1994) suggests also that "this is a somewhat curious claim; however, since balance of power theory already has a commonly known phrase for this called "holding the balance" (Schweller 1994:76).

Snyder's (1991) critique on Walt's (1987) theoretical approach seems to revolve more around the "intentions" hypothesis. Snyder (1991), underscores in this sense that Walt's (1987) contribution to the alliance theory may be minimal since scholars like Hans J. Morgenthau (1973), Paul Seabury (1965) and others had already asserted that a "balance does form or should form merely against power and sometimes a powerful state *may develop* aggressive intentions" (Snyder 1991:126).⁹ From another perspective, Snyder (1991) credits Walt (1987) for his explicit dissociation of independent sources of threat by first disaggregating them and then reintroducing them in the concept of "threat." In Snyder's (1991) view, "Walt has made a useful theoretical clarification, one that

⁹ Italics in original.

brings balance-of-power theory more into line both with common sense and with the historical record” (Snyder 1991:126).

Walt (1987) underscores that in order to get a clearer view regarding statesmen behavior when making alliance choices “one should consider in parallel several sources of threat” (Walt 1987: 26). Nonetheless, he argues that one cannot predict which of these presupposed factors or sources of threat will be the most important in a particular situation, “only that one or all of them are likely to play a role when making alliance choices” (Walt 1987:26). For his investigation, Walt (1987) chooses an interesting field, a region from the Asian continent rich in forming and breaking alliances. From his perspective, regions like Southeast Asia and the Middle East represent a great laboratory that reflects states that have been concerned almost entirely with regional threats.

Hoping to unravel more about the states behavior he draws upon both “traditional diplomatic history and recent alliance commitments in the Middle East” (Walt 1988:277). His findings appear to contrast the results prescribed by the balance of power theory, which indicate that states will ally in response to imbalances of power or that “weaker states will form alliances to oppose stronger powers” (Walt 1987:18). Walt’s (1987) findings suggest almost the opposite in that “states seek allies when there is an imbalance of threat [that is, when one state or coalition is especially dangerous]” (Walt 1988:281). In this sense, states will form alliances primarily to *balance* against threats.¹⁰ Walt (1987) argues also that “occasionally *bandwagoning* behavior may occur,” however, this behavior is more likely to occur “under certain identifiable conditions” (Walt 1987:29).¹¹ Walt’s (1987) findings point toward an important aspect related to ideology and common

¹⁰ Italics in original.

¹¹ Italics in original.

culture. In his view, they matter less when the threat level is higher, what matters is the perception of threat, and that is what determines the choice of the statesmen in the international system. In his quest towards developing a more theoretically significant approach reflected by the balance of threat theory, Walt (1987) advances five hypotheses and for the purpose of this analysis they are provided below.¹² In his testing process, Walt (1987) finds “strong support for the balancing hypothesis, little for bandwagoning, modest support for the ideological perspective and little for aid and penetration as causes of alliance.”¹³

1. States ally *against*¹⁴ states that threaten them-that is, they “balance;”
2. States ally *with* states that threaten them-that is, they “bandwagon;”
3. States choose allies of similar ideology;
4. Foreign aid attracts allies;
5. Political penetration facilitates alliance

It is relevant to this theoretical framework to note that Walt (1987) writes from a Neo-realist perspective and defines in this sense *balancing*¹⁵ as a process where states are allying with others against the prevailing threat and *bandwagoning* as an alignment process with the source of danger (Walt 1987:17).¹⁶ It is important to remark, from the perspective of the power/threat dichotomy, that Walt’s (1987) findings suggest that “states balance against several different kinds of threats and not just against power alone” (Walt 1988:277). The states’ alliance choices according to Walt (1987) are based mainly on the actors’ perceptions of threat rather than of those of power. From this perspective, geographic location and intentions affect in particular the level of threat that a state poses

¹² This particular order is adopted by Walt and is here taken from Snyder’s “Review: Alliances, Balance and Stability.” *International Organization*, Vol.45, No.1 (Winter 1991).

¹³ See Walt’s “The Origins of Alliances.” In *Ithaca, NY, Cornell Univ.Press.* 1987.

¹⁴ Italics in original for one & two.

¹⁵ Italics in original.

¹⁶ The terms “alliance” and “alignment” are used interchangeably in this analysis. Walt had borrowed the terms *balancing* and *bandwagoning* from Kenneth Waltz (who credits it to Stephen Van Evera) in his *Theory of International Politics.* 1979.

to others. Walt (1987) acknowledges that there exists the possibility that different states perceive potential allies and threats in different ways (Walt 1988:283).

When examining the alliance formation Walt (1987) suggests that in order to test whether balancing or bandwagoning was preferred by a particular state, it is imperative to question “whether policymakers choose to align with or against the states they perceived as the most powerful or threatening” (Walt 1987:17). In this sense, it could be explored which sources of threat were most important in determining the states` calculations. Regarding limitations of the balance of theory predictions, Walt (1987) suggests that “although this theory helps explain why coalitions that were formed against Germany and its allies in World Wars I and II had dissolved, it cannot explain the aversion behavior or reasons that determined why the other states developed such an opposition against Germany” (Walt 1988: 280). Thus, the motives of forming alliances are to be investigated. The balance of power theory, in his view cannot explain adequately “why balances often fail to form” (Walt 1988:279).

In Walt’s (1987) conception, these presupposed deficiencies can be overcome by recognizing that states seek allies mainly to balance “threats.” Threats according to Walt (1987) can be conducive to an imbalance of power therefore to an immediate coalition or alliance. Walt (1987) believes that if states consider the geographic proximity, the perceived impressive military power and the intentions of other states they will be more likely to form alliances against the most threatening state. Important to note is that overall, Walt’s (1987) balance of threat theory embodies the balance of power assumptions by incorporating factors of capabilities, geography and intentions. From his perspective, “the balance of threat theory offers a more compelling explanation of

alliance choices than an exclusive focus on the distribution of power capabilities” (Walt 1988:282). Thus, in Walt’s (1987) view, a balance of threat hypothesis will provide better explanation of the small states behavior than the global balance of power perspective. Walt (1987) defines “alliances” as a “formal or informal relationship of security cooperation between two or more sovereign states” (Walt 1987:1).

His justification vis-à-vis employing such a broad definition for this concept that comprise “formal” and “informal” arrangements of security cooperation, rests on the fact that despite their deep commitments, “many contemporary states are reluctant to sign formal treaties with their allies” (Walt 1987:12). By confining alliances in a larger spectrum, the opportunities to extrapolate beyond the precise distinctions between formal and informal alliances are broadened and in this sense, the exclusion of a large number of important cases from the examination can be avoided. In many instances Walt (1987) suggests that states choose to preserve only great commitments between each other and did not sign formal treaties of alliances, as is the case with the United States and Israel where the relationship is bonded by a tacit agreement.

As noted, the traditional balance of power theory frames both balancing and bandwagoning in terms of power. Walt (1987) acknowledges that power plays an important role in states calculations however, the factors that *threaten* that power are, in his view, the most important since they determine whether an alliance is or is not necessary to be formed.¹⁷ Moreover, Walt (1987) contends that “both balancing and bandwagoning are more accurately described as a response to threats than to power” (Walt 1985:9). Walt’s (1987) contribution to the alliance theory consists in examining the factors that elevate the level of threat and determine, in this case, the alliance

¹⁷ Emphasis added.

tendencies. In abstract, Walt (1987) concludes that the states actual behavior is better predicted by his newly refined hypotheses. The following trend serves as a summary of Walt's (1987) hypotheses revised in terms of the threat factors. Macdonald (1989) contends that Walt's (1987) examination in this area is shortsighted from the analytical standpoint.

According to Walt (1987) "states tend to ally and balance against the prevailing threat" (Walt 1987:148). Macdonald (1989) believes that explaining the case of Israel is crucial for understanding alliances. From his perspective, Walt's (1987) explanation appears less clear. In Macdonald's (1989) view, since Israel was bombarded with massive U.S. aid for a long time and was transformed in this way into a "proximate threat," why then did *small* and *weak* Arab countries from the Israelis vicinity not ally and balance with the U.S. or Russia against the Israelis? (Macdonald 1989: 795).¹⁸ Although Walt (1987) considers in his study this case as an "anomaly" his theoretical explanation appears to challenge this hypothesis. Randolph M. Siverson (1988) also criticizes Walt (1987) for his "failure to maintain the high theoretical level that guides its initial purpose" (Siverson 1988:1045).

2.1 The Balancing Behavior Hypothesis

Walt's (1987) revision to the balance of power hypothesis consists in adding a series of factors that were previously only implicitly stated in the hypothesis. By expanding them, he hopes to clearly explain *how the level of threat is elevated* due to the contribution of these factors and *how states behave* due to these implications.¹⁹

¹⁸ Emphases added.

¹⁹ Emphases added.

The Aggregate Power factor

In Walt's (1987) view, the distribution of aggregate power reflects a potential threat and may constitute a greater motive for states either to balance or bandwagon. Walt (1987) defines aggregate power in terms of a state's total resources [i.e., population, industrial and military capability, technological prowess, etc.] (Walt 1985:9). Overall Walt (1987) suggests that "states balance against *threats*, of which aggregate power is only one component" (Walt 1985:35).²⁰

The Proximate Power factor

Proximate threats, as the aggregate power factor, can influence states to balancing and bandwagoning by creating specific zones or "spheres of influence." Walt (1987) suggests that "the ability of a state to project power declines with distance" (Walt 1985:10). In this sense "states that are bordering a great power may choose to bandwagon rather than balance, especially if this powerful neighbor has demonstrated its ability to compel obedience" (Walt 1985:11). Counting on the effects of proximity, Walt (1987) mentions that for the Soviet Union to use military power against its neighbors may be an easier thing to do, however, from his perspective, this factor emulates the model of *offensive* capability and in such "neighboring context countries can be either under *de facto* Soviet control or allied with the U.S." (Walt 1985:36).²¹ Since Russia continues to emanate in Europe a kind of imperial or hostile pungency it provides, according to Walt (1987), a powerful incentive for independent countries to seek allies elsewhere in order to

²⁰ Italics in original.

²¹ Italics in original.

deter such an attempt or to defeat it should it occur (Walt 1985:36). Geography from Walt's (1987) perspective, explains why so many of the world's significant powers have chosen to ally with the U.S.

The Offensive Power factor

Walt (1987) conceptualizes this factor in terms of states potential offensive and defensive capabilities. In Walt's (1987) perspective, two kinds of possible alliances may result from the threatening implication of this factor. One is that states may get influenced by the immediate threat capabilities and that will push them to balance by allying with others. The other possibility inculcates the "sphere of influence" aspect that seems to sway weaker states, who border those with large offensive capabilities, to bandwagon since balancing alliances are not a viable possibility in these circumstances.²² Offensive power creates, in Walt's (1987) view, "a world of tight alliances and few neutral states" (Walt 1985:11).

The Offensive Intentions factor

Walt (1987) suggests that "perceptions of intent play a crucial role in alliance choices." In light of this, intentions and not power are crucial for creating opposing alliances. States expansionist ambitions and substantial power provoke other states to balance against them (Walt 1985:12). Walt (1987) argues that "when a state is believed to be unalterably aggressive, others are unlikely to bandwagon, and in case an aggressor's

²²In this context Walt suggests that the alliance formation becomes more *frenetic* when the offense is believed to have the advantage: great powers will balance more vigorously while weak states seek protection by bandwagoning more frequently. See "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power" in *International Security*, Vol.9, No.4. (Spring 1985).

intentions are impossible to change, then balancing with others is the best way to avoid becoming a victim” (Walt 1985: 13).

In general scholars coming from fields other than the realist or the Neorealist traditions, like those from social constructivism or neoliberal institutionalism, attempt to critique the Neorealist theory for inadequacy and usefulness in providing a clearer explanatory theoretical framework from where predictions will result. Interesting to find is that in most cases scholars indicate the limitations that the balance of threat theory has been unable to address, however, very few scholars appear to suggest in a concrete way, a comprehensive alternative in explaining the alliance choices. Usually the debate in this field is concentrated on poorly defined or refined theoretical concepts or whether the realism theoretical framework is adequate to explain issues from other areas as well as whether this theory accounts for change and development in the international system.

Although Walt’s (1987) attempt is highly regarded by some scholars as an impressive and convincing amendment of the traditional balance of power theory, Walt (1987) cannot escape the criticism pertaining to certain empirical anomalies such as “why similarly situated states behave in opposite ways and contrary to the theory predictions, or why strong states sometime bandwagon and weak states sometime balance (Schweller 1994:77).²³ Snyder (1991) for instance, acknowledges Walt’s (1987) contribution to unraveling the origins of alliances. However, he indicates that “despite the valuable theoretical insights provided by Walt (1987) to the alliance theory, his study has short insights and is limited empirically since it only encompasses the alliances in the Middle

²³ See “Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In.”

East.”²⁴ Keohane (1988) goes much further arguing that Walt (1987) is not an expert on the Middle East since he relies mainly on secondary sources translated into the English language. In contrast, Walt (1987) suggests that in particular the Middle Eastern region appears suitable from his perspective for studying alliances since the various coalitions that had formed among Middle Eastern countries, had fluctuated enormously throughout the Cold War period.

In this sense, since Walt (1987) attempted to explain “what brought states together or drove them apart,” the Middle East cannot help but be a legitimate choice for answering these questions. Snyder (1991) also questions Walt’s (1988) balancing process by raising a valuable question: “if what is balanced is *threat* rather than *power* of what does the balancing consist?”(Snyder 1991:126).²⁵ Walt (1987) appears to suggest in this sense that threatening intentions are therefore balanced by mobilizing extra power. Regarding the final predictions that Walt’s (1987) balance of threat theory alleges vis-à-vis the states tendencies to either balance or bandwagon, Snyder (1991) suggests that the fact that “states balance more than they bandwagon” did not come as a big surprise to scholars from the field of international politics, since in sight, this was already the case.

Paul Schroeder (1994), a scholar who arduously investigated whether the generalizations made by the Neorealist theory come to terms with the international history, argues in contrast to Walt (1987) that “bandwagoning is historically more common than balancing, particularly by smaller powers” (Schroeder 1994:117). The assertion which incriminates the prevalence of balancing in the international arena is based on this scholar’s historical investigation that goes back to 1785 and explicitly to

²⁴ See “Alliance Theory: A Neorealist First Cut” by Glenn H. Snyder in *Journal of International Affairs*. 1990.

²⁵ Italics in original.

Germany when the Austrian Emperor Joseph II attempted to carry through the exchange of Belgium for Bavaria.²⁶ Based on this scenario, Schroeder (1994) argues the same as Snyder (1991) that throughout the centuries in every major crisis “different states perceiving the same threat or similar ones adopted differing strategies to meet them” (Schroeder 1994:119). In this situation, Schroeder (1994) suggests that the Neorealist perspective is incompatible with the history of international politics, since it cannot accommodate it as Walt (1987) perceives it.

Schroeder (1994) underscores with this example one of the limitations that this theory has in explaining alliances. Although Walt (1987) suggests in his findings that threats can be perceived differently by different states and no particular order in terms of the threat factor is followed by states when they choose alignments, Schroeder (1994) finds it important to argue that “Walt’s thesis, designed to help neo-realist theory explain why states so often join overwhelmingly powerful coalitions, actually makes it virtually impossible to distinguish between “balancing” and “bandwagoning” or to determine the real motives of actors, since any bandwagoning state is likely to claim that it is actually “balancing” against a threatening enemy” (Schroeder 1994:119).

He cites in this instance the Romanian alignment with Germany during the 1939-1940 period when Romania was bandwagoning with Germany in order to balance the threat from the USSR. Interesting from this perspective appears to be Schroeder’s (1994) question that pertains to the mixed motives chosen by states as well as whether the strategies adopted by them are directly proportional with the greatest side payments

²⁶ See the entire discussion in “Historical Reality vs. Neo-Realist Theory.” *International Security*. Vol. 19, No.1. (Summer, 1994), pp.108-148.

received in territorial gains, future alliances, political concessions, prestige, etc. (Schroeder 1994:120).

2.2 The Bandwagoning Behavior Hypothesis

Walt (1987) suggests that bandwagoning may occur from two distinct motives that are related to *offensive* and *defensive* reasons.²⁷ One is that of *appeasement* “by aligning with the threatening state or coalition the bandwagoner may hope to avoid an attack on itself by diverting it elsewhere and the other is that of *profiting* that reflects a state alignment with the dominant side in war in order to share the spoils of victory” (Walt 1985:8).²⁸ Walt (1987) acknowledges that both balancing and bandwagoning have greater implications for the practical world.

In a bandwagoning world “if statesmen follow the balancing prescription, threats will encourage their allies to defect, leaving them isolated against an overwhelming coalition” likewise in a balancers world “following the bandwagoning prescription by employing threats and power more frequently will lead others to increase their opposition against you more vigorously” (Walt 1985:14). In Walt’s (1987) perspective, balancing and bandwagoning are the alliance equivalents of deterring and appeasing. In the realm of international politics, Walt’s (1987) findings suggest that *balancing is more common than bandwagoning*.²⁹ In his prescriptions, in a balancing world “states are more secure because aggressors will face combined opposition while in bandwagoning world security is scarce because aggression is rewarded” (Walt 1985:4). The reason that balancing is more common than bandwagoning has to do with the state’s preference to “balance

²⁷ Italics in original.

²⁸ Italics in original.

²⁹ Italics in original.

against the threat rather than bandwagoning with it.” In these conditions, the author argues that states can preserve most of their freedom by accepting subordination under a potential hegemon. Walt (1987) concludes that “in widely different contexts, the strong tendency for states to balance when making alliance choices is confirmed” (Walt 1985:16).

States will bandwagon only when the capabilities they can add to either side are unlikely to make much difference, they can do little to affect the outcome, they are either confronted by a great power, or allies are unavailable in the close proximity. Interesting to remark is that in all these mentioned instances, Walt (1987) speaks of bandwagoning only in terms of “small and weak states.” Regarding this approach, Macdonald (1989) suggests that “Walt uses only two levels of analysis in examining the behavior of states in the Middle East; one is that of superpowers and the other is that of small states” (Macdonald 1989:796).

In Walt’s (1987) view, accommodating a neighboring great power or bandwagoning may be the best choice sometimes for “small and weak states in close proximity to a great power since potential allies may be scarce or distant and in particular these states lack the capabilities to stand alone” (Walt 1985:18). Regarding scholars who oppose this view, Walt (1987) stresses that these “are placing themselves in direct opposition to the most widely accepted theory in the field of international relations” (Walt 1985:16). Although Walt (1987) acknowledges that bandwagoning situations may occur in Eastern Europe, he appears to vehemently deny that bandwagoning decisions may have a greater impact on the global balance of power. In his conception, bandwagoning is relevant only for the weak states, with no allies but armed with leaders

who believe that potentially threatening states can be appeased. Walt (1987) appears to suggest that for states that matter, balancing is the rule, in that states will join forces against the threats posed by the power, proximity, offensive capabilities, and intentions of others. From this perspective, the Romanian case will be interesting to follow. Other critics pertaining to Walt (1987) come from John A. Vasquez (1997) who argues that Walt (1987) “takes a very incrementalist position when explaining that balance of threat should be viewed as a refinement of traditional balance of power theory” (Vasquez 1997:904).

In big lines, Vasquez (1997), discounts Walt’s (1987) prediction that ‘states balance against threats’; “a state *capable* of making a threat must be guarded against because no one can be assured when it may actualize that potential” (Vasquez 1997:904).³⁰ For Vasquez (1997) “if power and threat are independent, as Walt (1987) argues, then something may be awry in the realist world” (Vasquez 1997:905). His critics pertain more to the realist field than to Walt (1987). In his view, “Walt (1987) practices the discipline the way the dominant paradigm leads him to practice it” (Vasquez 1997:906). With respect to the foreign policy excesses that Walt (1987) points out in his study, scholars other than Walt (1987) believed that “if the United States did less, its allies would do more for themselves, since they prefer balancing to bandwagoning” (Snyder 1991:127).

A consistent part of Snyder’s (1991) criticism also revolves around the balancing-bandwagoning dichotomy. In his perspective, Walt’s (1987) dichotomy is not perfectly suitable for explaining the alliance formation since states may “balance” by other means than alliance [i.e., by armament or military action] (Snyder 1991:128).

³⁰ Italics in original.

Schweller (1994) cites that in a similar way Jack Levy and Michael Barnett who suggest that the realist approach is in general “relatively silent concerning Third World alliances or how state-society relations in particular might give rise to distinctive patterns of alignment behavior” (Schweller 1994:77). In their view, resources providing function of alliances and the impact of domestic political economy play a greater role and leaders form alliances according to them in order “to secure urgently needed economic and military resources to promote domestic goals, respond to external and internal security threats, and consolidate their domestic political positions” (Schweller 1994: 77).

Schweller (1994) contends that Walt (1987) does excellent work regarding the prediction of the bandwagoning cases that includes domestic sources. Both Waltz (1979) and Walt (1987) reach the same conclusion that “states with illegitimate leaders, weak governmental institutions, and/or little ability to mobilize economic resources are weak states that are likely to bandwagon anyway” (Walt 1987:250-265). Also, Walt’s (1987) prediction that states balance against the most dangerous threat to their survival appears to be compatible with the practical world. Keohane (1988) who reviewed one of the most significant works on alliances in the past two decades, Walt’s (1987) *The Origins of Alliances* study, points to the fact that Walt (1987) uses not only ideas from his former teacher Kenneth N. Waltz (1979) who quoted the term of “bandwagoning” but also he manages to transform his argument that

states seek less to maximize power than to maintain their position in the system, and that therefore “balancing” not “bandwagoning” is the behavior induced by the system” in that “elites in charge of state policy seek above all to maintain them in power; and since they are shrewd judges of their own interests, this leads them to “balance” against threatening states rather than to “bandwagon,” joining the stronger side in hopes of picking up some crumbs from the victors table (Keohane 1988:1).³¹

³¹ See Keohane’s review on Walt’s approach in “Alliances, Threats, and the Uses of Neorealism.” *International Security*: Vol. 13, No.1.

Paul Schroeder (1994) suggests vis-à-vis bandwagoning that Walt (1987) had narrowly defined this term. In his view, “states have very different reasons to choose balancing or bandwagoning” (Schroeder 1994:117). According to Schweller’s (1994) perspective, “the aim of balancing is self-preservation and the protection of values already possessed, while the goal of bandwagoning is usually self-extension: to obtain values coveted” (Schweller 1994:74). In essence, “balancing is driven by the desire to avoid losses; bandwagoning is driven by the opportunity for gain” (Schweller 1994:74).

In Snyder’s (1991) observation, Walt’s (1987) theoretical approach to the alliance theory is completely default and cannot generate much knowledge since his “analysis leaves the misleading impression that the balance of power theory is entirely about alliance making” (Snyder 1991:104). According to Snyder (1991), “a fully developed theory of alliances, would have to deal with choices between alliances and other means of security” while this dichotomy obscures the full range of choices within the alliance realm and inhibits a more discriminating analysis (Snyder 1991:128).³²

For the purpose of this project it is important to note that Snyder (1991) suggests that “states have alignment options other than allying with or against a threatening power” (Snyder 1991:128). From this perspective, it will be interesting to determine the options that Romania had vis-à-vis Snyder’s (1991) option effects like neutrality [whether formal or informal], improved relations with third parties and to conciliate or compromise with the threatening state. Conciliation according to Snyder (1991) “buys security at some cost to intrinsic value while balancing buys security at the cost of autonomy” (Snyder 1991:128). The dichotomy between balancing and bandwagoning

³² See Snyder’s entire critique in “Review: Alliances, Balance, and Stability.” *International Organization*, Vol. 45, No.1 (Winter 1991).

does not supply enough information in Snyder's (1991) conception regarding how states choose their allies or how they shape their alliances nor does it clarify how they proceed when their motive is strictly balancing.

2.3 The Ideological Solidarity Hypothesis

Walt (1987) suggests that "what holds alliances together is the external threat" (Walt 1987:153). From this perspective, is it worth noting that alliances are defensive in nature since they are mainly driven by fear; moreover, Walt (1987) finds that "the more similar the states are, the more they are likely to ally" (Walt 1987: 33). In Walt's (1987) perspective, ideological solidarity encompasses "alliances that result from states sharing political, cultural, or other traits" (Walt 1987:33). Walt (1987) acknowledges that this hypothesis in particular, "stands in sharp contrast to balancing and bandwagoning hypotheses that are responses to external threats" (Walt 1987:33).

However, a common ideology, Walt (1987) argues, can also create effective alliances through solidarity and alignment. At both theoretical and practical levels Walt (1987) argues that increased attention needs to be accorded to the type of ideology itself as well as to whether the ideology is unifying or divisive in nature. "States, according to him, are more likely to follow their ideological preferences when they are already fairly secure while any indications of insecurity will convince states to take whatever allies they can get" (Walt 1987:38).

When reviewing the importance of ideology as a cause of alliances, Walt (1987) finds in the alliances formed in the Middle Eastern region between 1955 and 1979 almost no effects for local alliances and somewhat stronger effects for alliances with the

superpowers. He appears aware of the fact that the general view of the security consideration dominates the ideological approach or that “security considerations are likely to take precedence over ideological preferences, and ideological based alliances are unlikely to survive when more pragmatic interests intrude” (Walt 1987:38). Walt (1987) mentions in relation to this that “any factors that tend to make states more secure should increase the importance of ideological considerations in alliance choices” (Walt 1987: 38). In his view, “ideology is most important when defense is dominant and states are most secure” (Walt 1987:39).

The states security is important because it influences whether states have been willing to sacrifice their security in order to gratify their ideological preferences. In Walt’s (1987) perspective, “many ideological alliances may just be balancing alliances in disguise if they have been formed to oppose the spread of a hostile ideology or they may be bandwagoning when weak regimes alter their ideological positions when a new ideological movement appears to be gaining momentum” (Walt 1987:40). In general scholars tend to resume their review on Walt’s (1987) first two hypotheses, balancing and bandwagoning.

With respect to the last three, scholars in their reviews either point towards the ideological solidarity hypothesis in the context of U.S. foreign policy recommendations or lay aside and leave unquestioned the influence of economic and political penetration as instruments in forming alliances. Macdonald’s (1989) critique on Walt (1987) revolves around issues of conceptualization and the ideology hypothesis in that the former believes that the latter “underestimates the role of ideology in alignment patterns especially on the part of the superpowers” (Macdonald 1989:796). According to Macdonald (1989)

despite the fact that Walt (1987) acknowledges that ideology has an effect in the alignment process, his definition regarding ideological affinities is inadequately stated especially when it comes to the ideological “influence” in a particular alignment. In this sense, Walt (1987) appears to underestimate the role that ideology plays “in *some* situational relationships” like that between the U.S. and Israel.³³ Macdonald (1989) appears to be on the same line of argument with other scholars when he argues that Walt (1987) “is guilty of underestimating the ideological importance in *some* alliances” (Macdonald 1989:797).³⁴

Keohane (1988), from the same perspective, acknowledges that Walt’s (1987) evidence about balancing and ideology are interesting factors especially since their findings appear to be contrast. However, he contends that “while balancing is more prevalent than bandwagoning, the role of ideology appears to be conditional if not spuriously subsumed by the balance of threat theory” (Keohane 1988:2). It is worth mentioning that Walt’s (1987) predictions account for modest support for the ideological attraction hypothesis in the work of James H. Lebovic (2004) who argues that Walt (1987) more than anything “understates the impact of ideology on alignment.” Lebovic (2004) suggests that “the strength, duration and ultimate impermanence of the regional alignments indicate that they had more important basis in ideology than Walt supposes” (Lebovic 2004: 167).

Lebovic’s (2004) critique on Walt’s (1987) ideology rests on the fact that the latter, by his neorealist inclination, fails to distinguish the “logic of appropriateness” and to perceive the interests that form in a particular alignment. Lebovic (2004) argues that

³³ Italics in original.

³⁴ Italics in original.

“Walt’s (1987) efforts to incorporate ideology into the balance of threat theory are half-hearted at best” (Lebovic 2004:169). Moreover, “Walt’s balance of threat theory makes room for ideology only to the extent that it can be tied to the “aggressive intentions” a part of the theory that remains from his perspective “underspecified and undertheorized” in Walt’s analysis” (Lebovic 2004:169). Lebovic (2004) contends that Walt (1987) is not sufficiently clear in discussing ideology, especially when he mentions that “ideology is less powerful than balancing as a *motive* for alignment” (Lebovic 2004:169).³⁵ In his view, Walt (1987) fails to elaborate on the “origins and nature” of the aggressive intentions and much less on their relationship to ideology (Lebovic 2004:169).

Lebovic (2004) sees as problematic Walt’s (1987) discounting of domestic forces influences and how these forces reinforce or promote ideology’s effects. With respect to the clarity of concepts conveyed by Walt (1987) some scholars like F.Gregory Gause III acknowledge that the Middle East region is a “hard case” for the Neorealist approach since an amalgamation of the bandwagoning incentives related to transnational ideologies and identities are identified in this region (Gause 1999:15). Gause (1999) criticizes Walt (1987) for the same limitations as Lebovic (2004). In his perspective, Walt (1987) “subsumes ideology under his general rubric of threat as a sign of ‘aggressive intentions’” (Gause 1999: 23).

While Walt (1987) appears to lack, in some views, the explanatory power to discuss the importance of ideology in the sense that “ideological similarity leads to alignment,” Snyder (1991) acknowledges that “there has been a general trend away from formal alliances in the Third World in favor of other kinds of military and political collaboration, such as military aid and arms sales” (Snyder 1991:123). Like other

³⁵ Italics in original.

scholars, Macdonald (1989) contends that Walt (1987) underestimates the role of ideology in alignment patterns, especially on the part of the superpowers. It is completely unrealistic in his view, to judge the role of ideology in foreign policy only through the perspective of states ideological affinities. Although like Walt (1987), Macdonald (1989) acknowledges that “ideology is not the only or most important determinant of alignment policy” he finds important at least to review Walt’s seditious work on alliances.

Robert G. Kaufman (1992) criticizes Walt’s (1987) theoretical work to the extent that he gets the privilege to form a special dialogue with Walt (1987) in the alliances literature, although he, the same as other scholars did not offer a comprehensive theory of alliances suitable to replace that developed by Stephen Walt. Despite the fact that he finds “large elements of truth” in Walt’s (1987) approach, Kaufman (1992) cannot help but suggest that both Neorealism and Walt’s (1992) truth suffer from “an ultra-parsimoniousness, which obscures rather than clarifies the choices the statesmen actually face” (Kaufman 1992:419). Furthermore, Kaufman (1992) sees problematic Walt’s (1987) entire relevant theory for policy and argues in favor of incorporating critical aspects of domestic politics, and perceptions of individual statesmen in further research.

For Kaufman (1992), Walt’s (1987) entire book portrays more “a clear and bold foreign policy agenda” (Kaufman 1992:418). According to Kaufman (1992) Walt’s (1987) prescriptions can be detrimental to American foreign diplomacy regarding the diminution of the American security vigilances in the world. Contrary to Walt (1987), Kaufman (1992) suggests an increased and permanent American military that provides assiduous guidance in the international arena. Although Walt (1987) acknowledges

Kaufman's (1992) "identification of some factors that may impede the normal tendency for states to balance against threats" he is definitively dismissing Kaufman's (1992) assertions regarding the policy prescriptions (Walt 1992:448). Walt (1987) finds them "misleading and unhelpful." In Walt's (1987) view, Kaufman (1992) fails to develop a theoretical framework that will replace what he basically rejects, and from this perspective Kaufman's (1992) "laundry list of factors" remain only a list of factors that is theoretically limited. Kaufman (1992) concedes that "alliance behavior is not just a product of the international system: it reflects the internal process of states, ideology, and the perceptions of individual statesmen as well" (Kaufman 1992:419). For Kaufman (1987) ideology and domestic constraints can have a much greater effect in alignment patterns than Walt's (1987) theory predicts (Kaufman 1992:438).

Although Walt (1987) meticulously defends point by point his approach in Kaufman's (1992) research work, he acknowledges first Kaufman's (1992) effort to improve the balance of threat theory and then recommends that Kaufman (1992) "move beyond listing various factors that may influence alliance behavior, and begin formulating clear and testable hypotheses" (Walt 1992:469). Walt (1987) appears to credit more the work of Eric J. Labs (1992) *Do Weak States Bandwagon?* in which Labs (1992) appears to object to realists for failing to recognizing the strengths of their theory. Since they both agree on so many theoretical levels, Walt (1987) finds it difficult to critique Labs (1992) conclusion that "balancing behavior is even more widespread than earlier Realists have recognized" although he tries to come with some constructive criticism that do not undermine Lab's (1992) theoretical efforts. On the positive spectrum, Keohane (1988) acknowledges Walt's (1987) new evidence about balancing

and ideology hypotheses, in that balancing is more prevalent than bandwagoning. He suggests that Walt's (1987) analysis is "subtle and nuanced" if considering how Walt (1987) goes by testing conditional hypotheses about states behavior and how he uses the Neorealism premises to theoretically inform his analysis and to formulate the propositions of balancing and bandwagoning. Keohane (1988) considers that Walt (1987) is "admirably systematic in examining alignments and realignments in the Middle East" (Keohane 1988:173).

