

# Interwar Views on Managing Eastern European Space:

## Exploring Lypa's Conceptualisation of the Black Sea States Union

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**Abstract** Few people realise that the idea of establishing a Black Sea Union (BSU) – a regional bloc along the Black Sea littoral – was proposed in the immediate aftermath of WWII. This idea was primarily developed and advocated by Yuriy Lypa, a Ukrainian inter-war political thinker (1900-1944). In his books, Lypa described the dominant cultural, political and economic reasons for Eastern European states to create a supranational body in the Black Sea region. He also elaborated on the principles of common foreign and security policy of the proposed BSU and provided justification for establishing free trade and customs zones. In addition to outlining the dominant characteristics of the BSU, this article assesses the viability of Lypa's ideas, as well as illustrates the linkages between the BSU and European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC).

**Keywords:** Yuriy Lypa, Black Sea Union, BSU, ECSC, Eastern Europe, Ukraine, Turkey, Russia, interwar geopolitics

The contribution which an organised and living Europe can bring to civilization is indispensable to the maintenance of peaceful relations.

- Robert Schuman

The Black Sea States Union is an entity which can establish a

new stage of the existence of states and a new level of European culture in its Black Sea dimension.

- Yuriy Lypa

## Introduction

Critically evaluating research conducted on 1918-1945 political thinking reveals a certain inequality in focus; interest in West European interwar ideologies was significantly more comprehensive than in Central, East and South Europe and social and political scientists tended to neglect those sub-regions. There are at least four explanations for this imbalance of scholarly interest. First, social scientists considered it very unlikely that original thoughts could be formed in lands with insufficient political traditions and weak national identification.<sup>1</sup> Second, they explain that theories developed in occupied or dependent European states could hardly impact the international order during the interwar period. Third, they argue that interwar East European leaders and intellectuals were usually poorly educated and, therefore, could hardly generate sufficient or innovative political ideas. Not to mention that these leaders were preoccupied waging civil wars and organising revolts which left them scant time to theorise on political life.<sup>2</sup> Finally, the majority of the texts that did originate from interwar Eastern Europe were never translated into French or English and therefore modern political scientists did not have the opportunity to evaluate them properly. And, importantly, the majority of these texts were stored in secret KGB archives and inaccessible for readers until the 1990's.

Yuriy Lypa, whose research will be discussed in this article, was one Eastern European who strove – but failed – to change the interwar balance of power. However, his education and future-oriented global-scale thinking makes his work noteworthy.<sup>3</sup> As a result, this research will provide a necessary impetus for a re-evaluation of East European interwar thought and shed some light on the East European interwar discourse.

Lypa was one of the few thinkers looking far beyond his time and foreseeing a new world order. This order, while stressing the importance of nation-state sovereignty and cultural uniqueness, was characterised by the significant shift to liberal coexistence and interdependence. Lypa advocated the creation of a new interstate entity in the Black Sea Region which was more advanced than the international

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organisations of the time. His Black Sea States Union (BSSU) would have facilitated advanced trade links, established a single and free market, launched a common foreign and security policy, and introduced peace between member-states. Ten years later the same priorities were declared by the founding fathers of the European Union (EU),<sup>4</sup> so that it can be stated that the Ukrainian geo-scholar was in-sync with his West European counterparts even though they were more successful in implementing their visions while Lypa's were suppressed.

It is important to note that many of Lypa's ideas appear naïve and romantic; he was inclined to ignore the existing world order and replace it with more desirable options. For instance, he drew up plans for Ukraine to shed its Soviet skin and Polish root and emerge as an independent state in the 1940's. But he never doubted that the USSR was doomed to collapse and all constituting it member-states possessed a moral right to pursue their national policies regardless of the Kremlin's interests. These, and other romantic opinions, should be remembered while evaluating Lypa's geopolitical contribution.

This work proceeds as following: First, it presents the ideas surrounding the Black Sea Space as envisioned by Lypa. This section evaluates Lypa's geopolitical orientation and regional conceptualisation including an introduction to his proposed Black Sea State Union (BSSU). This is followed by a discussion of the dynamics of the BSSU, including the role of the USSR (later Russia) in the formation of such a union. The final substantive section of this work is based on a comparative assessment of the BSSU and the European Union (EU) and makes use of Lypa's geopolitical thinking.

Religion and Nonviolence

Studies show that nonviolent protests can build sympathy domestically and abroad by appearing less extreme than violent ones.<sup>10</sup> However, perceptions that the new regimes may be more centrist can often be dismayed once the new governments are formed. At least with respect to international actors, the new regimes may not only appear extreme but even more extreme than their predecessors—albeit in a different way. Specifically, they appear religiously radical. One explanation for this lies with the motivations of the opposition engaged in nonviolence.

