

UNIVERSITAT AUTÒNOMA DE BARCELONA  
Departament de Comunicació Audiovisual i Publicitat  
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**REPRESENTATION OF 'EUROPE' IN THE MEDIATIZED  
DISCOURSE OF UKRAINIAN POLITICAL ELITES**

By **Dariya Orlova**



Supervisors:

**Dr. Volodymyr Kulyk**, National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy



**Dr. Natividad Ramajo Hernández**, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Europe has been a significant geographical, socio-political and cultural reference point for Ukrainian society for a long time. Historically, Ukrainian debates on identity matters and even projects of Ukrainian national selfhood have been marked by a presence of two major powerful images – East and West, Russia and Europe (Hnatiuk, 2004: 66). Thus, ‘Europe’ has turned into a key signifier within a national identity discourse in Ukraine.

Significance of ‘Europe’ as a crucial signifier in the Ukrainian public discourse particularly surfaced following Ukraine’s declaration of independence in 1991. Post-communist transformation of Ukraine that had been launched with the country’s independence entailed far-reaching processes of social and political changes and suggested a number of challenges for Ukrainian society. One of the central challenges concerned the need to reconsider national identity, since the breakup of the Soviet Union brought a critical shift in categories of collective identities (Dyczok, 2009: 377). As discussions on the sources of national identity emerged at the forefront of the public discourse, the issue of ‘Europe’ got particular prominence. Along the line, Ukraine’s leadership proclaimed the so-called ‘European choice’ of Ukraine, an ultimate goal of Ukraine’s integration into Europe and EU institutions. Declaration of Ukraine’s pursuit of European integration implied not only a foreign policy choice, but also an assertion of Ukraine’s European credentials. Reconsideration of national identity and declared course towards European integration largely shaped discourse on ‘Europe’ in Ukraine throughout the 1990s.

By the early 2000s, however, the ‘European issue’ mostly paled into insignificance due to Ukrainian leadership’s failed policy of European integration, a foreign policy shift towards Russia and increasing concerns about internal political and economic developments in Ukraine. The Orange Revolution – a symbolic name for a series of protests and political events that took place in Ukraine in the aftermath of the electoral fraud in late 2004 – marked a real momentum to the reemergence of ‘Europe’ as a key signifier in the Ukrainian public discourse. The post-revolutionary period in Ukraine was indeed high on the pro-European rhetoric with a new leadership declaring European integration bid as their primary priority. References to Europe became recurrent in the discourse of intellectual and political elites. The modes of references have been quite diverse though, establishing ‘Europe’ as a contested signifier in the Ukrainian public discourse. The variety of competing visions with regard to ‘Europe’ has been illustrative of the complex process of discursive construction of representations and identities in Ukraine. Whereas different, at times competing,

representations of Europe found prominence in the discourse of Ukrainian political elites, the very discourse has been largely under-researched in Ukraine. This study is expected to fill the gap by trying to investigate patterns of discursive construction of 'Europe' by representatives of political elites in the post-Orange Ukraine.

Accordingly, the proposed research *aims at examining* how Ukrainian political elites construct and represent image of Europe in their mediatized discourse. In particular, the study will analyze what identities of Europe, perceptions of Europe and relations to Europe are being constructed in the mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites.

The research focus on the mediatized discourse of political elites is explained by several factors. As the socio-political role of the media has been dramatically increasing over the last decades, the modern media turned to mediate most of discourses (Wetherell et al., 2001). The boundaries between political discourse and media discourse have become particularly vague (Fairclough, 1995). Mediatized political discourse has thus emerged as a new type of discourse, guided by conventions of both, political and media discourses. Given tremendous media penetration, people have been increasingly consuming mediatized politics. Therefore, mediatized political discourse has become a crucial domain for construction, reconstruction, maintenance and challenging of perceptions, identities, representations and relations. The role of political elites is significant in this regard as they largely drive discursive struggle over meanings, representations and identities, particularly in societies undergoing transformation, as in the case of Ukraine.

Analysis of the study is focused on one particular instance of mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites, that is, the case of a popular political television talk show, hosted by Savik Shuster, which has been broadcasted on four Ukrainian TV channels under different titles since September 2005. The rationale for choosing the Shuster's talk show as an object of inquiry is explained by significant popularity the talk show has enjoyed since its launch in Ukraine. Following the start of its broadcast in autumn 2005, the talk show has soon become one of the most watched TV programs on Ukrainian television. Given its unrivaled popularity among the audience, the talk show has turned into one of the major discussion platforms for politicians in Ukraine. Although popularity of the talk show has gradually declined compared to the periods of its limelight, it has proved to be one of the major media phenomena in the post-Orange Ukraine and still remains one of the most popular political discussion programs in the country. As such, the Shuster's talk show suggests an important discursive setting for political elites, which makes it a relevant object of investigation, given the central research question of the study.

The proposed study covers a post-Orange period in Ukraine, as the Orange Revolution brought reinvigoration of ‘European choice’ notion into the Ukrainian public discourse, which requires in-depth exploration. The time frame of analysis, i.e. 2005-2010, has been designed to embrace the four years of the ‘Orange’ leadership in power and the first year of the presidency of Viktor Yanukovich. Thus, by focusing its analysis on the mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites in 2005-2010, the study aims at examining key patterns of discursive construction of ‘Europe’, as well as possible discursive shifts with regard to ‘Europe’ in the post-Orange Ukraine.

The research is largely guided by a theoretical and methodological framework of the critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach, which defines discourse or language use as a form of social practice. By emphasizing socially constitutive power of discourse, as well as the dialectical relation between language use and other strands of the social, the CDA approach advocates for multidisciplinary study of discourse entailing linguistic and social analysis. Thus, according to the CDA framework, a comprehensive study of discourse requires both, linguistic exploration of the content of discourse and socio-political analysis of conventions shaping discourse within a broader socio-political context.

In compliance with the employed methodological framework, the study pursues several research *objectives* in order to comprehensively explore the research question. In particular, the study aims at finding out:

- How is Europe referred to in the mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites?
- What are the traits and features that are attributed to Europe?
- What kinds of relationship between Ukraine and Europe are suggested in the discourse of political elites?
- Which discursive conventions shape construction of representations of Europe in the mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites?
- How does the broader socio-political context influence discursive construction of ‘Europe’?

The following chapters of the thesis provide a detailed elaboration of the proposed study.

Chapter 2 presents an overview of the theoretical framework the study draws on and addresses a number of conceptual notions crucial for the research. In particular, Chapter 2 focuses on discussions of such concepts and notions as discourse, discursive construction of representations and national identity, mediatization of politics, political talk shows and their



role as discursive platforms.

Chapter 3 examines the socio-political context shaping discursive construction of 'Europe' in the mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites. This chapter is divided into three major sections designed to cover contextual layers relevant for the study. The first section discusses media developments in the independent Ukraine, relations between the media and political elites in the broader context of post-communist transformations. The second part of the Chapter 3 provides a detailed background on the talk show under analysis, with an overview focused on the format peculiarities of the talk show, its development and socio-political impact. The third section of the Chapter 3 discusses the importance of 'Europe' as a key signifier for Ukrainian society. The section primarily concentrates on the discourse of Ukrainian intellectuals with regard to national identity and culture and provides an overview of the Ukrainian leaders' official discourse on 'Europe' within the broader context of the European integration policy of Ukraine. This chapter also addresses the reception of the European integration course by the Ukrainian society.

Chapter 4 provides an overview of the methodological framework employed and research tools utilized in the study. Apart from discussing a pursued research strategy, the Chapter provides a detailed description of the different stages of the research process. Limitations of the study are also addressed in this chapter.

The actual empirical findings are presented in the Chapter 5. This Chapter provides a comprehensive account on the conducted analysis of the mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites with regard to representation of Europe. The Chapter combines a textual analysis of the contents of discourse, concentrating on such dimensions of analysis as frames of references, argumentation strategies and linguistic means employed in the construction of 'Europe', and detailed exploration of the discursive conventions shaping such construction. The analysis also incorporates investigation of the broader socio-political and cultural context in order to explore relations between text, discursive practice and socio-cultural practice that shape the mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites on 'Europe'.

Finally, Chapter 6 summarizes the main conclusions of the analysis and discusses implications of the research findings.

## CHAPTER 2

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

#### 2.1 Introduction

The dissertation aims at finding out how “Europe” is represented in the mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites, or in simple words – what representatives of Ukraine’s political elites say about Europe in media and how they do it. Clearly though, the research question goes far beyond examining the concrete statements of politicians about ‘Europe’. The study instead pursues several goals. Firstly, by exploring the content of the analyzed sayings the research identifies a range of meanings ascribed to Europe in discourse. Analysis of this discursive repertoire of meanings reveals how Europe is constructed as a central signifier in the Ukrainian public discourse. Secondly, the study analyzes conventions that enable construction of ‘Europe’ the way it is being constructed. This very concise outline of the research question entails a number of theoretical presumptions and notions employed in the study, which are further highlighted in detail in this chapter.

Foremost, the chapter focuses on scholarly discussions of such concepts as discourse and discursive construction of national identity. It also highlights theoretical debates around television talk shows as a discursive setting, as well as implications of increasing mediatization of political communication.

The general framework of the study is guided by the critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach, which is employed both as theoretical and methodological foundation of the thesis. Methodological core of the CDA approach is discussed in the chapter on research methodology, while this chapter concentrates on the conceptual standpoints shaping the study. Prior to addressing these conceptions, I would like to point out that the CDA framework shares ontological and epistemological premises developed within the social constructionism paradigm (comprehensive account of those is provided in Crotty, 1998). In particular, the CDA approach shares “the anti-foundationalist premise that all knowledge is discursively produced and therefore contingent, and that there is no possibility of achieving absolute or universal knowledge since there is no context-free, neutral base for truth-claims” (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002: 5). This premise has been central to the conceptualizations developed within the CDA approach, as my further overview illustrates in more detail.

#### 2.2 The Notion of ‘Discourse’

As the title of the thesis suggests, discourse is both a central conceptual notion and a major object of the study, which is why it needs to be properly explained and discussed. The

need to clarify what is meant by discourse in this work and why it matters is particularly explained by an overwhelmingly wide scope of usage of the word ‘discourse’ both in academic field and in other contexts. On the one hand, abundance of theoretical approaches to discourse that have been developed within humanities and social sciences following the so-called ‘linguistic turn’ of the 1960s (Jensen, 2002) contributed to the vagueness and fuzziness of the concept (van Dijk, 1997). On the other hand, subsequent popularity of discourse studies translocated the notion of ‘discourse’ into other domains of social life, like popular media, political communication, and even everyday communication – which generated ever more confusion. As a result, the notion of ‘discourse’ has been criticized for comprising too much and turning into a buzzword with little analytical value (Widdowson cited in Meyer (2001: 17). However, plurality of interpretations of what discourse is does not make discourse per se unfit for theoretical and analytical purposes. Rather, the use of the term should rely on clear conceptualizations that delineate boundaries of the notion.

While different approaches to discourse studies that have been developed in the last decades propose at times competing perspectives on what discourse is, most of them agree on a broad definition of discourse as a form of language use (van Dijk, 1997; Wetherell et al., 2001; Gee, 2005) and underline its constitutive role in social relations and interactions (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002). This viewpoint has been fundamental to the aforementioned ‘linguistic turn’ in the studies of human and social relations on the one hand, and ‘social turn’ in the language studies on the other (Kulyk, 2010). Thereafter, the new emphasis on language as a form of social practice has turned into a starting conceptual premise shared by most approaches to discourse studies. In his argument about the social nature of language use, Fairclough (2001) stresses that language is a part of society, not external to it. Accordingly, language use is a socially conditioned process, not a purely linguistic act. Fairclough (2001: 19) reiterates that linguistic phenomena are social because they go along socially determined lines and have social effects. Crucially, language use is not only socially conditioned, but socially conditioning as well. That language does not neutrally reflect our knowledge, relations and identities but instead constitutes them has been widely accepted among discourse theorists (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002; Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough and Wodak, 1997). In words of Jorgensen and Phillips (2002: 9):

Language, then, is not merely a channel through which information about underlying mental states and behaviour or facts about the world are communicated. On the contrary, language is a ‘machine’ that generates, and as a result constitutes, the social world. This also extends to the constitution of social identities and social relations.

That is to say, discourse as a ‘general mode of semiosis’, as Blommaert suggests (2005: 2), “transforms our environment into a socially and culturally meaningful one” (Blommaert, 2005: 5). Discourse is thus both a meaning-making site and a meaning-making process. According to the CDA line of the argument, discourse is constitutive of social identities, social relations and systems of knowledge (Fairclough, 1995). In other words, it is in discourse that identities, relations and knowledge are maintained, negotiated, questioned, transformed and reproduced.

At the same time, discourse theorists warn against simplistic view of one-way causal relation between discursive activity and other kinds of social practices. Instead, they emphasize the dialectical relation between language use and other strands of the social. On the one hand, social and institutional settings shape discourses, and on the other hand, discourses influence and shape various forms of social practices (Fairclough, 1995; Wodak, 2001). As the popular formula suggests, discourses are socially constituted and socially constitutive.

However, there is disagreement among different approaches to discourse concerning the ‘scope’ of discourses (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002: 3). While some theorists (for instance, Laclau and Mouffe) believe that discourses embody the entire social practice, others (CDA scholars in particular) prefer to view discourse as one strand of the social (Fairclough, 2001). Guided primarily by the CDA framework, this study also shares the assumption that discourses should not be equaled to the social as such, since this equation would pose a substantial challenge in terms of analytical proceedings.

Despite this conceptual discord over the ‘scope’ of discourses, socially constitutive power of discourse as language-in-use has been generally recognized. Yet, further attempts to narrow down the concept of discourse find many more variations within different theoretical approaches to discourse. Van Dijk notes that the repertoire of ‘discourse’ uses is extremely wide (1997). Some characterize discourse as a communicative event; others refer to specific types of language use, like ‘political discourse’. There are also references to discourses to mean particular conversations, concrete instances of talk etc. Thus, one of the major arguments concerns relation between a concrete instance of linguistic interaction, a particular communicative event and a more common discursive practice of which the former is a part. Both may be and are attributed as discourses, which is sometimes perceived as manifestation of confusing vagueness of the concept. However, according to Fairclough (2001: 23), this ambiguity is ‘felicitous’ because, “it helps underline the social nature of discourse and

practice, by suggesting that individual instance always implies social conventions – any discourse or practice implies conventional types of discourse or practice”. Hence, the term discourse is used to describe both discursive act (or in Fairclough’s terms, discursual action) and discursive practice (or discourse type). While the thesis rests upon this conceptual ambiguity that embraces complex interrelation between individual discursive activity and social conventions preconditioning it, I will try to bring some clarity into this study by referring to discourse to mean general discursive activity and actual sayings under analysis, whereas reference to discursive practice will mean a type of discourse. To make an example, in case of the proposed thesis, I will use the ‘discourse’ to refer to the analyzed corpus of elites’ sayings and ‘discursive practice’ to mean the framework for communication set by the talk show format. At the same time, full clarity is hardly achievable here because both discussed notions are essential facets of the concept of discourse.

Another crucial theoretical notion and category of analysis initially suggested by Foucault and then developed by Fairclough is ‘orders of discourse’. Fairclough (2001: 24) defines orders of discourse as interdependent networks of conventions that constrain discourse and practice. He closely relates orders of discourse with social orders noting that social orders are those networks that structure “a particular social ‘space’ into domains associated with various types of practice” (Fairclough, 2001: 24). Thus, since a certain discursive practice may be guided by conventions of several discourse types, its analysis should include analysis of all conventions of all discourse types. In case of this study, analysis of discursive practice will thus require examination of conventions guiding not only the format of the particular talk show, but those of political debates etc.

### **2.3 Discourse, Text and Context**

One of the two discussed facets of discourse – the one concerning actual discursive activity, sayings or writings – is closely related to the notion of text. The conceptual relation between discourse and text has been widely debated. In fact, it is separation of discourse from text that has established discourse as a distinct object of inquiry (Kulyk, 2010: 21).

While many view text, spoken or written sayings, as a synonym to discourse, CDA theorists have been quite explicit in their conceptual demarcation of the two notions. Text is thus considered to be an essential part of discourse, a product of discourse as a process (Fairclough, 2001: 20). Therefore, analysis of discourse cannot be reduced to analysis of text, because discourse presumes the whole process of interaction, including two other crucial components: process of text production and process of its interpretation. Moreover, careful

analysis of discourse should necessarily focus on the context of discursive interaction, social conditions surrounding processes of production and interpretation (Fairclough, 2001: 20). Yet, texts remain a central object of discourse analysis because they are tangible and accessible embodiment of discourse (Talbot, 2007). It is through texts that an analyst gets an idea about discourses if he/she couldn't observe communication acts in real time (Kulyk, 2010: 24). Thus, texts being “materially durable products of linguistic actions” (in Wodak's expression, 2001: 66) provide a point of access to analysis of discourses.

While acknowledging essential role of texts as embodiment of discourses, CDA analysts have been consistent in arguing for the thorough analysis of context, previously overlooked in traditional linguistic analysis of texts (van Dijk, 1997; Fairclough, 2001; van Dijk, 2001; Wodak, 2001). The focus on context examination has been key to the commitment of CDA to multidisciplinary approach to discourse study that is critical and problem-oriented (van Dijk, 2006). This peculiar emphasis on the context derives from the central assumption shared by discourse scholars, that is, language use is a social practice. Accordingly, discourses can only be understood with reference to social and cultural conditions guiding and accompanying them. A set or a network of these conditions, which Blommaert (2002: 44) calls ‘contextualisation universes’, includes “complexes of linguistic, cognitive, social, cultural, institutional, etc. skills and knowledge”, which are used by people for contextualizing their interactions. As Blommaert (2002: 43) points out, “if we want to explain the way in which people make sense socially, in real environments, we need to understand the contexts in which such sense-making practices develop”.

Thus, CDA scholars insist that discourse analysis should refer to extralinguistic factors like culture, society, and ideology (Meyer, 2001: 15). In determining what constitutes context, CDA theorists identify different levels of contexts. Thus, van Dijk (2001: 108) speaks of “structures of local and global contexts” related to discourse structures; Fairclough (2001: 21) refers to “the immediate conditions of the situational context and the more remote conditions of institutional and social structures”. Wodak (2001: 67) suggests a concept of context that embraces four levels. The first level concerns the immediate, language or text internal co-text; the second level deals with “the intertextual and interdiscursive relationship between utterances, texts, genres and discourses”; the third level refers to the extralinguistic variables and institutional frames of a specific ‘context of situation’; and finally, the fourth level is related to “the broader sociopolitical and historical contexts, which the discursive practices are embedded in and related to” (Wodak, 2001: 67). Van Dijk (2006; 2008), however, argues that analysis of context should go beyond examination of sociopolitical and

cultural conditions and also incorporate analysis of ‘cognitive’ environment, that is, cognitions of discourse participants, their knowledge, beliefs etc. Chilton (2005: 22) also points out that CDA scholars have largely overlooked cognitive aspects when dealing with context, which suggests the need for conceptual reconsideration of the notion for future research.

The notion of context is particularly critical when it comes to applied analysis: when investigating discourses one unavoidably has to make analytical decisions on what aspects of context should be included into one’s analysis. In other words, what should constitute operationalizable context in each particular study of discourse. The complexity of analytical choices concerning analysis of context has been a matter of much debate and criticism among researchers (Blommaert, 2002). Particularly, the issue stimulated tension between followers of the Conversation Analysis approach and the CDA (see for instance, Schegloff, 1997; Billig and Schegloff, 1999). CDA researchers have been criticized for incorporating their personal biases into selection of contexts and their analysis, which diminishes empirical accuracy of analysis. Blommaert (2002) also noted that in many CDA studies what is presented as analysis of context is in fact a usual provision of background, which may also bring questions about credibility of such research.

CDA scholars themselves have been aware of methodological challenges posed by the need to include analysis of context into their studies. Van Dijk (2006) noted that a completely full contextual account is not achievable, because it would be boundless. He also pointed out that contexts do not necessarily directly influence discourses and thus should not be treated as deterministic. Yet, many researchers may have trouble acknowledging this as they may be too focused on contexts as they see them. In this respect, an accurate research should consider different interpretations of contextualization by different actors in interaction (van Dijk, 2006; Blommaert, 2002).

While context analysis does present a significant methodological challenge, its relevance for exploration of discourses can hardly be questioned. Although context selection and subsequent analysis carry limitations of researchers and cannot be fully exhaustive by definition, analysis of contextual conditions of discourses adds an extremely rich layer to the comprehensive study of discourses. Taking into account complexities of context selection, analysis and interpretation, one possible solution would be clarity and explicitness of researcher’s explanations of all stages of context account presented in a study.

## 2.4 CDA and Power Relations

Another conceptual premise central to the CDA approach that has generated immense debate and criticism is its commitment to the so-called critical research and engagement (Fairclough, 2001; Fairclough and Wodak, 1997; Wodak, 2001). The critical commitment concerns analysis of power relations manifested in discourse as one of the primary objects of inquiry. Power and particularly institutionally reproduced power is key to CDA (Blommaert, 2002: 24). Wodak (2001: 2) points out that critical discourse analysis is “fundamentally concerned with analyzing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language. In other words, CDA aims to investigate critically social inequalities as it is expressed, signaled, constituted, legitimized and so on by language use (or in discourse)”. Thus focusing on the discursive practices, CDA scholars aim at revealing power relations manifested in discourse on the one hand, and showing the role of the very discursive practices in the maintenance of such social order, on the other hand (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002: 63-64). Furthermore, CDA intends to go beyond exposure of power relations in discourses as it sees itself as a potentially emancipatory force (Fairclough, 2001) and advocates contribution of its research to social change towards more equal power relations in society (Blommaert, 2002: 25; Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002: 64).

Fairclough (2001) argues for thorough consideration and analysis of power relations as they are key sources of existing conventions that determine boundaries of discourses. While acknowledging existence of various modalities of power, CDA emphasizes that power is primarily exercised and enacted through language use in modern societies. Fairclough (2001: 36) notes that power/language relationship operates in two important modes: power *in* discourse and power *behind* discourse. He is particularly preoccupied with the latter since it illustrates capacity of power to impose conventions that control discourse types. Such conventions may function for instance as “common-sense assumptions which treat authority and hierarchy as natural” (Fairclough, 2001: 2). Fairclough (*ibid.*) calls these assumptions ideologies:

Ideologies are closely linked to power, because the nature of the ideological assumptions embedded in particular conventions, and so nature of those conventions themselves, depends on the power relations which underlie the conventions; and because they are a means of legitimizing existing social relations and differences of power, simply through the recurrence of ordinary, familiar ways of behaving which take these relations and power differences for granted.

According to him, ideologies are increasingly employed as ‘means’ of exercising



power in modern societies and therefore need to be thoroughly studied. Apart from distinctive interest in theories of power and ideology that are conceptually integrated into the general theoretical framework of the CDA, references to Foucault's notions of 'orders of discourse' and 'power-knowledge' have been particularly common (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000: 451). CDA theorists have appropriated Foucault's conception of power as both a productive and a constraining force (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002: 14). Power is productive in a sense that it constitutes discourse and creates the social world; and it is constraining because it determines particular ways of talking about the social world and also rules out alternative ways of talking about it. Power thus enables knowledge and imposes limits of knowledge. Foucault's conception attracted much of attention because he was among the first theorists to concentrate on rules and practices guiding different discourses in different historical periods.

Thus, Foucault adheres to the general social constructionist premise that knowledge is not just a reflection of reality. Truth is a discursive construction and different regimes of knowledge determine what is true and false (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002). Foucault's aim is to investigate the structure of different regimes of knowledge – that is, the rules for what can and cannot be said and the rules for what is considered to be true and false. The starting point is that although we have, in principle, an enormous number of ways to formulate statements, the statements that are produced on this or that matter are rather similar and repetitive. Moreover, there are innumerable statements that are never uttered, and would never be accepted as meaningful. Thus, the historical rules of the particular discourse delimit what is possible to say (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002).

Preoccupation with power and power relations as veiled agents of discourse has been a recurrent matter of criticism of CDA. A brief account of such criticism is provided in Blommaert (2002), Bucholtz (2001). It has been argued that view of discourse as a tool of hegemony constrains exploration of other ways in which meaning in discourse is negotiable (Bucholtz, 2001: 168). Much of criticism, however, does not challenge the very assumption about the role of power in discourse, but rather target analysis of power relations executed within CDA framework from methodological perspectives. Bucholtz (2001: 168) notes that political bias of an analyst advocated by CDA frequently leads to poor analysis of discourse as it "yields findings that can always be predicted in advance, once the basic power relations have been sketched out."

Notwithstanding reasonable criticism of at times excessive politicization of analysis provided by CDA approach that may result in overlooking other significant aspects of discourse, analysis of power will be an important component of this thesis. Particularly,

analysis will focus on power relations manifested in discourse and power as a constitutive force of conventions behind discourse. Analysis of power in discourse will help to illuminate power relations among actors of discourse and its implications for discursive interaction. This aspect of analysis is critical for the study given its focus on the interactions between political elites in a mediatized discursive setting. The focus on elites is explained by their pivotal role as carriers of power that regulate social interactions in different areas of modern societies (Kulyk, 2010: 33). Since elites are responsible for the continuity of the social order (Keller, 1963: 4), their discursive activity is aimed at preserving the social order and imposing respective constraints. At the same time, as Keller (1963) notes, elites tend to compete over the social order in periods of transformations, a feature which can be fairly attributed to contemporary Ukraine. Such struggle inevitably finds its way in the discursive domain. Analysis of the way this struggle is carried out in discourse can give insight into power relations in discourse.

As for analysis of power behind discourse, the study will examine power as a source of conventions guiding the discourse. Exploration of power relations is particularly plausible for the study of political discourse of elites, as is the case under thesis investigation. According to Fairclough (1995: 182), “political discourse provides the clearest illustration of the constitutive power of discourse: it reproduces or changes the social world by reproducing or changing people's representations of it and the principles of classification which underlie them.” A more elaborate account on peculiarities of political discourse and increasing mediatization of political communication is provided in the final section of this chapter.

## **2.5 Discourse and Identity**

Constitutive power of discourse has been particularly acknowledged with regard to identity construction (Fairclough, 2001; Wodak et al., 1999; Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002; Lakoff, 2006). This study also rests on the central assumption that it is in discourse that collective identities are produced, reproduced, transformed and dismantled (Wodak et al., 1999). The proposed research project has been significantly inspired by the discursive construction of national identity approach, as Wodak et al. (1999) explicitly labeled it. Analysis of the construction of ‘Europe’ as a central signifier in the Ukrainian public discourse will thus be conducted within a theoretical framework of this approach and conceptualizations of identity suggested by other CDA theorists. Before discussing conceptualizations that underpin the study, I would like to briefly outline connotations the term ‘identity’ holds and map the general path of ‘identity’ conceptualizations over time,

given that a thorough and in-depth review of theories of identity would be a separate work of itself.

A quick search on ‘identity’ in the famous web encyclopedia *Wikipedia* shows numerous meanings depending on the context of the word use. The *Wikipedia* suggests about a dozen of wider contexts of the use of ‘identity’, including philosophic topics, personal conceptions, mathematics etc. This simple exercise of looking for meanings of ‘identity’ on the web illustrates the discursively conditioned multifacetedness of the term.

However, even if we narrow down the term to concepts in philosophy and social sciences that address the questions of “who and what we are” (Blommaert, 2002: 203), we will have to face abundance of interpretations and versions. Brubaker and Cooper (2000: 1) argue that the concept of identity extensively penetrated into academic discourse in 1960s, eventually turning into a buzzword due to its conceptual vagueness.

In their review of identity theories, Benwell and Stokoe (2006: 17) point out that at present ‘identity’ is a “heavily theorized, academic concept that is a paradigmatic product of its historical conditions, formulated and reformulated in strategic ways by the period or movement under which it arises and preoccupations of its theorists”. Indeed, analysis of the developments in conceptualization of identity can reveal paradigmatic shifts in philosophic and academic thought in general. In this respect, shift of theoretical focus towards the discursive dimension of identity was significantly influenced by the above discussed ‘linguistic turn’ in social sciences and ‘social turn’ in linguistic studies. At the same time, such analysis would show impact of social and political context on the ideas shaping discussions of ‘identity’. Thus, for instance, civil rights and youth movements of the late 1960s in the western countries, sexual emancipation, processes of decolonization – all influenced the way identity has been thought about and debated.

It is widely accepted by theorists of identity that the concept of identity is a child of modernity (e.g. Taylor, 1989; Giddens, 1991). While traditional societies prescribed choices one had to make and roles to play, in modernity societies and individuals become more reflexive, in Giddens’ terms (Gauntlett, 2002). Everyday activities, let alone views, turned out to be matters of personal reflections and choices. Benwell and Stokoe (2006: 18-19) argue that such early treatments of identity that were concerned with a ‘project of self’ have roots in rationalism of the Enlightenment with its belief in the liberating ratio and autonomous self-sufficient subject. Understanding of identity primarily as a ‘project of self’ remained prevailing until the psychoanalytical shake in the early twentieth century (Benwell and Stokoe, 2006).

In the course of the twentieth century, study of identity evolved as one of the central issues in sociology. Cerulo (1997: 385-386) noted that microsociological perspectives like those of social psychology, symbolic interactionism focused primarily on the individual, on the formation of 'me'. Such perspectives dominated throughout the 1970s. Eventually, however, sociologists shifted their attention from the personal to the social dimension of identity. Thus, the social identity theory, a key sociological theory of group identity developed primarily by Tajfel and his followers (see Tajfel, 1982; Tajfel and Turner, 1986) emphasizes cognitive processes of membership and identification with a group through social categorization and explores the phenomenon of the 'ingroup' and 'outgroup'. This approach implies the view of identity as a cause of behavior and actions, an argument challenged by alternative theoretical standpoints. Social identity theory has been criticized for theorizing identity as "pre-discursive, unified and essential" (Benwell and Stokoe, 2006: 25). Such criticism of the social identity theory articulated by proponents of discursive approach to identity illustrates a pivotal conceptual tension between constructionist and essentialist frameworks in social and cultural studies. This conceptual tension is further addressed with more scrutiny.

Alongside with the above mentioned shift of focus towards the social dimension of identity in sociology, studies of identities crossed the disciplinary boundaries in the second half of the twentieth century and gave rise to a number of conceptualizations and a lot of research across social sciences and humanities. Notably, much of research concerned collective identities rather than individual ones. Cerulo (1997: 386) argues that social trends like socialist and nationalist movements among other things incited growing scholarly concentration on group identities. In particular, gender/sexuality, race/ethnicity and class have become primary issues of concern and formed the 'holy trinity' of the discursive field (Appiah & Gates, 1995: 1 cited in Cerulo, 1997: 386). In this respect, national identity as a form of collective identity has also received greater attention and theoretical development within new approaches that are relevant for the proposed study.

Another significant shift in the studies of identity across social sciences and humanities, which is crucial for the overall theoretical framework of the dissertation, concerned increasing popularity of the social constructionist stance on identity and collective identities in particular. As argued by Benwell and Stokoe (2006: 4), identity has been relocated "from the 'private' realms of cognition and experience, to the 'public' realms of discourse and other semiotic systems of meaning making". Whereas early theoretical approaches viewed attributes of collective identities as natural or essential, the social

constructionist approach rejects any category that “sets forward essential or core features as the unique property of a collective’s members” (Cerulo, 1997: 386).

As for today, social constructionist standpoint on identity is widely accepted if not to say prevailing in the research on identities. According to Blommaert (2005: 205), “almost any significant author in the wide field of identity studies would argue that people don’t *have* an identity, but that identities are constructed in practices that *produce, enact, or perform* identity – identity is identification, an outcome of socially conditioned semiotic work”. Thus, the social constructionist approach emphasizes the process of identity construction in a semiotic field, broadly speaking. This premise shared, research on identities has been increasingly focusing on “the forms of linguistic expression, oral and literate, formal and informal, spontaneous and planned, as evidence of the capacity shared by human beings for differentiating themselves from others and connecting themselves with others – the businesses of making, recognizing, and maintaining identity” (Lakoff, 2006: 144).

Another crucial notion shared by social constructionists with regard to identity, concerns dynamic nature of identity. As Wodak et al. (1999: 11) argue, “concept of identity never signifies anything static, unchanging, or substantial, but rather always an element situated in the flow of time, ever changing, something involved in a process”. Accordingly, understanding of identity as something solid and intrinsic is criticized for the lack of explanatory force when it comes to the study of particular behaviors of particular social actors in particular social settings (Wodak et al. 1999: 11 specifically refer to political and military conflicts in ex-Yugoslavia, Africa etc.). The dynamic nature of identities is manifested in that process of identification is never completed, it is always ‘in process’ (Hall 1996: 2).

