

WILL MOLDOVA FRACTURE? CONSIDERING THE CASE OF GĂGĂUZIA

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Author’s note: the translation of all non-English source material is by the author unless noted otherwise.

On 27 June 2012 Moldova signed a set of trade and political agreements with the European Economic Community that places the nation on a pathway to EU accession, and by some estimations, possible NATO membership. [An earlier E-Note](#) considered the role of one pro-Moscow region, Transdnistria, in the unfolding Moldovan drama. Here, we consider a lesser known, but possibly more volatile region, Găgăuzia.

Known formally as the “Autonomous Territorial Unit of Găgăuzia,”¹ its approximately 160,000 residents account for only about 3.5 percent of Moldova’s total population. Găgăuzia is actually a composite of four noncontiguous land areas. They are located in the southern Moldovan geographic protuberance that lies between western Ukraine’s Odessa Oblast to the east, and the eastern Romanian *județe* of Vaslui and Galați to the west. Moldova’s strategic location between Ukraine Romania places it at a vortex of regional competition between NATO and Russia. The western- (and specifically, Bucharest-) leaning Moldovan government has long struggled with its two contentious, pro-Russia autonomous republics.

Warning that “Găgăuzia would declare independence”² if Moldova signed an association agreement with the European Union (EU), its governor, Mihail Formuzal, called on Moldova to defer signing the EU agreements until after national elections scheduled for later this year. “We have many questions regarding that document, including the impact it might have on our relations with Russia. The situation won’t look nice if the political elite in this country changes and Moldova renounces the accords with the EU,” he said.³

¹ The formal name in Romanian, Moldova’s official language, is *Unitatea Teritorială Autonomă Găgăuzia*. The author has elected to use the Romanian *Găgăuzia* in this paper. Găgăuzia recognizes three official languages, Romanian and Gagauz (a Turkic language); and Russian, which is the language of instruction in local schools and the one spoken by the majority of Găgăuzia’s Orthodox Christian residents. Locally, Găgăuzia is sometimes called *Gagauz Yeri*, a truncated version of its formal name in Gagauz, *Avtonom Territorial Bölümlüü Gagauz Yeri*.

² “Mihail Formuzal: Găgăuzia își va declara independența dacă Republica Moldova semnează Acordul cu UE.” [Mediafax.ro](http://www.mediafax.ro/externe/mihail-formuzal-gagauzia-isi-va-declara-independenta-daca-republica-moldova-semneaza-acordul-cu-ue-12709025). <http://www.mediafax.ro/externe/mihail-formuzal-gagauzia-isi-va-declara-independenta-daca-republica-moldova-semneaza-acordul-cu-ue-12709025>. Last accessed 30 June 2014. Interestingly, Formuzal made this statement in an interview with a Turkish news service, *Milliyet*.

³ “Autonomous region's leader asks Moldova to make no haste in signing agreement with EU.” *ITAR-TASS* [online edition, 14 May 2014]. <http://en.itar-tass.com/world/731655>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.

Public reaction in Găgăuzia to Moldova's 27 June EU accord was decidedly negative. The leaders of two Moscow-aligned political parties were especially blunt. According to one, Igor Dodon,⁴ "The signing of this agreement directly contradicts the Moldovan constitution, which clearly provides for a national referendum" to determine whether Moldova will move in the direction of the EU, or alternately, the Eurasian Customs Union.⁵ "What the authorities are doing to the people of Moldova is a crime," he continued. The day before, Dodon declared in Moscow that "we are committed to officially cancel the association agreement with the European Union," ("*ne asumăm angajamentul de a anula oficial Acordul privind Asocierea cu Uniunea Europeană*") noting that earlier referendums in Transnistria and Găgăuzia instead supported joining the ECU. He said the "hastily initialed Agreement on Association with the EU" ("*au parafat în grabă Acordul privind Asocierea cu UE*") was "rushed by Bucharest, Brussels and Washington" ("*fiind zoriți de București, de Bruxelles și Washington*") and "will put into doubt Moldova's very statehood" ("*va fi pusă în săși statalitatea Republicii Moldova*").⁶ Moldova, Dodon said, will either "be an integral state aligned with Russia, or lose our unity and a large part of our territory" to become a "tasty morsel for the Bucharest-NATO military experiment."⁷

Moldova's former President and leader of its Communist Party, Vladimir Voronin, said, "The association agreement signed between Moldova and the European Union does not take due account of our interests in the east. We should not lose our partners and limit our development possibilities."⁸

FRACTURED GEOGRAPHY, FRACTURED POLITICS

Găgăuzia's total land area is only 1830 square kilometers, or about 5% of Moldova's total territory. Under Moldovan law, Găgăuzia includes all areas where ethnic Gagauz represent at least half the local population, and parts of Moldova that have opted to join the Găgăuzia by referendum.⁹ As a result, the boundaries of Găgăuzia have undergone several small revisions since the region was officially established in 1994. It currently consists of four noncontiguous areas with just three cities between them: the capital, Komrat, plus Ceadr-Lunga and Vulcănești, along with about 30 villages.¹⁰

Găgăuzia declared independence on 19 August 1991, shortly after the attempted coup d'état earlier that month in Moscow by the so-called "Gang of Eight."¹¹ Several days later, on 27 August, Moldova also declared independence. Găgăuzia did not enjoy special status within the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic. After their respective 1991 declarations of independence, Găgăuzia and Moldova coexisted warily until December 1994, when a compromise was struck in which Găgăuzia agreed to recognize Moldovan authority over the region. Moldovan political leaders opposed the idea of a federal state composed of three autonomous republics (Moldova, Transnistria & Găgăuzia),

⁴ Dodon leads the Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova (*Partidul Socialiștilor din Republica Moldova*). Its position is that suspending the EU integration processes in favor of integration into the Eurasian Customs Union is the best guarantee to preserve stability in the country and, in particular, to preserve Transnistria and Găgăuzia within the Republic of Moldova. See: <http://dodon.md/2014/06/noi-socialistii-ne-asumam-angajamentul-de-a-anula-oficial-acordul-privind-asocierea-cu-uniunea-europeana/>. Last accessed 28 June 2014. Dodon's party in 2005 formed an electoral alliance with the Socialist Party of Moldova (*Partidul Socialist din Moldova*) from which it split in 1995. Known as the *Blocul Electoral "Patria-Rodina"* (BePR) or "Motherland" Electoral Bloc, it captured 4.97% of votes cast in the 2005 parliamentary elections but failed to meet the 9% threshold required to qualify it for seats.