## The Black Sea Space

Lypa developed the idea of the BSSU in his work entitled *The Destination of Ukraine*—a series of geopolitical essays (1938). In this work, Lypa

argues that the Black Sea states should deploy a new geopolitical perspective in determining their national security identities so that they be redefined as key territories between North and South – not East and West – and use their unique positions to grow in power and ensure theirs and regional security. As Lypa noted, the East-to-West axis was the most risk-prone for those states since it entailed the abandoning of natural advantages and would transform the Black Sea states into colonial annexes of more advanced nations. Speaking particularly about Ukraine, Lypa argued that the ‘North-to-South axis is the only organic axis for Ukrainian lands [...] Ukrainian statehood requires access to the Black Sea and the upper parts of the Dnieper river.<sup>5</sup> The argument was supported by historical evidence that the most powerful regional actors always imposed their control over North-to-South relations. For instance, the kings of the Kyivan Rus filled their treasuries by taxing merchants who travelled from Varangians to the Greeks. This money allowed kings to conduct effective military campaigns and destroy alternative North-to-South trade routes (f.e. in Khasaria).<sup>6</sup>

Building on his original observations, Lypa’s second book, *The Black Sea Doctrine* (1940), spends considerable time defining the unique geopolitical features of the Black Sea space—as a separate group of self-sufficient states which were *temporarily* transformed into colonies. These states possessed relatively weak cultural and economic relations to the European and Asian worlds. The Black Sea space was locked within itself; it was historically formed by common channels of trade and communication (rivers running from North to South), the common mentality and peoples’ habits, as well as by the common memory of huge empires and leaders who proved that strong geopolitical powers can form along the Black Sea littoral.<sup>7</sup>

To illustrate the uniqueness and self-sufficiency of this space, Lypa compared the Black Sea basin to a fortress with the Black Sea itself comprising the heart of the fortress. Its Eastern walls were constituted by the Caucasian states stretching up to the Caspian Sea and Volga River, its Western walls running along the Carpathian mountain range and the borders of the Balkans. The fortress had also three gates: the Danube, the Caspian Sea, and the Bosphorus. Turkey was considered to be the foundation of the fortress and Ukraine its vault.<sup>8</sup>

In assessing the perception of Fortress Black Sea by world powers, Lypa reminds on local colonialism. For West European strategists, the Black Sea states were European while their Russian counterparts treat-

ed these states as Russia, distinguishing them between “Small Russia,” “Danubian” and other fragmented and dependent territories.<sup>9</sup> At the time, the world powers denied, in word and deed, the Black Sea states the right to become independent. Lypa agreed that such denial could be justified since the Black Sea region was politically disorganised and economically underdeveloped. However, the Lypa saw such conditions as a temporary problem. To eliminate them, he drafted a political strategy for the Black Sea states to regain sovereignty and acquire real power. This focused on integration-to-unification and the creation of the BBSU.

### ***Re-Administrating the Black Sea Space and the Creation of the BSSU***

The chief reason for attempting to reconstitute the Black Sea region and construct the BBSU was the perceived lack of adequate deterrence mechanisms to counter-balance the multi-directional pressures mounting in the region. As Lypa was writing-up his *Black Sea Doctrine*, WWII was on and the Black Sea region under tremendous pressure. The USSR, Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and, to a lesser some extent, France with Britain, were politically and economically expanding into the region. The USSR attempted to build railways that connected the Caucasus, Donbass and Central Ukraine to Moscow and redirecting the flow of people, goods, and resources East. Nazi Germany – after the annexation of Austria – attempted to deepen the Danube so that larger amounts of goods could be transported from the Balkan states to Western Europe and vice versa. Italy aimed to control Albania, which was a direct threat to Turkish security while France and Britain tried to strengthen their positions in Bulgaria and the Caucasus, cracking Turkish influence in the region.<sup>10</sup> Against this backdrop, Lypa advocated the BSSU to raise state security under conditions of external penetration.

The first step for the unification of the Black Sea states – particularly Ukraine, Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania and the Caucasian states was the creation of free trade and customs zones. Lypa considered that the liberalisation of financial policies would unite the Black Sea states into one interdependent self-sufficient economy. Moreover, taking external pressure into account, Lypa stressed that the middle of 20<sup>th</sup> century was the right time for the creation of the free trade and customs zones, at least between independent states.<sup>11</sup>

The successful launching and deepening of economic interdependence was to be ensured by further industrialisation. In 1940, the Black Sea states were mainly agricultural though teeming with opportunities in mining and heavy industries. However, due to mismanagement, bribery and low education among local authorities, these states were unattractive for investors. To make matters worse, agricultural productivity deteriorated year on year.

