

# **Cultural Identifications, Political Representations and National Project(s) on the Symbolic Arena of the Orange Revolution**

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## **Abstract**

The article is a study of the interplay of several important generators of meanings of the Orange Revolution, namely, background representations, cultural scripts, actors and audiences. The events of the Orange Revolution are interpreted as a symbolically charged socio-cultural performance. The analysis is focused on the cultural identity component of the political representations of the main stage characters (two presidential candidates) which have been constructed in such a way that they explicated visions of national development and vectors of identity work that currently coexist and compete in Ukrainian society. The author suggests that the symbolic arena of the Orange Revolution revealed that a culturally informed project of nation building, well in line with aspirations of wider circles of nationally conscious Ukrainian intelligentsia, might become one of the crucial factors of political mobilisation in present-day Ukraine.

## **Introduction**

The Orange Revolution in Ukraine in autumn 2004 took the West by surprise. Not only popular opinion, but also many experts found it amazing that vigorous democratic mobilisation was ‘conjured up’ in a former Soviet republic where neither political leadership nor institutions of civil society seemed to show signs of profound devotion to the Western-style democratic values and procedures. This mobilisation came as a surprise also for the majority of Ukrainians – even for those who by means of their intellectual work and oppositional political activity prepared its advent. No wonder that in the wake of this revolutionary euphoria the large-scale protests that took place in Kyiv and other Ukrainian urban centres have sometimes been called ‘the Orange Miracle’. However, social dramas cannot be explained only by the ‘miraculous’ actualising of ritual and mythic schemas. Instead, following Jeffrey Alexander’s (2004) suggestion, which highlights the interplay of the

main generators of meanings of the Orange Revolution, namely background representations, cultural scripts, actors and audiences, we might find a much more promising perspective. The events of the Orange Revolution can be interpreted as a symbolically charged socio-cultural performance. In view of this, the presented analysis is focused on the political representations and cultural ‘scripts’ of the main stage characters (two presidential contenders) which were constructed in such a way that they explicated competing visions of national development for the independent Ukraine.

### *What revolution?*

Some political analysts have recently come to the conclusion that while the Orange Revolution ‘was revolutionary in terms of the process that brought it about and the expectations that drove it, it has not been revolutionary in its results’ (Sherr 2006:1). Afterwards the form of government stayed unchanged, a majority of the so-called oligarchs who collaborated with the previous regime maintained their political power and resources, and radical improvement of the economic situation did not occur. However, so-called ‘velvet revolutions’ in Central-Eastern Europe seem to be informed first and foremost by the concern ‘to bring the existing relations between the state, the nation, and the individual in line with the culturally constituted ideal’. In view of this, an absence of radical change in form of the political system is of secondary importance (Holy 1996:71). Moreover, due to the activation of emotionally charged ‘revolutionary’ and carnival forms expressing longed for radical changes, it can be suggested that we do deal with a kind of ‘revolution-in-minds’.

In Ukraine, it was widely hailed as a ‘national’ revolution, and expressions such as ‘national revival’, ‘resurrection of the Ukrainian soul’ and ‘European Renaissance of Ukraine’ were frequently repeated. Indeed, during the Orange Revolution, appeals using nationally informed symbols and rhetoric were exceptionally prevalent. However, negotiations about the parameters and ‘nature’ of the national identity – whether for someone calling themselves Ukrainian by birth or by conviction – are far from conclusive. Therefore, the ‘nerve’ of the Orange Revolution was symbolic presentation and, to some extent, dramatic performance of different scenarios of definition and redefinition of the nationhood. These scenarios each in its own way addressed the core issue: what cues Ukrainians as a newly independent nation need to orient themselves toward in order to become a ‘nation like it must be’, i.e. a stable and prosperous national community within the world national system.

Already in November 2004, the large-scale protest actions in Kyiv were labelled as a 'bourgeois revolution' by some Ukrainian intellectuals (Denysenko 2004). Attention was paid to the unusually high level of mobilisation among the intelligentsia and the so-called new bourgeoisie who themselves rallied in Kyiv's Independence Square and supported the protestors both by means of symbolic authority as well as financially. Skilful elevation and manipulation of the collective memories about national grievances caused by the Soviet regime, using Ukrainian national symbols, folklore and visual images, also indicated active participation of the 'middle class' and intelligentsia in the symbolic orchestration of the Orange Revolution. Last but not least, the wide-scale use of the Internet<sup>1</sup> and other modern communication technologies for agitation and as means of practical organisation of the protest activities can convey information about the approximate age and social status of the active participants and audiences of the Orange Revolution. Thus, it can be asserted that the Orange Revolution did empower the Ukrainian intelligentsia, professionals and the growing strata of petty and midlevel entrepreneurs – not in a sense that they suddenly gained real political power, but because their nationally-informed concerns and moral orientations became an apparent stake in the struggle for cultural hegemony in Ukraine. Even if one presidential candidate relied on massive support of the vast Ukrainian peasantry and the other was more inclined to search for support among industrial workers, both candidates were aware that sympathy from the intelligentsia and the middle class could mean empowerment and increased legitimacy for the party who won. This contributed to the strong emphasis on questions of moral authority used by the candidates, as well as pronounced endeavours to create the 'cultured' image of the presidential candidates and their supporters in both camps.<sup>2</sup>

When trying to find a proper framing to the processes of socio-cultural transformation in the post-Soviet states, it is indeed important not to solely focus on the apparent political aspects of the 'national order of things' (Malkki 1996). Transition in Ukraine should proceed in several directions, including the development of a culture that articulates basic values and norms to which all members of society can comfortably relate (Isajiw 2003:xviii-xix; Kuzio 2003). Other social scientists studying the post-Soviet space (for example, Eglitis 2002) have also emphasised the crucial importance of moral-evaluative and cultural dimension of transformation processes launched by the 'nationalising' (Brubaker 1996) Eastern-European states. This dimension of 'national' frames of reference underlying the dramatic present-day debate about the future of Ukraine, might resonate with cultural and political concerns of the Ukrainian intelligentsia in the first turn.

