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Stars and Trident

The European Integration of Ukraine

by Maciej Olchawa

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Maciej Olchawa's Compelling Argument on Behalf of Ukraine's European Integration

The book *Stars and Trident: The European Integration of Ukraine* by Maciej Olchawa offers several important arguments on behalf of Ukraine's European integration and the benefits of this process not only for member states of the EU and Ukraine, but also – in the long term – for Russia and other European countries.

Based on an in-depth analysis of relations between the European Union and Ukraine from the initial days of its independence in 1991 until early 2013, the author presents a convincing claim about the viable perspective of Ukraine becoming a member of the EU, which can help neutralize Russia's neo-imperial tactics toward the region that Moscow considers its "near abroad." Moreover, as suggested by Maciej Olchawa, a Ukraine that is integrated with Europe will become a model for "Russia in Europe to Vladivostok" – as noted in 2007 by Zbigniew Brzezinski, who the author cites frequently.¹ It is important to note that the opinion that Ukraine is becoming a roadmap for Russia is shared by a renowned scholar from Moscow, Lilia Shevtsova.² In addition, the conclusions of scholars from Russia, Ukraine, Poland, and Brussels (represented by Maciej Olchawa) made during an international conference at the Jagiellonian University³ underscored that a growing number of inde-

¹ According to Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Ukraine offers not only a lesson, but a hopeful avenue for Russia – one that all of us in the West should hope that Russia will pursue." Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Ukraine as Russia's Older Brother," *Kyiv Post*, November 14, 2007.

² See Lilia Shevtsova, "Ukraina – kak vekha," in *Obinokaia derzhava. Pochemu Rossiia ne stala Zapadom i pochemu Rossii trudno z Zapadom* (Moscow: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2010), 116–121. See also Włodzimierz Mokry, "Program Jerzego Giedroycia aktualny na Ukrainie i w Rosji. W 10. rocznicę śmierci redaktora 'Kultury' paryskiej," in *Prace Komisji Środkowoeuropejskiej PAU*, ed. Jan Machnika and Irena Stawowy-Kawka (Kraków: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 2011), 45–56.

³ These issues were also discussed during the conference entitled *Poles, Ukrainians, Russians: Roads to Awareness and Understanding* organized by the Faculty of International and Political Studies of the Jagiellonian University in June 2013, with

pendent Russian academic circles in Moscow are increasingly convinced that it is in Russia's interest to follow in the footsteps of Poland and carry out the agenda of Jerzy Giedroyc – enshrined in the recognition of Ukraine's sovereignty. The acknowledgment of Ukraine's independence by the authorities in Moscow will help the Kremlin to abandon its neoimperial policies aimed at subverting Ukraine.⁴ From Maciej Olchawa's diligent analysis of official documents, as well as the opinions of political scientists, journalists, and politicians, it is clear that the European Union indeed has the chance to "anchor Ukraine where it belongs – in Europe," as is underlined by the author in his conclusions and recommendations. The paramount mission that has to be undertaken by European and Ukraine policymakers for the sake of Europe, its security, and overall development, is best-summarized by the maxims of Zbigniew Brzezinski⁵ and Alexander J. Motyl.⁶ Both emphasize that shutting the

the participation, among others, of renowned scholar Alexander Lipatov from Moscow. It is worth noting that Maciej Olchawa presented a very insightful paper entitled *The European Union or Eurasia? Regional Differences in Context of Ukrainian Society's Perception of the Past and the Future*, which sparked a lively discussion among participants. In this context, an interesting concept was presented by Alexander Lipatov, who stated that because of Kyiv's destruction following the Tatar onslaught in 1240, the Muscovite state was isolated from Western culture and was transformed into Mongolian Rus, which gave rise to the "system of Russian rule that does not allow dialogue between the authorities and society," that is so visible today. See Alexander Lipatov "Rosja na gruzach Rusi," *Uważam Rze Historia* 14, no. 5 (2013): 52-55.