At the same time, elements of essentialist approach are still found in many contemporary conceptions of identity. Thus, claims of primordialism, the oldest paradigm employed to explain nations and nationalism (Ichijo & Uzelac, 2005), regarding naturalness of nations have not been fully excluded from theoretical accounts on national identity. Some mainstream theories of nationalism refer, for instance, to conceptions of an historical origin of nations, which implies some ‘objectivity’ of nations’ existence. For example, influential theory of Anthony Smith (1991) rests on the argument that “most nations originated historically on the basis of ethnic communities and are to a certain extent ‘the heritage of older collective groups’” (Wodak et al, 1999: 20).

Although constructionist approach to identity has been contrasted with those embracing essentialist views, the latter are not completely irrelevant even for

constructionism-inspired research on identities. I would suggest that many conceptions of collective identities labeled as constructionist and essentialist, let alone ‘mixed’ ones, do not always directly contradict each other, but rather focus and foreground different dimensions of identities. Thereby I do not reject all non-discursive approaches to national identity; yet, the proposed study is primarily guided by theoretical stance that views discourse as a potent creator and enforcer of identity (Lakoff 2006: 144).

The concept of national identity as a form of collective identity is of principal interest for the study. In accordance with the discussed general premises of constructionist and discursive approach to identity, national identity is viewed as a product of discursive interaction. It is in discourse that national identities are constructed and negotiated. Billig (1995:8) argues in his work *Banal Nationalism*, that study of identity should involve study of discourse, because, “to have a national identity is to possess ways of talking about nationhood.” He also mentions, that “an identity is to be found in the embodied habits of social life”, to which he attributes habits of ‘thinking and using language’ (ibid). Billig’s argument about ways of talking about nationhood resonates with the narrative approach to identity developed by Ricoeur, as Wodak et al. suggest (1999: 14). Such approach presumes that one draws one’s identity from the identity narration; one’s own identity is conveyed to others in the form of narrative. Hall (1996: 4) also suggests that identities “arise from the narrativization of the self”. He emphasizes that while narrativization has fictional nature, it does not undermine its “discursive, material and political effectivity” (ibid). Wodak et al. (1999: 24) observe that Hall’s conception views a narrative of the nation as presented in literature, media and everyday culture. A narrative of the nation creates “a connection between stories, landscapes, scenarios, historical events, national symbols and national rituals which represent shared experiences and concerns, triumphs and destructive defeats. This narration lends meaning and security to monotonous existence and ties everyday life to a ‘national destiny’” (ibid).

While collective identities are also collective narrations, such narrations are hardly voluntary – rather they should be understood as produced and reproduced by social actors in particular historical and institutional contexts (Hall 1996; Wodak et al. 1999). Furthermore, such collective identities emerge within “the play of specific modalities of power”, Hall (1996: 4) argues.

Such conception is relevant for the proposed study from several perspectives. First, it presumes dynamic nature of national identity: as discursive interaction never stops, so is national identity never completely settled. Construction of national identity is a matter of

discursive negotiation and a process of discursive negotiation at the same time. This emphasis on the processual is principal for the study, because the proposed research aims at investigating the discourse of Ukrainian political elites in terms of process that results in produced meanings, which presumably constitute repertoire for national identity negotiation. Such analysis of repertoire is not deterministic by definition, because it does not assume direct influence of 'texts' and does not examine reception of the 'texts' by the actors of discourse to test influence. However, it allows a researcher to track changes in the discourse and define some benchmarks by focusing on the overall process of discursive construction.

Another reason why the discussed approach to national identity is productive for the analyzed case concerns consideration of 'modalities of power' as significant underpinning factors of discursive construction of national identity. Since the research project focuses on political elites as primary actors of the discourse under examination, analysis of power relations is crucial for the study of competing narratives proposed by competing political elites. At the same time, power relations are manifested not only in the competing claims; modalities of power are found behind those statements that seem to evoke a consensus. Both groups of statements are to be examined in this study.

Hall's (1996: 4) argument about the emergence of identities within "the play of specific modalities of power" bears another crucial implication for the analysis of discursive construction of identities. He notes that because of this play of modalities of power, identities are rather products "of the marking of difference and exclusion, than they are the sign of an identical, naturally constituted unity" (ibid). Hence, identities are always constructed through the relation to the 'Other', to the 'constitutive outside'. The process of identity construction thus entails discursive construction of boundaries. Neumann (1999) argues that because collective identities essentially presume separation of one people from the other, there is no non-exclusive collective identity per se. Crucially, collective identities are constructed through the relation to the various layers of 'Others' (ibid), which can result in the hierarchy of 'Others'.

The notion of the 'Other' as the constitutive of collective identities has attracted much of scholarly attention in the last decades, particularly following Said's groundbreaking work on *Orientalism* (1978), in which he explored and showed how an image of 'Orient' has been constructed and reconstructed in western discourse, leading to certain policies on the one hand and popular perceptions, on the other. The representation of the 'Other' has increasingly become one of the key topics in media studies giving rise to a number of empirical research on the issue (Wodak & Busch, 2004). Most of the studies dealing with the notion of the

‘Other’ concerned the production and reproduction of stereotypes about minorities, marginalized groups, as well as external ‘Others’.

The concept of the ‘Other’ as constitutive of national identity is critical for the proposed study, given one of its central assumptions, that is, Europe being a significant reference point and signifier in Ukrainian public discourse. Accordingly, the study will analyze the discursive representation of Europe as one of potential ‘Others’ for Ukrainian national identity. The dissertation’s central focus is not on the construction of Ukrainian national identity, but rather on the construction of ‘Europe’ vis-à-vis Ukraine.

## **2.6 Nations as Imagined Communities. The Role of Media in Construction of Nations**

As the concept of identity has been dramatically influenced and shaped by the constructionist turn in social sciences and humanities, so has been the concept of a nation. Anderson’s conception of ‘imagined communities’ (1991) particularly stands out in this respect.

Anderson rejects both primordialist claims of naturalness of nations and functionalist arguments establishing connection between the rise of nations and stages of capitalist development (Waisbord, 2004). Instead, he suggests that nations are mental constructs. The process of imagining existence of a community is crucial for the construction of nations. According to Anderson (1991: 6), nation is “an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign”. He proposes several important arguments to support his claim. Nations are imagined because “the members of even the smallest nations will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them; yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (ibid). Anderson explains that a nation is imagined as limited because even the largest of them have boundaries. Finally, “nations are imagined as sovereign because the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm” (Anderson, 1991: 7).

According to Anderson (1991), the fall of Latin as the ‘sacred language’ and emergence of many written languages disseminated by printing made possible for people to think about themselves and to relate to others in a new way. This point of Anderson’s theory is of particular relevance to the proposed study as it foregrounds the role of the media in constructing nations. The media are central to his idea of nations as ‘imagined communities’ because print technologies were critically important in the formation of nations (Waisbord, 2004).



As argued by Waisbord (2004), nation building required institutions to reach population in societies that had undergone changes brought by industrialization and urbanization, since traditional face-to-face communication was not sufficient anymore. In this respect, the mass media, along with such institutions as the church, school and army, gained crucial importance as they could spread a common culture and nurture feelings of common belonging. Consumption of print news brought opportunity for shared experiences among populations from distant places of one country. “Newspapers were platforms for imagining nations by acting as meeting spaces for articulating national views and synchronizing time and space”, Waisbord (2004) concludes. Newspapers also constructed frontiers of the imagined nations demarcating one nation from the others.

Some theorists also suggest a key link between emergence of nations and development of bourgeois public sphere that relied on different forms of printed media, particularly newspapers (Eley, 1996 cited in Waisbord, 2004). The notion of public sphere is further discussed in more detail with regard to television talk shows.

As public communication has largely relocated into the domain of the mass media and the media themselves have become more diverse, available and all pervasive, scholars have increasingly addressed the role of the media in fostering the national. It has been noted that, “like educational systems, official calendars, and state rituals, the media store cultural elements that come to define nationhood” (Castello, 2009). In particular, television has been granted a primary role in the construction of nations (Castello, 2009; Morley, 2000).

Castello (2009: 306) argues that television as one of the main links between people and their social environment presents the most powerful tool of national images. Given that identities are formed through representations, television is crucial as it channels, spreads and constructs these representations. Television is also seen as a pivotal site for ‘imagining’ a nation, its boundaries and for contesting what it is like (Castello, 2009: 315).

As Morley (2000: 107) suggests,

National broadcasting can thus create a sense of unity – and of corresponding boundaries around the nation; it can link the peripheral to the centre; turn previously exclusive social events into mass experiences; and, above all, it penetrates the domestic sphere, linking the national public into the private lives of its citizens, through the creation of both sacred and quotidian moments of national communion. Not that this process is always smooth and without tension or resistance.

Morley’s argument projects several important implications of the media engagement into constructions of nations. The first one concerns the shared media experience of being

part of a nation. The media present a suitable space for nurturing national identities by providing shared collective experiences (Waisbord, 2004). Media rituals (Couldry, 2003) and media events (Dayan & Katz, 1992) like commemorations, coronations, television debates before elections etc. are examples of such collective experiences that forge a sense of national community.

The second implication refers to routine ways of constructing and maintaining the sense of nation and is closely related to the concept of 'banal nationalism' developed by Billig (1995). Billig (1995: 8) argues that while nationalism has been widely attributed to some extreme and exotic exemplars, "the routine and familiar forms of nationalism" are often overlooked. He criticizes theorizations of nationalism that take the world of nations for granted, as something 'natural' and obvious (1995:16) and adheres to Anderson's idea of nations as mental constructs. Accordingly, Billig's concept of nationalism covers the ways that established nation-states are reproduced on a daily basis. Within this framework, the media help to perpetuate 'banal nationalism'. Kulyk (2010: 135) emphasizes that more crucial than important media events are daily media routines that construct the audience as a nation and, moreover, posit it as an essential part of nation, thus foregrounding national identity over other identities.

Finally, the third implication of Morley's argument concerns potential tension that media construction of nations can yield. This brings us back to the idea that identities are subject to change and media discourse constitutes a crucial realm where such changes are negotiated, which reaffirms relevance of the focus of analysis on mediatized discourse suggested by this study.

## **2.7 Television Talk Shows. Hybridity of Genre**

With regard to the role of the mass media in construction of representations, different media genres have been addressed by scholars, starting from news and ending with TV fiction series (Castello, 2009). Television talk shows, particularly American and European, increasingly attracted scholarly attention starting from the 1990s. The research focus, however, centered on the democratizing potential of the talk show genre (Hamo, 2006) rather than on discursive construction of representations within the talk show setting. Theoretical discussions of talk show genre developed primarily with reference to the concept of public sphere, as highlighted further in this section.

Active engagement of people into public discussion has been viewed as a form of participatory democracy enabled by the talk show genre (Livingstone and Lunt, 1994).

However, definition and conceptualization of the very talk show genre poses significant challenges for theorists and researchers. Livingstone and Lunt (1994: 37) note that the concept of genre is difficult to apply to such dynamic cultural forms as contemporary television and talk show programmes in particular, because the latter challenge the distinctions “between entertainment and current affairs, ideas and emotions, argument and narrative”.

Örnebring (2003: 506) points out that most of the studies “use the term ‘talk show’ as a catchall concept, encompassing everything from light-night entertainment to programmes more akin to the news interview format”. Leurdijk (1997: 149) also suggests that “it is nearly impossible to give a coherent definition or comprehensive description of talk shows”, as “on closer observation, the only characteristic these programmes have in common is a host talking with people in a studio”.

Thus, the talk show genre is largely regarded as hybrid due to its capacity to involve journalistic and entertainment elements in different combinations depending on the particular programme (Munson, 1993). In his analysis of the role the talk shows play in modern media culture, Munson (1993: 17) argues that the talk show is “highly plastic, thrives on change, and can package any timely topic into product, spectacle, and performance – all in very short order”. He asserts that talk shows are not only a political instrument, but entertainer, advice-giver and ersatz community as well (Munson, 1993: 3).

General hybridity and flexibility of the talk show genre requires a specific research approach in each particular case of study in order to describe and explain how hybridity is manifested in a particular programme.

Peculiarities of the television talk show that is analyzed in this study are addressed in the section with analysis of the discursive practice. It should be noted at this point, however, that despite vague classification of talk shows, the talk show under analysis is largely considered here within the framework of a current affairs debate programme, following the definition and criteria suggested by Örnebring (2003: 505). According to Örnebring, current affairs debate programmes have two distinct traits. Firstly, they “claim to cover important societal issues, and to play an important role in the public sphere as a whole”. Secondly, “the dominant forms of communication in the public debate programmes are debate, discussion and/or conversation between two or more participants, with a host (or hosts) in some way leading, or at least with some measure of influence over, the debate” (ibid). Both criteria satisfy the case analyzed here, although the talk show under investigation also blends genre boundaries with inclusions of entertainment elements etc. These issues are highlighted in the

chapter analyzing peculiarities of the discursive setting provided by the talk show.

## **2.8 Talk Shows and Public Sphere**

Despite the discussed hybridity of the talk show genre, most theoretical works addressing the issue of talk shows have focused on one common feature for various talk show incarnations, that is, engagement of the public into discussion of socially or politically significant matters. Much of the academic discussion evolved around applicability of the 'public sphere' concept to the study of talk shows.

The concept of 'public sphere' initially developed by Habermas (1989) to explain the historically essential role of public sphere for emergence of democracy has come to be widely referred to by media and communication scholars who extrapolated the concept to the mass media. Habermas's historical account focused on the rise and fall of the bourgeois public sphere as benchmarks in the development of democracy as such. In his seminal study, he argued that activity in the cultural public sphere in Western Europe of the 17th century, which involved good mannered conversations about many kinds of small things among equals, in due course spilled over into the political sphere (Lunt & Stenner, 2005: 60). Thus there emerged a forum for the discussion of political, economic and social issues, which laid the ground for informed and critical public opinion formation. Habermas's concept of the public sphere thus foregrounds reasoned and critical discourse (Dahlgreen, 1995: 8):

The public sphere exists, in other words, in the active reasoning of the public. It is via such discourse that public opinion is generated, which in turn is to shape the policies of the state and the development of society as a whole.

Habermas's initial conception brought about numerous interpretations of what can be considered a modern form of public sphere. As public communication has been increasingly relocated into the domain of mass media, perception of the mass media as the major embodiment of the public sphere has become mainstream (Caprignano et al, 1990:33). Particularly, television has been regarded the prime institution of the public sphere in modern society (Dahlgreen, 1995); yet the advent of the Internet has definitely brought changes in this regard with the web taking away the primacy of public sphere embodiment.

However, Habermas himself has been quite critical about the potential of the mass media to represent public sphere, and particularly to create conditions that would provide for public deliberation and opinion formation in an open way (Lunt and Stenner, 2005: 60). Habermas's pessimism resulted from his "analysis of the way that public relations and commercialization have undermined the autonomy of the bourgeois public sphere", Lunt and

Stenner suggest (ibid). Habermas criticized the media for providing a pseudo-public sphere, a sphere of public relations foregrounding passive spectatorship rather than real active public debate (Livingstone & Lunt, 1994: 10).

Yet, it is Habermas's (1989) conception of the bourgeois public sphere that has been taken as a starting point for a number of following theorizations and empirical studies of the mass media and talk shows in particular. Most of such theorizations share a common premise viewing public communication and public sphere as means for fostering transparency and accountability in the decision-making process (Ferree et al., 2002). In such a framework, democracy is indispensably linked to the practices of public communication (Garnham, 1990; Dahlgreen, 1995; Barnett, 2003). Since the scope of modern society does not allow direct participation of large numbers of citizens in a social dialogue, it is argued that the media have become a key setting for public communication and, ultimately, a public sphere in its own (Dahlgreen, 1995: 8). Thus, it is generally accepted that the media play a growing role and shape political life to a large extent by providing a framework for political communication (Livingstone & Lunt, 1994: 4).

However, many theorists question the capacity of the media to serve as a setting for critical and reasoned debates. Such concern goes back to Habermas's argument criticizing the media for promoting passive consumption instead of rational and critical discussion by the public, and offering convenience thinking (Curran, 1996). Other concerns arise from presumptions grounded in media malaise approach, an umbrella term for theorizations of harmful effects media supposedly have on modern democracy, like that of inducing "political apathy, alienation, cynicism and a loss of social capital" (Newton, 1999:577). Another argument concerns decline in the critical capacities of public due to monopolization of knowledge in the hands of intermediaries (Barnett, 2003:11).

Debates about the potential of the media to be a today public sphere have been focused, among other aspects, on the television talk shows of various kinds as they seem to offer a viable communication platform for critical discussion and thus – for informed public opinion formation. However, although the social significance of talk shows seems to be generally acknowledged (Tolson, 2001:3), there is no consensus among media and communications theorists as to whether the talk shows facilitate reasoned discussion by providing a space for a new kind of public forum or what they offer is just "a travesty of real political debate with no 'real' consequences" (Livingstone & Lunt, 1994: 1). On the one hand, talk shows are admitted to offer a discursive space for interaction between ordinary people and institutional representatives thus carrying a democratic potential (Wood, 2001:

65). On the other hand, it has become common to blame talk shows for dumbing down the discourse and for causing degeneration of public debate. Concerns were raised about the rise of ‘punditocracy’, meaning that only a restricted circle of experts and opinion leaders are given a voice (Alterman 1992; Soley 1992 cited in Wessler & Schultz, 2007: 22). It is frequently emphasized that the talk shows foreground showmanship rather than substantial discussion of the issues.

## **2.9 Television Talk Shows and Mediatization of Politics**

Recent analysis of talk shows has been particularly focused on their entertaining aspect, which goes in line with a general trend of “infotainment” expansion and growing ‘spectacularization’ of media content and formats. Thus, Mazzoleni and Schulz (1999: 251) argue that the media have been increasingly driven by ‘media logic’, which resulted in the ‘spectacularization’ of political communication formats and of political discourse itself’. However, the authors go beyond the notion of ‘spectacularization’ and consider it within a wider concept of ‘mediatization’. The latter has seen many theoretical interpretations and developments and is now commonly referred to in discussions of the impact the modern media have on politics and society.

Most definitions of the mediatization share a premise of growing and intensified media influence (Strömbäck, 2010: 1). People become more and more dependent on the mass media for their awareness of political issues, on the one hand; on the other hand, political actors tend to rely more on the media as points of access to the public (Blumler, 2003: xvi). As argued by Hjarvard (2008: 113), mediatization is the “process whereby society to an increasing degree is submitted to, or becomes dependent on, the media and their logic”. Another crucial dimension of mediatization concerns capacity of the media to change conditions for human communication thus shaping and reshaping relations among all social institutions (Livingstone, 2009). The way the media mold political communication is a matter of particular concern. Mazzoleni and Schulz argue that, “mass media construct the public sphere of information and opinion and control the terms of their exchange” (1999: 250). Thus they decide who gets access to the public, what kind of issues are ascribed principal importance etc. Moreover, as the media colonizes politics, in Meyer’s expression (2002: 50), political actors have to adapt to or even adopt the media’s logic and rules (Strömbäck, 2010: 3). For instance, the language of politics embraces that of advertising, public relations, and show business, as noted by Mazzoleni and Schulz (1999: 251). Mazzoleni and Schulz conclude that, “mediatized politics is politics that has lost its autonomy, has become

dependent in its central functions on mass media, and is continuously shaped by interactions with mass media” (1999: 250).

Ubiquity of the media in modern societies and their increasing impact has led theorists to regard mediatization as a meta-process that shapes modernity, along such meta-processes as individualization, commercialization, and globalization (Krotz, 2007). Livingstone (2009: x) also asserts that mediatization is a meta-process “by which everyday practices and social relations are historically shaped by mediating technologies and media organizations”.

It is crucial to note that the concept of mediatization has been almost exclusively attributed to democratic, highly industrialized and mainly western societies. Hjarvard (2008: 113) emphasizes that, “mediatization is no universal process that characterizes all societies”. He, however, makes a point that due to globalization, more and more regions will be affected by mediatization, though the influence is likely to be different depending on the particular setting. Hence, there is definitely a lack of studies and conceptualizations of mediatization processes in non-democratic, quasi-democratic or transition countries like Ukraine. Yet, the media development in such countries may follow the path of the media development in democratic countries in many respects, especially when it comes to relatively free commercial media. As well as political communication in such countries frequently follows the media logic.

Discourse analysts within CDA framework have also addressed the notion of mediatization, given an established interest of CDA in political and media discourses as specific types of discourse. Fairclough (1995: 182) emphasizes that, “political discourse provides the clearest illustration of the constitutive power of discourse” because it reproduces and changes the social world by reproducing and changing people's representations of it. Media discourse has also attracted much of CDA interest for a number of reasons. Firstly, the media have been viewed as particularly interesting object of CDA inquiry due to their “manifestly pivotal role as discourse-bearing institutions”, as Garrett and Bell (1998) suggest. In this respect, capacity of the media to influence people’s perceptions of the world by means of constructing a certain discursive reality for audiences has been acknowledged (Retzlaf, 2010). Secondly, discourse analysts note that at present media discourse mediates most of discourses (Wetherell et al, 2001), which adds another layer for the analysis of discursive interaction. This particularly concerns political discourse as the boundaries between political discourse and media discourse are getting remarkably vague.

Fairclough (1998: 142) argues that political discourse as an ‘order of discourse’ is

“continuously changing within wider processes of social and cultural change affecting the media themselves and other social domains which are linked to them”. Accordingly, the structured configuration of genres and discourses that constitutes political discourse should be analyzed with regard to shifting relations with media discourse as an ‘order of discourse’. He concludes that,

mediatized political discourse as an order of discourse is constituted by a mixing of elements of the orders of discourse of the political system – the lifeworld (ordinary life), sociopolitical movements, various domains of academic and scientific expertise, and so forth – with journalistic discourse (Fairclough, 1998: 148).

Fairclough’s commentary on mediatization of political discourse from CDA perspective complements discussed theoretical observations on mediatization as a metaprocess shaping social relations in contemporary societies. The notion of mediatization is critical for the proposed study given the central object of inquiry, that is, mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites. It also has important implications for the actual analysis of discursive practice that would require thorough exploration of complexity of relations between conventions guiding discourse of Ukrainian political elites and its impact on the discursive construction of the image of Europe.

### **2.10 Talk Shows: Implications for the Study**

The above review of theoretical discussions on television talk shows demonstrates preoccupation with such issues as public engagement and its potential for social dialogue, laity/expert relations (Livingstone and Lunt, 1992) and other aspects that are largely considered from a normative perspective.

At the same time, talk show genre attracted attention of conversation analysts addressing broadcast talk as a focus of research (e.g. Hutchby, 2006) and discourse analysts examining discursive power relations in talk show, for instance between host and participants (Hamo, 2006). Some empirical research on talk shows concerned analysis of how certain issues are discussed in the provided setting (e.g., Leurdijk’s (1997) analysis of debates on racism and multiculturalism in the Dutch talk shows). Although discourse analysts studying construction of representations in the media largely concentrate on news media, discourse of talk shows, I argue, provides an extremely rich data for the analysis of discursive representations. As noted by Leurdijk (1997: 149), “the characteristics of the (talk show) format allow for more diversity, contradictions and ambiguity than traditional news media”. Much of the talk on talk shows is unprepared, which again adds value for the analysis of



discourse. Mediatization effects on political discourse also contribute to the complexity of the analyzed instance of discourse. Yet, all these aspects while posing certain challenges for a researcher promise stimulating exploration of the topic.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **CONTEXT OF THE STUDY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The CDA theoretical and methodological framework employed by this study puts a great emphasis on the exploration of socio-political context shaping discourses. The purpose of this chapter is to address several crucial contextual layers that have been influencing the construction of 'Europe' in the mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites.

In particular, this chapter provides an overview of media system and media developments in the independent Ukraine as it is the media that represent a platform for discursive construction of 'Europe' in the analyzed case. Relations between the media and political elites find special elaboration in the overview. The second part of the chapter provides a background on the Savik Shuster's political talk show as a discursive setting under investigation. While outlining peculiarities of the talk show format, its reception by public and impact, the second part of the chapter also examines how relations between political elites and media are manifested in the analyzed discursive setting and what are their implications for the discursive construction of 'Europe'. Finally, the third part of the chapter discusses the significance of 'Europe' as a reference point for Ukrainian society. Apart from exploring the role of 'Europe' in the discourse of Ukrainian intellectuals, this section also provides an overview of the European integration policy pursued by Ukrainian leaders, official discourse on 'Europe' and public reception of the European integration idea.

All the three mentioned contextual layers are shaped by the meta-context of post-communist transformation Ukraine has been undergoing since the breakup of the USSR with all its complex implications for the processes of democratization and identity construction. These issues are also addressed in respective sections.

#### **3.2 Media System and Media Developments in the Independent Ukraine**

Media system in the independent Ukraine can hardly be analyzed without consideration of historical context shaping development of the media. In this respect, reference to the Soviet times is crucial as Ukraine inherited the Soviet system of media, which were totally controlled by the ruling Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and state apparatus. Impact of the Soviet heritage on the Ukrainian media has been so strong that scholars mention post-Sovietness as a key feature defining media system of the independent Ukraine, noting that it implies a radical change of social role performed by the media on the one hand, and maintenance of many Soviet attributes molding the very media,

on the other hand (Kulyk, 2010: 177). Broader social and political context bearing traces of the Soviet system also contributes to such ambivalent environment for media development in the country undergoing transition to democracy.

Totalitarian political regime enforced by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union provided for total control over the media. Leadership of the Communist Party exerted control over all aspects of media functioning, starting from establishment of the media and ending in sanctioned censorship of texts transmitted by the media (Kulyk, 2010: 177). All the print media were founded by various institutions and branches of the Communist Party and the Komsomol, a youth branch of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Dutsyk, 2010: 31). Radio and television, ascribed a crucial role for propaganda purposes, were completely owned and financed by the state. Furthermore, the communist authorities heavily controlled the very content of the media through institutionalized censorship, limiting the role of media to that of mouthpieces of regime. (Kulyk, 2010).

Thus, multifaceted control over the Soviet media was authorized and implemented through a well-developed hierarchical structure of the Soviet media. Ukrainian media were fully integrated into the Soviet system of media (Dyczok, 2009: 19) and reproduced general patterns on the republican level. Hence, Ukrainian media like all Soviet media functioned as ideological voices of the communist regime instead of providing an independent communication platform for society and government. As a result, tradition of censorship has turned into a real burden for the democratizing Ukraine and its media system and still mars development of the media in the country.

Another important implication of Ukrainian media functioning within the Soviet system concerned their largely peripheral status compared to the so-called ‘central’ media based in Moscow. As republican level media were less well funded compared to the ‘central’ ones operating for the entire USSR, quality of the former was poorer. Consequently, Ukrainian media were “less technologically developed, staffed by lower quality journalists and overall less influential and popular” (Dyczok, 2009: 19).

Transformation of Ukrainian media started with the general liberalization course and *glasnost* policy endorsed by the new General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev (Belyakov, 2009). Gradual liberalization of political regime enabled increasing pluralism of media and pluralism of opinion represented in the Soviet media. Crucially, the very role of media started undergoing transformation, as they no longer transmitted the only CPSU-authorized interpretation of events but rather provided a platform for alternative interpretations and alternative voices. Growing independence of editorial

teams was eventually “codified through legal measures, originally designed to legitimize *glasnost* policy” (Richter, 2001: 134). Liberalization of media peaked in 1990 when a new Soviet Media Law was adopted that declared freedom of speech, prohibited censorship and ended monopoly of the Communist Party on media ownership (Kulyk, 2010: 185; Dyczok, 2009: 19). Even though democratization in Ukraine generally lagged behind changes occurring on the larger scale of the USSR (Kulyk, 2010: 184), liberalization reforms of *perestroika* did lay the foundation for further media emancipation within newly emerged independent states following collapse of the Soviet Union.

After Ukraine became independent in 1991, country’s leadership declared the end of state censorship and confirmed the right to private ownership, which eventually led to the fast growing number of media, both press and broadcasting companies (Dyczok, 2009). New legislative framework related to media development was introduced during the first years of Ukraine’s independence with 1992 Law on Information breaking the ground (Richter, 2001; Dyczok, 2009).

Development of media legislation in the independent Ukraine strengthened democratic achievements of *perestroika* with regard to media regulations, as legislative obstacles for private media ownership were lifted. New legislative framework contributed to significant changes of Ukrainian media landscape. The most popular existing media outlets became independent from state control (Kulyk, 2010). Some state and municipal media that existed in the Soviet Ukraine came under the ownership of their staff. A lot of new outlets were founded by various organizations, new Ukrainian parties, companies and even individuals. According to some data, the number of licensed print media outlets doubled during the first year of independence (Kulyk, 2010). New broadcasting companies also appeared all over the country. Crucially, not only the number of media outlets remarkably increased, thematic and ideological diversity of the media provided a striking contrast to the Soviet times. Such dramatic changes over quite short period of time illustrate why the 1992-1994 became known as the ‘golden era’ of Ukrainian journalism (Dyczok, 2006: 221).

Yet, further developments of Ukrainian media system revealed drawbacks of the discussed transition. In particular, those concerned unfinished privatization of the media. While privatization was regarded as an essential prerequisite for the complete independence of the media from state control (Ryabinska, 2011: 4), many media outlets remained in the state ownership as Ukrainian political elites were reluctant to fully hand over control of all media outlets (Dyczok, 2006: 221). As a result, market environment did not provide equal opportunities for the media: since state-owned media received state funding they could afford

offering lower rates to advertisers, as well as lower prices for readers and subscribers (Ryabinska, 2011: 6). In fact, current situation with regard to state-owned media remains essentially the same. According to existing data, there are still more than 100 state-owned newspapers, as well as over 800 municipal newspapers, reaching together to almost 22 per cent of the entire market of periodicals in Ukraine (KAS, 2011). The state also owns about 4 per cent of the TV and radio sector, in addition to nearly 815 local television and radio companies (Ryabinska, 2011: 6).

Not only retained state ownership hindered democratization of Ukrainian media market. Broader political and economic processes taking place in Ukraine in mid and late 1990s shaped establishment of a dual or hybrid, in Dyczok's definition (2006: 222), media system in Ukraine. Hybridity of the system is manifested in maintenance of certain patterns typical for the Soviet media system, like leftovers of censorship, and incorporation of traits common to democratic societies, like private ownership of media.

Leonid Kuchma's victory in the presidential elections of 1994 marked the beginning of political and economic processes determining duality of Ukrainian media system, although its roots go back to the Soviet period and partial media reform implemented during the first years of Ukraine's independence.

Whereas the new legal framework and liberalization of economy made it possible to establish private media and seek alternative funding for the existing media, the process of economic liberalization went hand in hand with growing corruption and emergence of the so-called financial-industrial groups that raised enormous capital in the shady privatization of the 1990s and were closely connected with political establishment. Media surfaced as attractive assets for the discussed groups in the mid-1990s when the latter started accumulating media resources. Gradually, Ukrainian oligarchic clans concentrated huge media assets and control over media sector in their hands (Ryabinska, 2011: 9) in a process eventually labeled as 'clanisation' of media (Dutsyk, 2005). Accumulation of media assets by financial-industrial groups intensified after a global financial crisis of 1998. A lot of broadcasting companies and print media outlets that functioned as middle-sized business companies could not survive and were forced to sell their shares to oligarchic clans (Ryabinska, 2001: 9). Along the line, administration of President Kuchma exerted growing political pressure on the media in the run-up to upcoming parliamentary and presidential elections of 1998 and 1999 (Kulyk, 2010).

Thus, by the end of the 1990s Ukrainian media were largely concentrated in the hands of powerful financial-industrial groups with very close links to political elites. In particular,

all 6 TV stations with broadest audience reach belonged either to the state or oligarchic clans (Dyczok, 2006: 222). Thus, the most popular TV channels INTER and 1+1 were reportedly controlled by Viktor Medvedchuk representing a so-called Kyiv clan; STB, ICTV, and New Channel (Novy Kanal) belonged to Viktor Pinchuk, Kuchma's son-in-law (Way, 2005; Dyczok, 2006). In conditions of backsliding democracy, Ukrainian political and business elites quite effectively manipulated the mainstream mass media turning them into instruments of political pressure. As Ryabinska (2001: 9) notes, "Ironically enough, although private ownership is considered an important condition for the independence of the media, the process of media appropriation by large financial-industrial groups in Ukraine was accompanied by a reduction of their autonomy and freedom". Private ownership of media in Ukraine did not result in the media independence because most big owners of the mainstream media perceived them as a useful supplement for their major businesses in other industries rather than self-sufficient business itself (Dyczok, 2009). Intertwinement of political and economic interests of major financial-industrial groups owning media made their media outlets hostages of political system advanced by Kuchma and his administration. Imposed control over major media, particularly TV channels, brought about biased coverage of political processes, events and actors, reaching its height during election campaigns. Thus, coverage of presidential election campaign of 1999 aroused criticism of the Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe as its committee found that, "Media coverage was grossly biased in favour of the outgoing President"<sup>1</sup>.