## **The national project(s) in Ukraine: political tasks, cultural issues, and moral concerns**

Ukraine has often been described as a regionally divided ‘postcolonial’ land with a short and violently interrupted tradition of statehood and with just a minority of ‘nationally conscious’ people (mainly located in its western part), which suddenly found itself as a sovereign body within the global system of nation states. The disintegration of the USSR has often been conceptualised, especially among ‘nationalising’ Eastern European intellectuals, as another ‘spring of nations’. Ukraine’s independence looks in this perspective as a successful realisation of the ‘centuries-long’ strivings of Ukrainians to become a full-right nation. More balanced accounts, however, emphasise the deep economic crisis and system degradation as the main factors resulting in the break-up of the Soviet Union (Hobsbawm 1997:72; Wilson 1997b; Brubaker 1996:23-55). The ‘national card’ became an attractive means to legitimate the newborn state in the face of the world and its own population. In a time when the alleged bankruptcy of the nation state system is debated all over the world and when the EU member states intensify trans-national European co-operation, Ukraine has faced, together with a range of new economic and political challenges, the nineteenth-century problem of parallel state- and nation-building.

Due to both historical circumstances and the present political agenda, perceptions of the (Ukrainian) nation in Ukraine are ambiguous and contradictory (Kulyk 2006). On the one hand, the present-day Ukrainian political elites mostly regard the nation as a necessary *formal* pre-condition for existence of the independent state. On the other hand, intellectual and political circles tend to adhere to the concept of the nation as a *spiritual* community based on shared culture and language. The existence of regional and ‘mixed’ vernacular variants of ethno-cultural identification where the inherent tensions and complexities in the process of national identity construction are contested (Rodgers 2006:160) complicates the picture even more. Obviously, the definition of the nation in terms of the ethnic majority’s culture is rooted in concepts that have dominated Central-Eastern Europe for more than a century (Brubaker 1996:112; Smith and Law 1998; Schöpflin 2003:487). However, the present-day efforts to institutionalise Ukrainian culture ‘from above’ and to support it on a grass-root level, do not necessarily indicate that a certain ‘ethno-national’ project is on the political agenda (see Wolczuk 2000). As it is known, ‘ethnic’ and ‘civic’ patterns are ideal types which

coexist in varied proportions in the majority of present national projects (see, for example, Zimmer 2003; Brubaker 2004:132-146). Besides, when political actors construct ideological arguments for particular action-related purposes, they unavoidably use available cultural – including ethno-cultural – idioms (Skocpol 1994:204; Alexander 2004:528).

Despite official declarations about returning to ‘good old’ pre-Soviet and European-inspired traditions of nation-building, until now cultural policies of ‘nationalising’ post-Soviet states have been in many ways rooted in the recent Soviet praxis to define and institutionalise nationhood (Brubaker 1996:8; Kulyk 2006). According to George Grabowicz, when the Ukrainian political establishment<sup>3</sup> on the surface asserts Ukrainian spirit and consciousness as guiding principles of the state’s national cultural policy, it is made in a Soviet-styled manner and in order to establish a kind of statist ideology. What looks on the surface as ethnic nationalism might be the appeal to all nationalities of Ukraine to support the task of state building – a nationalism where state should be identified not with the nation, but with the top ruling political (and presently also business) elites. Thus, the new ‘official’ post-Soviet Ukrainian ideology is deficient in its understanding of Ukrainian culture: the ‘cultural stuff’, according to this ideology, is solely a tool for political manipulation, a tool without any intrinsic value for the embracing nation-building processes (Grabowicz 2003:320-321). On the other hand, as Volodymyr Kulyk points out, such an instrumental view of culture appropriated by Ukrainian political elites correlates with deeply rooted common sense understandings shared by many ordinary Ukrainians. This popular orientation, being the reversion to the Soviet normality, presupposes marginalisation of ethnicity as an element of individual identity and a factor in social life, and priority of ‘internationalist’ uniformity and social pragmatism over ethno-cultural traditions (Kulyk 2006:301).

This might imply that the role of the post-Soviet intelligentsia as obedient ideological producers remains unchanged. Moreover, this intelligentsia in their efforts to form a national consciousness might employ almost the same arsenal of symbolic means and the same modality of rhetoric that their Soviet predecessors exploited in the project of transforming the consciousness of their fellow-countrymen into one in which they are seen as the prospective builders of communism (Verdery 1991:430). In the same vein, the intelligentsia that is concerned with implementing the ‘statist’ national project might seek to disguise rational elements of the national imagination in order to transform their compatriots into the ‘full-right’ nation ‘as if by magic’ (Billig 1995:77; Lamont 1989:137-143).

In the early 1990s many well-known (among them some dissident) academics, writers, historians and journalists accessed positions of power as parliament deputies, public debaters and even ministers. The flux of Ukrainian intelligentsia into political and politicised areas obviously contradicted the long tradition of claiming intellectual autonomy as the main feature of the Eastern European cultural and academic circles. Indeed, the 'rank-and-file' intelligentsia in Ukraine has always been regarded as a group exercising its authority not through direct involvement in politics, but primarily through moral leadership and intellectual discussion. The politicisation of the post-Soviet intelligentsia has been sometimes explained as a compelled response of morally superior individuals to the drastic conditions of a transitional period, captured in the words of the poet Yevhen Malanyuk: 'When a nation has no leaders, then poets become its leaders' (*Jak v natsii vozhdiv nema, todi vozhdji jiji - poety*). However, mutual articulation of the nation as an empowering political-cultural project and intellectuals as implementers and legislators of this project is a more plausible explanation of the intelligentsia's political activism than compelled response to deviations of the transitional period (Kennedy and Sunny 1999:12-13). Intellectuals of middle-class origin very often played the central role in the formation of national identities of their respective nations (Greenfeld 1992; Hroch 1985) and generally, identification with a nation has been an important component in the middle-class sense of collectivity (Hobsbawm 1983:302). Thus, middle classes and especially professionals in the spheres of cultural and scientific production are not only 'legislators and interpreters' (Bauman 1987) of the national idea for the rest of society, but, one can argue, 'nation' and 'nationhood' is a central organising subject (Steinmetz 1992:501) in their own class/strata narrative identities.

Nevertheless, when primarily economic capital, not ideology (national or other), became a decisive factor for exercising political authority in the post-Soviet societies, the intellectuals' prestige and influence on the political realisation of the national projects noticeably decreased. Their social positions, which balanced between the dominating ruling elites and the dominated 'people', have tended to slide gradually towards the dominated and powerless. In such conditions frustrated cultural and academic Ukrainian intellectuals turn to well-known national(ist) rhetoric as a means of empowerment (Greenfeld 1992). Its more benign forms have focused on issues of cultural identity, moral responsibility, Christian values and national dignity that, it says, should become guiding principles for both nationally conscious power-holders and patriotic people. However, by transferring the discussion into moral and identity-constructing domains, the intelligentsia not only seek to

conceal their interests in restoring their privileged social positions in the new socio-political reality, but also to disguise structural problems of inequality and social injustice as actual barriers for the implementation of all-embracing national projects. In such conditions national(ist) rhetoric and populist reasoning might turn into a kind of symbolic capital as they serve to disguise and legitimise interested political relations as disinterested cultural pursuits (Bourdieu 1994).