⁵ Formally known as the "Customs Union of the Eurasian Economic Community," the ECU was organized in January 1995 by Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan with the declared future intent of forming an economic union. Kyrgyzstan joined in 1996, followed by Tajikistan in 1997. In October 2000 (shortly after Vladimir Putin's accession to the Russian presidency) the ECU became the Eurasian Economic Community (EEC). Uzbekistan joined in 2006 after the Central Asian Cooperation Organization was merged into the EEC. One analysis notes the EEC "was prioritized by Russia as a future centre [sic] of gravity and regarded as such by other post-Soviet states (e.g., Moldova and Ukraine became observers in 2002, followed by Armenia in 2003). Many commentators viewed the EEC as the most viable framework to emerge in the post-Soviet space." See: Dragneva, Rilka, & Wolczuk, Kataryna (2012). "Russia, the Eurasian Customs Union and the EU: Cooperation, Stagnation or Rivalry?" *Chatham House Briefing Paper 2012/01* [August 2012], p. 4.

http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/public/Research/Russia%20and%20Eurasia/0812bp_dragnevawolczuk.pdf. Last accessed 28 June 2014.

⁶ "Noi, socialiștii, ne asumăm angajamentul de a anula acordul privind asocierea cu uniunea europeană." <http://dodon.md/2014/06/noi-socialistii-ne-asumam-angajamentul-de-a-anula-oficial-acordul-privind-asocierea-cu-uniunea-europeana/>. Last accessed 28 June 2014.

⁷ *Ibid.* Dodon uses the term *poligon experimental* (literally, "experimental polygon"), a common trope in Romanian discussions about the nation's frontier position between NATO and Russia. It is an allusion to the polygon formed by map grid coordinates for targeting artillery.

⁸ "Moldova's association agreement with EU disregards its interests in east." *ITAR-TASS* [online edition, 27 June 2014]. <http://en.itar-tass.com/economy/738089>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.

⁹ This latter group consists of the village of Kirsovo, inhabited mainly by ethnic Bulgarians; the town of Svetlii, dominated by ethnic Russians; and Ferapontivka in which ethnic Ukrainians outnumber the local Gagauz population.

¹⁰ "Gagauzia: growing separatism in Moldova?" *OSW Commentary* [10 March 2014]. Centre for Eastern Studies (*Óródek Studiów Wschodnich*). <http://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-commentary/2014-03-10/gagauzia-growing-separatism-moldova>. Last accessed 29 June 2014.

¹¹ Formally, the "State Committee on the State of Emergency: (Russian: Государственный комитет по чрезвычайному положению („ГКЧП”); Russian trans: *Gosudarstvennyi Komitet po Chrezvychainomu Polozheniyu* ("GKChP").

and went only so far as to grant Găgăuzia status as a “national–territorial autonomous unit.”¹² This granted Găgăuzia limited self-determination in terms of the right to declare independence in the event that Moldova loses sovereignty.¹³ That right was abolished, however, in July 2003 by a set of constitutional amendments that declared Găgăuzia a “constituent and integral” part of Moldova, and stated that its land and resources belonged to the Moldovan people.

There are three main Găgăuzian political factions. The civic organization *Găgăuzia Unită* (“United Găgăuzia”) is associated with the *Partidului Regiunilo* (“Party of Regions” or “PR”). Mihail Formuzal, whose second and final term as Găgăuzia’s governor ends in November 2014, leads it. A second civic organization, *Noua Găgăuzie* (“New Găgăuzia”), in November 2012 associated with a national political party, the *Partidul Democrat din Moldova* (“Democratic Party of Moldova”). The faction’s leader is Nicolai Dudogio, mayor of Găgăuzia’s capital city, Komrat.¹⁴ The Motherland bloc is Găgăuzia’s third political faction and adamantly opposed to EU accession, which it says “grossly violates the country’s constitutional neutrality and sovereignty...by imposing a protectorate Romanian policy on our country with limited sovereignty...and aggressive anti-Russian foreign policy.”¹⁵

In the 2011 election to the Găgăuzian People’s Assembly (Romanian: *Adunării Populare a Găgăuziei*), the Party of Regions and the Democratic Party of Moldova collectively captured 15 of the 25 independent seats, with most of the balance won by the Moldovan Communist Party.¹⁶ Representatives of the Găgăuzian People’s Assembly have demanded (so far, unsuccessfully) a permanent five seats in the 101-seat Moldovan parliament.¹⁷

GĂGĂUZIA’S REFERENDUM ON ECU ACCESSION

A February 2014 referendum in Găgăuzia put three questions before voters. The first question, printed on a red ballot, asked, “Do you agree with the direction of governmental policy to integrate Moldova into the European Union?” The second question, printed on a green ballot, asked, “Do you agree with Moldova’s accession to the Customs Union of Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan?” The third question, printed on yellow paper, asked whether Găgăuzia should seek independence from Moldova, in the event the latter lost its sovereignty—such as if Moldova and Romania were merged into a single state. Găgăuzians overwhelmingly voted “no” to the EU (97.2%) and “yes” to the ECU (98.9%), and “yes” to right to secede (98.9%). Over 70 percent of eligible voters participated in the referendum,¹⁸ which was monitored by international observers from Belgium, Poland, Bulgaria and Hungary, who concluded the voting had proceeded in accordance with international standards.¹⁹ The Moldovan parliament promptly amended the Code on Elections to ban local referendums on issues of state importance.²⁰

Most analysts believe the referendum’s timing was linked to a power struggle between Găgăuzia’s governor, Mihail Formuzal, and the mayor of Komrat, Nicolai Dudoglo. The idea of a referendum on ECU accession had longstanding support: for example, New Găgăuzia in December 2012 called for one to determine Găgăuzia’s geopolitical orientation. However, when Formuzal in October 2013 proposed one, New Găgăuzia only supported it on 27 November 2013 after failing two weeks earlier, on 15 November, to remove Formuzal from office. Had New Găgăuzia members (and by extension, the Democratic Party of Moldova) succeeded in November 2013 to remove Formuzal from office, New Găgăuzia and the DPM would have had a de facto monopoly on political power in Găgăuzia.