- ⁴ "Many Russian intellectuals, including liberal ones, stumble upon the issue of Ukraine and Ukrainian independence. In the past, the notion of an independent Ukraine helped Polish elites develop their policies. Today, this same notion is needed to allow Russians to find a new identity." Lilia Shevtsova, "Nasz bohater nie naszych czasów. 10. Rocznica śmierci J. Giedroycia," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, September 13, 2010. See also Lilia Shevtsova, "Ezhi Gedroits: rossiiskii vzgliad," *Novaia Pol'sha*, no. 9 (2010): 3-6.
- ⁵ "Time may not be working in favor of a voluntary submission by Kyiv to Moscow, but impatient Russian pressures to that end as well as the West's indifference could generate a potentially explosive situation on the very edge of the European Union." Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Strategic Vision: America and the Crisis of Global Power* (New York: Basic Books), 95.
- ⁶ "If the European Union is unwilling or unable to defend democracy in its backyard and to prevent Ukraine's transformation into a second Yugoslavia, then the EU is as meaningless as its commitment to supposedly humane European values is hollow." Alexander J. Motyl, "End of Ukraine and Future of Eurasia," *Kyiv Post*, May 7, 2010.

door to the European family would have disastrous consequences for Ukraine and the EU.

Bearing in mind the 22 onerous, but, nevertheless, fruitful years during which the EU and Ukraine rallied around the “twelve yellow stars,” there seem to be no substantial reasons why the Association Agreement should not be signed in Vilnius in 2013. This historic opportunity cannot be wasted bearing in mind that:

Firstly, European integration is supported by a clear majority of Ukraine's society, and the main political parties have declared a pro-European course by adopting a statement in the Verkhovna Rada on the implementation of Ukraine's aspirations for European integration and the signing of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement (315 out of 349 MPs present voted in favor).

Secondly, thanks to the patient and systematic cooperation of many individuals and institutions from both sides of the UE-Ukraine dialogue, both European and Ukrainian politicians are aware of the necessary changes – or corrections to their policies, approaches, and actions – that are required to bring down the existing barriers that hamper an all-inclusive agreement. These issues are compellingly, tersely, and clearly formulated in the last two conclusions of Maciej Olchawa's book.

Alluding to the book's point of departure embodied in the illuminating notions presented by Zbigniew Brzezinski and Alexander J. Motyl, Olchawa argues that “Russia first” is not the right approach. The author makes a valid point by identifying the main causes of Ukraine's troubles and its difficulties in establishing neighborly relations with EU member states as well as its onerous dealings with the Russian Federation, which oscillate “between conflict and dialogue.”⁷ In his two chief recommendations, the author upholds that the “European Union's policy toward Ukraine cannot be shaped as a reaction to existing Brussels-Moscow or Kyiv-Moscow relations. The EU cannot accept the “Finlandization” of Ukraine because this would increase the neoimperial appetite of the Kremlin and increase the EU's dependence on Russian energy.”⁸ In this context – as aptly justified by Olchawa – Kyiv's notion that Ukraine can gain anything from being a “bridge between Russia and the West” seems unwarranted. In the chapter that focuses on this issue, we learn that “cheap gas from ‘Kremlin Inc.’ comes at a high political price. It pulls Ukraine away from

⁷ See Rafał Kęsek, *Między konfliktem a dialogiem. Polityka Ukrainy wobec Federacji Rosyjskiej w latach 1997 – 2004* (Krakow: Biblioteka Fundacji św. Włodzimierza, 2010), 246.

⁸ See chapter “Conclusions and Recommendations.”

the European Union because it hampers the implementation of vital reforms in the energy sector.”⁹

The above-mentioned argument deserves particular attention given the various economic, political, and social effects of the Kremlin's gas war waged against Ukraine. Casting off dependence on Russian raw materials will allow saved funds to be allocated to raising the quality of life of the most disadvantaged citizens of the European Union and of Ukraine. However, energy security, which is necessary for economic stability and the civilizational development of any country – as noted by the author – is not possible without eliminating gas as a political tool, one that is recurrently used by Moscow. It is no accident that former Prime-Minister Yulia Tymoshenko – pressured by the EU to sign the agreement with then-Prime Minister Vladimir Putin – became a hostage of the gas war. It is essential for the political factor (i.e. the fixing of gas prices) to be eliminated from the economic sphere in order to abet the functioning of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA), an integral part of the Association Agreement whose main task is to improve trade relations and promote social prosperity.¹⁰

In addition to the benefits of stabilizing the economy, there is also the potential for the rebirth of universal values and spiritual needs among “Slav peoples, that other ‘lung’ of our same European homeland,” as portrayed by John Paul II in his speech to the European Parliament on October 11, 1988. The Pope desired that “Europe, with sovereign power, equipping herself with free institutions, may one day enlarge the dimensions given to her by geography and even more by history... [Where] culture inspired by Christian faith has deeply marked the history of all the peoples of our unique Europe, Greek and Latin, Germanic and Slavonic, in spite of all the vicissitudes and beyond the social systems and the ideologies.”¹¹ As an advocate of EU enlargement for Central European countries and the author of the phrase “From the Union of Lublin to the European Union,” it is particularly noteworthy that 13 years after his speech in the European Parliament, during the historic pilgrimage to

⁹ See chapter “Ukraine: The Bridge to Europe.”

