LECTURE

The "Orange Revolution": Analysis and Implications of the 2004 Presidential Election in Ukraine

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The Orange Revolution was the most momentous political event in Eastern Europe since the fall of the Berlin Wall. But it rests on a paradox. The Revolution was about the creation of a political nation, about changing the nature of the political regime in Ukraine, and redirecting the arrows of political development towards an "open society" which, in the current political vocabulary, is synonymous with one word: Europe. And yet, the Orange Revolution owes its existence to a strong national movement in Ukraine. National as in nationalism.

The "minority faith," to use the title of a well-known book by a British professor, did not lead "nowhere," to use the title of a rather infamous article by a former American diplomat. The national faith actually became an electoral majority, although in unexpected ways, and its success in achieving the hardest of feats, organized and sustained collective action, cracked the old regime down the middle. We have come a long way since Hans Kohn, for whom nationalism in the East was all emotion and irrationality, and a threat to an open society. The Orange Revolution took place in what for Kohn was the deep East, since his East began at the French-German border. And yet, if Ukraine is now on the road to an open society, it is largely thanks to the strength of its nationalism.

The complicating factor is that Ukrainian society is suffering a severe crisis of legitimacy. The non-Orange part of the electorate—44 percent, in the final round of elections on December 26—refuses to accept that the popular uprising on Kyiv's Central Square (the Maidan) was legitimate. The Orange electorate—just a touch over the major-

ity threshold, at 52%—refuses to accept non-Orange grievances as legitimate. This could be dismissed as the normal dynamics of a winner/loser electoral outcome, except for the fact that the Orange and non-Orange constituencies are strikingly polarized geographically.

Ukraine had been geographically polarized once, during the last round of presidential election that brought Leonid Kuchma to power in 1994. The fact of the matter is, Ukraine is far more polarized now than it was in 1994. At the same time, and this is not a contradiction, as I will explain later, the huge level of rejection of Viktor Yushchenko in Eastern Ukraine is virtually identical to that of Leonid Kravchuk in 1994, at a time when there was no Orange Revolution. I would venture to say that there is something deeper at work, namely, the fear of exclusion. In this respect, the fact that the new Cabinet of Ministers virtually excludes Eastern Ukraine, a first since the creation of Soviet Ukraine in the 1920s, is quite significant.

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The Orange Revolution began on 22 November 2004, when it became clear that the old regime had stolen the election. Falsifying an electoral outcome in a competitive context is an art, but there was nothing artful in how Donetsk, the power base of then Prime Minister Yanukovych, falsified the results. Donetsk reported an overwhelming majority for Yanukovych (96 percent) which, as such, was not entirely implausible, since similar near-unanimous support for Yushchenko could be found in the Galician provinces of Western Ukraine. Where Donetsk overreached was in reporting an enormous turnout of 97 percent, 10 percent higher than any other oblast outside of the Donbas, 16 percent higher than the national average, and 19 percent higher than the turnout obtained in the same Donetsk oblast just three weeks earlier.

What a statistician would cautiously call implausible, the Maidan and, in quick succession, Western governments called impossible. At least three-quarters of a million votes had been fabricated in Donbas (Donetsk and neighboring Luhansk) and that alone called into question the official small lead (2.9 percent) enjoyed by Yanukovych in the national results. Sure enough, there were also allegations of thousands of violations throughout eastern and southern Ukraine. In a large country, the impact of these violations in local precincts on the aggregate national result is difficult to assess. Evidence based on taped phone conversations soon surfaced that the Presidential Administration had intercepted results sent by territorial electoral commissions and altered them before they were eventually received by the Central Electoral Commission. Establishing the authenticity of taped conversations, however, takes time.

What jolted Western governments and the OSCE in refusing to recognize the result of this second round, and most likely served as the initial impetus for people to fill the Maidan, was the obvious and gross violation in Donetsk. One Russian in Donetsk,

who was observing the election in Yanukovych country for a European organization, was shocked less by the violations per se, than the fact that they were committed so openly and brazenly. This arrogance—let's call it the hubris of incompetence—ultimately doomed the regime.