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One option to reach the standards of the more developed countries was to generate enough capital within the borders of the BSSU and investing them into the development of domestic facilities. No foreign direct investment was appropriate due to the concerns of economic security. To succeed in producing internal capital, the Black Sea states should return to the old – one can even say medieval – patterns of cooperation, which Lypa defined as *artiles*. Historically, artiles were semi-formal associations for various enterprises. Payments on job-done were standard and based on verbal agreements. Based on the joint actions of families, clans, and communities with specialisations in a narrow field of activities, these artiles could provide the necessary preconditions for the economic growth of the BSSU. To illustrate the efficiency of proposed patterns, Lypa mentioned that several artiles from the 19<sup>th</sup> century were competitive in tobacco- and salt-production, agriculture and sea trade, cargo shipping, military affairs, delivery of the post, among other activities. Lypa described this pattern of economic activities as the “capitalism of solidarity,” which should have existed and developed as an alternative to ‘individualistic Western capitalism and Communistic police capitalism.’<sup>12</sup>

The proposed BSSU could satisfy its demands in raw materials through the prudent use of available resources – mineral deposits, soils, rivers, and population – on the territories of the Black Sea states. According to Lypa’s calculations, hard coal could (have) be extracted in the Donbass basin (reserves estimated circa 5 bln. tonnes), crude oil could be pumped from Transcaucasian valleys (reserves estimated circa 6,400 mln tonnes), manganese, copper, and iron could be excavated in the Central Ukraine and Southern Turkey. Also, crops, fruits, and vegetables could be easily cultivated on black-earth soils; this food would be enough to feed the entire BSSU population. All extracted or cultivated resources could be easily transported from one state to another via Black Sea routes and river systems. Lypa noted that more than 50

river ports existed in the region equipped to moor and operate with large vessels. Rivers could also ensure the production of hydroelectricity; their potential was estimated to be (approximately) 8,760,000 h.p. Finally, the common maritime character of people inhabiting the Black Sea littoral would allow them to find a common language and forge a strong socio-political community. As a result, sooner or later, the 140 million BSSU residents would be in position to pursue their ambitions on the international level and to change the global balance of power.<sup>13</sup>

Regarding foreign policy, Lypa believed that the precondition for a strong Union was rooted in the political unification of the Caucasus. People inhabiting those terrains, dispersed and exhausted by constant wars, should stop their conflicts to enjoy a common welfare. Peace, political stability, and fruitful cooperation on the Eastern walls of Fortress Black Sea would assist in the sustainable development of the BSSU and work for the joint exploration of Iranian oil fields and facilitate trade with the Central and East Asian countries. Moreover, a unified Caucasus would become a secure path to the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean, which was of significant importance when considering that the Black Sea had weak connections to the worlds' oceans.<sup>14</sup> Lypa even claimed that connections with Iran and Iraq constituted the only possible drawbridge of the Fortress. Lypa also advocated that an Idl-Ural independent state should emerge at the estuary of Volga river to cut off Russia from access to the Caspian Sea. To succeed with this task, a BSSU foreign policy was to target the self-identification of the indigenous people in Western Asia, particularly the Kazan Tatars, Chuvashians, and Bashkirians, who were oppressed by the USSR.<sup>15</sup>

One other issue in the re-administrating of the Black Sea space resided in moving the centre of Orthodox Christianity from Istanbul to Kyiv. Lypa claimed that the capital of former Byzantium had already become the pillar of the Muslim cultural world and, therefore, had lost its value as the centre of ancient Christian tradition. Only Kyiv, blessed by St. Andrew at the very dawn of its existence, possessed both historic traditions and a favourable location to become the new seat of the ecclesiastical throne. Such a rearrangement would encourage the development of Christian communities in the BSSU, as well as decrease tensions between Christians and Muslims in Turkey.

Finally, the BSSU leaders were strongly encouraged to benefit from the ideological rivalry between the 'three imperialisms' attempting to colonise the Black Sea region. Lypa understood that the underdevelop-

oped and disorganised East European states were not in a position to use hard power for their protection and that many of them remained under occupation. Therefore, high-level diplomacy and coordination of foreign policies were the most applicable tools to manoeuvre between the competing regional interests in order to gain time for re-industrialisation and rearmament.

### The Lynchpin of the BSSU

Solidity within the Fortress would be assured by the mutually beneficial cooperation between Ukraine and Turkey. Somewhat akin to Germany and France's role in the current EU, these states were expected to constitute the lynchpins of the BSSU.