Historical narrative appears to be on a higher pedestal in Walt's (1987) theoretical approach in examining the patterns of alignments and the way perhaps Walt (1987) approaches it dissatisfies many historians. It is interesting to note from this perspective, that Keohane (1998) suggests that "alliances *are* institutions: they involve rules prescribing roles for participants" (Keohane 1988:174).³⁶ In this sense he mentions that "NATO, unlike many alliances, is highly institutionalized, since it includes formal bureaucratic organizations with complex decision-making routines and differentiation of functions" (Keohane 1998:174). Since Walt (1987) did not raise institutional questions in his study, Keohane (1988) considers that determining which conditions alignments become formalized in or how the impact of a formal treaty is different than an informal one, are critically important for enriching this particular literature.

2.4 The Foreign Aid Hypothesis-A Special Form of Balancing Behavior

Regarding the foreign aid perspective, Walt (1987) suggests that "the more aid, the tighter the resulting alliance" (Walt 1987:41). In Walt's (1987) view, this hypothesis helps justify most economic and assistance programs. However, Walt (1987) warns that

³⁶ Italics in original.

“the aid relationship may be more the result of political alignment than a cause of it” (Walt 1987:42). Walt (1987) justifies his assumption with a statement speech given by the Secretary of State Alexander Haig regarding the U.S. security assistance program. Haig mentioned that “the friendly states we support can themselves help us assure our most vital national interests” (Walt 1987:42).

In the context of this study it is important to remark that since the Cold War ended in Europe, for the U.S. to find a common enemy was a greater task, and this perhaps may help explain why it took Romania approximately fourteen years to finalize the alliance process with NATO and why after only three years from the September 11 events, Romania qualified as a member of an alliance consistent with U.S. interests. Parenthetically noted, Walt (1987) acknowledges aid as a valuable instrument of alliance formation however, only when “alternatives are nonexistent.”

In the scarcity of defense alliances alternatives despite its reluctance, Romania committed to downsize its military at NATO’s request giving in this way, greater leverage to NATO in this alliance. From Walt’s (1987) theoretical perspective, NATO appears to find a way through its foreign aid to balance a common external threat although Walt (1987) underscores that foreign aid plays a relatively minor role in alliance formation. It becomes interesting from this perspective to reveal how much of a role the foreign aid played in the Romanian historical record on alliances and how much it played with NATO.

2.5 The Transnational Political Penetration Hypothesis

Walt (1987) defines this hypothesis in terms of “the manipulation of one state’s domestic political system by another through (i) public officials with divided loyalties, (ii) lobbying and (iii) propaganda” (Walt 1987:46). Regarding this hypothesis, Walt (1987) suggests that “the true causal relationship between transnational penetration and international alliances is often unclear” (Walt 1987:47). Circumstances and common interests appear to play a much greater role in this kind of alliance formations. Walt (1987) mentions that “political penetration is more effective against open societies, when the objectives are limited, where the means are perceived as legitimate and where other important incentives for the alliance already exists” (Walt 1987:48).

Walt (1987) advises that the last three hypotheses examined in his alliance investigation in the Middle East are rather weak causes in forming alliances since a requirement first need to be met in order for any of these hypotheses to play a role. That requirement is security, and in forming these kinds of alliances, most states need to find security plentiful. However, as Walt (1987) specifies “even great powers will view their security as precarious” (Walt 1987:49). As for the case of Romania this study begins to assume that security interests played a greater role in alliances more perhaps than did the ideological affinities.

Walt (1987) stresses that states have for the most part chosen “to bandwagon with the U.S. rather than balance it” (Walt 1988: 314). In Walt’s (1987) view, balancing is less likely to occur when (i) the states in question are too weak to alter the balance through their own actions, (ii) when effective allies are unavailable, and (iii) when the threatening power is believed to be appeasable. It appears intriguing from this

perspective to determine whether the case of Romania conforms to the balance of threat theory. Siverson (1988) criticizes Walt (1987) for losing focus in his theoretical analysis.

He suggests that

instead of explicitly stating a set of Waltzian assumptions about the *necessity* of alliances in the international system and then allowing these assumptions to interact across considerations of national power, ideology, and penetration, Walt turns to a consideration of the three individual factors in the formation of alliances without a well-formed consideration of how the constraints and imperatives of the international system interact with the three identified factors (Siverson 1988:1045).³⁷

Siverson's (1988) criticisms pertain also to Walt's (1987) theoretical framework approach and testing procedure. He contends that Walt (1987) was careless in adopting a more coherent and feasible research design with more distinct cases that were going to add to the variation in the independent variables clarifying in this sense "the discussion of the role of national autonomy and policy preferences in alliance choices" (Siverson 1988:1045). The Romanian case study in this instance can help enrich this variation. With respect to the last hypotheses, even Walt (1987) acknowledges that they are not likely to be effective alliance instruments until the nations interests converge. In absence of shared political interests, Walt (1987) contends that "even generous aid programs do not create effective alliances" (Walt 1987:225).

Literature indicates a significant gap in this area although Walt (1987) suggests that the provision of economic and military assistance cannot always create effective alliances. Regarding this hypothesis, Walt (1987) conditions his predictions or likelihoods on the following grounds: (i) if the supplier has a monopoly on a valuable asset, (ii) if there exists an asymmetry of dependence (one side needs the other more), (iii) if there is an asymmetry of motivation pertaining to an issue, (iv) if the patron is

³⁷ Italics in original.

politically capable of manipulating the level of assistance provided to the client (Walt 1987:236). Since these conditions are rarely met, foreign aid does not appear to be an important factor in the alliance formation; and due to these effects scholars are reluctant to begin an investigation of alliances from this perspective, when conditionality is prevalent. The following section addresses a series of various relevant conclusions regarding Walt's (1987) theoretical approach.

2.6 Concluding Remarks

The present theoretical examination reviewed Stephen Walt's theoretical approach on how alliances are formed. In contrast to the balance of power theory, Walt's (1987) balance of threat perspective suggests that states form alliances not from the desire to balance power, but in order to balance power against threats. As the reviewed perspectives in this analysis underscore, Walt's (1987) work is remarkable in that it provides, in an explicit way, some of the motives or factors that states consider when they decide to balance or to bandwagon. Although Walt's (1987) findings indicate that states prefer balancing to bandwagoning, viewed as a whole it is fair to admit that this theory needs more clarifications and case studies in order to identify a pattern among the motives behind the states choices to ally with particular partners.

A special attention in this review pertained to Walt's (1987) two sets of hypotheses—balancing and bandwagoning. Balancing hypothesis concerned the question of whether states choose alliance partners in order to balance against power or to balance against threats. Bandwagoning hypothesis concerned the question of whether states align with the threatening state. As this examination contends, confusion related to balancing

and bandwagoning persists. In Schroeder's (1994) view for instance, "the bandwagoning image pictures the global order as a complex machine of wheels within wheels while the balancing pictures the prevailing tendency among states" (Schroeder 1994:72). Through Walt's (1987) perspective, both these concepts depict very different situations. In the case of balancing, security is plentiful, "states are more secure, because aggressors will face combined opposition," while in the case of bandwagoning, "security is scarce because successful aggressors will attract additional allies" (Walt 1987:17).

Walt (1987) conceives threats in terms of proximity, intentions and aggregate power. It is hoped, in this context, that the case of Romania will contribute to the theory by either expanding the number of threats enumerated by Walt (1987) or cementing the fact that one, two or all of them were part from the Romanian alliance decision making process. As Siverson (1988) suggests "the element of threat usually needs to be present to activate balancing alliance activity" (Siverson 1988:1044). Walt (1987) articulates throughout his theoretical analysis to world politics that under most circumstances "balancing is more common than bandwagoning." Others suggest based on different historical events that "balancing is the exception, not the rule."³⁸

Some argue that Walt's (1987) theory undermines the importance of domestic factors in alliance decisions. They suggest that "illegitimate elites and states that are weak *vis-à-vis* their societies, bandwagon more often than balance of threat theory predicts (Schroeder 1994:74).³⁹ Important to retain from this literature review is that alliances are not only responses to threats but also to prestige and economic opportunities. Regarding the ideological instrument, Walt (1987) contends that

³⁸ See footnote 9 in "Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In." *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 1. (Summer, 1994), pp.72-107.

³⁹ Italics in original.

ideological affinities are less important or even tertiary when security concerns are prevalent. Walt (1987) contends that weak states are more likely to bandwagon or remain neutral when allies are unavailable. An interesting aspect raised by Kaufman (1992) is that “Eastern European states actual behavior confounds Walt’s structural theories” (Kaufman 1992:423). From this perspective the present case study aims to illuminate and contribute to the progress of the alliance theory, since more case studies are needed in this sense for making valid generalizations. The strategy of Romania to balance against the proximate and the distant threat may enrich in some way the alliance theory. Walt (1987) even contends that “perceptions of intent are likely to play an especially crucial role in alliances choices” (Walt 1987:25).

Kaufman (1992) suggests, based on his research findings, that “ideology, economic penetration and political subversion have effects on alignments than Walt’s theory predicts” (Kaufman 1992:438). As it can be inferred, scholars tend to focus more on Walt’s (1987) balancing and bandwagoning hypotheses. Scholars like Macdonald (1989) go one step further and critique Walt’s (1987) ideological affinity, foreign aid and political penetrations arguing that sometimes Walt (1987) may be guilty, due to his experience in connecting facts with reasons, of forcing some facts to fit his theoretical framework. Regarding the last three hypotheses, Macdonald (1989) contends that they are poor predictors when it comes to identifying the small states behavior especially when they are considered in context of states balancing and bandwagoning behavior.

Macdonald (1989) appears convinced that Walt (1987) “underestimates the role of ideology in alignment patterns,” he agrees with Walt (1987) that “ideology is not the only or most important determinant in alignment policy,” and like the others does not

offer something more suitable (Macdonald 1989:796). More on ideology is discussed by Lebovic (2004) who seems to perceive that Walt (1987) underestimates the role of ideology, although like Kaufman (1992) he appears inclined to connect ideology with domestic forces. As noted, many scholars criticize Walt's (1987) Neorealist approach although none of them come up with a solution better than Walt's (1987). Some argue that more case studies are needed in order to test Walt's theoretical predictions. The present study aims to contribute to the theoretical understanding of the alliance dynamics and will focus in Chapter Four on identifying the patterns of alliance in Romanian historical record and on depicting the key strategic interests that confronted Romania in forming alliances. After assessing Romanian behavior and the potential threats, this study will determine whether the Romanian decision to balance or bandwagon is made due to the perceived territorial threats or due to immediate needs to improve its economy. Interesting from this perspective is to conclude whether Romania balanced or bandwagoned with the latest formed alliance, NATO against external threats of territorial security, Russia's intentions to increase its defensive military force or internal threats to gain prestige and political concession in order to make its path towards the European Union much smoother.

CHAPTER 3: HISTORICAL EVIDENCE REGARDING ROMANIAN ALLIANCES MOTIVES

For centuries the Romanian territory continued to remain the battlefield for confrontation among competitors as well as an object for their compensation.

Gheorghe Platon

3.1 The Geopolitics of Romania

The English historian R.W. Seton Watson asserted in his volume *History of the Roumanians*, that “Romanian History can only be understood in its geographical setting,” thus, the purpose of this chapter is to familiarize the reader with Romania’s history and its geopolitical setting. It is intriguing to identify in this context what happened with Romania when the Russian and the Austro-Hungarian influences, replaced the Ottoman domination. Let us, begin by first identifying, geographically and politically, Romania on the European continent. Some Romanian historians perceive Romania as a country “situated at the crossroads of civilizations, graced with a harmoniously distributed relief,” as opposed to other historians who, “attest to the belief that Romania brings an original touch in the concert of universal history: a culture, affixing to a tormented but not less glorious past” (Pagina Nationala a Romaniei).

Dennis and Andrea Deletant (1985), two leading scholars who write extensively on Romania, speak of Romania as “a country of paradox,” or as a country that through “her geographical position has contributed to her predicament” (Deletant 1985: xii). Kurt W. Treptow (1996), an American historian preoccupied with East European studies, suggests that Romania is “located at a crossroads between powerful empires, it took a long time to be established as a national state and still regrets the loss of ethnic

Romanians in the surrounding area” (Treptow 1996:v). Two important aspects emerge from these assertions: one is the geographical position of Romania “at a crossroads of the empires,” and second is the history of Romania that shows Romania’s former divisions between political entities varying in their degree of independence from neighboring empires.

In order for the reader to understand what the Deletants (1985) are referring to when they mention Romania and ‘her predicament’ in the same context, it is worth specifying that from both geographical and historical perspectives, Romania was situated at the confluence between the two great empires: the Ottoman and the Russian; or at the crossing between the Orthodox, the Muslim, and the western world. Although in the contemporary era the Ottoman Empire remains an important historical subject, Russia continues and will continue to influence Romanian foreign affairs since it cannot be diverted geographically. Due to its geographical position at the crossroads of Europe, “Romania has since early times been prey to successive waves of invaders” (Deletant 1985: xii).

Until the First World War, the Romanian people struggled fighting the domination of migratory populations such as the Turks, the Tatars, or other nations. In all of these struggles, Romania aimed to obtain the unity of all of the Romanian provinces: Moldova, Wallachia, Transylvania, Dobrogea, and Banat. Throughout this examination Romanian provinces refer to the medieval principalities which emerged according to historians as “feudal states” upon the development of the political structures at the Romanian borders, the Carpathian-Danubian area.⁴⁰ Historians mention that these

⁴⁰ See the section of Stefan Andreescu and Mihai Maxim in the book edited by Giurescu and Fischer-Galati (1998). This book encompasses a collection of historical essays written by different authors such as

feudal states, developed incrementally in the Romanian borders following the Tatar withdrawal in 1242 A.D. This section aims to examine the geopolitics of Romania until the creation of Greater Romania on 1 December, 1918, and thus, it is important to note, that aspects regarding “Romanian national history emerged in the second century, when the Roman legions of Trajan were stationed in the territory of the Thracian tribe of the Dacians” (Fischer-Galati 1957:2).

From territorial security perspective, this section aims to identify a pattern, or a common ground, that determines or influences the Romanian need for forming political and diplomatic alliances. It is interesting to note that despite the Roman retrieval from the Romanian territory, the Romanic character persisted within the Romanian principalities while negative imprints resulted in the Romanian customs from the Ottoman occupation. Recorded in the Romanian history is that the Ottoman expansionism in the southeastern part of Europe began around the 1400s and due to this threat, Romania attempted to create a solid political relationship with its western neighbor, the Hungarian in order to resist the Ottoman invasion. However, despite the victories scored in the 15th century by Vlad the Impaler and Stephen the Great, the Ottoman invasion towards the heart of Europe was stopped only temporarily as they succeeded in 1522 to annex Banat, a western territory of Romania, and to transform it into a pashalic.⁴¹ Historical facts attest that this was one of their great successes since no other territories under their occupations were pashalics.

Although attempts to conquer Romanian territories were made numerous times by the Ottomans during the period of the 1500s, these attempts did not materialize easily

Andreescu, Brezeanu, Platon, Maxim, Vulpe, Giurescu and Fischer-Galati. Throughout this project I cite only individual authors like e.g. Platon (1998) instead of Giurescu and Fisher-Galati *et.al* (1998).

⁴¹ Or pashalik-the jurisdiction of a pasha over a territory.

because during that time historians suggest that the international context was more favorable to the Romanians. Moreover, as the Romanian historian Mihai Maxim (1998) suggested “*the great regional powers were interested in maintaining the Romanian countries as buffer-states between them*” (Maxim 1998:107).⁴² Aside from the regional powers there were Poland and Hungary and later the Habsburg Empire. One of the leading figures in Romanian history, Gheorghe Platon (1998), mentions with respect to the Ottoman invasion that “the Hungarian-Polish rivalry for domination over the Romanian space was a major factor for undermining the capacity of the anti-Ottoman front on the Danube”(Platon 1998:133). In his perspective, “Poland did not hesitate to attempt a rapprochement with the Sublime Porte and to collaborate with it against Hungary, while the latter carried on a wavering policy towards the Ottoman power and a grasping policy towards the Romanian lands” (Platon 1998:133).

In the economic sector, the Romanian historian P.P. Panaitescu (1947) indicates that “it was essential for the Turks to secure domination over the Romanian principalities and to absorb Romanian principalities into their Empire gently rather than conquer them.”⁴³ According to Maxim (1998), the Ottomans were interested more in the potential of Romanian economic tribute, its granary “without which both the Turkish army and its capital city would have starved” (Maxim 1998:108). The tributes imposed by the Ottomans on the Romanian principalities were heavy and consisted not only in the form of food units, but also in the forms of money and recruitment of young children for the Janissary corps. All of these tributes were supposed to be given to the Turks in exchange for their kindness to keep the mosque buildings absent in the Romanian principalities.

⁴² Italics in original.

⁴³ See Maxim’s (1998) discussion on page 108 in “Romania-A Historic Perspective.” Edited by Dinu C.Giurescu and Stephen Fischer-Galati. *East European Monographs*. 1998.

More on the economic potential of the Romanian territories and the foreign domination is discussed by Deletant (1985) where he argues that the Romanian “fertile soil and deposits of gold attracted a motley collection of early peoples” (Deletant 1985: xii). It is worth mentioning that from Panaitescu`s (1947) perspective, for the Ottomans “the economic reasons prevailed over the political and military considerations.”⁴⁴ Relative to their occupation, Maxim (1998) advances a rational theory suggesting that in the “Sofia, Belgrade, and Buda-Imperial highway” most of the time, Romanian territory “stood in the way of the Turkish expansion” (Maxim 1998:109).

It is important to note that the Romanian custom of paying tribute to the Turks stretched for a good amount of time until the Ottomans began to conquer Romanian territories. From the perspective of foreign policy, historical evidence suggests that

The Ottomans did not favor any direct relations to be entertained by the principalities with other diplomats outside the Ottoman power. Moreover, all links between Romania and the outside world were supposed to be known and mediated by the Ottomans even including the right to negotiate economic treaties with others (Maxim 1998: 116).

For the Ottoman Sultans, principalities of Romania remained simply “Ottoman subjects” that were restrained in the context of “asymmetric relations” with the rest of Europe in order to preserve the balance of power in the region. A great example of this is constituted by the sultan’s reaction when he became angry by the news that some diplomatic exchanges were made between Moldavia and Poland. The Ottoman Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent claimed in a letter to the Polish King that both Moldavia and Wallachia “are my slaves and tributaries and their possessions, incorporated among the others of our states like Bosnia and Semendria, constitute the Ottoman propriety”

⁴⁴ Panaitescu`s view, is discussed by Maxim (1998) on page 109 in the book “Romania: A Historic Perspective,” edited by Dinu C. Giurescu and Stephen Fischer-Galati.

(Maxim 1998: 117). It is relevant to note that from the territoriality perspective under the Ottoman suzerainty, Romanian historical records reveal that the Romanian principalities were territories with no status and no political independence. Moreover when the Ottoman conquest began, the principalities of Romania and the Ottoman Empire were divided according to Romanian historians by a frontier line that contained special guiding signs. Great Romanian resentments towards the Ottomans resulted from the fact that during their suzerainty, Romania was forced to cede, at their orders, parts of its territories such as Bukovina [northern Moldavia] to the Austrians and Bessarabia [a portion of Moldavia between the Prut and the Dniester Rivers] to the Russians.

Maxim (1998) mentions, vis-à-vis the Ottoman generosity that such deeds were not singular, and most of the Danubian cities [across the Danube River] were annexed by the Ottomans alone while the principalities continued to pay tribute in order to maintain their “principles, estates, laws, religions and customs.” Concerning the status of the other annexed provinces, like those from the intra-Carpathian Principality of Romania, such as Transylvania, it is worth mentioning that its status was very different under the Habsburg authority than it was under the Ottoman suzerainty.⁴⁵

Historians mention that during the Habsburgs, Transylvanian affairs were managed bottom up, under a special Constitution for Transylvania, directed from Vienna. Nonetheless, “while no sultan had ever taken the title of Prince of Moldavia, Wallachia, or Transylvania, the Vienna Emperor did take the title of the governor and Prince of Transylvania” (Maxim 1998:119). Among the adverse effects brought by the Ottoman legacy in Romania was the top down approach which led to the fact that the territories controlled by the Ottomans to remain economically behind those controlled by the

⁴⁵ Transylvania was annexed by the Habsburgs in 1687.

Habsburgs. Due to the Ottoman approach, both Moldavia and Wallachia, for instance, lagged behind Transylvania and Bukovina [the northern part of Moldavia]. Historians, like Maxim (1998), attribute this economic lag to the fact that Transylvania was already a rich province in subsoil resources at its Habsburg annexation, whereas during the long lasting occupation of the Ottomans over Wallachia, Dobrogea, and Moldavia a significant gap between the Balkan and Western European economies began to accentuate which perhaps, above everything, this may be one of the reasons behind these territories underdevelopment.⁴⁶ As noted, during the Ottoman occupation Romanian territories had been “wrenched away from the body of the principalities” and annexed to the Ottoman Empire. In addition to this treatment, historians claim that these territories were affected by poor and inefficient Ottoman administrations.

Critical to note is that the duration and intensity of occupation differed across all territories. Historians note that on the positive side, the Ottoman contribution was imprinted in arts, embroidery, ceramics, gastronomy, and decorations to mention only a few. Compelling to quote are the remarks of Wayne S. Vucinich who studied the “Stamp of Istanbul” and said that “the Ottoman social system fostered many undesirable habits in Romania [among them the bribe or baksheesh, distrust of the government, and so forth] that lived on long after the Empire’s demise” (Maxim 1998:126). Like Maxim (1998) suggests, it is interesting to observe, from this perspective that “Centuries of feudal bondage developed in Romania a state leaning towards lethargy, indifference, indecision, likewise, a tendency towards submissiveness that flourished of the necessity of survival” (Maxim 1998:126). From another perspective, the consequence of the “feudal anarchy” entertained by the Ottomans appears to have left a lasting imprint on the Romanian

⁴⁶ More than five centuries of suzerainty from 1419 until 1878 in the case of Dobrogea.

territories, henceforth maintaining a kind of continuous struggle for domination and influence. Yet perhaps some, if not all, of these factors brought saturation to the Romanian culture and may have influenced Romania to change its political course and aspire to something different, to western values and identities that were not automatically more superior but more reputable. With this established framework let us examine some of the Romanian political avenues from instances when the Romanian territory was caught between the Ottoman, Russian and Austrian Empires.

3.2 The Inheritance of the “sick man of Europe” - Romanian Territoriality

From the historical perspective, Platon (1998) suggests that “as early as the end of the 14th century, the Romanian Lands—placed in an important strategic area—lay at the very heart of the conflicting interests and actions of some great powers” (Platon 1998:133). Platon (1998) provides an interesting political comment made by an Italian humanist, Filippo Buonaccorsi (1490), vis-à-vis the Romanian defense strategic approach. Buonaccorsi (1490) suggests that around the important events, “the Romanians bound themselves through treaties, not as defeated but as victors.”⁴⁷ Historical evidence suggests, in this respect, that the Romanian attempts to form anti-Ottoman alliances were characterized by greater disorganization and indecision. As it was suggested, the geopolitical position influenced Romania both positively and negatively. Some parts of the Romanian territories like that of Transylvania, for instance, benefited from the Austria-Ottoman conflict from 1593, as well as from the peace that followed in 1606. In light of these events, historians mention that the Habsburgs considered Transylvania as a territory that belonged to them, rather than as a subject to

⁴⁷ Citation provided by Platon on his essay on page 133.

obtain tributes. Although Transylvanians renounced the Ottoman suzerainty and accepted the protection of the Habsburgs, they benefited from a political status within the Empire, while Moldavia and Wallachia did not. Platon (1998) contends that “the Ottoman Empire, due to the nature of the relationship with Poland and the Habsburgs, was interested in maintaining the political and territorial status-quo for some of the Romanian lands” (Platon 1998:136). Historical evidence suggests also that the most affected territory was that of Wallachia because it was directly neighboring the Ottoman Empire. Since Moldavia was neighboring Poland, the treatment coming from the Ottomans was much milder as compared to that of Wallachia, who was mainly at the mercy of the Ottoman Empire.

It is worth remarking that the Ottoman Empire differed in exerting its influence on the Romanian territories, mainly because of their geopolitical position. It appears clear that the geopolitics played a role through the economy, geography and history in balancing the Ottoman’s interests in the region. From the geopolitics perspective, the European Powers were concerned about establishing a certain territorial and political balance in Europe. Historians argue that the Romanian army, at the confrontation with the Ottoman occupation, was strong enough to allow the Turks to absorb the territories resources first rather than integrate them completely into the Ottoman Empire.

The Ottoman strategy to “theoretically” preserve the provinces status under their suzerainty was influenced by the fear that at any time one of these provinces could initiate a rapprochement, either by way of the Poles or the Habsburgs, against the Ottomans. Platon (1998) mentions in this sense that

the geographical position and the political situation linked to Moldavia’s closeness to Poland, to the ever-stronger clash of Austria’s and Poland’s conflicting interests in Transylvania; caused

the three Romanian Lands to hold different places, not to have the same specific weight within the Ottoman political system (Platon 1998:136).

From his historical perspective, “the Romanian Lands organically integrated themselves into European politics throughout their history which in turn influenced the area of imperial objectives and the interests of the great powers disputing their hegemony the Ottoman Empire, Austria and Poland” (Platon 1988:137). It is worth suggesting that what guided Romanian history throughout the territorial domination process was its aspiration towards national unity and obtaining independence from foreign domination. As a territory situated at the confluence between the east and west, Romania was the “subject” of territorial disputes and annexations among the Great Powers.

At one point, an important anti-Ottoman alliance made with the Transylvanian Prince brought all three provinces under the same umbrella and due to their united efforts under Michael the Bold [or the Brave] Wallachia, Transylvania and Moldavia achieved their first territorial unity in the 1600s. However, as history records, this unity was short lived and rather instrumental. Due to the negative international reaction, “the three Romanian territories were to be incorporated among the possessions of the Austrian Empire as a rightful inheritance of medieval Hungary at the expense of Michael the Bold who was meant to serve only as an *instrument* of unity with a view to achieve this political objective” (Platon 1998:139).⁴⁸ During the unification period, Poland was a stringent opponent of the Habsburg Empire and began complotting with the Ottomans about further Polish plans of annexations.

Although the Ottoman plan was different and rather lethargic, the Turks continued to remain distant and began instigating dissension between Poland and Austria. Russia

⁴⁸ Italics in original.

appeared in this plan as an actor very interested in weakening Poland's expansion however, at this time Russia's ambitions lacked the military capacity and influence to interfere directly in such territorial matters. Nonetheless, with the increase of Russian influence in the east of Europe the Romanian territory was now placed at the line of contact as well as of impact between the four great powers: the Austrian and Ottoman Empires, Poland and Russia.

From Platon's (1998) perspective, "the Romanian territory continued to remain the battlefield for confrontation among competitors as well as an object for their compensation" (Platon 1998:140). In this battle, began the alteration of the Ottoman power that converted the enormous Empire into the "sick man of Europe." Thus, it remained up to Russia and the Habsburg Empire to divide the inheritance of the Ottomans. Two of the Romanian territories, Moldavia and Wallachia, remained the theater of the struggles between the Great Powers of Europe. Treptow (1996) notes with respect to this that at the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth century, important changes occurred in the political situation of the Romanian territories.

First, as expected, "the Treaty of Carlowitz (1699) sanctioned the inclusion of Transylvania in the Habsburg Empire;" second, after the Austrian-Russian-Ottoman wars, Austria annexed Oltenia and Bukovina while Bessarabia was going to be the prize of the Tsarist Russia after the Russo-Ottoman war (Treptow 1996:11). Significant to note is that the revolution of 1848 marked the beginning of the unification process of three Romanian territories. Despite the fact that this revolution failed to achieve its goal, historical evidence suggests that what remained important for Romanians was the

awareness of the “idea of unification” which became the basis for the creation of the modern national unitary state in 1918. It is worth noting that

Two of the Romanian territories, Wallachia and Moldavia remained under the Ottoman suzerainty guaranteed by the seven European powers until January 1859 when in defiance of the Paris Convention both provinces elected Alexandru Ioan Cuza as their prince. Romanian historical record reveals that the new unitary state officially adopted the name of Romania on 24 January 1862, but four years later in 1866 Alexandru Ioan Cuza abdicated and the journey of foreign dynasty began in Romania. The first prince chosen for Romania by the Russians and the French was the German Prince Carol I of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen. The reign of Carol I (Prince from 1866-1881 and King of Romania from 1881-1914) introduced a period of constitutional monarchy in Romania (Treptow 1996:13).

Stephen Fischer-Galati (1957) notes that the “Russian interests in the principalities dates back to Peter the Great, the first Russian Tsar to seek the active cooperation of Romanian princes against the Turks in the early eighteenth century” (Fischer-Galati 1957:6). The Russian influence grew even larger with Catherine the Great and her protectorate doctrine, established to protect all the Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire.

During the eighteenth century, Romanian principalities confronted the Phanariot domination when the princes of principalities were imposed by the Ottoman Empire, however, not from the Romanian rank but from the Greek quarter of Constantinople. Russia served as an important supporter of the restoration of Romanian princes during the revolution of 1821, and this appeared to consolidate a positive relationship with Romania. Fischer-Galati (1957) mentions that after the Russo-Ottoman war of 1826-1828 “Russian influence culminated in the establishment of a Russian protectorate over the Romanian principalities, granted by the Treaty of Adrianopole” (Fischer-Galati 1957:6).

It is significant to note that the ensuing Russian occupation until 1834 was a fruitful period for Romania since Russian General Paul Kisseleff “laid the foundation of a new Romanian state in the principles of the separation of powers [separating justice

from administration] in Wallachia and Moldavia” (MacKenzie 1985:301). However, the positive collaboration between Russia and Romania did not have a long duration. During the period of 1848-1849 Russian troops intervened in the nationalist revolts initiated by young Romanian intellectual boyars who lived and studied in Paris, and who aimed to continue developing “Kisseleff’s reforms and achieve independence and constitutional government in the Romanian principalities Moldavia and Wallachia” (MacKenzie 1985: 293). Political emancipation of the principalities was apparently the last thing that interested Russia.

Romanian territories, as Treptow (1996) notes, “had to overcome the unfavorable geographical situation between three, not always friendly, empires” (Treptow 1996:285). Andrew MacKenzie (1985), states that “In the summer of 1853 Moldavia and Wallachia were occupied by the Russian armies; France and Britain formed an alliance with Turkey and declared war on Russia” (MacKenzie 1985:343). As it can be deduced, Russian influence remained active in Romania until the Crimean War when the two Romanian territories were supposed to balance the European powers. Following the year of fighting between the Ottomans and the Russians, the Romanian territories exchanged Russian domination with that of the Austrians, who occupied the principalities until March, 1857. Regarding territorial concerns and Romanian strategies to regain territorial independence, it is compelling to cite the following paragraph provided by MacKenzie (1985) in *A Concise History of Romania* that speaks eloquently about both, the western and Romanian interests.

Believing that the European revolution on which they had pinned their hopes of union was not possible in the near future, the Romanian exiles in the summer of 1854 approached Napoleon III, Emperor of France, the British government and Cavour, Prime Minister of Sardinia, asking them to declare that Moldavia and Wallachia should be united into a single

state under a foreign prince, which to them meant independence (MacKenzie 1985:343).

It is intriguing to remark that the attempt made by the Romanian intellectuals indicates that Romanian elites had a long history of dependency on western powers. In the same context, Treptow (1996) notes that “one need to look no further than Romania in 1848 to be convinced of the major role played by the intellectuals in the unfolding revolutionary year”(Treptow 1996:259). As noted, since the 1848 revolution Romanian elites played an ideological role in deciding Romanian affairs. Moreover, as Treptow (1996) mentions, Romanian intellectuals and leaders understood that “independence could only be achieved through a cunning diplomatic game in a favorable international context” (Treptow 1996:325).

With respect to Romanian territoriality and the foreign involvement and support within this matter, it is important to note that Russia, next to France, Sardinia and Prussia supported the provinces union of Romania under a foreign hereditary prince. Only Great Britain did not want “the integrity and authority of the Ottoman Empire to be prejudiced in any way” (Giurescu 1971:117). During the Russo-Ottoman war of 1877 Romania participated alongside Russia in the war, and won its independence from the Ottoman Empire which was recognized in the San Stefano Treaty of 1878. Since the southern part of Bessarabia, regained in 1856, was supposed to be returned to Russia after the Berlin Treaty, Romanian-Russian relations became strained and experienced the hostilities of the Ottoman Empire, the suspicions of the Habsburg Monarchy and the expansionistic movement of the Russian Empire.