But for that to happen, you needed sustained social pressure. And it is exactly at that point that absolutely everybody, beginning with Yushchenko, was in the dark. And this is why all these stories about the Orange Revolution being the result of Western intervention, while containing a grain of truth, ultimately miss the point by a wide margin. The backbone of Orange, the PORA student movement, was indeed impressively organized, and no doubt greatly benefited from the training it received from Serbian and Georgian colleagues, as well as from American foundations. Sustaining a Tent City in downtown Kyiv costs money, and a fair amount of it, but it is far more likely that these resources came from a group of wealthy Yushchenko allies, who, incidentally, now form the core of Tymoshenko's Cabinet, than from the ubiquitous Uncle Sam. There was a lot of money circulating in Ukraine, and not all in the camp of the Yanukovych-aligned oligarchs.

Yet what everybody expected was for a relatively small following to disrupt business as usual in the center, much like the small demonstrations of Ukraine Without Kuchma four years earlier, during the Gongadze crisis, with pressure placed on Western powers not to recognize the election. What happened instead was a mass outpouring on the streets and swelling numbers, instead of diminishing ones. One can dispute how many exactly there were in the streets, but one had only to look at the Maidan to think Berlin, Prague and Bucharest 1989. Or Belgrade 2000, and Tbilisi 2002. As the saying goes in my native language, a picture is worth a thousand words.

In the perspective of rational choice analysts, the "tipping point" had been reached, the point after which the benefits of engaging in collective action surpass the costs. That, no one could foresee. It wasn't supposed to happen in Ukraine. All the seminars in Ukrainian studies I had attended in the past few years, including one I hosted a month before the second round, had concurred on one thing: civil society in Ukraine is too weak to stand up to the rise of a post-Soviet authoritarian regime. Prague 1989 in Kyiv? Not in your wildest dreams. And yet it happened. The Revolution was first and foremost a revelation: that Ukrainian society had in fact profoundly changed since independence.

With a mass, but peaceful uprising in downtown Kyiv, the nerve center of the government, the old regime elites, rather than Western governments, were the ones who came under massive pressure. With so many people in the streets, and the obvious falsification in Donetsk, the decision by the West not to recognize results was far easier to make, even though France and Germany, ever mindful of their oil interests in Orange-challenged Russia, could have lived without the problem. From that point on, with the tipping point passed in terms of street demonstrations, and with Ukraine shunned by the West, the fate of the Orange Revolution rested on the cohesion of the old regime elite.

As the Yale political scientist Keith Darden argues in *The Blackmail State*, the old regime (which I am using here as a shorthand, but which in fact was not that old, but rather the the peculiar creation of a post-Soviet environment) was all about the subversion of state institutions (security, fiscal, regional, educational) to the benefit of one particular leader and his coterie.

In one sense, the rise of *Our Ukraine*, Yushchenko's political vehicle, is the story of individual officials who served the Kuchma regime and were either forced out, or became disillusioned, and then banded together to challenge the regime, beginning with Yushchenko himself, followed by Yulia Tymoshenko, current Vice-Premier Anatolii Kinakh, and the list is relatively long. The Orange Revolution, on the other hand, is the story of high-powered elites who defected from the Kuchma regime while still in control of their institutions. Prior to the first round, only Volodymyr Lytvyn, a former Kuchma Chief of Staff who was supposed to have become his henchman as parliamentary Speaker, was on the verge of defecting, a predilection that was sealed on November 27, when parliament voted not to recognize the second round.

Under street pressure, the defections snowballed. University rectors challenged the regime and allowed their students to demonstrate. Regional councils proclaimed they would not acknowledge the results. Diplomats posted abroad denounced the falsification. Media magnates, the so-called "oligarchs," began to loosen the administration's control of their news broadcasts. Crucially, the security forces refused to follow orders to use force. The Western media reported that such an order had been given, when the Revolution was a week-old, and that the SBU made it clear that it would confront Army or Interior Ministry troops if it had to. Whether an order was actually given remains to be investigated, yet, by all indications, the regime knew, by the second week, that it could no longer count on the support of its security service. The last straw was the decision of the Supreme Court invalidating the second round and ordering a third one, in defiance of the expressed preference of President Kuchma.