While describing Turkey, and defining its geopolitical interests, Lypa argued that it's optimal develop path rested in a north-bound expansion; justified by the specific allocation of mineral resources along the Black Sea shores (Northern Turkey),<sup>16</sup> the intention to enter the new markets of East Europe and the Caucasus, and the necessity to withstand French, British and Italian pressure coming from the south and west.<sup>17</sup> Ukraine was, according to Lypa, also pressed to the Black Sea by Russian assaults so that no reasonable alternatives remained except exploring the space to the south. Its major coal and iron ore basins, particularly in Donetsk, Lugansk, and Kryvyi Rig, were also located relatively close to the sea. The centripetal expansion of both states would strengthen the connection between them and catalyse the emergence of the BSSU geopolitical lynchpin. This linchpin, as Yuriy Lypa advocated, should have risen notwithstanding adverse circumstances and external obstacles. Moreover, the post-war period provided a solid chance for it to appear as major superpowers would be focused mainly on domestic recovery.

Turkey, having experienced the reforms of Kemal Atatürk in the formative years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, entered a phase of dynamic growth. Lypa advocated Atatürk's rejection of Ottoman ambitions and traditions of pan-Turkism in order to build a self-sufficient state on the Anatolian peninsula. The separation of clerical and state power was necessary for this, as well as the forceful repatriation of Greeks, Armenians, Kurds, and other minorities. Kemal's policies and the transformation to local nationalism revived the confidence of the Turkish

people in their state and encouraged them to re-think their geopolitical priorities.<sup>18</sup> Ukraine, despite being oppressed for centuries, also managed to preserve its cultural uniqueness largely untouched. Lypa emphasised that its citizens were reluctant to adopt any kind of foreign ideologies even if those ideologies were introduced forcefully.<sup>19</sup> Also, like the Turks, Ukrainians were less inclined to behave emotionally, preferring instead a rational approach to solving social issues. These features would grant them the right to administer the BSSU.<sup>20</sup> Finally, possessing 4/7 of the terrains and resources in the region, Ukraine would evolve into the engine of the Union; this state would supply the BSSU with crucial resources, qualified workers, and statesmen. The fact that Ukraine remained within the USSR – and a sliver in Poland – was treated by the author as a temporary hurdle, which would be overcome in the immediate future.

The geographic proximity of Turkey to Ukraine and the adoption of free, unlimited trade within the BSSU would increase revenues in both states. The economic justification for this could be found in the trade patterns of ancient times, the middle ages, and modern times.<sup>21</sup> Also, Turkey was the most active sea trader with Ukraine in 1924-28 when Soviet Ukraine was not so rigorously controlled by Moscow's central plans and could conduct a relatively independent foreign policy. Finally, in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Turkey was very interested in purchasing Ukrainian cotton products and machinery and Ukraine required Turkish wool and cattle.<sup>22</sup>

Lypa also advocated that Ukraine and Turkey should forget their former conflicts to face the future challenges together. Being united, he argued, they would accumulate enough military power to ensure security and prosperity for the entire region. Again, examples for this could be found in history.<sup>23</sup> At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Turkish government was very supportive of the idea of a Ukrainian state and even hosted diplomats from Kyiv between 1917-1920. Unfortunately, the idea of Ukrainian independence failed as nationalist movements lost the war of liberation in 1921. However, it did not stop the Turkish government from signing, on 21 January 1922, an Act of Friendship with Soviet Ukraine. That was one of the few international acts ever signed on behalf of Soviet Ukraine and, probably, the only one classified as a 'priority act.'

The common maritime outlook shared by Ukrainians and Turks was also significant for forging the lynchpins of the Union. Lypa char-

acterised this as one full of blind love for adventures, endeavours, and discoveries. This is what inspired people living on the shores of the Black Sea and simultaneously triggered the majority of their problems. Adoring heroism and perceiving the world emotionally, they typically lacked the ability to make precise calculations or to build realistic plans. Consequently, that often produced overestimation of power and defeat in conflicts with weaker, but smarter enemies. On the other hand, this love of heroism also ensured their cultural preservation in unfavourable conditions; they rarely forgot their heroes and past victories.<sup>24</sup>

The lynchpins created by Ukraine and Turkey, as Lypa saw it, was the crucial precondition for reducing external threats, boosting the economy of the BSSU, allowing it to abandon its colonial penetration, pacifying the conflicts in the Caucasus and Balkans, and restricting European superpowers in achieving their regional ambitions.

### ***The Role of the USSR (Russia)***

Given the content and context of Lypa's geopolitical writings and their intended objectives, it is normal for readers to infer that the author was ignorant to the Nazis minor, and USSR's major power position in the region.<sup>25</sup> Such an assumption is patently erroneous; he clearly recognised Soviet Russia's disproportionate presence and its ambitions. However, he considered its influence to be in long-decline. During the interwar period the USSR changed its economic priorities and started developing facilities located East, in the Asian part of the USSR. Notwithstanding Ukraine and the Caucasus states, new centres of industry were sprouting-up along the White Sea littoral and in the republics of Kazakhstan, Buryatia, Western and Eastern Siberia (near contemporary Omsk, Semey, Ulan-Ude, and other cities). If we look at Soviet statistical data, these new centres accounted for some 80.5% of all Soviet industrial output in 1939. Also, the exploration and exploitation of Asian coal basins tripled the extraction of this deposit between 1913 and 1939.<sup>26</sup> And, the USSR launched an ambitious project to explore the basins of the Angara and Yenisei rivers in Siberia to ensure the production of the cheapest electric energy in the world as well as provide access to new coal reserves. Lypa's argument that such a significant economic shift would diminish Russian influence in the Black Sea region was therefore grounded.