Controlled media communicating sanctioned messages fit into general patterns distinguishing political regime under Kuchma. According to Way (2005: 133-134), competitive authoritarianism fostered by Kuchma rested on two major pillars: first being 'an extensive set of largely informal institutions and processes that served to harass oppositions and to falsify election results'; and second – "a coalition of oligarchic forces in parliament and in the administration that organized support for Kuchma, competing for his patronage". It is precisely through oligarchic forces that direct control over the media was secured. Indirect forms of control over more or less independent media and journalists included economic pressure (for instance, through constant inspections of the Tax administration) and even physical intimidation and attacks (Dyczok, 2006)

Kuchma's second term in the presidential office marked further strengthening of authoritarian trends, deterioration of media freedom and tightened control over media

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/Documents/WorkingDocs/Doc99/EDOC8603.htm>

content<sup>2</sup>. According to Dyczok (2005: 245), the ruling political elite of Ukraine extensively used the mass media to prevent any criticism of their activities and manipulate public opinion in order to win elections. “The establishment was not trying to promote an ideology, since it had none, but rather was limiting the amount of information circulating so that people would not really know what was going on, creating an *information vacuum*,” researcher notes (Dyczok, 2005: 245).

Accumulation of major media in the hands of oligarchs loyal to Kuchma allowed for more straightforward and rigorous control over the media and their content than ever before. Policy of control over the mainstream media reached its heights in 2002 in the run-up to parliamentary election as presidential administration began distributing the so-called ‘*temnyky*’ – informal yet obligatory instructions outlining which topics should be covered by the media and how they should be covered and interpreted (Ligachova & Ganzha, 2005: 10).

*Temnyky* epitomized informal mechanisms of media harassment that went in line with other informal practices of political control over opponents like blackmail (Darden, 2001) employed by Kuchma and his administration.

Implementation of ‘recommendations’ contained in *temnyky* was thoroughly controlled by presidential administration. Violations of such instructions led to pressure on media owners and managers. Although existence of *temnyky* and their content was eventually made public through Internet, Kuchma’s administration continued their circulation for nearly two years (Kulyk, 2010: 209). The extent of control exerted over the media in this period is vividly illustrated by the coverage of the 2002 parliamentary election campaign. The mainstream media were without doubt biased in favour of the pro-presidential bloc “For a United Ukraine” (“*Za Yedynu Ukrayinu*”), whereas opposition parties were either excluded from the media discourse or represented in a negative light (Dyczok, 2009). According to media observers, “For a United Ukraine” received more than half of the total election coverage on television, whereas the main opposition bloc “Our Ukraine” – only 13% of the coverage, most of which was negative in tone (*ibid*).

The discussed patterns of relations between media and ruling elite remained essentially unchanged over the next two years. The authorities tried to employ well-tested manipulation techniques over again during the presidential election campaign of 2004. Thus, the ruling elite embarked on a multi-dimensional ‘Stop Yushchenko’ campaign, putting a

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<sup>2</sup> Decline of media freedom, as well as general trends towards establishing authoritarian political regime, were documented in a number of reports by international non-governmental organizations, including annual reports on Media Sustainability Index conducted by the IREX (e.g., IREX (2001), IREX (2002).

great emphasis on the 'respective' media coverage, which was designed to discredit Yushchenko (Dyczok, 2009).

Yet, further development of events, namely the Orange Revolution, demonstrated a striking shift in Ukraine's post-Soviet transformation. The role of media and journalists was conspicuous in this respect as their joint efforts to counteract censorship and fraud resulted in a 'journalists' revolution' which became an essential component of the transformation process. A number of individual protests and collective actions of journalists against censorship instigated a chain reaction all over the country, ultimately bringing freedom of expression into newsrooms. Ligachova and Ganzha (2005) provide a rich account and chronicle of events eventually growing into 'journalists' revolution'. The effect of journalists' efforts became apparent in a week after the beginning of the Orange Revolution: none of the TV channels relied on instructions from Presidential Administration anymore (Kulyk, 2010: 211). Instead, TV channels tried to provide a more or less balanced coverage giving an access to both competing political camps and presenting alternative viewpoints.

'Journalists' revolution', however, did not emerge out of nothing. Those journalists and editors taking courage to protest against censorship in their media were inspired by their colleagues from the Channel 5 (Pyatyy Kanal), the only opposition channel broadcasted since 2003, as well as other independent media. Whereas TV channels, perceived as the most crucial media by the ruling elite, constituted a major target of state censorship, other less mainstream media outlets were allowed some freedom (Kulyk, 2010). The Internet also emerged as a platform for opposition voices, although its penetration in Ukraine was quite small at that time, making about 8% of Ukraine's population (Dyczok, 2009: 25). All in all, such limited media pluralism contributed to the breakdown of Kuchma regime (Way, 2005). Defined as competitive authoritarianism (Way, 2005; Kuzio, 2005), the regime rested on the combination of authoritarian practices and real competition. Thus, although Kuchma and his administration attained enormous control over media, they were not able to completely block criticism, which turned into an important prerequisite for regime failure.

The Orange Revolution and subsequent change of elite brought significant changes for Ukrainian media. Even though initial enthusiasm about the Orange revolution was eventually replaced by disappointment and skepticism over the political developments in the post-Orange Ukraine, some democratic achievements, namely media freedom, have been generally recognized (Dyczok, 2009). Crucially, the Orange Revolution resulted in a transformation of relations between political elites, media owners, media managers and journalists (Dovzhenko, 2010; Kulyk, 2010). The newly elected President Viktor Yushchenko



cancelled practices of control over the media. The trend towards less state interference in the media was acknowledged by international media organizations (MSI Ukraine-2005). Many newsrooms inspired by changes in the country switched to more balanced news coverage.

Another notable peculiarity of the new media context that emerged after the Orange Revolution concerns appearance of new political TV talk shows broadcasted live on Ukrainian TV channels. *Freedom of Speech* talk show hosted by Savik Shuster paved the wave for several similar TV projects on Ukrainian television and demonstrated huge popularity of the format among the audience. After years of political censorship on television, live political debates involving many rivals proved to attract a lot of public interest. Given the central focus of the study, detailed analysis of the talk show within socio-political context of the post-Orange Ukraine is provided in the next section.

While media freedom and pluralism largely strengthened in Ukraine following the Orange Revolution and change of the ruling elite, further developments showed that many achievements with regard to media freedom did not turn sustainable. In particular, media observers expressed concerns over purposeful bias in political coverage that intensified from year to year, election campaign to election campaign in the post-Orange Ukraine (Dovzhenko, 2010). The nature of bias, however, differed from the Kuchma period. Whereas bias of the Kuchma period had been basically guided by the more or less direct censorship from the presidential administration, bias in the post-Orange media was money-driven. Media observers pointed to changing patterns – ‘censorship induced by authorities’ was replaced by ‘money censorship’ (Belyakov, 2009).

Paid-for coverage emerged as one of the major sources of income for the mainstream media and television in particular. By providing a positive coverage of politicians or criticism of their opponents for money, the media virtually gave up their essential role of ‘watchdogs’ and reduced themselves to the ‘factories providing paid PR services’, in words of Dovzhenko (2008). Paid-for coverage in media, also known as ‘*jeansa*’ in Ukraine (Belyakov, 2009; Grynko, 2010; Ryabinska, 2011), has been part of the trend towards marketization of Ukrainian television business (Ryabinska, 2011). As owners of the influential media finally shifted their focus to profit-making function of their media businesses, they found profit-making opportunities in paid-for coverage. Thus, *jeansa*, particularly political *jeansa*, became pervasive in Ukrainian press and broadcasting outlets. The breadth of paid-for stories has been especially striking during the election campaigns.

Analysis of electoral news coverage by major TV channels revealed a growing amount of hidden advertising in journalists’ materials during the 2006 parliamentary election

campaign (Dovzhenko & Ligachova, 2006). Whereas authorities did not exert a centralized pressure on the media, editorial policies were largely determined by media owners and top-managers rather than editors and journalists, the monitoring showed (ibid.). It is during the 2006 parliamentary election campaign that media owners and managers widely set up practices of selling news programs time to different political forces (Dovzhenko, 2010). Such unethical practices by the media were maintained and reinforced during the 2007 parliamentary election campaign. Furthermore, media owners upgraded their offers for political customers: headquarters of political parties could now purchase not only separate news pieces or interviews but an overall loyalty of the channel (ibid.). Media owners became major actors negotiating 'media plans' or packages of coverage with major political forces. Within such a framework, journalists have been reserved a role of passive executors. At the same time, journalists largely accepted the role prescribed to them and such unethical practices. General disappointment with the results of the Orange Revolution also contributed to the growing cynicism of journalists, on the one hand, and loyalty to cash for coverage practices, on the other.

Election campaign for Presidency of late 2009-early 2010 demonstrated durability of the paid-for coverage practices: the media, primarily television channels, continued providing paid-for 'services' to various political camps (Gromadzki et al., 2010). While pluralism of opinion represented in the media was secured to some extent, it was achieved through competition of political 'customers' as most or even all key actors resorted to paid-for coverage thus assuring their presence in the media. Hence, pluralism of coverage was not a conscious choice or policy employed by the media, but rather a side effect of the discussed marketization.

Despite some progress attained with regard to media freedom, such achievements brought by the Orange Revolution turned to be fragile and not sustainable. Developments in the Ukrainian media system in 2005-2010 showed that media largely remained instruments for political and business elites (Grynko, 2010; Ryabinska, 2011). Media's dependence on politics did not fade away; instead it changed the form. The Ukrainian media did not emerge as an independent social institution, capable of performing functions of a 'watchdog' on the one hand and a platform for informed public debate on the other.

Readiness of media and journalists to get engaged in non-transparent practices (Tsetsura & Grynko, 2009), as well as readiness of politicians and businessmen to pay for the latter, particularly reveals fragility of the 'Orange' achievements in the media sphere.

On top of that, lack of media reforms following the Orange upswing, contributed to

the general vulnerability of achievements with regard to media freedom. The Orange elite did not venture to complete privatization of state-owned and municipal media that could significantly change the media landscape of the country. Neither did they undertake efforts to establish public broadcasting in Ukraine, a long-awaited media reform expected to foster democratization of Ukrainian media (Kulyk, 2010).

By and large, lack of institutionalization of achievements in the media sphere hindered their sustainability in the post-Orange period. The general context of political instability, dysfunctional state institutions (Gromadzki et al., 2010: 9), as well as constant power struggle between representatives of the ruling elite – all undermined democratic transformation of Ukrainian media.

That media achievements of the Orange period were fragile found evidence in the eventual development of events following Viktor Yanukovich's victory in the presidential elections of 2010 and change of the ruling elite. Soon after the beginning of Yanukovich's presidency, Ukrainian journalists, as well as international media organizations, were raising the alarm about deterioration of media freedom in Ukraine. Concerns about intensified autocratic tendencies in Ukraine were widely raised (Gromadzki et al., 2010). In their August 2010 report entitled "Temptation to Control"<sup>3</sup>, Reporters without Borders, an international NGO advocating freedom of the press, noted an increase of press freedom violations in Ukraine since Yanukovich's election as president. "Cases of physical attacks on journalists, direct obstruction of their work and acts of censorship of various kinds were reported to the organization", the report read. Freedom House, a reputable international NGO promoting democracy, downgraded Ukraine's status from 'free' to 'partly free', mentioning deteriorating media freedom as one of major reasons for such decline<sup>4</sup>.

The new leadership brought old methods of 'managing' media reminiscent of the Kuchma period (MSI-2011). Media observers suspect that the centralized information policy authorized by the new administration has been in place (ibid.), although its employment is more sophisticated compared to Kuchma times. Thus, there are no direct evidences like *temnyky* that would prove the centralized policy of censorship has been established (Ryabinska, 2011: 10). However, reports based on regular monitoring of major TV news programs suggest reproduction of media coverage patterns typical for the Kuchma regime. Television news programs are providing most of their coverage to the authorities and ruling

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<sup>3</sup> Temptation to Control, report of fact-finding visit to Ukraine. Reporters without Borders. Report available at [http://en.rsf.org/IMG/pdf/rapport\\_ukraine\\_anglais.pdf](http://en.rsf.org/IMG/pdf/rapport_ukraine_anglais.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> See <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2011/ukraine?page=22&year=2011&country=8156>

coalition; furthermore, the coverage is either positive or neutral – there is too little, if any, space for criticism (Monitoring, 2011).

Undisguised political bias transmitted in news programs, as well as attacks on individual journalists and pressure exerted over opposition media, provoked activity of journalists aimed at protection of media freedom. In May 2010, journalists and media activists founded a Stop Censorship movement<sup>5</sup>, which gathered about 570 signatories (MSI-2011). Activists of the movement have conducted a number of public actions to attract attention to censorship problem in Ukraine.

The discussed trends in media development following Yanukovich's election as president in February 2010 demonstrate erosion of media pluralism in Ukraine, which particularly concerns broadcast media.

The provided overview of transformation pathway the Ukrainian media were moving through over the last two decades suggests some important implications for the study of Ukrainian media system in general and for this particular research. Firstly, the overview shows a crucial connection between media developments and broader processes of post-communist transformation shaping the entire socio-political environment in Ukraine. As key social institutions, media are bound to depend on political developments to certain extent. However, media carry significant internal potential to shape political developments and transformation processes too. Consequently, media are involved in a complex interplay with other social institutions and political actors. Analysis of such interplay between Ukrainian media system, social institutions and political actors indicates the second implication concerning the very Ukrainian media system, namely, its hybrid nature. As argued by Dyczok (2006: 220), a hybrid model of Ukrainian media entails a combination of features inherited from the Soviet era and new ones common for democratic societies. Thus, analysis of Ukrainian media reveals a number of leftovers from the Soviet times in the way the media interact with society and political elites. Even over twenty years on, the media in Ukraine are still burdened by the Soviet legacy. The problems I have outlined in the overview are not exclusively Ukrainian. Instead, many other post-communist and post-Soviet media systems are troubled with similar issues. Bias, censorship, governmental influence, media harassment, lack of journalistic professionalism, funding problems, self-censorship constitute an exhaustive list of problems media in the post-Soviet countries share (Oates, 2007). Commonality of these problems shaping development of the media systems in the post-

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<sup>5</sup> Movement's website is [stopcensorship.wordpress.com](http://stopcensorship.wordpress.com)

Soviet countries in transition has been put into the center of the ‘neo-Soviet model of media’ conceptualization (ibid.).

As Ukraine’s transformation since its independence has been largely viewed as slow and evolutionary (Gromadzki et al., 2010: 7), the progress with regard to media democratization has also been gradual, marked by ups and downs.

At present, Ukrainian media face a number of problems impeding their development within a democratic framework. Whereas legislation regulating media relations in Ukraine has been recognized as quite progressive, its enforcement is marred by numerous violations. Heavy dependence of the media’s editorial policies on the decisions and biases of media owners remains a crucial obstacle on the way to media freedom and independence. In addition, highly concentrated ownership of media by big industrial moguls undermines media pluralism. As several big domestic business groups, widely associated with a handful of oligarchs, have remained the most important players on the Ukrainian media market, mainstream media, particularly television, continue to perform the role of mouthpieces. Finally, self-censorship of journalists and lack of mechanisms for professional self-regulation also constrain development of media freedom.

Combination of the discussed problems and a general context of growing authoritarianism in Ukraine in recent years are hardly promising for the Ukrainian media. Yet, the dynamic nature of media may prove to foster unexpected changes. Emergence of the Internet as a communication platform has definitely contributed to the media pluralism in Ukraine and may bring forth more changes in the media landscape of the country. According to the data of the Internet Association of Ukraine, almost 17 million people or 48% of Ukrainian population over 15 years old had access to the Internet as of March 2012<sup>6</sup>. As Internet penetration is rapidly increasing, more and more people discover online media as sources of investigative journalism and alternative opinion. What implications this will bring for the entire media system of Ukraine and how it will shape post-communist transformation of Ukraine remains to be seen.

Meanwhile, television remains the most popular medium in Ukraine, which explains why most of the pressure exerted over the Ukrainian media has been targeted at TV channels. The discussed patterns of relations between media and political elites have been most vividly exemplified with regard to TV channels.

The next section of the chapter examines, among other things, how media and

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<sup>6</sup> Internet Association of Ukraine, data available at [www.inau.org.ua/download.php?ae688b45925c28d6c50ebe814e19e75&target=1](http://www.inau.org.ua/download.php?ae688b45925c28d6c50ebe814e19e75&target=1), accessed on August 22, 2012

political elites interacted within a peculiar format, a political TV talk show.

### **3.3 Savik Shuster's Talk Show on Ukrainian Television: Format, Popularity, Impact**

I have noted in the previous section with an overview of media system of Ukraine that television remains the most popular type of mass media in Ukraine. As of 2010, 98% of Ukrainian households had a TV set<sup>7</sup>. Television is also largely perceived as the mainstream channel of information, which explains the scale of efforts exerted by the authorities and political elites to control television content. Popularity of television in Ukraine is well illustrated by the fact that it receives the largest share of advertising money, about half of the total amount (Ryabinska, 2011: 5).

Television gradually developed into the mainstream media during the Soviet period as the communist authorities discerned its huge potential for channeling state propaganda. However, TV watching emerged as the most popular form of media consumption in early 1990s (Kulyk, 2010: 189). Several factors contributed to its growing popularity at that time: it was cheap compared to print media and it offered entertainment (ibid.). As the first years of independence brought economic crisis, fall of living standards, political uncertainty and a lot of disappointment, people increasingly turned to TV for escape-like relaxation. By and large, television acquired so far unrivaled popularity among people in the independent Ukraine. Among different genres of TV programming, political talk shows emerged as an exceptionally popular format in the post-Orange Ukraine, suggesting an interesting case for the study. While the proposed thesis explores one particular aspect of political talk shows, that is, discursive construction of representations in the political talk show setting, a broader account of the format peculiarities, its impact and public reception are needed to contextualize the study.

I will start my overview of the talk show under investigation with an explanation of rationale for selecting this particular program. I will then briefly present a history of the talk show on Ukrainian television and, finally, I will elaborate on the format of the talk show, its peculiarities that determine discursive practice of the talk show, and public reception of the program.

The study focuses its analysis on the political TV talk show initially entitled *Freedom of Speech (Svoboda Slova)* that was launched on the ICTV television channel in September

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<sup>7</sup> According to the data of the Industrial Television Committee, a professional industry association of TV channels, media agencies and advertisers. The data available at [www.itk.ua/uploads/page/downloadfile.php?file=ua\\_22\\_09\\_2011\\_181116.pdf](http://www.itk.ua/uploads/page/downloadfile.php?file=ua_22_09_2011_181116.pdf), accessed on August 23, 2012.

2005. Thereafter, the talk show, hosted by Savik Shuster, changed its TV location and titles several times. The format of the talk show has remained essentially the same in the course of its existence on Ukrainian television, although some minor changes have been introduced. Those are discussed further in the overview. The talk show is a Friday night discussion program, focusing largely on politics and political issues. Like all talk shows, the analyzed case features groups of guests and involves audience participation (Tolson, 2001:3), the latter being quite limited though, as I further highlight. Thus, the talk show setting presents a meeting point for elites, primarily political ones.

The choice of the talk show for the analysis is explained by several factors. Its appearance on Ukrainian television concurred with the first serious turmoil in political life of Ukraine after the Orange Revolution, the resignation of the first Orange Cabinet of Ministers headed by Yuliya Tymoshenko. Political instability in the democratizing Ukraine happened to be a fruitful context for the new talk show. It quickly attracted large audience and eventually turned into one the most watched programs on Ukrainian television. The format of the talk show was accepted with enthusiasm. From the very beginning of broadcast, observers noted that such new talk shows have significant capacity to become major discussion platforms in the country (Telekrytyka, 2005a). As many controversial issues were discussed and politicians openly confronted during live broadcast, the talk show seemed to contribute to the development of public sphere and democracy in Ukraine. Thus, the analyzed talk show received unequalled popularity among discussion programs with a focus on politics in Ukraine. On the peak of its popularity, the talk show attracted up to 50% of the total TV audience in Ukraine (Konstantynova, Verhelis, 2006).

The format, as well as the content of the talk show became regularly discussed, as can be tracked from the archive of the *Telekrytyka* online publication, a major source of news and analysis on Ukrainian media. The discussed topics, the lists of invited guests, manner of the host – all have turned into matters of prolific discussions in media and presumably in mass discourse. The content of discussions on live talk show, frequently viewed as happenings on the ‘main political stage of the country’ (Trymbach, 2006), has been transferred into other domains of discourse<sup>8</sup>, contributing to the increasing importance of the talk show in the public discourse.

Fast growing popularity of the talk show indicated immense interest in and demand for mediatized politics among Ukrainian population. Whereas actual civic and political

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<sup>8</sup> here I mean that statements of invited politicians and arguments in the studio were eventually reported as news in other media

activity of Ukrainians has been quite low, mediatised politics proved to attract a lot of attention.

Significance of the discussed talk show has also been illustrated by many ‘lives’ it has had on several TV channels. Furthermore, the talk show has given rise to several other programs of a very similar format, thus becoming a trendsetter on Ukrainian television.

### **3.3.1 Shuster’s talk show: development of the program and chronicle of TV relocations**

The first program of the *Freedom of Speech* talk show was broadcasted on the ICTV television channel in September 2005. The format of the talk show was borrowed from Russia, where Savik Shuster had hosted an eponymous program on the NTV television channel for several years until it was shut down in 2004 by the channel’s new management<sup>9</sup>. Prior to an official launch of the talk show in Ukraine, Savik Shuster told journalists that he felt he wanted to work in Ukraine after ‘everything that happened there’, referring to the dramatic events of the Orange Revolution and post-Orange political developments (Telekrytyka, 2005). It was also reported that Shuster as an anchor was recommended to Viktor Pinchuk, an owner of the ICTV channel and former president Kuchma’s son-in-law, by Boris Nemtsov, a Russian opposition politician, in a private talk (ibid.). This small detail provides a clear illustration of direct involvement of media owners into such aspects of their media businesses as programming (a pattern discussed in the previous section).

ICTV, the oldest commercial TV channel broadcasted in Ukraine, was reportedly acquired by Viktor Pinchuk in 2000 (Dovzhenko & Shandra, 2007). The channel was initially founded by an American company Story First Communications in 1991 (Tkachenko, 2003) and started its broadcast in 1992. Throughout the ninetieth, the channel’s strategy made a particular emphasis on entertainment and broadcast of translated foreign media products (films, TV series, animation films, shows etc.). Since the 2000s, the channel significantly expanded its coverage, now reaching 95% of the Ukrainian population<sup>10</sup>. It is also in the early 2000s that the channel shifted its programming focus towards incorporation of information programs. As a part of Pinchuk’s media holding, the ICTV channel produced quite biased political news programs during Kuchma’s presidency. However, the content of news programs during the 2004 presidential election campaign was not as straightforwardly biased

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.newsru.com/russia/09jul2004/stopinform.html>

<sup>10</sup> data from the official website of the ICTV, available at <http://ictv.ua/ua/index/view-content/about/52>, accessed August 24, 2012



as that offered by the TV channels under control of Viktor Medvedchuk, head of Presidential Administration, and the Social-Democratic Party of Ukraine (united) (Telekrytyka, 2004).

All in all, the channel has been one of the leaders of the so-called second tier of TV channels in Ukraine throughout its existence. By the time *Freedom of Speech* talk show was launched on the ICTV, the channel attracted about 7-8% of the audience share on average. The first programs of the talk show received comparable audience share. Thus, an average audience share of the program constituted 7,4% in November 2005, a few months following the launch of the talk show (Telekrytyka, 2005c). Gradually, the talk show emerged as one of the most popular programs on Ukrainian television, reaching at times as much as 50% of the audience share (Konstantynova & Verhelis, 2006). The talk show was well accepted among media professionals and experts (Balatsanova, 2006; Telekrytyka, 2006a). The popularity of the new talk show was evidenced by formal recognition as well. The talk show received the award “*Teletriumf*” (TV Triumph) winning the nomination of best talk show in 2007<sup>11</sup>. Shuster himself appeared as the only journalist in the list of the most influential people of Ukraine, according to the *Korespondent* magazine annual ranking; and was chosen as a leader of “Faces of TV Channels” rating composed by the *Focus* magazine<sup>12</sup>.

After a prominent success on the ICTV television channel, in a year and a half, Shuster announced about his transfer to the INTER television channel in summer 2007 (Telekrytyka, 2007). The INTER TV Channel has been a broadcasting leader in Ukraine since its launch in 1996 (KAS, 2011). Thus, for instance, the channel attracted about 22% of the audience share on average in 2007<sup>13</sup>, the year Shuster joined the channel. INTER’s steady popularity, however, made it an object of particular concern of Ukrainian authorities. The channel had been under a heavy control of the ruling elite during Kuchma’s presidency. The actual owners of the channel have long remained unknown, which provoked a lot of speculations and investigations in the media community (Telekrytyka, 2006b; Nayem & Leshchenko, 2008). After the Orange Revolution, the channel was reportedly acquired by a businessman Valeriy Khoroshkovsky (Leshchenko, 2006), who eventually took high offices in several governments in the post-Orange Ukraine. At present, Khoroshkovsky takes an office of the First Vice-Minister in the government of the ruling party, Party of Regions. At the same time, the INTER TV channel has also been associated with a business tycoon

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<sup>11</sup> Data from the official website of the *Teletriumf* award, available at <http://www.teletriumf.org/page/2007/>, accessed August 24, 2012

<sup>12</sup> See <http://world.pravda.com.ua/ukr/news/2007/01/12/3195281/>

<sup>13</sup> Data from the official website of the INTER TV channel, available at <http://inter.ua/uk/news/2008/01/16/2516>, accessed August 24, 2012

Dmytro Firtash (KAS, 2011). The case of the INTER TV channel exemplifies a problem of media ownership transparency in Ukraine, demonstrating intertwining of political and economic interests in action and its damaging impact on media independence.

Transfer to the INTER marked the talk show's further advancement, as the channel has been considered No 1 in Ukraine. The talk show was now broadcasted under the title *Savik Shuster's Freedom (Svoboda Savika Shustera)*, putting a larger emphasis on the individual of the host. The format of the talk show largely remained the same. The minor changes included: new decorations of the studio styled to remind interior of the British Parliament, the increased number of people in the audience, reaching 200, upgraded technology of measuring opinion of the audience. The talk show also introduced a cartoonist who was drawing cartoons of the speaking guests and demonstrated them either in the course of the talk show or at the end of the program. Given the general popularity of the TV channel, Shuster's talk show secured high rankings. The share of the audience achieved as much as 35% (Mediabusiness, 2007). Media experts recognized *Savik Shuster's Freedom* as the most influential TV program in Ukraine in terms of its impact on public opinion and conduct of political elites in 2007 (Telekrytyka 2007a). At the same time, ICTV channel kept *Freedom of Speech* talk show hosted by another anchor, but its popularity significantly deteriorated (Mediabusiness, 2007).

The next year, in summer of 2008, Shuster left INTER TV Channel, created his own production studio and signed a 3-year contract with the TRK Ukraine (TRK Ukraina) TV Channel (Telekrytyka, 2008). Along with the traditional Friday night political talk show that was renamed into *Shuster Live*, the studio produced daily political talk shows, hosted in turns by Shuster and other presenters. Again, the format of the Friday talk show remained essentially the same, although the shift towards entertainment became more vivid (musical performances at the end of the program became common, the range of invited guests expanded, now including winners of beauty contests, sportsmen etc.) The rankings of the show decreased, partly due to the lower general rankings of the TRK Ukraine, but remained quite high. For instance, the program from December 14, 2009 received its maximum share of the audience, almost 18% (Telekrytyka, 2009).

TRK Ukraine, the third TV channel to host Shuster's talk show, has demonstrated the most dynamic growth in the recent years (KAS, 2011). When Shuster's talk show shifted its location to the TRK Ukraine TV channel, the latter was considered one of the leaders of the second tier. Its average audience share accounted for 5,6% in 2008 (ibid.). Since then, the Channel has been consistently improving its rankings: it attracted 8,35% of the audience

share in 2009 and about 10% – in 2010 (ibid.). In 2011 the Channel also increased its audience share, amounting to 11,4% (Mediabusiness, 2012). Thus, TRK Ukraine's steady growth and development made it the second most popular TV Channel in Ukraine in 2010 and 2011. Such fast expansion and success have become possible due to generous investments of the Channel's owner, SKM holding, one of the biggest financial-industrial groups in Ukraine controlled by the richest Ukrainian businessman Rinat Akhmetov. Efficient management and programming propelled the Channel to the top. Shuster's relocation also contributed to the growing popularity of the TRK Ukraine.

However, at the end of 2010 it was reported that the TRK Ukraine and Shuster Studio didn't prolong the contract and later Shuster announced that the talk show would be broadcasted on the First National Channel, a state-owned TV channel. The format underwent some changes. Most importantly, the audience in the studio no longer represented the entire nation; instead members of the audience have been selected on the grounds of professional background, group interests, age etc. Generally the audience is composed of two of such groups, about 50 people in total. Among the invited audience were lawyers, pensioners, teachers, dentists and even bloggers. The rankings of the talk show on the First National Channel have been relatively high, with the audience share reaching up to 12-15% in some programs (Telekrytyka, 2011a, 2011b), far better results compared to the average audience share of 2,32% attracted by the Channel in 2010 (KAS, 2011).

The appearance and development of Shuster's talk show on Ukrainian television concurred with the period of post-Orange media democratization. Indeed, the talk show was largely perceived as independent in its editorial policy during the first years of its broadcast. Although the talk show was broadcasted on several TV channels owned by business moguls affiliated with different political groups, its editorial independence was hardly questioned until the late 2010. Since then, observers noted bias in the talk show's policy, often subtle, such as choice of topics and guests. As the talk show switched to the First National TV Channel, talks about its dependence on the presidential administration became more frequent (Raskevich, 2011). In particular, Mustafa Nayem, a former team member of the Shuster studio, wrote on his Facebook page that, "Savik on UT-1 (referring to the First National TV Channel) and on TRK Ukraine – are two Saviks. But that's not the most important. What is important is that Savik definitely gets instructions concerning programs. These are not temnyky, these are not lists of those forbidden (to participate in the talk show). But he has to

consult on these or those questions. I know it.”<sup>14</sup>

While allegations of editorial dependence marked the recent two years of the talk show’s broadcast, a number of other issues regarding the talk show format were raised in 2005-2010, a period under analysis in this study. The next subsection addresses the respective discussions, while providing an overview and analysis of the talk show format.

To conclude this part of the overview, Shuster’s talk show has remained one of the leaders of TV programs with a focus on politics since its launch in late 2005, although migration of the host and the format from channel to channel has led to a growing competition between similar projects. Two out of three TV channels that broadcasted the discussed talk show kept the format on air even after Shuster left the channels. Yet, Shuster is considered to be a ‘parent’ of the format in Ukraine and his program still enjoys popularity, although general disappointment with politics and mediatized politics in particular, as well as increasing censorship in the media, have undermined the talk show’s success recently.

### **3.3.2 Format of the Shuster’s talk show, its modifications and implications for the discursive practice**

Producers of the analyzed talk show have been defining its format as a ‘socio-political talk show’. The talk show’s central focus on politics, politicians and political experts as chief guests suggests that the analyzed talk show can also be regarded as a current affairs talk show (Haarman, 2001). Yet, as I have noted in the theoretical chapter, there is hardly any strict classification with regard to talk show genre since its nature is highly hybrid (Munson, 1993; Lunt & Stenner, 1999). The talk show under investigation illustrates this point: although it is asserted to be a quite serious current affairs discussion program, it does feature blending of genre boundaries by incorporating music and sport performances etc. The trend towards inclusion of more entertainment elements into the talk show has been strengthened in the course of the program’s existence, as I further highlight.

From the very beginning, the format of the analyzed talk show centered around discussion of political issues by representatives of political elites. Thus, the talk show has been featuring predominantly politicians, officials, experts and opinion leaders, occasionally – artists, civil activists, business representatives etc. Generally the talk show hosts around twelve to twenty guests, each or most of whom is given certain amount of time to speak at the

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<sup>14</sup> see discussion on Mustafa Nayem’s Facebook page  
<http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1779702338399&set=a.1078519169258.2012987.1414642146&type=1&ref=nf>

main microphone and express his/her opinion on the discussed matter. Along the line, other guests discuss the issue while switching to the main microphone one by one, according to the host's invitation.