¹⁰ See chapter “The Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA).”

¹¹ John Paul II, *Europe: Paris 1980, Santiago de Compostela 1982, Strasbourg 1988* (Gliwice: PUK KompART, 2008), 78. Consult materials from the Jagiellonian University's 2011 conference entitled *Europe of 'Two Lungs' in the Literary and Pastoral Works of the Blessed John Paul II*, which included the participation of scholars from Ukraine, Russia, Poland, and the European Parliament. See also Mokry, *Apostolskie słowo Jana Pawła II na Ukrainie w 2001 roku*, 412.

Ukraine in 2001, Pope John Paul II stated, "Here the Church breathes with the two lungs of the Eastern and Western traditions."¹²

Most Central-Eastern European intellectuals have also dedicated their work and lives to create a peaceful and dignified coexistence of all nations and states that respect "human freedom and dignity rooted in the European consciousness" and "its ethic of duty"¹³ which many policymakers in post-communist countries lack.

It is upon these indispensable values that the European Union expects Ukraine to develop relations with other countries and peoples. While aspiring to membership in the European Union, Ukraine cannot elude the adoption of European standards which guarantee its citizens individual freedom, security, and well-being. Moreover, Ukraine's government should foster friendly relations with all of its neighbors. Thus, as pertinently stated in the conclusion of Maciej Olchawa's book, the future of Ukraine ultimately rests in the hands of Ukrainians. Without undertaking radical reforms both in the economic and political spheres, and without reforming the court system that has become politicized and is plagued by selective justice as the case of Yulia Tymoshenko perfectly exemplifies, Ukraine may "drift more toward Eurasia than the EU," but, as underscored by Olchawa, "this decision will ultimately be made by the people of Ukraine." It is understandable, the author notes, that "Ukrainians will need assistance from the European Union – and should be encouraged

¹² Pope John Paul II noted: "the Church shows forth her divine and human reality, embellished by the genius of Ukrainian culture. Here there is a fraternal meeting between those who draw from the sources of Byzantine spirituality and those who are nourished by Latin spirituality. Here the deep sense of mystery which suffuses the holy liturgy of the Eastern Churches and the mystical succinctness of the Latin Rite come face to face and mutually enrich each other." During the general audience in the Vatican on 4 July 2001, following his return from Ukraine, the Pope summed up the "unforgettable experience [...] in Kyiv and Lviv, to preside over solemn eucharistic celebrations in the Latin rite and Byzantine-Ukrainian rite" which "was as though living the liturgy 'with two lungs.' It was like this at the end of the first millennium, after the baptism of Rus and before the unhappy division between East and West. We prayed together so that the differences of the traditions will not impede communion in faith and in ecclesial life. 'Ut unum sint': The words of Christ's sorrowful prayer resounded eloquently in that 'frontier land,' whose history records in blood the call to be the 'bridge' between divided brothers." Quoted in Włodzimierz Mokry, *Apostolskie słowo Jana Pawła II na Ukrainie w 2001 roku* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Szwajpolt Fiol, 2002), 324-412.

¹³ See Alexandra Laignel-Lavastine, *Duchy Europy. Wokół dzieła i myśli Czesława Miłosza, Jana Patočki i Istvana Bibo* (Sejny: Pogranicze, 2012), 40-70.

towards this path, especially by those countries that benefited from similar support in the past and today are members of the EU family.” This would be the fruition of a secure Europe that develops harmoniously and is free from chaos; it would be the “Native Realm” which so many individuals dedicated to Ukraine have dreamt about – including Czesław Miłosz, Stanisław Vincenz, Jerzy Giedroyc, Bohdan Osadchuk, Vasyl Stus, Andrei Sakharov, and their praiseworthy successors.

It should be noted that thanks to the hard work of many Polish politicians and Members of the European Parliament, most notably the EP's former president, Jerzy Buzek, the most determined, consistent, and active advocate of Ukraine's European aspirations, which it confirmed during its presidency of the EU,¹⁴ is Poland – first lead by President Lech Wałęsa, the estimable and tirelessly active President Aleksander Kwaśniewski, and followed by President Lech Kaczyński. Recently, President Bronisław Komorowski has also conducted a patient, vigorous, and effective policy dedicated to Ukraine's European integration.