Lypa was also driven by what he saw as historical destiny; the ul-

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timate collapse and dissolution of the USSR and Russia itself. The specifics of this demise are articulated in his 1941 work entitled: *The Division of Russia*. Such a collapse, Lypa contended, was based on a three-dimensional equation—which is relevant for our own times.

First, Lypa supposes that Imperial Russia's territorial expansion – commenced under Tsar Ivan IV Vasilyvich (A.K.A. Ivan the Terrible) – was a haphazard affair that left the country and its successor, the USSR, vulnerable and likely to fail. Instead of solving mounting, internal political, social and economic problems and consolidating the body-politik, Russian autocrats expended the nation's wealth on expensive wars in a diversionary tactic to redirect public concern to fighting external foes. Russia, literally had to expand or die. This policy priority consequently led to dysfunctional governance structures over a multinational and multi-denominational empire. Russian rule on new lands was always supported by the rigorous enforcement of centrally adopted decisions, ubiquitous corruption, and imposing military supervision. Sooner or later, Lypa predicted, such policies would crack; there would not be enough armed strength or political will to preserve the state.

Second, the nature of the Russian people was crucial. Russians were described by Lypa as skilful administrators who abandoned their origin and traditions to struggle for power in the heterogeneous empire.<sup>27</sup> They were considered pragmatic and persistent in their attempts to incorporate bureaucracy into every sphere of social life. Also, since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the core of Russian power and spirit resided in St. Petersburg and Moscow and most Russians were unwilling to discover the rest of their Empire. That unwillingness led Lypa to conclude that Russians did not form or represent an original nation, they were pure administrators, nothing more; and such a mental vacuum could not keep the Empire together for a long time.<sup>28</sup>

Third, Russian foreign and domestic policies were regarded as ingredients for national destruction. Lypa reflected that total war was, for Russia, the idol of imperial rule. Wars could easily be started because the majority of population supported it eagerly: peasants experienced such heavy wars that even they began to look with hope to gain new territories.<sup>29</sup> After new lands were conquered, Russians often ordered the elimination local peculiarities which could trigger obstacles for the smooth running of the administration. This often entailed the elimination of everything: architecture and monuments, livelihoods and

people. As a result of such devastations: the fuel needed to ensure a history of rural-urban animosity, national distrust and local governing structures that could (and would) outlive the central authorities in St. Petersburg and later Moscow.

Simply, Lypa was certain that Russia's long-term policy orientation was unsustainable and would ultimately bring about the collapse of the Empire. And so, conceiving of a unique Black Sea Union made sense to Lypa since the inevitable collapse of Russia (USSR) would create a vacuum and an opportunity, the states of the Black Sea littoral needed to build their collective consciousness and form a Union or face the trials of a collapsed USSR and likely penetrations from Western states individually. So, instead of reading Lypa as a blind and naïve futurologist, it is more accurate to describe him as understanding that the states of the Black Sea littoral stood a better chance of survival in a pack than alone. This idea resonates to our own times as many of the region's woes stem from dysfunctional cooperation and the ease of penetration from exogenous states.

### **Lypa's BSSU and the EU: Similarities and Differences**

Lypa's conception of re-administrating the Black Sea region seemed to be too pioneering and innovative for the times—the interwar years, followed by WWII. Even today it is hard to believe that these states – enjoying independence for 25 years already – possess the necessary potential and political will to unite and become a regional superpower. Not to mention that the international discourse is not suitable for this. However, several of Lypa's ideas about the new political priorities and new world order proved, over time, their relevance and a living example, the EU, is a testament to the intersection of normative approaches for the sake of realistic ambitions related to peace, security and economic prowess among former belligerent states.

First, the intention to create the EU was derived from the concept of solidarity of destinies (*solidarité de fait*), declared by (then) French Prime Minister, Robert Schuman who, together with the leaders of the other five founding countries, concluded that dealing with the new common challenges required the application of new common strategies. Fearing the ideological and military threat coming from the USSR, and attempting to switch German activity from destructive to constructive ends, they agreed that nothing would be more simple and yet wide-reaching than uniting the coal and steel branches of

their economies (1951) in order to regulate and establish transparent controls over the two most important war-ingredients at the time.<sup>30</sup> The leaders of France, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Italy, and (West) Germany recognised that they had to begin real, fundamental, cooperation or face even greater uncertainties in the future. They were too weak to survive external threats on their own and too weak to prevent the internal revival of Nazism. And, they urgently needed to boost their economies to restore pre-war power and security. The same driving forces were defined by Lypa as crucial for the emergence of the BSSU. The external threat resided in the colonial ambitions of the Western and Eastern states to grab the Black Sea region, internal threats were rooted in the severe fragmentation of the states. Also, the only way to gain power and security was seen in the drastic modernisation and industrialisation of the BSSU.

