

Krzysztof Szpakowski, Kamil Głowacki

Conceptions of European integration in Ukrainian perspective

This essay shows the most common conceptions of integration in the European Union, concerning its broadening and deepening process. First part focuses on two visions of Europe as a whole: first one will be a holistic, exclusive vision of Europe and the second, opposite, will be a synergetic, inclusive idea of Europe.

Second part of this speech focuses on European prospects for Ukraine.

Talking about the conceptions of Europe and the European Union we should start from explanation what precisely we understand under the term *Europe*. It is really hard to define this term and many scientists have a serious problem with it.

The first problem is connected with the impossibility of defining the geographical borders of Europe, especially the Eastern and South-Eastern one. This border was changing during centuries. We have to be aware that since the end of the 18th century the Eastern border of contemporary Europe has been set on the Ural Mountains, so if we have problems with such an “easy” thing like defining geographical borders, how we can define their cultural aspect.

What is more, many scientists like Bernard Burrow claim, that Europe is a mental phenomenon or historical one. For them

Europe does not exist outside our minds and historical facts. Facts which we call Europe¹.

Consequently we have to notice another factor which could help us to define Europe – these are the values, European values. It is said that the borders of Europe are defined rather by values than some geographical guidelines. Certainly, geographical borders set the framework, but the values define the exact borders.

As we can see, it is possible to point out some factors like geography, history, or the European values that enable us to create various definitions of Europe and highlight borders of this phenomenon. That is why in many cases our understanding of the term *Europe* is different and depends on the comprehension of others.

So if it is so hard to define the term *Europe* it is also really hard to name the criteria of being a European. This way of thinking leads us to a question: is it possible to find one and the only one good conception for European integration?

The answer for this question is simple – no. No, because if we do not have one definition of Europe, we can have many solutions and ideas for European integration.

Nowadays, we can distinguish two main conceptions of Europe and in the same time of European integration. The first one is the idea of holistic, exclusive Europe. This conservative conception aims to build a culturally prescribed Europe based on Christian mythology, shared meanings and values, historical myths and memories, the Ancient Greek philosophy and Roman legacy, homogeneity.

¹ Adam Szymański, *Turcja a tożsamość europejska*, [in:] Franciszek Gołembski [ed.], *Tożsamość Europejska*, Warszawa 2005, p. 132.

Holistic Europe does not intend to include any other culture or religion except for the Christian legacy. This is why many major politicians both implicitly and explicitly advocate the idea of the EU Constitution Treaty article regarding the Christian roots of the Union².

This vision of Europe has its strong and weak points. Advantage of this exclusive way of thinking is the fact that it is easier to shape a common European identity. It seems to be obvious that building our identity as Europeans is much simpler if we have common roots and values. The second factor that helps us to do it, is the psychological mechanism based on a simple division between *WE* and *THEY*. The action of this mechanism is natural and unsophisticated. If outside our neighborhood we see potential enemies we treat people who are around us as our close friends with whom we want to integrate. In this conception the EU seems to be cut off from the rest of the world by a bubble which surrounds the whole “old EU”. Inside the bubble there is only one possibility – deepening, because broadening leads to loosening the European identity. Deepening separated from enlargement could be beneficial for the EU, because it gives many possibilities of achieving political integration in a shorter time and thanks to this, gaining a stronger position on international political scene³.

However, the vision of exclusive Europe does not have only good sides. We have to notice that if we agree on this conception of European integration we would have to be aware that there exist some disadvantages of such idea. The first question that arises is

² Anyhan Kaya, *EU integration process: Prospects and challenges for Turkey*, “Wspólnoty Europejskie”, nr 10 (167) 2005

what we would do with many cultural minorities in Europe if we accept the vision that EU is the community of European values and a Christian club.

Next, it will appear the issue of Muslims who live in Europe. This minority does not want to be assimilated with societies in which they live, so they create townships or ghettos totally separated from national culture of the country they stay in. The solution of this issue could be the integration between migrants and Europeans but this process is being blocked by the vision of exclusive Europe. The result of such a way of thinking is growing intolerance and “ghettoisation”. What is more, it disables the peaceful coexistence between Europeans and immigrants from non-European countries. The integration between *us* and *them* is becoming impossible.

On the contrary to this exclusive vision of European integration, there stands the conception of a synergetic, inclusive Europe. This progressive idea suggests politically dynamic Europe based on cultural diversity, dialogue, heterogeneity. The advocates of synergetic Europe promote coexistence with other cultures, and emphasize that the EU is, by origin, a peace and integration project. Joschka Fisher, Michel Rocard, and Gerhard Schröder are examples of politicians emphasizing the secular character of the EU. The political Europe project goes along with the idea of unity in diversity, aiming at building a meta European identity embracing cultural and religious differences⁴.

³ Piotr Mazurkiewicz, *Europeizacja Europy*, Warszawa 2001, p. 63.

⁴ Anyhan Kaya, *op. cit.*, p.13.