### **Two Viktors – ‘Two Ukraines’**

No matter the terms in which the Orange Revolution is defined, it is clear that it represents a kind of social performance whose intensive dramatic effect and coherence of symbolic expression have not been seen in Eastern Europe for years. Indeed, it was not just a turbulent political event, but it also became an arena of quite a spectacular *cultural* battle revealing the lines of power, trust and identification in contemporary Ukrainian society. As Alexander argues, ‘in a differentiated, stratified, and reflexive society, a strategy success depends on belief in the validity of the cultural contents of the strategist’s symbolic communication and on accepting the authenticity and even the sincerity of another’s strategic intentions’ (Alexander 2004:528). This ‘belief in the validity of the cultural contents of the strategist’s symbolic communication’ can be regarded as one of the important factors informing the voters’ choice during the 2004 presidential elections in Ukraine. Indeed, commentators both in Ukraine and abroad noticed that the programmes of the oppositional candidate Viktor Yushchenko and the authorities’ protégé Viktor Yanukovych were not strikingly different; economic growth and overcoming social problems were prioritised by both camps. Both candidates regarded themselves (and were regarded by their voters) as champions of a prosperous Ukraine and, accordingly, resorted to patriotic rhetoric. In public Yushchenko and Yanukovych and their allies displayed similar ‘legitimate images of ostentation’ (Daloz 2003:41) – that is to say, none tried to hide material markers of their personal prestige and status (expensive cars, clothes, *etc.*) in front of the voters in one of the poorest European countries. However, the candidates obviously represented different sectors of the Ukrainian political field, their political agendas were informed by different world-views and, accordingly, their personal images were tailored each in its own way.

The ultimate results of the votes in the third round showed that the gap between the candidates was not that great – forty-four per cent for Yanukovych versus fifty-two per cent for Yushchenko. However, the differences, in terms of class, age, ethnic/language affiliations and regional

belonging between those who put their votes for each candidate were significant. According to the polls, the majority of people of Ukrainian ethnicity, with tertiary education, between the ages of eighteen and thirty-nine, voted for Yushchenko, while the majority of those indicated as ‘non-Ukrainians’ or ‘Russians’, older than fifty and with an unfinished secondary education chose Yanukovych (Diagramy 2004:11). Yushchenko was victorious in the western and central (‘agricultural’) regions of Ukraine, while Yanukovych won in the industrial east and semi-industrial south. The results of the vote allowed some experts to conclude that the nation remained divided into ‘two Ukraines’. One should, however, take into account that the Ukrainian ‘east’ and ‘west’ are not solely – and not primarily – two geographical zones. They can probably be better conceptualised as loci in a kind of mental ‘map’, as two poles around which multiple lines of cultural divisions (combining national, supranational, generational and class vectors) have become clustered. These lines of cultural division obviously influenced the choice of a political side (primarily a choice of an appealing political image) by the Ukrainian voters in 2004.

### **Yushchenko: ‘Viktor- the winner’**

‘The good versus evil dichotomy was especially important in energising hundreds of thousands of people to join the Orange Revolution’, comments Taras Kuzio on incentives of the mobilisation of the Ukrainian populace in November 2004 (Kuzio 2005:8). The framing of the events and the main political actors in terms of moral-ethic and religious categories was indeed one of the crucial factors turning these presidential elections into a vivid social drama. When nicknaming each other, the opposite parties used allusions with strong moral overtones: those from Yanukovych’s camp called adherents of Yushchenko’s bloc *Nasha Ukrayina* ‘*Nashysty*’ (a derogatory term evocative of ‘Nazis’ that played on the first part of the bloc’s name), while their opponents used Yanukovych’s surname and coined the swearwords ‘*Bandyukovychi*’ and ‘*Yanuchary*’ (alluding to the notorious ‘Yanychary’, who were active in the Ottoman raids on Ukrainian territories). However, it was Yushchenko who eventually succeeded in projecting a definitely positive image ‘in the eyes of fifty-two per cent of the Ukrainian populace and Western governments as well.

Well-organised and disposing sufficient resources, the opposition made a stake on the ‘right sort’ of person when choosing Yushchenko as their front-figure. There were no explicit tensions between the empowered with a national rhetoric ‘script’ played by him as a stage figure and his personal identity as a ‘background representation’. He communicated his political

and cultural message convincingly enough, and due to such cultural extension (Alexander 2004:531), his audience (both voters and potential political allies) could identify themselves with his onstage character. The leader of the *Nasha Ukrayina* bloc was a successful economist and politician projecting the image of a person with high moral standards. A strong emphasis was made on the clarity and even unpretentiousness of his background. He became the first political figure of his magnitude in Ukraine who was not only open about facts of his personal background and his family, but also actively used this as an important source of identification for his audience.

To begin with, Yushchenko originated from a simple family. His father was a teacher and a World War II veteran who survived imprisonment in a concentration camp. In a country that suffered enormous atrocities during the war and where collective memory about it is kept alive in practically every family, references to this part of the collective past are indeed important (especially taking into account that Yushchenko's adherents were nicknamed '*Nashysty*'). For Yushchenko the fate of his father exemplified, in turn, the tragic fate and grievances of the whole of the Ukrainian nation in the course of its history and, at the same time, served as an illustration of the spiritual strength and dignity of the Ukrainian people (Yushchenko 2005b).