The audience in the studio was claimed to represent a sample of the entire Ukrainian population according to sociological criteria. This feature was emphasized as a remarkable peculiarity of the talk show; however, the talk show producers changed their approach to audience selection with the talk show's most recent shift to the First National TV Channel. As I have noted above, participants of the audience have now been selected according to such criteria as professional background, social status, age etc. depending on the topic of the program. Since the proposed study does not cover the time period following the talk show's shift to the First National TV Channel, this format change with regard to audience selection is of less relevance for the analysis. Instead, the alleged representativeness of the audience is an important matter for discussion as it significantly defined the whole format, suggesting implications for the discursive practice exercised in the talk show.

Thus, representativeness of the audience was constructed as a crucial point due to interactive options provided by the format. Namely, participants from the audience were supposed to use a special navigation console as a system of voting in the course of the program to indicate whether they support statements of the guests or not. I further address this feature of the format in the analysis of the role of the audience in the discursive setting provided by the analyzed talk show.

Another crucial peculiarity of the talk show concerns its special emphasis on the role of the host, Savik Shuster. Haarman (2001) noted that talk show genre prescribes a very important role to its host as it (genre) centers on a personality. My analysis also shows that the talk show under examination has been largely constructed as a domain of Shuster, a respected and impartial observer from outside. In an interview, then chief editor of the talk show Darka Chepak stressed that Shuster as a personality immensely contributed to the popularity of the program. "He is a person who actually brought freedom of speech into Ukraine, as some joke...It (the talk show) has become the first platform where politicians started speaking openly, where they were not limited by some frames"<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> Interview with Darka Chepak, then chief editor of the Shuster Live talk show, December 10, 2010, Kyiv

### 3.3.3 Interaction within a host-guests-audience triangle: power relations behind the talk show setting

The discussed emphasis on the special role of the host is illustrated by the leading role ascribed to the host within the analyzed talk show format. The host is the one in charge of the whole discussion; he in fact hosts the discussion and supposed to lead it as well as limit it when finds it necessary. Shuster was frequently starting the program with such an introduction “Good evening. This is *Svoboda (Freedom)* in a live television broadcast, a program that determines leaders or the program where freedom is limited by time and me, Savik Shuster”, unequivocally indicating the chief role of the host.

Indeed, the host is the one who determines the order of speakers and the amount of time one has to express oneself. Furthermore, since not all the invited participants are given an opportunity to speak at the main microphone, the host decides who is granted this privilege and who is left with the only option of brief comments or questions from one’s place. The host is also authorized to make shifts and turns in the course of the program.

At the same time, chief editor of the program noted that Shuster had been criticized for talking too little<sup>16</sup>. She argued, however, that although he doesn’t talk much, he is always very substantive in his commentaries. Indeed, the analysis of textual data shows that Shuster does not frequently interfere into the discussion, at times allowing speakers to go on talking for quite long. Moreover, speakers often manage to avoid responses to some questions by shifting focus of their speech. Nevertheless, the host does make attempts to interfere into the discussion by trying to silence this or that speaker or suggesting turns in the talk. While the role of the host is being constructed as that of a moderator, he does not always remain absolutely impartial and occasionally expresses his personal attitude, yet usually in a subtle way. Most of the time, however, Shuster tries to behave as a neutral observer.

Another interesting peculiarity of the host’s manner of interaction with guests concerns construction of his status as an equal among representatives of political elites. Thus, he frequently addresses politicians by their first names and adds some personal flavor to their overall interaction. It should be noted that politicians participating in the talk show maintain this pattern by similarly addressing and treating the host. In addition, they occasionally refer to the host as a referee, seeking approval or support.

By and large, the host constructs himself as an independent moderator, on the one hand, and as a respectable peer of his guests, on the other hand. At the same time, the host

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

does not consistently confront politicians who avoid responses, shift focus or impose their own agenda. He mostly interferes only in cases of blatant impudence or disrespect the guests demonstrate towards each other. Thus, the host does not basically challenge interaction patterns of the invited politicians who frequently demonstrate lack of respect to each other, as well as preoccupation with personal posture rather than participation in a reasonable debate.

Another crucial facet of interaction entailing power relations in the suggested discursive setting concerns the role of audience in the studio. As I have noted in the overview of the format, the audience in the studio, composed of 100-200 individuals (depending on the TV channel that broadcasted the program), was selected according to the sociological criteria and thus reportedly represented the whole nation. This was presented as a crucial novelty of the format as it suggested a great potential for interactivity through the use of technological devices measuring opinion of people in the audience. The audience was thus prescribed a role of a general public that had to constantly react to sayings of talk show guests by using a special navigation console, later – a special computer. Apart from that, the audience was asked to vote some particular questions before the program, in the course of the program and at the end of the program, thus providing a sort of public opinion poll. In his interview prior to the first program broadcast, Shuster also stressed the progressive role of the format, arguing that audience's voting in the course of the program is sort of a direct democracy tool,

*“it (format) really shows how public opinion is changing in a live broadcast, how powerful the word is and how it can influence not only people who hear these words, but also how it governs reaction of politicians who say these words. So in this sense, it's a full interactive: a person goes out to the public and public evaluates this person in a live broadcast, in real time. In a sense, this is an exercise of direct democracy, if you want...” (Telekrytyka, 2005b).*

That talk show producers put a big emphasis on this interactive peculiarity of the format is illustrated by Shuster's constant appeals “Please work” to the audience, as well as references to the results of the voting, in the course of the program.

Apart from expressing their attitudes by means of electronic voting, people in the audience are hardly provided with other options for direct participation in the program. Whereas at first the format foresaw a vox pop part at the end of the program, when people from the audience were given 30 seconds to summarize their impression of the discussion, this part was eventually removed.

While the format of the analyzed talk show makes a big emphasis on tracking the reaction of the audience on the sayings and goings-on in the studio, the audience itself is largely silenced. The presence of the audience is thus peripheral in relation to the central role

of the speakers – invited guests. The peripheral presence of the audience is also manifested in the spatial setting of the talk show, an important aspect for the analysis of talk shows' formats (Carpignano et al., 1990). Thus, in the case of Savik Shuster's talk show, the audience is clearly demarcated from the guests. People in the audience are also not allowed to approach the guests during the breaks, as was reported by one of the Ukrainian bloggers who took part in the program, where bloggers constituted one group of the audience<sup>17</sup>.

*“The duty of the button-pressers (audience) was simple – to press two buttons. If they were seldom pressed, there was a message urging to “work”. All the rest was prohibited. It was prohibited to cross the special line, it was prohibited to approach the ‘guests’, it was prohibited to talk etc. Special overseers with radio sets secured that all these prohibitions weren't violated. They looked like impounders of cattle”<sup>18</sup>.*

Thus, the talk show's format sets a framework where the role of the audience is basically limited to that of a spectator who can only express support or disagreement with the speakers by means of electronic voting. In other words, the talk show is put on the audience.

At the same time, the talk show producers have been trying to engage a broader off-studio audience into the program. Thus, the talk show has been featuring different kinds of short TV bridges with smaller audiences from the streets, other towns, institutions etc. One of the minor changes in the format that was introduced when the talk show switched to the TRK Ukraine concerned a new option for the public to send messages via email with feedback on goings-on in the studio during live broadcast. Some of the messages have been read and discussed, which added another dimension for interactivity. The talk show producers also announced about the plans to increase interactivity of the talk show ever more, by installing special equipment into the TV sets of the off-studio audience, which will allow them to vote and reflect their attitude to the guests' talk as if they are in the studio (Telekrytyka, 2011c).

Analysis of the talk show's format in terms of power relations shaping the discursive practice suggests that despite an assigned leading role to the host, the guests of the program, largely represented by politicians, are quite free in their conduct and discourse. They are mostly confronted by each other as the host only occasionally resorts to direct confrontation or exertion of control over the interaction leaving quite a lot of space for verbal maneuvering of the guests. The audience in the studio, although supposed to demonstrate reaction to politicians' statement, is not permitted to directly challenge the guests or contribute to the discourse, other than by electronic voting.

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<sup>17</sup> see <http://gorbachevsky.livejournal.com/159321.html>

<sup>18</sup> ibid



### **3.3.4 Format's implications for the discursive interaction and reception of the talk show**

While from the outset the format of the talk show was accepted with approval, it has eventually drawn criticism from media observers and wider public. However, it should be noted that most of the criticism has been targeted at politicians participating in the talk show and their manner of conduct. At the same time, it has been acknowledged that the format sets the rules and thus producers are at least partially responsible for the interaction between guest speakers.

One of the major issues generating criticism concerned selection of guests. The talk show has been criticized for favoring politicians and failing to provide more visibility to experts and journalists (Bakhtyeev, 2009). As argued by the observer, it is politicians who drive the format of the most of Ukrainian political talk shows, while experts and journalists are seen as secondary participants.

*“Irrespective of how smart, professional, interesting, popular and rank-boosting an expert or journalist is, he will never be able to become a first-rate guest...And vice versa, it doesn't matter how odious, unpopular, roguish and ignorant a politician is, he is secured a seat at the head of the table” (ibid).*

Indeed, analysis of the invited participants demonstrates that the talk show is preoccupied with and opts for politicians mainly. Politicians are the chief guests regardless of the discussed topic, be it corruption, education, pensions, foreign affairs, etc. At the same time, there is a recent trend to invite more stakeholders from civil society and business, not only journalists and experts, as it was at the beginning of the program. Yet, the number of civil society representatives is still very small in proportion to the rest of the invited guests; as is the amount of time given to them for expressing themselves.

Other observers criticized the talk show for featuring the same guests over and over again (Shcherbyna, 2011; Raskevich, 2011). Furthermore, it has also been suggested that the talk show producers invite the same people because of their showmanship and predisposition to make a spectacle instead of a substantial discussion (Sushchenko, 2011).

Showmanship and theatricality as driving forces behind interaction of guests within the analyzed talk show setting have been widely condemned for dumbing down political discourse (Belyakov, 2009; Ganapolskiy, 2009). Reasoned political debate has turned into 'politainment', Belyakov asserted (2009: 606). What could be a platform for real dialogue has descended into a stage for public settling of accounts with each other, observers noted

(Sibiriakova, 2011). Ukrainian political talk shows, including the analyzed one, have turned to be perceived as ‘shouting matches where mudslinging is the main weapon rather than powerful arguments’ (Raskevich, 2011).

While the provided examples of public reaction to goings-on in the talk show studio criticize primarily politicians, it is clear though that such goings-on are authorized by the talk show producers to a lesser or greater degree. By setting the format for the discussion, producers of the talk show set boundaries of what is acceptable and what is not, what is relevant and what is not. If the host does not challenge this or that instance or pattern of interaction, it is implicitly ascribed ‘normality’ within the discursive setting.

From the very outset, the talk show raised mainly hot political issues and invited actors from competing political elites, which resulted in high-pitched discussions, involving provocative questions to opponents and mutual accusations. In due course, such communication manner has jellied into a distinct trend – political actors have been increasingly practicing mutual intimidations, manipulative shift of discussion focus, avoidance of direct responses, juggling with facts and statements, flirtation with the audience. This is not to say that the very format of the Shuster’s talk show underwent some critical changes. Instead, it is politicians who mastered their skills of public debate as they presumably see it. However, producers and the host are in charge of framing the discursive setting and thus directly or indirectly encouraged the discussed transformation.

Some peculiarities of the format also contributed to the increasing mediatization of political debate within the analyzed discursive setting. For example, the host’s constant references to the numbers of support or disagreement expressed by the audience through voting in the studio might have stimulated politicians to make only those statements that would find an accord among people. Another example of such implicit encouragement of populist rhetoric concerns a temporary rule introduced by the talk show producers during the 2009-2010 election campaign. Candidates for presidency or their authorized representatives participating in the program were allocated different amount of time to express themselves during the program; the amount of time was determined at the beginning of the program according to the numbers of votes speakers’ brief introductions attracted from the audience. Thus, the need to attract the audience and receive more time might have also prompted politicians to say ‘popular’ things. All in all, politicians have been increasingly resorting to populist rhetoric, with their verbal exercises reminding nothing but an eloquence contest. As one commentator ironically noted about the discourse of the talk show participants,

*“The phrases about corruption are especially popular. That’s why those actor*

*politicians especially fight to have their phrases repeated in the final moments of the program. It does not matter that everyone is ears-deep in corruption. It's important to talk about it with the same temperament as when demanding bribes.” (Ganapolskiy, 2009).*

Apart from populist rhetoric and straightforward attacks on each other, guests of the talk show have also been employing less obvious techniques to impose their agenda. Although they are invited to discuss particular issues, they frequently neglect certain questions and switch the focus of discussion in the direction that is most favourable for them.

This observation has found evidence in personal interviews with one of the talk show editors, Heorhiy Tykhy, and an MP assistant, Volodymyr Venher. Tykhy said that politicians come to the studio with ready-made statements they have to put across. “They have to communicate the statements prepared by the party. They fight with Savik: please give us a floor because we necessarily have to say this. If one came to the studio – one has to put the message across”<sup>19</sup>, Tykhy said. As a result, there is virtually no live conversation. “This is not true communication; this is rather a sequence of acts of talking that are not connected with each other”<sup>20</sup>, Tykhy added noting, however, that at times politicians cross the line, pique each other – and then some sincerity might surface. Tykhy explained that politicians’ intention to mainly reproduce ready-made statements authorized by their party bosses does suggest a big challenge for the host and the entire talk show, but they try to draw speakers out of their comfort zones. Yet, the analysis suggests that such attempts are quite sporadic, whereas the host commonly allows politicians feel quite unconstrained.

Venher also confirmed that parties ascribe the role of speakers to more eloquent persons and delegate the authority to communicate party’s position on this or that issue at the talk show. Thus, most politicians view the talk show as a platform for publicity, according to Venher. At the same time, many politicians participate in the talk show for the purpose of demeaning opponents, he said.

Hence, analysis shows that participation of most political actors in the talk show under investigation is largely guided by the need to secure constant publicity, self-promotion on the one hand and neutralize or discredit opponents on the other.

Interview with Venher also revealed that Shuster’s talk show has undergone some change in the perception of political elites, with showmanship emerging as its primary function. “At first politicians treated Shuster’s talk show very seriously and they were

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<sup>19</sup> Interview with Heorhiy Tykhy, editor of the Shuster Live talk show and editor/presenter of the *After live* TV show, June 28, 2012, Kyiv

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*

thoroughly preparing for the program. Actually, many of them were afraid of participating in the talk show,”<sup>21</sup> Venher said. “Later, however, they (politicians) started treating it with scepticism. It is now mainly regarded as a cesspit”, he added. Venher also noted an interesting pattern: some politicians deliberately refuse participating in the talk show as they consider it a spectacle rather than a real debate.

Tykhy also admitted that politicians’ interaction within the talk show setting reminds a performance. “They are all aware that it’s a play. They wouldn’t confess this to camera, but they clearly understand it’s just a play...One can see their transformation when the camera is on...Then there’s a firework, showy arguments”<sup>22</sup>. That the talk show producers are also regarding the talk show setting as a stage of some sort is illustrated by the eventual introduction of a complementary program called *After live* designed to provide a glance into the backstage of the Shuster’s talk show. Thus, the *After live* show demonstrates unrefined video shots, brief interviews with the talk show participants made during the breaks of the talk show.

Increasing shift of the analyzed talk show towards entertainment is also illustrated by gradual extension of boundaries typical for a current affairs discussion program format. Shuster’s talk show has been increasingly featuring different kinds of music performances, pantomime, inclusion of representatives of subcultures like bikers etc.

While the discussed trend towards entertainment and performance has been widely criticized, the talk show has remained quite popular, though far not as popular as during the first years of its broadcast. Such enduring popularity of the format demonstrates a steady public interest in mediatized politics, despite irritation it evokes. It has been argued that Ukrainians have accepted that politicians are performers in the first instance, not policy makers (Ganapolskiy, 2009). Vitaliy Portnikov, a famous Ukrainian journalist and observer who is frequently invited to participate in the Shuster’s talk show as an expert, suggested a similar explanation in an interview. He noted that politics in Ukraine is substituted with TV maneuvers. “Ukrainians are watching the actions of politicians as if they were watching their favorite football teams,”<sup>23</sup> Portnikov said.

Given the discussed peculiarities of the discursive setting provided by the Shuster’s talk show, namely, shift towards mediatization of politics, prevalence of showmanship over

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<sup>21</sup> Interview with Volodymyr Venher, an MP assistant (Our Ukraine-People’s Self-Defense faction in the Parliament), July 5, 2012, Kyiv

<sup>22</sup> Interview with Heorhiy Tykhy, editor of the Shuster Live talk show and editor/presenter of the *After live* TV show, June 28, 2012, Kyiv

<sup>23</sup> Interview with Vitaliy Portnikov, a journalist and political observer, a frequent guest at the Shuster’s talk show, December 10, 2010, Kyiv

reasoned debate, wide employment of populist rhetoric by politicians etc. – the question may arouse, why has the talk show discourse been chosen as an object of inquiry. If representatives of political elites don't mean what they say while participating in the talk show – why bother analyzing their discourse? The answer to this question is entrenched in the theoretical framework employed for the study. Analysis of mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites does not aim at establishing which statements are sincere and which are not. Whereas 'true' intentions beyond each particular statement may remain unclear, what matters most is that the analyzed discursive repertoire is likely to permeate into other domains of discourse, given the popularity of the talk show. Certainly, the discussed conventions of the discursive practice, like a tendency to express statements that are likely to be accepted by most people, should be considered in the analysis. These conventions shape the discursive boundaries of what is acceptable and relevant and thus influence the entire discourse under investigation. Therefore, the proposed study, while mainly focusing on the discursive construction of 'Europe', embraces analysis of the discursive practice within the Savik Shuster's talk show.

### **3.4 Europe as a Reference Point for Ukrainian Society**

Historically, 'Europe' has been a key signifier in the Ukrainian public discourse. Bearing a number of cultural connotations, 'Europe' has been playing a crucial role in the discourse on national identity in Ukraine over many decades (Wolczuk, 2000; Hnatiuk, 2005; Yavorska & Bohomolov, 2010). Ukrainian intellectuals have extensively referred to Europe in their 'projects' of Ukrainian collective 'self'. The mode of references has not been unanimous though. Whereas some have been constructing Ukrainian national identity through explicit identification with Europe, whatever the latter implied, others have been contrasting Ukraine to Europe underlining inherent discrepancies between the two. The competing visions yielded an entire repertoire of representations and identities with regard to Europe and Ukraine – sometimes complimentary, sometimes ambivalent or even mutually exclusive. This complex repertoire has been shaping public discourse on Europe in Ukraine for many years.

While 'Europe' has long been present in the discourse of Ukrainian intellectuals, it particularly emerged as a crucial signifier following Ukraine's declaration of independence in 1991. First of all, the breakup of the Soviet Union brought a shift in categories of collective identity (Dyczok, 2009: 377). As a Soviet identity category was dismantled, Ukrainians faced the need to reconsider their collective self-identification. What does it mean to be Ukrainian?

How does it relate to being Soviet or post-Soviet? Shall Ukrainians seek another supranational source of collective identity? Should it be Europe, Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) or maybe a Slavic union of some sort? All these questions, complicated by a lack of consensus in the Ukrainian society, have been molding national identity construction in the independent Ukraine.

Another discursive facet establishing 'Europe' as an ever more important reference point has been represented by an official discourse of Ukraine's authorities with regard to the policy of European integration. After declaration of independence, Ukraine's leadership proclaimed an ultimate goal of Ukraine's integration into Europe and EU institutions, implying that Ukraine has made not only a foreign policy choice, but defined its belonging to Europe in political and cultural terms.

Both discursive domains, the one constructing 'Europe' as a signifier for Ukrainian national identity and the official political discourse on the European integration, constitute an essential context for this study. Therefore, the purpose of this section is twofold: the first part of the section provides a brief account of conceptualizations constructing 'Europe' as a crucial reference point within discussions of Ukrainian national identity; the second part overviews the official discourse on the European integration as part of the European integration policy pursued by Ukraine since its independence.

#### **3.4.1 'Europe' in the discourse of Ukrainian intellectuals: implications for national identity construction**

Significance of Europe as a reference point for Ukraine has been illustrated by a great variety of competing representations and identities constructed to signify 'Europe' or rather 'Europes' in the Ukrainian public discourse. The role of Ukrainian intellectuals has been critical in this respect as they have been at the front of national identity construction processes. Europe as a reference point played a crucial role in the discussions on Ukraine's cultural orientation and national selfhood throughout the second half of the nineteenth century until the beginning of the twentieth (Zabuzhko, 2006) and culminated in the Ukrainian Literary Discussion of 1925-1928 instigated by a Ukrainian poet Mykola Khvyliovy (Shkandriy, 2006). Khvyliovy called for openness to Western literary models, which presumed Europe as a major cultural orientation for Ukraine (Naydan, 2009). The Literary Discussion, raising critical questions about the models for Ukrainian culture, ended up in a series of persecutions of Ukrainian intellectuals by the Stalinist regime in what was eventually called 'the executed renaissance' (ibid.) While the 'Western orientation' theme

remained largely silenced in the public discourse of Ukrainian intellectuals during the Soviet period, it resurged in the late 1980s following the *glasnost* policy. As many Ukrainian intellectuals and writers in particular surfaced from the underground in the late 1980s-early 1990s, so did the ‘European orientation’ notion. Yet, the ‘European orientation’ theme reemerged along with the other conceptions in a vibrant post-Soviet discourse. Thus, the variety of representations and identities with regard to Europe that shaped competing visions of Ukrainian national identity has been vast; yet, such competing visions have at least one commonality – they have all been developed within a West-East or, more precisely, Europe-Russia nexus (Hnatiuk, 2005).

#### ***3.4.1.1 Ukraine between ‘East’ and ‘West’***

Historically, Russia and Europe have been the two major poles, landmarks occupying a central place in the Ukrainian collective imaginary. Their power and appeal have been conducive to the emergence of ‘being-in-between’ rather than ‘being-in-itself’ mode as a defining mode in the discourse on Ukrainian national identity (Hnatiuk, 2005).

Ukraine between ‘East’ and ‘West’ theme is thus one of the mainstream approaches, within which Ukrainian identity is being conceptualized. Hnatiuk (2005) argues that this approach emerged in the mid-war period of the XX century and reemerged following Ukraine’s independence. In particular, this theme gained popularity in Ukrainian historiography, geopolitical discourse of Ukraine’s political elites. It has also been largely accepted by the Ukrainian mainstream political science (Kudriachenko et al., 2009).

Hrytsak notes that it is difficult to find a historian of Ukraine who would have never written at least once about “Ukraine between East and West” (2011). Indeed, popularity of the formula is exemplified by frequent references to it in the very titles of historical essays on Ukraine (see for example, Lysiak-Rudnytsky, 1987; Dashkevych, 1991; Shevchenko, 2001; Yakovenko, 2005).

Hrytsak himself argued in one of his interviews that,

*“Ukraine as a country, as a civilization, as a people, appeared and developed on the margin of two civilizations – it is a symbioses of eastern-Christian and western-Christian...Due to that, we have to go through a dramatic, at times conflicting, borrowing of some elements of Byzantine and Catholic traditions. Ukraine is a synthesis of Byzantine and Catholic traditions” (Hrytsak, 2008).*

Thus, acknowledgement of Ukraine’s position between ‘East’ and ‘West’ entails reference to Ukrainian culture as a borderland culture, marked by double influence of ‘eastern’ and ‘western’ traditions. The borderland character of Ukrainian culture admitted, its

implications are regarded in different ways, which illustrates diversity of intellectuals' visions on Ukraine. For instance, some historians (Lysiak-Rudnytsky, 1987; Shevchenko, 2001) argued that such a combination of influences has in fact enriched Ukrainian culture, making it unique to some extent. This standpoint implies that Ukraine can and should transform this combination of influences into its strength and use it in a constructive way. The notion of bridge between East and West has been employed within this approach.

Another strand of opinion views Ukraine as a civilizational battlefield, a site of contest between East and West. Hnatiuk (2005: 357-358) notes that this approach, widely popular during the first year of Ukraine's independence, implied a negative or even hostile attitude to Russia. Proponents of this approach underlined that Ukraine's claims of 'Europeanness' are legitimate, whereas Russia has never been part of Europe (e.g. Tkachenko & Reynt). Apart from othering Russia, this approach employs an argumentation strategy aimed at emphasizing Ukraine's Europeanness through reference to such notion as 'the center of Europe'<sup>24</sup>. Hnatiuk (2005: 359) also points out that many Central-Eastern European countries have localities to signify the 'center of Europe', which are supposed to signal about these countries European credentials.

One more common pattern identified in the discursive strategies employed in CEE countries and by some Ukrainian intellectuals within the discussed strand of opinion concerns construction of alternative 'Easts'. Thus, during their EU accession process, CEE countries were trying to shift the discursive border between Europe and Eastern Europe further east and, hence, locate themselves in the 'real' Europe (Kuus, 2004: 479). In this respect, Kuus (2004) recalls the notion of 'nesting orientalism' introduced by Bakic-Hayden (1995) to define a practice of reproducing the dichotomy of Europe and the East but through a gradation between the two. In accordance with this pattern, Central Europe has been constructed as the most European of Europe's internal Easts, Ukraine and other post-Soviet European countries as more 'eastern' East, Russia – as the most oriental. In words of Kuus (2004: 480), 'Each accession country can escape the East by framing itself as the eastern outpost of Europe'. In a similar vein, Ukrainian intellectuals advocating the idea of Ukraine's legitimate claims of its Europeanness have been constructing Russia as the real 'East'. Within such a framework, Ukraine, although established in-between East and West, is constructed as fundamentally European, yet different from the 'entirely' European countries.

The discussed discursive pattern illustrates intrinsic flexibility of such concepts as the

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<sup>24</sup> It is commonly argued in Ukraine that Europe's geographical center is located in the Ukrainian Carpathians, near Rakhiv town, according to the inscription on the respective memorial erected there



‘East’, ‘Eastern Europe’ and ‘Europe’.

Attempts to embed Ukraine discursively into ‘Europe’ have been even more distinct within another mainstream approach to ‘Europe’ vis-à-vis Ukraine, which I define here as a ‘Return to Europe’

#### **3.4.4.2 ‘Return to Europe’**

Whereas historians and political scientists have been widely referring to East-West dichotomy as determinative for Ukrainian national identity construction, Ukrainian writers have rather been emphasizing Ukraine’s inherent belonging to European culture (Hnatiuk, 2005: 345).

Yuri Andrukhovych, one of the most popular writers of the independent Ukraine, suggests a particularly interesting case in this respect. Andrukhovych’s writings of the late 1980s-early 1990s postulated the breakup with the Soviet tradition and the need to reconceptualize Ukrainian culture through reference to European experience. Andrukhovych and the Bu-Ba-Bu literary group, whose names comes from the first syllable of the Ukrainian words for buffoonery, farce and burlesque (Naydan, 2005: 24), put forward a new kind of poetry and performance. They rejected both the Socialist Realist works of literature and traditionalist approach to Ukrainian literature tightly blended with nationalistic sentiments. By mocking the icons of the Ukrainian past and orthodox samples of literature, they established aesthetic freedom as their primary value (Naydan, 2009). Combination of the avant-garde literature and art performance suggested innovation, cultural modernization and implicit orientation to the vibrant post-modern culture of the West.

Whereas the Bu-Ba-Bu writings and performances represented implicit orientation towards Europe and the West as sources of contemporary art forms and culture, Andrukhovych explicitly addressed European dimension of the Ukrainian national identity and identity issues at large. His prose and essays particularly stand out in this regard. Thus, Andrukhovych’s earlier novels *Recreations* and *Moskoviada* define Ukrainian identity in opposition to the Soviet empire as an incarnation of evil whereas his novel *Perverzion* ‘represents the most articulate embodiment of the younger generation’s quest for a new Ukrainian identity within the newly reformulated Europe’, according to Naydan (2005: 25). Andrukhovych’s stance on Ukrainian national identity encompasses two essential notions – an imperative of the breakup with the Soviet empire and inescapable longing for Europe.

He persistently tries to include Ukraine discursively into an imagined realm of the Central Europe thus validating its cultural belonging to Europe. Europe is represented as an

ideal model in his writings, particularly earlier ones. He associates Europe with freedom, respect for individualism and rule of law. On the contrary, Russia is constructed as an embodiment of ‘anti-civilization’ with its predisposition to despotism and collectivism (Hnatiuk, 2005: 303).

Interestingly, it is not only Russia that is stigmatized in Andrukhovych’s writings. He also ascribes barbarian traits to Ukrainians, depicting many of them as vulgar and backward individuals, not good enough to be Europeans. His disappointment with Ukrainians results in the internal othering. His internal ‘other’ is a Russian- or surzhyk-speaking individual from a lower class. Such internal ‘others’ do not fit Andrukhovych’s conception of Ukrainian national identity designed to embrace Ukrainian-speaking, educated, Western-oriented peers. The writer’s disillusionment with Ukraine’s European credentials is particularly manifested in the essays of 2000-2002 (Hnatiuk, 2005: 330), a period of Ukraine’s deterioration of relations with the European Union.

However, whereas Andrukhovych has been increasingly dubious about Ukraine’s chances for Europeanness, he has never questioned intrinsic Europeanness of Halychyna, a western region of Ukraine and Andrukhovych’s homeland. Close historical and cultural links with modern Central European countries, due to the common past within the Austro-Hungarian Empire, are regarded as prerequisites for Halychyna’s essential belonging to Europe (Andrukhovych, 2001). Thus, Andrukhovych has been trying to extend the boundaries of the imagined Central Europe to include Halychyna as a rightful part of cultural Europe (Hnatiuk, 2005). Within such a framework, Halychyna is reserved two significant roles: that of Ukraine’s internal ‘Europe’ and Ukraine’s chance to get integrated into Europe. Indeed, Andrukhovych contrasts nationally conscious, educated and western-oriented *halychany* (Halychyna residents) with largely Russian-speaking, Soviet-minded (read backward) Ukrainians to the East of Halychyna. Halychyna is constructed as a sort of European island in the post-Soviet morass. Furthermore, it is Halychyna’s essential Europeanness that leaves chances for Ukraine’s integration into Europe. While trying to deconstruct the Soviet myths underpinning Ukrainian national identity, Andrukhovych is constructing another one, that of inherently Central European Halychyna. The writer has been criticized for such mythmaking aimed at fostering a new kind of national identity in Ukraine that excluded those not-good-enough-to-be-Europeans (Hrytsenko, 1998; Hrytsenko, 2001).

Whereas Andrukhovych’s idea of a ‘return to Europe’ established Ukraine’s integration to Europe primarily through Halychyna’s inclusion into the cultural realm of Central Europe, other Ukrainian intellectuals have rather avoided regional divisions. Instead,

they have been constructing the concept of Ukraine's return to Europe as a national idea for the independent Ukraine (Hnatiuk, 2005: 374). Proponents of this approach have been putting an emphasis on Ukraine's inherent belonging to Europe that had been interrupted during the Soviet period. A return to Europe would mean re-finding its place among European countries. A return to Europe has also been presumed to signify Ukrainian national identity's orientation towards Europe rather than Russia (Protsyk, 2004). Europeanness as an essential layer of Ukrainian national identity is constructed as the only way to breakup with the Soviet legacy and Russia. Thus, the discussed approach rests on the Europe-Russia dichotomy and suggests an unequivocal choice. It is the 'European choice' that denotes choice of freedom, democracy and respect to human individualism as fundamental values whereas choice of Russia would entail leaning towards totalitarianism, loss of national identity and colonial status with all its implications. Hence, this approach rests on the widely shared perception of Europe as an embodiment of the desired Ideal and Goodness (Horsky, 2000).

Furthermore, some advocates of the 'return to Europe' concept construct Europe not only as a desired orientation, but as an essential condition for Ukraine's being as such. Oksana Pakhliovska, a Ukrainian linguist and daughter of a famous Ukrainian poet Lina Kostenko, underlined in one of her articles that,

*“despite the crisis in the relationship between Europe and Ukraine, Ukraine's **'to be or not to be'** completely depends on the extent of Ukraine's integration into the European consortium. We may debate on the forms and dynamics of the integration. But what is obvious – that is the ultimate necessity of such integration, if future Ukraine is thought in terms of a state, nation and culture, rather than one of numerous silent peripheries of the anachronistic agonizing empire” (2001; bolding – mine).*

Kirsenko (2006) also asserts that integration into Europe is the only viable choice for Ukraine. “...The general direction of development is just a matter of time and it cannot be changed, because the only possible alternative to return to Europe would be a nation's suicide”.

Proponents of the return to Europe have been justifying Ukraine's pursuit of 'European' future through arguments of Ukraine's intrinsic belonging to European civilization and culture. Such argumentation strategy entails naturalization of Ukraine's 'European choice': Ukraine's European credentials proved, its integration into Europe is argued as obvious and natural.