Some speculate another reason the referendum was organized was to improve Găgăuzia’s bargaining position in negotiations the Moldovan national government in Chișinău. Current law provides for Găgăuzia to retain all local

¹² Găgăuzia’s legal status within Moldova is defined by, respectively, the Moldovan Constitution, the Găgăuzia Code (a local constitution of sorts), and Moldova’s law on the special legal status of Găgăuzia.

¹³ <http://www.e-democracy.md/files/elections/gagauzia2006/special-legal-status-gagauzia-en.pdf>. Last accessed 29 June 2014.

¹⁴ The author has elected to use the local spelling in Gagauz, which is also the Russian transliteration. It is spelled *Comrat* in Romanian.

¹⁵ “Frațiunea parlamentară a Partidului Comuniștilor i-a cerut miercuri președintelui Nicolae Timofti să inițieze un referendum privind oportunitatea semnării Acordului de Asociere cu Uniunea Europeană.” *Independent* [online edition, 14 May 2014]. <http://independent.md/comunistii-vor-referendum-privind-oportunitatea-semnării-acordului-de-asociere-cu-ue/s>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.

¹⁶ The remaining three seats were won by the Liberal Democratic Party (2) and the Party of Socialists (1).

¹⁷ “Găgăuzia solicită o cotă permanentă de 5 deputați în Parlament.” *Independent* [online edition, 15 April 2014]. <http://independent.md/gagauzia-solicita-o-cota-permanenta-de-5-deputati-in-parlament/#.U624mxa4n8s>. Last accessed 27 June 2014.

¹⁸ “99% of Gagauz voters support declaring independence if Moldova joins Romania.” *Nationalia CIEMEN* [online edition, 3 February 2014]. <http://www.nationalia.info/en/news/1758>. Last accessed 29 June 2014.

¹⁹ “Gagauzia urges Moldova not to prosecute Customs Union poll organizers.” *ITAR-TASS* [online edition, 10 February 2014]. <http://en.itar-tass.com/world/718487>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.

²⁰ “Moldovan parliament bans local referendums on issues of state importance.” *ITAR-TASS* [online edition, 13 March 2014]. <http://en.itar-tass.com/world/723443>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.

personal and corporate income tax, and value-added and excise tax receipts. In July 2013 Moldova proposed to drop substantially the share retained by Găgăuzia and other regions to only 25% of local personal income tax receipts, and 50% of corporate income, VAT and excise tax receipts.²¹

HISTORIC ALIGNMENT WITH RUSSIA

Moldovans split when the Soviet Union held its “first, and last” referendum on 17 March 1991. It asked Soviet voters “Do you consider necessary the preservation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a renewed federation of equal sovereign republics, in which the rights and freedoms of persons of all nationalities would be fully guaranteed?” Votes in Găgăuzia and Transdnistria voted to retain the Union whereas the rest of Moldova boycotted the referendum.²² One commentary observed, “Moldova’s choreography of joining (in 1991), leaving (in 1993) and re-joining (in 1994) the Commonwealth of Independent States reveals the improving and degrading alike dynamic of its relationship with Russia” [sic].²³

For its part Găgăuzia has long used the threat to adopt pro-Russian policies as a bargaining chip with the Moldovan national government in Chişinău. Russia, though, maintained a studied indifference toward Găgăuzia for the first decade of Moldovan independence, opting instead to foment separatism in the more strategically located (and geographically unitary) Transdnistria. In November 2003, Russia proposed a peace plan for Moldova known informally as “the Kozak Memorandum.”²⁴ Moldova quickly rejected the proposal, which would have federalized Moldova, and given Transdnistria and Găgăuzia a veto on foreign policy matters and international treaties.²⁵

More recently, Russia has again turned to Găgăuzia as it seeks additional leverage to counter Moldovan ambitions to EU accession. Russian interest in Găgăuzia increased in parallel with rising turmoil in neighboring Ukraine, a volatile admixture for Găgăuzia described as a combination of “separatism and the constant centrifugal force of Ukraine.”²⁶

In early 2014, Farit Mukhametshin, the Russian Ambassador to Moldova, said “this year, the embassy will pay particular attention to Găgăuzia and Tăraclia.”²⁷ Regarding the latter, the population of this Moldovan *raion* is two-thirds Russian-speaking ethnic Bulgarians. Moldova’s Romanian-language press has cautioned that unrest could spread northward from Găgăuzia to Tăraclia.²⁸ There were published reports in mid-May that *provocatori* (“provocateurs”) attempted to take positions in Reni, a *Bugeac* city only 22km from the Ukraine border.²⁹

RUSSIAN AMBITIONS IN GĂGĂUZIA?

As one former Georgian diplomat wrote recently regarding Găgăuzia, “Russia...knows the nooks and crannies of its former empire better than EU diplomats do.”³⁰ For Russia, Găgăuzia is a lever to influence Moldovan politics, but not a strong one: only a single electoral district represents Găgăuzia’s small population, making its voice in Moldovan national politics largely inconsequential.³¹ One commentator sees the situation as follows:

²¹ “Гагаузия готова биться за бюджет.” Комментариев. 30 July 2013. <http://www.kommersant.md/node/19159>. Last accessed 29 June 2014.

²² “Remembering a futile referendum.” *RIA-Novosti*. 24 March 2011. <http://en.ria.ru/analysis/20110324/163178963.html>. Last accessed 27 June 2014.

²³ Lazăr, Maria Sabina (2012). “Legitimizing De Facto Statehood: Russian hard politics in Moldova.” *CEPE Weekly Review* [18 September 2012]. <http://cepeoffice.com/2012/09/19/legitimizing-de-facto-statehood-russian-hard-politics-in-moldova/>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.

²⁴ Formally, the “Russian Draft Memorandum on the basic principles of the state structure of a united state in Moldova.” See: <http://www.stefanwolff.com/files/Kozak-Memorandum.pdf>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.

²⁵ Lazăr (2012).

²⁶ “Separatismul și forțele centrifuge o constantă în Ucraina.” In “Eliminarea Ucrainei de la Marea Neagră poate deveni realitate.” *Bugeacul Românesc* [13 May 2014]. <http://bugeacul-romanesec.blogspot.com/2014/05/condeiro-eliminarea-ucrainei-de-la.html>. Last accessed 27 June 2014.

²⁷ Minzarari, Dumitru (2014). “Gagauz Referendum in Moldova - a Russian Political Weapon?” *bne:daily* [online edition, 6 February 2014]. <http://www.bne.eu/system/files/dispatch-pdf/2014-02-06/9950-bnesedaily0602.pdf>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.