The term *meta European identity* needs some explanations. Some scientists believe that it is possible to create European nationality based on political institutions. They say that in frames of inclusive Europe, where people are aware of existence of other cultures and understand each other, it is possible to build their supranational or meta European identity thanks to the mixture of down top and up bottom processes. Up bottom processes consist of ingredients such as building supranational institutions which targets at governing the whole EU or creating common internal and external policy. Thanks to these processes citizens of the EU gain some formal frames where they can initiate some down top processes that are informal and focus on building peaceful coexistence. This factor should lead to the integration between citizens of various European countries⁵.

However, constructing common identity in conception of inclusive Europe is harder than in the previous case, because here we do not have a potential enemy so we cannot build it using the *WE and THEY* mechanism. In this case they are our friends and we should pursue to know each one better and better. Thanks to those relations we would be able to understand them better and integrate with them. It is easier to borrow some values from other cultures and use them in the field of our own.

After all, if we take into account the minorities issue as we have done it in the first part devoted to the holistic conception of Europe, we can notice that here the problem of other nationalities just vanished. It is possible because this vision, as it was said earlier, assumes that Europe is open for all cultures and additionally, people

⁵ Piotr Mazurkiewicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-86

who live within its borders are interested in getting know other cultures, also those of non-European origin. As a result of this point of view we receive an idea that people willingly integrate with each other and that we exchange and adapt some cultural patterns of behaviour between cultures⁶.

In this part there were marked some main points of two visions of Europe in the theoretical aspect. These two conceptions exist parallelly in minds of European politicians and scientists, which of this two would be promoted depends on political options in European countries and awareness of European citizens. Now Europe has to choose one of presented conceptions. The choice of the conception will determine further political decisions concerning enlargement and deepening. This decision for sure will have a great impact on countries that want to be the EU members, especially for Turkey or Ukraine. We can see that in the future the EU will face new problems and challenges. It is connected with a probable membership of countries from the Balkans and Eastern Europe.

Following this problem we can find that the issue of Ukraine as a country which has undertaken political and economic reforms is one of the main themes in the discussion about the future of Central-Eastern Europe after the Orange Revolution in 2004. Unexpected reaction of Ukrainian society to falsification of presidential voting made an impression on European governments and elites.

It is easy to notice that modern Ukraine is exposed to the choice between two conceptions of future. It is strictly conditioned

⁶ Stanisław Tokarski, *Tożsamość Europy a kultury pozaeuropejskie: Podróż na Wschód – w poszukiwaniu korzeni*, [in:] Franciszek Gołembski [ed.], *Tożsamość*

by the history of this country which is situated between two different civilization influences.

The first one is an impact of culture and patterns from Western Europe represented by countries of Central-Eastern Europe. This assemblage of values contains fundamental elements like respect for human rights, democratic model of country based on law. What is more, it includes development of modern civil society and basic freedoms of every citizen.

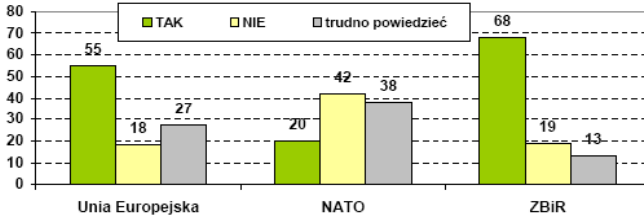
On the other hand we can mention civilization of Eurasia represented by influence of East Slavic values such as authoritarian style of governance, orthodox Christianity values and feeling of common collective identity.

We can brightly see that there are cultural borders between particular regions of Ukraine and among the society. Generally speaking, Western Ukraine with Lviv and for example Galicia Region represents pro-European point of view and many citizens support policy for integration with European Community. On the other side we can notice that in central regions of state for example in Kiev, there are - in a similar number - many supporters either of European Integration or pro-Russian course of economic and political cooperation. Going far to the Eastern regions we can observe an increase of public support for integration with the Community of Independent States and for Belarus-Russia Union. What is interesting for politicians and observers, in every region we can mark quite large number of citizens who maintain balanced policy which is,

Europejska, Warszawa 2005, p. 70.

according to them, the most beneficial for Ukraine from political, social and economic point of view.

Wykres 1
Zwolennicy i przeciwnicy przystąpienia Ukrainy do różnych organizacji międzynarodowych

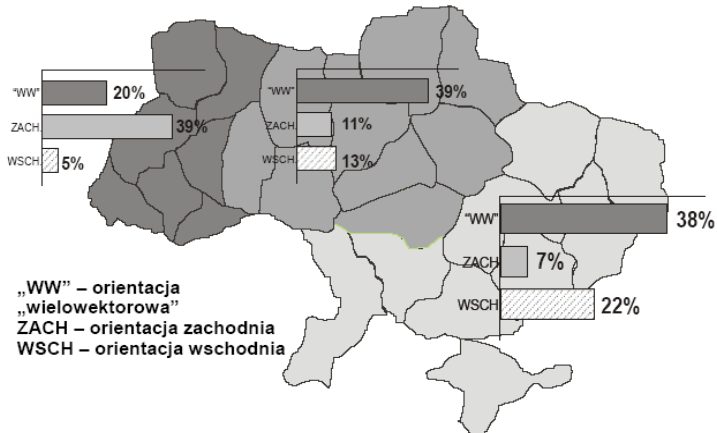


Dane:
Fundacja im. Stefana Batorego 2003

Joanna Konieczna, *Między Wschodem a Zachodem*, Fundacja im. Stefana Batorego, Warszawa 2004