*“At the beginning of the 90s this first decade of Ukrainian independence was regarded through a perspective of the process of – not even integration – but rather reintegration of Ukraine as **an organically European reality** into a*

*political and cultural space of Europe” (Pakhliovska, 2001; bolding – mine).*

The provided quote illustrates the discussed strategy and also exemplifies essentialization of Ukraine’s ‘Europeanness’ as a fundamental quality, which should cast aside questions about legitimacy of Ukraine’s claims for reintegration into Europe.

Whereas the ‘return to Europe’ concept implies Ukraine’s inherent Europeanness that had been interrupted at some point, many intellectuals have been emphasizing that European integration requires a lot of efforts. In other words, although Ukrainians are inherently Europeans, they need to undertake efforts to become ‘fully’ European, they need to prove they are worth a life of Europeans. In this regard, Europe is constructed as a kind of a promised land (Skurativsky, 1992). One can get there only through hard work and persistence.

It is also important to note that Ukrainian intellectuals have been constructing Ukraine’s Europeanness not only through explicit ascription of European roots to Ukrainian culture and identity. Many intellectuals have embarked on reconsideration of Ukrainian culture through the ‘European’ lens. Their analysis of miscellaneous cultural processes in Ukraine aimed at discursive inclusion of Ukraine into the European context (e.g., Zabuzhko, 1999; Pavlychko, 1999).

Conception of Ukraine’s ‘return to Europe’ has been recurrent in the discourse of Ukrainian intellectuals throughout all the twenty years following Ukraine’s independence. However, its popularity fluctuated largely depending on the political developments within Ukraine and relations with the European countries. The very conception has also been a matter of transformations, with certain issues gaining more prominence over the others in different time periods. The time frame of the study, that is, years 2005-2010, provides an interesting illustration in this respect.

The Orange Revolution marked a real momentum for the ‘return to Europe’ concept in the Ukrainian public discourse, which particularly contrasted with the period of European apathy preceding the presidential elections of 2004. Unprecedented civic activity of Ukrainians was widely associated with the nation’s European aspirations. The notion of the ‘European choice’ emerged as one of the central ideas behind socio-political transformations accompanying the Orange Revolution. Those principles and values that were put into the heart of protest movements were denoted as essentially European. Reaction of many Ukrainian intellectuals reflected the general mood of the ‘European optimism’. Along with then elected president Viktor Yushchenko, Ukrainian intellectuals and opinion makers

reiterated that the Orange Revolution evidenced Ukraine's essential Europeanness and commitment of Ukrainian society to the European values.

Andrukhovych (2004) asserted that the Orange Revolution signified 'a victory of Europe as an ethical value' in his speech at the sitting of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly at the height of the Orange Revolution on December 12, 2004. He emphasized that Ukrainians proved to cherish European values of freedom, tolerance and rule of law as fundamentally theirs. His speech included a number of metaphors suggesting Ukraine's deep-rooted connection with Europe.

*"My Polish friend Andrzej Stasiuk writes in his outstanding essay, 'Great things are happening in the East. Ukraine has raised from the knees. These recent cold and snowy November days Europe's heart is beating there, in Kyiv, on Maidan Nezalezhnosti'" (Andrukhovych, 2004).*

*"To conclude, please allow me another poetic metaphor. It follows from the watching at the geographical maps. They all show the same thing: there's not a single drop of water in Ukraine that wouldn't belong to the Atlantic basin. This means, that it (Ukraine) is linked to Europe with all arteries and capillaries" (ibid.).*

The cited metaphors referring to human bodies and organs are called to signify Ukraine's intrinsic connection with Europe, Ukraine's belonging to Europe. That being so, Europe is obliged to accept Ukraine, Andrukhovych's line of argument suggests.

The initial spur of enthusiasm among intellectuals concerning Ukraine's European integration eventually dissolved, as the post-Orange policy of European integration turned to be unsuccessful. While I am addressing these political developments in the next section in more detail, one point should be noted here. A lot of those Ukrainian intellectuals sharing the vision of Ukraine's return to Europe were disappointed not only by the inefficiency of Ukrainian leadership's European policy, but also by Europe's reserved stance on Ukraine's membership prospects. Such disappointment has been articulated into a new overtone shaping the 'return to Europe' idea in the post-Orange Ukraine.

"For the majority of Ukrainians, denial of their European prospects in fact means denial of their identity, a symbolic packaging of them back into the Russian 'Eurasia'", one of the Ukrainian intellectuals commented on the European Neighborhood Policy (Riabchuk, 2006). Riabchuk and some other intellectuals thus noted that a status of Europe's neighbor assigned to Ukraine is offensive.

#### ***3.4.4.3 Europe in the discourse of Ukrainian anti-Westernists***

While Europe is largely ascribed various positive meanings and connotations in the

discourse of Ukrainian intellectuals, pro-Western stance finds quite considerable contestation too. In particular, proponents of closer ties with Russia and Slavic civilization construct Europe as Ukraine's 'Other', emphasizing inherent differences of values. Such explicit othering of Europe is mostly represented in the discourse of politically affiliated experts close to such organizations as *Russkaya Obshchina* (Russian Community) and others promoting integration with Russia. While popular among certain groups of population, this discourse, however, remains quite marginal in the communicative field of Ukrainian intellectuals.

Yet, anti-western sentiments are far not limited to those advocating pro-Eastern or pro-Russian political orientation of Ukraine. In fact, as Hnatiuk (2005) notes, the customary division of political and cultural orientations in Ukraine into pro-Western or pro-European and pro-Eastern (pro-Russian) is a too simplified schema. Instead, neither the pro-Western nor the pro-Eastern approach is homogeneous. Furthermore, there are strands of opinion that do not fit in either of the two schemes. In this respect, the so-called *nativists* represent an interesting case of anti-Westernism in Ukrainian intellectual and literary discourse (Hnatiuk, 2005; Hnatiuk, 2009).

According to Hnatiuk (2009: 203), Ukrainian nativism opposes acculturation and advocates the re-establishment of old values. Thus, nativists regard Europe and the West in general as a source of threatening modernization. Hnatiuk (2009: 203) argues that Ukrainian nativism employs arguments of the nineteenth-century *narodynyky* (traditionalists) that were actively engaged in the debates with modernists on the need of modernization, which was strongly linked to the 'Europeanization' of culture.

Whereas nativist discourse is not homogeneous, there are crucial patterns commonly shared. Ukrainian nativists, represented primarily by writers (in particular, the so-called 'Zhytomyr School'), argue that western models are inappropriate for Ukraine and should not be applied uncritically (Hnatiuk, 2005). Nativists make a big emphasis on the self-sufficiency of Ukrainian culture, which does not require external samples. Furthermore, there is a popular implicit notion of Ukrainian messianism with regard to Europe (Horsky, 2000). Thus, Ukrainian culture is constructed as morally superior to the Western culture, which has suffered from nihilism and consumerism. Within a nativist framework, those Ukrainians advocating appropriation of western models either lack understanding of the local context or undermine Ukrainian culture by betraying its authenticity (Hnatiuk, 2005).

The anti-Westernist discourse in Ukraine, exemplified by nativists, constructs 'Europe' as a potential threat to Ukraine's authenticity, as a colonizer of Ukrainian culture. The ideas of nativists have also been voiced by political elites as the study reveals.

The provided outline of the Ukrainian intellectuals' discourse is rather schematic, as the amount of variations within each of the mentioned approaches is large. It is also quite challenging to classify all the strands of opinion as many of them do not fit into generally accepted schemes. However, this brief outline is supposed to demonstrate two crucial things with regard to the discursive construction of 'Europe'. Firstly, the overview of intellectuals' discourse reveals that Europe is indeed a key signifier in the discourse of Ukrainian intellectuals, particularly when it comes to discussions of national identity and cultural orientation. Secondly, the overview demonstrates divergence of conceptions and representations of 'Europe', which illustrates complexity of discursive construction of 'Europe' in Ukraine.

The discourse of intellectuals presents a significant contextual layer for the study, as those conceptions and representations of 'Europe' developed by Ukrainian intellectuals are not isolated in their discourse. Instead, such conceptions transcend discursive boundaries and find their elaboration in other discursive domains, including the mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites.

### **3.5 Policy of European Integration and Ukraine's Official Discourse on Europe**

#### **3.5.1 Ukraine's independence and establishment of relations with the European Union**

From the very beginning of Ukraine's independence proclaimed in 1991, Ukrainian leadership declared Ukraine's European aspirations. European integration has since been defined as a major foreign policy priority of Ukraine (Kubicek, 2003). Respective provisions were laid down in the legislative framework establishing and regulating foreign policy and national security issues.

An ultimate goal of full membership in the European Union was affirmed in the *Strategy of Ukraine's Integration with the European Union*, a 1998 document outlining the policy of European integration.

From the very outset, the discourse of Ukrainian leadership with regard to European integration has widely embraced the notion of the 'European choice' as a manifestation of Ukraine's essential belonging to Europe (Wolczuk, 2003). Yet, as Ukraine's policy towards the EU was low on substantial internal reforms, the very term 'European choice' has turned to be regarded as an empty truism (Tedstrom, 2001; Wolczuk 2003).

Indeed, Ukraine's movement towards the EU during the two terms of the president

Kuchma (1994-2004) was slow and troublesome, despite certain achievements like actual establishment of the cooperation framework between Ukraine and the EU through signing of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (1994, ratified in 1998). Lack of Ukraine's progress with regard to the European integration during the Kuchma presidency has been explained by several factors.

While the European integration presumes a number of normative criteria to be fulfilled, Ukraine's declaration of intentions to join the EU was not accompanied by respective reforms of its institutions and policies at the domestic level. Instead, Ukraine's post-Soviet transformation under Kuchma was marred by a gradual shift towards authoritarianism, increasing corruption and deficit of the rule of law. Under such conditions, the Western countries, which consistently made it clear that Ukraine's integration bid depends not only on its foreign policy orientation, but also on its domestic reforms and order (D'Anieri, 2005: 90), had apparent reasons to restrain from fostering Ukraine's integration into the West.

However, it is not only lack of reforms and commitment from the Ukrainian side that determined its failed integration into the EU. The European countries have also demonstrated deficit of coherent vision and engagement with regard to Ukraine's integration. Following the breakup of the Soviet Union, the European Community created a special program for the former Soviet Republics – Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS), which was perceived as 'an early indication of the differentiation of EU policy towards the Central and Eastern European countries on the one hand, and the former Soviet Republics' (Vahl, 2003). In the early 1990s, The European Union pursued mainly undifferentiated policy towards the countries of the former Soviet Union (but for the Baltic States), which was predominantly aimed at maintaining strategic stability (ibid.). In addition, the European Union was preoccupied with its internal institutional transformation and accession of the Central-Eastern European countries throughout the 1990s, which all made Ukraine a secondary issue on the EU external agenda. The size of Ukraine, its geopolitical significance with regard to relations with Russia also contributed to that the Ukrainian issue was put off sine die, Ukraine's membership prospects ruled out.

Kuchma's second term in office (1999-2004) marked further deterioration of relations with the EU. The murder of journalist Gongadze, alleged arms sales to Iraq, decline of media freedom – all these developments deepened frustration and the so-called 'Ukraine fatigue' among European leaders (Pavliuk, 2001; Kuzio, 2003). At the same time, such status quo largely satisfied the EU as it allowed maintaining a formal partnership with Ukraine on the



one hand and keeping it out of discussions on observable membership prospects, on the other hand. Since no progress with regard to reforms and transformations was achieved, Ukraine could remain in the 'grey zone' of uncertainty, which proved to be quite convenient for the EU (Kuzio, 2003).

Therefore, when the European Union introduced a proposal for a Wider Europe Neighborhood Policy in 2003, its framework seemed feasible for the development of relations with Ukraine. The European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), designed to cover sixteen countries including Ukraine, was formally advanced a year later, in 2004. The policy has been argued to strengthen relations between the EU and its neighboring partners and suggest a rather deep cooperation in miscellaneous fields. Yet, it also implied that prospects of 'deep cooperation' would keep neighboring countries from demanding promises of membership, at least for a while (Grabbe, 2004). Ukrainian side accepted ENP quite unenthusiastically, since the ENP framework established Ukraine as a 'neighbor' and did not envisage even distant prospects of membership. All these processes and trends shaped stagnation of relationship between Ukraine and the EU in the run-up of the 2004 presidential elections.

Another crucial peculiarity of the Ukrainian leadership's European integration policy in the discussed period concerned a parallel employment of 'multi-vector' foreign policy approach. A multi-vector foreign policy entailed concurrent development of strategic partnerships with several key international actors, primarily the EU, Russia and the USA. Such a framework was argued to secure the best balance of Ukraine's national interests. In reality, however, it provided a convenient and adjustable framework for fulfilling the short-term objectives of Kuchma and his surrounding (Kuzio, 2005a: 61). The multi-vector approach exerted by Kuchma was not driven by ideological considerations, neither by public opinion. Instead, it was utilized to shape current political objectives and react to immediate geopolitical developments. Thus, Kuchma leaned towards the West during his first term as a president because country's leadership wanted to establish Ukraine as an independent actor vis-à-vis Russia and get assistance from international financial organizations. On top of that, Kuchma had to rely on national democrats pursuing pro-Western foreign policy orientation, as he lacked a loyal majority in the parliament. Guided by a similar logic, Kuchma turned to Russia during his second term in the office when he found himself isolated and neglected by the West (Kuzio, 2003; Kuzio, 2005a; Kubicek, 2007).

Kuchma's confusing and contradictory foreign policy, as well as lack of genuine reforms that would transform Ukraine into a democratic and economically developed country, resulted in the widely shared Western perception of Ukraine's European integration

policy as purely declarative (Wolczuk, 2003). Indeed, even despite obvious stagnation of relationship with the EU, Kuchma and the ruling elite did not give up a pro-European rhetoric emphasizing inevitability of the 'European choice' made by Ukraine. However, ambiguity of the multi-vector foreign policy approach also found manifestations in certain discursive shifts in the official rhetoric over the Kuchma's decade. Whereas periods of intensified relations with the West were marked by the leadership's discursive emphasis on Ukraine's essential belonging to Europe and distinct political culture (read – distinct from Russia), eventual deterioration of relations with the EU and increasing proximity to Russia were accompanied by claims of ingrained historical links with Russia that cannot be ignored (Wolczuk, 2000)

"You know my principal position on our foreign political orientation: one cannot interpret our European choice in a too simple way. We must not turn our back on our neighbors, on our own past, which connects us with them", Kuchma asserted in his speech on the eighth anniversary of Ukraine's independence (cited in Wolczuk, 2000).

Another notable peculiarity of the official discourse shaping multi-vector foreign policy approach concerned extensive references to the notion of 'national interests' as imperative guidelines for foreign policy. Accent on pragmatism was also a key discursive pattern within the rhetoric of 'pragmatic nationalism' increasingly employed by Kuchma, as Kuzio notes (2005a: 62). Thus, Kuchma's argumentation strategy framing 'pragmatic nationalism' rested on the claims of Ukraine's self-sufficiency as a source of Ukraine's 'own way' suggesting that Ukraine should not copy 'Western' model uncritically.

All in all, the official discourse of Ukrainian leadership was quite ambivalent with regard to Europe, Russia and 'Ukrainian national interests', which suggests important implications for the discursive practice shaping construction of 'Europe'. On the one hand, the ruling elite rationalized the policy of European integration by references to Ukraine's inherent cultural Europeanness. On the other hand, the reserved reception of Ukraine and its integration bid by the EU provoked a discursive shift: the Ukrainian leadership increasingly argued for the 'Ukrainian way' as a possible alternative to integration, though leaving without explanation what this 'Ukrainian way' presumes. However, the 'European choice' as a strategic orientation has never been explicitly challenged in the Ukrainian political discourse. The attractiveness of the 'European choice' has thus emerged as common sense. Political elites have been widely resorting to the 'European choice' rhetoric to mobilize public support as such rhetoric suggested references to prosperity and development (Svyetlov, 2007). Consequently, the course towards European integration of Ukraine has evolved as consensual in the political discourse, with all major Ukrainian political forces largely supporting

Ukraine's 'European aspirations' but for some reservations voiced by communists (Larrabee, 2007).

Adoption of pro-European rhetoric by all major political elites, although argued by researchers to suggest only declarations, has significantly shaped the discursive practice of constructing 'Europe' since the Kuchma times and continues to be heavily reproduced in the Ukrainian political discourse, as my further overview and analysis reveal.

### **3.5.2 The Orange Revolution, reinvigoration of the 'European choice' and post-Orange developments of relations with the EU**

While relations between the EU and Ukraine had been stagnant for several years, presidential elections of 2004 were anticipated to bring some impetus into the cooperation between the two. Observers pointed out that the outcome of the elections would finally determine 'the extent to which Ukraine will be pro-Western and pro-reform or Russia-focused and reform-averse' (Wolczuk, 2004). Viktor Yushchenko was largely regarded as a pro-Western candidate with a comprehensive reform agenda aimed at liberalization and democratization of Ukraine, as well as facilitation of European integration (Wolczuk, 2005; Kubicek, 2007).

The Orange Revolution, a series of mass protests against blatant election fraud, and eventual victory of Yushchenko drew unprecedented attention of the international community and instigated enormous enthusiasm with regard to Ukraine and Ukrainian society all over the world. The Orange Revolution was placed in a sequence of peaceful revolutions starting with 'velvet revolutions' of 1989 in Central European countries (Garton Ash & Snyder, 2005; Ferrero-Waldner, 2004). It was argued to reveal unthought-of civil activism of Ukrainians (Emerson, 2005; Kuzio, 2005b). Crucially, it is due to the Orange Revolution that Ukraine finally appeared as a 'European country on the cognitive map of many European leaders', in Wolczuk's words (2006: 7). International observers and the media eagerly asserted that the Orange Revolution and Yushchenko's electoral triumph marked celebration of Western values in Ukraine (Almond, 2004; Karatnycky, 2005). Given such a remarkable shift in the image of Ukraine, the Orange Revolution was seen as a milestone in the EU-Ukraine relations signifying a potential breakthrough in Ukraine's European integration (D'Anieri, 2005; Svyetlov, 2007).

Unprecedented response from the Western leaders and societies, as well as active engagement of the EU as a mediator during the 2004 standoff between Yushchenko, his supporters and incumbent leadership, raised expectations about reinvigoration of European

integration in Ukraine (Kubicek, 2007). As a candidate for presidency, Yushchenko had made the European integration bid one of the key issues of his electoral agenda. Whereas ‘European choice’ rhetoric had already been established as mainstream, Yushchenko criticized Kuchma for nominal integration into Europe and contended that his presidency, by contrast, would bring a comprehensive strategy of European integration and its consistent implementation. Thus, he declared Ukraine’s full membership in the EU as his ultimate goal.

Following his election, Yushchenko embraced pro-European rhetoric even more ardently, emphasizing in most of his speeches that Ukraine’s future is in the united Europe. His assertion of the European integration’s imperative rested on arguments about Ukraine’s essential Europeanness. Yushchenko’s argumentation strategy aimed at emphasizing continuity of Ukraine’s ‘European choice’ throughout Ukraine’s history.

*“Our path into the future – is the path that United Europe goes. We with its peoples belong to one civilization, share the same values. History, economic prospects, interests of people give clear answer to the question where to seek our fortune. Our place is in the European Union. My goal is Ukraine in the United Europe” (Yushchenko, 2005a).*

According to Yushchenko’s line of the argument, the Orange Revolution manifested such continuity as it proved the intention of Ukrainian society to develop together with the European democratic countries.

One of the crucial peculiarities of Yushchenko’s discourse with regard to European integration concerned his explicit attempts to distance from any ambiguity concerning foreign policy. By constructing ‘European choice’ as natural for Ukraine, he suggested that it would no longer be a victim of dubious multi-vector foreign policy.

Yushchenko’s vigorous pro-European rhetoric, however, found quite a reserved response from the EU officials (Wolczuk, 2006; Kuzio, 2006; Kubicek, 2007). While they diplomatically welcomed Ukraine’s democratization and revival of European aspirations (e.g. Ferrero-Waldner, 2005), they also insisted on the development of relations within the ENP framework, as earlier planned, and avoided addressing the issue of membership prospects for Ukraine. The European Union extended an initial Action Plan under the aegis of the ENP by adding 10 extra points designed ‘to strengthen and enrich’ the relationship between Ukraine and the EU. Some observers noted that the list of 10 new points signaled about Ukraine’s increasing importance for the EU (Vahl, 2004). Yet, the EU leaders were largely reluctant to specify what kind of relations might follow implementation of the Action Plan within the ENP.

Observers explained the European Union’s cautiousness towards Ukraine by lack of

EU's strategic vision on Ukraine's place in the EU shared by its member-states. It was argued that the Orange Revolution and Yushchenko's victory presented an intricate challenge for the EU (Saryusz-Wolski, 2004; Barysch & Grant, 2004; Wolczuk, 2005; Kubicek, 2007). Whereas Ukraine led by Kuchma or Yanukovich would definitely entail conservation of the status quo, Yushchenko's presidency that followed the Orange Revolution suggested the need to reconsider EU's policy towards Ukraine. Preoccupation with complicated internal processes within the EU (constitutional crisis that followed the rejection of the treaty establishing a European constitution by French and Dutch voters at the referenda, implications of the 2004 enlargement, lack of conceptual consensus on EU future to name but a few) took the focus away from the recently emerged 'Ukrainian issue'. Besides, an active engagement of the Russian leadership into an electoral process in Ukraine and subsequent deterioration of relations between Ukraine and Russia further complicated elaboration of the European Union's response, given the geopolitical importance of its partnership with Russia (Kubicek, 2007). As a result, the EU essentially adopted 'a policy of constructive ambiguity' towards Ukraine in the post-Orange period, according to Larrabee (2007: 51).

While efficient implementation of the Action Plan and reforms by Ukraine's new leadership could become a catalyst for the development of a comprehensive and more straightforward approach towards Ukraine and its membership bid by the EU, political developments in Ukraine after the Orange Revolution rather raised concerns about the country's transformation prospects. Achievements of the Orange Revolution turned to be quite fragile in view of the political crisis that hit the Orange team soon after coming to power. As economic growth stalled, corruption allegations voiced by the representatives of the Orange camp against each other, the country immersed into a heavy political turmoil, complicated by the amended constitutional framework that revealed numerous flaws. Political instability and lack of reforms contributed to the erosion of public confidence in democratic processes in Ukraine (Kubicek, 2007). Thus, Freedom House (2006) reported growing skepticism about Ukraine's future among Ukrainian population, with 59,7% of respondents believing that the country is moving in the wrong direction in November 2005.

The policy of European integration also fell victim of political instability in Ukraine. While the new ruling elite and president Yushchenko in particular endorsed the integration with the EU, the Orange leadership failed to adopt a coherent and long-term strategic framework of Ukraine's European integration, let alone implement it. The European integration as a long-term strategic goal could turn into a uniting idea for competing camps within the Orange elite, but they did not manage to override their immediate domestic

considerations. As noted by Gromadzki et al. (2010: 12), ‘in the context of the intensive power struggle, any strategies requiring long-term commitments, including EU-related matters, were relegated to the backburner’.

Hopes for efficient, coordinated and well-managed policy of the European integration further faded when the new coalition had been established in the parliament following the parliamentary elections of 2006. The new government was headed by president’s major political rival, Viktor Yanukovich, who lost the 2004 presidential elections to Yushchenko. Coordination and management of the foreign policy suffered from the competition between president and government promoting different foreign policy agendas. Yushchenko remained high on pro-European rhetoric, but he lacked political mechanisms and management skills to deliver on his declarations (Wolczuk, 2006: 8). Yanukovich as a new Prime Minister also declared irreversibility of the European integration of Ukraine, noting existing consensus between all the major political elites as for Ukraine’s integration bid (Razumkov Centre, 2007a). However, Yanukovich, as well as his political force Party of Regions, had been consistently criticizing Yushchenko for deterioration of relations with Russia thus suggesting the need to reaffirm strategic partnership with the latter. His foreign policy discourse had thus been reminiscent of ‘multi-vector’ foreign policy rhetoric advocated by Kuchma.

While the Orange coalition returned to power a year later, in 2007, dissent between Yushchenko and Tymoshenko, appointed as a Prime Minister, deepened. Constant disputes between the two and their political forces created a destructive political and administrative environment for European integration policy implementation.

All in all, Ukraine’s progress with regard to European integration during the presidency of Yushchenko (2005-2010) was quite modest, which particularly contrasted with extremely high expectations generated by the Orange Revolution. Internal confrontation within the ruling elite hindered development of a comprehensive strategy regarding Ukraine’s European integration. Given a general lack of reforms, institutional framework for the European integration remained quite inefficient. As a result, implementation of the Action Plan designed to foster cooperation between Ukraine and the EU was selective, lacked consistency and delivered few tangible results (Razumkov Centre, 2007a; Gromadzki et al., 2010). At the same time, president Yushchenko retained a vigorous pro-European rhetoric in the course of his presidency and during the 2009-2010 election campaign. However, general disillusionment of Ukrainians with the developments that took place after the Orange Revolution was extended to include the European integration issue. Expectations set too high, public disappointment with the lack of progress concerning European integration bid turned

intense in the post-Orange Ukraine. This became evident during the presidential campaign for the 2010 elections: European integration was hardly a top issue for most candidates; instead, such notions as the 'third way' and 'neutral status' for Ukraine regained popularity in discourse (Gromadzki et al., 2010: 75)

Party of Regions skillfully capitalized on Orange failures and public disappointment, with Viktor Yanukovich inaugurated as a newly elected president of Ukraine on February 25, 2010. The first year of Yanukovich in the office brought changes into Ukraine's foreign policy. Whereas the new president has been recurrently assuring European leaders of Ukraine's irrevocable commitment to the European integration, observers noted an actual shift of foreign policy priorities towards the so-called 'Russian vector' (Razumkov Centre, 2011). Ukraine continued implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agenda, which is supposed to prepare for and facilitate the entry into force of the Association Agreement, a long-awaited document expected to deepen Ukraine's economic integration with the EU. However, Ukrainian leadership sent contradictory signals to the EU, evoking uncertainty about Ukraine's true priorities with regard to foreign policy. For example, the ruling Party of Regions raised an issue of joining the Customs Union with Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus, which is incompatible with the European integration. The return to ambiguous foreign policy exposed leadership's lack of strategic vision on Ukraine's future and short-sighted preoccupation with immediate interests, observers acknowledged (Razumkov Centre, 2011; Gromadzki et al., 2010). This, along with a general trend towards growing authoritarianism of the new ruling elite, created preconditions for deterioration of relations between Ukraine and the EU by the end of the first year of Yanukovich in the presidential office. Developments of the next two years, which are not covered by the timeframe of this study, marked a rapid decline of relationship with the EU, as Ukrainian leadership has been openly criticized for questionable persecution of former opponents, attempts to curtail media freedom, persisting corruption of the judiciary, lack of commitment to reforms and overall deficit of democracy (European Integration Index, 2012; Razumkov Centre, 2012).

The provided overview of the relations between Ukraine and the European Union over the last two decades suggests several important implications for the study of discursive construction of 'Europe' in the mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites. Pro-European rhetoric epitomized in the popular notion of the 'European choice' was established as mainstream during the Kuchma presidency in mid-1990s. Since then, references to 'European integration' as a primary strategic goal for Ukraine found their way in the programs of most political parties, blocs and leaders (Gromadzki et al., 2010: 72). Thus,

European integration of Ukraine has emerged as a matter of political consensus in the country as none of the major political forces has been disputing this goal (Wolczuk, 2006). At the same time, no political force has offered a coherent policy program on European integration throughout Ukraine's independence. Whereas European integration is regarded as desirable, it is also seen as an abstract and distant prospect by most of the Ukrainian political elites (Wolczuk, 2006: 15). Wide adoption of pro-European rhetoric along with insufficient engagement into development of a comprehensive policy of European integration, as well as discouraging lack of internal transformations in Ukraine, suggest that the 'European choice' has remained 'an expedient political slogan rather than a priority' (Gromadzki et al., 2010: 72). All in all, the 'European choice' of Ukraine has attained a declarative consensus among the Ukrainian political elites, but it has also fallen a victim of immediate interests of elites in power. The ambiguous foreign policy that has largely dominated Ukrainian political agenda throughout the whole period following country's independence, with an exception of the short post-Orange period, aimed at bringing short-term benefits for the ruling elites rather than strategic advantages for Ukraine and its society.

It has been argued that Ukraine's ambiguous foreign policy reflects ambiguity in public opinion and essential ambivalence of Ukrainians' identity (Gromadzki et al., 2010; Ryabchuk, 2000; Ryabchuk, 2003). The next part of the chapter addresses this issue in more detail focusing on survey data revealing trends and patterns in public opinion of Ukrainians with regard to European integration and their implications for discursive construction of 'Europe'.

### **3.5.3 'European choice', public opinion and identity matters**

Arguments about internal ambivalence of Ukrainians' foreign policy orientations do find evidence in the sociological surveys exploring Ukrainian public opinion. Indeed, the number of Ukrainians advocating for closer relations with the EU countries is comparable to the number of Ukrainians standing for cooperation with Russia as a primary priority. When asked to define which direction of the foreign policy should constitute a priority for Ukraine, about 38,2% of respondents mentioned EU countries; 35,3% – Russia, October 2011 poll showed (Razumkov Centre, 2012). The numbers of support of each option, however, have been fluctuating over the analyzed period (2005-2010) reflecting political developments in the country. According to survey data, the highest support for the closer relations with the EU countries was observed in April 2005, reaching 39,6% of respondents, the lowest – 23,8% in November 2009. By contrast, these very polls indicated the reverse results for cooperation



with Russia bid: the highest support for closer cooperation with Russia was thus noted in November 2009 amounting to 52,5%, the lowest – 34,9% in April 2005.

A similar trend has been observed with regard to integration directions viewed as viable for Ukraine: 38,3% of respondents favored European integration, compared to 36% of respondents standing for integration into the Customs Union of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan, according to the April 2012 survey conducted by the Razumkov Centre (Razumkov Centre, 2012). The distribution of votes on foreign policy priorities has been steadily revealing regional discrepancies in Ukraine, with the western Ukraine leaning towards the EU, the eastern and southern regions of Ukraine – towards Russia. Such divergent geopolitical orientations of Ukrainians have been explained by historical legacies and related to those distinct regional patterns in collective self-identification. Whereas respondents from the western and central parts of Ukraine largely associate themselves with a Ukrainian cultural tradition (79,9% and 69,1% respectively), the number of respondents from the eastern and southern regions identifying themselves as belonging to Ukrainian cultural tradition is smaller (42% and 40% respectively) (Razumkov Centre, 2007b). At the same time, quite many Ukrainians from the eastern and southern regions associate themselves with a Soviet cultural tradition (22,7% and 26,5%). The number of those in western and central regions is 5,8% and 17% respectively (*ibid*).

Not only regional discrepancies with regard to identities and geopolitical orientations have been shaping public opinion in Ukraine. Another distinctive pattern identified by observers and scholars concerns internal ambivalence of many Ukrainians when it comes to deciding foreign policy priorities. It has been noted that a large proportion of Ukrainians prefers simultaneous integration with the EU and Customs Union of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan (Gromadzki et al., 2010: 69). In this context, Gromadzki et al. cite Wilson's assertion that, 'there is a conscious Ukrainian' minority and an even smaller minority of 'conscious Russians', and a large mixed-identity 'swamp' in between' (Wilson, 2005: 42 cited in Gromadzki et al., 2010: 69), which explains why the two incompatible alternatives peacefully coexist in Ukraine. Wolczuk (2006: 18) argues that such multi-vectored foreign policy preferences suggest that even though Ukrainians are largely enthusiastic about European integration, they do not see contradiction between EU membership bid and closer ties with Russia/CIS. As a result, Ukrainian public places Ukraine in overlapping integration spaces, according to Emerson (2005).

Indeed, Ukrainians have been largely supportive of the idea of Ukraine's integration into the EU, with the lowest level of support of 40,1% observed in September 2005 and the

highest, reaching to 65,1% – in November 2002 (Razumkov Centre, 2012). Thus, on average about half of the population opts for European integration of Ukraine, as opinion polls reveal (ibid.). European integration is backed by the Ukrainian society due to predominantly positive image of the EU in Ukraine. Viewed as a benchmark of development, Europe is perceived as an attractive destination point (Gromadzki et al., 2010: 71). Various facets of public perceptions of ‘Europe’ are discussed in the analysis chapter with more detail. While Ukrainian society generally favors European integration, the support is far not always conscious and informed (ibid.). There has been remarkably little public debate on the implications of EU membership for Ukraine, on peculiarities of EU policies and regulations etc.