²⁸ Though not the subject of this essay, there is emerging sentiment in Tăraclia for the sort of ethnic self-association granted Găgăuzia: for example, “If our district will not provide national-cultural status, the next step will be the union of Bulgarian villages (a total of 27 in Moldova) in the composition Taraclia.” („Dacă raionului nostru nu i se va oferi statut național-cultural, următorul pas va fi unirea satelor bulgărești (în Moldova sînt în total 27) în componența raionului Taraclia.”) See: “Toți bulgarii din Moldova vor în raionul Taraclia.” http://www.noi.md/md/news_id/41248. Last accessed 29 June 2014.

²⁹ „Eliminarea Ucrainei de la Marea Neagră poate deveni realitate.” *Bugeacul Românesc* [13 May 2014]. <http://bugeacul-romanesec.blogspot.com/2014/05/condeiro-eliminarea-ucrainei-de-la.html>. Last accessed 27 June 2014.

³⁰ Samadashvili, Salome (2014). “Gagauzia: A new attack on the Eastern Partnership?” *EU Observer* [online edition, 2 April 2014]. <http://euobserver.com/opinion/123000>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.

³¹ Parmentier, Florent (2014). “Moldova,” p. 50. <http://www.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/publications/reports/pdf/SR019/SR019-Parmentier.pdf>. Last accessed

“This situation may be the beginning of a qualitatively different phase in what has initially seemed like just another East-versus-West confrontation. Increasingly, the developments in Moldova are taking on the trappings of a proxy war.”³²

Moldovan political analyst and founder of its Social Democratic Party, Oazu Nantoi, is blunt about Russian intentions: the February 2014 referendum “was written by the Russian embassy in Chişinău,” he said, continuing:

“This is a well-written scenario, with elements of political provocations. Gagauz authorities are some faithful executants of Moscow, while the Communist Party is accomplice in the attack on the constitutionality of the Republic of Moldova [sic].”³³

Despite Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov’s statement that Russia is officially “in favor of a settlement which would respect territorial integrity and sovereignty of Moldova,”³⁴ there is region-wide speculation about Russian ambitions to consolidate Găgăuzia and parts of southern Bessarabia in Ukraine’s Odessa Oblast. This is the historic region known to Russians and Ukrainians as *Budzhak* (Бу́дзжак) and *Bugeac* to Romanians and Moldovans. It is located southwest of Odessa in an area bounded by the Black Sea, and the Danube and Dniester rivers. When Bessarabia was reintegrated into the Soviet Union after World War II, the Slavic-majority territories in northern and southern Bessarabia were made part of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. Central Bessarabia was joined with the Moldovan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (centered on modern Transdnistria) to form the Moldovan SSR.

Leonid Slutsky, a member of the Russian Duma and Chairman of the Committee on the Commonwealth of Independent States, welcomed the results of Găgăuzia’s February 2014 referendum, which called for Găgăuzian self-determination and the integration of Moldova into the ECU.³⁵ When one of the Găgăuzian referendum’s organizers was asked at the time about the pending one in Crimea, he said, “We are confident that the referendum is the highest form of democracy. However the Crimean people vote, we respect their decision.” Găgăuzian governor Mihail Formuzal earlier invited officials from Ukraine’s just then-deposed Yanukovich government to “come and ‘vacation’ in autonomous southern Moldova.”³⁶

WILL EU ACCESSION FRACTURE MOLDOVA?

A *RIA-Novosti* commentary characterized the 27 June EU agreement as a “voluntary acceptance of slavery” that is “not supported by most” Moldovans. It suggested the agreement will “infringe Transdnistria autonomy” by among other things, allowing Romanians as well as Slovaks and Hungarians to assert property claims in Moldova. “What will be ensured here?” the commentary asked, “the rights of European claimants to Găgăuzia, Transdnistria, Donetsk, and Lugansk?” It concluded somewhat menacingly, “Perhaps Russia should protect those who are not willing to accept slavery?”³⁷

In a 12 June 2014 interview with the Turkish press, Mihail Formuzal, the governor of Găgăuzia, said that the interest of “Găgăuzian autonomy” would demand Găgăuzia’s independence if Moldova joined the EU. At the same time, however, Moldova is enacting tougher legal penalties for advocating separatism. Its principal intelligence agency, the SIS,³⁸ said it was prepared to “annihilate secessionist movements” and “attempts to escalate tensions” by what

30 June 2014.

³² Minzarari, op cit.

³³ “Overwhelming support for Russia-led Customs Union in illegal referendum in Moldova’s Gagauz region.” *Moldova.org* [online edition, 3 February 2014]. <http://www.moldova.org/overwhelming-support-russia-led-customs-union-illegal-referendum-moldovas-gagauz-region/>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.

³⁴ See: <http://www.bloomberg.com/video/ukraine-as-close-to-civil-war-as-possible-lavrov-Mxqx9qdZR8OCC1fmUTGbyA.html>. Cited text quoted in Calus, Kamil (2014). “Trannistria: the powers’ playground.” *LSEE Research on South Eastern Europe*. <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/lsee/2014/06/19/transnistria-power-politics/>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.

³⁵ “Moscovia apreciază că referendumurile din Găgăuzia, desfășurate în februarie, sunt “absolut oportune”. *Independent* [online edition, 27 March 2014]. <http://independent.md/moscova-apreciaza-ca-referendumurile-din-gagauzia-desfasurate-in-februarie-sunt-absolut-oportune/#.U63AMxa4n8s>. Last accessed 27 June 2014. The Custom Union between Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan is now the “Eurasian Economic Union.”

³⁶ “Declarații halucinante ale lui Formuzal: ‘Să vină ofițerii Berkut în Găgăuzia’.” *Independent* [online edition, 24 February 2014]. <http://independent.md/video-declaratii-halucinante-ale-lui-formuzal-sa-vena-ofiterii-berkut-in-gagauzia/#.U63Qyha4n8s>. Last accessed 27 June 2014.

³⁷ RIA-Novosti commentator Maxim Salighin, quoted in “Presă rusă: Rusia trebuie să-i protejeze pe moldovenii ce nu acceptă „sclavia” integrării europene.” *Independent* [online edition, 27 June 2014]. <http://independent.md/presa-rusa-rusia-trebuie-sa-i-protejeze-pe-moldovenii-ce-nu-accepta-sclavia-integrarii-europene/#.U63U2Ra4n8s>. Last accessed 27 June 2014.