All of these territorial dissensions caused Romania to pursue pro western alliances after the Congress of Berlin, since their interest in dominating Romanian territories was

almost absent. Romania became a “junior member of the Triple Alliance” in 1883 in hopes that Austria and Germany would protect Romanian territories against the Russian attacks. For the purpose of this study, it is significant to observe that the dynastic period of Carol I in Romanian history is a very important one from the perspective that Carol was the king who reoriented Romanian foreign policy towards a pro-German and pro-Austrian fervor. He understood that Russia, the same as France, failed to “secure a preponderant position of Romania in the Balkans after 1878” (Fischer-Galati 1957:8). Fischer-Galati (1957) notes, vis-à-vis this inclination, that the “French educated aristocrats disfavored an alliance between Romania and Austria, the ally of Germany and the power which had thwarted Romanian ambitions in the Balkans and Transylvania” (Fischer-Galati 1957:8).

The Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 are important for Romanian history since during this period it spurred the creation of Greater Romania by incorporating, in addition to the northern territories, Banat, Crisana, Bessarabia, Transylvania, and Bukovina into one Kingdom on December 1, 1918 in Alba-Iulia, the town which had previously witnessed the victory of Michael the Brave in this respect. Also, in Romania, the influence of the Habsburg Empire was felt mainly in Transylvania. Fischer-Galati (1957) notes that “the Germans and Hungarians, who had participated in the economic, political and cultural progress of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, had reached higher standards of achievement than the Romanian population in the Old Kingdom or in Greater Romania” (Fischer-Galati 1957:10).

Heterogeneity in this territory appears to create the subject that will preoccupy most historians who write in this area, some like Constantin C. Giurescu (1998) speak

about Transylvania as “Romania’s ethnic reservoir.” From the influences and territorial perspective, Platon (1998) argues that while “Russia under attentive observation of the Habsburg Empire acquired a predominant power in the two Romanian principalities, Austria legitimated her rule over the Romanian territory” (Platon 1998:155). A controversial subject from both sides, the Romanian and the Hungarian, is related to the Transylvanian irredentist territorial claims. Questions like “who was there first, or to who did this territory belong to: to the Romanians or to the Hungarians?” still preoccupy historians (Larrabee 1990:69). Some Romanian critics will go so far as to argue that after communism collapsed in Romania and questions regarding Transylvania were brought up, many feared that the world powers, for instance the U.S., would recognize Transylvania either as part of Hungary or as an independent territory since Transylvania has a more Magyar than Romanian population.

Speculation exists in the sense that the U.S. Secretary of State, James Addison Baker III who served under the administration of George H.W. Bush, favored more the Hungarian government over Romania when the Romanian-Hungarian frontier was disputed in the 1990s; also more fear emerged from affiliations of Tom Lantos, a Hungarian born who served as a Representative in the U.S. Congress during these tensioned times. In this respect, Romanian elites were afraid that he might have influenced decisions in Washington vis-à-vis Transylvania.

Evidence also exists that due to the issues concerning minority rights in Romania during the 1990s “relations between the Bush Administration and the Romanian government cooled decidedly after the miners` rampage in June 1990 and remained icy until the middle of 1991” (Human Rights Publication on Romania). In this perspective,

Treptow (1996) notes that “despite the stability and social peace established in Romania in the second half of the 1990s, the United States Department of State issued a travel advisory for Romania, discouraging investment, tourism and communications with the West” (Treptow 1996:563).⁴⁹ By forming the latest alliance with NATO, Romania hoped to avoid an uncomfortable situation where the U.S. intervened unexpectedly, supposedly in the Transylvanian minorities, an issue almost similar to the Serbian case. Although despite all, as Watson (1934) suggests, “the Transylvanian problem, provides the key to understanding of the Romanian problem as a whole” (Watson 1934: vii). Since Romanian territoriality emerges as an element of insecurity that coerces Romania to form diplomatic alliances, it is important to mention that information regarding the origination of this issue is provided in greater detail in the ensuing section where an increased exploration of Transylvanian territoriality is found as well as in Chapter Five where territorial security is examined.

Beginning with the eleventh century, Giurescu (1998) suggests that Hungarians colonized the eastern part of the Transylvanian province with Hungarian and German elements. The consolidation of the Hungarian rule in Transylvania was accomplished according to Giurescu (1998), at the beginning of the thirteenth century, after the Magyarization process began. Historical evidence suggests that after the Habsburg consolidation, the Romanian life in this area was deteriorating. During this time many Romanians were forced to abandon Orthodox faith and to accept becoming “Uniates” with Rome’s Catholicism. Religious persecution and social oppression coerced many Romanians who refused to convert to move away from Transylvania. The Magyar noblemen and a small group of Romanian deputies voted in 1791 for the dualism and

⁴⁹ According to Treptow, this advisory was removed five years later in 1995.

unification of Transylvania with Hungary. Due to circumstantial politics in 1867, Transylvania became part of the Hungarian crown until its unification with the Romanian kingdom in 1918. The Austro-Hungarian influence was felt long after Transylvania was united with other Romanian territories. The union of the Transylvanian minority with Romania continues to be an issue even during the contemporary era. As noted, Greater Romania was completed in three successive stages during 1918. The first was the Union of Bessarabia, the southeastern territory of Romania. The second was that of Bukovina and the third the union of Transylvania, Banat, Crisana, Oltenia and Maramures.⁵⁰

3.3 Concluding Remarks

This chapter aimed to familiarize the reader with the Romanian struggles to achieve and maintain the Romanian unitary state. Although, from some scholars' perspective, this particular behavior resembles more an 'offensive' rather than 'defensive' posture, it is imperative to mention that the Romanian offensive behavior was not based on conquest of foreign territories but rather on recuperating territories that were natively Romanian but were occupied during centuries by various dominations. This chapter concedes that Romanian history is heavy in dates and events and it can become confusing in many respects especially where sometimes there is lack of written evidence.

What is important to retain from this chapter is that Romania struggled since the domination of the Roman Empire to maintain its territorial integrity. In many respects Romania was and remains a bridge territory that balances the European powers.

⁵⁰ See the analysis provided by Constantin C. Giurescu on page 275 in the book: "Romania: A Historic Perspective," edited by Giurescu and Fischer-Galati.

Romania is a Pontic⁵¹ country located between the Russian, Central Europe and the Balkan influences. Romania holds an important strategic position in Europe by controlling the lower course of the Danube River and an important size of the Black Sea region. With respect to imperial influences, historians like Watson (1934) claim that “while the two Romanian principalities were subjected to the humiliation of the Phanariot regime, Transylvania fell upon quieter times under Habsburg rule and remained as a peaceful political backwater until the middle of the nineteenth century” (Watson 1934:169). After the decline of the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Habsburg Empire found the three Romanian lands in different economic and political stability. The Habsburg Empire considered Transylvania associated but at the same time distinct from the Empire; the real control over this territory lay in Vienna.

During the Russian-Ottoman war from 1768-1774, Russian plans to annex Moldavia and Wallachia were rejected by Vienna and since the tensions between the Russians and the Habsburgs were close to becoming a war conflict, King Frederick II suggested that instead of annexing Romanian provinces it would be more advantageous to divide Poland in 1772. Russian influence in Romania was manifested on the grounds of protecting the Orthodox peoples of the Balkans from the Ottoman intervention. As the historical events will reveal, Russia’s good intentions were only plausible motives to mask its contentious ambitions to lead in Europe since, despite the fact that Russia agreed to recognize and defend the territorial integrity of Romania, Russia annexed Bessarabia, one of the most important economic territories according to Treptow (1996) from its faithful ally, Romania. Due to its diversified relief, the Carpathian Mountains, plains, and basins, Romania possesses a great wealth of natural resources of which oil is the

⁵¹ Access to the Black Sea.

most important according to some views. As this examination emphasizes, the achievement and the maintenance of Romanian unity was a long process for the Romanians to achieve since it started in the second century and continued to be fostered during the 1990s when the Transylvanian territorial question was brought up again. Treptow (1996) suggests that “although deeply embedded in Eastern Europe, Romania has a long tradition of being somewhat different from its neighbors, a custom it has yet to relinquish” (Treptow 1996: v). Treptow`s (1996) remark weighs heavily in this project, especially since Walt (1987) did not thoroughly address in the “balance of threat” theory the idea of “apartenenta,” or belonging by identifying with a group of states. Following this section begins the unfolding of the Romanian behavior in the context of the Eastern Question raised at the decline of the Ottoman Empire and the affirmation of the southeastern European state.

Watson (1934) mentions in the context of Romania, Russia and Austria, that what secured the Romanian principalities “was the great struggle of the Seven Years of War that brought the most lasting and memorable results which led to a complete reversal of the traditional alliances on the Continent and set the Eastern Question once more in motion” (Watson (1934:9). Thus, the ensuing chapter will touch on the Romanian conflicts of interest for its territorial aspirations in the alliance systems with Central Powers [Germany and Austria-Hungary], The Triple Alliance [Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy] and the Entente after Romania obtained its independence from the Ottoman Empire.

CHAPTER 4: EXPLAINING ROMANIAN ALLIANCES FORMATION

The purpose of this chapter is to identify a pattern in Romanian behavior in forming alliances from 1878 to 1990. This chapter is divided into four parts. The first part investigates aspects related to Romanian behavior in forming alliances from 1878 when the new Romanian state won its independence from the Ottoman Empire until the conclusion of the First World War. The second part examines Romania's historical account of alliance formation from the end of the First World War until the completion of the Second World War. The third part examines Romanian stance within the Warsaw Pact. The fourth part connects the patterns of alliances identified in the Romanian case with Stephen Walt's (1987) theoretical perspective hoping that through the link between the historical ground and Walt's (1987) theoretical approach to emerge the conditions under Romania either balanced against or bandwagoned with a threatening power.

Regarding Romanian alliances behavior this chapter aims to capture whether hypotheses derived from the balance of threat theory conform to Romanian historical material as well as whether, from Romanian independence until the alliance with NATO, any changes in Romania's pattern of behavior regarding alliance formation occurred. Intriguing in this chapter will be to distinguish among the Romanian trends of alliances since based on these trends the subsequent chapters aim to emphasize whether Romania followed the same or different pattern of alliance formation with NATO. Subsequent will be to identify a recurrence among the motives that Romanian alliances were based upon when they were formed. Was there continuity or change in Romanian behavior? Thus, it will be interesting to identify which behavior is more prevalent on the Romanian case,

balancing or bandwagoning and why? Equally interesting will be to learn how much emphasis Romania put on ideological solidarity or if a common ideology creates effective alliances. It will be intriguing to determine whether the ‘provision of economic aid or military assistance’ created effective alliances, or if there is evidence in Romanian historical records that supports transnational political penetration as an effective instrument of forming alliances.

4.1 The San Stefano Treaty (1878) and the Outset of the Romanian-Russian Animinities

The time through which Romania obtained its political independence from the Ottoman Empire has been recorded in Romania’s history of 1866-1877 as a period of intense political struggles for the Romanians to obtain their political independence. Reckoning that during this critical period an important part of the Romanian territory, Transylvania was under Hungarian occupation. In November 1870, Carol I [Charles], the King of Romania attempted to persuade the Guaranteeing Powers to consent to the proclamation of Romania’s independence. In exchange he proposed as an incentive “a trade treaty favorable to the Habsburg Empire” (MacKenzie 1985:370).

In 1875 the trade treaty was accepted and a convention with Austria-Hungary was concluded. However, the situation with Russia was much different. According to MacKenzie (1985), when asked for his consent to the proclamation of Romania’s independence in 1873, the Russian foreign minister refused to acknowledge it. Nonetheless, after this refusal Romania concluded in 1876 a commercial convention with Russia too. Since the Eastern Question remained for the Balkans region an open “question” Romania began to fear Russia and its actions. From the Romanian view, a

Russian attempt to attack the Ottoman Empire was supposed to involve the march of Russian troops over its territories making from this perspective, its territorial integrity vulnerable. In order to assure the guarantee of territorial integrity, Romania decided upon neutrality in Russia-Ottoman affairs. However, skeptical Romania, despite this stance it began making military preparations in order to oppose any occupation of its territory by a foreign army assuming that since it considered itself an independent state apart from the Ottoman Empire, Romania was entitled to decide alone upon its administrative decisions.

Despite the precautionary measures taken either vis-à-vis the Russians or the Ottomans, Romania found itself in a security dilemma when the Ottoman Empire gained a victory over Serbia⁵² which marked the division of the European powers into two theatrical camps. Fearful that its short and fragile independence was going to be overturned Romania decided to begin discussions with Russia regarding its availability towards the Russian army to march through Romania against the Ottoman Empire. However, in spite of this benevolence, Romania aimed to first seal with Russia a written agreement in order to ensure and document that its territorial integrity was going to be respected by the Russians.

MacKenzie (1985) notes that despite the fact, a convention for the signing of this agreement was drawn, the formal signing of this document occurred much later, on 16 April 1877 due to Russia's decisions to postpone the war. The language of the convention clearly conveyed that "The Russian armies were to be allowed to pass through Romania, paying for all they required, whether for services or materials" (MacKenzie 1985:376). In exchange the "Russian Government agreed to maintain and

⁵² Romanian neighbor from south west.

observe all the political rights of the Romanian state resulting from the domestic laws and the existing treaties, and to maintain and defend Romania's present integrity" (Mackenzie 1985:376). This study employs the same as Walt (1987), alliances as "formal or informal relationship of security cooperation" (Walt 1987:12). Paul Gordon Lauren (1979) suggests that "an arrangement that is defensive in character and concerned chiefly with the strategic and political threat" makes the difference between political and military alliances (Lauren 1979:147). According to Lauren (1979), an example of political alliance constitutes the Triple Alliance in its initial phase. Lauren (1979) suggests that the Triple Alliance was an "organizational process" or "transnational bureaucratic politics" when it was initially formed between Austria and Germany.⁵³ In light of this, Lauren (1979) suggests that an "*entente* defines an understanding or agreement among states which is based on conventions and declarations. In contrast to an alliance, an entente is not written; nor does it have a specified duration" (Lauren 1979:249).⁵⁴

In the circumstances of war between the Ottoman Empire and Serbia, Romania wanted to assure its independence by having it recognized by Constantinople. In this context, Romania wanted to assure the Ottomans regarding its "absolute neutrality" in exchange of a special guarantee in the event that a war between one of the neighboring states and the Ottoman Empire should occur (MacKenzie 1985:375). However, Turkey did not comply with Romanian independence wishes and the Romanian attempt created more tensions between Romania and the Ottoman Empire than peace. After this refusal, Romania was left to continue to persuade the Great Powers at the next peace conference and to put its territorial space at the Russians disposal in order to confront the Ottomans.

⁵³Lauren (1979) argues that this alliance "gained detailed military and Naval dimensions after 1909" (Lauren 1979:147).

⁵⁴ Italics in original.

It is interesting to note here that the majority of battles between the Ottomans and Russians unfolded on Romanian soil forcing Romania not to only voluntarily participate in the battles in order to defend its own provinces but also to participate in a war at its own expense while Russians were making great progress to succeed in this war. The war between the Russians and the Ottomans ended on 31 January 1878 with an armistice, which Romanian history reveals that it led to the end of Romania's war of independence.

The peace between Russia and the Ottoman Empire was officially enacted with the Peace of San Stefano Treaty on 3 March 1878 and with this occasion it recognized the independence of Romania, Serbia and Montenegro. Historians mention that Bulgaria was the most benefited nation among the others since "the autonomous principality of the Bulgarian administration was created and an autonomous administration was introduced in Bosnia and Herzegovina" (MacKenzie 1985:380). According to MacKenzie (1985), Russia's prestige was also enhanced upon this treaty and due to this, the other Great Powers convened in another congress aiming to regulate the status of south-eastern Europe.

The Treaty of Berlin Congress which concluded on 13 July 1878 also recognized Romania's independence however, it only allowed Romania to incorporate its lost territories of the Danube Delta, Snake Island⁵⁵ and a part of Dobrogea and lose the south-west of Bessarabia in favor of Russia. The fact that Romania had to cede a good part of Bessarabia to Russia despite that a careful Romania agreed previously with Russia that it was going to "defend and maintain Romania's present territorial integrity" appeared to greatly frustrate Romania. In these circumstances, even though Romania adopted a neutral stand at the beginning of the war between Russia and the Ottoman Empire,

⁵⁵ Currently Romania is disputing this territory with Ukraine at the Hague International Supreme Court.

Romania believed that since it participated in the battles while defending its territories, Romania basically had alone, meritoriously won its independence. Long before the Treaty of San Stefano, Romania appeared interested in defending its territories, and having that recognized by the powers. After the Berlin convention, Romania knew that having to redeem Bessarabia from Russia was a challenging if not impossible task since its military was not as superior as the Russians. In the Romanian eyes, Russia began to fit the profile of the un-trusted and hungry territory neighbor from the East.

4.2 Romania and the Formation of Secret Regional Alliances

Important to note is that during the Russian-Ottoman war various secret alliances were created between Romania and its neighbors. There were written agreements that exemplify Romania in an attempt to gather allies in order to balance the Ottoman and the Russian threats to its territory. In order to emphasize Romanian behavior while enacting alliances it is imperative to examine at least a few of the most important ones. Eugene Boia (1993), a scholar preoccupied with Romanian and Yugoslavian historiography suggests, regarding regional alliances that “in the summer of 1867, discussions were held on the issue of an alliance formation between Romania, Greece, Serbia and Montenegro” (Boia 1993:10). Maintaining the status quo for Romania was the main objective in forming these alliances. An important treaty of alliance was formed on 20 January 1868 between Romania and Yugoslavia before Romania gained its independence.

Among the wishes mentioned in the treaty were the favors of expecting reciprocal support against the Ottomans and pledges of collaboration in improving the economies of Romania and Yugoslavia. Another significant regional treaty was signed between

Romania and Serbia. This treaty assured Romania's neutrality and documented both states wishes to pursue a common policy of the Balkan states against the Ottomans (Boia 1993:10). Supposedly, preserving the status quo was meant to keep Romania in a state of neutrality. When the Romanian status quo was in jeopardy, historical facts reveal that Romania took a stand against its enemies and presupposed neutrality. Trust appears to be a value highly regarded by Romania in forming regional alliances. Despite the trust regard, Serbia and Montenegro betrayed Romanian trust when they agreed to form without Romania another secret anti Ottoman alliance in June 1876. As previously mentioned, the "Eastern Question" and the revolts against the Ottoman Empire were preponderant issues in the Balkanic Peninsula during the second half of the 1800s.

Aiming to gain their independence, Serbia and Montenegro agreed to declare war without consulting Romania on the Ottoman Empire.⁵⁶ Romanian behavior appeared, in this instance, carefully aloof when the former refused to participate in the Russian-Ottoman conflict and to change the Ottoman suzerainty with that of the Russian Empire. Regarding the "maintaining of its neutrality" behavior, Boia (1993) suggests that since geographically Romania was located at the confluence between the two empires it could not avoid the invasion by either one or both powers on its territory. As noted, since Romania had failed to obtain at Constantinople, the recognition of a neutral state, it forced the Romanian returned to Russia's mercy to help maintain its political rights and territorial integrity.

Nonetheless, as emphasized, Russia failed to keep its promissory military convention act when they deliberately exchanged two of the Romanian territories, one

⁵⁶ See Eugene Boia's discussion in "Romania's Diplomatic Relations with Yugoslavia in the Interwar Period, 1919-1941." *Columbia University Press*. 1993.

being Dobrogea for the southwestern part of Bessarabia. Romanian animosity towards Russia began intensifying at the San Stefano Treaty (1878) and only increased with the Berlin Treaty since Romania's aspirations to get back its territories from Russia remained largely frustrated. Boia (1993) acknowledges that "the bitter experiences with Russia during the 1877-1978 period led Romania to be distrustful of its huge neighbor to the east" (Boia 1993:15). It is imperative to mention that based on these historical circumstances Romania managed to escape only for a short period from the Slavic encirclements by gradually fallen under the influence of Vienna and Berlin by secretly joining the Triple Alliance on 18/30 October 1883 [and renewed it in 1888, 1892, 1902 and 1913] (Boia 1993:15).⁵⁷

4.3 Romania and the Adherence to the Triple Alliance -The Bandwagoning Behavior

Romanian alliance with Triple Alliance constitutes an example of bandwagoning behavior however; it can be argued also that Romania joined this alliance for balancing Russian threats and maintaining peace and the balance of power in Europe.⁵⁸ Romania's journey in the Triple Alliance began from frustrations that it remained only a small state encircled by Russian mercy and protectorate. Frustrated by Russian actions, Romania looked up to other powers, included the Central Powers⁵⁹ in order to get a resolve with its territorial integrity despite the fact that animosities with Austria-Hungary were also persistent since regions of Romania were occupied at that time by both Hungary and

⁵⁷ Otto von Bismarck of Germany formed in 1879 a secret defensive alliance-the Dual Alliance-with Austria-Hungary. A few years later in 1882 Italy, angry at France, secretly signed the Dual Alliance with Germany and Austria-Hungary forming with them the Triple Alliance.

⁵⁸ This is an example of ambiguous dichotomy between balancing and bandwagoning.

⁵⁹ Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy.

Austria. “The alliance among Germany, Austria, Hungary and Italy was the result of a conservative and defensive in nature collaboration whose main purpose was to defend the Allied states against any attack from the outside and to consolidate the situation created by the previous treaties” (Petrescu-Comnene 2000:20).

Boia (1993) argues that Romania due to its internal reconstruction, joined this alliance from the desire to “alleviate the oppressive treatment of those Romanians living under Magyar rule and to provide her assurance against Russian encroachments” (Boia 1993:15). In this context Romania began to contour that which is known to be a balancing behavior with the Triple Alliance since it became allied with it in order to acquire support to balance an external threat: Russian threat. At the same time, this constitutes an example of bandwagoning behavior also since Romania made an alignment with Austria-Hungary despite the fact that Romania had territories under this domination.⁶⁰ The sense of security that Romania obtained by adhering to this alliance is reflected in that Romania was supposed to have an equal voice in the peace negotiation process and was going to participate in the maintenance of peace in the Balkans.

Despite that both Austria and Hungary threatened Romania; Romania had more to gain by becoming their ally. Based on the presupposed alliance terms, Romania pledged “not to enter into other alliances against the signatory powers, which in turn, promised Romania help if attacked by neighboring states; Romania had also engaged to provide aid if any of the other members were attacked” (Boia 1993:15). However, in spite of all the privileges it is interesting to find that Romania had never submitted the terms of this

⁶⁰ Consider this as an example of the debate regarding whether weak states balance or bandwagon. Walt (1987) suggests that the “conditions” under which states tend to behave in certain ways are imperative for understanding the states behavior. Joao Resende-Santos (1992) argues that “if neutrality is not an option, weak states will be forced into some sort of bandwagoning behavior.” See for this his comments in “System and Agent: Comments on Labs and Kaufman.” *Security Studies*. Vol.1, No.4. Pp. 697-702.

alliance to the Romanian Parliament for ratification as required by law. Romanian elites in this context played a very interesting role by not wanting in this way to either provoke or harm Russia. Regarding this, Boia (1993) suggests that the involvement of a few Romanian officials, more concretely that of the King of Romania [Carol I, King since May 1881] who agreed to secretly sign the treaty with the Triple Alliance hoped that “the treaty would hold until favorable conditions enabled Romanians to pursue foreign policy against Austria-Hungary” (Boia 1993:16).

This particular behavior conforms to what Walt (1987) predicted regarding the weak states behavior: “states are tempted to bandwagon when allies are unavailable and that the most threatening power was believed to be appeasable” (Walt 1987:173). Approximately three million Romanians lived, according to Boia (1993), in territories under one of the signatories, Austria-Hungary. Moreover, Boia (1993) emphasizes that “contrary to his personal preference, Carol I did not wish to go against his people, the majority of whom were pro-Entente” (Boia 1993:20).⁶¹ The bandwagoning behavior seems reflected also in this alliance from the fact that despite the animosities with Austria-Hungary, Romania joined the stronger coalition [or the source of danger] hoping to profit from the relationship and regain its territories under the Austria-Hungary occupation.

However, even in these conditions what appears to be in the Romanian advantage is the language on which the terms of the alliance were constructed. The “unprovoked attack” message apparently provides Romania with leverage, the possibility to fluctuate and change its status in the alliance from “alignment in neutral.” If during the Serbo-

⁶¹ The Entente was formed after the Triple Alliance in 1904 by Britain and France against the perceived threat of Germany

Bulgarian war and the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913, Romania appeared to maintain a neutral position vis-à-vis the events, when conditions became favorable for reclaiming its territories Romania went against its will and the alliance signatories' power by complotting again with Russia to recapture its losses. Romania viewed the actions of Austria-Hungary as *provocateurs* rather than provoked.⁶² Romania changed its neutral position when circumstances were favorable only for it to increase its territorial components that in fact were part of Greater Romania. The ensuing fragment illustrates a few of the reasons that made Romania, determined perhaps to maintain its neutrality for so long and to attempt war only when gains were supposedly to be attainable. In his archival notes, Boia's (1993) findings suggest that

Romania did not enter the war in its first weeks for several reasons. First, because Romania was unprepared for war since all of its undelivered orders had been placed with German armament firms. Second, because its military planners viewed with apprehension a winter campaign in the difficult terrain of the Carpathians. Third, because the offers from the two opposing camps (Russia and Germany) provided perhaps the most important reason for non-commitment. On July 30-31, 1914 Russia offered Transylvania to Romania in return for neutrality. Germany, in turn, proposed Bessarabia in exchange for the same condition. So depending on the outcome of the war, Romania could regain either Transylvania or Bessarabia (Boia 1993:20).

This behavior also conforms to Walt's (1987) theory that "a decline in a state's relative position will lead its allies to opt for neutrality or align with the dominant side in the war time in order to share the spoils of victory" (Walt 1987:21). It is compelling to remark that Romania was determined to maintain the neutrality behavior for concerns regarding its territorial places like Transylvania and Bessarabia. Aiming to preserve its territorial integrity Romania *abandoned* the status of "cautious neutrality" and began *secret* discussions with Russia in order to obtain recognition for regions under Hungary and

⁶² Emphasis added.

portions of the Bukovina under Austria.⁶³ The relaxation from this perspective towards Russia appears justifiable. Boia (1993) suggests that “Bucharest agreed to permit Russian supplies for Serbia to cross through Romania but refused the transit of German supplies for the Ottoman Empire” (Boia 1993:21). Perhaps many are wondering why stopping the German transit and allowing only Russian supplies?

A closer inspection of the cited paragraph reveals that Germany promised Bessarabia in exchange for Romanian neutrality, however, Romania had apparently foreseen the long and interminable struggles to annex this territory when deciding to go in the other direction.⁶⁴ Interesting to underscore here is that since earlier times, Romanian geographic position played a critical role in forming alliances. Romania appeared permanently preoccupied in maintaining its territorial integrity and national survival by uniting all Romanians in one state and to do this it attempted whatever was necessary, even putting trust, again, in Russian hands and going against the alliance signatories’ power, Austria-Hungary. During the First World War, Romania adopted the “benevolent neutral behavior” (1914-1916).

4.4 The Benevolent Neutral Behavior (1914-1916)

Romanian modern history reveals that regional alliances between Romania and its neighbors were set, in principal, to preserve the Romanian territorial status quo, established at the end of the European war at the Paris peace conference in March 1856. Since the beginning of the First World War, Romania had concluded various treaties and among them a treaty of alliance with Austria-Hungary. Thus, when Italy informed

⁶³ Emphases added.

⁶⁴ Transylvanian territory is located in the core of Romania, while Bessarabia on the lateral side.

Romania about its decision to remain neutral, Romania inclined to respond with an “armed neutrality” position submitting in this way to the will of the majority and its constitutional King Charles I and not to the offense shoulder of the Austro-Hungarian armies. Despite the fact that Romania announced its neutrality, historians like Vlad Georgescu (1990) argues that there was actually no neutrality since Romanian Prime Minister, Bratianu as early as 1914 began to negotiate terms for entering the war with the Entente. Talks between Romania and Russia were initiated by King Ferdinand who succeeded King Carol after his death in October 1914. King Ferdinand had a pro-Entente view, and through his officials “convinced Russia to recognize Romania’s right to Transylvania in October 1914 in exchange for Romanians promise to remain neutral and to enter the war only at the right moment” (Georgescu 1990:167).

At the beginning of the First World War both Romania and Italy were faithfully allied with Austria-Hungary through an alliance treaty of reciprocity created in the event of an unprovoked attack. Despite the bonded alliance, both Italy and Romania felt that Austria-Hungary was the main instigator of all hostilities and because of that, the best case for both of them was to deter by either remaining neutral like Italy or adopt a “benevolent neutral” behavior like Romania. By witnessing both the opening hostilities of Austria-Hungary and later its defeat, Romania felt too insecure to continue supporting a defeated power and began a series of courtesy discussions with Russia hoping to regain at least the territories under the Habsburgs oppression.

The Romanian Prime Minister, Bratianu received the approval from the Romanian King to start bargaining with Russia again. Only this time, Romania was more adamant in conditioning Russia that in exchange for Romania’s benevolent neutrality, Russia

“should oppose any change of the territorial status quo of the present frontiers of the Romanian state and should acknowledge the Romanian right to annex the regions of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy inhabited by Romanians” (MacKenzie 1985:405). After signing this agreement with Russia, the Romanian cabinet was now eager to prolong its neutrality until its military gained the necessary strength and help and in this case with modern armament from Italy, Britain and France. Apparently the delayed decision to join the war is justified by Romania through the late arrivals of the modern armament at the end of the 1916 year.

As it can be inferred, Romania started the war on the side of the Entente. MacKenzie (1985) notes vis-à-vis the Romanian neutral behavior that Romanian Prime Minister Bratianu “continued his negotiations for an alliance with all the Entente powers, which Italy had joined in May 1915 without informing Romania, as she engaged earlier to do” (MacKenzie 1985:408). Romania declared war on December 29, 1915 against Austria-Hungary justifying its action more in terms of “a policy of national instinct” (MacKenzie 1985:409). It is imperative to emphasize from the behavioral perspective that Romania was mainly forced by the Entente to undertake the war.

Russia, MacKenzie (1985) notes “was the first to order Romania to attack Austria-Hungary in June, 1916 and France followed suit in early July” (MacKenzie 1985:411). It appears clear in this context that Romanian military preparations were poor and incomplete to attempt such a war. Surrounded by the war outbreak Boia (1993) mentions that the Romanian military was “weakened and disorganized” marked by “poor equipment, short supplies of ammunition since Romania produced none of its armaments, and most importantly the Romanian military lacked its basic organization” (Boia

1993:21). The conclusion of the First World War was more to the detriment of Romania since its territorial distribution promised in the secret joined alliances was not completely recognized by the Powers considering that Romania was propelled to confront a few hard hurdles until the Greater Romania was to be founded. After the war, Romania “regained Wallachia, with minor frontier rectifications in Austria-Hungary’s favor, but lost southern Dobrogea to Bulgaria; and the rest of the province was to be ruled jointly by the Central Powers” (Boia 1993:28).

Russia concluded the war with an armistice with the Central Powers and continued to remain a threat to Moldova and Bessarabia even after 1918 when both Bessarabia and Moldova united with Romania. In order for Greater Romania to be recognized, the Great Powers at the Paris peace conference had to validate the union of all reunited Romanians. It is imperative for this study to emphasize that Romanian national unity was also supported by the U.S. president Woodrow Wilson. The American President endorsed the principle of Romanian national unity on 5 November 1918 by stating in his declaration that

The Government of the United States is not unmindful of the aspirations of the Romanian people without, as well as within, the boundaries of the kingdom. It has witnessed their struggles and sufferings and sacrifices in the cause of freedom from their enemies and their oppressors. With the spirit of national unity and the aspirations of the Romanians everywhere the Government of the United States deeply sympathizes and will not neglect at the proper time to exert its influence that the just political and territorial rights⁶⁵ of the Romanian people may be obtained and made secure from all foreign aggressions (Boia 1993:30).⁶⁶

The relevancy of this paragraph is going to be discussed more extensively in the next chapter during the discussion reflecting the American reasons for expanding NATO

⁶⁵ Some Romanians associated this with the “Yalta Betrayal.”

⁶⁶ Quoted by Boia, pp.30. Original citation: Doc. No. 391, Lansing to the Romanian Charge d’Affaires ad-interim, Letter, Washington, 5 November 1918, in 1918 *la Romani*, 2:1194; also quoted in Spector, *Romania at the Paris Peace Conference*, 62-63.

towards the East of Europe and Romanian disappointment with the U.S. at Yalta. It is interesting to mention here that Romania had highly regarded the speeches coming from the west. In fact, according to Boia (1993), Wilson's note influenced Romania's second entry into the war, whether it was intended to or not. From the Romanian alliances approach perspective, Boia (1993) notes that "what set Romania and Yugoslavia apart from most of the other states with similar border disputes was that both fought on the victorious side during the war and the outcome of the war had not adversely affected their relations" (Boia 1993:36).⁶⁷ In many ways "fighting on the victorious side" appears to support Walt's (1987) bandwagoning hypothesis which suggests that states form alliances with the source of danger.