Whereas Ukrainians support European integration, few identify themselves as Europeans, opinion polls suggest. Thus, November 2009 survey showed that only 31,4% of respondents feel belonging to Europe. This pattern has been quite stable throughout recent years, the most recent data showing that a number of those identifying themselves as Europeans slightly increased (33,8% in April 2012) (Razumkov Centre, 2012). Interestingly, young Ukrainians tend to identify themselves as Europeans more eagerly compared to older population. Ukrainians have also been quite skeptical about Ukraine’s European credentials. While most respondents recognize Ukraine’s Europeanness in geographical and historical terms (76,6% and 58,3% respectively, according to the April 2012 survey), they largely don’t view Ukraine as a European country in political, social and economic terms. Ukraine’s cultural Europeanness is acknowledged by 41,9%, according to April 2012 survey (Razumkov Centre, 2012).

It should also be noted that European integration tends to be a youth- and elite-driven project in Ukraine, as opinion polls indicate, which is a typical trend across Europe (Wolczuk, 2006: 19).

The provided overview of opinion poll data suggests some significant implications for the analysis of socio-political and cultural context shaping discursive construction of ‘Europe’. Ukrainian society has largely accepted the idea of European integration endorsed by political elites. However, the reception has lacked conscious consideration of consequences European integration might bring. Furthermore, it has mainly rested on popular perception of Europe as an embodiment of welfare. Such lack of awareness concerning European integration process creates favorable conditions for turning ‘European choice’ into a subject of subtle manipulations and reinterpretations by political elites (Gromadzki et al., 2010: 71). On top of that, ambivalent orientations of the society and social anomie (Panina,

2006) that have been shaping social transformation of Ukraine following the breakup of the USSR and Ukraine's attained independence, suggest a complex environment for the discursive negotiation of identities and representations in Ukraine.

## CHAPTER 4

### METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

#### 4.1 CDA as a Methodological Foundation of the Study

The methodological framework of this study is based upon a complex and multidisciplinary theoretical framework of the critical discourse analysis (CDA). One of the central peculiarities of the CDA framework concerns a crucial link between theoretical premises developed within the CDA framework and methodological guidelines employed in empirical research. As argued by Jorgensen and Phillips (2002: 3), discourse analysis can hardly be used as a method of analysis detached from its theoretical and methodological foundations. “Each approach to discourse analysis... is not just a method for data analysis, but a theoretical and methodological whole – a complete package” (ibid.). Thus, although CDA does offer a set of elaborated techniques for analysis of discourse, they can hardly be exercised without reception of philosophical and conceptual premises distinguishing the CDA framework.

Rationale for choosing the CDA framework as foundational for this study, as well as key conceptual notions that guide the research, are explained in the theoretical chapter of the thesis. This chapter focuses on the methodological peculiarities of the CDA, application of principal theoretical notions for purposes of empirical research and specific analytical tools. The second part of the chapter provides a detailed description of the research process and data overview.

Employment of the CDA theoretical and methodological framework is thus guided by a strong explanatory force it suggests for the proposed case of study, on the one hand, and CDA’s well-elaborated analytical strategy and tactics for empirical research, on the other hand. Unlike some other approaches within a field of discourse studies, the CDA offers a well-operationalized analytical framework and developed instruments that can be applied for research. Furthermore, the CDA has proved to be a valid and productive methodology for analysis of media discourse (van Dijk, 1985; Garrett & Bell, 1998; Wodak & Busch, 2004). With political discourse traditionally constituting one of the major theoretical and research focuses of the CDA approach, CDA scholars have also addressed an emerged phenomenon of mediatized political discourse (Fairclough, 1995), which is a central subject matter of the thesis.

CDA framework has gradually evolved as one of the mainstream approaches to data analysis within qualitative research tradition in media and communication studies. Hence, CDA shares some of the fundamental premises distinguishing qualitative tradition. In

particular, it puts a great emphasis on the concept of *meaning*, as well as ‘its embedding in and orientation of social action’ (Jensen, 2002: 236). Thus, CDA researchers explore how media generate meanings in discourse and how those meanings shape social action. The second assumption of qualitative research concerns the need to study production of meanings in their naturalistic contexts, to the degree it is possible (ibid.). In this respect, the notion of *context* emerges as pivotal. I have briefly mentioned the challenge of context selection as an analytical step in the theoretical chapter; I illustrate this notion further in the chapter with regard to my particular study. The third distinctive feature of qualitative research methodologies pertains to the special role of a researcher, regarded as an interpretive subject (ibid.). The CDA approach considers interpretative capacity of a researcher as crucial, given the essential conventionality of meanings that are to be studied through exploration of discourse. The implications and limitations of researcher’s interpretative capacity are also addressed further in the overview of research process.

One of the central features of the CDA framework is its openness and flexibility when it comes to particular research instruments. While the CDA does have a well-developed methodological ‘toolbox’, it is not something to be blindly copied. Instead, employment of particular research techniques depends on the case of study and research question. Furthermore, it is not only a combination of different research tools that is possible and recommended, CDA-driven research can also incorporate elements from other approaches to discourse analysis, as well as non-discourse analytical perspectives (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002). Multi-methodological perspective employed in CDA-inspired research is thus regarded as an advantage and strength (Wodak & Busch, 2004; Wodak, 2001: 65).

Since CDA is strongly based in theory, particular studies within this framework necessarily refer to various concepts and theories of different levels developed to explain diverse facets of social relations (Meyer, 2001). As discourse analysis aims at investigating wider social practice, references to social and cultural theory are needed to encompass non-discursive elements of the social practice (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002: 69).

It should also be noted that CDA approach to research and its methodical procedures are largely consistent with the established tradition of Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Thus, data collection, analysis and theory are connected in a circular process, shaping dialectical relationship between analysis of discourse and development of theory (Meyer, 2001: 18).

#### **4.1.1 Principles, analytical models and instruments of the CDA employed in the study**

Given the discussed variety of research methods and tools developed within the CDA framework and the need to select those appropriate for a particular research case, I would like to focus here on the models of analysis adopted in this study.

While the CDA approach constitutes a basic framework of this study, it specifically draws upon the analytical model developed by Fairclough (1995; 2001; 2003) for the analysis of discourse and methodological elaborations within the discourse-historical approach (Wodak et al., 1999; Reisigl & Wodak, 2001; Wodak, 2001). Both approaches go beyond textual analysis and emphasize the crucial need to explore contexts of discourse. Since discourse analysts aim at examining complex interrelations between discourse and society, they strongly advocate for an employment of a combination of linguistic and sociological approaches (Weiss & Wodak, 2003: 7). Such a combination of methods is supposed to make the best use of available data. While analysis of discourse presumes examination of various kinds of contexts shaping discourses, conceptual and methodical ‘tool kit’ designed for a particular study has to adequately address different facets of the study case. It should be clarified though that not only contexts shape discourses but discourses ‘influence discursive as well as non-discursive social and political processes and actions’, according to CDA scholars (Wodak, 2001: 66). This dialectical relationship between discourses and contexts illustrates complexity and challenges discourse analysts encounter when they need to operationalize the conceptual notion of ‘context’ for the purposes of their research. One of the ways to meet the discussed methodological challenge, as suggested by the discourse-historical approach, is to follow the principle of triangulation (Wodak, 2001: 65). The principle of triangulation in the context of CDA-guided research implies incorporation of different approaches, theories and a variety of empirical data and background information (ibid.). Thus, the discourse-historical approach emphasizes the need to ‘integrate a large quantity of available knowledge about the historical sources and the background of the social and political fields in which discursive ‘events’ are embedded’ (ibid.). Furthermore, such research should integrate social theories to explain the context and its implications for the discourse under analysis.

I have tried to follow this methodological recommendation by, first, intensive exploration of the socio-political context around discursive construction of the image of ‘Europe’ by Ukrainian political elites in the mediatized discourse; secondly, by including theoretical explanation of the processes of discursive construction within the context of post-

communist transformations Ukraine is undergoing; and, finally, by incorporating elements of such research methods as qualitative interviews and participant observation to complement my data analysis. A more detailed account is provided further in the description of the research process.

Significance of context exploration is also acknowledged in the analytical model developed by Fairclough (1995; 2001), which I largely rely upon in this study. Thus, context or socio-cultural practice, in Fairclough's terms, constitutes an essential facet of discourse analysis. Fairclough's model, explained below in more detail, is a comprehensive analytical framework, well-elaborated for analysis of media and mediatized political discourses.

Fairclough (1995: 56) suggests that analysis of discourse of any particular kind should involve 'an alternation between twin, complementary focuses, both of which are essential', that is, analysis of *communicative events* and the *order of discourse*.

According to Fairclough (1995), analysis of communicative events in its turn should involve the study of relationship between three dimensions of that event, that is, text, discourse practice (or discursive practice) and socio-cultural practice. Within this framework, 'text' refers to the actual content of discourse; 'discursive practice' embodies the processes of text production and text consumption; and 'socio-cultural practice' implies the social and cultural conditions shaping communicative event. It should be noted that socio-cultural practice concerns both situational context of the interaction and more remote conditions of social context and structures (Fairclough, 2001: 21).

The second essential focus of the discourse analysis concerns the notion of 'order of discourse', which refers to the network of conventions that guide and constrain discursive activity (Fairclough, 2001: 24). A more detailed explanation of the 'order of discourse' concept has been provided in the theoretical chapter. Fairclough's analytical model, while distinguishing different facets of discourse, presumes their close relation with each other. Therefore, these facets are to be analyzed in relation to each other, rather than as separate domains. Since discourse is constitutive of identities, knowledge and relations (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough, 1995; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997; Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002), as I have argued in the theoretical chapter, it is through relationship between texts, interactions and contexts that the former are constructed.

Within the proposed model, analysis of text covers traditional forms of linguistic analysis, that is, analysis of vocabulary and semantics, the grammar of sentences and smaller units, as well as textual organization above the sentence (Fairclough, 1995). Analysis of employed vocabulary is supposed to reveal the ways of representations exerted by speakers.

Given a wide range of meanings conventionally associated with a word, or ‘meaning potential’ of a word as Fairclough terms it (1992: 186), the choice of words demonstrates peculiar modes of signification. Consciously or unconsciously, speakers make decisions on the word choice, thus ascribing certain meanings to words, which illustrates some sort of strategic representation of the object of talk or world in general.

Hence, analysis of vocabulary should focus on *wording*: whether the used words are neutral or ideologically contested; whether a speaker resorts to rewording, overwording, euphemisms or dysphemisms etc (Fairclough, 2001: 92). While rewording might signal about conscious attempts to change traditional or widespread representations (Kulyk, 2010: 70), overwording, the use of many synonymous words in one text, illustrates ideologically driven preoccupation of speakers with the matter of focus (Fairclough, 1992: 193). Euphemisms are employed to replace words that can evoke negative reception and thus soften such potentially negative perceptions associated with some words. Dysphemisms, on the contrary, are supposed to emphasize a negative attitude or point of view towards some phenomenon. Thus, the variety of lexical choice options to denote actors, activities, phenomena, domains etc. can reveal different ways of discursive representations, which explains why it constitutes a crucial focus of discourse analysis within the CDA framework.

Metaphor is another linguistic means widely addressed by discourse analysts in the exploration of texts. According to Lakoff and Johnson (2003), metaphors are powerful semantic tools that help to ‘understand and experience one kind of thing in terms of another’. Thus, metaphors are not only matters of language, but rather of conceptual system at large; concepts in turn structure how we perceive the world (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). Therefore, metaphors are seen as a sort of cognitive mechanism and a means of understanding matters (Chaban et al., 2007).

Metaphors not only describe similarities or mediate between two subjects; in fact, metaphors contribute to the very construction of similarities and respective knowledge about the world (Drulak, 2006: 503), thus constructing social reality (Hülse, 2006). What is more, metaphors not only contribute to construction of perceptions and knowledge about certain things, but also predefine the way of thinking about those things (Kulyk, 2010: 71). Different metaphors suggest different ways of dealing with things too (Fairclough, 2001: 100).

The constructive power of metaphors is far not limited to perceptions and knowledge. Metaphors are also crucial linguistic devices for construction of identities. In particular, such types of metaphor as synecdoche, metonymy and personification are widely employed to create sameness and difference between people (Wodak et al., 1999: 43). Thus, metonymies



replace ‘the name of a referent by the name of an entity which is closely associated with it in either concrete or abstract terms’ (ibid.). For instance, countries are referred to replace persons or vice versa. The synecdoche is used to replace ‘the name of a referent by the name of another referent which belongs to the same field of meaning and which is either semantically wider or semantically narrower’ (ibid.) Some synecdoches are termed as ‘generalizing’ for they replace a semantically narrower expression with a semantically wider one. There are also ‘particularizing’ synecdoches that suggest a semantically wider term for a narrower one. Synecdoches are frequently identified in discourse when it comes to constructing representations and identities of countries and nations.

Wodak et al. (1999: 45) also point out that the use of pronouns, particularly ‘we’, is one of key linguistic means to indicate sameness and thus construct common identity. In a similar vein, pronoun ‘they’ is heavily utilized to signify ‘difference’. Constitutive significance of metaphors acknowledged, discourse analysts have been extensively investigating metaphors and their role in discursive construction of knowledge, identities and relations.

Yet, while vocabulary and lexical means constitute one of the central focuses of linguistic analysis of texts within discourse analytical framework, other aspects of texts also find systematic elaboration. Fairclough (2001: 100) notes that textual representation of actions, events, relationships etc. entails choice between different grammatical process and participant types. Such choice, as in the case with lexical choices, signifies ideological, in a broad sense of the term, standpoint.

Analysis of grammatical features of texts can reveal mode of relations prescribed to actors. It is through grammar choices that some actors are constructed as agents, while others – as patients, in Fairclough’s words (2001: 101), with an agent exerting action over a patient. Modality is another crucial concept in this respect. Fairclough (2001: 105) identifies two dimensions of modality. When modality refers to a matter of the authority of one participant in relation to others, it is termed as a ‘relational modality’, whereas modality implying a matter of speaker’s authority to probability of a representation of reality is called ‘expressive modality’ (ibid.). Modality is expressed through modal auxiliary verbs, like *may*, *can*, *must*, *should* etc., which are crucial tools to signify mode of relations between agents and between an agent and his/her claims. Relational modality is of particular interest to discourse analysts as it indicates implicit authority claims and implicit power relations exercised in discourse. Expressive modality, in its turn, is interesting for analysis due to authenticity claims, or claims of knowledge that are evidenced by modality forms (Fairclough, 2001: 107).

Expressive modality does not necessarily presume the use of modal auxiliaries; instead, even statements employing non-modal present tense may manifest expressive modality. For instance, when a statement is framed as a fact, that is, when there are no words indicating assumption or probability, this statement manifests categorical modality. In other words, it conveys a claim of truth or knowledge, which implies that it does not require interpretation, let alone contestation. This kind of modality is particularly typical for some genres of media texts, like news.

Grammar choice also influences the way processes are represented in discourse. Thus, processes can be represented as actions or as events with unclear agency, which is achieved, for example, through the use of passive voice. Unclear agency can also be conveyed through inanimate nouns, abstract nouns and nominalization, when a process is converted into a noun or a multi-word compound noun (Fairclough, 2001: 103). In such cases, there is no indication of the timing of the process, modality and agent. All in all, analysis of grammatical features of texts is instrumental for the study of discursive construction of representations.

The discussed notions and instruments of linguistic analysis have been guiding the analysis of 'text' as an essential element of the discourse under investigation. I have largely regarded them as linguistic means and devices involved in the discursive construction of representations, identities and relations, following the analytical model developed by Wodak et al. (1999) for the study of discursive construction of national identities. Within this model, linguistic means of realization constitute a crucial dimension of textual analysis, in addition to the two other components, namely, thematic contents and strategies. These two other dimensions of analysis are explained further in the section describing the research process.

I have noted in the theoretical chapter and here that analysts pursuing CDA approach emphasize the need to combine linguistic analysis of texts with social analysis in order to provide a comprehensive exploration of discourse. To achieve this, a researcher should examine not only different facets of discourse, like those defined by Fairclough's model, which I primarily rely on, but also the relationship between these different facets. In this respect, such conceptual notions as *intertextuality* and *interdiscursivity* gain particular importance. According to Fairclough (1992; 1995), intertextuality is a crucial dimension of discourse analysis. It is a special property texts have of 'being full of snatches of other texts, which may be explicitly demarcated or merged in, and which the text may assimilate, contradict, ironically echo, and so forth' (Fairclough, 1992: 94). Intertextual analysis of texts, which Fairclough (1995: 61) contrasts to linguistic analysis, 'focuses on the borderline between text and discourse practice in the analytical framework'. Intertextual analysis thus

views text from the perspective of discursive practice, trying to identify traces of discursive practice in the text (ibid.).

Related to intertextuality is another key concept within discourse analysis, i.e. *interdiscursivity*, which refers to the employment and adoption of discursive conventions in text (Kulyk, 2010: 77). Thus, one text may draw on conventions of different discourses, which contributes to the changes of order of discourse (ibid.). Interdiscursivity is thus ‘both a sign and a driving force of social and cultural change’, as Jorgensen and Phillips suggest (2002: 139). According to Fairclough (1995), analysis of intertextuality and interdiscursivity is more interpretative in nature than linguistic analysis, which is largely descriptive. Therefore, intertextual and interdiscursive dimensions of discourse analysis establish links between texts and orders of discourse thus suggesting insight into the role of discourse in processes of social change (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002).

In order to analyze the discussed interplay between texts and orders of discourse, a researcher has to examine the two other mentioned facets of discourse, namely, discursive practice and socio-cultural practice. Analysis of discursive practice presumes exploration of processes of text production and text consumption. Kulyk (2010: 163) notes, however, that such analysis should focus on a systematic observation over repeated patterns that shape discursive practice, rather than on one particular communicative event. Accordingly, analysis should aim at identifying conventions of discursive practice that guide the analyzed communicative event.

Finally, the third facet of discourse analysis, the socio-cultural practice, needs to be explored in order to get a more informed understanding of the particular communicative events, which ‘cumulatively constitute and reconstitute social and cultural practice at all levels’ (Fairclough, 1995: 62).

The next part of the chapter provides a detailed description of the research process, based on the expounded analytical framework. It is aimed to demonstrate how particular methodical notions and instruments have been operationalized and applied to investigate the mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites on ‘Europe’.

## **4.2 Research Strategy and Process**

After elaboration of the research question, the next stage of the study concerned development and design of the comprehensive research strategy that would be most appropriate for empirical exploration of the research question.

In accordance with the presented methodological framework, the study of discourse

followed such stages of analysis:

- data selection and sampling
- contextualization
- textual analysis
- analysis of discursive practice
- analysis of socio-cultural practice and orders of discourse

It should be noted, however, that some of the dimensions of analysis, although presented here as stages, were not designed to strictly follow one another. This particularly concerns the three last stages of discourse analysis. While the employed methodological framework establishes them as distinct facets of discourse analysis, such separation is largely made for the sake of clarity of the analytical model. The actual analysis is instead conducted in a more dialectical way, which goes in line with the principles of interpretative analytical cycle within grounded theory research tradition. I further elaborate on this in the description of respective stages/dimensions of analysis in more detail.

#### **4.2.1 Data selection and sampling**

Analysis of discourse conventionally starts with the selection of textual corpus that would constitute primary data for the study (Kulyk, 2010: 63; Wetherell et al., 2001: 24).

As explained in the introductory chapter, the proposed study is set to investigate the mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites with regard to construction of representation of 'Europe'. The analysis is focused on the case of a popular television talk show hosted by Savik Shuster, which has been selected as an instance of the mediatized discourse. The rationale for choosing this particular talk show, as well as the time frame of analysis (September 2005-December 2010), is also explicated in the introduction and developed in the contextual chapter.

As a researcher, I tried to follow the talk show on a regular basis and watch it in real time. Yet, the analysis is mainly based on the exploration of transcripts of the talk show programs. Therefore, a transcript of one program constitutes a basic textual unit of analysis.

Whereas a detailed account on the talk show format, its history of development on the Ukrainian television and other pertinent aspects is provided in the Chapter discussing context of the study, a few brief remarks on the matter would be relevant here too. Although I constantly make references to *'the analyzed talk show'* throughout the thesis, I have in fact been researching three talk shows or rather renditions of one talk show, which had been broadcasted under different titles on the three Ukrainian TV channels during the selected time

frame of the study. Given different titles of the talk show, I prefer to speak about Savik Shuster's talk show by the name of the host for the sake of convenience, as the talk show has been widely associated with the host and the name of the host eventually appeared in the title of the talk show after its transfer to the third TV channel. The talk show, now entitled *Shuster Live* is still broadcasted on the First National TV Channel at the time of writing this thesis (September 2012). However, its transfer to the First National TV Channel and weekly programs are beyond the research focus of the study.

The time frame of the study has been selected to cover the post-Orange period in Ukraine. The starting point of the time frame corresponds to the launch of the talk show broadcast on Ukrainian television, i.e., September 2005. The ending point, December 2010, has been selected to embrace the first year of the presidency of Viktor Yanukovich, which followed the five-year period of the 'Orange' leadership in power.

Given quite a broad time frame of the study, the total number of the talk show programs broadcasted during this period amounted to 209, which is a hardly manageable corpus of data for the thesis. Furthermore, as the duration of the talk show made up 2,5-4 hours depending on the period of its broadcast, the transcripts of the programs constitute thousands of pages. Therefore, the corpus of textual data has been selected to represent a sample of the talk show transcripts over the whole period of investigation. The sample of data has been designed to provide a more or less even coverage of the entire period. Thus, I have picked up a month (3-5 programs) out of each season of the talk show broadcast on TV, excluding summer months when the broadcast was usually halted until a new television season.

Another crucial principle guiding the sampling concerned the intention to include programs broadcasted during the official election campaigns. In the course of the analyzed period, three election campaigns took place in Ukraine: 2006 and 2007 parliamentary election campaigns, and 2010 presidential election campaign, which had been given an official start in autumn 2009. The analytical decision to include both, the talk show episodes broadcasted during the election campaigns and those evenly representing inter-election periods, has been guided by the purpose to compare discursive patterns shaping mediatized political discourse during election campaigns and periods between the elections.

All in all, 67 programs have been selected for analysis. The table below illustrates distribution of the selected programs by months and channels and indicates which months corresponded to the election campaign periods.

<b>ICTV TV Channel (September 2005 – June 2007)</b>		
2005	2006	2007
October (4 programs)	February (parliamentary election campaign) (4 programs)	February (4 programs)
	May (4 programs)	May (4 programs)
	September (3 programs)	
<b>INTER TV Channel (August 2007 – July 2008)</b>		
2007	2008	
September (parliamentary election campaign) (4 programs)	February (5 programs)	
	June (4 programs)	
<b>TRK Ukraina TV Channel (September 2008 – December 2010)</b>		
2008	2009	2010
October (5 programs)	February (4 programs)	February (4 programs)
	May (5 programs)	June (4 programs)
	November (presidential election campaign) (4 programs)	October (5 programs)
<b>Total number of analyzed programs</b>	<b>67</b>	

Some of the transcripts were taken from the official websites of the TV channels broadcasting the talk show or web pages dedicated to the talk show. In particular, the ICTV television channel has been consistently uploading transcripts and some other information regarding the talk show like weekly rankings and audience share on the special web page of the program <http://svobodaslova.ictv.ua/>. INTER TV channel did have a separate web page about the Shuster's talk show with transcripts available at the time of the talk show's broadcast on the channel; however, the INTER television channel closed the web page when Shuster left the channel with no information left accessible. Afterwards, Shuster created his own production studio and the transcripts of the talk show broadcasted on the TRK Ukraina

television channel had been made available on the official website of the production studio <http://3s.tv/home/>. Eventually, however, the talk show producers stopped uploading the transcripts and deleted many of the already uploaded transcripts from their website. Thus, I have managed to collect all the transcripts of the talk show programs from the ICTV TV channel (starting with the first program broadcasted on September 9, 2005 and ending with the last program hosted by Shuster on this channel, June 8, 2007). I have also obtained the transcripts of the talk show programs broadcasted in 2010 from the Shuster's studio website. All the rest of the transcripts, including transcripts of the talk show broadcasted on the INTER TV channel (August 24, 2007-July 4, 2008) and transcripts of the talk show broadcasted on the TRK Ukraine TV channel in 2008-2009 were provided by the talk show director Andriy Shyrochenkov at the personal request.

The use of the transcripts suggests certain limitations of the study, which are addressed in more detail in the final part of the chapter.

#### **4.2.2 Contextualization**

The next step of the research process following selection of the textual data corpus concerned contextualization of the study. I have discussed the challenges of contextualization in the overview of the theoretical framework and in the first part of this chapter. Indeed, while context is conventionally regarded as an essential part of discourse analysis, analytical decisions on which background information should be included in the study are always complex and bear significant limitations by default.

In order to explore the discursive construction of 'Europe' by the representatives of Ukrainian political elites in their mediatized discourse, I have identified several contextual dimensions or layers that I consider relevant for the discourse under investigation. The first contextual dimension pertains to the notion of 'mediatized discourse'. Since mediatized discourse represents a particular type of political discourse drawing on conventions of the media discourse, I have been trying to provide a background on the relations between political elites and the media in Ukraine. Specifically, I have been interested in covering the role of the Ukrainian media within a broader context of political elites' communication with the public in the independent Ukraine. By providing a historical overview of the trends shaping development of the Ukrainian media over the last two decades, I have tried to address the changing role of the media in the country undergoing post-communist transformations.

The second crucial dimension of context concerns the Shuster's talk show as a

mediatized discursive platform for Ukrainian political elites, which constitutes one of the major focuses of the study. The contextual section on the Shuster's talk show includes background information on the format of the talk show, its development, as well as public reception of the talk show throughout its broadcast on Ukrainian television. The contextual overview also concentrates on the peculiarities of the discursive setting suggested by the talk show and its impact on the interaction between political elites, the media and the public in Ukraine.

Finally, the third contextual layer concerns historical, socio-political and cultural underpinnings shaping discursive construction of 'Europe' as a reference point for Ukrainian society. In particular, I have focused on the discourse of Ukrainian intellectuals and tried to identify patterns of signification of 'Europe' in their discussions of Ukrainian national identity and culture. This part of the contextual chapter also examines official discourse of Ukrainian leadership with regard to 'Europe' within the broader context of the European integration policy of Ukraine. The overview of the intellectual and political elites' discourses on 'Europe' has been supposed to provide a context on the range of the meanings ascribed to 'Europe' in Ukrainian public discourse.

All the three identified contextual dimensions find a detailed elaboration in a separate chapter dedicated to the context of the study. However, contextual peculiarities are also addressed in the very analysis, because I have tried to embed the research findings into a wider socio-political context and demonstrate the interplay between patterns identified in the analysis of the investigated discourse and broader discursive and socio-cultural practices. Therefore, both contextual chapter and analysis constitute essential parts of the study, according to the employed theoretical and methodological framework.

Apart from including a background on the respective socio-political and cultural developments in Ukraine, I have also tried to incorporate theoretical considerations and analysis of scholars explaining social and political processes and changes in Ukraine in order to supplement the provided context and, hence, enhance my analysis.

### **4.2.3 Textual analysis**

The empirical analysis of 'texts' represented by transcripts of the talk show programs has largely drawn on the analytical framework developed by Wodak et al. (1999) for the analysis of discursive construction of national identities. In particular, analysis focuses on such three crucial dimensions of 'texts' as: contents, argumentation strategies and linguistic means. The textual analysis also heavily employed instruments of linguistic research outlined



in the first section of the chapter.

Given the central focus of the study, the first step of the textual analysis has been to determine the boundaries of references to Europe in the overall discourse of actors. The analysis detected the use of such words as 'Europe', 'European Union', and 'European' and contexts of references to them in order to come up with the matrix of thematic contents (Wodak et al., 1999). Thus, the primary category of analysis was *topics* or *frames* that constituted the thematic structure of references to 'Europe' and 'European'.

The notion of frames has been well developed and conceptualized with regard to media texts and news in particular (e.g. Entman, 1993; Entman, 2004; Iyengar & Simon, 1993). In this respect, framing is defined as 'the process of culling a few elements of perceived reality and assembling a narrative that highlights connections among them to promote a particular interpretation' (Entman, 2007). Frames are thus theorized as textual structures that represent social reality from a certain angle. Conceptualizations of frames have undergone intensive development, suggesting various interpretations of what frames might entail. However, a frame remains a somewhat flexible category of analysis that requires clarification in each particular instance of research.

This study employs the notion of 'frame' to mean a semantic macrostructure that shapes a certain aspect of discursive representation. It should be noted that frames are purely analytical categories developed by a researcher. It is not actors of discourse who consciously pack their speech and ideas into elaborated frames. It is a researcher who deconstructs a text by using an analytical unit of frames ascribing certain features to them. Therefore, analysis of frames is largely conditioned by a researcher's interpretation scheme. Conditionality of frames as semantic macrostructures is, however, inevitable, due to a complex interplay between conventionality of language use as such and various dimensions of contextual influences on particular instances of communicative events and language use within these events.

These limitations minded, analysis of text aims at defining different frames of references to Europe employed in the analyzed discourse in order to analytically deconstruct the text and investigate different patterns of discursive construction of 'Europe'. The next step of the analysis is to investigate what kind of identities of Europe, perceptions of Europe and relations between Ukraine and Europe are constructed within each frame of reference. Since identities and representations are a matter of contestation, negotiation and transformation, which take place in discourse, analysis of different frames of references is supposed to reveal such discursive contestation with regard to Europe and Ukraine.

Exploration of the discursive construction of 'Europe' is achieved through the analysis of particular argumentation strategies and linguistic means employed within each frame. In addressing and analyzing 'strategies' of the actors of discourse I rely on the respective conception of Wodak et al. (1999: 32), which defines strategies as specific, more or less conscious or automatized plans that 'serve certain purposes or help to achieve a particular objective'. Wodak et al. (1999) emphasize that the degree of intentionality depends on the examined data, with the extent and significance of intentionality increasing in instances of political communication. In this respect, the analyzed data suggest a case of quite concentrated intentionality, as the mediatized discourse of political elites is heavily marked by strategic formulations. Analysis, therefore, aims at investigating which strategies shape references to 'Europe'.

Analysis of linguistic means is designed to demonstrate how particular lexical units and syntactic devices are used to construct representations of 'Europe' and its relations with Ukraine. For instance, metaphorization of Europe and the European Union, which has been much researched (e.g. Chilton & Ilyin, 1993; Mussolff, 2000; Chaban et al., 2007), illustrates one of the prevalent ways of discursive construction of 'Europe'. The proposed analysis also addresses metaphorization of Europe by the Ukrainian political elites among other linguistic means used to construct image of Europe.

#### **4.2.4 Analysis of discursive practice, socio-cultural practice and orders of discourse**

As discussed in the previous section, CDA framework views textual analysis futile without thorough consideration of extralinguistic factors shaping discourses. In accordance with the employed framework, the next stage of research, following the linguistic analysis of 'texts', concerned analysis of discursive practice, socio-cultural practice and orders of discourse or discursive conventions guiding the analyzed communicative events.

In particular, analysis focused on the two discursive practices: discursive practice of political elites' interaction in the talk show setting and discursive practice of politicians' references to Europe. In other words, I have tried to explore which conventions have been driving and framing mediatized interaction of Ukrainian politicians and their discourse on 'Europe' in the mediatized setting suggested by the talk show format.

Analysis of texts provides a point of access to the discussed conventions. By exploring particular patterns of interaction between actors of discourse manifested in texts, a researcher can identify which statements and modes of conduct find contestation or

challenging and which are left without such contestation. This allows making conclusions on what is assumed as acceptable and what is seen as requiring contestation. However, analysis of discursive practices may go beyond examining texts and involve other research methods.

In order to enhance my analysis of discursive practices guiding construction of 'Europe' in the mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites, I have supplemented my research methodology by incorporating elements of ethnographic research (participant observation) and qualitative interviews.

Participant observation in my case implied participation in the Shuster's talk show as an external observer. After the negotiations with the talk show producers, I was allowed to observe the goings-on in the studio during the live broadcast of the *Shuster Live* talk show program on December 10, 2010. However, I was not allowed to observe the backstage goings-on. Basically I could observe the same things as anyone from the audience in the studio, although I was placed separately from the audience. Whereas my observation capacity was largely limited, participation in the talk show did turn into a valuable experience as it suggested some sort of immersion in the field (Jensen, 2002: 242). Thus, I could observe goings-on in the studio during the breaks, which are not broadcasted on television, namely, what people in the audience do during the breaks, whether they engage into discussions with each other, whether they try to approach guest politicians. I could also observe conduct of the invited speakers during the breaks, their interaction with each other and with the people in the audience. All in all, participant observation allowed me to get a better understanding of the discursive setting offered by the talk show format. Apart from that, I also managed to make two interviews, which are discussed further in more detail.