Second, the EU's founders advocated peaceful cooperation within the Union and promoted stability along its borders. For instance, France and Germany were expected to abolish their historic rivalry and launch mutual beneficial trade.<sup>31</sup> The North African countries were supposed to become closely affiliated to the Union so that they could be used as the resource of suppliers and transit territories. The Balkan states also were to become pacified to bring stability to the backyard of the EU. The principles of solving – actually – simmering conflicts and stabilising the situation along the borders were also stressed by Lypa who steadfastly believed that the Caucasian nations should relegate their rivalries to mere footnotes of history in order to enjoy the comforts of economic growth and political stability as a union. The same could be said of the historical rivalry between Turkey and Ukraine; Lypa simply thought it to be the leftovers of a time that no longer exists. Pacifying the internal space and establishing an Ild-Ural state would result in the free access of the BSSU member-states to the world's oceans, Iranian oil, and Asian markets; the Caucasian and Caspian states would be transformed into reliable transit and resource supplying partners.

Third, both the EU and the BSSU were not considered to be simply 'for-profit' projects created in times of crisis. Both Unions advocated solid cultural foundations. The EU's architects appealed to the common European identity shaped by Christian (Catholic and Protestant) humanism, Greek philosophy, and Roman law. Moreover, all European states were indirectly united by the history of their interactions, not-

withstanding whether the experience of these interactions was constructive or destructive. Lypa, for his part, considered that all BSSU member-states shared a common Black Sea heritage and identity. The distinguishing features of this identity lay in a decidedly maritime outlook, an emotional rather than rational perception of the world, and a blind love of heroism. Also, the BSSU states had a rich history to unite them, as well as a spiritual tradition initiated by Orthodox Christianity but also including Islam and Western strands of Christianity and Judaism. In other words, while the EU stresses an identity of religious homogeneity and political/national heterogeneity, the BSSU was meant to be based on a religiously heterogeneous configuration and political harmonisation into a singular, homogeneous bloc. The BSSU was not only a project for security and prosperity, but for establishing a family of nations.<sup>32</sup>

There are, of course, clear discrepancies between the BSSU's corner-stone and the guiding principles of the EU. For instance, the EU was founded as a Union open to the world, it was greatly dependent on foreign direct investments, particularly on US financial aid under the European Recovery Programme. Contrarily, the BSSU was intended to be a self-sufficient entity with no need for foreign capital which would only divide and then sub-divide the littoral as it had time and time again in the past.

And, liberalism was recognised as the dominant ideology of the EU, and contrasted against Lypa's intentions to construct the BSSU on the principles of nationalism.<sup>33</sup> The revival of the artiles can be justified from an economic perspective; however, the nationalistic basis of the BSSU could possibly slow the overall development of the region, not to mention the possibility of new external and internal conflicts emerging as a result of competing visions of the nationalisms present in the region. Having described the BSSU as a free-trade and customs zone, Lypa did not take into account further stages of integration, such as launching a common currency or establishing a political union, again in contrast to the EU.

Yet, Lypa's ideas about the practical, strategic and even humanitarian driving forces behind the unionisation of the Black Sea littoral were more than a reflection of Western processes; they were a set of unique observations likely to have inspired Shuman and his counterparts as they sat, took toll of the devastations of WWII and looked for ways out of the cyclical forces of history. Lypa's ideas were revolutionary pre-

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cisely because they sought to do what people thought, and likely still think, cannot be done. However, if France and Germany, Germany and the UK can work together in a single European Union then there is no reason why Lypa's own ambitions cannot be realised for peace and later union between Turkey and Ukraine seems easy compared to peace and union between France and Great Britain

## Conclusion

Yet, for now, the weight of history has prevented the rise of the BSSU. To give flesh to Lypa's conception, a strong shake-up in interstate relations is needed which is very unlikely to happen within the existing geopolitical architecture. Romania and Bulgaria, which should constitute the Western wall of Fortress Black Sea, have entered the EU and are bound by obligations coming from Brussels. Russia still possesses an efficient leverage of pressure on the Caucasus states and will not lessen its influence in the future as evidenced in its Crimea and Eastern Ukrainian adventurism. The Eastern walls of Fortress Black Sea also have significant cracks in them. Ukraine itself remains too corrupt and chaotic to take the lead and invite other countries of the Black Sea space into a union. Turkey shows only token interest in establishing a trade and customs zone with its neighbouring states so it refuses to serve as the foundation of the Fortress. Even the weak attempts to facilitate trade between Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova, in the ranks of the GUUAM agreement, was inefficient and unproductive and cannot diminish Russian domination of the region.