Before Orange, Ukraine watchers knew that whether Ukraine would turn the corner would be contingent on whether a critical mass of elites would defect from the old regime. What would trigger this spiral of defections was impossible to predict. Which is another way of saying that Orange was impossible to predict. What is Orange? The Orange Revolution is not about policy issues that are normally front and center in electoral contests, but about a process. It is neither about a joyful acceptance of the neo-liberal economic model, nor about American geostrategic interests, but rather about the systemic abuse of executive power in Ukraine, and the disingenuousness of proclaiming a strategic course of European integration, while regressing on all political, economic, and legal indicators of Europeanness. The Orange Revolution is about the creation of a civil society in real time, before our eyes, in the sense that, for the first time in Ukrainian history, an organized society acted as a counter-weight to the state. Twelve days of massive demonstrations, between November 22 and December 3 (the day the Court ruled), cannot be fabricated.

But where did this civil society come from? We still know little about the social foundations of Orange, and no doubt sociological and anthropological studies will do much to inform our understanding in the years ahead. But two factors appear to have played a critical role: the generational and the national. Orange began with PORA, a group of students who were children or teenagers at the time of independence, and ended with the nomination of what appears to be the youngest Cabinet since the Bolshevik Revolution, with an average age of 44. To be sure, people of all ages were on Maidan, and the grandmothers, the *babulias*, were out there in full force. Nevertheless, it seems fair to say that the driving force, both at ground level and at central command, was a generation that had not been in a position of authority during the Soviet era. That generation, we can surmise, is anything but a *homo sovieticus* in how it views the state. This is most disturbing to neighboring autocrats, beginning with Russia, in their assessment of the export potential of the Orange Revolution. Given a similar opportunity, why would the young, post-Soviet, generation in Russia behave any differently?

The mitigating factor, however, is nationalism. Nationalism is a term of opprobrium to many, and is very often used selectively. Yet it has value as a concept of comparative political analysis. Let me be very clear as to what I mean here. Nationalism is a claim of political sovereignty based on a claim of cultural distinctiveness. The French model of the nation is generally presented as contradicting this assertion but, in the last analysis, the French defined the French as whoever spoke French and nothing else. They were, and remain, quite intolerant on the issue of linguistic diversity. In Ukraine, nationalism is a factor because one constituency is far more cohesive than another in its vision of the nature of Ukrainian cultural distinctiveness. That constituency is strongest in Western Ukraine, territories that were not part of a Russian Imperial or Soviet state until the Second World War (with one regional semi-exception). Western Ukrainians did not fill the square on their own, but there is little doubt that they, Galicians in particular, were overrepresented, in the backbone of Maidan. Remove them from the equation and you have a serious organizational problem.

But leave them alone on the square and you have an even bigger problem. The Orange Revolution is not a Galician coup. It is rather about Western Ukrainians and Central Ukrainians coming together for the first time for real, rather than symbolically, as happened in 1919. In electoral arithmetic, there is no question, as I will show in a moment, that Yushchenko's breakthrough was specifically in Central Ukraine. On Maidan, although we don't yet have access to systematic data, one has to assume that the bulk of non-Western Ukrainian demonstrators were from areas of Central Ukraine. At the elite level, again the composition of the new Ukrainian Cabinet is instructive. Of the 23 ministers, only four are from the East, but only four are from the West. Nearly two-thirds are from Central Ukraine. The Donbas media has frequently raised the specter of Galicia taking over Ukraine, but a single minister is actually from Galicia. It is Central Ukraine that now dominates Ukrainian politics.