³⁸ The Information and Security Service of the Republic of Moldova (*Serviciul de Informații și Securitate al Republicii Moldova*). Known by the initials “SIS”.

it characterized as promoters of Eurasian unity, “and was ready to tackle” any possible paramilitary groups or followers of extremist ideologies.³⁹ Romanian political figure Antal Arpad offers a rhetorical answer: “We are not separatist, we are autonomist.” (*Nu suntem separatiști, suntem autonomiști*).⁴⁰

In February 2014, Moldovan authorities alleged Găgăuzia intended to implement a “strategy devised in Moscow” to install a “Cossack battalion of Bugeac” that would establish “a state within a state” near Moldova’s Galați raion.⁴¹ An 11 June press report said that the “first signs” of Găgăuzian secession “have already come”: “under cover” of forming home guard units trained by local police, “detachments of Cossacks” were being infiltrated to foment and escalate ethnic riots in Găgăuzia and Bălți (a city in north central Moldova) against the government in Chișinău.⁴²

ROMANIA: AN ASPIRING REGIONAL HEGEMON?

The Romanian government’s 2007 *National Security Strategy* articulates an unambiguous “one nation-two states” principle with respect to Moldova:

“On the basis of the special relationship between Romania and Moldova and the common sense of community responsibility arising from national history, language and culture, the principle of ‘one nation-two states’, and the spirit of European unity, *we will pay special attention to cooperation with the Republic Moldova*. Romania’s political and moral duty is to support the Moldovan state through the process of modernization, democratization and European integration, and to do everything possible to support - in political, economic and diplomatic terms – Moldova’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as to enhance our contribution to the expansion of its physical security and prosperity. To this end, Romania will closely monitor developments in the separatist conflict in eastern districts of the Republic of Moldova, and will actively contribute to the identification of viable solutions-based on the country’s democratization and the demilitarization of the region, including the withdrawal of troops stationed illegally there - and support decisive involvement in the peace process by the European Union and the United States.”⁴³ [Emphasis in original]

³⁹ The quoted text reads in the original Romanian: “„anihila mișcărilor secesioniste” sau tentative de „escaladare a tensiunii” făcute de „promotorii ai vectorului eurasiatic” și că este pregătit să contracareze „posibile grupuri paramilitare sau adepți ai ideologiilor extremist.” See: Mihaeanu, Razvan (2014). “Gărzile populare găgăuze.” *Rumaniamilitary.ru* [12 June 2014]. <http://www.rumaniamilitary.ro/garzile-populare-gagauze>. Last accessed 27 June 2014.

The official SIS website alleges a “secret meeting” took place on 5 June 2014 to “prepare ethnic minorities in Bălți and Comrat to revolt against the legitimate authorities of the state” and “to recruit detachments that would be trained to escalate internal conflicts and to conduct an information war against Moldovan authorities.” See: “SIS s-a autosesizat referitor la “întâlnirea secretă” de la Bălți din 5 iunie 2014.”

<http://www.sis.md/ro/comunicare/noutati/sis-s-autosesizat-referitor-intalnirea-secreta-balti-5-iunie-2014>. Last accessed 27 June 2014. SIS alleged the conspirators intended to form a "Federation of Moldova" out of four autonomous republics: the Republic of Moldova, the Transdniestrian Moldovan Republic, the People's Republic of Găgăuzia, and the North Moldavian Republic (formed from Ukraine’s Chernivtsi region and northern Moldova). See: Turcanu, Alina (2014). “SIS, alertat de dezvăluirile din presă privind „mișcărilor secesioniste” din Bălți și Comrat Citeste mai mult: adev.ro/n6yq7v.” *Adevarul.md* [online edition, 10 June 2014]. http://adevarul.ro/moldova/politica/sis-alertat-dezvaluirile-presa-privind-miscarile-secioniste-balti-comrat-1_53972c700d133766a875c80d/index.html. Last accessed 27 June 2014.

⁴⁰ “Antal Arpad: Nu suntem separatiști, suntem autonomiști.” *Agerpres.ru* [online edition, 19 May 2014].

<http://www.agerpres.ro/politica/2014/05/19/antal-arpad-udmr-covasna-nu-suntem-separatisti-suntem-autonomisti-18-43-52>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.

⁴¹ Marchievici, Călin (2014). “Ingredientele unui conflict violent.” *Cotidianul.ro* [online edition, 29 January 2014]. <http://www.cotidianul.ro/alerta-in-ucraina-cazacia-de-pe-don-trec-la-ofensiva-in-estul-si-sudul-tarii-231027/>. Last accessed 27 June 2014.

⁴² Pogor, Eugenia (2014). “Cum va răspunde Rusia la asocierea Moldovei cu Uniunea Europeană.” *Adevarul.md* [online edition, 11 June 2014]. http://adevarul.ro/moldova/politica/cum-raspunde-rusia-laasocierea-moldovei-uniunea-europeana-1_5397f7ac0d133766a879f53a/index.html. Last accessed 27 June 2014.

⁴³ President of Romania (2007). *Strategia De Securitate Națională a României*. Bucharest: Președintele României, p. 36.

<http://www.presidency.ro/static/ordine/SSNR/SSNR.pdf>. Last accessed 30 June 2014. The quoted text reads in the original Romanian: “Pe temeiul relațiilor speciale dintre România și Republica Moldova și în con- sens cu responsabilitățile firești ce decurg din comunitatea de istorie, limbă și cultură, cu principiul “o singură națiune – două state” și cu spiritul politicii europene de vecinătate, vom acorda o atenție deosebită cooperării cu Republica Moldova. România are datoria politică și morală de a sprijini acest stat în parcurgerea procesului de modernizare, democratizare și integrare europeană, de a face tot ce este posibil pentru a susține – din punct de vedere politic, economic și diplomatic – principiul suveranității și integrității sale teritoriale, precum și pentru a spori contribuția noastră la extinderea spațiului de securitate și prosperitate. În acest scop, România va monitoriza cu atenție evoluția conflictului separatist din raioanele estice ale Republicii Moldova, va contribui activ la identificarea unor soluții viabile – bazate pe democratizarea țării și demilitarizarea regiunii, pe retragerea trupelor și armamentelor staționate ilegal – și va sprijini implicarea decisivă în procesul de pace a Uniunii Europene și Statelor Unite.”