The other significant detail is Yushchenko's rural Ukrainian descent and, accordingly, his fluency in Ukrainian, which is his native language. Clear-cut ethnic and cultural identification became an important component of his image that primarily attracted a less urbanised and more nationally conscious Ukrainian-speaking part of the electorate in western and central Ukraine. Interestingly, one of the leaflets spread during Yushchenko's election campaign in the western-Ukrainian city of Lviv emphasised the fact that the presidential candidate addressed his mother 'You' in a rural and 'authentically Ukrainian' manner ('*Ty*' in Ukrainian, *i.e.* a more respectful and distancing form than '*ty*'). Yushchenko's hobby of beekeeping was presented as a traditional (and even charged with Christian symbolic connotations!) pursuit of the Ukrainian farmer. Meanwhile, Yushchenko's reputation as an honest politician was mentioned only in the conclusion of the leaflet. This curious detail indicates once again the importance of issues of cultural and social identity as points of reference or background information (Alexander 2004) in the social drama of the Orange Revolution. By way of positioning himself as a person with authentic Ukrainian roots and as a politician concerned with the problems of the Ukrainian countryside, right-centrist Yushchenko succeeded to win crucial votes in the rural parts of central Ukraine where people used to vote for communists and socialists (Arel 2005:3). On the other hand, although his level of popularity was

extremely high in Ukraine's most nationally conscious western region of Galicia, Yushchenko (who is not Galician himself) managed to keep a distance from the more radical 'Galician style' and was keen on projecting his image as a national leader for the whole of Ukraine.

However, Yushchenko did not always manage to avoid exaggerations and doubtful assertions in his attempts to present himself as the champion of the Ukrainian nation and Ukrainian culture. Some of his statements about Ukrainian culture and history were too much in line with right-wing populist rhetoric. 'When listening to Yushchenko's speeches in Independence Square one could hear quite strange overtones', historian Olena Rusyna points out. She continues:

He mentioned ancient burial mounds where fighters for Ukraine's independence lie buried (!). The problematic statement about Ukrainians as 'the nation of cultured [*inteligentnykh*] people' was backed by the even more problematic claim that the Ukrainian written language was formed six thousand years ago. ... And how could one forget a favourite character of Ukrainian historical mythology, Anna, daughter of the Kyivan prince Yaroslav the Wise: the princess was allegedly literate, not like her royal French husband. ... But we hope anyway that mythological constructions about Ukraine as a cradle of the [European] civilisation in nearly all its manifestations ... which Yushchenko mediated to the people are not the main message of the new authorities (Rusyna 2005:11).

Indeed, given Yushchenko's ambitions to attract a more open-minded and intellectually oriented audience, his resort to manipulative populist rhetoric containing allusions to questionable 'facts' of Ukrainian cultural superiority looked quite awkward. Even more, these obvious efforts to manipulate 'cultural stuff' for the immediate political aims in fact could signify Yushchenko's conformity with Kuchma's 'statist' policies. This might send a wrong message to the voters who wanted to see in Yushchenko a 'true' Ukrainian championing not only the Ukrainian state, but the Ukrainian nation, Ukrainian culture and Ukrainian language.

Unlike outgoing president Kuchma and his handpicked successor Yanukovych, whose deficient command of the Ukrainian language was widely known, Yushchenko took advantage of demonstrating his 'authentic' Ukraine-ness while speaking Ukrainian in public, even though he often spoke the less perfect 'standard Ukrainian' variant. Indeed, his image as an oppositional Ukrainian politician was reinforced by his fluency in Ukrainian. Even though in popular opinion Ukrainian is perceived as a 'natural language'

of ethnic Ukrainians, the daily speaking of Ukrainian in urban locations beyond western Ukraine is often viewed either as a reflection of rural backwardness or a manifestation of nationalist feelings (Kulyk 2006:291). To be a Ukrainian speaker is therefore not just a 'primordial belonging' and a matter of personal concern, but also an important socio-cultural choice in a society divided according to language affiliations. Lines of language division quite expectedly either cross or run parallel to the lines of division according to class, regional and cultural identifications. Thus, it was quite predictable that the vectors of political contest during the last presidential elections in Ukraine might obviously duplicate the lines of language division (Arel 2005). However, it can be argued once again that it does not necessarily mean that the national project(s) in Ukraine are exclusively a matter of one-sided elevation and empowerment of the suppressed Ukrainian language and (traditionally rural) culture. Nor does it mean that Yushchenko, who indeed wrote and said quite a lot about Ukrainian history as well as the revival of Ukrainian culture, spirituality is a bright example of an ethnic nationalist (though controlled by the authorities, Ukrainian media and a part of Western mass media spread just this view). National identity is not determined by 'inborn' ethnic affiliations solely, and the presidential elections and the Orange Revolution illustrate this quite well. The question at stake was not championing 'primordial' affiliations, but rather upholding the moral societal order to which the Ukrainians should adhere. Thus, Yushchenko's line of argument seems to be that of 'cultural nationalists' or 'revivalists' described by John Hutchinson as 'moral innovators who seek by "reviving" an ethnic historicist vision of the nation to redirect traditionalists and modernists away from conflict and instead to unite them in the task of constructing an integrated distinctive and autonomous community, capable of competing in the modern world. ...The "modern" (or, as it is frequently designated, the "West") is particularized to its adherents as a local manifestation of a universal drive for progress...' (Hutchinson 1987:34).

Given that the issues of overcoming 'abnormal' corruption within the ruling elite and establishing the foundations of an open democratic society contain pronounced moral overtones, the presentations of Yushchenko as a person stressed his 'normality' and 'moral health'. He was often featured as a perfect family man and a caring son. In his election programme, he declared 'the protection of family values, rights of children and respect to parents' as some of his biggest concerns. In strong contrast to the well-known Soviet family policy, he stated that conditions must be created where, rather than state institutions, the family first and foremost provides a harmonious environment for bringing up children and caring for elderly people. One of

the most popular fliers pictures Yushchenko happily smiling while cuddling a little child.

Yushchenko has never tried to look folksy and instead retained his image as a well-bred and sincere, but slightly reserved, person. His manner of talking was often described as ‘preaching’, and it is not surprising that in his speeches and articles he often used Christian metaphors, examples and expressions. Yushchenko also implied that the human principles of Christian morality should be applied in the political sphere (Yushchenko 2005a). Indeed, in extreme political situations such an appeal to a higher moral order and to religious symbols can be an effective means of mobilising social action. However, as it will be discussed later, appeal to Christian allusions can be used not only to glorify the ‘offer’ or ‘martyr’, but also to wake empathy for the ‘offender’. Christian discourse – open to contradictory interpretations and emotionally charged – does not look strange in contemporary Ukrainian politics, as far as political reason is often removed from being strictly pragmatic. The ‘transitional period’ after 1991 has been a time of hectic search for a kind of ideological compensation, for a vision that could take place of the officially abandoned Communist ideology. In Ukrainian society and politics a vision of ‘civilisational’ choice between ‘Europe’ and ‘Eurasia’ is patterned in many ways in the same manner as a moral choice between ‘Good’ and ‘Evil’ and, earlier, a ‘revolutionary’ choice between the ‘bright communist future’ and ‘decaying capitalism’.