According to Walt (1993) bandwagoning occurs mainly when "the state is weak and cannot add to a defensive coalition but can still incur the wrath of the threatening state" (Walt 1987:29). This section concludes the first part of this chapter by emphasizing that Romania adopted a neutral stance in most of the European war events until its status quo was in jeopardy. Romania adhered to the Triple Alliance hoping to preserve its pacifist policies and peaceful intentions in the Balkans.

When the First World War broke, Romania just like Italy, refused to join Austria-Hungary in its war declaration since it had not received proper notification from the Vienna cabinet (Petrescu-Comnene 2000:20). Romania understood that by dwelling with the Triple Alliance it could not achieve its national aspirations or goals and then decided to pledge war on Austria-Hungary on 27 August 1916. It is imperative to emphasize that Romania was highly persuaded by the Allies to sign the declaration of war. Knowing clearly its national objectives, Romania began to demand in advance written guarantees

⁶⁷ Perhaps this was true until the Banat dispute began to test their relation of friendship.

from Russia and other allies. Often Romanian behavior was defined by its national unification objective, moreover by “its major irredentist intentions like Transylvania [including the Banat, Crisana, and the Maramures] and Bukovina, under Austria-Hungary, and Bessarabia, under Russia” (Boia 1993:24). Forced by the circumstances to side with the Allies, Romania was often criticized by others for opportunism. A clear example materialized with the Serbs accusation “at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, when the Serbs accused the Romanians of opportunism for having first concluded a treaty which promised them territorial acquisitions in order to enter the war, while Serbia fought without having received written assurances, believing that self-determination would be the basis for peace” (Boia 1993:25).

As previously noted Romania had tasted a few of the Russian disloyalties and it decided to take extra precautions especially vis-à-vis Russia. Even Boia (1993) contends that the Romanian Prime Minister Bratianu, like most Romanians, “was haunted by the memory of Russia’s treatment of Romania in 1877-1878” and due to Russia’s past behavior the Romanian Prime Minister appeared determined not to commit Romania to action without far-reaching guarantees in advance. Despite that Romania was committed to join the conflict, interesting in this context is how Romanian distrust towards the Russians began to catch contour. As this study progresses, it is easy to remark that the level of distrust towards Russia is going to rise and perpetuate for decades to come resolving, in this sense, for Romania to secure a defensive alliance treaty with the American alliance, NATO.

It will be interesting from this perspective to determine how much of Russian’s intentions and influences were considered by Romania in deciding an alliance with

NATO since, until now, it appears clear that Romania needed a lot of persuasion in forming almost any kind of defensive diplomatic alliances. During the winter of 1917-1918 Romania was faced with an important choice of whether “to surrender to the Central Powers or to carry on hopeless resistance without any Allied resistance” (Boia 1993:27). Since Russia began an armistice talk with the Central Powers, Romania, perhaps insecure of its military size and economic power followed Russia’s reasoning and concluded a “provisional armistice with the Central Powers on 9 December 1917” that was considered to be by critics a “temporary cease-fire and not a prelude to a separate peace” (Boia 1993:27). In this context, I begin the second part of this chapter by examining Romania’s historical account on alliance formation after the First World War through the end of the Second World War. It is clear by now that the potential for forming alliances resonated with Romania around its territorial integrity. In what follows, it is interesting to distinguish whether Romania followed the same basis for forming alliances.

4.5 Romania During the Interwar Period (1918-1939)

At the outbreak of Second World War on September 1, 1939 Romania continued to maintain a neutral stance vis-à-vis wars. Following World War I, Romania persisted to “pursue the general line promoted by the League of Nations which guaranteed the territorial *status-quo* and proclaimed the principles of international law-principles which the Romanian state has always endorsed” (MacKenzie 1985:428).⁶⁸ The Romanian national state was now completed, all Romanian provinces were now united and the creation of this new state was recognized by the Peace Conference in Paris on 18 January

⁶⁸ Italics in original.

1919. However, the dominant position of the Allied Powers at the peace conference “under the pretext that the Romanian government had concluded a separate peace with the enemy in 1918 and that the United States had not signed the secret treaty with Romania in 1916, the great powers allowed Romania only the status of a country with “special interests” at the peace conference” (MacKenzie 1985:429). At this conference Romania was surprised to receive such treatment when not only its delegates were downsized but frontiers that were recognized in the treaty concluded in 1916 with France, Great Britain and Italy were now disputed. It is imperative from this perspective to provide more insights regarding Romanian historical positions in different circumstances in order to depict Romanian behavior.

The creation of the new national state was indeed recognized in Paris. However, despite this accomplishment, in tacit exchange the Great Powers policies often infringed on the independence and sovereignty of Romania by intervening in its internal affairs. The fact that almost all the treaties signed before were sanctioned by the Great Powers and that Romania was supposed to pay for all the territories that were recuperated, caused Romania to be unwittingly dependent on the ‘great western imperialist powers’. It is also interesting that following the war “in foreign affairs Romania’s territorial integrity had to be defended and the *status-quo* maintained” (MacKenzie 1985:432).⁶⁹ Regarding this MacKenzie (1985) suggests that

After World War I, Romania’s foreign policy bore the seal of the interests of the Romanian bourgeoisie and landowners. The ruling class forged a system of international relations and agreements designed to ensure the class domination of the bourgeoisie and landowners inside the country and at the same time to guarantee its territorial integrity which had been achieved by virtue of

⁶⁹ Italics in original.

the international principle of the right of the people to self determination (MacKenzie 1985:446).

Since the former ruling circles turned after the war to France and Britain, whom they considered were most likely to defend Romanian interests it is important to mention that after communism collapsed in Romania, Romanian elites turned again towards the west by instigating dialog of alliance with NATO. In this sense it is fair to assume that a pattern of creating treaties of alliance begins to contour.

4.6 The Formation of the Little Entente - A Form of Balancing Behavior

Historical facts reveal that the formation of this group was necessary to stabilize central Europe. As noted, Romanian fear towards the Soviets grew even larger as time progressed. The fear in this instance revolved around the territory of Bessarabia which was not recognized previously by the Soviets as reunited with Romania but rather annexed by Romania. The fear of maintaining its territorial integrity appears to compel Romania to be skeptical not only regarding the Soviets but to almost the entire Balkanic flank, the Bulgarian and Hungarian neighbors. The 1920s history captures an interesting aspect related to this fear, that Romania became anxious about an imminent armed conflict with the Soviets and caught in such a dilemma Romania wanted to assure itself that in any eventuality, its proximate neighbors would come to its rescue.

Despite the Romanian attempts to form any kind of agreements neither of its neighbors appeared interested in expressing an active participation against the Soviets if such an attack was going to occur. After a few attempts, on 23 April 1921, Romania and Czechoslovakia signed a treaty concerning the Hungarian irredentism. A few years later, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia signed the first of what was going to be called the Little

Entente convention. Due to its increased premonitions, Romania proposed the formation of a tripartite alliance among Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and itself against the growing and now mutual fear of funneling Hungarian imperialism in this region. Although Romania was a proponent of this alliance, the Romanian Foreign Minister Take Ionescu postponed making a decision in assisting one of these countries in case an unprovoked Hungarian attack occurred.

Interesting to note, in terms of alliance choices and behavior, Romania appears to model that of the preventive, insecure and undecided candidate with lots of precautionary actions taken just in case something was going to take place. Apparently the delay in making a decision was due to the fact that Romania wanted to form a much larger alliance in which Greece, Poland and Austria could join, making sure that more allies were now aware of the Hungarian issue. According to Walt (1987) this kind of behavior models that “states do not balance against power but against threats” (Walt 1987:148). Romania attempted in this sense a series of alliances in order to balance threats. Walt (1987) argued that “states seek to counter threats by adding the power of another state to their own” (Walt 1987:149).⁷⁰

The treaty of defensive alliance that served as a guarantor for their eastern frontiers was signed between Romania and Poland on 3 March 1921 and was mainly based “on the common interests that both states had in Soviet Russia, and with which both shared a common border” (Boia 1993:77). Interesting to remark is that Romania had territorial disputes with the Soviets too and that out of its six neighboring states, Romania maintained good relations based on defensive alliances with only Poland and Czechoslovakia since Hungary and Bulgaria sought revisions of the peace treaties. The

⁷⁰ Walt's definition of balancing.

instability character of Central Europe appears to permanently influence Romania to sign short term defensive alliance treaties either with Poland, Czechoslovakia or Yugoslavia.

What appears relevant here is that Romania increasingly placed its duty into fulfilling its diplomatic role, to convincing more countries to participate in endless peace and defensive treaties in order to ensure a peaceful Balkanic Peninsula and recognition of a series of frontiers. Despite the outstanding questions with Yugoslavia regarding the remnants of the Romanian Banat, historical facts reveal that support existed from the Yugoslavian side. However, in spite of all these, Romania aimed to also capture Greece in the alliance quest next to Poland and Czechoslovakia. Romania wanted to make sure that the defensive alliance with Yugoslavia was real and since opportunities were available Romania attempted to create a dynastic intermarriage alliance with Yugoslavia that was going to bring more comfort to the trust value. In this context Boia (1993) mentions that the second daughter of the Romanian King Ferdinand and Queen Maria received right after Christmas in Romania, a visit from the new King of Yugoslavia and a Prince Regent Aleksandar, successor king after the death of his father on 16 August 1921 (Boia 1993:89).

Related to this event is that on 9 January, the engagement of King Aleksandar with Princess Marioara appeared as an announcement in the *Monitorul Oficial* the major news paper in Romania. With this occasion the arduous alliance builder, the Romanian Foreign Minister Ionescu announced in a public declaration that “by publicizing this engagement it completed the work in which I and the Yugoslavian Prime Minister had been involved for the past nine years” (Boia 1993:89). The culminating point of this

endeavor was ended with the convention of a defensive alliance between Romania and Yugoslavia in Belgrade on 7 June 1921.

It is significant to note in this respect that although Romania never took part in any of the actions of certain western powers against the Soviet Union, the relations between Romania and Russia became very strained especially after Romania signed the League of Nations Covenant in 1921 and became a member of this international organization. MacKenzie (1985) argues that

Romania in her foreign relations was influenced by the fact that the country was a borderland between the capitalist world and the Soviet Union, and difficulties in Romanian foreign policy were also created by the policy of concessions of the great western powers towards Germany (MacKenzie 1985:447).

The most important moment in Romanian foreign affairs appears to be the signing of the Kellogg-Briand Pact on 27 August 1928, when fifty states joined together to settle all the differences among them by peaceful means. Romania's position in this pact resonated with "its speedy enforcement" of the pact. In this pact the signatory states aimed to

Contribute to the safeguarding of peace between these countries and to put into force without delay between the peoples of these countries the Treaty of Paris concluded on August 27, 1928, whereby war ceased to be an instrument of the national policy (MacKenzie 1985:449).

In spite of the Romanian delaying habit to ratify before the Parliament treaty, the Romanian Parliament had unanimously ratified this protocol. According to MacKenzie(1985), Germany withdrew from the League of Nations on 14 October 1933 and from this time on Germany's relations with other states began to deteriorate since Germany demanded that "the German colonial empire should be built again" (MacKenzie 1985:461). Romanian independence was threatened also by the ascension and consolidation of the Nazi regime since Romania feared a potential rapprochement

between Germany and countries that had irredentism claims. MacKenzie (1985) argues that in this critical time, “it was necessary for Romania to evolve an independent foreign policy” since in addition to Germany, Italy and Hungary began the consolidation of fascism therefore, the need for collective security grew concomitantly with the power and chances of these countries to decide the destiny of Europe. MacKenzie (1985) also suggests that “Romania promoted peace in this part of Europe and acted with determination within international bodies in defense of the European *status quo*, and for an understanding among nations, for disarmament and collective security in Europe” (MacKenzie 1985:461).⁷¹

As it was noted, Romania kept close cooperation with France and Britain despite their inconsistencies in supporting Romania. When France, Britain, Italy and Germany drafted the Quadripartite Pact inspired by Mussolini, Romania expressed its disappointment and condemned their act as “a gross infringement of the League of Nations Charter” (MacKenzie 1985:463). Due also to the rapprochement between the U.S.S.R and France, Romania considered that it was the time for it to take this matter further with Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia in order to bring their diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union back to normal. In 1934, the Romanian-Soviet rapprochement was created which was going to serve as a mutual observance of national independence and sovereignty. The difference this time was that the Soviets postponed signing this mutual assistance pact continuing to maintain “good neighborly relations.” On 9 February 1934 Romania, Greece, Yugoslavia and Turkey signed a Balkan Pact, for the purpose of

Mutually guaranteeing the security of the Balkan frontiers and engaging not to undertake any political action towards another non-signatory Balkan state without the mutual advice of the other signatories, and not

⁷¹ Italics in original.

to assume any political obligation to any other Balkan State without bringing it to the knowledge of the other parties (MacKenzie 1985:464).

The objectives of this treaty were to fight against the plots of the revisionist states. When Germany annexed Austria in March 1938, Romania knew that its economic position was in jeopardy since its commerce with Britain and France was done mainly through Austria. Also, when Czechoslovakia was invaded by Germany, Romania knew that not only did this terminate the existence of the Little Entente but also it deprived Romania of a very important ally who was one of its main armament suppliers. The isolationism that Germany caused Romania, forced Romania to begin economic agreements with Germany.

In 1939 MacKenzie (1985) argues that basically these “onerous treaties subordinated Romania’s economy and policy to the aggressive interests of Germany” (MacKenzie 1985:470). While under the German influence, Romania attempted to consolidate its system of alliances and create fulcrums against the political and economic encirclements of the fascist states. It sought to strengthen its relations with Greece and Turkey which seemed more equipped to resist the Nazi aggression in South-East Europe. At the same time, Russia concluded with Germany an economic convention and a non aggression pact deteriorating in this manner more of Romania at the beginning of the Second World War.

4.7 Romania’s “Informal Neutrality” Behavior during World War II (1939-1945)

It is imperative to note at this point in this examination that the Second World War had various and profound consequences for the Romanian territorial integrity that was threatened now by Germany and the countries who wanted the peace treaties reviewed.

Romania appears to follow the same diplomatic defensive behavior when approaching war as it certainly did in the First World War. The only difference in this instance consists of: the stand of neutrality of Romania which was not voluntarily announced but rather it was imposed on Romania who was basically forced to draw closer to the Reich in order to counterbalance the threat posed by the Russia.

Due to the isolationism imposed by the Germans, Romania was forced to proclaim its neutrality on 4 September 1939. Hoping to reverse some of the provisions of the Treaty of the Versailles enacted at the end of the First World War, Nazi Germany became an ally of Fascist Italy and Japan. Meanwhile, Russia was thinking a way to pursue a kind of territorial and political rearrangements with Germany in Europe. They signed in this sense the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact on 24 August 1939 that was supposed to be a Nazi-Soviet rapprochement that guaranteed a peaceful settlement between the two powers. In these circumstances, Romania was forced to become an ally of Germany since Romanian King Carol II, a romantic adventurist King who succeeded the throne Ferdinand I and Queen Marie and was an admirer of popular fascist leaders of the Iron Guard and Adolf Hitler.

Romanian history portrays Carol II in a negative image. According to historians like Treptow (1996), he heavily exerted his control over Romanian democratic political system and managed when he encountered the opposition parties in 1938 in Romania, to establish a royal dictatorship, replacing the quasi-democratic parliamentary system. After the Hitler-Stalin Pact, Russia forcibly occupied Bessarabia and the northern part of Bukovina [a territory not even mentioned in the Pact that had never been part of Russia and Ukraine] (Treptow 1996:16). After a few weeks since the Diktat of Vienna, Romania

was forced to cede to Hungary northern Transylvania, where Romanians made up the majority of the population in this region. All of this territorial loss, in addition to the Quadrilateral that was supposed to go to Bulgaria made Carol II abdicate in favor of his son Michael I,⁷² however, the damage was too great for Romania to recover easily. The German instrumentalization grew larger within the term of Romanian General Ion Antonescu and the formation of a new government on 4 September 1941 with the help of the German military. Supposedly the German military was instrumental in assuring control since a short civil war erupted between Legionaries [the regent council that ruled Romania while Carol II renounced to his throne in favor of his son Michael who was only six years old] and the Romanian military.

MacKenzie (1985) argues that “without any foreign support, Romania saw her territory reduced in the summer of 1940 and was compelled to submit to Nazi Germany” (MacKenzie 1985:472). On 22 June 1941, Romania entered the war on the Nazi side against the Soviet Union. This moment in history marked the time when Romania was finally drawn into the anti-Soviet war. Romania balanced the Russian threat with Germany. Based on Walt’s (1987) theoretical predictions, Romania did bandwagon with Germany. Eager again to secure its integrity Romania began to look up to its neighbors and also to this time proximate Hungary with whom it wanted to conclude a non-aggression pact. However, under preeminent war circumstances the Hungarian government rejected the Romanian proposal. MacKenzie (1985) notes that “in the autumn of 1939 Romanian government approached the Soviet Union and this time with a

⁷² Michael I (1940-1947) was also forced by the communists to abdicate. He lived in Geneva for a long time. He returned to Romania shortly after communism collapsed however, his comeback was unwelcome first when Ion Iliescu then Romanian President refused his entrance at the Otopeni airport in Bucharest. After two years he came back to Romania, claimed a good part of his lost land and continues to live with his family at the Savarsin Castle in Romania.

view to reaching an understanding” (MacKenzie 1985:473). Aware of its size and capabilities, Romania attempted to form a “block of neutral countries” in South-east Europe in order to confront the Germans.

In this sense Romania took Poland under its wing by helping it with war materials and refugee camps; things that contradicted Germany’s isolationist policies imposed on Romania. Despite the increased Romanian efforts to improve relationships with the neighboring countries, on 26 June 1940, both Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina were incorporated within the U.S.S.R. and two months later “alone, without any outside support, a prey to Nazi Germany and her allies, Romania had to submit to the onerous conditions of the Vienna Fascist Diktat at the end of August, 1940 and to cede northern Transylvania with over 2,500,000 inhabitants, most of them Romanian to the Hungarian Horthy” (MacKenzie 1985:475). The German occupation in Romania was harsh and dehumanizing from the sovereignty and economic through the political perspectives; since during this forced alliance with the Nazi Reich, Romania was supposed to voluntarily accept the fascist dictatorship.

Despite a few attempts to come out from the German subordination, Romania was unsuccessful until Russia came to its rescue to battle the fascist coalition. An armistice convention was signed in this sense in Moscow between the Soviet Union, Great Britain and the U.S. on the one hand and Romania on the other. In this armistice Romania pledged “at 4.00 a.m. on 24 August 1944, to cease entirely her military operations against the Soviets in all theatres of war, ceased to make war against the United Nations, severed relations with Germany and her satellites, join the war on the side of the Allied Powers

and fight against Germany and Hungary aiming to restore Romania's independence and sovereignty" (MacKenzie 1985:488).

With respect to forming alliances, and in this case on Romania joining the anti-fascist alliance, MacKenzie (1985) notes that on the evening of 23 August 1944 *BBC news* pointed out that "Romania's move would have marked effects..." while the United States radio station in Europe stated that "Henceforth Romania was a new ally in the United Nations camp for she asserted her will to join in the struggle against the common enemy" (MacKenzie 1985:489). Imperative for this study is to provide Mackenzie's (1985) take from *Le Figaro* who wrote that Romania had been the only country of Germany's satellites which had "not received any territories in exchange for its alliance, but on the contrary had been compelled to cede to Hungary one of its most fertile provinces-Northern Transylvania" (MacKenzie 1985:490).

It is interesting to note that in Romania the elites were instrumental in the changes of allies. According to MacKenzie (1985) on 24 August 1944 the *New York Herald Tribune* "showed that what was left of the sixth and eighth German armies, had been trapped between the Russians and the Romanians, the latter attacking the Germans from behind following the orders received from Bucharest; this was the second time that the Wehrmacht had had its sixth army trapped" (MacKenzie 1985:491). The consequences that Romania confronted when joining the anti-fascist coalition affected its military, strategic position, economic and its political participation internationally. Media captured that Romania made a decisive contribution to the victory of the Allied Powers and even the *Sunday Times* concluded that "Romania could be described as a keystone." On 10 October 1944 the head of the Soviet delegation to the Peace

Conference, W.M. Molotov declared that “we all know that Romania, by a decisive move, shook off Antonescu`s fascist regime and joined the Allies...Together with ourselves and with the Allied troops, the new democratic Romania engaged in the fight for Hitler`s defeat and made considerable sacrifices in that fight. We all recognize the services Romanian people have made for the cause...” (MacKenzie 1985:496).

At the conclusion of this section it is imperative to note that the political and military alliances initiated by Romania before and during the period of the two World Wars had at their core maintaining Romanian territorial integrity and its independence. As it could be inferred almost all alliances that were formed between the war periods were enacted with countries that had the same objectives as Romania, maintaining status quo, peace and security in Eastern Europe. A series of defensive alliances attempted at the outset of the Second World War were mainly against the revisionist states who wanted the peace treaties reviewed. Romania reached towards the small and medium countries that had an antirevisionist orientation. Traditional defensive alliances were renewed with Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.

Romania maintained its good relationships with France and Great Britain despite their sometimes unfavorable prescriptions towards Romania. Historians` opinions contrast vis-à-vis the Romanian alliance with the Reich.⁷³ Some argue for a “forced alliance” others argue that Romania pursued a policy of “informal neutrality” between the powers “influenced by the policies of their Polish and Yugoslav allies who were already accommodating themselves to the Growth of the German power” (Haynes 2000:20). The latter appears to suggest that Romania`s attempts to grow closer to Hungary and Russia

⁷³ See the discussion section of Dinu C. Giurescu “Romania During the Second World War* September 1, 1939-August 23, 1944,” in the book edited by Dinu C. Giurescu and Stephen Fischer-Galati.

when the France capitulation and Britain's defeat were big news on the continent were only speculations. Also it appears to incriminate the efforts made by Romania to finalize the Balkanic Pact in Athena on 9 February 1934 with Yugoslavia, Turkey and Greece whose main objective was maintaining the status quo in this region. In this context I begin examining Romanian behavior from the conclusion of Second World War until the Warsaw Pact.

4.7 Romania from the Conclusion of Second World War until the Warsaw Pact (1945-1955)

According to Treptow (1996), on 23 August 1944, Romania informed the Allies, the "Anglo-Saxons," that it was going to leave the War in spite of any costs. Historical facts collide whether the King of Romania was forced by the communists to abdicate or he made the decision that the Romanian clause was lost in favor of the communists. Treptow (1996) notes that "amid disputes over the proper course of action to withdraw from the war, King Mihai I ordered the arrest of Ion Antonescu and his collaborators on 23 August 1944 and declared war on Nazi Germany" (Treptow 1996:17).

This action ended with an armistice signed in Moscow on 12 September 1944 between Romania and the Allied Powers, represented by the Soviets. After the armistice, the Soviets orchestrated the installment of Petru Groza's communist government in Romania. Under the communist leadership a growing pro-Soviet wing was possible and as a result on 30 December 1947 the King of Romania, Mihai I, was forced by the communists to abdicate and with him the monarchy in Romania was abolished forever. The Soviet backed communist party took complete power and the process of Stalinization began. Among the leading Soviet backed reforms were forcible collectivization and the

annihilation of the historical parties.⁷⁴ Romanian history was rewritten in order to fit the Marxist ideology, and the orthography of the Romanian language was changed in order to appear more Slavic than Latin.

The treatment for the Romanian intellectuals was equally harsher and included a basic liquidation through two options to flee either into exile or die in the communists prisons. A complex of prisons, “the gulags” created in Romania after communists took over, engulfed hundreds of thousands of Romanians that opposed obeying the communist regime. The Communist Party reinvented itself with a more appealing popular name: the Communist Romanian Worker’s Party.⁷⁵ Important to note is that since 1948 until the end of the 1950s, Romanian cultural, political, social and economic sectors followed the “model and directives of the Kremlin, disregarding internal realities and the necessities of the country” (Treptow 1996:520). This period was marked by a continuous and forced Sovietization in a territory where Romanian traditional values were preserved despite various occupations.

The Soviet occupation proved to be one of the most destructive since it consummated all sectors. One positive aspect during the Soviet occupation in Romania was the death of Stalin, which allowed the collectivization process to continue at a slower pace while avoiding potential social unrest in the country. The struggle for power within the communist party intensified with the death of Stalin. From what Treptow (1996) notes, “Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, the successor of Groza’s communist backed government, after participating at Stalin’s funeral and trying to guess the intentions of the future Soviet leaders, understood that a fierce struggle was taking place in Moscow to

⁷⁴ The most important being the National Peasant Party and the National Liberal Party.

⁷⁵ Partidul Muncitoresc Roman.

succeed Stalin” (Treptow 1996:528). Apparently this was a valuable lesson for Dej to learn. At his return from Moscow he began practicing the lesson by listening to people’s concerns in order to avoid domestic unrests.

Forced loyalty was the attribute that characterized the Romanian alliance with Moscow and an increased isolationism was what characterized Romanian behavior with the west. During this time, a series of friendship treaties were signed by Romania with its proximate neighbors and a unique 20 year treaty based on mutual friendship and economic cooperation was signed with the USSR, due to the fact that Romania fought against the Soviet power during the Second World War (Treptow 1996:529). Around these circumstances, I begin reviewing the Romanian stance within the Warsaw Pact which was an international organization formed to guarantee, for the members of the pact, “independence, peace and security” in addition to “serve as an invincible barrier against the imperialist forces of aggression and revanche.”⁷⁶

4.8 Romanian Behavior within the Warsaw Pact (1955-1989)

Western historians like Treptow (1996) mention that the end of the Romanian-German alliance was marked by the fact that Ion Antonescu, the former Romanian General who served as the Romanian defense minister in 1938 and who was dismissed numerous times and even imprisoned by Carol, denounced the Romanian alliance with Germany when he believed that Germany could not defeat the Soviet Union and therefore, Romanian interests. At the conclusion of the Second World War, Romania was forced to accept not

⁷⁶ Citation according to Boris Messner, Die Breshnev-Doktrin and taken from Wilfried Loth (2001) “Moscow, Prague and Warsaw: Overcoming the Brezhnev Doctrine.” *Cold War History*, Vol. 1, No. 2.

only that Bessarabia and northern Bukovina became legitimate Soviet territories but also the status of the “aggressor” in contrast of what Romania had requested.

The Romanian request of “co-belligerent” status was based on the fact that Romania was for the most part an active participant to the Allies in the war against Germany (Treptow 1996:516). It appears interesting that after the war, the British and the Americans did not object to the Romanian treatment moreover, they encouraged it when Churchill met with Stalin at the beginning of October 1944 to reassure him about the British position regarding the Soviet predominance over Romania.

Relative to this treatment, Treptow (1996) captures a very interesting aspect regarding how the Romanian war participation ended. He mentions that “the Romanian efforts and its eighteen divisions provided in the fight against Germany were basically ignored while what was acknowledged was the Soviet political accommodation with the western Allies that appears to have taken precedence over international law and justice” (Treptow 1996:517). Important to consider is that the Sovietization of Romania began with the Petru Groza government that replaced the Antonescu Administration and served as a bridge to that of Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, a Soviet professionally formed leader who spent most of the time during the war in the Soviet Union.

Interesting from the Sovietization perspective is the fact that the military and the home land security was controlled mainly by the communists during the Groza government. Until the middle of the 1950s, Treptow (1996) mentions that the Romanian communist regime was loyal to that of Moscow [Stalin] averting in this way any contacts with the western world. After Stalin’s death, it appears that the rule of Nikita Khrushchev did not benefit from the same popularity especially when the Kremlin

imposed that Romania in addition to Bulgaria, Poland and Hungary were to focus on the agriculture sector while Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic and the Soviet Union were to continue the industrialization process.

Romania disapproved the Soviet indulged treatment and began discussions of a new coalition among Romania, Poland and Hungary in order to oppose the Kremlin's view. Thus, forcing diplomatically for the first time the Soviet Union to reconsider its plan. Progresses relative to territorial security were visible especially during the 1958 when after Dej's long persuasion, the Soviet Union agreed to withdraw its military troops from Romanian territory since no defense was now necessary especially when all Romanian borders were surrounded by communist states.

The moment of withdrawal of Soviet forces from Romanian territory is crucial and marks the period when Romania began to distance itself from the Soviet Union and orient its economic trading towards the west. Walt (1987) argues that when states feel secure they will begin forming alliances based on other instruments. With respect to Romanian-Soviet relations, Treptow (1996) notes that the drift between Romania and the U.S.S.R became even larger during the Sino-Soviet conflict when Romania offered to mediate or balance the conflict between China and the Soviet Union.

It is important to remark that the de-Sovietization process began in Romania during the Dej administration and it affected first all political prisoners. Dej continued these reforms by exchanging the Russian names given to the streets and cinema by western ones. From this perspective, Dej even appears to admit publicly during an important party conference, that "Moscow was responsible for all bad things that occurred in this country in the past twenty years" (Treptow 1996:532). After his death,

the Dej government was replaced by that of Nicolae Ceausescu in 1965 which changed the name of the country from the People's Republic to the Socialist Republic of Romania. Ceausescu continued the re-Latinization process started by Dej and began attacking the myth that the Russians "liberated" Romania on 23 August 1944 (Treptow 1996:534). Among the diplomatic actions that Ceausescu took in the international arena which subsequently contributed to enhancement of the Romanian prestige were Romanian

- (i) Refused to break diplomatic ties with Israel after the six-day war in the Middle East.
- (ii) Established diplomatic relations with the Federal Republic of Germany in 1967, at a time when no other socialist country had relations with Bonn.
- (iii) Allowed the Romanian Jewish Community to join the World Jewish Congress.
- (iv) Refused Romania taking part in troop exercises of the Warsaw Pact (Treptow 1996:539).

Dennis Deletant (2002), an expert English scholar in Romanian studies, argues that "Romania was cemented into the Soviet bloc from a military point seven years before the establishment in May 1955 of the Warsaw Treaty Organization (Deletant 2002: 7). In his recent work regarding Romania and its involvement in the Warsaw Pact, Deletant (2007) argues, based on military documents newly released from the Romanian archive that Nicolae Ceausescu refused to join the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 not because he was against this invasion but because "he was not invited by the Soviet Union to participate" (Deletant 2007:495). According to what Deletant (2007) takes from the military documents, Ceausescu thought it imperative to preserve in Poland the Socialist solidarity that began in 1981 to challenge the communist domination.

Apparently the documents that cover an important period from 1963 to 1989 contrast Ceausescu's position vis-à-vis the Pact and reveal that Ceausescu became an avid advocate of the intervention in Poland even during his last days in office because he

sought the efficacy of this Pact to preserve the Socialist solidarity.⁷⁷ Deletant (2007) suggests, vis-à-vis the Romanian position in the Warsaw Pact, that “satisfaction of Soviet security needs and the maintenance of ideological cohesion were the parameters that defined the Romanian position” (Deletant 2007:495). Deletant (2007) appears to believe that there was a significant difference between the ‘appearance and reality’.

The reality according to Deletant (2007) was that Romania tested the limits of behavior accepted by the Soviets when pursuing autonomy in foreign policy, and knew how to strategize its actions in order to not stir concerns at the Kremlin. With respect to defense policy, Romania created its own Patriotic Guard, a workers militia that benefited from a long legacy in Romania. By exploring the national sentiment, Deletant (2007) argues that Ceausescu gained legitimacy only in the eyes of the Romanian people by appealing to their national sentiments to rebel against the Soviets and not the other neighboring countries. Later however, the nationalism appeal proved detrimental and served as a mechanism of social control and preservation of personal dictatorship.

As noted in the previous section, after the conclusion of the Hungarian revolution Romania ceased being a loyal ally of the Soviet Union. The rift from the Kremlin was gradual and uneven. Shortly after the Soviet incremental withdraw of troops from Romania, “the underpinning of the Romanian regime, Gheorghiu-Dej approved the immediate introduction of stringent security measures in order to maintain the Communist Party’s control and to compensate for the Soviet loss” (Deletant 2002: 20). The measure taken by Gheorghiu-Dej was supposed to gradually reorient Romania away from the policies of Soviet Russia. Dej clearly refused to see Romania as the “Comecon

⁷⁷ See “Taunting the Bear’: Romania and the Warsaw Pact, 1963-89” by Dennis Deletant.

or ‘breadbasket’ for the industrialized members as East Germany and Czechoslovakia” (Deletant 2002: 21).

By refusing Khrushchev’s planning role, Romania avoided remaining a faithful supplier of raw materials to Moscow and put in jeopardy its economic situation at home. From the documents released by the Romanian military it appears clear that Romania was careful in preserving the “neutrality” role between the Soviets and China; apparently the “Romanian Workers Party tried to mediate and not intervene too much in others states` affairs, this appears evident when deciding to publish in Romania both the Soviet and the Chinese communiqués” (Deletant 2007:497). Also under Dej`s administration, Romanian military documents reveal that his actions went so far as to remove a good part of the KGB counselors from Romania.