Găgăuzian separatism is in substantial part animated by fear of the unification of Moldova and Romania, something purposefully fuelled by local officials and compounded by statements from Bucharest.⁴⁴ To the latter, Romanian president Traian Băsescu made what one commentary called “an astonishing declaration”⁴⁵ during a 27 November 2013 interview with Romania's TVR-1 national television station:

“I am convinced that if ‘unionist winds’ start to blow in Moldova, Romania will always be ready for that. Accession to NATO was once a fundamental project for Romania. There was also another one - accession to the EU. I think that the third fundamental project should become our unification with Moldova. There can be no doubt about that...it is a realistic project that Bucharest is strong enough to put into practice...all of my actions concerning Moldova are linked with the idea of our possible unification. I know that the time is not right now. But this will happen because human blood is not water.”⁴⁶

Băsescu’s declaration preceded the Vilnius Eastern Partnership Summit, and came only days before Romania’s Unification Day. In an interview several weeks later reported by Russia’s ITAR-TASS news agency, Băsescu doubled-down, saying of neighboring Moldova:

“This country was not born with the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact – it has a history, culture and language, which are connected with Romania and the Romanian nation.”

Russia-goading Russia is not new to Băsescu: he was quoted in 2011 as saying “Please note that Romania does not have experience in annexing other states.”⁴⁷

Romania’s interests in Moldova have been analogized to Russian interests in Crimea:

“Romanian interests are somehow indirectly influenced by what happens in Ukraine...the Republic of Moldova is of major interest, and the situation in Moldova it is not so different from the one of the Ukrainian state, as we have under its territory important Russian population and two territories similar to Crimea - Transdnistria and Gagauzia [sic]. Also, within the current political discourse of Romanian leaders, Russia was always depicted as a potential enemy and an distrusting player that has the potential of affecting Romania’s interests also at Black Sea.”⁴⁸

Some see danger for Moldova embedded in the Ukraine analogue:

“The real danger that the Ukrainian crises has on the Republic of Moldova is encouraging the break-away regions of both MRT [Moldovan Republic of Transnistria] and Gagauzia to escalate the efforts of gaining more independence while the Republic of Moldova stays firm on opposing such attempts. Consequently, there is a constant in the declarations of the Moldovan officials and official press releases when Ukraine is concerned, namely supporting Ukraine’s integrity. In addition, it is constantly submitting messages that question the legality and legitimacy of the Crimean referendum due to take place on March 16th this year mostly due to the fact that MRT has also made the object of such an action in 2006, when almost 100% of the population voted for independence from Republic of Moldova and openness to close the relations with Russia. Needless to say, Moldovan officials have heavily questioned its legality and legitimacy.”⁴⁹

⁴⁴ *OSW Commentary* [10 March 2014], op cit.

⁴⁵ Ghimiş, Ana-Maria (2014). “Romania-Moldova a single state: realistic proposal or political declaration?” *CEPE Policy Analysis*, 19: January 2014. Bucharest: Center for European Policy Evaluation. <http://cepeoffice.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/cepe-policy-analysis-january.pdf>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.

⁴⁶ “Unification with Moldova should become Romania's next big project - President Basescu.” *Interfax* [online edition, 28 November 2013]. <http://interfax.com/newsinf.asp?id=462686>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.

⁴⁷ Mihailescu, Robert (2011). “Traian Basescu catre un parlamentar rus: Va rog sa notati ca Romania nu are niciun fel de experienta in anexarea altor state.” *HotNews.ro*. Quoted in Ghimiş (2014).

⁴⁸ Mogoş, Alina (2014). “Romania’s geopolitical interest threatened by Russian actions in Crimea?” *CEPE Policy Analysis*. 22: March 2014, p. 25. Bucharest: Center for European Policy Evaluation. <http://cepeoffice.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/cepe-policy-analysis-march-2014.pdf>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.

⁴⁹ Chirvase, Petronela (2014). “Ukraine crisis from behind Moldovan lenses.” *CEPE Policy Analysis*. Op cit. Bucharest: Center for European Policy Evaluation. <http://cepeoffice.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/cepe-policy-analysis-march-2014.pdf>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.

For its part, Găgăuzia's governing committee has escalated its criticism of the Moldovan government in Chișinăului. This includes proposing new penalties of up to 15 years in prison “for the promotion of unionism and particularly the unification of Moldova with Romania.”⁵⁰ Not surprisingly, the view of the Romanian government is different: “everyone knows that Moldova alone has no chance [to block Russia], so union with Romania is the only viable option, even if the subject of Transdnistria is still unresolved.”⁵¹

After Moldovan authorities refused to allow an aircraft carrying Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin to use Moldovan airspace, Găgăuzia's governing committee apologized for what it called “reckless actions of the Moldovan authorities” (“*acțiunile nesăbuite ale autorităților din Republica Moldova*”).⁵² Earlier, in April 2014, People's Assembly President Dmitry Konstantinov asked Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov to examine the possibility of opening a consulate of the Russian Federation in Comrat,⁵³ a day after asking President Putin to simplify procedures for granting Russian citizenship to Moldovans.⁵⁴

While some Găgăuzia commentators argue that “the direction of Găgăuzia's foreign policy should be coordinated with Turkey,”⁵⁵ others are adamant that Moldovan (and Romanian) “actions to drive a wedge between Găgăuzia and Turkey... are repeated and purposeful...clearly, what we are seeing are explicit steps by pro-Romanian forces to isolate and deprive Găgăuzia of its support from fraternal countries.”⁵⁶

ROMANIA SEES SHADOWS IN GĂGĂUZIA

A Romanian perspective is that “if Găgăuzia would attach to Bugeac by means of a corridor through Bender (Moldova), the new autonomous republic Transdnistria-Odessa would approach the size and population of Moldova...and have a better chance than Moldova of becoming economically viable given access to the Black Sea and the Danube River. The installation of Russian forces so close to Constanța's port [note: Europe's second largest] and airport would check these strategic positions, something the EU and NATO should take into account and consider very closely.”⁵⁷

Romania also sees “a Moscow-Budapest axis” (“*axa Moscova-Budapesta*”) that under Viktor Orbán has made ‘systematic statements on the Transdnistria issue demanding autonomy for the region—obviously thinking of Transylvania.’⁵⁸ This is important for several reasons, principal among which is the fact that both Romania and

⁵⁰ The quoted text reads in the original Romanian: „pentru acțiunile de promovare a unionismului și în special a unirii R. Moldova cu România.” In “Găgăuzia propune pedepse cu închisoarea pentru promovării unirii Republicii Moldova cu România.” *Independent* [online edition, 27 June 2014]. <http://independent.md/gagauzia-propune-pedepse-cu-inchisoarea-pentru-promotirii-unirii-republicii-moldova-cu-romania/#.U620HBa4n8s>. Last accessed 27 June 2014.