Why is this important? The civil society revealed by the Orange Revolution has taken root precisely in the areas where Ukrainian national consciousness is more cohesive. Historically, of course, nationalism can graft itself on any political ideology. In interwar Western Ukraine, Ukrainian nationalism had appropriated for itself an authoritarian model of society that was rampant in Central Europe. In the early years of independence, mainstream nationalists appeared to be more interested in the trappings of statehood, than about substantive reforms. But the Kuchmagate scandal, four years ago, revealed that the only constituency capable of presenting an organized resistance to the subversion of democracy, even if unsuccessful at the time, were the nationalists. The fringe elements notwithstanding, the nationalists, in that defining moment, revealed themselves to be democrats, in fact, the only democrats.

The question we have to ask ourselves is why is it that people mobilized, then and now, in some regions (West and Center), and not others (East and South)? My answer has to do with how people relate to their national identity. Ukrainians in Central and Western Ukraine have a more cohesive view of their identity, and this greater sense of solidarity is a facilitating factor in their ability to undertake collective action. Nationalism acts a vehicle for the realization of a project, and that project has become that of an open society, as we know it in Europe. It is high time for us to leave the experience of "integral" nationalism in the closet, in the historical closet—once again, fringe outbursts notwithstanding. Nationalism produced the Orange Revolution which, as I said at the outset, took the form of a popular uprising for an open society.

But Orange conquered only half of the country, and this half is highly concentrated geographically. What are the facts about this polarization? Ukraine is divided into twenty-seven territories: twenty-four provinces or *oblasts*, one autonomous republic (Crimea), and two cities with a special territorial status (Kyiv, the capital, and the naval port of Sevastopol, whose facilities are leased to the Russian Fleet). In the final round of December 26, Yanukovych won in ten territories, comprising just under half of the national electorate (48 percent). Yushchenko won in seventeen territories, comprising just over the other half (52 percent). In the territories that he carried, Yanukovych received 75 percent of the vote. In the territories carried by Yushchenko, his score was 80 percent. In only one of all twenty-seven territories was the vote relatively close: the Southern oblast of Kherson, where Yanukovych beat Yushchenko 51 percent to 43 percent. In all other twenty-six territories, the margin of victory by one or the other candidate was enormous. After Kherson, the closest race in the whole country was in Kirovohrad, a Central Ukrainian oblast which straddles the Center and the South (partly located in an area that was historically known as Novorossia), where Yushchenko defeated Yanukovych by 31 percentage points, 63 percent to 32 percent, which in any country would be considered a landslide.

Another way to look at it is to divide Ukraine into regions. There is an interesting debate in the literature as to how best to delineate Ukraine's regions, but for the sake of continuity here, let me resort to a dividing principle that I have been using for a

decade, focused on five regions, with Kyiv in brackets. In this grouping, the Yanukovych zone is divided into an industrial East and a semi-industrial, semi-agricultural South, while the predominantly agricultural Yushchenko zone is divided into three regions according to their distinct periods of incorporations into a Moscow-dominated state: the Left Bank (1640s), the Right Bank (1790s), and the West (1940s). The Kyiv metropolis, as an industrial magnet, is a huge exception in this agricultural landscape. On December 26, Yanukovych carried 79 percent of the East and 70 percent of the South, while Yushchenko carried 72 percent of the Left Bank, 78 percent of Kyiv, 78 percent of the Right Bank, and 89 percent of the West.

The geographical polarization is stark, and it is starker than it was ten years ago. In the presidential election of July 1994, former Prime Minister Leonid Kuchma unexpectedly edged incumbent Leonid Kravchuk by six percentage points, 51 percent to 45 percent. The election was not about democracy, as it took place in a relatively fair and free fashion, and the legitimacy of Kuchma's victory was not contested. A comparison of the regional breakdown of the vote with the 2004 election is instructive. The support for Kuchma and Kravchuk, compared to Yanukovych and Yushchenko, was virtually the same in 1994 and 2004 for the East, South, and West: 75 percent for the winner in the East and South, 90 percent for the winner in the West. Nearly all the changes took place at the Center—Left and Right Bank, and in the capital. The Left Bank declared itself two to one in favor of Kuchma (66 percent to 31 percent), and that was the biggest puzzle at the time. It now voted for Yushchenko three to one (72 percent to 24 percent). The Right Bank evolved from a relatively close contest (54 percent to 42 percent in favor of Kravchuk) into a sweep, four to one (78 percent to 19 percent) for Yushchenko. Critics of the polarization model argued back then that the Right Bank acted as a buffer between the polarized East and West. But there is no such buffer anymore, except for tiny Kherson.