My research strategy with regard to investigating discursive practices has included interviews with 'stake holders' in order to find out their perspectives on some patterns of examined discursive practices. In particular, I made interviews with the following people:

1) Darka Chepak, then chief editor of the *Shuster Live* talk show. Interview recorded on December 10, 2010, Kyiv;

2) Vitaliy Portnikov, a journalist and political observer, a frequent guest at the Shuster's talk show. Interview recorded on December 10, 2010, Kyiv;

3) Heorhiy Tykhy, editor of the *Shuster Live* talk show and editor/presenter of the *After live* TV show. Interview recorded on June 28, 2012, Kyiv;

4) Volodymyr Venher, an MP assistant (Our Ukraine-People's Self-Defense faction in the Parliament). Interview recorded on July 5, 2012, Kyiv.

My questions to the interviewees have been designed to find out the following issues:

- how they see the role of the talk show and its impact on the public;
- what they think about the discursive setting suggested by the talk show and the very interaction of political elites within the talk show framework;
- how political elites address the issue of ‘Europe’, according to the interviewee’s observations (namely, when they refer to Europe, in which contexts, what they say about Europe etc.)

Those being major points of interest, I have adjusted my questions to the interviewees in each particular case. For instance, when talking to the talk show editors I was more interested in finding out their perspective on the very discursive setting of their talk show. I also inquired about their observations of politicians’ conduct in the talk show. Apart from that, I used the opportunity to clarify some of the technical issues regarding production of the talk show: how they choose topics for discussion and select guests, how they see the role of the host in terms of ‘managing’ guests and a number of other issues. In interviewing an MP assistant, I made more emphasis on the questions relating to the political discourse on ‘Europe’. Thus, I inquired about the interviewee’s observations on popular perceptions of ‘European’ issue among political elites, their standpoints on European integration etc. I also asked about politicians’ attitudes to the Shuster’s talk show, how they define their own role while participating in the talk show, how they see the entire interaction within the talk show and a number of other issues. The interview findings are incorporated in the analysis of discursive practices.

As I have noted in my description of the employed analytical framework, analysis of discursive practices complements the textual analysis. Furthermore, comprehensive study of discourse also requires exploration of the socio-cultural practice guiding the particular communicative events. Analysis of the socio-cultural practice as a third essential facet of discourse is closely related to the contextualization stage of the research. In this study, analysis of context and its implications for the discourse under investigation is provided both in the contextual chapter and in the analytical one.

By combining linguistic exploration of ‘texts’ that manifest discursive construction of ‘Europe’ with the analysis of conventions shaping discursive practices of such construction, as well as implications of broader socio-political and cultural context, I have tried to demonstrate a complex interplay between the discussed facets of discourse. Peculiarities and implications of this interplay are integrated and presented in the analytical chapter and find final elaboration in the conclusions of the study.

#### **4.2.5 Limitations of the study**

Although the research was thoroughly designed, it has some unavoidable limitations, which I would like to address here.

Some of the limitations are inherently related to the very methodological framework employed, others concern more technical aspects of research tools utilized. Some limitations are also specific to this particular study.

Limitations related to the CDA framework largely pertain to the interpretative nature of the discourse analytical research. The CDA framework establishes a crucial role of a researcher whose identity and biases suggest critical implications for the entire research process, starting with the research question formulation through data collection and ending in the actual analysis. Within the CDA framework, implications of researcher's interpretative capacity are particularly manifested with regard to contextualization of the study. Since a completely full account of context is virtually impossible, a researcher needs to make analytical decisions on which background information should constitute operationalizable context of the study. I have tried to address this limitation to the extent it is possible by providing a detailed explanation of contextual layers identified as relevant for this study.

Implications of researcher's interpretations and biases are not limited to context selection though. Development of the analytical model for textual analysis also draws on researcher's interpretation of language use, as I have mentioned with regard to such an analytical category as 'frame' employed in my analysis. Given fundamental conditionality of language use, the actual analysis of discourse that encompasses complex relations between contents of discourse and conventions shaping discourse is a matter of researcher's interpretations. Following recommendations of the CDA scholars (Wodak, 2001), I have tried to address this challenge by incorporating conceptual considerations and analysis developed within other theoretical approaches examining social and political processes in Ukraine into my study.

Apart from the discussed inherent limitations of the employed methodological framework, several other limitations relating to the research procedures and the use of methodical tools need to be mentioned as well.

The first limitation of this kind concerns the data selection process, namely, reliance on the transcripts of the talk show programs made by the talk show staff. This had several implications for the study. Firstly, I could not personally check accuracy of all transcripts given a hardly manageable scope of the textual data. Secondly, the provided transcripts did not include a full account of interaction in the talk show, as I could compare television

versions of some of the talk show programs with the respective transcripts. Thus, some minor utterances might have been uncovered in the transcripts, particularly, when it concerned simultaneous talk of the participants. Finally, reliance on the transcripts did not allow for more in-depth analysis of interaction, excluding such important dimension of interaction as non-verbal.

Another limitation of the study concerns insufficient employment of interviews with ‘stake holders’ as a complementary research method. While the data obtained from the conducted interviews did enhance my analysis of discursive and socio-cultural practices shaping discourse under investigations, a few more interviews would presumably further strengthen my findings. In particular, I lacked interviews with actors representing political establishment of Ukraine, which is explained by complicated access to them. Whereas my only respondent representing political establishment to some extent provided me with contact information of potential interviewees, none of them responded to my inquiries about interview.

Finally, I would like to address one peculiarity of the study, which may be regarded as a limitation; yet, I rather prefer to view it as a proposal for future research. This peculiarity concerns exploration of public reception of the Ukrainian political elites’ mediatized discourse with regard to ‘Europe’. While the research design of this study did not aim at investigating public reception and perception of the analyzed discourse, this facet of discourse does suggest a curious and challenging case for further analysis. A study examining reconceptualization of identities, representations and relations (constructed by the political elites in their mediatized discourse) in other discursive domains of society would definitely bring thought-provoking findings.

**CHAPTER 5**  
**ANALYSIS OF REPRESENTATIONS OF ‘EUROPE’ IN THE DISCOURSE**  
**OF UKRAINIAN POLITICAL ELITES. THE CASE OF SAVIK SHUSTER’S**  
**POLITICAL TV TALK SHOW**

**5.1 General Overview**

With the rationale of the study explained in the opening chapter and analytical framework expounded in the chapter on methodology, this part of the thesis will focus directly on the empirical findings.

In accordance with the research question, the suggested analysis aims at examining how image of Europe is being represented in the mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites. In particular, analysis is designed to elucidate what perceptions of Europe, relations to Europe and identities of Europe are being constructed by Ukrainian politicians in their discourse while participating in the political TV talk show. In compliance with the methodological framework employed, the suggested analysis is focused on the two facets of the discursive construction of ‘Europe’, namely, the very content of the discourse on ‘Europe’ and conventions of the discursive, as well broader socio-political and cultural, practices guiding such construction.

Prior to presenting analysis of frames constructing and shaping representations of Europe – a basic unit of analysis as specified in the methodological chapter – I would like to outline general patterns of references to Europe in the analyzed discourse.

It should first of all be noted that ‘Europe’ is commonly present in the discourse of Ukrainian political elites, which is evidenced by numerous mentions of ‘Europe’ within miscellaneous contexts. Thus, each examined episode of the talk show included references to Europe. Naturally, peculiarities of the discursive setting suggested by the talk show format shape discursive boundaries of references to Europe to a large extent. Some of the peculiarities distinguishing discursive practice of the analyzed talk show are addressed in the section discussing the analyzed talk show within contextual chapter. I would like, however, to mention here some other peculiarities that concern construction of ‘Europe’ in the discourse under investigation.

The format of the analyzed talk show stipulates discussion of issues related to Ukraine primarily, which is manifested in the selection and definition of topics. Mostly those refer to political, economic and social processes within the country or foreign policy issues. As a result, Ukrainian context completely dominates in the analyzed discourse. In this regard, references to Europe are also made in the context of Ukraine and Ukrainian politics. That

Europe is extensively invoked in relation to Ukraine demonstrates its significance as a reference point for Ukraine. Various aspects of Europe's role of a reference point, as it is constructed in the analyzed discourse, are further elaborated in the analysis of frames.

Another crucial peculiarity of the analyzed discursive practice relates to the previous one in some way as it also concerns domestic context of references to Europe. Namely, I mean strategic employment of references to Europe by representatives of Ukrainian political elites that is targeted at internal opponents. Such strategic employment also establishes 'Europe' as a pivotal reference point for Ukraine. What implications this suggests for the construction of 'Europe' and its relations with Ukraine is elaborated in the analysis of particular frames.

Finally, the third key feature of the discursive practice with regard to representation of Europe in the talk show setting concerns peculiarities of the live speech of participants. On the one hand, the talk show format provides for quite unconstrained and spontaneous speech of participants; on the other hand, it stipulates quick shifts of topics, interruptions etc. Thereby, speech of participants is somewhat chaotic and unstructured. For instance, some references are made in passing, some are not clear enough or uncompleted, which does suggest a challenge for analysis. At the same time, such volatility and unstructuredness of participants' speech is prolific for analysis. Thus, the discussed peculiarity of the discursive practice allows capturing a wide range of references to 'Europe', some of which may seem less important or relevant at first sight, but in fact turn out to contribute to the complete repertoire of representations of 'Europe' constructed in discourse. Furthermore, analysis of the whole range of references helps to discern taken-for-granted meanings with regard to Europe, which constitute an important layer of discourse. In a similar vein, ambiguity accompanying a lot of references to 'Europe' in the analyzed discourse is confusing on the one hand; but on the other hand, it illustrates complexity of discursive construction of 'Europe'. As further analysis shows, some references to 'Europe' entail several frames or seemingly mutually exclusive notions. Yet, such patterns should be carefully considered as they suggest crucial implications for the construction of representations of Europe. The proposed analysis, among other things, aims at identifying such patterns and discussing its implications, as further highlighted in the analysis of respective frames.

### **5.1.1 Europe, European Union, the West and 'abroad'**

The textual data examined in this study show that actors of the analyzed discourse use the term 'Europe' more frequently than the 'European Union' and equate the EU with



Europe. Such nomination strategy underlines the importance of cultural and geographical, rather than political dimension of perceptions, according to Hülse (2006). It should also be noted that pattern of equating Europe and the EU has been well established in the internal European discourse too (Tekin, 2008: 736). This, however, suggests a challenge for discursive construction of Ukrainian identity in terms of Europeanness: while Ukraine's geographical and cultural belonging to Europe is acknowledged, prospects of joining the EU remain quite vague. Furthermore, the very necessity of Ukraine's full accession into the EU is a matter of discussion. As a result, actors of discourse are implicitly confronted with the question whether one can be European but stay out of the European Union at the same time? How they deal with this question and what such equivocalness implies – these issues are also addressed in my analysis of frames.

The analyzed discourse of Ukrainian political elites not only equates Europe with the EU, it also constructs Europe as a single and homogeneous entity. This is achieved by means of a generalizing synecdoche, that is, replacing the name of a referent by the name of another referent which belongs to the same field of meaning (Wodak et al., 1999: 43). Thus, for instance, Europe is frequently referred to imply European/EU states as a whole or even some specific European states without proper explanation what is meant by 'Europe'.

Remarkably, differences within Europe are practically not admitted. Although occasionally some actors note that Europe consists of many countries and there are different practices within Europe, such claims are quite irregular. Instead, 'Europe' is predominantly represented as a homogeneous entity in the discourse. It is also crucial to note that diversity in Europe is largely overlooked in the analyzed discourse. Issues that could undermine perception of Europe as homogeneous like migration are not invoked.

In a similar way, the notion 'European' is being constructed by means of a generalizing synecdoche. 'European' as an attribute and a signifier is extensively employed in the analyzed discourse to denote an immense variety of things. Thus, generalizations of 'Europe' and 'European' demonstrate that they are both seen as homogeneous notions that are hardly problematized in the discourse.

Closely related to Europe are two other notions invoked in the discourse – namely, the 'West' and 'abroad'. Both are sometimes used to mean European states, as the context of their employment suggests. However, the use of these two concepts bears even more ambiguity compared to 'Europe'. Thus, the 'West' is loosely alluded to mean European/EU countries, EU countries and the United States or western developed countries in general. Moreover, the notion of 'West' is frequently invoked for particular emphasis on the US as part of the 'West'.

In this regard, the ‘West’ implies NATO and NATO member-states. The latter strand in references to ‘West’ suggests some negative overtones, which are, however, mostly related to the US and its foreign policy. In this respect, references to ‘West’ reproduce to some extent negative connotations prescribed to the ‘West’ and NATO in the Soviet discourse (Yavorska & Bohomolov, 2010).

At the same time, analysis suggests that notions of ‘East’ and ‘West’, a powerful conceptual dichotomy distinguishing many geopolitical and geocultural discourses, are largely translocated into local domain in the examined discourse. Thus ‘West’ is primarily referred to mean ‘western Ukraine’, ‘East’ – Eastern Ukraine. Yavorska and Bohomolov (2010: 16) also note that East-West dichotomy has a ‘locally-ethnographic’ character in the Ukrainian culture in the first instance and does not presuppose cultural implications the dichotomy bears for the Western cultures.

The notion ‘abroad’ also presents an interesting case for analysis, because while it presumably should denote any spatial unit beyond one’s borders, contexts of references reveal that the notion ‘abroad’ is largely employed to denote European/Western countries. This pattern suggests that Europe indeed represents a crucial reference point for Ukraine, which finds extensive illustration in the discourse under investigation. That Europe and West are regarded as key landmarks is also evidenced by occasional references to the ‘world’ or even ‘the entire world’ also implying European/Western countries. Thus, discourse of Ukrainian political elites demonstrates adherence to Eurocentrism. Along with Europe, Russia represents another crucial reference point in Ukrainian discourse; yet, its role differs from that of Europe, which is further explicated. It is notable that other geopolitical entities are scarcely present on the common mental map referred to in the discourse.

Another pattern of references to the notion of ‘abroad’ concerns preferred employment of this notion compared to ‘Europe’ for more negative contexts. As the provided quote illustrates, ‘abroad’ is invoked to speak about negative aspects of relations with European countries.

***Yuriy Lutsenko** (former Minister of Internal Affairs, Our Ukraine-People’s Self-Defense Bloc): “I personally know a lot of examples when unfortunately Ukrainians are treated **abroad** as third-rate people. As a Minister of Internal Affairs I constantly receive such information. In that very Germany, with that very Consulate, with that very Embassy. Last year in December a bus with our workers was stopped...” (May 15, 2009, TRK Ukraine; bolding-mine)*

Instead, explicit references to ‘Europe’ predominantly go with positive contexts. This is explained by an overwhelmingly positive image of Europe in Ukraine, which finds

evidence in numerous positive lexicalizations attributed to ‘Europe’ and ‘European’ in the analyzed discourse and beyond. Such lexicalizations contribute to the construction of ‘Europeanness’ as inherently good and positive. The suggested quote below exemplifies the pattern of ascribing positive traits to the signifier ‘European’ through synonymous use of positive lexicalizations and the term ‘European’ side by side. Detailed overview of such positive lexicalizations and their implications is provided in the analysis of employed frames.

*Vyacheslav Kyrylenko (MP, then leader of Our Ukraine-People’s Self-Defense Bloc’s faction in the Parliament): “There can be many discussions, but after early elections the president, democratic majority in the parliament and the government – these are people who have a fundamentally common view on the future of Ukraine. And they see this country as a democratic, free, transparent, **European** and economically developed. For the sake of this goal we should overcome all discussions that can arise on our way to this.” (February 22, 2008, INTER, bolding-mine)*

### **5.1.2 Personification of Europe**

Among linguistic means used for constructing image of ‘Europe’, personification is of particular importance as it reveals patterns defining construction of relations between several entities, like Europe and Ukraine in the analyzed case. Analysis suggests that Europe is extensively personified in the discourse of the talk show’s participants, that is, described in a humanized, anthropomorphized form. According to Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 33), personification allows to understand a broad variety of experiences with nonhuman entities in terms of human practices, characteristics etc. Personification of states and geopolitical entities like continents, regions etc. has been widely employed in international relations discourse. Drulak (2006: 502), referring to Chilton and Lakoff (1999), argues that ‘most international thinking is embedded in the metaphorical belief that ‘states are persons’ or, more generally, ‘states are containers’’. Such metaphors enable us to think about states or other entities in terms of their bodies, mental and physical activities etc. Metaphors of personification are crucial for the construction and maintenance of collective identities (Yavorska and Bohomolov, 2010). The way states or communities are ascribed capacity to think, act and feel exemplifies discursive construction of collective identities in action. Similarly, modes of activities between several entities described in human terms reveal construction of relations between these entities, which is of peculiar interest for the proposed study.

Analysis of the mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites shows that they construct both Europe and Ukraine as humanized entities and frame relations between them in humanized terms. Both Europe and Ukraine are represented as actors with capacity to act,

think, interact and develop different modes of relations. The inexhaustive list of references exemplifying personification of Europe and Ukraine identified in the analyzed discourse includes the following: ‘Europe shuddered’, ‘Europe is concerned’, ‘does Europe need us?’, ‘we owe Europe’, ‘we should seek solution together with Europe’, ‘are we going to lie to Europe?’ and many others. A wide variety of such references suggests different patterns for construction of identities of Europe and Ukraine and relations between them. Therefore, more detailed analysis of such patterns is presented further in the analysis of frames.

## **5.2 Thematic Structure of References to ‘Europe’. Frames of References Employed in the Construction of ‘Europe’**

The provided brief outline of discursive peculiarities shaping construction of ‘Europe’ in the examined discourse is developed further within discussion of respective frames. Analysis of the whole range of references to ‘Europe’ and ‘European’ established such major frames employed to refer to ‘Europe’:

- Europe as a geographical entity or ‘geographical’ frame
- Europe as a model and a source of norm(s)
- Europe as an advanced civilization
- Europe as a geopolitical pole or ‘geopolitical’ frame

I have noted in the methodological chapter that frames are analytical categories, not an accurate reflection of the contents of discourse. Therefore, the suggested list of frames represents one way of structuring the contents of the discourse, which may in fact be multiple. Accordingly, elaboration of frames and their analysis is largely conditioned by interpretations of a researcher, which should be taken notice of.

The identified frames are quite broad and indicate major macro-themes within which ‘Europe’ and ‘European’ are alluded to. In-frame peculiarities and patterns, as well as sub-topics are addressed in the analysis.

The proposed scheme of frames is not clear-cut: identified frames are not mutually exclusive. Thus, many references to ‘Europe’ found in the analyzed discourse imply several frames. Furthermore, a lot of references within this or that frame entail ambiguity. What may seem as fuzziness is in fact illustration of complexity of discursive construction of identities, representations and relations.

One final observation should be pointed out before presenting analysis of frames. The observation concerns dynamics of discursive construction of ‘Europe’ over the analyzed period. My analysis suggests that general patterns of discursive construction and frames

employed in construction largely remained consistent over the time span of analysis. This particularly concerns employment of the three first frames that are quite evenly reproduced in the discourse. The major discursive shift occurred with regard to the ‘geopolitical’ frame during the presidential election campaign in Ukraine in late 2009. This shift, as further elaborated in my analysis, is primarily related to the changes of political context in the country and ‘demands’ of discursive practice accompanying election campaigns. At the same time, changes of the talk show’s location on Ukrainian TV channels have basically not affected discursive practice of constructing ‘Europe’. While minor changes were introduced into the format of the talk show in the course of its relocations, contributing to certain shifts in the general discursive setting (as highlighted in the background chapter), their impact on the discursive practice of constructing ‘Europe’ has not been detected by analysis.

### **5.2.1 Europe as a geographical entity**

A large number of references to ‘Europe’ identified in the analyzed discourse entail purely geographic connotations, like, for example, mentions of Europe as a destination point for gas transit. On the one hand, such references are of less significance for the proposed study as they are more or less straightforward and clear. On the other hand, their seeming simplicity and obviousness does suggest a certain trap. While such geographical references may seem devoid of ideological connotations and effects, this is far not the case. The way Europe has been constructed as a geographical concept entailing cultural and political connotations has been widely addressed by historians and scholars (e.g. Wolff, 1996; Kuus, 2004; Eder, 2006).

Analysis suggests that Europe as a geographical entity, a territory is primarily associated in the discourse of Ukrainian political elites with the Western European developed countries, including such non-EU states as Switzerland and Norway. At the same time, actors of discourse frequently refer to the Eastern European countries when talking about ‘Europe’, which suggests that they perceive them as inherently European too. Thus, the analyzed discourse establishes Europe as a geographical region comprising EU member-states and non-EU Western European states. There are also occasional references to Balkan countries as geographically European, although political status of some of them (like Kosovo) is uncertain. On the whole, ‘Europeanness’ in geographical terms is not a matter of discussion or contestation in the examined discourse, which implies that geographical ‘Europeanness’ is admitted as a fact, i.e. being conventionally naturalized in the discourse.

Interesting in this regard is ascription of geographical ‘Europeanness’ to Ukraine.

Ukraine's geographical belonging to Europe is not questioned in the analyzed discourse. Ukraine is constructed as part of Europe both explicitly and implicitly.

Below are several examples explicitly denoting Ukraine's 'Europeanness' in geographical terms.

*Vyacheslav Kyrylenko (MP, Our Ukraine-People's Self-Defense Bloc): "Ukraine is a wise country in the very center of Europe". (May 29, 2009, TRK Ukraine).*

*Arseniy Yatsenyuk (MP, Our Ukraine-People's Self-Defense Bloc, candidate for Presidency at the time of program): "We must realize that we are not a secondary European country. And those who don't know geography well...I will present them with a map... We are Europe..." (November 20, 2009, INTER).*

It is noteworthy that explicit claims of Ukraine's 'Europeanness' within the geographical frame widely employ the notion of 'the center of Europe' to discursively locate Ukraine in. Employment of this notion is supposed to emphasize obviousness of Ukraine's European credentials and legitimacy of assertion of its 'Europeanness'. I have mentioned in the contextual chapter that similar claims were made in many Central-Eastern European countries with their different localities ascribed the role of 'geographical center of Europe' (Hnatiuk, 2005: 359).

Apart from explicit ascription of 'Europeanness' to Ukraine, many references imply this in a less straightforward way:

*Oleksandr Yefremov (MP, leader of Party of Regions' faction in the Parliament): "...and in 2004 Ukraine showed the best results, if you remember, Leonid Makarovich: 12,6% of GDP growth. That was the best rate in Europe". (February 06, 2009, TRK Ukraine)*

*Liliya Hryhorovych (MP, Our Ukraine-People's Self-Defense Bloc): "But Ukraine is a major transit country in Europe". (February 02, 2008, INTER)*

Analysis shows that references to Europe within the geographical frame do not yield contestation among actors of discourse. Thus, geographical 'Europeanness' is conventionalized. However, many references to 'Europe' in geographical terms find further elaboration within other frames that imply various cultural and geopolitical connotations, inducing contestation in the discourse.

### **5.2.2 Europe as a model and a source of norm(s)**

Europe as a model of the best practices is the most recurrent frame in the analyzed discourse of Ukrainian elites. It is widely employed, both implicitly and explicitly, through

reference to ‘European experience’ as relevant and meaningful for Ukraine. Examples of ‘European’ practices that are widely provided by actors of discourse are constructed as normative and desirable. ‘Europe’ and ‘European’ turn out to be criteria of quality in broad terms and references to them are used as an ultimate argument for or against this or that decision/practice/viewpoint etc. Analysis of contexts of references to ‘Europe’ and ‘European’ shows that such references are part of discursive strategies of legitimization and deligitimization. Thus, politicians tend to refer to European practices and norms (often subjectively perceived as such) to legitimize their proposals, decisions and practices or to undermine and deligitimize such practices and decisions of their opponents.

**Yuriy Karmazin** (MP, Our Ukraine-People’s Self-Defense Bloc): “Among other things President told that a 5-year term of tenure for Verkhovna Rada and local councils will not contribute to the democratization. When in Europe they also reduce terms of tenure to three years. In order to change elites more frequently so that they didn’t get brazen, didn’t rob the country to the end. So did President say something bad? Well said.” (February 10, 2006, ICTV)

**Nestor Shufrych** (MP, Party of Regions of Ukraine): “You should know: you have now pulled out a so-called pseudonational idea with all threats it bears. Please tell why countries of Europe do not produce nuclear energy, fuel elements at home? France? Just one country. But this is very dangerous. Because those who produce it have to bury waste products at home. If you want that Ukrainians had nuclear waste products buried at their home – this is your stand. I’m strongly against.” (February 17, 2006, ICTV)

**Oleksandr Yefremov** (MP, leader of Party of Regions’ faction in the Parliament): “Therefore we have to talk about budgetary federalism. That’s what Sarkozy launched in Europe.” (October 10, 2008, TRK Ukraine)

The provided examples suggest that references to ‘European experience’ are used as a sort of an ultimate argument in the discussion, which is supposed to ‘disarm’ opponents. Claims explicitly formulated as ‘so does Europe’ or ‘so is done in Europe’ are commonly voiced by actors of the analyzed discourse, which also implies embedded logic of reference to ‘Europe’ as an ultimate argument.

**Oleksandr Lavrynovych** (then Minister of Justice): “And I tend to support that Ukrainian people delegated authority to a single body – parliament, as it is done in most countries not only of Europe, but in the world”. (February 2, 2007, ICTV)

Notably, the majority of references to ‘European’ practices are uncritical since effectiveness and usefulness of respective practices are hardly ever questioned and debated.

The frame of ‘Europe as a model’ is also articulated through comparisons of practices and processes taking place in Ukraine and ‘Europe’. The analyzed textual data show that

Ukrainian political elites commonly allude to ‘Europe’ in their estimations of situation in Ukraine. In such comparisons Ukraine is largely represented as backward in contrast to the developed ‘Europe’.

*Inna Bohoslovska (then leader of “Viche” Party, later MP, Party of Regions’ faction in the Parliament): “How to compete? My gentlement, the entire budget of Ukraine is equal to the budget of one European city. What are you talking about, what equal competition? We have to develop our own market for 15 years and you are going to engage in competition.” (February 17, 2006, ICTV)*

*Nestor Shufrych (MP, Party of Regions of Ukraine): “This is abnormal that we have the most expensive meat in Europe. So the next step is either we decrease the prices and make them at least equal to average European – because we are already in Europe and further according to prices, or Hryvnia crashes and then dollar prices for first-need goods will get equal with those in neighboring countries.” (February 17, 2006, ICTV).*

*Vasyl Onopenko (then judge of the Supreme Court of Ukraine, affiliated with Yuliya Tymoshenko’s Bloc): “Whereas in many countries of Western Europe about 10-12 percent are condemned to imprisonment, in Ukraine this index is 36 percent...This is a very dangerous statistics.” (May 19, 2006, ICTV)*

While Ukraine, as usually argued, lags behind superior Europe, comparisons of the two imply relevance of ‘Europe’s experience that is supposed to serve as an example of how everything should work. While the notion of ‘European experience’ is very widespread, references to particular European countries are also quite extensive. Specifically, there are references to Poland and other post-communist Eastern European countries (likely due to a shared view of common political and socio-cultural context of countries’ development), but also to France, Germany and some other western European countries (which perhaps can be explained by a popular perception of France and Germany as successful leaders of ‘Europe’). However, it is crucial to note that although actors of discourse refer to particular European countries as models of practices, the notion of ‘European experience’ is prevailing, which bears important implications for the construction of identity of ‘Europe’ and knowledge about ‘Europe’, as further highlighted.

Within the discussed frame, ‘Europe’ is also constructed as an embodiment and a source of norm(s). In this respect, the popular notion of the ‘European standards’ is especially illustrative. This notion is invoked to signify the best/the highest standards in a number of fields (public administration and economic policies prevailing among others but not limited to those).

*Vasyl Onopenko (then Chairman of the Supreme Court of Ukraine, affiliated with*



*Yuliya Tymoshenko's Bloc*: "We need to understand: those who raise issue of European standards (mean that) European standard implies an accessible court, an independent court." (June 27, 2008, INTER)

It is worth noting that the majority of references to the 'European standards' are articulated as self-explanatory and frequently go without explanation what actually is behind those 'standards', like in the suggested quotes below.

**Hryhoriy Nemyria** (then MP, *ByuT* faction in the parliament, later Deputy Prime Minister responsible for European integration policy): "I think we should avoid unneeded rhetoric and talk about more practical issues. The thing is about standards. What standars are people talking about in Ukraine? European standards. Have you ever heard anyone talking about CIS standarts? They simply don't exist." (May 05, 2006, ICTV)

**Vyacheslav Kyrylenko** (MP, *Our Ukraine-People's Self-Defense Bloc*): "If the government undergoes a real change, not in terms of faces but at least in the way of actions – we will really approach European standard then and Ukraine will finally define its identity." (February 12, 2010, TRK Ukraine)

Similar to the notion of 'European standards' is another popular formula of 'European way' of doing things, which is also employed as self-explanatory. Actors of discourse employ the term '*po-yevropejsky*' (literally translated as 'in a European way') to denote certain mode of conduct, which does not find elaboration but rather alludes to perception of 'European' as a synonym to good.

The use of the two discussed notions – the way they are conveyed and contexts of employment – suggests that they are regarded as commonsensical by actors of discourse. This brings us to another important layer of signification of 'Europe' in the discourse of Ukrainian elites, that is, construction of knowledge about 'Europe' and identity of 'Europe' within the analyzed frame.

#### ***5.2.2.1 Europe as a model: knowledge and identity of 'Europe' behind the frame***

As I have mentioned in the previous section, the frame of 'Europe as a model' is commonly communicated through references to 'European standards' and 'European way of doing things', which usually go without explanation what 'European' means in such cases. Instead, such references entail implicit, yet obvious assumption that 'European' is equated to 'good' by default. This leads to conclusion that the analyzed discourse relies on the concept of 'Europe' as a source of everything good as common sense on the one hand; and contributes to the reproduction of this concept by not questioning it on the other hand. It is precisely this logic that makes an adjective 'European' a self-explanatory signifier of goodness. As a result,

representatives of political elites refer to ‘European’ in an astonishing and at times confusing variety of contexts, ranging from ‘European system of power’, ‘European way of life’ to ‘European salaries’.

**Mykola Rudkovsky** (MP, Socialist Party of Ukraine): “I was surprised that President who declares a European choice, European way of life, movement towards Europe does not support changes into the Constitution that make Ukrainian society and system of government European...” (February 10, 2006, ICTV)

**Yuriy Miroshnychenko** (MP, Party of Regions of Ukraine): “Today many people say here ... that they are ready to pay and that we should pay European prices for gas. I agree with this. And I would vote with my two hands for this. But only when our citizens receive European salaries.” (February 15, 2008, INTER)

While most references to ‘European’ experience within the analyzed frame rely on taken for granted assumption that ‘European’ means something good and, consequently, relevant examples for Ukraine, there are rare instances of questioning relevance of such experience for Ukraine.

**Leonid Kravchuk** (First President of the Independent Ukraine): “But we shouldn’t compare ourselves with Europe today. Europe has been living for a thousand of years, five hundred years – she came through it. And we’ve been living for 14 years” (February 24, 2006, ICTV).

However, even these rather exceptional claims questioning relevance of European experience, do not contest essential ‘goodness’ or ‘rightness’ of European practices. This again contributes to the construction of knowledge about ‘Europe’ as a realm of best practices.

Along with implicit signification of ‘Europe’ and ‘European’ as embodiment of ‘goodness’, such signification is also manifested in explicit attribution of positive traits to ‘Europe’ and ‘European’ in particular. Within the analyzed frame, the notion ‘European’ is mentioned among a number of positive lexicalizations, presuming a synonymous relation between European and those positive lexicalizations. The discourse actors refer to ‘European’ as a synonym of high quality, well-functioning, democratic, developed etc.

Remarkably, the adjective ‘European’ very often goes hand in hand with such attribute as normal. Thus, Europe is ascribed normality, against which Ukraine has to measure itself.

**Yevhen Kushnariov** (MP, Party of Regions of Ukraine): “I stand for that you created not a Utopian opposition, as your bill suggests, but a real, normal, European opposition” (September 15, 2006, ICTV)

**Serhiy Vlasenko** (MP, BYuT faction): “I would like to draw attention that Yuliya

*Tymoshenko did not immediately go to court. Yuliya Tymoshenko addressed her political rival and said: “Dear political competitors, the breach is very small. A normal European tradition suggests to make a recount of votes in such cases so that no one had doubts.” (February 19, 2010, TRK Ukraine)*

It seems reasonable, however, to assume that the word ‘normal’ in the above mentioned examples bears connotations of normative, i.e. ‘European’ is represented here not just as something regular and common, but rather as appropriate.

Another important implication of the provided examples concerns construction of ‘Europeanness’ in terms of practices within the discussed frame. Abundant use of the notion ‘European’ in a variety of contexts signifies that its meaning goes much further beyond establishing geographical location/belonging etc. Within ‘Europe as a model’ frame, ‘Europeanness’ is established through adherence to certain practices.