⁵¹ The quoted text reads in the original Romanian: “oricine stie ca Moldova singura nu are nici o sansa, astfel ca Unirea cu Romania este singura optiune viabila, chiar daca subiectul Trasnistriei este inca in suspans.” See: “Editorial – Trasnistria, Crimeea si diavolul de pe stalpul portii...” *Rumaniamilitary.ro* [13 April 2014]. <http://www.rumaniamilitary.ro/editorial-trasnistria-crimeea-si-diavolul-de-pe-stalpul-portii>. Last accessed 27 June 2014.

⁵² “Rogozin: Găgăuzia a condamnat impertinența Chișinăului: Mulțumesc, prieteni.” *Independent* [online edition, 16 May 2014]. <http://independent.md/rogozin-gagauzia-a-condamnat-impertinenta-chisinaului-multumesc-prieteni/#.U624EBa4n8s>. Last accessed 27 June 2014.

⁵³ “Administrația din Găgăuzia îi cere lui Lavrov să deschidă un consulat al Federației Ruse la Comrat.” *Independent* [online edition, 2 April 2014]. http://independent.md/doc-administratia-din-gagauzia-ii-cere-lui-lavrov-sa-deschida-un-consulat-al-federatiei-ruse-la-comrat/#.U629_xa4n8s. Last accessed 27 June 2014.

⁵⁴ “Administrația din Găgăuzia îi cere lui Putin să simplifice procedura de acordare a cetățeniei ruse pentru moldoveni.” *Independent* [online edition, 1 April 2014]. http://independent.md/doc-administratia-din-gagauzia-ii-cere-lui-putin-sa-simplifice-procedura-de-acordare-a-cetateniei-ruse-pentru-moldoveni/#.U62_Cha4n8s. Last accessed 27 June 2014.

⁵⁵ The quoted text reads in the original Russian: “Внешнеполитический вектор Гагаузии должен быть согласован с Турцией.” See: <http://gagauzinfo.md/index.php?newsid=12931>. Last accessed 27 June 2014. <http://www.rumaniamilitary.ro/transnistria-un-scenariu-de-cosmar>. Last accessed 27 June 2014.

⁵⁶ The quoted text reads in the original Russian: “что подобные действия по вбиванию клина между Гагаузией и Турцией... являются неоднократными и целенаправленными... Совершенно ясно, что мы наблюдаем четкие шаги прорумынских сил по изоляции Гагаузии и лишению ее поддержки со стороны братских стран.” See: “«Единая Гагаузия»: В ответе ли Турция за Гагаузию?” *Gagauzinfo.md* [online edition, 26 June 2014]. <http://gagauzinfo.md/index.php?newsid=12919>. Last accessed 27 June 2014.

⁵⁷ The quoted text reads in the original Romanian: Daca Gagauzia s-ar alipi Bugeacului, impreuna cu un coridor creat in aceasta directie dinspre Tighina, noul raion autonom sau republica Tiraspol-Odessa s-ar apropia de dimensiunile si populatia R.Moldova, amenintand inclusiv Cahulul si avand in schimb iesire la Marea Neagra si bratul Chilia al Dunarii, cu sanse mult mai mari de a deveni economic viabil, comparativ cu R. Moldova. Instalarea de forte rusesti la o aruncatura de bat de Portul Constanta, aeroportul Kogalniceanu si de gurile Dunarii, ar anula aceste pozitii strategice, lucruri pe care UE si NATO ar trebui sa le ia in considerare si sa le analizeze cu deosebita atentie.” See: Zgureanu, Marius (2014). “Transnistria, un scenariu de cosmar.” *Rumaniamilitary.ro* [26 March 2014]. <http://www.rumaniamilitary.ro/transnistria-un-scenariu-de-cosmar>. Last accessed 27 June 2014.

⁵⁸ The second quote reads in the original Romanian: “Dupa instalarea la putere a regimului Orban, oficialii maghiari de la Budapesta au sistematic luari de pozitie pe problematica transnistreana, cerand autonomie pentru regiune – evident cu gandul la Transilvania.” Dungaciu, Dan G. (2014).

Hungary are EU and NATO member-states. Turkey, too, has interests here:

“Turkey attributes particular importance to the relations with the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia where our kindred Gagauzians live. We perceive the presence of Gagauzians as a bridge which further strengthens bilateral relations with Moldova. There are nearly 170,000 Gagauz people living in Moldova out of which 160,000 live in Gagauzia.”⁵⁹

One Turkish perspective is represented by the headline “Between the EU and Russia are descendants of the Oghuz” (*Oğuzların torunları AB ve Rusya arasında*), a reference to “Oghuz origin Gagauz Turks” who “want to protect their identity.” “There is nothing for us in Europe,” according to one Găgăuzian, “we do not speak their language.”⁶⁰ Speaking in *Gagavuzya* (Turkish for Găgăuzia) in May 2014, Turkey's Parliament Speaker Cemil Cicek said, “We, as Turkey, are furthering our efforts to enhance bilateral relations with Gagauzia in every field and to contribute in resolving its problems.”⁶¹ Another Turkish official said, “Within the relations with Moldova, Găgăuzia has a special importance for Turkey due to our language and cultural ties with its people.”⁶² It was referred to in another article as one of Turkey's “Blood brother countries” (*Kan kardeşi ülkeler*).⁶³ While Turkey has “invested a great deal of money” in Găgăuzia through its Turkish Cooperation and Development Agency, “only 4.4 percent of those polled on the issue of Moldova's foreign policy orientation favoured prioritising [sic] relations with Turkey.”⁶⁴

Romanian president Traian Basescu sees a nation beset from several directions, of which Găgăuzia is but one source:

“Romania is once again engulfed by conflicts, in a region of conflict if the situation in Ukraine escalates and in an area of instability. In the south, in the Balkans, there is Bosnia and Herzegovina, where people are in the streets; there is the Ukraine crisis; Moldova, with Transnistria launching challenges against the Chisinau administration; a Găgăuzia that held a referendum to join the Eurasian Union; with a Communist Party in the Republic of Moldova seeking to give rise to a conflict in northern Moldova this time, so opposite to Găgăuzia, in Balti, for the Eurasian path of the Republic of Moldova.”⁶⁵

CAN RUSSIA LEVERAGE GĂGĂUZIA TO FOMENT CONFLICT WITHIN NATO?