Regarding the Romanian behavior and its participation in the Warsaw Pact it is important to underscore that Ceausescu systematically continued to pull Romania away from the Soviet influence however, he pulled Romania into a direction favorable to his own interests. Since the focus in this project is on the alliances, especially those formed under the pressure of threats, it is important to note that Romania started acquiring suspicions of Russian involvement in Romanian territorial affairs when during a stop-over in Moscow on the return from China; Khrushchev formally raised the question of territorial revision in Transylvania.⁷⁸ The question of Transylvania, as this chapter tries to emphasize, is one of special importance for Romania.

Within the Warsaw Pact, Romania established an autonomous position that was advocated even during the numerous congresses when Ceausescu argued purposefully that Romanian national interest was above the Warsaw Pact’s militaristic requirements.

⁷⁸ See Verona, *Military Occupation and Diplomacy*, page 101.

It appears evident that Romania wanted not to be considered part of the Soviet policy when during the Cuban missile crises, the Romanian government informed the U.S. that “in any conflict, Romania will remain neutral” especially since Romania was not informed vis-à-vis the missile placement. In exchange of this Romania wanted from the U.S. assurance that “in the event of hostilities arising from the missile crises, the U.S. would not strike Romania on the mistaken assumption that it would be allied with the Soviet Union” (Deletant 2007:497).

Romania distinguished itself in the context that its commitment to the Warsaw Pact became annulated when the actions of the Soviet leadership went above the Romanian territorial security, although an alliance with the U.S. to balance Russian threats would have been welcomed by Romania if the U.S. had initiated it. Perhaps due to the increased Soviet domination of the Warsaw Pact the egotistic Romanian figure felt insecure when it saw that all ‘its command, policy making, and decision making’ rested with Moscow. Ceausescu criticized Russia’s influence in the Pact and proposed a rotation in decision making from the non Soviet member states. Since Russia was deaf to the Romanian request, Ceausescu suspended its military forces under the Warsaw Pact’s joint command. When Russia invaded Czechoslovakia in the spring of 1968, Romania refused to allow Bulgarian military forces to cross its territory as well as declined Russia’s request to join the Soviet led Warsaw Pact invasion in Czechoslovakia.

Romania condemned the invasion and acknowledged Czechoslovakia’s autonomy. Russia on the other had continued to intimidate Romania by conducting military exercises along Romanian borders with Bulgaria and Hungary. After the Czechoslovakian invasion, the Warsaw Pact was practically invalid for Romania.

However, fearful of Russia's threats and in order to protect itself, Romania began to invest in its own military forces. On the logistic side, Romania oriented itself towards strengthening relationships with China that was from the domestic politics perspective much closer than Great Britain for instance. Romania's role in the Warsaw Pact alliance was mainly diplomatic which increasingly denounced Russia's initiatives to achieve tighter military integration within the Warsaw Pact.

Romania refused to support the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan and publicly opposed Soviet intentions from 1983 to deploy ballistic missiles in East Germany and Czechoslovakia to counter NATO. It is interesting to note that Romanian withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact was not complete because of the Russian consequences, although Romania had completely withdrawn from the military exercises and from supporting the Russian territories greed.

Despite Romania's diplomatic attempts to call for more consultation and more communality when making decisions, Russia continued to rise as a threat to Romanian sovereignty and this can be clearly seen in Romania's actions in not permitting Russian troops to cross Romanian territories, even for a simple exercise. Romania was afraid that during the military exercise Russia would attempt, as it did in Czechoslovakia, to maintain the presence of the military troops. Moreover, Ceausescu was terrified when his foreign intelligence service informed him regarding the decision made in Crimea by the Soviets at a meeting of the Warsaw Pact heads of state in July 1964 where Ceausescu was not invited, that discussions were whether or not to occupy Romania as well as Czechoslovakia on 22 August.⁷⁹ This, in addition to the Soviet plot to replace him with a leader more sympathetic to Russia, was enough to influence Romania to take the Russian

⁷⁹ See Deletant footnote number 19 from "Romania, 1948-1988: A Historical Overview."

threat very seriously (Deletant 2007:500). It appears evident based on Romanian historical record and “its less strategic location” that future alliances attempted by Romania will be based more on threats to territorial security than on aims to become a member of the European Union since Romania did not border any NATO state. A particular behavior appears recurring since the acknowledgement of Romanian independence and it has to do with maintaining the status quo.

What it is interesting about this behavior is that it catches more contours during the Ceausescu period although it tends to repeat itself. Ceausescu tried to keep Romania distinct from the Russian influence and to advocate internationally for “no external involvement in the domestic affairs of others.” This appears to guide his decision during the Polish crisis of 1980 when the Leonid Brezhnev administration demanded military intervention. Romania was the only country that participated in that meeting who refused to agree on military intervention. Moreover, according to Deletant’s (2007) reviewed documents, Ceausescu appears to disregard the Soviet threats regarding NATO’s “preparations for defending Western Europe that was supposedly going to increase the risks for the peace and security of all countries within the socialist community” (Deletant 2007:501).

Based on the memorandum drawn by the Soviets, Ceausescu reduced the military expenditure 5 per cent and began the withdrawal of certain military units deployed on the foreign territories. It is also very interesting to note that Ceausescu appears to take Russia for granted in various situations, confident perhaps of the fact that the Romanian people were ready to back his ambitions up. Romanian behavior within the Warsaw Pact modulates that of balancing, which according to Walt (1987) is induced by external

threats and it becomes visible during the peace times. Romania balanced against Russian threats by seeking the approval of western powers. The beneficial situation in Romania appears to revert in the 1980s during the austerity period when Ceausescu insisted on becoming extremely independent and pay the entire amount of foreign debts, an act that put an incredible hardship on the Romanian population.

During that time “many Romanian people wondered whether the autonomy was worth the price” (Deletant 2007:503). Since food was scarce and communist discipline was higher, Deletant (2007) argues that the Romanian population had experienced very differently the two close visits of Mikhail Gorbachev from March 1985 and May 1987. Apparently, Gorbachev’s ‘glasnost’⁸⁰ and ‘perestroika’⁸¹ concepts shook Ceausescu’s cult of personality that began developing during his term in the Politburo.⁸² Due to the scarce food, limited access to electricity, water, heavy control on the media and greater communist discipline, the Romanian people discontented with Ceausescu’s repayment strategy were looking forward to receiving Gorbachev and his reforms of modernization.

Although people expressed a positive attitude towards his message, Ceausescu appeared worried about the entire speech given by Gorbachev and promptly argued that he had already applied the reforms advocated by Gorbachev in Romania. However, they appeared to be incompatible with Communist society; moreover, since Gorbachev did not consult Ceausescu about his policies in advance, Ceausescu had an excuse not to apply Romania in ‘perestroika’ and ‘glasnost’. Deletant (2007) captures, in his consultation on the primary data, that Ceausescu was reluctant to change which was especially visible in equipping the military force. He relied heavily on the old electronics, for instance,

⁸⁰ Gorbachev’s policy of media openness.

⁸¹ Russian for “restructuring,” Gorbachev’s proposals to reform the Soviet economy.

⁸² “Political bureau,” small, top governing body of most Communist parties.

claiming that they were more reliable and there was no need to “spend money on materials which deteriorate” (Deletant 2007:504). This may indicate the reason that after Ceausescu’s regime collapsed, Romania possessed huge and outdated military equipment and perhaps this too accentuated the obsession of forming an alliance with NATO since Romania became afraid that in case of an attack from Russia or other neighboring country, it could not defend itself. The fact that in Poland members of Solidarity advanced to the Polish government increased Ceausescu’s insecurities to hold on to the Romanian people as a piece of property. Since Gorbachev expressed his wishes to reform the Warsaw Pact and to refrain from using ‘the use of force or the threat of force’, Ceausescu’s aim to prevent socialism in Poland did not materialize.

According to Deletant`s (2007) take on the Romanian military archive documents, it appears clear that 1989 was the year when Ceausescu returned to Brezhnev’s doctrine and began advocating the perseverance of the socialism solidarity so avidly that the Hungarian administration could not abstain from replying that it was in contradiction with the principles that Romania tried to advance; “non-interference in the internal affairs, the sovereignty, [and] the relation between the socialist countries” (Deletant 2007:504). Since this message was identified as coming in 1989 from the Hungarian administration, careful attention is required in this area due to the fact that the communist regime started to fall down like dominos in central Europe.

Many argue that the Stalinist regime which Ceausescu started to create in Romania was the result of the infiltration in politics of his wife Elena Ceausescu because of his frequent illnesses. It is hoped that a clear idea regarding how Romania behaved during the domination of three great empires, two world wars and peaceful times had

emerged. In this context, begins the fourth section of this chapter where the aim is to link the patterns of alliance formation with Stephen Walt's (1987) theory and to determine whether any changes in alliance behavior occurred from the Romanian independence through the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact in 1990.

4.9 Examining Romanian Behavior in Forming Alliances (1878-1990)

Since 1878 when Romania became an independent state it is demonstrated in this analysis that almost all of the alliances formed by Romania and surveyed for this examination were constructed on political and military grounds. Historical evidence underscores that often economic incentives were promised by Romania to the guaranteeing powers in exchange for their consent of Romania's independence [e.g. the trade treaty with the Habsburg Empire]. Territorial integrity and security were the main objectives on which alliances were always attempted. As this analysis highlights, Romania "could not by any means forget the blood relations between people living in the kingdom's principalities and the *subjects* from under the Austria-Hungary or Russian Empires" (Petrescu-Comnene 2000: 21).⁸³

Historians argue that in establishing alliances Romania sought mainly friendship, the guarantee for common frontiers and peace in the Balkan region. Numerous times Romania called upon France, Great Britain and Italy to help fight against Russia's wrongness or the German threat. France was one of the powers admired most by Romania and one that helped improve Romanian image abroad the most.⁸⁴ Romania's intervention in the war on the side of the Allies can be justified not in terms of conquest

⁸³ Italics in original.

⁸⁴ Some even argue that "nowhere in the world is France better loved than in Romania" (Petrescu-Comnene 2000:68).

but rather in terms of a defensive basis. For instance, when it joined the Triple Alliance, Romania aimed to defend the Allied states against attacks coming from outside and to gain the military support necessary in the event of Russia's incursions into the Balkans. However, when the Romanian status-quo was destroyed, Romania changed its position and helped to restore the balance of power as well as to correct the errors made by the Congress of Berlin when Bessarabia which is believed to be 'the richest soil in Europe' was given to Russia.

When Romania decided to go against Austria-Hungary, it was because Romania saw no loyalty in their actions, especially when they instigated the war and refused to notify Romania regarding their war intentions. Evidently these insecurities began to grow, so in this context "instead of a group of states that, through their common efforts were supposed to work together to maintain peace and the balance of power, new forces appeared that were at war with one another" (Petrescu-Comnene 2000:20). Since Austria-Hungary posed an imminent threat to the national interests of Romania, Romania took the liberty to act into its own hands and began to work towards the Romanian future and security by joining those who were able to provide it with security and to assure its national unity. Increased attention needs to be given to the context where Romanian tendencies in forming alliances begin to contour. When moving away from Austria-Hungary, Romania declared that

Our expectations concerning our adherence to the Triple Alliance were betrayed. For over thirty years, the Romanians living in Austria-Hungary have not seen any kind of reform, even superficial, to satisfy them; they have been treated as an inferior nation, condemned to bear the tyranny of a foreign element that constitutes only a minority among the many component nationalities of the Austria-Hungarian state (Petrescu-Comnene 2000:21).

Expectations appear to be among the factors that prompted Romania to change its position against the Austria-Hungary Empire. Later on, Romania will face the same dilemma with Russia, only in this case expectation and ‘threats’ will have an equal weight. From what was examined it appears clear that Romania did not follow too closely the advice given by the Iron Chancellor in 1868 “to maintain good relations with all neighbors and *wait, patiently*, for the ripe fruits of the European tree to fall by themselves on the table..., to *maintain* good relations with both sides and, as a last resort, if everything else fails, to join those forces whose victory seems certain” (Petrescu-Comnene 2000:68).⁸⁵

Indeed a lot of persuasion was necessary for Romania to enter the war but when it saw the imminence of the German threat inside its borders, Romania did not hesitate to take part in its extinction. Although it has been clearly presented in this examination that Romania could not participate equally in the war since it lacked modern warfare equipment. Romania appears to form a pattern of alliance with Czechoslovakia who was Romania’s most important war material supplier and it appears to sincerely defend Czechoslovakia’s interests until the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact.

It is imperative to note that among the Balkanic interests, Romania always followed its own interests by listening to “the nation’s soul.” A good example is constituted in the case of the Romanian King Ferdinand, who was German by birth but decided to continue on the alliance path with the Entente, letting in this way “the Latin blood and vocation to prevail over his personal interests.” Romania walked in the alliance path next to England, France, Italy and Russia. The fact that Romania declared war on Austria-Hungary, Germany, Bulgaria and later when Turkey declared war on

⁸⁵ Italics in original.

Romania basically illustrates why Romania always felt despised by its neighbors, and perhaps why it decided after 35 years of communism to go back to its most loyal friends in the west despite their lasting sympathies for Hungary.

If during the First World War, Romania was blessed to be ruled by King Ferdinand and his interests, during the Second World War since both Germany and the Soviet Union re-emerged as major political actors, Romania was “pressured” by King Carol to choose Germany against the Soviets. The Soviet treatment was already known by Romania and despite that, in 1934 the Romanian government established full diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, despite that the question of Bessarabia remained unresolved with this power.

After the advice of the Romanian King Carol, the Romanian government was forced to begin the alliance discussions with Germany and maintain its neutrality towards the Reich until Germany managed to disregard Romanian territorial integrity and to pose, during 1939, the growing military threat within Romanian territorial borders. Due to this threat, Romania’s entry into the war on the Axis side was justified. Despite the fact that Romania was protected by a series of regional alliances like that with Poland against the Soviets, or that of the Little Entente and Balkan Entente against Hungary and Bulgaria respectively, Romania felt insecure. Throughout this examination it is visible also that Romania sought to retain its traditional alliances and good relationship with the west despite that, for instance with Great Britain, Romania had never signed a formal alliance, but since Great Britain was one of the guarantors in the League of Nations, it was tacitly assumed that cordial relations existed between these countries. Rebecca Haynes (2000) finds it interesting that three factors prompted Romania to seek the friendship of the

Reich and that these three factors remained central to the Romanian-German relationship throughout the period of 1936 to 1940. She argues that first was the economic collaboration factor that prompted Romania to attain, through Germany, its hegemonic role in Europe as it did before the First World War. Second, “was the question of the Hungarian revisionism factor,” through which Romania hoped to earn German sympathy first since it was a rising power in Europe, in order to urge Germany not to support the Hungarian revisionist claims (Haynes 2000:169).

Here again it appears clear that Romania follows the same motive of territorial integrity in pursuing alliances. In exchange for this service Romania agreed to maintain its neutrality by not entering any anti-German coalitions and not extending any of its alliances against Germany. As it was previously underscored, Romania followed the same path until its status-quo was in jeopardy, as was the case when Romania became aware of the Nazi support towards the Hungarian revisionism. The third factor according to Haynes (2000) was fear of the rising power of the Soviet Union. Haynes (2000) suggests that “the Soviet Union was not only perceived as an ideological threat to the Romanian monarchy, but also as a military threat to Bessarabia” (Haynes 2000:169).

Performing a diplomatic role in the Balkans, Romania thought it necessary to counter-balance with Germany against the Soviet Union. Boia (1993) notes, interestingly, that Hitler assured Antonescu’s government that “after the conflict was over Romania would receive indemnities which as far as Germany was concerned, had no territorial limitations” (Boia 1993:312).⁸⁶ Romanian reasoning in the alliance with Germany as Haynes (2000) suggests was one of the “head rather than the heart.”

⁸⁶ “No territorial limitations” could have included Bessarabia, northern Bukovina, Transnistria-a Romanian inhabited region, northern Transylvania, the Yugoslav Banat, and other regions inhabited by Romanians.

Although the loss of Bessarabia was to be permanent, Romania managed to recuperate the whole of Transylvania at the end of the Second World War. Haynes (2000) very clearly states that “although there were times when Romanian foreign-policy options were severely limited, as in the summer of 1940, Romania played its diplomatic cards with astuteness during the first half of the twenty-first century by never accepting the role of a mere pawn of the Great Powers” (Haynes 2000:180).

The path of alliances illustrated by the Romanian case during the First World War indicates great interest towards the preservation of its territorial integrity. Evidence discussed in this examination suggests that even during the Second World War, Romanian strategy was to retain neutrality or equilibrium between the Great Powers. Factors like “distance, climate, and the fear of awakening the Russian instinct of self-preservation by menacing their capital” appear to support Stephen Walt` (1987) balance of threat theory and it is intriguing to see to what extent this evidence will support his hypotheses. It is very compelling also from this perspective to answer the question: did Romania follow the same pattern of behavior in the alliance formation with NATO? After decades of history, it is fascinating to determine if and what changes have been made in the Romanian behavior when forming alliances.

Walt (1987) predicts that “when confronted with an external threat, states may balance or bandwagon” (Walt 1987:17). Due to its geographical setting Romania confronted the occupation of three empires. After obtaining its independence in 1878, Romania was reluctant to form any alliances with Russia since it did not trust Russia. However, when the Ottomans started to regain strength Romania, afraid of Ottoman domination, reluctantly formed “a written agreement” with Russia that was supposed to

be kept by the Russians.⁸⁷ In the Waltian perspective, this illustrates a bandwagoning behavior since Romania made an agreement with the source of danger: Russia. Romania did not have a choice but to ally with “the principal external threat” that was Russia who began to gain influence in Europe at that time.

Walt (1987) was right when predicting that “security will be scarce” when bandwagoning behavior occurs. Neutrality was the most frequent behavior that Romania adopted in times of preminent wars. As noted, its military was weak, disorganized and less equipped. However, even in these conditions Romania took precautionary measures to prepare “just in case” Russia decided to leave its troops on Romanian territories. Even bandwagoning with Russia, in the Russo-Ottoman war, Romania believed that it alone won its independence, since it fought alone to eliminate the Turks from the Romanian borders. By allying with the stronger side Romania did not benefit from greater influence, and this was demonstrated at the Berlin Congress when important Romanian territories were incorporated by Russia. This appears to support Walt’s (1987) assertion that “allying with the stronger side gives the new member little influence because it adds relatively less to the coalition” (Walt 1987:19).

A very important point to make is that all the secret treaties signed by Romania with its neighbors became void when the Romanian status-quo was in jeopardy. It is important also to note that all the evidence regarding these alliances account for Walt’s (1987) hypotheses, however, some in a more compelling manner for a particular hypothesis than the other. Walt (1987) suggests that “when states are prone to bandwagoning, alliances are extremely fragile” (Walt 1987:21). More importantly, he

⁸⁷ Parenthetically noted, this might be one of the reasons that Romania always asks that the “international law” be followed when recognizing states sovereignties.

suggests that “a decline in a state’s relative power will lead its allies to opt for neutrality” (Walt 1987:20). As this historical evidence suggests, Romania was prone to neutrality since it was better to remain in anonymity than to ally with a threat like Russia from whom it did not know what to expect. The succession of bandwagoning behavior continues with the Triple Alliance, when disappointed with Russia, Romania asked the Central Powers for help.

In this instance Romania became an ally of “the greatest threat” Austria-Hungary who had occupied Transylvania at that time. Again, Romania pledged to be loyal and not enter into other alliances against the signatory powers. However, when the opportunity came to regain its territories under foreign domination, Romania switched positions to Russia in order to gain Transylvania despite the fact that Bassarabia was under Russian occupation. Another characteristic prevalent in the Romanian case is “going back to Russia.” Starting the First World War next to the Entente and signing a series of secret treaties with the members of alliances did not help Romania much when the Day of Judgment with the Great Powers arrived.

Due to its size and perhaps due to its fluctuating history, Romania emerges in this analysis as ‘a lost and confused traveler in a busy and loud intersection’. Apparently, there were lesser circumstances when Romania remained faithful to one decision. Its vulnerability was always “territorial integrity or Greater Romania.” Walt (1987) rightly predicts that “bandwagoning is dangerous because it increases the resources available to a threatening power and requires placing trust in its continued forbearance” (Walt 1987:29). When times for decisions occurred to either surrender or remain loyal to an alliance that lost purpose, Romania adopted a skeptical attitude trying to form secret

agreements with its proximate neighbors. After the conclusion of the First World War, disappointed by Russian actions, Romania inquired among its neighbors whether any would come to its rescue against the Soviets; the answer came back negative. Preventive, insecure and undecided are three attributes that fit the Romanian profile. Unhappy with the peace treaties, Bulgaria and Hungary maintained a distance from Romania. In this view, Romania took advantage of any opportunities; they even considered intermarriage alliances in order to assure its defensive alliances.

So far the most common behavior adopted by Romania is bandwagoning which is usually a typical for small and weak states as Walt (1987) predicted. It is important to remark that responses from the superpowers regarding Romanian wishes in almost all instances were detrimental to Romania. This perhaps had to do with the fact that Romania was a small state and all the time had the same problem: to assure recognition of territorial unity. Romania took whatever territories were recognized by the Berlin Congress, or whatever status the Great Powers allowed Romania to have.⁸⁸

The sources of threat conceptualized by Walt (1987) such as: aggregate power, geographic proximity, offensive power and aggressive intentions induced on Romania a bandwagoning behavior. Regarding the origins of alliances in Romania, the historical record on Romania reveals: (i) external threats are the most frequent cause of forming alliances, (ii) fears of territorial division, status quo and territorial loss often convoluted around Transylvania rather than Bessarabia. With respect to Romanian behavior, Romania bandwagoned most times with threats such as Russia and the Triple Alliance during the First World War. The alliance with Germany during the Second World War can constitute an example of balancing only when it is perceived from the perspective

⁸⁸ E.g., the status of a country with “special interests” at Paris Peace Conference on January 18, 1919.

that Romania allied with Germany against the prevailing threat Hungary who wanted the peace treaties to be reviewed.

The fear again was for Transylvania because this was a Hungarian irredentism claim. Also, fears emerged from Russia's actions of postponing signing the mutual assistance pact of "good neighborly relations" and the return of Bessarabia to Romanian territory in addition to rumors of a rapprochement with Hungary of an offensive against Romania. So in this case Walt's (1987) prediction that "states balance against threats" is supported by evidence. More importantly, Walt (1987) suggested parenthetically that

States are more likely to balance in peacetime or in the early stages of war as they seek to deter or defeat the powers posing the greatest threat. But once the outcome appears certain, some will be tempted to defect from the losing side at an opportune moment. Thus, both Romania and Bulgaria allied with Nazi Germany initially and then abandoned Germany for the Allies, as the tides of war ebbed and flowed across Europe in World War II (Walt 1987:31).

It is important to remark that threats to economic prosperity affected the Romanian decision to approach Germany at that time since Germany, after annexing Austria in March 1938, isolated Romanian exports with Britain and France. According to Treptow (1996), Romanian King Carol II made a personal rapprochement with Germany since Poland, an important ally of Romania, turned toward Germany diminishing for Romania the possibility of collaboration for maintaining the status-quo.

Treptow (1996) notes, that "Carol II discussed with Adolf Hitler the potential of strengthening economic relations between Germany and Romania" (Treptow 1996:464). Germany in this case sought Romania as an ally because it wanted to "achieve the economic subordination of Romania." Based on this analysis, it is expected that Romania balanced with NATO by joining forces with dominant powers that threatened Romania. It is expected also that Romania bandwagoned, by foreseeing an alliance with

NATO in the absence of other potential allies and to aim to become an ally of NATO believing that the threat to its territorial security could be appeasable. From Walt's (1987) perspective, it is expected that Romania fits the profile of a weak state that is more vulnerable to pressure and can do very little to determine its own fate. Also based on Russia's historical record and its political turn in the 1990s Romania is expected more likely to bandwagon with its threats since useful allies are unavailable. Regarding ideology, aid and political penetration it is important to note that Romanian royals were descendents from the Sigmaringen dynasty from Germany and some of them became kings of Romania in very mysterious ways.

Carol I of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen (1866-1914) was installed prince and king in Romania "against the wishes of the Great Powers who refused to recognize the union of Moldavia and Wallachia" (Treptow 1996:62). Under his ruling Romania secretly joined the Triple Alliance and opposed to enter into war on the side of the Triple Alliance despite the alliance concluded in 1883. He switched to Entente promising to maintain a "benevolent neutrality in exchange for recognizing Romanian claims to Transylvania and parts of Bukovina" (Treptow 1996:63). Ferdinand I of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen was king of Romania (1914-1927) and the nephew of Carol I; he favored the Entente Powers. Under his ruling Romania achieved its unity in 1918. Carol II of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen was the oldest son of King Ferdinand I and Queen Marie.

His legacy on Romania speaks about his adventurist-romantic escapades and replacement of the quasi-democratic parliamentary system with a royal dictatorship (Treptow 1996:431). His legacy also speaks about greater support for Germany in exchange for support against the Soviet threats. More regarding Romanian behavior

during the Second World War is captured by Treptow (1996). He notes that when “Carol’s new government declared Romania’s intention to join the Axis, he renounced the British territorial guarantees of April 1939, withdrew Romania from the League of Nations, and then threw himself and Romania on Hitler’s mercy” (Treptow 1996:469).

As noted, elite’s affinities like those of the Romanian dynasty did not play a significant role in forming alliances. However, their placement in Romania can be considered instrumental. Based on Romanian historical records it is expected that in the alliance with NATO elite’s ideology to not play a significant role until Romania felt secure enough to think about pursuing an alliance based on similar ideologies. As Walt (1987) contends “ideological solidarity is less important than external threats as a cause of alliance” (Walt 1987:266). With respect to foreign aid and political penetration Walt (1987) suggests that “the provision of foreign assistance and the establishment of extensive contact” results after security stability is achieved as the context of the Romania-NATO alliance is going to underscore.

CHAPTER 5: THE ALLIANCE ROMANIA - NATO

5.1 The Return To The Western Identity (1990-To The Present)

The purpose in this chapter is to examine whether Romania swerved from its alliances formation trend when it formed the alliance with NATO. It will be interesting, in this sense, to learn whether the Romanian choice to join NATO was made from the elites desire to return Romania to its western identity, from eagerness of democratization or from historical fears of territorial insecurities. This chapter begins by addressing the westernization perspective followed by an analysis regarding Romanian concerns of democratization and territorial integrity. A brief conclusion will accentuate what interests preoccupied Romania during the 1990s.

Regarding Romanians and their western affinity, Elizabeth Pond (2001) suggests, that “if one wants to discover whether a modern English or Italian word really originated in Latin, the best test is to see if it exists in Romanian” (Pond 2001:39). Before going into details about the competing perspectives regarding the concept of western identity, it is important to remember first that at the collapse of the communist regime in 1989 for westerners, Romania was a country hard to identify on the world map and associated more perhaps with *Dracula* or the gymnastics field.⁸⁹ It is also important to remark that during the last decade of Nicolae Ceausescu’s dictatorial regime Romania was confronted with greater political and economic isolationism.

However, in 1975 after denouncing the Russian invasion in Czechoslovakia, from the spring of 1968 Romania obtained the status of “Most Favored Nation” (MFN) with the U.S., Romania was not able to keep this status very long, since money and trade

⁸⁹ Emphasis added.

benefits coming from the west were given in exchange for other Romanian concessions. The MFN⁹⁰ status conferred upon Romania the opportunity to trade with the U.S., to pursue a foreign policy independent of what Moscow imposed on the rest of Eastern Europe and “to improve the human rights conditions for the Romanian population, especially in the sector of emigration towards the west that was carefully controlled and very restricted by the communist regime” (Pilon 1985:1). Since reports on these requirements, often inquired by the U.S., were mostly inconclusive due to the scarce information received from Romania, the U.S. Administration became suspicious and requested a thorough investigation of the Romanian situation. Although the American Administration was looking for a “hole in the Iron Curtain,” it was unacceptable for them to continue to subsidize monetarily and economically a communist dictatorship that was not living up to its promises.

Afraid of the upcoming results, Ceausescu’s cabinet took action and refused the Congressional investigation of the Romanian human rights record and declined the status of MFN on 29 February, 1988 mainly because rumors were spreading that the U.S. Congress would not renew Romanian status due to the increased human rights violations by the Ceausescu regime.⁹¹ Because Romania’s energy supplies were shrinking and that the country now had to import oil during the 1980s, it appears relevant that these factors coerced Romania to reorient its foreign policy more towards the east; to either the Middle East [especially Iraq] or to Soviet Russia. As noted before, the cultural aspect for Romanians was inhibited as was the economic one. Romanians were deprived of developing a liberal view towards things as they happened in the west. The Sovietization

⁹⁰ A status that gives a nation the same low tariffs the U.S. gives to its best trading partners.

⁹¹ See “Romania Asks U.S. For Trade Privileges.” *The Associated Press*, 9 January 1990.

process in Romania was long enough to deprive the Romanian population of its identity and values. Increased attention was given to the Russian language and Russian doctrine than to Shakespeare or Voltaire. Moreover, the cult of personality and the indoctrination imposed by the Ceausescu regime on Romanian nationalism to gain popular support proved detrimental to the Romanian culture as a whole. “Severe state control over artistic, cultural activities, education and press” fueled the development of a communist ideology that naturalized most of the Romanian institutions that made Romania famous during the 1960s (Treptow 1996:544).⁹²

After the collapse of the communist regime, Romania appears to demand its return to ‘western identity’, a stigmata that will be used increasingly by the Romanian elites like former President Iliescu or Constantinescu after the Romanian disappointment of not being included in the first post-Cold War round of NATO enlargement (*NATO Transformed* 2004:21). Since the focus of this project is to identify Romanian patterns as well as the motives that lead to forming alliances, it is imperative to focus on the period of the 1990s when the last military alliance was attempted with NATO. Moreover, an increased attention will be given from this perspective to Romanian former leader Ion Iliescu, since it was under his administration that the dialogue with NATO began.⁹³

There is more evidence regarding Romania and its aspiration to western values after 1996 when, based on Stephen Walt’s (1987) assumptions, Romania would have been more secure in thinking about ideological affinities. Literature on Romania during

⁹² The research section of the Romanian Academy was disbanded and new academicians had to be members of the Communist Party. All publications and contacts with foreign institutions were censored or severely restricted. The educational sector was strongly tied with industrial production (e.g. high school students and university students received education based on the demand from the industries. Excess on quota was prohibited in programs). Some of the literature, medicine and hard sciences enjoyed certain independence (Treptow 1996:545).

⁹³ Romania concretely began the dialogue with NATO on 24 July, 1990.

1990 indicates that Romanian elites were inclined more towards continuing the eastern ideology than pursuing the western one. The former Romanian president was portrayed by many western critics as a continuation of the Sovietization process and, not only because he was a product of the Soviet school, but also because he continued to maintain close ties with Russia even after he was recognized as an interim President of Romania. Foreign publications often captured Iliescu as “Gorbachev`s man in Romania” (*The Washington Post* 1989:30).⁹⁴

Testimonies that pertain to this claim are many. Some suggest that during the first night of the 1989 revolution, Iliescu not only visited the Russian embassy in Bucharest but also used the red phone line to communicate with Moscow. Reports also mention that the relationship between Iliescu and Gorbachev was formed during the time when they both studied in Moscow and was maintained during his term as President of Romania. What appears intriguing from this perspective is that shortly after Iliescu took office he began negotiations with Moscow to instruct military and diplomatic personnel in the Russian institutes, a practice that was abolished by Romania in 1964.⁹⁵

After the execution of Ceausescu on 25 December 1989, the Iliescu interim government-Frontul Salvării Nationale (NSF)⁹⁶ was installed in Romania and it was supposed to serve the country until the 20 May, 1991 elections. According to Vladimir Tismaneanu (1992) the NSF was more “an umbrella movement than an ideological constituted party” (Tismaneanu 1992:268). During the 1990s most of what was recorded by the national and international media pertains to the Romanian governmental

⁹⁴ See “Iliescu Was Seen As A Threat.” *The Washington Post*. 30 December 1989. And “Gorbachev has Spoken by Telephone with Iliescu.” *BBC Monitoring Service: Former USSR*. 29 December 1989.

⁹⁵ Armand Gosu. “Politica Rasariteana a Romaniei: 1990-2005.” In *Contrafort*. Vol. 1, No. 135.

⁹⁶ The National Salvation Front.

instabilities and people's unrest vis-à-vis the neo-communist government. Less information is given with respect to the return to a western identity, democratization or modernization. Indeed, the speeches given by Romanian elites attest to the fact that they considered the noted factors as necessary for Romania to develop. However, it appeared clear that the most relevant factor was maintaining stability and territorial integrity.

In this sense more emphasis is on the border disputes, the unrest of the Hungarian minority in Transylvania and the pressures that the Romanian people put on Iliescu to step down as a leader.⁹⁷ In retrospect, western international figures often condemned Iliescu's strategy to keep order in the country, since he made use numerous times of the coal miners to evict the opposing demonstrators. Since increasingly more westerners were suspicious about the police and military involvement to stop demonstrators, Iliescu decided to go back to an older tactic—that of appealing to the national sentiment, or what was left of it, and instead of tanks, using masked police and civil people [miners] against the other population as an appeal to defend the state order.