However, the historic value of the ideas of Lypa and the discourses that later surrounded these findings need to be appreciated. The Ukrainian thinker evoked the conception of a new-type of organisation in 1940, a decade before the EC/EU was even considered. Moreover, Lypa completed sophisticated economic calculations and conducted interdisciplinary research to prove the viability of his plans. Lypa's BSSU was not without its organisation and theoretical flaws, however it was drawn up by only one man in the conditions of total war and political prosecution. And, it could have been significantly improved on if Lypa had not been brutally murdered by the NKVD in 1944.<sup>34</sup>

Yuriy Lypa's geopolitical conception intended to unite and transform the Black Sea states into a real functioning mega-power. To achieve that goal he advocated the revival of North-to-South geopolitical thinking, a concentration on internal economic transformations,

and the insolation from external political influences. The Black Sea States Union could have become a self-sufficient entity locked within its borders; at least, it possessed enough resources to do so. Also, the BSSU could have shaped interstate affairs in the region pursuing the policies of peace. This entailed attempts to unify the Caucasus states, cut Russia off from the Caspian Sea, and expel the French, Germans, Italians, and British from the neighbouring states. What the future holds in store, in this regard, remains anybody's guess. What is certain, is that Lypa will be remembered for his uncompromising humanitarian-nationalism that was more inclusive than exclusive and sought to patch centuries of distrust and animosity for a regional peace that all could enjoy.

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## Notes

- 1 Łukasz Adamski while describing the early 20th century Ukrainians once stated that they did not and could not form any kind of nation as they lacked a conscious national self-identification. Only Ukrainian elites identified themselves as Ukrainians. The same national inferiority was applicable to other peoples residing in Eastern Europe. See Łukasz Adamski (2011), *Nacjonalista Postępowy (Progressive Nationalist)*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, p. 37.
- 2 The beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was a very challenging time in the Black Sea region, because of the partial dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and the eruption of the Balkan Wars in 1912 and 1913, the breakout of WWI and the Ukrainian War of Independence and series of civil wars between 1917 and 1921, the Turkish 1919-1922 War of Independence and conflicts between Russian Communists and Tsarists in the Caucasus.
- 3 Lypa's father was a Minister in the 1917-1921 Ukrainian governments (Trentralna Rada and Dyrektoria) and therefore Yuriy Lypa had a chance to communicate with the brightest Ukrainian intellectuals of his time. Also, he studied law in Kamieniec-Podolski University between 1918 and 1920. In 1922 he moved to Poland and was enrolled as a student in Poznan Medical University (graduated in 1928). Some sources state that between 1922 and 1928 he was awarded a scholarship and spent some time studying in Great Britain.
- 4 Particularly, one should consider Konrad Adenauer's 24 March 1946 speech in Cologne, Robert Schuman's Declaration of 9 May 1950, Alcide

De Gasperi's speech to Italian Communist Senators on 15 March 1952, Jean Monnet's speech to the National Press Club in Washington on 30 April 1952.