Bearing in mind its historical unionist traditions and the place of Belarusians and Ukrainians in the Polish and Lithuanian Commonwealth, one would expect that Lithuania, the host of the Eastern Partnership summit in Vilnius, a country that has experienced difficulties on its own path to freedom, will remain an ally of the Ukrainian nation's desires. Today, this long-standing Lithuanian tradition is continued by the generations of President Vytautas Landsbergis, President Valdas Adamkus, and President Dalia Grybauskaitė.

Consequently, it is hard not to be satisfied by the publication of this important book, which fits perfectly into the ongoing discussion regarding the goals, benefits, and chances of Ukraine's EU membership.

I also hope that this book, which is recommended reading for all European and Ukrainian policymakers as well as for all advocates of Ukraine's EU aspirations, will attract as much attention as Maciej Olchawa's work entitled *Imperial Games*, which focuses on Ukraine's place in the United States' geopolitical strategy.¹⁵ I also expect that this second book, which is dedicated to ongoing developments in EU-Ukraine relations, will contribute to the signing of the

¹⁴ See chapter concerning the Eastern Partnership and the conclusion of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement negotiations in: Janusz Józef Węc, *Pierwsza polska prezydencja w Unii Europejskiej: Uwarunkowania – Procesy decyzyjne – Osiągnięcia i niepowiedzenia*, ed. Bogdan Szlachta (Krakow: Seria Societas, 2012), 39-41, 90-95, 233-235.

¹⁵ See Maciej Olchawa, *Imperial Games: Ukraine in the United States' Geopolitical Strategy* (Krakow: Arcana, 2009), 248.

historic Association Agreement and will be as thought-provoking as his first book, which was rated highly by the distinguished Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski, who has focused his studies on sources of conflict and conflict prevention in Ukraine, Europe, and the world. The book was also acclaimed by renowned advocates of Ukraine's European aspirations, experts and politicians, such as the EU Ambassador to Ukraine, Jan Tombiński, Alexander J. Motyl, and Andrzej Nowak.

The conclusions and recommendations included in this excellent analysis written by Maciej Olchawa, a representative of the youngest generation of experts on Ukraine, educated in both American and Polish universities (European Studies and Ukrainian Studies at the Faculty of International and Political Studies of the Jagiellonian University), should be helpful to all those interested in this subject. The author prepared *Stars and Trident* while working for the European Parliament; therefore, he had an excellent opportunity to gather and analyze information while he was actively participating in the Parliament's activities concerning cooperation with Ukraine, including the drafting of parliamentary resolutions, conducting negotiations between political groups, organizing meetings with Ukrainian policymakers, or taking part in election monitoring missions to Ukraine.

It is worth mentioning that the author, who speaks English, Polish, Ukrainian and Spanish, decided to publish his book simultaneously in English, Polish and Ukrainian, also in order to show Ukrainian politicians the emphasis that the European Parliament places on the development and functioning of the national languages of each and every EU state and the importance of the development and functioning of Ukrainian. The issue of the Ukrainian language in international and diplomatic relations between Kyiv and the EU is discussed in a separate chapter, as well as in a paper Maciej Olchawa prepared for a conference organized in Krakow in 2012.¹⁶ The author skillfully persuades the reader that until Ukraine regained its sovereignty, for centuries the Ukrainian language did not have the proper conditions to develop naturally. The language had been persecuted and, even today, it is marginalized and exploited for political purposes. Therefore, according to the author, the constitutional guarantees concerning the functioning of the national language have not been fulfilled because, apart from a few exceptions, the Ukrainian language is not being used in international relations by politicians, nor is it used by Ukrainian institutions, including diplomatic services that liaison with UE member states

¹⁶ Consult the conference held in Krakow in November 2012 entitled, *The Ukrainian Language in the Lives and Activities of the Ukrainian Elites over the Past Centuries: Culture, Education, Religion, Society, Politics*.

and other countries. This book, published in three languages, is intended to reach Ukrainian policymakers who are responsible for their country's cultural and political growth. Very often, unfortunately, their actions result in the widespread perception that Ukraine is a Russian-language state.

It is also significant that this book, which advocates Ukraine's European integration, was written by a graduate of the Jagiellonian University in Krakow and has been published by the Saint Volodymyr Foundation, established in 1990. Its patron was baptized 1025 years ago in Kyiv, which confirmed Ukraine's European identity, together with its fundamentally Christian culture.

Włodzimierz Mokry