Between 1994 and 2004, one social stratum significantly altered its electoral orientation: the peasantry. Until recently, the peasantry was nationally-oriented only in Western Ukraine, that is, in areas that did no experience the social cataclysms of collectivization and famine in the 1930s. In the agricultural heartland of Central Ukraine, the peasantry tended to vote Socialist or Communist. It was 1917-1918 all over again, although for different reasons: the national movement conquered the West, the capital and some urban areas of the Center, but could not penetrate the countryside. Yushchenko's greatest achievement was his capacity to rally rural Ukraine under his banner. It began with the parliamentary elections of 2002 and became hegemonic with the final round of the 2004 presidential saga.

What we don't know yet is how exactly the peasantry became Orange. Once again, serious field research is required. There are two possible story lines. The first is the activation of a social class that had essentially been broken in the 1930s. In the past decade, the peasantry may have developed a political consciousness which makes it critical of the authorities and receptive to the Orange message. The peasantry may not have been

stomping the ground on Maidan in November-December, but it is its determination to vote for change that sealed the fate of the Old Regime. For the first time in Ukrainian history, the peasantry may have become a politically active component of the emerging political nation.

The second possible explanation focuses on elites. Perhaps the peasantry, as a legacy of the 1930s, and as a reflection of its economic dependence, is still, on the whole, largely obedient to local authorities, but what changed in the past decade is how local authorities orient themselves. With all the talk about how "administrative resources," that is, the improper use of local administrative offices to promote the candidate of the regime, distorted the results of the first round of election in October 2004—a round that already produced a geographically polarized result, with the polarization increasing in each round—no one could satisfactorily explain to me why *adminresursy* would allegedly work in Eastern and Southern Ukraine, but not elsewhere. Particularly under conditions where all local administrations were under massive pressure from the center to produce results favoring Yanukovych, and where Yushchenko was shut out from the main TV channels that are broadcast nationally, i.e. in all regions. Why couldn't the *blackmail stat*e blackmail everybody, especially in remote rural areas?

In a seminal article, the American political scientist Lucan Way argued that the project of autocratic restoration, seemingly successful in Russia, faced a structural problem in Ukraine, namely the division of its elites along the national question. In spite of the *blackmail state*, before Orange, Ukraine had a parliament more autonomous than in Russia and an electoral process far more contested than in Russia. For Way, Ukraine had developed into a case of "democracy by default," a democracy whose rules were constantly assaulted by the executive branch, but which was strong enough to prevent the regime from safely controlling the results of an election in its favor. Back in October 2004, no one could predict the Orange Revolution, but no one either, including the regime itself, could predict exactly how the election would play out. (The doomsayers of the Ukrainian intelligentsia were predicting a dark apocalypse, and they were proven spectacularly wrong). This was the real story, pre-Orange: despite the Herculean efforts by the Kuchma regime to subvert the election, they could not prevent a challenger from making a credible bid to win. That degree of pluralism in the system, annihilated in Belarus, considerably enfeebled in Russia, but intriguingly potent in Moldova and Ukraine, Way ascribed to the existence of a structural division at the elite level over nationalism. The neo-Soviet state was unable to fully re-centralize, to reestablish what Russians and Ukrainians call the "vertikal" of state power, because of an incentive for elites to coalesce around two poles, an incentive that instilled a degree of pluralism in the system, "by default."

Why were elites in rural Ukraine able to withstand the infamous *adminresursy* pressures from the center? Is it because they sensed a profound change of allegiance among their constituents? Or is there something else at work that make them receptive to the Orange discourse? This is where I would like to introduce the variable of language.