Mapka

Regionalny rozkład orientacji w polityce zagranicznej



Joanna Konieczna, *Między Wschodem a Zachodem*, Fundacja im. Stefana Batorego, Warszawa 2004, Punktem wyjścia dla zastosowanego podziału Ukrainy na regiony jest propozycja Ołeksandra Stehnija i Mykoły Czuriłowa (1998)

The government and president of Ukraine have a possibility to choose among three general ways of foreign policy which emerged from internal division in the country.

Before the occurrences of Orange Revolution, Ukrainian authorities officially presented foreign policy based on “the European choice”. In fact, they played with declarations about it and did not make any reforms or changes which could have deepen a cooperation between the Community and Ukraine. On the other hand, they had a very good cooperation with Eastern neighbours, especially with the Russian Federation.

Bilateral relations between Ukraine and the European Community began in 1991 when Ukraine gained the independency. In the declaration from that year, the European Community supported political changes in this state and gave a hope for good relations and dialogue in the future. In 1994 there was signed a special agreement between Ukrainian government and European Commission called “Settlement of partnership and cooperation”. It is worth noticing that Ukraine was the first of post-Soviet countries which was a signatory of such agreement. In this document Ukrainian government obliged to continue process of transition; to support democratic processes, to respect fundamental human rights and to harmonize economic relations with European Community. In next years common Committees were established to cooperate in many fields such as law, economy, cultural exchange and possible perspective integration. It should be mentioned that this type of cooperation did not bring expected results. Unfortunately, there was no good progress in deepening the cooperation. What is more, Ukraine was far and far

from fulfilling basic criteria to become a member of the European Community which are called Copenhagen Criteria⁷. Ukraine did not implement any of them: there were no satisfactory achievements in stability of state institutions which could guarantee rules of democracy. The government did not respect human rights and law at all. Moreover, there was no real free market economy and ability to be competitive on common market. The hardest criteria was to implement *acquis communautaire*⁸ and cooperation in the field of Common Foreign and Security Policy.

After Orange Revolution and the success of Wiktor Juszczenko in presidential voting in 2004 the situation has changed. New president and all governments during 2005 were enthusiastic about pro-European policy and they changed the attitude to the European Union. New authorities revised hitherto foreign policy. In February 2005 there was signed a new agreement between Ukraine and European Community called “EU-Ukraine Action Plan”. Till now, the Ukrainian government fulfilled parts of it such as “Political dialogue and reforms” and “Regional and international matters – common foreign and safety policy”. To gain all aims of this agreement, Ukrainian authorities made another plan called “Road Map” that gave details on the adaptation of reforms to the expectations of the European Union. Till now, 70% of this plan has been achieved. The most important event in 2005 was the EU-Ukraine summit in Kiev. During this conference the EU awarded Ukraine with the status of free market economy which is the most important thing in

⁸ A. Marszałek, *Integracja europejska*, Warszawa 2004.

the Ukrainian way to a membership in World Trade Organization. Additionally, it was said that Ukraine made a great progress in building a democratic state based on the rule of law. Moreover, Ukraine joined the EU safety and satellite navigation project called Galileo⁹.

In 2006 after the parliamentary elections in March, it is hard to estimate what the foreign policy of new government would be. Maybe it would be a return to a balanced policy caused by energetic crisis and other economic relations with Russia? The fact is that Ukraine made a great improvement on the way to the integration with the European Union. The question is if the European Union knows how to cooperate with Ukraine in the future and what perspective for bilateral relations is? It is expected that a new agreement for future cooperation will be signed in 2006 but we still cannot predict what it will look like and what it will contain precisely. We will have a possibility to see what the EU-Ukraine summit which is planned for July 2006 can bring to the bilateral relations¹⁰. The next step in these relations is new politics made by the EU authorities that is based on special European Instrument of Neighbourhood and Partnership.

Now, it is really hard to foresee in what way the EU is going to develop and what conception of European integration has the biggest chance to win. It depends on many factors such as future of European Constitution Treaty and the quality of the EU after the enlargement with Romania and Bulgaria in 2007. In these circumstances we do not have any possibility to estimate what the foreign

⁹ Grzegorz Gromadzki, Ołeksandr Suszko, *Między satysfakcją a rozczarowaniem. Relacje UE-Ukraina rok po pomarańczowej rewolucji*, Warszawa-Kijów 2005, p. 14

policy of EU would be towards Ukraine, Turkey and other countries that aspire to join the EU and have fulfilled their political and economic interest as soon as possible.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 16