For instance, during the first few months of the Iliescu government, Romania tested all the political and economic uncertainty and the domestic and ethnic unrest. Confusion was preponderant in the cultural sector, since materials such as paper, typing machines and ink had to be imported in order to make possible the elimination of the Russian written propaganda. Throughout the election period, numerous Romanians that opposed Iliescu's government protested in the University Square. Demonstrators wanted Iliescu to step down as a leader, since suspicions regarding his Soviet affiliation increased. The evidence shows that he stepped down as a Party Leader but not as a contender to the presidency. Moreover, he forced his candidacy by keeping the

⁹⁷ See for this an entire range of articles during the 1990s in *The Times*, *The Guardian*, *Reuters News*,

University Square quiet. Iliescu's government at numerous times called miners to the capital in order to defend Romania from a coup attempt (*The Associated Press*. 15 June 1990).⁹⁸ The media often caught some of Iliescu's congratulatory remarks towards the miners such as "the fascist coup had been foiled."⁹⁹ This kind of defense appears to incriminate his actions even more in an interview captured by *Reuters* in April 1990 when a journalist implied that Iliescu would use force to break up the University Square demonstrators again. An angry Iliescu replied that "security forces will not be deployed, but I would like to know what police in West Germany or France would have done if a main thoroughfare in the capital had been blocked for six days by demonstrators" (*Reuters*: 30 April 1990).¹⁰⁰ Neither Great Britain, nor the U.S. were part of Iliescu's western examples on how to manage opposing demonstrators.

An interesting perspective from the 'western identity' appears to be the speech given more than a decade later in 2002 by former Romanian President Ion Iliescu, in an event sponsored by the Woodrow Wilson Center in February, 2002.¹⁰¹ On this occasion, the former president argued that "Romanians have long identified with Western Europe, despite a half century of Soviet occupation and the deprivation and isolation imposed by the Ceausescu regime in the 1980s." Despite all of this he maintained, "The Western values and ideals still seeped in."¹⁰² It is thought-provoking to mention that shortly after he took office in March 1991, the former president sent to Moscow his then political counselor Ioan Mircea Pascu in order to enact a new and most controversial political

⁹⁸ See "Anti-Communist Demonstrators Demand Iliescu Resignation." *The Associated Press*. 24 April 1990. And "Iliescu Thanks Miners for Helping Quash Anti-Gov't Demonstrations." *The Associated Press*. 15 June 1990.

⁹⁹ "The slide backwards towards tyranny under Iliescu." *Independent on Sunday*. June 17, 1990.

¹⁰⁰ See also "Iliescu Says Protesters-Filled Square to be 'Cleaned Out'." *The Associated Press*. 12 May 1990.

¹⁰¹ This speech was given two years before Romania became a member of NATO in 2004.

¹⁰² Speech delivered at the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington D.C. on 7 February, 2002.

treaty that was supposed to “strengthen the friendship and collaboration between Romania and the USSR.”¹⁰³ It is imperative to note that if ratified then by the Romanian Parliament, the prerogatives of that treaty were supposed to block, for almost fifteen years, any political and military alliances that Romania may have thought to enact with the western world. Moreover, in the treaty between Romania and Russia from the spring of 1990, it was also stipulated that “Russia had a right of veto when Romania sought any occidental alliance.”¹⁰⁴ How close, then, Romanian elites were toward returning to the western world appears to be a subject for debate.

For our purpose it is interesting to mention that former Russian President Michael Gorbachev was responsible for the orchestration of this kind of treaty, which sought according to Romanian press “to form a buffer zone between the west and the east by calling on all former satellite countries to commit to this treaty-plan.”¹⁰⁵ Even more interesting is that Gorbachev’s plan was highly denounced by everybody including Hungary and was approved only by Romania, the only country from central Europe that eagerly hurried to sign it. Fortunately, it was never ratified by the Romanian Parliament.

Regarding the western identity, it is compelling to underline that as a leader, Iliescu was more interested in maintaining functional the old organizations such as the Warsaw Pact and CAER. Speculations exist that at the beginning of 1991, Romanian leaders looked up to Russia in order to receive new strategic initiatives. Many were unpleasantly surprised when on 22 December 1989, Iliescu declared in Article 9 of the

¹⁰³ See the entire article regarding this treaty on the Romanian Press at: http://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-arhiva-1262128-iliescu_actionat_pentru_apararea_intereselor_urss_ului.htm

¹⁰⁴ See “Discutia Saptamanii despre Relatia Romania-Rusia.” *BBCRomanian.com*.

¹⁰⁵ See the entire material in “Discutia Saptamanii despre Relatia Romania-Russia.” *Evenimentul Zilei*. Luni, 26 Iulie 2004.

“Comunicatul Frontului Salvării Nationale” that despite all “Romania was going to remain faithful to the Warsaw Treaty.” The numerous official visits made by representatives of the Petre Roman’s Ministers speak volumes about the kind of identity Romania was interested in pursuing with the west.¹⁰⁶

What is more interesting is that at Iliescu’s inauguration speech the American Ambassador to Romania, Alan Green, boycotted the ceremony showing concern over the Government’s violent breakup of a seven week protest against Iliescu (*The New York Times*, 21 June 1990).¹⁰⁷ With the U.S., as Joseph Harrington *et.al*, (1995) note “from January 1990 until the summer of 1991, American-Romanian relations resembled a roller-coaster” (Harrington *et.al*, 1995:1). In general with the west, Romanian leaders were theoretically looking to ‘put the backward nation in the ranks of the world’s most advanced countries by the end of the 1990s’. Moreover, after his election victory, Iliescu announced that he was looking “to transform Romania into a social democracy like that of Sweden, however, not to copy mechanically some forms of democracies from the west” (Interview given to *Reuters* by Iliescu on 21 May 1990).¹⁰⁸

In the same interview, Iliescu mentioned that regarding Romanian foreign policy, “Romania would maintain friendly relations with the Soviet Union, with which it shares a long border, while it would continue to remain in the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet-led Comecon trading block “as long as they exist.” Iliescu nostalgically acknowledged that “the shift now in these organizations is not on military importance” but rather “on the political one.” With this occasion he also mentioned that he hoped “to have good

¹⁰⁶ See “Iliescu, Roman head for Warsaw Pact Meeting.” *Reuters News*. 6 June, 1990.

¹⁰⁷ See the entire article “Evolution in Europe; At Romanian Inauguration, Promises and Doubts.” *The New York Times*. June 21, 1990.

¹⁰⁸ See “Iliescu Vows to Make Impoverished Romania an Advanced Country.” *Reuters News*. 21 May 1990.

relations with the U.S. and Japan, not to mention Europe.” Regarding the relationship with Russia, Iliescu underscored that “whatever the political color of any government in Romania, our economic and geopolitical situation will always be in our minds. Our interest is to have good and friendly relations with our neighbor the Soviet Union.” When asked which country he will visit first he replied that “it depends who invites me.”¹⁰⁹

From the western view, the White House established diplomatic relations with the new Romanian Government on Christmas day of 1989 (Harrington *et.al*, 1995:1). According to how the priorities were arranged on the new government agenda, it appears visible that more attention was given to the European House than to the western power. Romania concluded an Association Agreement with the European Union in 1993 and joined the Council of Europe in 1994.¹¹⁰ With the U.S. the focus was more on economy than identity, for Romanian leaders to re-establish the economic position of the MFN status was important.

Although the relation with the U.S. appeared cordial on the surface, when it came to people’s freedom Romania again lagged behind, and it took almost four years to regain the MFN status with the U.S. but only when Romania started to emphasize its desire to go back to its western identity. In a speech given in June 1997 by former Romanian President Emil Constantinescu,¹¹¹ who succeeded Iliescu, it appears clear that perhaps Romania was in search of “what was supposed to be Romanian.” However, a ranking order between identity and security can be easily established after 1996 when the regime

¹⁰⁹ Ironically he visited former Yugoslavia in August, 1990.

¹¹⁰ Data were taken from the speech given by the former Romanian President at the Woodrow Wilson Center in 2002.

¹¹¹ See for his speech the Internet site: <http://www.csd.org/97Book/constantinescu-C.htm>

changed. In his speech Constantinescu mentioned that “Romanian society does not regard accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as a form of protection against a threat, but is rather a way to regain an identity that was unjustly denied to it for five decades. For us NATO is not a shelter, but it is a community based on shared values now recovered” (Emil Constantinescu, former President of Romania).¹¹²

In his view, NATO represented a security umbrella, the most legitimate collective defense institution that was supposed to modernize its army forces and restore Romanian identity. Constantinescu’s reasons for a NATO alliance rests on the fact that “after 1990 Romania no longer had a collective security arrangement, and that was why it became imperative for Romania to modernize its army forces and to get membership in NATO” (Constantinescu’s Speech. June 1997). *The new name for security is prosperity*¹¹³ in his perspective, especially since new treaties of cooperation were signed with Hungary and Ukraine on May 25 and June 2 respectively.¹¹⁴ Romanian Foreign Affairs Minister Teodor Melescanu suggested, regarding western values, that “those of us in the Cold War’s ‘forgotten’ part of Europe can, therefore, help in better acquainting our western friends with our security needs and concerns and also with the way in which our eventual membership could serve NATO’s values and goals” (*NATO Review*. October 1993). Apparently Melescanu appears to press for NATO membership arguing that countries that are not molded after the western structures would inevitably be considered “undemocratic” and “unable to democratize,” forcing in this way a different destiny over

¹¹² Speech given by former Romanian President for the 14th International Workshop on Global Security-Prague, 21-25 June 1997.

¹¹³ Emphasis added.

¹¹⁴ May 25-Bucharest “The historic reconciliation between Romania and Hungary,” and June 2-Constanta “the treaty between Romania and Ukraine.” Data were taken from the former President’s Speech at the 14th International Workshop on Global Security-Prague, 21-25 June, 1997.

the progress of these countries. Some believe that only by allying with the west could Romania bring prosperity in the economic, politic and democratic sector. The U.S. Ambassador to Romania,¹¹⁵ Alfred H. Moses (1998) suggests that the U.S. as well as Germany was reluctant to consider Romania a future ally due to its fragile democratic and economic system.

Moses (1998) acknowledges that in 1996 when the opposition party replaced the neo-communist government frequent visits were made abroad to each of the sixteen member states of the Alliance in order to inform them regarding the Romanian potential with respect to the military contribution, geostrategic position and Romania's domestic stability. Political discourse of the new Christian Democratic National Peasant Party (CDNPP) that took power in Romania in 1996 appears to play a significant role in gaining momentum in reversing Romania's image and candidacy abroad. According to Moses (1988), first the Constantinescu government announced that "membership in NATO was Romanian number one policy," and then continued to refer to the Ceausescu regime as a "crypto-communist" period.

Moses (1998) notes that "when the new government of Romania apologized publicly to Germany for Romania's treatment of ethnic Germans under communist regime" the government of Helmut Kohl began to change its attitude vis-à-vis Romania and its potential for change (Moses 1998: 138). For Romanians who were in the majority, Western approval meant, the western alliance's recognition of democracy in Romania since the U.S. represents for central European power, stability, security and democracy. Regarding the return to western identity, a Romanian scholar Alina Mungiu-Pippidi (1999) suggests that "Romania's identity, particularly as it relates to European

¹¹⁵ From December 1994 until August 1997.

integration, is a common and serious theme” (Mungiu-Pippidi 1999:158). The reasons behind her assertion are based on the results obtained by *World Values Survey* that revealed that most Romanians wanted to integrate into the European Union (EU) for instance, but knew little about the western values.

Moreover, according to Mungiu-Pippidi (1999), the Romanian people were more inclined to endorse values that were characteristic of authoritarian, rural civilization rather than postindustrial or modern ones. It is important to mention that in general Romanian membership in NATO was perceived by Romanians more as a membership in a security organization, for it was more associated with the U.S. than other members. Romania also struggled to be admitted in the EU as this step was the most confusing for Romanians who were perceived, on the same continent, as “the other.” However, memberships in the western organizations conferred upon Romania a break with the past and an assurance that democracy prevailed.

David Phinnemore (2006) suggests that “the road to full participation in the structures of Euro-Atlantic integration has not confirmed Romania an easy Europeanization” (Phinnemore 2006: 48).¹¹⁶ As Phinnemore mentions, NATO for Romania meant a road of a fourteen year long process of struggles “demanding considerable and often painful domestic reforms.” Lazar Comanescu (2006) also argues that Romanian membership in NATO was different than membership in the EU. For Romania, NATO “was one of the main foreign policy goals, a natural reflex following the fall of the Berlin Wall, or dropping another anchor in the Euro-Atlantic community of

¹¹⁶ David Phinnemore’s book “The EU & Romania: Accession and Beyond,” represents a collection of essays where authors like Comanescu, Mungiu-Pippidi, Severin and Smith have contributed and are cited individually in this project.

values, peace and prosperity—the place where former communist countries felt that they belonged” (Comanescu 2006:97).

Comanescu (2006) contends that “security is not the only explanation for why Romania joined NATO. In the same way economic prosperity cannot be the main reason for the EU’s attractiveness” (Comanescu 2006:97). I may add to this trend that obtaining a western identity was also not the main reason either for why Romania joined NATO. As this section emphasizes, the idea of belonging to the west developed, as Walt (1987) suggested, because Romania assured its security first and then it earned a more complimentary etiquette for being a good and obedient ‘other’ that allowed its return to Europe, thus, western organizations.

5.2 Democratization, Romania and NATO

The objective in this section is to examine whether the fact that Romania engaged in an alliance with the west fits Romanian alliances profile and whether pursuing membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) contributed to the increase of the Romanian process of democratization. NATO requires for transitioning countries like Romania to show “that they have fully established democratic political institutions and market economies” (Szayna 2001:62). Samuel P. Huntington (1991) suggests that in the Romanian case, the sultanistic appellation would be the most appropriate characterization of Ceausescu’s source of authority and personal leadership (Huntington 1991:581).

For communistic regimes like that of Romania it is hard to transition towards a more liberal and democratic system, since the population was taught to accept “the individual leader as the source of authority where power depends on access to, closeness

to, dependence on, and support from the leader” (Huntington 1991:581). In his study, Huntington (1991) shows that two important elements are the most suppressed in communist regimes: “competition and participation.” In Huntington’s observation, “democratization proceeds more easily if competition expands before participation” (Huntington 1991:581).

Thus, it is competition among political parties that increases democratization. By definition, democratization characterizes the transitional process from non-democratic to democratic forms of government (Sodaro 2007:22). Kristian S. Gleditsch and Michael D. Ward (2000) speak of democratization as the meaning of a “dynamic process that results in discrete outcomes” (Gleditsch and Ward 2000:3). The transitional process towards democratization in the Romanian case was more slow and lenient since, after the removal of the communist regime, elites from the former communist party won elections and managed to stay in power six more years suppressing, in this sense, opposition parties.

The neo-communists were theoretically defeated in 1996, although they did not disappear completely from the political arena. The National Salvation Front (NSF) won the free multi-party elections of 1990 and subsequently the elections of 1992 [only the second time under a different name, the Party of Social Democracy or PSD] (Marginean 1997:1). The competition among parties was almost absent until 1992 when the NSF split in two, the Democratic Salvation Front (DNSF—those loyal to Iliescu) and the Party of Social Democracy in Romania (PDSR). The November 1996 elections brought history to Romania when a coalition made from the opposition parties won the majority of parliament and “pledged to bring faster reforms and improve the economy” (Linden 2000:132). It is important to note that the Democratic Convention Party in 1996 made

history from two perspectives: first, that Emil Constantinescu, a University Professor, was elected President, and second that the coalition party managed to break ties with the communist past. Nonetheless, it is important to mention that dialogue with NATO began in July 1990 under the Iliescu regime. Regarding the enlargement requirements, NATO pledged that

It has an open policy on enlargement and that any European country in a position to further the principles of the North Atlantic Treaty and contribute to security in the Euro-Atlantic area can become a member of the Alliance, when invited to do so by the existing member countries. (*NATO Enlargement*).

Theoretically, the road towards NATO membership includes five incremental steps that begin with “accession talks” and conclude with “the depository of instruments of accession with the United States, when countries formally become parties to the North Atlantic Treaty and thus members of NATO” (*NATO Handbook*). It is interesting to note that five years after the Romanian request of dialoguing, in 1995 the Alliance carried out a study on NATO Enlargement and made public the merits on which future countries were supposed to be admitted into the Alliance. The *Enlargement* study concluded that

Countries seeking membership in NATO have to be able to demonstrate that they represent a functioning democratic political system based on a market economy; that they treat minority populations in accordance with OSCE¹¹⁷ guidelines; have worked to resolve outstanding disputes with neighbors and have made an overall commitment to the peaceful settlements of disputes; have the ability and willingness to make a military contribution to the Alliance; and are committed to democratic civil-military and institutional structure. (*NATO Enlargement 1995*).

Regarding the democratization aspect, scholars like Dan Reiter (2001) argue that “NATO enlargement does not spread democracy” because each country engaged in the accession process with NATO “already had a strong national commitment to democracy by

¹¹⁷ Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

carrying out free and fair elections since the fall of communism” (Reiter 2001:60). Reiter’s (2001) argument rests on the fact that, in Romania, for instance, former communist elites continued to be in power with the Party of Social Democracy (PSDR) even after six years of dialoguing with NATO, until the 1996 elections when the communist-dominated party was defeated by the coalition parties’ opposition. In Reiter’s (2001) view, the fact that Romania held its first post-communist elections in 1992, elections that were supposed to be free and fair as they were validated by the international observers, demonstrates that Romania was already engaged in the democratization process, and membership in NATO did not bring more democratization than was supposed to develop alone but rather promoted U.S. interests abroad. Reiter (2001) argues that democratization is the last thing that concern countries that look for NATO.

In his perspective, there is “the neo-Wilsonian foreign policy consensus in the west that looks at progress made by the country in discussion towards the market democracy that cumulates with the integration in international organizations. Moreover, democracy, peace and trade give the desired effects” (Reiter 2001:44). Reiter (2001) even cites the declaration of former President Clinton from 1994 that seems to capture the U.S. interests in this sense. Former President Clinton argued that “Ultimately the best strategy to ensure our security and to build a durable peace is to support the advance of democracy elsewhere. Democracies don’t attack each other; they make better trading partners and partners in democracy” (Reiter 2001:44). Critics of Reiter’s (2001) democratization arguments suggest that, in particular, he overlooks the benefits that

programs invented by NATO like MAP¹¹⁸ and PfP¹¹⁹ bring for accessing countries. For instance, Dessie Zagorcheva (2001) argues that NATO does an excellent job in “directing and facilitating democratic reform” (Zagorcheva 2001:227). It is important to note here that it took Romania fourteen years to develop its democratic reforms under these programs and finally become a member of this Alliance, and perhaps the membership was linked more to the events surrounding 11 September, 2001 when security threats were redefined than to consolidation of democratization. Relevant to democratization is that Romania started dialogue with NATO on 24 July, 1990 when, Romanian Prime Minister Petre Roman sent an invitation to NATO’s Secretary General Manfred Woerner to visit Romania and with this occasion to discuss aspects regarding the implementation of a future Romania-NATO dialogue (Ionescu 2004:46).

This step was made by the Romanian government right after the North Atlantic Council announced in London on 5 July 1990 its decision to reinvent the purposes and re-transform the North Atlantic Alliance in order to “build the structure of a more united continent, support security and stability with the strength of our shared faith in democracy, the rights of the individual and the peaceful resolution of disputes” (*London Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance*). With this occasion the Council underscored that it was important for the Alliance to keep focusing on security. They argued that the Alliance “will continue to remain defensive, and it will defend all the territories of our members.” In this spirit, the Council invited Gorbachev on behalf of the

¹¹⁸ The Membership Action Plan “that assist countries aspiring to join the Alliance in their preparations for NATO membership.” *NATO Transformed*: 2004:21.

¹¹⁹ The Partnership for Peace Program whose purpose is to “increase stability, diminish threats to peace, and build strengthen relationships between individual Partner countries, NATO and other Partner countries.”

Soviet Union and representatives of the other central and eastern European countries to come to Brussels and address the North Atlantic Council.

We today also invite the governments of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, the Hungarian Republic, the Republic of Poland, the People's Republic of Bulgaria and Romania to come to NATO, not just to visit, but to establish regular diplomatic liaison with NATO. This will make it possible for us to share with them our thinking and deliberations in this historic period of change. (*The Declaration of North Atlantic Council, 5-6 July, 1990*).

It is interesting that in the same letter from July, 1990 that Prime Minister Roman sent to Secretary Woerner in Brussels it was mentioned that Brussels should confirm the accreditation of the Romanian Ambassador from Belgium to begin, for the first time since the Warsaw Pact, diplomatic relations with NATO (Ionescu 2004:47). A few months later on 23 October 1990, the Romanian Prime Minister was received by Secretary Woerner at NATO Headquarters (*NATO: News Released, 23 October 1990*). Upon this visit the Romanian government decided to nominate a permanent representative to NATO (Ionescu 2004:47). Zagorcheva (2001) suggests that Reiter (2001) “does not distinguish East European states according to their level of democratization” (Zagorcheva 2001:228).

Moreover, according to her perspective Reiter (2001) misses the fact that “countries with no democratic traditions before the fall of communism need greater guidance from international institutions than do those that are more democratically advanced” (Zagorcheva 2001:228). She places Hungary, Poland and Slovenia in a “successful democratization” spectrum where democratization is defined only in terms of reforms and their implementation. While countries like Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia are left in an “unsuccessful democratization” division due to the fact that these countries

experienced “no democratic tradition before the fall of communism, and that is the reason that they need greater assistance from international institutions” (Zagorcheva 2001:228).

At least from the Romanian democratic tradition perspective, it is important to remark that despite the fact that Romanian territories were under different dominations at different times, political parties played a central role in Romanian public life. Moreover, “as an expression of democratic rights and equal liberty for all citizens of the country, regardless of religion, language or nationality, ethnic minorities in Romania [Hungarians, Germans, Jews, and others] created their own political parties; like that of the Hungarian Party founded in 1922” (Treptow 1996:421). Treptow (1996) mentions regarding democratic tradition in Romania that “after the First World War the system of political parties in Europe underwent important changes, as did Romania” (Treptow 1996:411). A party that played an important democratic role in Romania was the National Liberal Party that for a long time supported “a constitutional, parliamentary and a democratic regime.” According to Treptow (1996), the efforts of this party were remarkable in ratifying the constitution in 1923, the adoption of agrarian reform and the elaboration and adoption of laws to consolidate the Romanian state in 1918.

Treptow (1996) also mentions that this party “took measures against perceived threats by extremist forces on both the left and the right by declaring in 1924 the Romanian Communist Party illegal” (Treptow 1996:413). More in this sense can be observed in the activities of another party, the National Peasant Party that “proved to be a strong anti-fascist and anti-dictatorial force, calling for maintenance of a democratic regime based on the constitution adopted in 1923” (Treptow 1996:417). Although it is true that each domination left different customs in Romania, it is important to

acknowledge that most of western educated Romanian intellectuals fought for freedom and western values in contrast to what was produced in Moscow.

The Partnership for Peace (PfP) Program was first discussed in 1993 by NATO Defense Ministers and then endorsed by Brussels in January 1994.¹²⁰ The scope of this program was to “consult with active participants in the Partnership whether that partner perceives a direct threat to its territorial integrity, political independence or security” (*Partnership for Peace Invitation*, 10-11 January 1994). Although Lennart Mevi perceived this program as “an old perfume bottle-it looks enticing, but it’s empty,” Romania was the first former Warsaw member country to sign up for the PfP “waiting room” on 26 January 1994 (*NATO Framework Document-PfP Signatures by date*). Interesting to note regarding whether the PfP shouldered democratization is that the sub-committee of this program was charged with monitoring the military reform programs in key member countries that were supposed to be accepted for NATO membership. The assessment was supposed to include aspects regarding the incorporation of military forces into a developing democratic society (*NATO PA-Archives*).

The depoliticizing of the armed forces was a democratized effort attempted by the Bucharest administration at the orders of NATO consultants. Scholars like Zoltan Barany (2004) suggest that “over the last decade and a half, international organizations have played a vital role in fostering economic and democratic development in Eastern Europe” (Barany 2004:63). Ioan Marginean (1997), a Romanian scholar preoccupied with the transition process to democracy, notes regarding democratization in Romania that “although marked by tension and conflicts, especially during 1990-1991, the process

¹²⁰ See the website of the “Partnership for Peace: A Basis for New Security Structures and an Incentive for Military Reform in Europe.” *NATO, PA- Archives*.

of democratization progressed, steadily satisfying the formal indicators of democracy” (Marginean 1997:353). According to Marginean (1997), the competition among political parties, moreover the victory gained in 1996 of the center and right winged opposition, revealed changes in political parties in power, and with this change it brought “the consolidation of the democratic institutions in Romania.”

Marginean (1997) also suggests that the transition to democracy is different for each country, and it mainly depends on how much pressure on the population or on the conditions of life the government is able to put without producing too much human suffering or losing its legitimacy. It is important to note that in Romania when the communist system fell, with it “collapsed the economic and social structures which were based on the state’s ownership of the means of production, a unique ideology the admitted dictatorship of a class, the leading role of the communist party and on the strict control of the whole society” (Marginean 1997:355). With respect to democratic progress, the study of Marginean (1997) suggests in 1997 that according to the criteria of a democratic regime developed by Robert Dahl

Romania was a democratic country since it did not have a totalitarian political regime in power; it had introduced democratic institutions, held free elections and experienced the transformation of political parties. Also, it had a democratic Constitution adopted in December 1991 and a great deal of private mass media (Marginean 1997:364).

Democratic governance according to Thomas S. Szayna (2001) who assessed the candidacies of MAP states¹²¹ through *Freedom House*, suggests that democratization, appears to increase in Romania after 1996.¹²² During 1991-1992, Romania received from

¹²¹ In the Membership Action Plan were included in 1991: Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

¹²² Note: See the assessment provided by Thomas Szayna and Table 4.11 on page 63 where he mentions that Freedom House assessed the political rights and civil liberties as based on a scale 1 to 7, with 1

Freedom House a score of (5, 5, PF), while in 1995-1996 a (2, 3, F) and a constant (2, 2, F) for the following years until 1999-2000 (Szayna 2001:63). Based on the *Freedom House* assessment regarding democratization, Romania appears to increase this process during the change of regime period in 1995-1996, when the connection with the past was theoretically interrupted. There is no indication of how much the NATO program plans would have helped Romania until 1996.

Studies published by the Woodrow Wilson Center reveal that NATO programs promote democratic development in the military sector by pressuring countries like Romania to depoliticize its military. However, when comparing democratization through NATO and the European Union perspectives, the European Union appears to be more successful for democratization, which has a similar criteria for assessing the progress of new members—the Copenhagen criteria that includes “stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for one’s minorities” (*European Commission-Enlargement*).¹²³

Regarding the Copenhagen political criteria, the European Union Commission concluded in 1998 that Romania fulfils these criteria and continues to work towards respecting and protecting the Hungarian minority rights. Moreover, the report mentions that “the current improvement in Romania following the arrival in power of a new government indicates that Romania is on its way to satisfying the political criteria for membership” (*Regular Report on Romania towards Accession*).¹²⁴ With respect to

represented the highest degree of freedom and 7 representing the lowest; and the freedom status represented F (free), PF (partly free) and NF (not free).

¹²³ http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/enlargement_process/accession_process/criteria/index_en.htm

¹²⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/pdf/key_documents/1998/romania_en.pdf

democracy and rule of law, the same report notes that “Parliament continues to operate satisfactorily. Its powers are respected and the opposition plays fully in its activities. The frequency of the government’s use of emergency ordinances remains a source of concern.”¹²⁵ Regarding human rights, the report mentions that “Romania has ratified most of the major human rights instruments” and that “the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees has concluded that Romania is no longer to be characterized as a refugee-generated country, and that basic standards of human rights are respected” (*Regular Report on Romania towards Accession*).

Interesting to note is that Romanian progress towards minority rights has been satisfactory for the European Committee except for the Roma (Gypsy) minority. Frank Schimmelfennig (1998) suggests that the Neorealist approach is limited in explaining why former communist countries strive to become NATO members, nor can it explain why NATO decided to expand towards the east, or why it invited the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to become NATO members (Schimmelfennig 1998:199). In his view, only the constructivist approach can resolve the puzzle regarding the interest of NATO in expansion, since constructivists focus on “enlargement as a process of international socialization” (Schimmelfennig 1998:199). Although Romania did not optimistically perceive the first step, PfP, proposed by NATO towards integration, it assured itself that this was at least a step of “a defense related cooperation” (Phinnemore 2006:40).

Romanian government, as many scholars like Linden (2000) suggest, was motivated by the competition created by neighboring countries like Hungary to integrate in western institutions. Leaders from extremist parties in Romania like Corneliu Vadim

¹²⁵ *Regular Report on Romania towards Accession*.

Tudor [the leader of Greater Romania Party] suggested that Romania wants into NATO “only because Hungary was a member of it, and this was the only way to keep an eye on it” (Barany 2003:149). Teodor Melescanu, Romanian Foreign Affairs Minister, declared that since 1991 Romania wanted to upgrade its relations with countries from the European Union as well as from other western countries. According to Melescanu (1995) “Romania’s integration with the west was Romania’s natural choice” (Melescanu 1995:8).

In his perspective, Romania was aware of its potential in NATO and was “aware that no decision could be implemented by NATO without the public opinion in the Alliance’s member states” (*NATO Review*, October 5, 1993).¹²⁶ Members of a NATO sub-committee charged with monitoring Romanian and Hungarian progress towards membership noted in a NATO Parliamentary Assembly in 2004 that “following the collapse of the Soviet empire, East European politicians expressed the desire that their countries should seek entry into European organizations and institutions. Today their foreign policy is centered on the aim of finding economic prosperity in the European Union and security within the North Atlantic Alliance” (*NATO: Introduction Speech of NATO Parliamentary Assembly in 2004*).

Reiter (2001) suggested the same as NATO officials that “membership in the European Union would better serve democratic reform in Eastern Europe than would NATO’s membership (Reiter 2001:47). Barany (2004) argues that democratic consolidation depends on the country’s security stability that can only be achieved by NATO, which in return allows democratization to flourish without distractions. In

¹²⁶ <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/1993/9305-3.htm>

Romania's case Barany (2004) argues that NATO represented not only security solutions but also endorsement of Romanian western orientation and a measure of domestic legitimacy (Barany 2004: 15).

If there was a question regarding NATO and democratization, Barany (2004) suggests that at least three positive answers will emerge. One will be related to "securing national sovereignty," the second regards the "incentives to participate in elections in order to show NATO commitment to change," and the third will revolve around "policy areas, especially defense and civil military relations" (Barany 2004: 17). For Romania the road towards NATO was not smooth considering the amount of economic and military sacrifices that were imposed on Romania by NATO regarding downsizing and reforming the military sector. A factor contributing to democratization in Romania may constitute the Membership Action Plans (MAP) invented in 1999 in order to assist future NATO members.

By its design, MAP was supposed to provide future members with the correct knowledge that a member of NATO should possess. Dessie Zagorcheva (2001) suggests that MAPs, in particular, have been important for countries like Romania and Bulgaria that were not accustomed to experiencing democracy. The importance of participating in these plans consisted mainly in "discussions and feedback from NATO experts in helping these countries to fulfill their objectives" (Zagorcheva 2001:228). Barany (2003) mentions that "even though the United States, along with Britain, Denmark and Iceland, was strongly opposed to Romanian NATO membership in 1997, it did offer a "Strategic Partnership" to Bucharest in order to enhance cooperation with and democratization in Romania" (Barany 2003:143). However, only after September 11 and after Romania

volunteered to host U.S. missiles on its territory Barany (2003) suggests that the U.S. President asserted that Romania “brings moral clarity to our Alliance.” As Barany (2003) contends, Romania experienced difficult times to secure an invitation from NATO officials to join the Alliance.

The integration in NATO’s structure was incremental and tedious for Romania and as Szayna (2001) suggests, both NATO and EU created greater “incentives in favor of advancing peaceful evolution and democratization in the unintegrated Europe” (Szayna 2001:20). Some Romanian elites like Gheorghe Maior, the Secretary for Euro-Atlantic Integration, argued, regarding the democratization process that “Romania has wasted a lot of time implementing NATO accession plans and is lagging 12 to 14 months behind” (Barany 2003:173). Even from August 2001 Barany (2003) notes that Romanian President Traian Basescu revealed that after all the efforts from Bucharest to improve the human rights records and listening to NATO’s directions, NATO’s reports still indicate that Romania was facing problems of political instability, corruption, military reforms and issues in integrating the Hungarian and Jewish minorities (Barany 2003:174).

The Romanian diaspora argued that the situation revealed often by foreign media did not match what occurred in Romania. Moreover, they insist that facts were often misrepresented by foreign press as Gabriel Popescu (2005) suggests that “on various occasions, violent events that occurred in Sofia, Bulgaria and Budapest, Hungary were broadcasted in western Europe as ‘live’ from Bucharest, Romania” (Popescu 2005:469). Szayna (2001) suggests that “NATO enlargement abide by the principles stipulated in Article 10 of the Washington Treaty that prohibits rejection beforehand of any European country” (Szayna 2001:41). According to Szayna (2001) the fact that “the U.S. lost

interest in advocating for enlargement, as they did when Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic joined NATO, may have contributed to a late democratization in Romania.” Szayna (2001) suggests that Romania made significant progress towards meeting NATO’s requirements for membership especially in the political sector.