Ukraine is a bilingual country—not as a matter of state policy, but in terms of sociological observations—whose inhabitants have a complex relationship with language. Ukrainians make distinctions between the language they identify with, the language they actually prefer to speak when given the opportunity, and the language they would like their children to learn in school. What we know is that there is a remarkable correlation between language of preference and support for Yanukovych or Yushchenko in regions. In Central and Western Ukraine, the proportion of people using Ukrainian as their language of preference is within the range of 75-80 percent, and their support for Yushchenko is within the same range. In Eastern and Southern Ukraine, 75 to 80 percent of the people prefer to speak Russian, and the support for Yanukovych is similarly within that range. The Orange Revolution caught fire in Ukrainian-speaking areas, where "speaking" refers to empirical behaviour, rather than symbolic attachment. Using the empirical criteria, the peasantry in Central Ukraine, the group that brought Yushchenko to victory, is 99 percent Ukrainian-speaking. Which brings us back to our question. What makes the peasantry and/or the rural elite recipient to an Orange message? Could it have to do with the fact their world is predominantly Ukrainian-speaking?

Between the second and third rounds of election, the national media opened up, as observers noted that the coverage of the two campaigns became balanced, and Yanukovych, suddenly on leave from his post of Prime Minister, lost the support of the much-vaunted administrative resources. Remarkably enough, three weeks of Orange fever had no discernable effect in Eastern and Southern Ukraine. The fabricated turnout of Donetsk was readjusted, to be sure, plunging from 97 percent to 84 percent, still seven percent higher than the national average, but this time with plausibility. Support for Yanukovych remained the same in these predominantly urban areas and whatever little change there was occurred, once again, in rural areas. In Central Ukraine, however, the Yanukovych vote, already quite low, collapsed. Once the turnout falsification in Donetsk was accounted for, the main difference between the second and third round was the Orange zone becoming even more Orange, furthering the polarization.

What should we make of this polarization? One approach in Ukrainian studies is to dismiss it as illegitimate, that is to say, to consider, on the one hand, the vote for Yushchenko in the third round as reflecting the true preferences of his electors, while, on the other hand, refusing to consider the vote for Yanukovych as reflecting the true preferences of his own electors. In other words, the Yushchenko vote is valid, but the Yanukovych vote is questionable. But what exactly is the point of sending planeloads of foreign observers (more than 12,000, apparently), deploying them predominantly in the Yanukovych zone, having the international monitoring organizations they were working with, and even the indigenous Committee of Voters, declare the process fair and free, yet still somehow cling to the notion that the Yanukovych vote was illegitimately inflated? By any reasonable standards, no systematic pattern of falsification, enough to significantly impact on the national vote, was uncovered in the third round. Nevertheless, once turnout was controlled for, the preference for Yanukovych in the East and South remained identical to what it had been on November 21.

A variation of the argument, one that appears to animate Prime Minister Tymoshenko and probably President Yushchenko, goes like this: While the voting count in the third round was legitimate, the conditions that led people to vote the way they did were not. Civil society has not taken root in Eastern and Southern Ukraine and people are far more vulnerable to being manipulated by their elites. The Yanukovych vote is illegitimate because it is the product of a closed society. Opening up the system will alter significantly popular preferences in the East and this will take care of the polarization. Since the drive for an open society originates from Central and Western Ukraine, systemic reform must be imposed from outside Eastern Ukraine. The corollary of this premise is the formation of a Cabinet not dominated by Eastern Ukrainians, which never happened before. Four of twenty-three ministers were born or lived a long portion of their life in Eastern or Southern Ukraine, two of whom, including the Prime Minister, from a coalition (the Tymoshenko Bloc) which received a grand total of 4 percent of the vote in its homebase of Dnipropetrovsk in the parliamentary elections of 2002. Politicians recognized by the Eastern electorate as representing them are virtually absent from the Cabinet.