‘The 2004 election ... represented a “clash of civilizations” between two political cultures: Eurasian and European. This clash was evident in the contrast between Yanukovich (Eurasian) and Yushchenko (European). ... Yushchenko was easily contrasted to the Kuchma/Yanukovich neo-Soviet and Eurasian political culture – he represented European values’ (Kuzio 2005:9). The heuristic value of the dichotomy ‘European’/‘Eurasian’ is quite problematic. However, the expressive preoccupation with the essence of European identity and ‘Europeanness’ in the intellectual discourse in Ukraine throughout the 1990s indeed might be viewed as an integral part of processes of ‘normalisation’ (Eglitis 2002:9-10) in the former Soviet counties. The concept of ‘Europe’ in contemporary Ukraine refers primarily to a cluster of values that need to be incorporated into both a political and broader societal context. These values in the eyes of many Ukrainians include those ‘non-Soviet ones’ of democracy, social trust and rather loosely defined ‘virtues of civility’ (Procyk 2003:158; Wolczuk 2000). After 1991 Ukraine has often been depicted in official discourse as a part of Europe, possessing all the ‘genuinely European’ cultural features, but nonetheless the political project of ‘bringing Ukraine closer to Europe’ was implemented quite

inconsequentially under Kuchma's rule. For Yushchenko it was important to declare the end of this ambiguous course and to demonstrate his distancing from Kuchma's and Yanukovych's uncertain orientations, including becoming openly pro-Russian during the election campaign. The 'European message' was indeed quite clear in his election rhetoric, though in his programme he also stated that 'relations with Russia are to be mutually beneficial, friendly and stable'. On the other hand, the 'European message' was combined with the issues relating to the national project. In one interview, Yushchenko was quite open that in his opinion 'Europeanness', understood as a set of 'undeniable values', does not in any way contradict 'Ukraine-ness' (Yushchenko 2004a).

It is obvious that Yushchenko's interpretation of 'Europe' is contradictory in itself. On the one hand, 'Europeanness' is regarded as something more or less primordial: Ukraine is already a European country due to its geographic position, proximity of cultural features and historical legacy. On the other hand, 'Europe' is a cluster of values and political principles that have to be achieved. Because of its Soviet and neo-Soviet legacy, Ukraine was left outside the visionary European project and now should revive and re-establish its 'Europeanness'. The way to the 'European' future, paradoxically enough, goes via the Ukrainian past. Ukraine's claims to be a part of the wealthy democratic 'Europe' need to be justified not only by its political course and economic reforms, but by its acknowledged – and even, as Yushchenko cued in his inauguration speech, in some way culturally superior – national identity.

Emphasis on issues of the Ukrainian cultural identity, 'roots', respect for Ukrainian history and traditions is connected to the personal predilections of Yushchenko – he made no secret of his fascination with archaeology and collecting samples of traditional Ukrainian culture. These hobbies seem to be a well-founded strategic choice for a person who strives to change the face of Ukrainian politics. In order to form a distinct political and cultural image of Ukraine in a new, 'European' style, Ukrainian elites ought to combine their efforts in forging a consensual Ukrainian national identity. It has to be empowered by a celebrated and equally treated cultural heritage of different nationalities calling Ukraine their home, but at the same time resting on acceptance of ethnic Ukrainian culture and 'undeniable' European values. This challenge is indeed massive, but Yushchenko's advantage was that he at least seemed to realise the importance of the (ethno-)cultural factor in the processes of national consolidation and transition to 'Europe'. His vision of Ukraine as 'a great European nation whose grievances and hopes cannot be ignored in the process of the creation of the new Europe' (Yushchenko 2004b) can presently look too 'rightist' and unrealistic.

However, for a majority of Ukrainians, it is much more attractive than a perspective of turning the country into a neo-Soviet reservation, much like neighbouring Belarus.

Yushchenko's 'script' contained many references to the past, to remembering historical grievances and to a revival of Ukrainian traditions and spirituality. However, his cultural message would not attract many adherents if it solely concentrated on questions of the Ukrainian past. Unlike Yanukovich, Yushchenko was concerned with portraying the elections as a choice for radical change and against the continuation of Ukraine's status as a faceless, semi-developed buffer zone between Russia and 'Europe'. This revolutionary zeal was undoubtedly one of the important factors that helped Yushchenko to win votes of the younger, more educated and more socially accommodated Ukrainians. In line with this rhetoric, Yushchenko and his allies demonstrated their revolutionary character through various means of symbolic signification. One of the most obvious examples was the choice of orange – the colour with its alarming, but at the same time mobilising, connotations. Numerous visual images of Yushchenko with flying orange banners in the background aroused revolutionary associations. The famous picture of Che Guevara with features transformed into a sms-portrait of Yushchenko widely circulated among the numerous 'orange ones' with mobile telephones in their possession. In practice, however, Yushchenko's political style has been almost the direct opposite of a revolutionary dictatorship. Ukrainian politicians and intellectuals have often blamed him for 'indecision' and propensity to compromise. However, his 'hesitating' manner for the moment proved to be more effective in gaining political allies and votes than the neo-Soviet command style of his opponents.

It can be argued that Yushchenko's performance achieved a necessary degree of fusion between cultural 'script', background representations, on-stage acting and audience response. His style of self-presentation has indicated changes in the political culture of the Ukrainian political establishment, as it drifts away from both the stiffness of Soviet officialdom and the 'simplicity' of many post-Soviet political leaders. His image was undoubtedly patterned in a manner accepted among the Western European political establishment – as a cultured man and 'expert'. However, it should not be forgotten that this kind of image suited not only the tastes of the Western political circles, but resonated with expectations of fifty-two per cent of the Ukrainian voters. Of course, this alone could not guarantee that the political and socio-cultural development in Ukraine after 2004 would follow an optimistic scenario. Nevertheless, this identification shift might be a good sign in itself.