However, from the economic perspective, as his study and the European Union Commission suggests, “Romania ranked lower, as having made progress toward establishing a market economy, though unable to withstand the competitive pressures in the Union in the interim” (Szayna 2002:3). In November 2002 at the Prague Summit, Bulgaria and Romania were the only European contenders for NATO membership. Tom Gallagher (2004) inquired in a study contrasting Bulgaria and Romania on whether or not the inclusion of Romania in NATO strengthened democratic reforms at home. Tatiana Kostadinova (2000) suggests that “a defining characteristic of democratic regimes is that they depend on widespread popular approval of domestic and foreign choices made by their elites” (Kostadinova 2000:235). Regarding how popular support in Romania perceived Romanian integration in NATO, Gallagher (2004) notes that “opinion polls showed strong public support for integration.” In his view, Romania appeared to be saved by NATO due to Kosovo involvement when Romania offered its aerial space to NATO forces to compel Milosevic to give autonomy to Albanians and thus conclude the war in Yugoslavia.

According to Gallagher’s (2004) observation, NATO had “transformed Romania from a troubled Balkan backwater to a ‘front-line state’” by offering greater favoritism and support after the Romanian administration backed several of the U.S. interests such as the war in Iraq and the immunity from persecution agreement for U.S. soldiers and

diplomats (Gallagher 2004:11). In his perspective, NATO as an organization did not contribute greatly to the democratization process in Romania since U.S. foreign policy interests were much greater than monitoring Romanian progress towards democratization. Improvements have been made apparently in all sectors, although the fight for power and influence are often questioned, especially in relation to preserving democratic gains.

The return to power in 2001 of Iliescu reinvented political party (Social Democratic Party, SDP) raised suspicions of corruption and dominance. However, the U.S. Ambassador in Romania, Michael Guest, often raised questions regarding Romanian corruptions, NATO officials appeared deaf especially in the light of facts that former *Securitate* agents were overwhelmingly present in high ranking positions either in Romanian government or in diplomatic missions around the world. Gallagher (2004) believes that Romania prioritized NATO integration first before the European Union because “the EU requires far deeper changes in the workings than does NATO; more indulgence for political pluralism and human rights to be safeguarded; NATO is more technical and concerned with modernizing military forces; NATO does not affect the way political power is exercised” (Gallagher 2004:15).

Based on his experiences abroad and in the U.S., the U.S. Ambassador Moses (1998) predicted that “if Romania’s government uses the NATO card as it should—to accelerate economic reform—Romania will be a prime candidate to begin NATO accession talks in 1999”(Moses 1998:152). As it could be inferred, having access to NATO dialogues and partnership plans did not accelerate Romanian democratization any more than was expected. In the long term however, remarkable progress is being made.

5.3 Fears of Territorial Security Loss

This section examines one of the reasons that, from my perspective, played a significant role for Romania in pursuing dialogue with NATO in the mid-1990s. As it appears clear from Romanian historical record, the recurrent motive behind Romanian alliances is “territorial integrity.” Romanian Prime Minister Petre Roman, who previously initiated the dialogue with NATO, while announcing his candidacy for the presidency in the Transylvanian city Tirgu Mures¹²⁷ in mid-August 1999, introduced a manifesto titled “Message to Transylvania” in which he called for cooperation among Romanian and Hungarian minority, stressing that “no one questions Romania’s territorial integrity today.”¹²⁸ Moreover, Emil Constantinescu in a speech addressed before the House of Representatives on July 15, 1998 acknowledged that

In this new and democratic historical adventure, the transition from totalitarian regimes to democracy... the idea of joining NATO did not merely grew out of a need to be a part of a defensive military alliance...issues that have seemed impossible to solve, both within and between the various Eastern European countries, can now find a solution through joint Democratic exercise that has replaced the harsh logic of confrontation by dialogue and cooperation. Let us imagine for just one moment that European stage after the fall of communism, had NATO gotten frozen in its original project, leaving the East of Europe prey to violence and chaos. What would there have been left of Eastern Europe? (*Address By His Excellency H.E. Emil Constantinescu, President of Romania, House of Representatives July 15, 1998.*)

This chapter is divided into two sections, the first is designated as a brief historical overview of the circumstantial factors that motivated Romania to request dialogue with NATO, and the second is occupied by an analytical interpretation of these factors through the lenses of alliance formation theory. For this endeavor, I use Stephen Walt’s (1987) balance of threat theoretical approach to assess whether Romania sought the alignment with NATO in order to balance a superior power and a perceived threat to territorial

¹²⁷ The city where the ethnic clash occurred in March 1990.

¹²⁸ See the entire article of Michael Shafir “Transylvania’s ‘Cosi Fan Tutte’”. 8 September 1999. *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*.

security rather than pursuing democratization or western identity. This assessment will confirm whether Walt's (1987) prediction that "states seek allies to balance threats rather than power" is supported by the reviewed evidence. Alistair Millar and Tasos Kokkinides cited in July 1997 a very interesting fragment in their publication about *NATO Expansion and the Excluded Countries*. This fragment is provided below and is taken from the "White Book"¹²⁹ that was released by the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Office.

If only one of them [Hungary, Romania] is able to see her aspiration fulfilled, there is no doubt that the other would feel frustrated, with a negative impact on the domestic political scene. If this happens, the process of rapprochement and partnership-building between Romania and Hungary could be slowed down, if not compromised all together. The impact on all political leaders who worked hard to accomplish a major breakthrough in the Romanian-Hungarian relations could be serious even devastating. Thus, the ground would be prepared for those nationalistic and extremist politicians who opposed all along the development of normal partnership between Romania and Hungary" ("Basic Notes on NATO Expansion and the Excluded Countries: A New Division in Europe. *European Security Publications*. July 1997).

Critics regarding Romanian, western aspirations, like Elizabeth Pond (2001) mention that "Iliescu's post-communist network sought NATO membership in the mid 1990s in part for the cachet, and in part to get financial and organizational help to modernize Romanian armed forces" (Pond 2001:36). Ion Iliescu made a speech to the WEU Parliamentary Assembly in Paris on 29 November suggesting that "Romania was striving to solve its security problems efficiently within a coherent European system...NATO was the main institution capable of effectively ensuring the necessary political and security guarantees" (*The British Broadcasting Company*).¹³⁰ Former U.S. Ambassador to Romania, Moses (1998) suggests that "after years of stalled negotiation and intense U.S. lobbying efforts,

¹²⁹ "White Book on Romania and NATO," released by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania, 1997.

¹³⁰ See "President Iliescu in Paris-President Iliescu Addresses WEU Parliamentary Assembly." *BBC Monitoring Service: Central Europe & Balkans*. December 1, 1994.

the signing in 1996 of the Romanian-Hungarian bilateral treaty was, for the region, comparable to the German-French reconciliation after the Second World War” (Moses 1998: 143). Donald R. Falls (2000) notes regarding the Romanian bilateral treaty signed with Hungary¹³¹ that “the matter of ethnic discord will not be dealt with simply by the stroke of a pen.” Falls’s (2000) assertion is based on the Romanian government admission in the “White Book” that “History bears proof that whenever Romania and Hungary were included in the same security arrangement, their relationship, though most of the time uneasy, was at least non-conflictual” (Falls 2000:20). It is interesting to note that from the perspective of some of the Romanian elder generation, the west was associated for a long time with the “Yalta betrayal” or with the big U.S. disappointment.¹³² The Romanian people put much faith in the power of the U.S. to discipline Russia and free Romania from the Soviet influence. However, after Yalta the war veterans’ generation particularly expressed great disappointment in U.S. actions for overlooking Romania.

Trust was of great value to the Romanian people but after the dismantling of communism it became unpredictable. Regarding the combination of restoring democracy in Romania and the Soviet influence, Stephen Fischer-Galati (1998) notes that at the conclusion of the Second World War “it is true that the Americans regarded the presence of Russians in Romania as more temporary than did the British, who were fully prepared to commit Romania to Soviet domination in the fall of 1944” (Fischer-Galati 1998:499).

¹³¹ The Hungarian-Romanian Treaty began in May 1991 and was concluded after long debates on September 16, 1996 under Iliescu’s government.

¹³² The “Yalta betrayal” refers to the meeting of three world leaders: Joseph Stalin, Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt in Yalta, Crimea on 4 February 1945, in order to establish the future governance of post war Germany and the assignment of eastern territories like Romania to the Soviet sphere of “democratic” influence.

As mentioned in previous chapters, Romanian territory was confronted during the centuries by the domination of three big empires: the Ottoman, the Russian and the Habsburg Empires. Transylvania, the territory located in the central and northwestern part of Romania, was for a long time under the Habsburg rule and it still remains a subject of dispute from the perspective of minorities' autonomy that live in this region.

The struggle for Transylvanian sovereignty occupies a great period in Romanian history and it can be traced back to the tenth century when the Habsburgs began their gradual occupation of this region. The first political unification of three Romanian territories—Transylvania, Wallachia and Moldova—was achieved in 1600 under Michael the Brave. It is interesting to mention that after the decline of the Ottoman Empire and the Treaty of Carlowitz in 1699, Transylvania went back under Habsburg power and maintained its autonomy only until 1867 when, for the first time, it was unified with the Hungarian Monarchy.

Evidence regarding conflicts of cohabitation date back to 1848 when Romanians of Transylvania opposed the union with Hungary in a “National Petition” at Blaj, demanding national rights and equality of Romanian people with the other nationalities from Transylvania (Treptow 1996:272). With the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy on 1 December 1918, Transylvania achieved its unity with other principalities of Romania and formed the Romanian unitary state. The union of Transylvania with Romania was recognized at Versailles on 4 June 1920 when at the Grand Trianon Palace the treaty between the Entente Powers and Hungary was signed (Treptow 1996:207). It can be inferred that since Transylvania was under the Habsburg influence for such a long time, the Habsburg identity and culture was naturally developed and preserved in this

region. Therefore, there was no need for the Hungarian minority population to learn the Romanian language or to conform to Romanian rules and customs since for a long time Transylvania benefited from considerable administrative freedom. Reports on Eastern Europe in 1990 reveal that “in 1947 there were some 1800 Hungarian schools in Romania, and that by 1980 there were only between 12 and 108 schools that offered courses in the Hungarian language” (Larrabee 1990:82).

Stephen Larrabee (1990) suggests that in Transylvania the number of Hungarian language schools declined under Ceausescu, as did the number of institutions of advanced learning where subjects were taught in Hungarian. The decline has to do, in his view, with Ceausescu’s policy of forced assimilation or “Romanization” in many Transylvanian cities. Although, there is clear evidence that Ceausescu’s systematization policy affected not only Transylvanian cities but many other Romanian regions, in which a great number of churches that played a distinctive role for Romanian identity and culture were demolished.

After communism collapsed in the 1990s, the Hungarian minority from Transylvania reacted to the event and started demanding more cultural and language freedoms such as the reintroduction of the Hungarian language in their instructional curriculum, to preserve the language in schools and universities. Tensions between the Hungarian minority and a freshly installed neo-communist government captured the attention of the international media and reached a climax in March when an ethnic incident broke out in the Transylvanian city Tirgu Mures, where the percentage of

Hungarian minority is the lowest compared with other cities from counties like Harghita or Covasna.¹³³

Testimonies regarding this event reveal that the ethnic clash between Hungarians and Romanians started on 19 March 1990 in the Transylvanian city Tirgu Mures. However, the history related to the origination of the clash remains a mysterious one even today, especially in terms of who instigated and perpetuated this conflict. From this study's perspective, it is important to remark that this was an incident of minority rights that transformed into a big issue, which began not only to accentuate Romania's damaged image in the west regarding minorities but to shake recently gained Romanian stability. On one side, Hungarians claim that the clash broke out when the ethnic Hungarians of Tirgu Mures held a candle-light protest to draw the attention of the new government to review the promised restoration of the banned institutions of education, whose language of learning was Hungarian (*Hungarian National Council of Transylvania*. 4 March 2005).

From the Romanian perspective, the incident broke out when the Hungarian minorities marched in the Transylvanian cities during the Hungarian holiday, 142 years of commemoration since the 1848 revolution. According to Romanian sources, Hungarian minorities started a marched protest with Hungarian flags, singing Hungarian provocative songs and shouting Hungarian slogans, while rumors emerged that Hungarians were responsible for the damage of two statues of the most prominent figures in Romanian history and from the 1848 revolution respectively; the statues of Avram

¹³³ According to the 1992 census in Tirgu Mures, the Hungarian minority accounts for 41.4 per cent of the 252, 651 inhabitants.

Iancu and Nicolae Balcescu (*Libertatea and The Associated Press*. 21 March 1990).¹³⁴

The Helsinki Human Rights Watch records regarding this incident “that divergences between Hungarians and Romanians began to escalate in January 1990 when Hungarians started demanding more cultural and educational freedom, among them being the reestablishment of the Hungarian language at all educational levels” (*Human Rights Watch on Romania*).

In order to get a more adequate picture of the events surrounding the beginning dialogue with NATO it is important to mention that at the beginning of the 1990s Romania was facing major domestic instabilities and political and economic changes. Ion Iliescu, a former communist leader, served as interim president of Romania until May 1990, when his ‘populist’ National Salvation Front won “the free and fair elections.” Hitherto, anti-communist demonstrations started in Bucharest since 12 January and continued sporadically during the first and second mandate of the Iliescu government. It is also important to note that, in the political sector, confusion was dominant even among the neo-communists who took power, and this apparently had fueled even more Romanian instability in the international arena.

According to what *The Economist* captured in January regarding demonstrations, it appears that “thousands of Romanians gathered in front of the National Salvation Front’s headquarters in Victory Square angry about the preponderance of communists in the government and suspicious that the new government was too soft on the murderous secret police, the “Securitate” (*The Economist*, 20 January 1990).¹³⁵ The news agency

¹³⁴ See “Ethnic Violence in Romania Latest Manifestation of Ancient Feud.” *The Associated Press*. 21 March 1990; “Ethnic Clashes Continue in Romania.” *New York Times Abstracts*. 23 March 1990. And “Romania Declares Local Emergency.” *The Washington Post*. 22 March 1990.

¹³⁵ See “Troubling Times in Romania.” *The Economist*. 20 January 1990.

notes that when the new administration acolytes Petre Roman, the Prime Minister, and Ion Iliescu the President tried to calm the crowd Dumitru Mazilu, a new government official, joined the chorus chanting “down with the communists,” and “death for death.” From the western perspective, and especially from the U.S., reactions were numerous and increasingly negative. The U.S. State Department took important actions vis-à-vis the government newly installed in Romania. It started with recalling the Ambassador to Romania for consultations in Washington just nine days before May elections, and it continued with boycotting the inauguration ceremony of Iliescu (*The Associated Press*. 22 May 1990).¹³⁶

The Washington administration declared that this was “a way to express concern over irregularities regarding the acts of intimidation against government opposition running in the 20 May elections” (*The Globe*. 11 May 1990).¹³⁷ Other western diplomats expressed vis-à-vis the event in an immediate interview that “the Romanian government is embarrassed and angered by Washington recalling its ambassador nine days before the country’s first free elections for 50 years” (*Reuters News*. 10 May 1990).¹³⁸ Romanian Prime Minister Petre Roman on the same occasion disclosed for media that “the U.S. action was contradictory” with the discussion that had occurred a week ago between himself and U.S. Ambassador Alan Green. During that meeting Roman claimed that he was questioned by Green regarding the electoral campaign, candidates and access to the media, but the meeting ended cordial.¹³⁹ Important to remark is that the U.S. administration had strongly deplored the Romanian government’s attempt to use force

¹³⁶ See “Senator Criticizes Romania Government’s Election Behavior.” *The Associated Press*. 22 May 1990 and “Irregularities in Romania prompt U.S. Envoy’s Recall.” *The Globe and Mail*. 11 May 1990.

¹³⁷ See “Bush Administration Condemns Government Tactics in Romania.” *The Globe*. 11 May 1990.

¹³⁸ See “U.S. Recalls Ambassador to Romania for Consultations.” *Reuters News*. 10 May 1990.

¹³⁹ “U.S. Envoys Recall Embarrasses Romania.” *Reuters News*. May 11, 1990.

against demonstrators.¹⁴⁰ More than acknowledging publicly that the government in Romania is illegitimate, the U.S. Ambassador blamed the Romanian President for “inspiring vigilante violence in the capital a week before elections and acknowledged that the country’s progress towards democracy had come to a halt.”¹⁴¹ Total confusion with the U.S. was captured in an interview given by Romanian Foreign Minister Romulus Neagu that praised early in February the Soviet Union support and disapproved that of the American Administration by saying that “the U.S. government had done nothing to support the new government except send humanitarian aid, for which Romania is very thankful” (*Reuters News*. 8 February 1990). He also claimed that Romanians feel that “the U.S. as well as all other countries in the world have a stake in the democratic process in Romania, and that we deserve their support in this tremendous process.”¹⁴²

The fragile administration of Iliescu was confronted with different economic sanctions coming from western administrations. It is essential to note that despite the stability and social peace established in Romania in the second half of the 1990s, some critics note that the U.S. Department of State maintained its position regarding Romania by issuing a travel advisory for Romania, effectively discouraging investment, tourism, and communications with the west in general” (Treptow 1996:563).¹⁴³

Regarding the Hungarian minority issue, incisive declarations were made at that time against interim Hungarian President Matyas Szuroes by the Romanian government, accusing him of pressing the conflict by urging Hungarians from Romania “to intensify

¹⁴⁰ “U.S. Displeasures the Use of Force against Demonstrators in Romania.” *Reuters News*. June 14, 1990.

¹⁴¹ “U.S. Ambassador Says Iliescu Incited Violence.” *Reuters News*. June 18, 1990.

¹⁴² “Romania Unhappy at U.S. Response to New Regime, Praises Moscow.” *Reuters News*. February 8, 1990.

¹⁴³ According to Treptow the travel advisory was removed only in 1995, five years after Romania began its dialog with NATO.

in their activity, and to organize themselves according to the idea that Transylvania will be a native Hungarian land” (*The Associated Press*. 21 March 1990).¹⁴⁴ Pressure from the Hungarian administration was put in a letter written to Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar by the Hungarian Foreign Minister Gyula Horn that “asked the international community and the U.N. to take effective measures...to protect the individual and collective of the largest minority of Europe” (*The Associated Press*. 20 March 1990).¹⁴⁵ A series of responses came from the U.S. that urged Romania to reject the extremist groups and to end the ethnic violence. After leadership in the Mures County was replaced by the Iliescu government for failing to prevent the incident and the meeting of Romanian Prime Minister Petre Roman with representatives from areas affected by this clash, the Romanian government issued a statement denying the previous accusation made about Hungarian government. “It is not true that...citizens from Hungary incited the ethnic Hungarian violence” (*The Associated Press*. 23 March 1990).¹⁴⁶

It is relevant, vis-à-vis this incident, to note that the Romanian Prime Minister initiated a sense of collaboration with Hungary asking for help from the Hungarian government in order to avoid exacerbating the conflict. The Hungarian government answered promptly after the Hungarian minority from Transylvania obtained the reintroduction of the Hungarian language in their schools and expanded their rights of cultural expression. However, tensions continued to persist internationally even after this incident was over. Apparently, the Romanian population raised suspicions from the event, and when asked replied that “Romanians from Transylvania continued to fear that

¹⁴⁴ “Romania Says Hungary Incites Ethnic Tensions.” *The Associated Press*. 21 March 1990

¹⁴⁵ “50,000 Rally in Solidarity With Romania’s Ethnic Hungarians.” *The Associated Press*. 20 March 1990.

¹⁴⁶ “Romania Backtracks on Accusations Against Hungary.” *The Associated Press*. 23 March 1990.

a campaign by ethnic Hungarians for education in their own language is a veiled push for autonomy or even union with Hungary, although Hungary denied these assertions” (*The Associated Press*. 21 March 1990).¹⁴⁷ I continue this section with an examination vis-à-vis Romanian territoriality.

5.4 The Size of the Romanian Threat

According to John J. Mearsheimer (1994), after the disappearance of bipolarity and the end of the Cold War, conflicts increased due to states struggles to provide for their security (Mearsheimer 1994:13). Romanians knew that the west represented freedom, democracy, and economic changes, although Iliescu’s government at the beginning of 1990 “campaigned with slogans against party politics and western capitalism.”¹⁴⁸ But in the mid 1990s, despite all the tense relations with the U.S. regarding minority rights, halted democratization and interruption of economic aid, the Romanian government requested political dialogue with NATO and wanted to become a part of the American alliance.

There were other international organizations like the Council of Europe, the European Union and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) that belonged to the west that could help Romania reconstruct its identity if this was the desired motive that Romania was pursuing. However, evidence appears to gather theoretically around another aspect, the fear of losing control over Transylvania that coerced Romania to begin its journey in the west with NATO. Important to remark is

¹⁴⁷ See “Ethnic Violence in Romania Latest Manifestation of Ancient Feud.” *The Associated Press*. 21 March 1990.

¹⁴⁸ See “Europeanization without Decommunization: a case of elite conversion.” By Alina Mungiu-Pippidi in David Phinnemore’s book “The EU & Romania: Accession and Beyond.”

that the Council of Europe was open only to democratic states and Romania was far from democratic. In fact, Romania was admitted as a full member in this institution on 7 October 1993 due to delays caused by its “human rights record and doubts of democratization” (Barany 2003:149). The European Union (EU) was only open to parliamentary democracies that met certain economic standards, “since the EU was perceived as the creator and guarantor of a level of prosperity not available anywhere in the East” (Linden 2000: 126).

Romania was far from meeting these economic standards since it had been isolated for so long from the west. NATO, on the other hand, represented for Romania “security” that was embodied in Article 5 of the NATO Treaty which stated that “an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all” (*NATO Handbook* 1995: 232). NATO’s criteria for admission revolved around “democracy, individual liberty and rule of law,” although no precise measurement was instituted regarding these three factors and the leisure of discretion rested with the Alliance member countries. Romania was aware of Hungarian ambitions to integrate with the west and its potential when it came to settling territorial and ethnic disputes with its neighbors.¹⁴⁹

In my view, Romania approached NATO first from suspicions of threats coming from Hungary regarding Transylvania and secondly, perhaps from fear of the U.S. passive capacity of involvement in European affairs such as setting the tone for economic aid,¹⁵⁰ ability to freeze aid due to dissatisfaction regarding minorities or religious rights,

¹⁴⁹ See Thomas Ambrosio (2000): “Preventing Hungarian Irredentism through Western Integration.” *Seton Hall Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations*; or his book “Irredentism: Ethnic Conflict and International Politics” (2000).

¹⁵⁰ When the U.S. had stopped the non-humanitarian aid to Romania, the European countries stopped too.

power to influence other westerners to perceive the Romanian government as illegitimate and authoritarian due to suspicions regarding elections, free media and free speech. Through my perspective, all of these factors accumulated in the first half year of Iliescu`s mandate prompted Romania to begin collaboration with NATO.

My perspective appears to convolute with that of Linden (2000) when he suggests that NATO represented for Eastern European countries a new promoter of security that prompted “states to pursue peaceful policies among each other, commit each other to settling rather than replaying old conflicts and abide by the system that is set to settle present and future disputes” (Linden 2000:126). Barany (1996) notes, vis-à-vis external threats, that during the 1990s “in public opinion polls most Romanians identify Russia and Hungary as the two sources of external threat to their country” (Barany 1996: 137). A representative of Romanian Defense Policy acknowledged in an interview with Barany (1996) that the justification of these feelings relates to historical animosities that existed between Romania and these countries. Barany (1996) also notes that perhaps the former Romanian secretary might have referred to the potential of ethnic Hungarian insurrection supported by Budapest when he declared in a 1994 news conference that “the main danger threatening Romania is not coming from outside, but from inside subversion (Barany 1996:137).

As noted, Romanian response to the U.S. [e.g. economic aid cut, increased refusal to grant the status of the MFN and intolerance of how Romanian government handled minority rights] was a “positive” one by requesting to begin dialoguing with NATO consciously aware that all the decisions rested with Washington. In my view, Romania hoped that this request for dialogue was to materialize into keeping Romanian territory

intact. Walt's (1987) balance of threat theory mentions that a motive for alliance may be bandwagoning that usually occurs when "a state is weak, when few or no allies are available, and when the outcome of a conflict appears certain" (Walt 1987: 28-32).

Although Walt (1987) suggests that this kind of behavior, [bandwagoning] is rare, he argues that a state is more likely to ally with its primary threat when the noted conditions are prevalent. Threat, in Walt's (1987) view, is conceived as the distribution of aggregate power that is defined in terms of a state's total resources [i.e., population, industrial and military capability, technological prowess, etc.]. Important to note is that both Hungary and Romania did not start from a level field in these sectors; Romania was leading only in terms of population. If numerically Romania was superior to Hungary, at the political, economic and military level it lagged very far behind. In contrast to Romania, in Hungary's democratization began consolidation when the Hungarian Democratic Forum (HDF) won a plurality in the spring of 1990 (Linden 2000:128). Since the economic reform in Hungary began before 1989, Hungary got a comparative advantage over Romania, when in 1990 its early reforms gained momentum, and "the country became the darling of western investors."

Linden (2000) notes that Hungarian Jozsef Antall, in contrast to Iliescu, was for "joining the west" while preserving the "Hungarian" tradition for the Hungarian population living outside the Hungarian borders (Linden 2000:128). According to some Hungarian perspectives, Hungarian attempt to reconstruct Romanian image in Western Europe reached its climax when western community accused Hungary for being a destabilizing factor in central Europe rather than a supportive one. Tensions between the two countries appear to intensify when Antall administration announced its ambitions to

integrate Hungary into the western community such as the EU and NATO concomitant with providing political help for Hungarian minorities living abroad.

Barany (2003) mentions regarding Romanian and Hungarian tensions that “in 1991, the former Romanian ministry of defense Victor Stanculescu convinced Romanian legislature to increase the military budget in part to counter the military threat from Hungary” (Barany 2003:1370). More interesting from this perspective is that Romania was already left after communism with a huge and obsolete military. With a view on territorial security, after the “Basic Treaty” was signed in 1996 between Romania and Hungary, Petre Roman, former Romanian Prime Minister, acknowledged a few years later that “the Romanian Hungarian partnership could be viewed as the core of the process of consolidating security in southeast Europe” (*Petre Roman Speech at Windrow Wilson Center*. January 27, 2000). It is worth mentioning here that the basis of this treaty regarded mutual respect of territorial integrity and ethnic minority rights in both countries according to European and international standards, and this was brought to light in the Romanian government.

From the theoretical perspective, Walt (1987) suggests that aggregate power, industrial and military capability, in this sense, can constitute a great motive for states to either balance or bandwagon. In his view, the proximate threat factor can influence states to balance or bandwagon by creating specific zones or “spheres of influence.” Although Walt (1987) argues that “the ability of a state to project power declines with distance,” it is interesting to note that in the case of Romania this was valid only regarding the threat coming from Hungary and not the power of influence projected by the U.S. The U.S. projected its powerful influence from the other side of the Atlantic Ocean through its

public discourses. Discourses of U.S. officials visiting Romania appeared less threatening since they were made on Romanian soil. For instance, during his visit in Romania on 11 February 1990 James Baker announced that “the future of American-Romanian relations will depend on Bucharest’s willingness to move rapidly towards greater democratization, religious freedom, protection of human rights and the rights of minorities.”¹⁵¹ Apparently, the absence of westerners in Romania was more threatening for Romanian government than their verbal threats.

Walt (1987) suggests that “states bordering a great power may choose to bandwagon rather than balance, especially if this powerful neighbor has demonstrated its ability to compel obedience” (Walt 1985:11). Hungarian actions like those of asking the UN, the Security Council¹⁵² and other western governments to intercede with Romanian authorities in favor of ethnic Hungarian minorities appeared for Romania to constitute an offensive capability of Hungary and an incentive for Romania to seek an alliance with NATO. The threat perceived by Romania from Hungary was legitimate in some ways since after a month from the resolution of the incident, Hungarian Prime Minister Jozsef Antall insisted French President Mitterrand “ask Romania to respect the human rights of ethnic Hungarians in Romania; although he made clear that he did not want to see Romania either boycotted or isolated” (*Reuters News*. 22 June 1990).¹⁵³ After all, in the mid 1990s the Hungarian administration was well received in the west compared to Romania.

Moreover, Tom Lantos, born in Hungary, who served as a democratic representative in the U.S. Congress before and during 1990, became a vehement

¹⁵¹ See foot note 9 in Harrington *et.al.*

¹⁵² See “Hungary Appeals to UN over clashes in Transylvania.” *The Times*. March 21, 1990.

¹⁵³ See “Hungarian Premier Asks French Help For Minorities in Romania.” *Reuters News*. 22 June 1990.

opponent of Romanian treatment towards Hungarian minorities. Lantos was a U.S. Congressman (D-CA), who previously assured Ceausescu during his visits in Romania that “Hungarians were not more persecuted than were Romanians.” Lantos played a significant role in constructing the Romanian minority image in the west and granting Romania the MFN status. Romanian media accused Lantos of double standards since his attitude towards Romania changed 180 degrees during and after the Ceausescu regime.

In Barany`s (1996) own words “in September 1992 the U.S. House of Representatives overwhelmingly (283 to 88) defeated the Administration-backed bill to restore Most Favored Trade Status to Bucharest” (Barany 1996:143). In Romania many critics argued that Lantos was instrumental when it came to help Romania restore its “Most Favored Nation” status.¹⁵⁴ Although things appeared great for Hungary at the beginning of 1990, Hungary seems to have fallen into its own trap when, after numerous attempts to denigrate the Romanian image in the west based on Romanian violation of the Hungarian minority rights issue. However, Hungary succeeded in keeping Romania apart from the Council of Europe until 1993.

Walt (1987) suggests that “perceptions of intent play a crucial role in alliance choices” (Walt 1987:26). In this sense, Thomas Ambrosio (2000) argues that “because of Hungary’s past behavior, its neighbors perceive any act of concern over the faith of its diaspora as a sign of nascent irredentism” (Ambrosio 2000:41). For Romania, Hungarian intentions to preserve Hungarian diaspora culture and language in other territories became threatening when they were associated with the word “autonomy.” There are

¹⁵⁴ See “Tom Lantos-portret neretusat” in Romanian press: Ziuia in No. 3742, Sambata 30 Septembrie 2006.

<http://www.ziua.ro/display.php?data=2006-09-30&id=208304>

speculations that Hungary, through its own cultivated lobby team in combination with the generous help of Lantos, had managed to create a Hungarian “sphere of influence” in the west. From the Waltian perspective, Hungarian substantial power of political stability, economic and military influence was capable of pressuring a state such as Romania to adopt a balancing behavior against Hungarian threats by allying with others against the prevailing threat.

Romanian behavior was based on two factors: one, Romanian awareness that it could alter Hungarian intentions with the help of NATO and two, Romanian realization that by relying on NATO it could avoid becoming a victim of Hungarian offensive intentions because members from a military alliance like NATO do not attack each other. However, as many critics pertaining to Walt (1987) suggest, the dichotomy between balancing and bandwagoning behavior appears to intertwine in terms of power and threats. In his balance of threat theory, Walt (1987) suggests that “states prefer to balance against the threat rather than bandwagon with it” (Walt 1987:263). Concerning territorial security, Romanian military scholars argue that “the PfP program was the closest thing to a security guarantee that Romania could obtain from any quarter, since, in case a country felt threatened, *active* participation in the PfP provided access to Article 4 of the Washington Treaty” (Pascu 2004:2).¹⁵⁵

Walt (1987) contends that the distribution of threats under forms of aggregate power, proximity, offensive capability, and perceived intentions compels a state to form alliances (Walt 1988:281). Romania experienced the practice of Hungarian “aggregate power” in a very competitive way. With respect to Hungarian state resources like industrial and military capabilities, they were more superior and westernized than were

¹⁵⁵ Italics in original.

Romanians. “As large a number as possible of Hungarian officers started to study at western military academies, and following their return they were appointed to key positions in their army (the commander and chief himself is a graduate of the U.S. Army War College)” (*NATO Parliamentary Assembly: Review on Hungary and Romania*. 21 October 1996). This was in contrast with what happened in Romania when Iliescu’s government negotiated training periods for Romanian officers in Soviet schools.