Russia has long pursued opportunities to tear off wedges of territory from other spheres of influence on its periphery. I have written before of how Russia surrounds itself with buffer zones and failing states under its abiding doctrine of *defense-in-depth*: “It is no coincidence that so many divided states border on Russia. Nor is it coincidence that so many unstable states sit on its periphery.”⁶⁶ I have also written about how Russia is sowing discord among the 160,000+ ethnic Hungarians in western Ukraine's *Kárpátalja*.

“Relatia Romaniei cu Rusia risca sa treaca prin Budapesta!” *Rumaniamilitary.ro* [26 March 2014]. <http://www.rumaniamilitary.ro/dan-dungaciu-relatia-romaniei-cu-rusia-risca-sa-treaca-prin-budapesta>. Last accessed 27 June 2014. Dungaciu, a Romanian sociologist, is a Moldova expert and Director of the Institute of Political Sciences and International Relations of the Romanian Academy, and President of the Black Sea University Foundation

⁵⁹ Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs (undated). “Relations between Turkey and Moldova.” <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-moldova.en.mfa>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.

⁶⁰ “Oğuzların torunları AB ve Rusya arasında.” *Milliyet.com.tr* [online edition, 17 April 2014]. [shttp://dunya.milliyet.com.tr/oguzlarin-torunlari-ab-ve-rusya/dunya/detay/1868259/default.htm](http://dunya.milliyet.com.tr/oguzlarin-torunlari-ab-ve-rusya/dunya/detay/1868259/default.htm). Last accessed 30 June 2014. Ethnic Oghuz are more commonly referred to as Türkmen.

⁶¹ “Turkey ‘expresses support’ to people of Gagauzia.” *Anadolu Agency* [online edition, 8 May 2014]. <http://www.aa.com.tr/en/world/325087--turkey-expresses-support-to-the-people-of-gagauzia>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.

⁶² Prof. Dr. Recep Akdağ, Minister of Health of the Republic of Turkey. <http://disab.saglik.gov.tr/yonetim/Uploads/files/moldovaing.pdf>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.

⁶³ <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/expo-da-umut-akrabalarda/eg/haberdetay/10.10.2011/1448819/default.htm>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.

⁶⁴ Rinna, Tony (2014). “Moldova, the EU and the Gagauzia Issue.” *New Eastern Europe* [online edition, 14 February 2014]. <http://neweasterneurope.eu/articles-and-commentary/1097-moldova-the-eu-and-the-gagauzia-issue>. Last accessed 30 June 2014. Sometimes small signs sometimes bear noticing: in May 2012, Găgăuzia's Formuzal joined leaders from Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus at the premier of a Turkish film about Cyprus at the Cannes Film Festival. See: <http://www.aa.com.tr/tr/s/52256---kod-adi-venus---cannes-da>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.

⁶⁵ “Basescu: Russia not seeking conflict with a NATO member state, thus Romania not a target.” *Agerpres.ro* [online edition, 2 March 2014]. <http://www.agerpres.ro/english/2014/03/02/basescu-russia-not-seeking-conflict-with-a-nato-member-state-thus-romania-not-a-target-14-32-52>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.

⁶⁶ Paine, S.C.M. (2012). *The Wars for Asia 1911-1949*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 83-84.

Regional conflicts in such places as Ukraine (Crimea and the Donbas), Transdnistria and Kárpátalja have been major points of discord between Russia and NATO (which Russia considers synonymous with the EU). It is certainly not, as once optimistically suggested, the case that “NATO expansion, because of a number of important reasons, does not conflict with Russian interests.”⁶⁷

Many current and aspiring NATO states that are former Soviet republics or Warsaw Pact members regularly wrestle with whether their national security interests are “a pillar or a pole”: a *pillar* in the sense of supporting NATO and its broad security interests, or a *pole* in the sense of existing to pursue uniquely national security interests in a multipolar world.⁶⁸ It seems it may default to what we might call the “French solution”⁶⁹: a national pole, sometimes though not always aligned with an American one, as one of many pillars supporting NATO. As one scholar wrote, “NATO expansion eastward and to non-European concerns” has always posed the risk that “diverging interests and discord [would] emerge between member states.”⁷⁰

It is self-evident that Russian interests would be served by conflict sown by NATO member-states pursuing their own national interests in Găgăuzia (and as mentioned parenthetically, in Tăraclia). The fissiparous tendencies already threatening the integrity of Moldova as a state are exacerbated by the pursuit of competing interests, real or claimed, among NATO members. Romania, in particular, has been singled for criticism over the better part of two decades for “veiled striving to revise the borders,”⁷¹ something recent comments about “one nation, two states” in Moldova serve to reinforce.

⁶⁷ Asmus, Ronald D., Kugler, Richard L., & Larrabee, F. Stephen (1994). *Building a New NATO*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

⁶⁸ This theme is suggested by Jordan Becker (2011). <http://www.atlantic-community.org/app/webroot/files/articlepdf/BurdenSharing.pdf>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.

⁶⁹ This characterization alludes to one French politician Hubert Védrine referred to as “modernized gaullo-mitterandiste.” See: Védrine (2001). *Ratification du traité de Nice. Intervention du ministre des Affaires étrangères, M. Hubert Védrine, à l'Assemblée nationale.* <http://www.doc.diplomatie.gouv.fr>. Last accessed 27 June 2014.

⁷⁰ Naselli, Jason (2012). “A Matter of Perspective: Why Predictions of NATO’s Demise are Flawed,” p. 2. <http://www.atlantic-community.org/app/webroot/files/articlepdf/NATOFuture.pdf>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.

⁷¹ Zhovnirenko, Pavlo (1997). “Problems of NATO Expansion: Ukrainian Perspective on Options for Guaranteeing of European Security,” p. 24. <http://www.nato.int/acad/fellow/95-97/zhovnire.pdf>. Last accessed 30 June 2014.