### **Yanukovych: ‘Viktor – the loser’**

In popular perception, the credibility of Viktor Yanukovych’s on-stage presentation was seriously undermined by the fact that he was the candidate backed by the regime of the unpopular outgoing president Leonid Kuchma. As early as April 2004, 70.4 per cent of Ukrainians believed that a free presidential election was impossible in their country affected by corruption and power abuse on all authority levels (Kuzio 2005:5). These fears were soon confirmed. Both rude coercion and the whole arsenal of Soviet-style methods of ‘ideological persuasion’ were used widely during Yanukovych’s campaign. The main mechanism of this propaganda was the appeal to deeply rooted dualistic mythologies and classification frames with strong xenophobic overtones. While the main target of Yushchenko’s rhetoric was the ‘bandit regime’ and corrupted authorities, Yanukovych’s supporters pointed out first and foremost ‘*Banderivtsi*’ (nationally conscious western Ukrainians who were depicted as sympathising with radical ethnic nationalism of historical ‘Banderites’ — the Ukrainian guerrilla movement which collaborated with the Nazis) and the West as the main forces destabilising the country. In the eyes of many Ukrainians, this Soviet-style election rhetoric proved to be too old-fashioned and oriented to the voters who had not accepted national frames of identification.

When analysing the causes of Yanukovych’s defeat as a symbolic figure it should also be pointed out that while he was backed by powers that provided him with necessary means of symbolic production (financial resources, help from political managers from Russia, *etc.*) and distribution (massive support in media), his cultural ‘script’ proved to be not competitive enough. Neither did his reputation as a political leader correlate with his optimistic political programme, nor did he look credible in the eyes of the majority of the voters. Even more disastrous was his failure to attract a ‘progressive’ (mobile, educated and intellectually influential) audience.

The discourse of Yanukovych’s speeches and election promises resembled documents of the Communist Party during Brezhnev’s ‘stagnation’, when revolutionary rhetoric and socialist romanticism faded and the main concern of the authorities was to keep the populace fed and pacified (Zarets’kyi 2004:19). Contrary to Yushchenko, the main (and probably the only consequently expressed) message of Yanukovych’s campaign was stability, ‘reliability’ and continuation of the policies tested by Kuchma. The blue and white colours of Yanukovych’s campaign, as he himself used to point out,

were not taken up by chance (Yanukovych 2005). The ‘naturalness’ of these colours was constructed in contrast to the ‘exoticism’ of the orange colour in the same manner as stability was intended to represent a positive message contrary to the negative message of change.

The social background of Yanukovych perfectly fits a political leader of the Soviet epoch: he originated from an urban worker family, and, more importantly, he was born and made his career in the ‘proletarian’ Donbas – the coal-mining industrial region and the symbolically significant locus on the mental map of the Soviet era. However, despite a privileged symbolic position as a proletarian centre, social conditions in the region have always been severe and crime rates high. Massive strikes of socially and economically deprived coal-miners stirred up Ukraine in the first years of independence. In Donbas, identity as the ‘working people’ seems to be of greater importance than distinct ethno-cultural affiliations; for an absolute majority of Donbas dwellers Russian *lingua franca* is the most natural language of communication in everyday life. The ethnic roots of Yanukovych are Byelorussian and Russian. Although he learned Ukrainian after taking office as Prime Minister in 2002, Yanukovych often found it difficult to express himself in standard Ukrainian and preferred to speak Russian during public occasions. This inability to master the state language looked quite strange for a person striving for the most representative state office. In this respect, Yanukovych resembled the unpopular Kuchma, whose deficient command of Ukrainian language was widely known.

The ‘non-Ukraine-ness’ (or, in any way, non-western variant of Ukraineness) of Yanukovych’s cultural orientation corresponded to his pro-Russian sympathies in the field of politics. Determined to preserve Ukraine’s independence, he nonetheless announced his readiness to make Russian an official language in Ukraine (an arrangement promised, but never implemented by Kuchma) and even to begin negotiations with Russia about dual citizenship. He played lip service to bringing Ukraine ‘closer to Europe’. Meanwhile, anti-American overtones were too evident in the agitation favouring Yanukovych. Yushchenko’s wife – an American-born Ukrainian – became one of its most obvious targets. Yushchenko himself was portrayed as an American protégé and a CIA agent. Nataliya Vitrenko, one of the devoted allies of Yanukovych, issued a flier where a picture of the American flag was incorporated with a swastika.

The appeal to Soviet dualist mythology was indeed too obvious in almost every twist of Yanukovych’s election propaganda. Ukraine was presented as surrounded by mighty enemies and in this situation, the most natural

solution was to make a stake on alliance with ‘brotherly’ Russia. The voters were persistently reminded that Ukraine and Russia, despite their different political realities, still share many collective memories, first and foremost ‘glorious’ ones – like, for example, the victory in World War II. Even details of Yanukovych’s visual presentation played on close ties with Russia: blue and white colours chosen for his campaign were sometimes combined with red – a combination that obviously referred to the Russian tricolour. Besides, it was no secret that Yanukovych was the presidential candidate most favoured by Vladimir Putin and his advisers. No wonder that while Yanukovych was hailed by the Russophone east as a defender of their language and ‘lifestyle’ against notorious ‘*Banderivtsi*’ and ‘*Nashysty*’, other Ukrainians feared the repeat of the neo-colonial ‘Byelorussian variant’ in the case of his victory.

The ‘non-European’ orientation of Yanukovych was made explicit in his personal style of public behaviour. Many observers noted his poor manners and lack of public speaking experience. His campaign revealed numerous examples of how he treated Yushchenko’s voters and even his own allies with disdain. He publicly called his opponents and their voters in the highly derogatory term ‘*kozly*’ (bastards); during one of the meetings with his voters, in front of numerous journalists and observers, he insulted an elderly veteran who wanted to ask him a question. However, this kind of political culture is nothing new for the former Soviet space (Nikita Khrushchev banging his shoe on the table in the UN’s headquarter is one of the classic examples). ‘Simplicity’ was nothing a political figure or higher dignitary should be ashamed of – on the contrary, lack of good manners was often treated as ‘proletarian sincerity’, determination and closeness to the ordinary people. Indeed, during his presidential campaign Yanukovych was keen on projecting his image as a ‘tough guy’ of simple working-class background, who had seen a lot of poverty and disaster in his life (despite the fact that his massive stature and wealthy appearance on the big boards communicated quite a different message).

The most scandalous fact, however, was that Yanukovych had been in prison, twice sentenced for robbery and violent behaviour. Opinion polls showed that a majority of Ukrainians would never vote for a presidential candidate with a criminal record. The most popular argument against Yanukovych as Ukrainian president emphasised both morality and national pride: a former criminal occupying the highest state office would be an insult not only to the feelings of every decent Ukrainian, but also in the eyes of the ‘civilised nations’, primarily those in Europe.