- 5 T. Podkupko (2009), Geopolitychni Doslidzhennia Yuriy Lypa v konteksti epohy (Geopolitical Researches on Yuri Lypa in the Context of Epoch), *The Fourth Lypa Readings*, p. 127.
- 6 Apart from Kyivan Rus there existed other powerful states in the Black Sea region benefiting from North-to-South trade and military campaigns. Lypa mentioned the Kingdom of Pontus reaching its zenith during the rule of King Mithridates IV (121–64 BC); about the Cossack Hetmanate in the times of Dmytro Vyshnevetsky (1550–1563) and Bohdan Khmelnytsky (1648–1657). Also, Lypa wrote that the Kyivan Rus was the most powerful during the reign of King Sviatoslav the Brave (945–972) who destroyed Bulgaria, Khasaria, threatened Byzantium and even considered moving the capital to the Danube estuary.
- 7 Yuriy Lypa (1942), Chornomorska Doktryna (The Black Sea Doctrine), Ukrainian Black Sea Institute, vol. 13, p. 74.
- 8 Ibid, p. 9.
- 9 Ibid, p. 75.
- 10 Ibid, pp. 83–84.
- 11 Ibid, p. 90.
- 12 Ibid, p. 80.
- 13 Yuriy Lypa and L. Bykovski (1941), Chornomorskyi Prostir (The Black Sea Space), Atlas, Ukrainian Black Sea Institute, vol. 6, pp. 9–10.
- 14 Yuriy Lypa (1942), Chornomorska Doktryna (The Black Sea Doctrine), Ukrainian Black Sea Institute, vol. 13, p. 37.
- 15 Ibid, p. 42.
- 16 In this regards Zonguldak Province with its coal reserves should be mentioned. As Lypa put it: 'The major coal reserves are allocated along the Black Sea shores stretching for 180–200 km from İnebolu to Ereğli and for 50–55 km inside the country.' Also, significant deposits of natural gas were allocated in Bolu, Marmara, and Çorum Provinces. Finally, the Northern Provinces of Turkey were rich in gold deposits. See Lypa (1942), p. 44.
- 17 Lypa wrote that Syria was under French control which caused only minor problems; French imperialism was the least aggressive. Major problems were caused by British troops deployed in the Cyprus-Haifa-Suez triangle and on the territory of Greece. The main problem for Turkey resided in the Italian presence on the Dodecanese Islands; the Italians had their strongest naval base there only a few dozens of miles away from the Turkish mainland. See Lypa (1942), p. 49.
- 18 Ibid, p. 42.
- 19 Regarding Ukrainians, Lypa cited Polish ethnographist Aleksander Jabłonowski (1829–1913): 'Ukrainians are perfect, punitive, and operational soldiers satisfied with any kind of supplies. Ukrainians are inborn conservatives; [that can be seen in everything] starting from their family life, ending with religious rituals. They are not inclined to religious fanaticism, despite how it may have seemed in the past. Ukrainians don't care about

- dogmas and reluctant to any changes because these changes don't influence their outlook.' See Lypa (1942), p. 11.
- 20 Yuriy Lypa wrote that throughout the centuries Ukrainian administrative intelligence was used to run other states, particularly Russia. Names such as Rozumovskyi, Suvorov, Kochubei, and Paskevych were well-known in the modern times Europe. See Lypa (1942), p. 12.
- 21 Recall, for instance, the trade patterns during the Kingdom of Pontius, Kyivan Rus, and Cossack Hetmanate (see endnote 6). Regarding Hetmanate times, in 1650 the Convention on Trade was signed between Zaporozhian Cossacks and the Ottoman Empire in which the free movement of Cossack galleys and vessels was granted in the Black Sea ensuring stable incomes to the treasury of the Zaporozhian Sich making it independent from Russian and Polish financial aid.
- 22 Ibid, p. 44.
- 23 For instance, in 1648 during the war of liberation with Poland, Zaporozhian Cossacks were supported by Turkish and Tatar horsemen, which allowed them to conquer lands up to Warsaw. In 1658 Zaporozhian Cossacks with Turkish support managed to defeat Moscovian troops and pave the way to defenceless Moscow. Also, between 1669 and 1681 the Ottoman Empire bribed Cossack hetman to get guarantees that their armies would not join the war in Europe on the side of Austria or Poland. See Lypa (1942), p. 118.
- 24 Ibid, p. 146.
- 25 Lypa never drew a line between Russia, the Russian Empire and the USSR.
- 26 Ibid, p. 87.
- 27 Tsar Nilolai I is reported to have said to French traveller, Astolphe de Custine during dinner that 'You think that you are surrounded by Muscovites, – the tsar said pointing at his environment. You are wrong: this man is from Germany, this is from Poland, this is from Georgia, that one is of Finnish origin, this one is of Turkish [...] All of them constitute Russia.' See Lypa (1995), Rozpovid Rosiyi (The Division of Russia), Institute of Ethnography NAS of Ukraine, p. 44.
- 28 Ibid, p. 50.
- 29 Ibid, p. 25.
- 30 J. McCormick (2008), *The European Union: Politics and Policies*, Westview, University Indianapolis, p. 59.
- 31 Ibid, p. 60.
- 32 Lypa (1942), p. 89.
- 33 As Lypa put it, 'Nationalism as the search for the nation's identity cannot restrict itself by underlining only the external features of the nation and its struggle for political independence. The search for a nation's identity will consequently lead to the emergence of a [nation's] own forms of social life and labour.' And later, 'Having discovered their identity they [nations] would feel, more distinctly, every oppression of this identity. Brutal political pressure from abroad and economic exploitation will appear in their nakedness.' See Lypa (1942), pp. 78, 85.
- 34 According to the official version, Yuriy Lypa was detained by the NKVD

as he was suspected of partisan activity and killed during his unsuccessful attempt at escape. However, the unofficial version claims that Lypa was asked by Soviet officers to treat their soldiers (as well as being a political scientist, he was also a bright surgeon). Officers agreed to grant him security, however did not keep their word. Several days later Lypa's body was found by peasants in the woods. People who found the body stated that Lypa was tortured and killed by his own surgical instruments.

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