This approach certainly has merits, as one is struck by how asymmetrical the Yanukovych and Yushchenko zones are in terms of their capacity for social organization. If civil society revealed itself in Central Ukraine during the Orange Revolution, it hardly exists in the East and South. It is as if Ukraine is inhabited by two different worlds: one aiming to break with the Soviet societal model, the other, even if undergoing profound economic changes, still devoid of initiative vis-à-vis the state. What makes its population so resistant to change? After all, we are talking about a highly educated population, by world standards. What makes its younger generation apparently less open to change than its counterpart in Central and Western Ukraine?

I would suggest that we look beyond the assumption of people not yet realizing what their true interests are and factor in the national question. The geographical polarization in Ukraine is not ethnic. The majority of the population in Eastern and Southern Ukraine has internalized a Ukrainian identity, as promoted by Soviet nationality policy. This is why the specter of separatism is nonsense, since it is hard to imagine why people who self-identify as Ukrainians would want to separate from a territory called Ukraine, and which they have essentially run for eighty years. The one exception here is Crimea, where ethnic Russians still form the majority, and where a secessionist movement had real potential in the 1990s. But Crimea remained passive throughout Orange and its turnout, contrary to the Donbas, was lower than the national average.

Eastern Ukrainians call themselves Ukrainians, but not in the same way as Western Ukrainians do. [As a shorthand here, "Eastern" will refer to Eastern and Southern Ukrainians, while "Western" will refer to Central and Western Ukrainians] Eastern Ukrainians tend not to think of identity in exclusive terms. In the Soviet era, they felt simulteanously Ukrainian *and* Soviet. With the disappearance of the Soviet identity, they feel adrift, unsure of where to affix their Ukrainian identity. Western Ukrainians, by

contrast, think far more in exclusive terms. And the last decade may very well have crystallized Ukrainian identity in Central Ukraine. What I am emphasizing here is national identity cohesion, how people situate their identity in the larger whole. Cohesion breeds self-confidence. And self-confidence generates a whole different way of dealing with Russia, something the Russian government, and Russians more generally, are not accustomed to, and something Eastern Ukrainians are not comfortable with.

Eastern Ukrainians are not Russians, but in how they interpret their past and future, they feel intimately connected to Russia. Western Ukrainians do not feel that connection, or if they do, to a far lesser degree. The crux of the matter is this. Western Ukrainians tend to believe that this two-layered sense of identity in the East can be remodeled. This is what could be called "nation-building" in the ethnic sense; in the language of national activists: making "true" Ukrainians out of Eastern Ukrainians. But it could very well be that there is something resilient in the Eastern regional experience that make this project illusory. This is not a matter of language per se, but of language situated in a given historical region. Eastern Ukrainians look at the Orange Revolution through the prism of their perceived regional experience, and the language they speak, Russian, becomes a symbol of that self-perception. They reject Orange, not because they are innately inimical to the project of an open society, but because of a sense that this is a project that excludes them.

The Orange Revolution was about the birth of the Ukrainian political nation, that is, of the capacity for a population to organize independently of the state and, in times of crisis, to defy the state. Yet this political nation is, as of yet, circumscribed to specific historical regions: the West and the Center. Ukraine's biggest challenge, in the years ahead, is to extend the political nation to the East and South, to make that population feel that it belongs to Ukraine in an *active* sense, to put substance to their citizenship (or civic identity). But inclusion in the political nation can hardly come from a unilateral vision of how national identity ought to be construed. If Russians in Russia have to understand that they cannot unilaterally impose their vision of Ukrainian identity on Ukrainians, Western Ukrainians [again, used as a shorthand for Western and Central] cannot unilaterally impose their vision of Ukrainian identity on Eastern Ukrainians. This is all about accommodating identity-based differences. Perhaps we should start deciphering all these claims for "federalism" in the East as a codeword for accommodation. What we need to bear in mind is that Eastern Ukrainians may interpret the first signals of post-Orange—with Yushchenko outlawing the very word "federalism" and the Tymoshenko Cabinet including no one deemed by the East as representative of the region—as a self-fulfilling prophecy: the heroes of the Orange Revolution are bent on excluding them.