Yanukovych became a target for ridicule also because of his lack of education – an important issue in a country where the percentage of people with tertiary education is one of the highest on the European continent. The handwritten curriculum vitae he submitted to the Central Election Commission contained many grammatical and spelling mistakes. Furthermore, it was signed by Yanukovych as ‘*Proffessor*’ – a spelling not used in either Ukrainian or Russian. The information about Yanukovych’s poor spelling could probably cause less damage to his political image if he had continued to construct this image entirely in line with the ‘tough guy’ scenario. However, his ambitions to look as intellectual as Yushchenko correlated neither with his real abilities nor with the components of his constructed image.

Absence of coherent and original strategy of positive image-making for Yanukovych was conspicuous during the whole presidential campaign. When it became clear that the opposition’s candidate gained massive support among the voters, the political managers from Yanukovych’s camp began to imitate every move that earned credits for Yushchenko. When Yushchenko appeared in public with a severely disfigured face, it was clear that the authorities would use this to the advantage of their healthy-looking candidate. Such efforts were indeed made; however, they did not have the expected result. Official accounts of the drastic changes in Yushchenko’s appearance as a result of poisoning with some exotic ‘non-Ukrainian’ food and rumours about alcohol abuse looked like evident scandalising of the opposition’s leader. Contrary to the expectations of Yanukovych’s advisers, in popular opinion Yushchenko became a martyr whose suffering elevated him to the symbol of the tormented Ukrainian nation. Consequently, efforts were made to present Yanukovych as a victim of physical abuse and even of a failed act of terror in the hope to detract public attention away from the mysterious illness of Yushchenko and win sympathy among the voters. However, after the ‘egg incident’ (when pelted by an ‘orange’ activist with an egg Yanukovych dramatically collapsed and was carried away by his security guards) he became a target of numerous jokes and caricatures questioning his image as a robust masculine politician.

The use of family photos and public appearances of Yushchenko with his wife and children during the agitation campaign provoked a wave of criticism in Yanukovych’s camp. Nevertheless, the public appearances of Yanukovych’s family members were organised as well. However, unrefined manners, emotional and, to say the least, hardly thought-out speeches of the prospective ‘first lady’ Ludmyla Yanukovych (in one of these ‘appeals’ she claimed that oranges distributed among the outdoor protestors in Kyiv had been poisoned and those who tasted them became seriously ill) made her a

target of anecdotes and caricatures. Also, comparison with Yushchenko's elegant-looking wife was not at all to her advantage. Pictures of Yushchenko posing with his mother in his native village were met with sympathy by voters. Quite predictably, in an effort to 'soften' his stiff image, Yanukovych, whose mother died when he was a child, was advised to visit his mother-in-law in the countryside in a relaxed atmosphere, as a part of his election campaign (Kontsepsiya 2004:11). It is obvious that this image-softening strategy was an undisguised imitation of the successful 'my-family-is-my-Ukraine' presentation made by Yushchenko.

The appeal to Christian values and allusions was also used in agitation in favour of Yanukovych. When his criminal past became widely known, his political managers appealed to Christian clemency among voters as a last resort. In line with this argument, Yanukovych should be given a second chance while Yushchenko, who openly pointed out this pitiful biographic detail of his opponent, must be condemned for his lack of Christian mercy. Another awkward effort to 'turn black into white' concerned the infamous depiction of Yushchenko's supporters as 'bastards' ('*kozly*' – literally 'goats'). Yanukovych tried to convince the audience that when announcing: 'we, healthy and strong people, are the majority – not those bastards who disturb our life', he in fact alluded to the Bible and meant nothing but 'scapegoats that must be driven into a desert'. However, this effort to look sophisticated was not well-received.

With so many miscalculations and incompatibilities in his constructed image, Yanukovych failed to look credible in the eyes of the majority of the electorate. However, one question inevitably comes to mind: was it something besides rude pressure that could incline forty-four per cent voters to vote for him? This question has already been partially answered in this paper: the 'normal' Soviet style of his image and message of stability made him recognisable for that part of the electorate who for different reasons found it difficult to accept changes in the socio-cultural climate of post-1991 Ukraine and feel nostalgia for 'good old' Soviet times. Moreover, in conditions of an almost complete blockade of positive official information about Yushchenko on Ukrainian and Russian TV channels, many voters became accustomed to frequent appearances of 'stable' earthy Yanukovych and internalised the idea of him as a future president.

On the other hand, one should not neglect the fact that despite all miscalculations and incoherence Yanukovych was quite successfully presented as a figure of almost epic proportions, as an 'extraordinary man' and a 'prominent personality' – not like an 'ordinary book-keeper' such as

Yushchenko. For example, in a quite extensive novel-like biography written by Valentyn Chemerys and pompously titled *Mystery of Viktor Yanukovych. A Study*, all elements of a heroic fairy-tale are present: the hero's miserable childhood, initiation, numerous ordeals (two imprisonments among them) and deeds, miraculous live-savings, the magic patron (in this case, cosmonaut Vladimir Beregovoy) *etc.* Like a protagonist from Russian and Ukrainian fairy-tales, Yanukovych was presented as a common man whose folksiness and 'character' might help him to win. Another example of such a style of argumentation can be illustrated with a passage from the leaflet 'Touch the destiny' ('*Prikosnis' k sud'be*): 'Leader of a country, leader of a state, leader of a people ('*narod*')... What has he to be like? ...We can evaluate this figure according to purely human parameters, because *all of us want to see in a leader first and foremost a nice person*' (Nikolayeva 2005, emphasis added).

Last but not least, the regional factor (or, rather, the factor of different cultural affiliations correlating with lines of regional divisions) also played its part. In eastern Ukraine sympathies were definitely on the side of Yanukovych, while in Galicia even those voters who were not convinced by agitation in favour of Yushchenko often chose not to vote for Yanukovych either. Local patriotism proved to be an important factor for many residents of eastern Ukraine, particularly Donbas; Yanukovych was perceived first of all as 'a local guy',<sup>4</sup> a person who in the case of victory could get even more power for lobbying the interests of the region. Yanukovych himself, however, was regarded as the public face of Ukraine's mightiest oligarchic clan headed by the richest man of the country. Thus, ordinary voters would hardly benefit economically or socially from his election. Nevertheless, Yanukovych's promises to defend their cultural *status quo* in terms of language and 'lifestyle' against the 'nationalists' became the strongest argument for many eastern-Ukrainian residents.