The proximity factor conforms to Walt’s (1987) theoretical prescription although “the ability of a state to project power does not decline with distance” for Romania as Walt (1987) assumed. In the Romanian case the ability to project power was indirectly proportional with distance. In spite of numerous U.S. attempts to discipline Romanian government, Romanian elites asked for U.S. help in getting involved for the “symbolic meaning” between Romania and Hungary. Romanian Minister of Defense Gheorghe Tinca declared, regarding the possible friendship of Romania and Hungary, that “certainly it can be purchased off the shelf, but cooperation with a country like the United States has a symbolic meaning deeper than the purchase alone” (*The Associated Press*. 20 June 1995).¹⁵⁶

Walt’s (1987) prediction in this sense is supported only by the Hungarian case, but when it came to the influences coming from the U.S. regarding disappointments in the Romanian course of democracy, rule of law and respect for human and minority rights; they were deeply felt in Romania despite the geographic distance. The U.S. suspicions regarding the Hungarian event in Tirgu Mures and the government backed

¹⁵⁶ See “Romania, Hungary Ask Symbolic U.S. Help on Military Cooperation.” *The Associated Press*. 20 June 1995.

actions of the miners in Bucharest to stop anti-government demonstrations created suspicions for the European Union Community, Council of Europe and NATO.

Phinnemore (2006) notes that “the European Community delayed both Romania’s inclusion in the PHARE program and the conclusion of an agreement on trade and commercial and economic cooperation until later in 1990” (Phinnemore 2006:39). Walt (1987) argues that perceptions of intent are imperative in alliance choices. Despite the fact that in the mid 1990s Iliescu’s government continued to pursue an eastern foreign policy, the issue of Transylvania and the perceived intentions that the U.S. might interfere in the affairs in favor of Hungary constituted a strong motive to propel Romania to look obediently towards the U.S. since, with Russia, the interwar record was speaking volumes.

Walt’s (1987) balancing hypothesis suggests that “states ally *against* other states that threaten them—that is they balance.”¹⁵⁷ The Romanian case appears to conform to the description of balancing hypothesis when pursuing NATO membership. However, when taking into consideration that Hungary is a part of the same Alliance, the evidence is more compelling and inclined towards the bandwagoning hypothesis that predicts that “states ally *with* states that threaten them—that is they bandwagon.”¹⁵⁸ For Romania, the level of threat was higher, and the identity of threat was certain, which conforms to Walt’s (1987) theoretical predictions that Romania will tend to balance in these conditions.

However, according to the evidence, Romania balanced the Hungarian and the U.S. threats when it became a member of the NATO Alliance. According to Walt

¹⁵⁷ Walt’s definition of balancing. Italics in original.

¹⁵⁸ Italics in original.

(1987), Romania bandwagoned with NATO when it formed an alignment with the source of danger—that is the Hungarian threats and the U.S. influence. It is important to mention that in the balance of threat theory, Walt (1987) finds strong support for the balancing hypothesis and less for bandwagoning, although he underscores that bandwagoning is more characteristic to small states with limited opportunities for alliances. Walt (1987) finds modest support for the ideological perspective, which stipulates that states will form alliances according to their ideological affinities.

Also in his alliance quest, Walt (1987) found little support regarding foreign aid that attracts allies or political penetration that facilitates alliances. From the ideological perspective, it is important to note that former Romanian Prime Minister Petre Roman suggested four years prior to Romania gaining full membership in NATO that “what still separates Romania from the west and the former east is not so much a matter of mentality and capacity of producing wealth as it is the degree of structuring and organizing our societies” (*Speech Given by Petre Roman at Woodrow Wilson Center. 27 January 2000*). Walt (1987) suggests that “the more similar states are, the more they are likely to ally” (Walt 1987:33).

However, since NATO represents a combination of west and east or a combination of states that favor respect for human rights and respect for collective rights respectively, it appears clear that from the Romanian perspective, the values and norms of NATO did not play a significant role in Iliescu’s first mandate when dialog with NATO was pursued, since Iliescu was more inclined towards Moscow than Washington. As noted, NATO was calling for countries which had respect for “common values, human rights, democracy and rule of law” these culminated in a portrayal of a unifying

ideology. Walt (1987) suggested that “states will be more likely to follow their ideological preferences when they will be fairly secure” (Walt 1987:38). There is great evidence in the Romanian case that after 1994, Romanian elites changed their political discourse regarding membership in NATO. Elites increasingly spoke regarding how Romania joined a system that has very well defined values. Iliescu, a former communist leader, announced that Romania had returned to Europe, since, “a pluralist political system was allowed, a new Constitution was enacted in 1991, fundamental freedoms, respect for minorities and division of power among legislative, executive, and judicial branches was instituted” (*Iliescu`s Speech delivered at Woodrow Wilson*).

In my perspective, Romania felt a sense of military solidarity with the west when it signed up and was accepted in the PfP program in 1994. Since NATO practices a unifying ideology, it is important to remark that most of the evidence in the Romanian case suggests that Romania initially asked for NATO membership because of security threats. Insecurities regarding U.S. involvement in pressing Romania to recognize Hungarian minorities’ autonomy in Transylvania motivated Romania more greatly than ideological affinities. In fact, Walt (1987) suggests that “security considerations are likely to take precedence over ideological preferences” (Walt 1987:38). It is interesting that relative to this Walt (1987) argues that “ideological based alliances are unlikely to survive when more pragmatic interests intrude” (Walt 1987:38). As this evidence suggests, ideology played a tertiary role in motivating Romania to begin political dialogue with NATO.

Regarding the foreign aid hypothesis, the evidence suggests that this might have played a secondary role in Romania’s case only because Romania attempted numerous

times to restore the MFN status, and that all the aid coming from the west was blocked due to Romanian irregularities in its human rights record. However, it appears relevant that western aid played a secondary role over security since Iliescu had a safety net preserved with the East and Middle East. From another perspective, despite the fact that when the Ceausescu regime was dismantled and Romanian foreign debt was paid off, Romania was faced with an inefficient industry, no foreign investment and no market economy, a western model economy would have enhanced Romania. However, NATO was a military alliance, and its main purpose was to serve countries as a security asset. At the beginning of 1990, Romania started to depend heavily on the International Monetary Found (IMF).

However, like all western institutions, “IMF demanded spending cuts in all industrial fields, controls on the budget deficit, limits to foreign borrowing, and the immediate closure of indebted state companies” (Barany 2003:134). These restrictions proved detrimental to the Romanian population, which was accustomed to being permanently employed. There were no alternative educational programs designed to help people transition to new jobs. Popular depression and demonstrations became the norm during the transition to democracy in Romania during 1990. In the international arena, Romanian domestic unrests were perceived with greater interest and suspicion. Many still argue that Romania faced a kind of authoritarianism regime. The positive aspect in all of this is that the European Community was perceptive to the situation and acted on time to prevent “Romania from staying as Albania or becoming a new Belarus” (Mungiu-Pippidi 2006:28). Regarding the political penetration hypothesis, the evidence suggests that Hungary tried to construct the Romanian image in the west according to its political

and economic interests. Tom Lantos, a democratic congressman, had a greater influence on how Washington perceived Romania. After a brief visit in Eastern Europe, and refusal of Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar to meet with him, Lantos stopped in Romania in November, where he received a warm welcome. At his return to Washington he declared that “I am very pleased with my visit to Romania.

I found very encouraging developments towards a democratic and open society, and it is my intention to recommend to President Clinton that Romania be granted Most Favored Nation treatment” (*Reuters News*. 29 November 1992).¹⁵⁹ Only a few years later he was bragging in an interview broadcast on the Hungarian television that “he took on alone the war with Romania for the Hungarian benefit” (*Archive Ziua*. 30 September 2006). Lantos was generous enough to take a different turn and suggest to President Clinton that the MFN status be restored to Romania, the only country from the communist block that was delayed this privilege, do to the persecution of Hungarian minorities in Transylvania.

Lantos acknowledged that his favor to Romania was made “despite the fact that members of the minority left-wing government and of the opposition including the large ethnic Hungarian minority had asked me to reconsider my stand on Romania.”¹⁶⁰ Walt (1987) suggests that “the true causal relationship between transnational penetration and international alliances is often unclear” (Walt 1987:47). According to Walt (1987), circumstances and common interests play a greater role in this kind of alliance formation, and penetration is more effective in closed societies where the objectives are limited. Walt (1987) mentions that the last three hypotheses examined in his alliance formation

¹⁵⁹ See “U.S. Congressman favors MFN Status for Romania.” *Reuters News*. 29 November 1992.

¹⁶⁰ See: “U.S. Congressman favors MFN Status for Romania.” *Reuters News*. 29 November 1992.

investigation in the Middle East are rather weak causes in forming alliances, since a requirement first need to be met in order for any of these hypotheses to play a role.

That requirement is security, and in forming alliances, most states will need to find security plentiful. However, as Walt (1987) mentions “even great powers will view their security as precarious” (Walt 1987:49). As for the case of Romania, the evidence indicates that security interests played a greater role in the alliance with NATO than did economic or ideological affinities. Regarding foreign aid and political penetration, it may be assumed that for Romania, “aid” was conceived as an open door opportunity to begin pursuing dialogue with the western world, and in retrospect, this “open door” weighed more than money or other economic goods imported from the west because it helped Romania to escape from isolation, even though autonomy for the Hungarian minority is still a vibrant subject in Romania.

It is clear that for involvement in NATO, even as a half member, Romania had to gain influence in Eastern Europe, and with that influence to instinctively protect its integrity since the collapse of communism installed unpredictability. As Walt (1987) suggested, in these circumstances states will be prone to bandwagon with the U.S. rather than balance with the U.S. In Walt’s (1987) view, balancing is less likely to occur when (i) the states in question are too weak to alter the balance through their own actions, (ii) when effective allies are unavailable, and (iii) when the threatening power is believed to be appeasable. The case of Romania conforms to the balance of threat theory, although Walt (1987) warns that “bandwagoning is dangerous because it increases the resources available to a threatening power and requires placing trust in its continued forbearance”

(Walt 1987:29). He also suggests that “it is safer to balance against potential threats than to rely on the hope that a state will remain benevolently disposed” (Walt 1987:29).

Perhaps his assertion began to materialize with the reasoning that Romania did not recognize Kosovo’s independence and demanded that “international law be followed and the sovereignty of nation states be protected.” After all, Romania found its place into the western world in 2004 in NATO and in 2007 in the European Union. Theoretically Romania is part of the western decision. However, it remains for further investigation to determine how much of a decision making role Romania plays in this world.

5.5 Concluding Remarks

Critics that experienced life in both western democracy and post communist Romania argue that the transition period was so prolonged in Romania because “the power vacuum created by the fall of Ceausescu was not filled with dissidents and intellectuals (Moses 1998:137). Moreover, Ceausescu’s aim to pay off a foreign debt estimated at nine billion dollars “left the country impoverished and decapitalized.” After Communism, Romania was left disoriented and in the hands of former communists that were less interested in what a western model of democracy was supposed to mean or how it is supposed to function and more interested in managing the transfer of most of the state’s assets into their own banks. Indeed some may be right arguing that there was no tradition in reforming economies; although this is not an excuse for Romanian elites to have left Romania remain behind for so long. An inexperienced Romania had to reverse its mercy from Russia and trust international organizations such as the IMF or the World Bank,

which were providing financial assistance in exchange for stricter guidelines regarding what was supposed to be accomplished with that money.

After communism collapsed, Romania was confronted with an abundance of state owned enterprises and with skepticism of foreign investors. Moses (1998) notes that “while the flood of western assistance and investment washed over Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary has not been duplicated in Romania; while Hungary has attracted over 14 billion dollars in western investment, Romania has attracted less than 3 billion dollars” (Moses 1998:148). The kind of discipline the Ceausescu regime coerced from the Romanian people was rare and appears, from my perspective at least, to have similarities with what Kim Jong-Il practices in North Korea.

According to Tismaneanu and Tudoran (1993), the legacy of the Ceausescu regime can be imagined only in terms of “harsh Stalinist controls on social, cultural and economic life; an all pervasive cult of personality focused on the ruler; draconian austerity measures and an explosive combination of mass discontent and official brutality” (Tismaneanu and Tudoran 1993: 3). “A traumatized and ill-informed population” who did not know the benefits of opposition accepted the ideological manipulation of Ceausescu and subsequent leaders until Romania learned that there was an alternative. Schimmelfennig (1998) sees democratization achieved in Romania through NATO’s projection of norms and values by instigating the sense of community, the western community. He argues, in this sense, that NATO taught Hungary patience and disinclined Hungary from pursuing its irredentism desires through instruments such as the “basic treaty” agreements with neighboring countries. From the constructivists’

perspective, the interests of countries like Romania are inclined more towards socialization in NATO than maintaining territorial stability as Neorealists believe.

Adrian Severin (2006), a former Foreign Affairs Minister during 1996-1997, explained that what compelled Romania to look westward was a combination of these two threats—“the Russian expansionism and Hungarian ethno-nationalism” (Severin 2006:106). The ‘Far West’ according to Severin (2006) was the best option to connect with Germany, France and the U.K political affinities. The alliance with Hungary was materialized in a “strategy of partnership” under the blessings of the United States. Due to its geopolitical setting, located at the crossroad of interests [the U.S., EU, Russia and China], Romania will continue to serve as the pylon of equilibrium that balances the U.S. and other European powers. As it emerges from this examination, Romania has continued to preserve its defensive identity through the centuries, serving as a messenger of diplomacy even now into the 21st Century.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1 The Importance of this Case Study

The purpose of this exercise was to assess the validity of Stephen Walt's (1987) balance of threat theory by using Romania as a case study. The patterns of alliance formation were identified in the Fourth and Fifth Chapter of this project, and based on Romanian historical record in many aspects the case of Romania conforms to the predictions made by Walt (1987) that "balancing is not universal." Although Romania fits the profile of a weak state surrounded by no potential available allies, Romania did make the case for a country that would tend to balance frequently against threats. Romanian record indicates that the score of balancing and bandwagoning is tight or equally distributed; however, since the dichotomy between balancing and bandwagoning is obscure, a definitive line is hard to draw between the two.

Based on the conclusions taken from the historical analysis, Romania: (i) *balanced*¹⁶¹ Russian threats by *bandwagoning* with the Triple Alliance, (ii) *bandwagoned* with Russia against the Triple Alliance to gain Transylvania, (iii) tried to *balance* with proximate neighbors against Russian influence, (iv) *balanced* Russian threats and Hungarian irredentism by *bandwagoning* with Germany, (v) *bandwagoned* with Russia against the German subordination, (vi) while in the Warsaw Pact *balanced* with the west by denouncing Russia's war invasions, (vii) *balanced* with NATO against territorial threats, (viii) ended up *bandwagoning* with irredentist countries. Regarding the most recurrent motive of alliances, Romania did make the case for a country that allies frequently with the source of danger which is bandwagoning. Based on the patterns of alliances identified, Romania tends to bandwagon more and balance less when it comes

¹⁶¹ Emphases added.

to threats alone. Overall, the findings of this project suggest that Romania conforms to Walt's (1987) predictions, and that Romania will be inclined to bandwagon more when "the most threatening power appears to be appeasable" (Walt 1987:173).

The Romanian case conforms also to Walt's (1987) theory from the perspective that bandwagoning is the only option that is available for a small state since, due to its weakness and pressures, a state like Romania can do little to determine its fate, although geographically Romania is considered a middle size country in the European continent, from the economic perspective it is a country transitioning to a market economy.

In this study, Romania conveyed a balancing behavior in the peace time when it became an ally of Germany against the perceived threatening intentions of the Soviet Union, Bulgarian and Hungarian irredentism claims. In this study, the alliance with NATO however, revealed two different and very interesting perspectives: (i) Romania started this journey with an attempt of alignment *against* states that threatened Romania.¹⁶² The threats consisted of perceived intentions of Hungarian irredentism, and of fears of the U.S. power being involved in this issue due to Romanian defection records on human rights. According to Walt (1987), a balancing behavior describes an instance when "states ally *against* states that threaten them."¹⁶³ From the second perspective, Romania ended up in an alignment *with* the states that threatened Romania, which is a bandwagoning behavior in Waltian terms.¹⁶⁴

The two elements "power and threat" appear, in the Romanian case, to play an equal role and thus to contradict Walt's (1987) prediction that power and threat are

¹⁶² Emphasis added.

¹⁶³ Italics in original.

¹⁶⁴ Emphasis added.

independent factors.¹⁶⁵ Power and threat appear independent factors for Romania only in bandwagoning instances when Romania formed the alliance with the principal external threat. Important to remark is that in the Romania-NATO alliance, Romania balanced a threat, but also balanced at the anticipation of the U.S. power of involvement in Romanian affairs. Walt (1987) suggests that “states balance against threats not power” (Walt 1987:148). Romanian behavior of balancing occurs only when power is in the equation with threat. From another perspective, Romania is inclined to bandwagon more when its territorial security is threatened and to balance only when it feels secure. According to Walt (1987), this was to be expected since Romania is a weak state located geographically in a very politically distinctive environment.

The bandwagoning behavior became distinctive in the Romanian case only when threat alone was present. After validating Walt’s (1987) theory, it is interesting to note that regarding the motives behind the formation of the Romania-NATO alliance, in general, people believe that Romania deviated from its behavior and it wanted NATO membership in order to become part of the west. Nonetheless, it is logical that a country becomes part of the west when it is fully integrated in the western institutions since the western package brings a series of elements like western identity, democratization, and economic prosperity. Based on the Romanian historical record reviewed in this study, Romania since its independence appears preoccupied more with keeping its territorial integrity intact than with improving its economic status.

Although after communism collapsed Romania asked the U.S. to have its Most Favored Nation status restored, it appears clear that Romanian independence from the

¹⁶⁵ In “Testing Theories of Alliance Formation: The Case of Southwest Asia,” Walt argued that “states seek allies to balance *threats*, and that power is merely one element in their calculation-albeit an important one” (Walt 1988:280) (*italics in original*).

west began during the last period of Ceausescu's regime when it experienced a few years without the Most Favored Nation status and developed a kind of economic autonomy. When the request for this status came back negative numerous times based on combating ethnic minority discrimination in Romania, it only contributed to the increase of fear that the U.S. may decline to help Romania in a situation when the Hungarian minority, for instance, might ask for territorial autonomy in Transylvania.

An ardent influence on the economic status restoration was Hungarian born, and former U.S. Congressman, Tom Lantos who made a habit of opposing and bringing Hungarian minorities from Romania to address the U.S. House.¹⁶⁶ For this exercise I considered Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett's (2005) approach that "a researcher's treatment of a historical episode must be selectively focused in accordance with the type of theory that the investigator is attempting to develop" (George and Bennett 2005:70). Since my objective was to validate Walt's (1987) balance of threat theory, the evidence is compelling to mention in parenthesis that Romania did not abate from its historical path at the initiation of dialogue with NATO. Based on the grounds provided in this project, it appears clear according to political circumstances in 1990 that Romania was constantly concerned with its territories. The evidence regarding the atmosphere surrounding 1990 reveals that territorial security again became a preoccupation of Romanians when ethnic disputes erupted. Additionally, this evidence indicates that, in principle, this was the primary motive for why Romania attempted NATO collaboration.

The confusion and unpredictability from 1990 oriented Romania towards a new alliance, NATO being the only security organization that was capable of helping in case

¹⁶⁶ See H. Con. Res. 181; H.J. Res.512 and H. Con. Res. 186;

of territorial disputes. Former Head of Ministry of Defense, Ioan Mircea Pascu (2004), argues in *Perspectives of a Prospective NATO Member* that “gradually after being withdrawn from the Warsaw Pact, Romania became obsessed with the dangers of encirclement and became imprisoned by its exclusively territorial, defense-oriented thinking” (Pascu 2004:8). It is important to remark that NATO demanded a series of domestic reforms such as “the settlement and maintenance of good relationships with the neighboring countries” (*NATO Transformed* 2004:17). Based on Romanian historical records, it appears normal for Romania to ask a big security power like NATO to assist Romania when relationships with neighbors were unsettled or sensitive to settle.

Threats like the aggregate power, constituted a greater motive for Romania to balance by getting NATO on its side, although due to its vulnerabilities and economic backwardness Romania ended up in an alignment with the principal external threat in a bandwagoning position. NATO is a defensive alliance that respects prerogatives of international law which Romania always refers to when it comes to states and recognizing their territorial sovereignty. The proximate factor was a different source of threat in 1990 in Romania. However, “the ability of a state to project power” did not decline with the distance as Walt (1987) predicted. In fact it increased with distance.

The power of the U.S. perhaps to intervene in Romanian affairs was perceived greater than the Hungarian threat at the Romanian border that it may or it may not reclaim Transylvania. Thus, the offensive power was a threat especially when Romania perceived the Hungarians to have the ability to alter Romania’s image abroad. Evidence regarding proximity did not hold the same for Romanian case as Walt (1987) predicted. The “aggregate power” was a prevalent threat in Romanian-Hungarian competition to

integrate in western organizations. It is unclear whether this was an example of balancing, as Walt (1987) suggested, or bandwagoning. The effects of “aggressive intentions” explained why Romania ended up bandwagoning with Hungary. The ideological solidarity factor appears in the Romanian case to conform to Walt’s (1987) prediction that there is a “modest association between ideology and alignment.” Iliescu’s numerous attempts at rapprochement with the USSR after Ceausescu and Dej tried to distance from them proved very detrimental to Romania and its image abroad. However, due to negative messages coming from the west, this distance inspired Romania to reorient its foreign policy at the right time. More regarding westernization appears visible in discourses of Romanian elites after 1996 when supposedly, Romania broke ties with its communist past.

As the identified behavioral patterns reveal, Romania did not become an ally with Russia because of ideological affinities. On the contrary, Romania approached Russia, as well as France and Great Britain, when its status-quo was in jeopardy. Romania emerges from this study, as many scholars who experienced living in Romania and abroad will argue, “as a paradox,” a unique and unpredictable country when it comes to its territorial security, and most importantly to Transylvania. A distinct position taken by Romania within the Warsaw Pact indicates that Romania was not as opposed to western imperialism as many implied since it entertained economic relations with the west. Pascu (2004) argues that

Romania’s autonomy within the Warsaw Pact impacted Romania both positively and negatively: on the positive side Romania enjoyed broader and better relations with the west and developed a real capability for independent thinking in planning its own security while on the negative side, it became increasingly isolated and cut off from modernization process in the rest of the Warsaw Pact (Pascu 2004:8).

In this instance Romania was balancing Russian proximate power, aggressive intentions, and aggregate power. However, the tense relations between Romania and Russia appeared to have inflicted more paranoia in the Romanian dictator, Ceausescu which caused him to continue isolating his country from the entire world. Economic ideology through the MFN status appears to have kept the relationship between Romania and the west good for a long period of time.

Imperfect records of human rights, however, disqualified Romania from participating further in this alliance with the west. Precautionary measures were taken by Romania when the Cuban missile crises increased tensions between the U.S. and USSR. Always on the defensive, Romania made an important gesture by letting the U.S. know that Romania was not part of any acts that the USSR attempted in Cuba. Neutrality was a behavior frequently identified in Romanian historical records. It is significant to mention that when neutrality was broken it was on account of Russia's capacity to force Romania to comply in various situations.

The evidence in this case conforms to Walt's (1987) prediction that "states are ignoring ideological considerations when strict fidelity to them would be costly or dangerous" (Walt 1987:214). Also interesting is that the evidence captured in this study mentions that Iliescu's purpose was for a treaty of friendship with the USSR in the 1990s. According to Walt (1987) "the tendency for states with similar domestic systems to form effective alliances is greatest when they are fairly secure, when the ideology does not require that sovereignty be sacrificed, and when a rival movement creates a powerful threat to legitimacy" (217). The fact that Hungary opposed and publicly denounced Romanian relations with the USSR changed Romanian behavior 180 degrees, and a few

months later, in July 1990, after the interethnic clash in Tirgu Mures of March 1990, Romania requested political dialogue with NATO. A motive for why Romania might have attempted dialog with NATO was military aid, and this may be sustained by evidence appearing after 1994. In order to disqualify this as a motive for alliance, it is relevant to suggest two perspectives: (i) the Iliescu government was neo-communist and Soviet oriented believing in huge military forces.

NATO, from another perspective, was receiving countries that were more compatible with NATO militaristic orientations and who pursued democratic reforms, which for Romania was almost impossible to comprehend in 1990; (ii) Iliescu and his acolytes were less interested in integrating Romania with the west, or submitting Romania to such expanses when people in Romania were demonstrating against unemployment and were food deprived. As Walt (1987) suggests this study comes full circle in the sense that it takes us back to external threats and territorial security, two elements for which NATO was conceived, and two great motives that coerced Romania to look for an alliance in NATO. However, less evidence is found regarding the democratization motive at the origination of this alliance.

This aspect is more nuanced after Romania was fully integrated in the organization. Although the purpose of NATO was to reform the military sector, even in the year 2000 international media forces were still reporting issues of human rights neglect in Romania. From the perspective of democratization the fact that Romania signed, beginning in 1992, a series of treaties with its closest neighbors like Bulgaria, Hungary, and Serbia may bring sustainable evidence of democratization, even though it is

evident that the treaty with Hungary was a struggle.¹⁶⁷ As the former U.S. Ambassador Mosses suggested, it was an event similar with the beginning of friendship between France and Germany after the Second World War. Moreover, transnational penetration referring to “the establishment of informal avenues of influence with another state” conforms to Walt’s (1987) prediction that is not an effective instrument to form alliances. Walt (1987) argued that “penetration” or manipulation “is hard to detect; those who seek to manipulate other states in this way are unlikely to do so openly, and those who are affected by penetration may be reluctant to admit that foreign interference played a role in their alliance decision” (Walt 1987:242).

Walt (1987) indicated that sometimes “penetration can be counterproductive when a state tries to alter the target’s preferred alignment in an especially significant way” (Walt 1987:260). Facts regarding this hypothesis are reflected only by the Hungarian backlash from trying to construct the Romanian image and identity in the west; while coming under the radar of western community itself for producing instability rather than stability on the eastern flank.¹⁶⁸ “European values,” as Ambrosio (2000) notes, are adopted by countries aspirant to NATO when “good relations with neighbors are established” (Ambrosio 2000:42). According to evidence from this project, Romania was not considered a country that internalized European values, and thus democratization, until 1992.

Evidence regarding the U.S. based Romanian Diasporas that lobbied for Romanian integration with the west exists; however, its influence became prevalent after

¹⁶⁷ The Basic Treaty with Bulgaria in 1992; the 20-Year Friendship Treaty with Serbia in May 1996 and the Treaty of Reconciliation with Hungary on September 14, 1996 (Cartea Alba Romania-NATO).

¹⁶⁸ Read more about this in Corneliu Bjola: “NATO as a Factor of Security Community Building: Enlargement and Democratization in Central and Eastern Europe.” *East European Studies*. (The Woodrow Wilson Center). And in Thomas Ambrosio’s studies regarding Hungarian Irredentism.

1996 when “sameness” with the west became the norm for many former communist countries. Until then, security guarantees were, as suggested, the Romanian focus. The first time Romania faced its insecurities and the feeling of “the other” from its proximate neighbors internationally was in 1990 when Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia formed the Visegrad group and refused to take in Romania based on the fact that “Romania’s sluggishness in applying democratic reforms would hinder Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia in their goal of rapid European integration” (Popescu 2005:464). According to Romanian historical record, threats to territorial security were more important than obtaining a common identity within NATO or through NATO.

Romanian alliance choices were based, according to Walt (1987), on the assumptions that the allies were chosen to balance against the most serious threat. Like Walt (1987) predicted, bandwagoning will be the behavior confined to weak and isolated states, although it appears to be more likely to occur than balancing. As of April 2008, many critics argued that Romania represents, for NATO’s Summit from Bucharest, only “a hotel” for the conference due to the fact that the Russian President and the U.S. President are going to meet afterwards in Sochi, Russia, to discuss more detail regarding building a missile shield system in Europe. It has been four years since Romania obtained full membership in NATO¹⁶⁹. It will be interesting to further explore what kind of decision making power rests with Romania in the NATO organization.

¹⁶⁹ On 29 March 2004 Romania obtained NATO membership. On April 2, 2004 the Romanian flag was raised at NATO Headquarters in Brussels.

6.2 Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

The results of this study may be limited in that “a single study cannot address all the interesting aspects of a historical event” (George and Bennett 2005:70). Romanian history is tumultuous and rich with information. Western historians have a different approach in reporting Romanian historical events than do Romanian historians. Although distinct periods and events appear to be exactly recorded, when it comes to interpretations each approach brings some kind of uniqueness or difference in the light of presenting a particular situation. This study suffers the same limitations that Walt (1987) appears to be criticized for-excess of information regarding the perceptions of forming alliances, as well as sustaining selection bias since Romania is the home country of the author of this project. Objectivity in analyzing a series of events may lack in saturation. Also, this study is based mostly on secondary data, easily accessible academic literature on Romania, mostly in English, and various reports and interviews captured by international media.

Primary data taken from the Library of Congress were only considered as evidence to support the assertion regarding how the U.S. Congress voted in granting Romania the Most Favorite Trading status. Various speeches made by Romanian elites on different occasions, and data provided by the NATO organization regarding Romanian steps towards NATO integration contributed to the sustainability of arguments. Since the Romanian media, during the 1990s, were corrupt and unreliable in most cases, more credibility was put on the events as captured by the foreign media. Aside from this case study, my theoretical objective was to identify whether the origins of the Romanian alliance with NATO were the most likely or the least likely to fit with Romanian alliance

behavior and Stephen Walt's (1987) balance of threat theory. First, I tried to identify, causal alliance paths in Romanian history since 1878, when Romania won its independence, and based on the patterns of these alliances,

I concluded that the Romanian case validates Walt's (1987) theoretical approach with two exceptions: (i) the most common behavior on Romanian historical record is bandwagoning not balancing if threats are considered and (ii) the ability to project power on Romania or threat did not decline with distance but increased with distance. Due to the fact that I am familiar with Romanian history, culture and the great importance the Romanian people put on unity, I expected Romania to fluctuate often from one behavior to another especially when threats related to territorial security were imminent. Throughout this exercise I tried to achieve a balance between the Romanian historical record and the balance of threat theory, however, I devoted greater focus on the contemporary events surrounding the origination of dialog between Romania and NATO.

This project used content analysis to examine editorial news, elite speeches, and elite interviews in order to establish an atmosphere similar to that of Romania in 1990. It relied on direct evidence, such as Romanian historical record, elite perceptions and testimonies to demonstrate its points. Any political or analytical bias in this study rests with the author. A series of elite interviews with key elite members who were part of the decision making process to approach NATO will validate my results that Romania felt alone, threatened, and unable to help itself when it asked for dialogue with NATO. However, based on Romanian historical record with NATO it is unclear whether Romania will continue to consider its territorial integrity over its economic and ideological needs when forming new alliances. This may constitute a subject for further

research, especially since Romania is in dispute now over territory with Ukraine at Hague International Court of Justice.

6.3 Reflections

Paul Gordon Lauren (1979) suggests that “public speeches, formal diplomatic messages, or even personal letters between heads of state may help explain the nature and purpose of deliberate actions and words in the past” (Lauren 1979:189). Larrabee`s (1990) phrase of “long memories and short fuses” abstracts eloquently Romanian neighborly relations. One day prior to the April 2, 2008, opening of the official NATO Summit in Bucharest, Romania, Romanian President Traian Basescu mentioned in an interview regarding Summit expectations that the Constantinescu administration from 1997 signed the Treaty of Cooperation and Friendship with Ukraine “without considering Romanian national interests.”¹⁷⁰

Moreover, the Romanian President accused the Constantinescu administration for weakness in negotiating and ignorance in signing a treaty without understanding all the clauses and conditions stipulated in the treaty. “...It is okay to say I do not understand or to take out something that you are not completely sure or comfortable with....” Basescu suggests vis-à-vis the incompetence involved in the Romania-Ukraine Treaty. As of this year, the matter of this territorial adjudication is still with the International Court of Justice from Hague, which is supposedly going to decide the southeast maritime border of Snake Island, an important economic resource rich in oil and natural gases.¹⁷¹ From NATO`s bureaucratic perspective, this unresolved issue is very important,

¹⁷⁰ See the interview with Romanian President Basescu on: www.antena3.ro Monday, March 31, 2008.

¹⁷¹ See *Economist Intelligence Unit*. “The Territorial dispute with Ukraine Intensifies.”

especially since apparently Romania was pressured by the western powers to get its territorial borders in order before July 1997 for the NATO Madrid Summit, when it was going to be invited to adhere to the Alliance.¹⁷² I consider that in terms of the Romanian historical record and its behavior when it comes to territorial aspects, this fact has a valuable resonance regarding the fact that even to members of NATO, some of Romania's borders are not clearly established and even during the grandiose NATO event in Bucharest, Romania was still concerned with some territories left unincorporated. Although the former administration accused Basescu of the same negligence when he made the decision to continue the treaty in 2007,¹⁷³ it is interesting to further explore this avenue and to determine whether it was in the Romanian national interest to sign a treaty that left a portion of territory undisputed or to continue renewing the treaty instead of breaking it and stir the western attention. While continuing again, after centuries of history, Romanian dependence remains constantly on the Great Powers (Hague in this case) to resolve territorial matters.

¹⁷² See: "Summitul NATO Incepe Astazi La Bucuresti: Istoria Se Scrie Aici." *Evenimentul Zilei*. April 2, 2008.

¹⁷³ Since the terms of this treaty were based on ten years.

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