There can be several explanations for such an unwillingness to accept the basic ethno-cultural parameters of the Ukrainian national project implemented 'from above'. One of them (Hrytsak 1996; Katchanovski 2006; Ryabchuk 2000a, 2000b) emphasises different historical legacies resulting in an uneven development of civil society and different understanding of nationality and ethno-cultural affinity in different parts of Ukraine. On the other hand, not only historical circumstances, but also incoherent cultural and language policies after 1991 played their role in maintaining and even strengthening the frontiers of the regional cultural division in Ukraine (Kulyk 2006).

Cultural presentations are important resources and terrains for various political projects and patterns of power relations (Lamont 1989:134). The symbolic arena of the Orange Revolution revealed that cultural facets of the nation-building and constructed national identity were well in line with aspirations of a nationally conscious Ukrainian intelligentsia and might be a crucial factor of political mobilisation in Ukraine. However, in order to empower the national project, cultural cues – propagated at the state level as well as played out at the 'grass-root' levels – have to be not only mediators of power relations via exclusion, but via inclusion as well. When seeking to condense cultural and political power, the political actors in Ukraine often neglect the consensual, the civic side of the equation (Schöpflin 2003:488) – the development of which can be disastrous in the long run. The search for the common cultural ground of 'everyday' Ukraine-ness of those who speak Ukrainian both at home and in public, who unhesitatingly include Stepan Bandera, Andriy Sheptyts'kyi and Vyacheslav Chornovil into the pantheon of the national heroes and of those who believe that 'formal recognition of their passport nationality, command of *surzhyk*<sup>5</sup> and love for *borshch* and *varenyky*' (Hrytsenko 1998:176) is quite enough, can look like an impossible mission. However, this search should not be abandoned or, even worse, made one-directional, even if the actors who are presently expected to be in charge of the 'cultural stuff' are not ready to open the field for new, multi-faceted practical and theoretical responses to the 'two Ukraines' dilemma.

### **Conclusion**

This paper outlined peculiarities of modelling the 'stage images' of two presidential contenders in the latest election campaign in Ukraine – the images that became embodiments of two alternative symbolic orders and vectors of identity work coexisting and competing in contemporary Ukrainian society. While Yanukovich appealed to the magic consciousness, the aura of the strong personality, the maintenance of a 'supranational' (normalised Soviet-like) lifestyle and a xenophobic division between 'Us' and 'Strangers', Yushchenko made a stake on professionalism, morality and a culturally-informed national project. As a consequence, the image of 'Viktor-the winner' – revolutionary, 'Europe'-oriented, intellectual, natively Ukrainian – proved to be appealing first and foremost to the potentially most competitive segments of Ukrainian society (students, professionals, white-collar workers and businessmen).

Soon after the Orange Revolution, the political barometer pointed to 'unstable' for the Orange rulers. A kind of trajectory correction took place, and this 'realistic' correction has been in conflict with the idealised presentations of

uncompromising, West-oriented, corruption-proof leaders. Though the Orange Revolution has had potent effects as a ‘symbolic deposit in actual historical time’ (Turner 1974:102), it is nevertheless too early to celebrate it as an event marking the end of the transition period in Ukraine. Radical improvement of the economic situation and accelerated democratic transformations did not occur. Viktor Yanukovych regained his positions, and presently the nexus ‘Yushchenko – the winner/Yanukovych – the loser’ seems to be converted. Nevertheless, it can be argued that important shifts did become observable in the sphere of identity work. Unlike a decade ago, identification with the ‘nation’ appeals to the majority of the Ukrainian population. In the course of the latest presidential election, a winning vision of prospective ideational development of the project called the ‘Ukrainian nation’ – aspiring to be ‘civilised’ and ‘European’ — was represented. That terms such as ‘culture’, ‘traditions’, ‘liberalism’, ‘moral values’ and ‘democracy’ frequently mentioned alongside with ‘nation’ in political proclamations and current intellectual discussions should give us a cue about who are the social actors – and audience – who invest in it (and, accordingly, can benefit) most. Implementation of a culturally informed project of nation-building seems to be well in line with aspirations of the Ukrainian intelligentsia, the cultural producers by definition and a class *in statu nascendi* (Szelenyi 1982), towards cultural and political power (Karabel 1996:210).

Cultural representations and references – relating to the national project in its different variants – are an important stake in the political battles for votes and confidence of the people in contemporary Ukraine. Cultural cues empower Ukrainian political discourse and quite often inspire joint political action – so far. When functioning exclusively as a tool for official Ukrainian ‘statist’ ideology, Ukrainian (ethno)-culture as a vital field open to negotiations might be endangered in the long run. On the other hand, intensive implementation of ethnically Ukrainian cultural schemes (whether presented as a kind of ‘European’ one or other) in everyday life can very soon turn into an assimilatory antidemocratic project. The last presidential election has demonstrated that people living in different regions, with different social backgrounds and cultural affiliations have different understandings of themselves as Ukrainians (Hrytsak 2000; Rodgers 2006) despite the fact that in 1991 they confirmed their will to live in the independent state of Ukraine. In order to empower Ukrainian culture and make it a glue of the national project, other significant actors – not only a nationally conscious intelligentsia and intellectuals – should have an opportunity to be seen and heard in the vital realm of contemporary Ukrainian culture. The cultural re-fusion Alexander writes about is an open democratic process, where

everyone can find his or her place. It seems to be one of the possible ways to empower the Ukrainian culture in order to make it a domain of consensus efforts and to bring Ukraine closer to 'Europe'.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> In the words of Michael McFaul, 'the Orange Revolution ... may have been the first in history organized largely online' (McFaul 2005: 12).

<sup>2</sup> One interesting detail can be mentioned in this connection. In an attempt to discredit the outdoor protestors gathering in Kyiv, participants in one of the programmes on the Yanukovych-supporting TV channel *TRK Ukrayina* claimed that 'one cannot distinguish a single cultured ('*intelligentnoje*') face in this mob.' [No reference to the date.]

<sup>3</sup> Grabowicz obviously analyses the situation during Kuchma's rule; however, it looks like his conclusions can be extended to the 'post-Orange' period as well.

<sup>4</sup> The 'local guy'-effect can not be neglected in Yushchenko's case either. In his native eastern Ukrainian Sumy oblast' which borders Russia, he gained a significantly higher percentage of votes than in the neighbouring oblasts.

<sup>5</sup> A colloquial mixture of Ukrainian and Russian.

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