***Petro Poroshenko** (then Chairman of Council of the National Bank of Ukraine, affiliated with Our Ukraine-People’s Self-Defense Bloc): “Today the principle of Europeanness lies in that issues are resolved in the parliament, not on the streets.” (February 29, 2008, INTER)*

As the example suggests, one is European as long as one does this or that in a ‘European’ manner, whatever the latter means. Thus, being ‘European’ implies commitment to certain practices and modes of conduct.

In this respect, attribution of the word ‘European’ in relation to Ukraine is particularly interesting. The statement “we are a European country” is common as an argument for or against some decisions or practices rather than a statement on geographical belonging.

***Anatoliy Hrytsenko** (then Minister of Defense, affiliated with Our Ukraine-People’s Self-Defense Bloc): “The first argument: we are a European country. And we will have politicians, not generals, in our government. We won’t have generals. And there are no politicians-generals in European countries. A general either commands troops or – if there are no available troops – resigns.” (September 7, 2007, INTER)*

In a similar vein, attribution of ‘European’ to Ukraine is used in a popular formula “If we are to be a European country, we need to do this and that”.

***Natalia Vitrenko** (leader of Progressive Socialist Party of Ukraine): “You know, I really want that all national minorities, all linguistic groups were protected in Ukraine. Then Ukraine would be a truly civilized, European country. ” (February 24, 2006, ICTV)*

Thus, although Ukraine's belonging to Europe in geographical terms is not questioned in the analyzed discourse, its (potential) Europeanness is regarded through the prism of practices and is conditioned by such practices.

This bears significant implications for the construction of Ukraine's identity vis-à-vis Europe and relationship between Ukraine and Europe, which is discussed in the next section.

### *Europe as a land of welfare*

Analysis of references to 'Europe' and 'European' within 'Europe as a model' frame also shows that Europe is associated primarily with prosperity and development. In this context, 'European' is constructed as a synonym of high quality, which is manifested in popular notions of 'European standards of living' and 'European quality of life'.

**Kyrylo Kulykov** (MP, *Our Ukraine-People's Self-Defense Bloc*): *"What difference does it make for people sitting over there which vector we are going to have? 'European' just sounds better than, say, 'northern' or 'Zimbabwean', or 'Mongolian'. European means European standard of quality of life. People want to live well, have high standards of living."* (February 12, 2010, TRK Ukraine)

The provided quote is quite illustrative in terms of the discussed frame as it exemplifies perception of 'Europe' as a land of welfare. Within this frame, Europe's attractiveness as a model is based on conception of Europe as advanced, rich, developed and prosperous.

Such conception of 'Europe' as embodiment of welfare and prosperity is epitomized in a popular metaphor 'to build Europe in Ukraine' that is being widely circulated in Ukrainian political discourse (Yavorska & Bohomolov, 2010: 50) and has been found in the analyzed corpus of textual data too. The metaphor suggests that 'Europe' is something achievable and buildable; it is a certain state of things. The common context of metaphor use implies that this state of things refers primarily to the above mentioned 'standards of living', welfare and prosperity.

**Valentyna Semenyuk** (Member of Socialist Party of Ukraine): *"...Dear voters, dear friends, Ukraine is located in the center of Europe. And I can tell you one thing – we will build Europe in Ukraine. Because today we are not only implementing standards of living, we are moving towards those standards in terms of living, economic development...and that is why we can talk about standards of European countries, because 'left' parties come to power there."* (September 21, 2007, INTER)

Yavorska and Bohomolov (2010: 51) note that the metaphor of 'building Europe in Ukraine' is also used by Ukrainian politicians as a rhetorical argument against European and

Euroatlantic integration of Ukraine. The metaphor implies that one can have one's own 'Europe' without being 'Europe' institutionally.

**Dmytro Tabachnyk** (then MP of Crimean Parliament, Party of Regions): “But we know many successful countries that are not members of military alliance, but they are completely guided by European civilizational norms of democracy, litigation, human rights, freedom of speech and so on. I won't specify these countries – you know many of them. Therefore, movement in this direction is building Europe here... Development of transparent economy, improvement of social standards, increase of pensions – this is movement in a European direction.” (May 5, 2006, ICTV)

The provided quote illustrates the pattern noted by Yavorska and Bohomolov. Although the statement alludes to 'Europeanness' in cultural and political terms through mention of European norms of democracy, it largely foregrounds well-being and development as essence of 'Europeanness'. Such conception of 'Europeanness', along with the previously mentioned one that foregrounds practices as a core of 'Europeanness', is also interesting in terms of implications for Ukraine-Europe relations as they are constructed in the discourse.

### ***5.2.2.2 Europe as a model: implications for construction of relations between Ukraine and Europe***

#### ***Europe as an object of desire***

The discussed frame of 'Europe as a model' entails a specific mode of relations between Europe and Ukraine, that is, relations of a role model and a 'wannabe'. Europe is constructed as the 'Other' for Ukraine, which is conveyed through numerous juxtapositions, comparisons, references to 'Europe' as a source of knowledge and best practices. At the same time, Europe is represented not as a hostile or threatening 'Other' within this frame. Instead, Europe is constructed as a desired 'Other'. Since Europe is a source of best practices and norms that are to be followed and appropriated, it serves as an 'object' of desire. This desire implies certain ambivalence of Ukraine's identity: on the one hand, there is aspiration to be one of them (to be part of Europe), and on the other hand, actors of discourse construct aspiration to be like them (to be like Europe in a meaning to be as developed and successful). The notion of 'being like them' is particularly manifested in the discursive attempts to signify Ukraine through attribution of the word 'European' to Ukraine.

**Vitaliy Kononov** (Green Party of Ukraine): “We are talking about thirty-year perspective, but world's leading ecologists say that if we continue to live the way we do, our world will not have future in twenty years. And if we talk about five-

*year perspective (we should mind that ) repository is being constructed and no one asks people on that – so do we have a prospect of being a European country? (September 21, 2007, INTER)*

The provided example illustrates pattern of defining Ukraine's 'Europeanness' through its commitment to good policies and practices. We are to be European if we do like them, the formula suggests. Here 'Europeanness' is achievable; it signifies some stage of development that Ukraine has to undergo. Since most comparisons of Ukraine and Europe suggest Ukraine's backwardness compared to Europe, Ukraine needs to get upgraded in order to become truly 'European'. Thus, many references within this frame while indicating recognition of Ukraine's essential belonging to Europe, suggest that Ukraine needs to make efforts to become really 'European'.

Remarkably, the discussed ambivalence of 'being in Europe' and 'being like Europe' can be found even in one and the same statement. It is often unclear whether attribution of 'European' to Ukraine implies Ukraine's full-fledged integration into Europe or copying the model. This brings us back to the above mentioned metaphor of 'building Europe in Ukraine'. The metaphor suggests that one can actually become 'European' without full integration into the EU. One is 'European' as long as there is 'European' comfort and welfare, no matter whether 'Europeanness' in this case is secured through participation in the EU institutions.

The mode of relations between Europe and Ukraine as a role model and a wannabe entails interesting peculiarity: Europe is ascribed a number of positive traits whereas Ukraine is constructed as backward. While identity formation is usually characterized by strategies of predication "attaching positive values to the Self and negative values to the Other" (Tekin, 2007: 738), the analyzed case illustrates the contrary. Representation of Ukraine is largely constructed through negative autostereotypes. Within the discussed frame, not only Ukrainian practices are stigmatized compared to those of European, actors of discourse also contrast European politicians with Ukrainian ones.

*Andriy Senchenko (MP, BYuT): "Behavior of leaders of European countries, I think, significantly differs from behavior of Mr. Azarov at fire in that those leaders are trying to find common solution and extinguish the fire together in their building, not everyone separately in his apartment." (October 24, 2008, TRK Ukraine)*

*Europe as authority*

Another important dimension of relations between Ukraine and Europe constructed within 'Europe as a model' frame concerns reference to European institutions as bearers of authority. Analysis of discourse shows that European institutions (both of the European Union and non-EU institutions like Council of Europe) are called upon as agents of authority to judge local matters. Similarly, European documents (like the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages) are appealed to as sources of norms that are crucial for Ukraine.

*Serhiy Pashynsky (MP, BYuT): "As for the statement of Prime-Minister Tymoshenko, I would like to draw attention of Mr. Boyko that EU Commissioner, which is a serious office in energy issues, supported this concept. This is an idea, a business idea, a geopolitical idea..." (February 1, 2008, INTER)*

*Valeriy Pysarenko (MP, then BYuT): "And the last thing: we have just returned from the Council of Europe. Here many say that Venice Commission supported, and Council of Europe supported...Council of Europe indeed passed a decision on Ukraine on Wednesday. This decision is called "On the state of democracy in Europe". And it says one thing: Ukraine needs to establish an independent branch of authority, independent from presidential administration and bureaucrats. That's what we need to do." (June 27, 2008, INTER)*

Within this frame, European institutions are reserved a role of an inspector vis-à-vis Ukraine, whereas Ukraine is seen as accountable before Europe.

Furthermore, not only European institutions are represented as embodiment of authority in the analyzed discourse. Individual European leaders, particularly Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel, are referred to as wise and respected statesmen.

One more crucial aspect of relations between Ukraine and Europe, as devised within 'Europe as a model' frame, concerns discursive construction of the importance of Europe's recognition of Ukraine's achievements. Concerns over Ukraine's image in Europe are commonly found in the discourse of the representatives of political elites. The need to be attractive in the eyes of Europe is regarded as evident. Similarly, European recognition is admitted with pride and satisfaction.

*Volodymyr Stretovych (MP, Our Ukraine-People's Self-Defense Bloc): "I'm puzzled by another thing: how can it happen that a country where political elites are not able to solve problems flourishes from below? We had our sportsmen here – they showed that we can do. Designers show that we can do. Our hryvnia is the best...Separate sprouts come up...These sprouts, which have nicely come up on Ukrainian soil, - they enjoy applause and authority in Europe." (October 17, 2008, TRK Ukraine)*

Many references entail the need to present Ukraine to Europe in the best light. Thus, Ukraine is constructed as urging for Europe's approval and recognition within 'Europe as a model' frame.

The provided quote below expressly reveals this pattern. The lexical choice of verbs employed to denote relations between Ukraine and Europe ascribes the role of appraiser or referee to Europe whereas Ukraine is constructed as a novice striving for recognition and scared of failure.

*Vitaliy Klychko (a famous boxer and then emerging politician, member of Kyiv city council): "We now have a unique chance to make a statement about ourselves, to make a statement in Europe and in the world. And the question is: either we will be able to use this chance or we can, pardon me, lose face and the whole world will be laughing at us?" (September 21, 2007, INTER)*

### **5.2.2.3 Discursive practice guiding employment of 'Europe as a model' frame**

While I have mentioned that the frame of 'Europe as a model' is one of the most regular in the analyzed discourse, it is also crucial to note that it is shared by all political camps, irrespective of the party and ideological affiliation. Even representatives of parties that are considered to be pro-Russian, like that of the Progressive Socialist Party of Ukraine, have repeatedly admitted relevance of European experience for Ukraine and referred to 'European practices' as examples to be followed by Ukraine.

'Europe', however, is not a single model called upon in the discourse of political elites. There are frequent references to Russian experiences as well, which is explained by the widespread presumption of strong connections between Ukraine and Russia and respective relevance of Russian experience. There are also occasional references to economic practices of China. Yet, in quantitative terms, references to Europe as a model are far prevailing in the analyzed discourse.

What is even more significant than quantitative prevalence, that is apparent consensus among political elites concerning essential goodness of European practices. That Europe is a home to best possible practices is neither debated nor questioned. Even when references to European experience are purely rhetorical and do not contain substantial explanation of what is meant by this or that practice, standard, norm etc. – such references typically remain uncontested by politicians.

Unproblematized perception of Europe as a source of best practices and norms is widely utilized within strategies of legitimization and delegitimization pursued by Ukrainian



political elites in discourse, as I have noted in the overview of the frame. Such strategies of legitimization and delegitimization thus rest on the commonsensical assumption of Europe's inherent progressiveness. At the same time, different political forces try to impose their vision of commonsensical goodness of Europe. For instance, actors representing Ukrainian left political forces, primarily Socialist and Communist parties, refer to commonsensical assumption of European practices as the best ones to argue primarily for social welfare initiatives or to criticize lack of those. Hence, their references to commonsensical assumption of Europe's goodness suggest primacy of social security and welfare. Instead, 'Orange' elites foreground democracy and efficient governance as key components of Europe's commonsensical progressiveness.

However, more frequent than ideology-driven references to commonsensical perceptions of Europe as an embodiment of the best practices, are references driven by immediate considerations to justify or condemn this or that practice, idea, proposal etc. In this respect, references to Europe are largely targeted at opponents. Such references are invoked to establish some practice as appropriate (as in the suggested instance below), neutralize arguments of opponents or even condemn those.

**Roman Zvarych:** *“Savik, I would ask that we understood what it is all about. Almost in each European country...I can't recall a parliament that would live to the end of its tenure. So it's a usual practice.” (February 9, 2007, ICTV)*

My assumption about strategic employment of 'Europe as a model' frame by representatives of Ukrainian political elites aimed at legitimizing their claims or delegitimizing those of opponents has found evidence in an interview with Volodymyr Venher, an MP assistant. He acknowledged that politicians mention examples from European practices or legislation when this is convenient for them. “This is typical both for authorities and opposition,” Venher said.

It is also important to note that 'Europe as a model' frame is very widespread in the discourse of other actors participating in the analyzed talk show. Small businessmen, musicians, designers, textile manufacturers and other groups of interest that were present at the discussions under exploration, as well as common people occasionally given a voice during program, – they all alluded to European experience in their commentaries and questions to politicians.

Not only guests of the program reproduce 'Europe as a model frame' in their discourse. The host of the talk show, Savik Shuster, has been extensively contributing to the recurrence of the frame. Shuster, who has been explicitly underlining his broad international

experience, his personal Europeanness and cosmopolitanism, consistently referred to 'Europe' in the analyzed programs. By providing statistical data comparisons with European countries, citing European press in his introductions of programs, the host made attempts to contextualize discussion of Ukrainian issues in terms of European practices and experience. Furthermore, he has contributed into discussions with politicians with his personal reflections on how things work in Europe in a number of occasions. Consistent allusions to 'European' experience by the host indicate that they are part of conventions guiding editorial policy rather than accidental mentions. This point has also found evidence in an interview with Georgiy Tykhy, editor and host of the *After live* program and one of editors of the analyzed talk show. Tykhy confirmed that Shuster as a team leader repeatedly mentions the need to refer to European and international experience at large. Which is more, Shuster has been alluding to international experience in his commentary on team's work too. "Sometimes when he criticizes the work of our editorial team or other Ukrainian media, he says that we need to go beyond our limits and think wider. Reference to international experience is a strong argument for him", Tykhy said.

Construction of 'European' practices as desirable and appropriate by the talk show host is vividly exemplified by one episode. One of the analyzed programs featured Chairman of the Supreme Court of Ukraine. While introducing the main guest, the host noted that part of the program featuring Chairman of the Supreme Court would not entail political debate:

**Savik Shuster:** *"Vasyl Onopenko kindly agreed to participate in the beginning of our program. Usually Chairmen of Supreme Courts, as well as all judges in other European countries do not participate in political debates. That's how we are going to do today. I will ask several questions, we will hear opinion of the Chairman of the Supreme Court, and afterwards we will start a discussion in our studio."* (June 27, 2008, INTER)

Such reference to European practice employed by the host to rationalize temporary 'adjustment' of the talk show format illustrates perception of inherent relevance of European practices.

Thus, analysis suggests that references to 'Europe' as a model are part of conscious editorial policy of the talk show and significantly contribute to the conventions guiding discursive representation of 'Europe' as a model.

#### **5.2.2.4 'Europe as a model' frame beyond the analyzed discourse**

Analysis of discourse with regard to reproduction of 'Europe as a model' frame has established that perception of Europe as an embodiment of best practices turned into common

sense among political elites of Ukraine. Interaction between representatives of political elites, as well as other actors of the analyzed discourse (intellectuals, businessmen, journalists etc.) demonstrates that references to ‘European experience’ are conventional. Commonsensical assumption of appropriateness of ‘European experience’ is largely based on the perception of Europe as a realm of welfare. Such perception is far not limited to Ukrainian elites. Instead, ‘Europe as a model’ frame enjoys incontestable popularity and proliferation in the discursive practice beyond the analyzed instance of discourse. In fact, the discussed frame demonstrates particularly strong connection between discursive practice under investigation and broader socio-cultural practice with regard to image of ‘Europe’.

Europe and the European Union, commonly considered as synonyms in Ukraine, have been widely associated by Ukrainians with well-being and prosperity. As one of the surveys suggests (ENPI, 2011), economic prosperity is one of the three major traits, along with democratic character and respect for human rights, Ukrainians associate the EU with. According to the same survey, Ukrainian respondents mentioned economic prosperity as the most typical value of the EU. Importantly, the respondents also mentioned this value as the most crucial at a personal level. No wonder, the EU is perceived as a club of the rich and developed nations. Such perception suggests the logic viewing everything ‘European’ as progressive and of good value.

Illustrative in this context is the emergence and broad circulation of such new words and concepts as ‘Euro-repair’, ‘Euro-windows’ etc. – all implying the best quality, the European quality (Hrytsenko, 2001). The ‘Euro-repair’ term has gained particular popularity and even crossed discursive boundaries of its initial use, as the illustration below suggests (IMG. 1).



(IMG. 1. Photo of protests during the Orange Revolution, Kyiv, Ukraine, 2005. The title reads “*Our Ukrainian people are doing a Euro-repair of the state. Please forgive for temporary inconvenience*”. Courtesy photo of Serhiy Kudelia)

The range of ‘Euro’-words has strikingly expanded since the mid 1990s and now includes ‘Euro-tire’, ‘Euro-tile’, ‘Euro-clothes’ (an euphemism marking stores of second hand clothes) to name but a few. In particular, the root ‘Euro’ as a signifier of good quality has been extensively utilized in marketing and advertising discourses. One TV ad has been promoting an upgraded version of a popular pain relief drug ‘Cytramon’, now called ‘Euro-cytramon’. Stores under titles ‘Euro’-something (like ‘Euro-crockery’, IMG. 2) are abundant even in small towns in Ukraine; the same is true for various online stores. One of the local fast food chains is called ‘Eurohouse’ (*Eurohata* in Ukrainian). Medical clinics have also extensively utilized the root ‘Euro’ in their titles: one of the most expensive and famous private clinics is called ‘Eurolab’, there are at least several dental clinics called ‘Eurodent’, a dermatological clinic ‘Euroderm’ etc. There is a ‘Euro-market’ (IMG. 3) in one of the residential areas of Kyiv that can even boast having a website<sup>25</sup>. Gas filling stations offer a special kind of gasoline, Euro-gas. From the beginning, the title indicated the origin of gas, but now it is also used to mean just a better quality gas. As in the case of ‘Euro’-gas, the root ‘Euro’ in the titles of stores or goods very often has nothing to do with the origin of goods offered; instead ‘Euro’ is used to associate with high quality. In a similar vein, many ads contain a common formula “you will find/we offer something of European quality” (IMG. 4). Advertisements of new housing construction projects have also used the notion of ‘European life’ to attract customers by promising housing that corresponds to ‘European standards’ (IMG. 5).

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<sup>25</sup> <http://www.evrobazar.com.ua/>



(IMG. 2, store 'Euro-crockery' in a city of Khmelnytsky)



(IMG. 4, Ad of shoes store posted in Kyiv subway. The title reads "Over 4,000 models of shoes of European quality.")



(IMG. 3, entrance into the 'Euro-market' in Osokorky residential area, Kyiv. Photo retrieved from <http://beerplace.com.ua/news/oktoberfest-2011-v-kieve-foto-den-1>, July 4, 2012)





(IMG. 5, ad of a new building complex posted on the bus. The slogan above says, “Start a European life!”)

### 5.2.3 ‘Europe as an advanced civilization’ frame

Another popular frame reproduced by political elites in the discourse refers to representation of Europe in terms of civilization and culture. While this frame also contains allusions to ‘Europe’ as a model and an embodiment of goodness, it conveys some significant differences compared to the above-analyzed ‘Europe as a model’ frame. Whereas ‘Europe as a model frame’ constructs Europeanness through practices, ‘Europe as a civilization’ frame foregrounds values instead. While practices are achievable – hence, Europeanness is achievable as well, values are seen as fundamental, which constructs Europeanness as inherent.

The discussed frame is primarily communicated implicitly. Explicit references to ‘Europe’ in terms of civilization are mostly articulated through direct attribution of the notion ‘civilized’ to Europe and synonymous use of such predications as European and civilized. The latter examples, which are quite typical throughout the whole period under investigation, very often carry connotations of practices too. Some practices are constructed as civilized, while others as wild or barbarian. Although many statements that refer to ‘civilized way of doing something’ combine implicit references to both values and practices, crucial for the analyzed frame is that it is Europe that is associated with ‘civilized ways’. Which is more, Europe is regarded as a source of such ‘civilized ways’.

*Ihor Shurma (Socialist-Democratic Party of Ukraine (united): “If political elite of Ukraine doesn’t stop today, Ukraine will appear to civilized Europe as a state with criminal inclinations. We are represented as a thief that steals gas from the European tube.” (February 3, 2006, ICTV)*

*Vyacheslav Kyrylenko (MP, Our Ukraine-People’s Self-Defense Bloc): “You as a*

*European person should know – and you definitely know this – no one is combining such capacity to influence media with position of a head of security service in a civilized European country.” (June 11, 2010, TRK Ukraine)*

As for implicit ascription of the meaning of civilization to Europe, it is achieved through construction of Europe as an embodiment of inherent cultural virtues. Theoretical literature on the notions of ‘civilization’ and ‘culture’ suggests some important distinctions between the two: while the concept of ‘culture’ is closely related to the concept of ‘nation’ and ‘national culture’, the notion of ‘civilization’ carries more universalistic connotations and claims (Ifversen, 2002). However, the two do not exclude each other (Ifversen, 2002: 7). Analysis of discourse of Ukrainian political elites with regard to Europe suggests that they don’t make distinctions between Europe as a civilization and Europe as a culture, neither explicitly nor implicitly. Instead, they construct European civilization as grounded on common values and culture. Careful analysis, however, shows that very often references to culture within ‘Europe as an advanced civilization’ frame suggest allusion to political values foremost, as discussed further with more detail and examples.

What is common for the concepts of culture and civilization is their essentializing character (Ifversen, 2002). Values underpinning civilization and culture are seen as inherent, deeply rooted and fundamental. This bears far-reaching implications for the construction of perception of Europe, its identity and relations with Ukraine within ‘Europe as an advanced civilization’ frame.

#### ***5.2.3.1 Perception and identity of Europe within an ‘advanced civilization’ frame***

‘Europe as an advanced civilization’ frame presumes perception of Europe as a natural cultural entity. As Ifversen (2002: 7) suggests, linking civilization with values is one way of denoting civilization. In this context, values are seen as uniting fabric that guides development of this cultural entity.

When it comes to Europe, representatives of Ukrainian political elites frequently reproduce this logic of perception. They construct Europe as an entity with fundamental values and, furthermore, - they construct Europeanness as inborn quality.

As the following example from the analyzed corpus of texts suggests, one is either European or not – there is no space for middle ground.

***Nestor Shufrych (MP, Party of Regions of Ukraine):*** “*Second issue concerns Stepan Bandera... You declare aspiration for European integration, right? Well, Polish lawmakers and European MPs ask to cancel this decree. You can’t be half-European... Just like you can’t be half-pregnant. If you want into Europe – listen to*

*what they say.” (February 26, 2010, TRK Ukraine)*

The provided example also illustrates other aspects of discursive construction of Europe: reference to ‘Europe’ as part of delegitimization strategy, perception of Europe as an inspector vis-a-vis Ukraine etc. What is important for the discussion of the analyzed frame, is comparison of being European with being pregnant. Such comparison implies that being a European is some sort of a natural physiological state of a human being. This assumption leaves out any compromise: Europeanness cannot be compromised here.

While other examples of constructing Europeanness as inherent within the discussed frame are less unequivocal, they also denote ‘Europe’ and ‘Europeanness’ in terms of innate qualities. Perception of Europe as a civilization is communicated through reference to such abstract notions like mentality, culture, spirit etc. – all signifying essential character of ‘Europeanness’.

***Vitaliy Klychko** (a famous boxer and emerging politician, member of Kyiv city council): “We are a European country. A European country not only be geography – we are a European country by mentality, culture.” (October 29, 2010, TRK Ukraine)*

Some statements alluding to European values construct them as moral and spiritual.

***Dmytro Spivak** (a politician affiliated with BYuT): “By the way, education does not only presume knowledge. It is morality. It is culture. It is spirituality. Our education is just the same as our government. Because everything you do with people and a state for so many years is absolutely immoral, absolutely earth-fed and doesn’t have anything in common with European values.” (November 27, 2009, TRK Ukraine)*

Others implicitly define Europeanness as adherence to progressiveness in broad terms:

***Natalia Vitrenko** (leader of the Progressive Socialist Party of Ukraine): “If we are a European country – and I would like to see here not obscurants, but civilized people, Europeans – then European charter of regional languages ratified by Ukraine...clearly provides for protection of regional languages.” (February 24, 2006, ICTV)*

However, more common is perception of ‘Europeanness’ in terms of values pertaining to political and civic culture. Thus, even when the actors of discourse refer to ‘culture’, they mostly imply culture of democratic political interaction and civic activity. This may be explained by peculiarities of the analyzed discursive practice: since analysis concentrates on the discourse of political elites in the framework of the political talk show, it is reasonable to expect that the discourse will be guided by references to politics in the first instance. More



elaborate discussion on this peculiarity and its relation to the wider discursive and socio-cultural context is provided further in the analysis of discursive practice within ‘Europe as a civilization’ frame.

A lot of the references to European values in terms of political culture are implicit – the actors of discourse commonly mention those without explanation what they mean by European political culture.

*Vladyslav Kaskiv (MP, Our Ukraine-People’s Self-Defense Bloc): “We simply have to finish this campaign that started so well and that was recognized by the whole world with dignity, in a European way...” (February 12, 2010, TRK Ukraine)*

*Vyacheslav Kyrylenko (MP, Our Ukraine-People’s Self-Defense Bloc): “When we joined the new coalition, I voluntarily resigned, that is, in the spirit of European values.” (February 12, 2010, TRK Ukraine)*

Analysis suggests, however, that most of the references to European values within ‘Europe as a civilization’ frame center around such ideas as fairness of political process, political responsibility (both are illustrated by above mentioned quotes), and other principles underpinning democracy. Notably, many references concern civility as a principle of political communication, constructing dialogue as a cornerstone of a democratic process.

*Andriy Sadovyy (Mayor of Lviv): “I am truly happy that we had such respected guests in Lviv yesterday. Mr. Kyrylenko, Ms. Tymoshenko, Mr. Kostenko... We had a discussion yesterday. We had an intelligent, sophisticated and civilized discussion... And I would like that... maybe even in Kyiv... that people saw how it’s going on. Because when I think of that discussion in Lviv – it reminds me a discussion in European parliaments. That’s the level... We have to move in this direction.” (February 27, 2007, INTER)*

Attribution of democracy as a fundamental value to Europe has also explicit manifestations in the discourse within the analyzed frame. As the example quote below suggests, European countries are seen as intrinsically democratic, democracy being essential part of them. When responding to the question of the host on whether he is ready to sacrifice democracy to exit the financial crisis, one of the Ukrainian politicians responded:

*Anatoliy Hrytsenko (MP, Our Ukraine-People’s Self-Defense Bloc): “You know, Savik, only in our corrupted and repressive state one could seriously discuss the question: “What is better for you – cutting your left hand or your right hand”? Such question would not even be raised in the Czech Republic, in Poland, let alone France, Germany. They find possibility to strengthen democracy and fight with crisis.” (November 13, 2009, TRK Ukraine)*

Along with democracy, two other values, namely – lawfulness and respect to human rights – are seen as value pillars of Europe, analysis suggests.

**Petro Poroshenko** (then Chairman of Council of the National Bank of Ukraine, affiliated with Our Ukraine-People's Self-Defense Bloc): “European integration consists of three components. First component is rule of law. And there is no Europe, no civilized states without this. The second component is human rights and democracy, as well as freedom of speech, without which no civilized state exists.” (September 21, 2007, INTER)

Not only Europe is attributed with the discussed values; Europeans are constructed as bearers of those values too. In particular, Ukrainian politicians frequently refer to their European counterparts as people upholding democratic principles in their political activities. They are also constructed as people of virtues in general. Such references frequently entail contrasting Ukrainian and European politicians.

**Anna Herman** (MP, Party of Regions): “Yes, there are ministers (of internal affairs) in the West that do not have shoulder loops, do not have a uniform, but these people have a high level of internal culture. And such high level of internal culture will never let these people get into the situation similar to that Mr. Lutsenko got in.” (May 15, 2009, TRK Ukraine)

Furthermore, some references of this kind concern common people too. In the provided example below, Europeans are constructed as people who fight for their political and civil rights because of their beliefs, whereas Ukrainians get engaged into civil activities for money.

**Kyrylo Kulykov** (MP, Our Ukraine-People's Self-Defense Bloc): “There are demonstrations of people who disagree with policies in Europe too. But they go to demonstrate...wait...they go to demonstrate just because they fight for their principles, while our people go to demonstrations because they are so poor and they earn money there. That's the problem.” (February 12, 2010, TRK Ukraine)

Emphasis on values within ‘Europe as a civilization’ frame practiced in the analyzed discourse also conveys connotations of universalism. Democracy, lawfulness and human rights that are foregrounded as core ‘European’ values in the discourse of Ukrainian political elites are being constructed as universal at the same time. This pattern illustrates tradition of Eurocentrism based on claims of universal validity for one’s own culture (Ifversen, 2002: 7). Analysis demonstrates that Ukrainian political elites reproduce Eurocentrism in their discourse through claims of universal relevance of European values. But this is not the only manifestation of discursive Eurocentrism in action. The textual corpus under analysis contains a number of references to ‘Europe’ that contrast it with other geographical entities,

which are, however, far more than geographical signifiers. As in the case with Europe, those entities are rather concepts that are prescribed socio-cultural and political meanings.

Thus, Europe is being frequently contrasted with Asia, the contrast presuming fundamental discrepancy between democratic Europe and authoritarian Asia.

**Yuriy Lutsenko** (former Minister of Internal Affairs, Our Ukraine-People's Self-Defense Bloc): "Ukrainian legislation, just like European one, does not require asking permission from the authorities to conduct a demonstration or sanction it. Only in Russian Federation, in Asian countries, in dictatorships one can ask authorities "Please let me demonstrate against you". Sometimes they are allowed...but mostly – no." (June 11, 2010, TRK Ukraine)

While the provided example also juxtaposes Europe and Russia, it should be noted that such contrasting of the two is not very typical within the analyzed frame. Instead, Europe and Russia are being widely contrasted within another popular frame of reference in the analyzed discourse that concerns geopolitical dimension of relations. As for differences in terms of civilization/culture/values, Europe is mainly contrasted with Asia. The quoted statement illustrates a common way of generalizing Asian countries, which implies that all Asian countries are dictatorships. Unproblematic predication of democratic with regard to Europe and authoritarian – with regard to Asia – suggests that such predications are being constructed as natural for the two entities.

Even when Europe is not directly juxtaposed to Asia, the latter is mentioned in such contexts that presume its cultural deficiency with regard to democratic principles and practices. Employed wording also illustrates the pattern of constructing Europe's cultural superiority over Asia. Whereas the Ukrainian term 'yevropeyskist' (in English – 'Europeanness') is created with suffix *-ist*, 'Asianness' is represented with the term 'aziatschyna' in the analyzed discourse. While suffix *-ist* is the most widespread and conventional suffix for derivatives used in socio-political naming of phenomena, suffix *-schyna* bears a semantic overtone of disdain in Ukrainian language (Lukyanenko, 2008: 163, 164-165).

**Yosyp Vinskyi** (MP, then Socialist Party of Ukraine): "Another thing is that in the acting Constitution...proceedings are not worked out, which results in that our 'Asian' format of relations between leaders of state brings about conflicts we have been witnessing recently. But one can't change 'Asianness' through changes into Constitution. One has to change people imposing this 'Asianness'." (February 2, 2007, ICTV)

The provided example demonstrates perception of Asian as synonymous with

undemocratic, disordered etc.

Yet, it is not only Asia that Europe is contrasted to in the analyzed discourse. Europe is also juxtaposed to Islam in terms of culture and values. Some statements refer to Europe and Africa as poles of development. While Asia is represented as an embodiment of authoritarianism vs. intrinsically democratic Europe, Africa is rather constructed as underdeveloped compared to the progressive Europe.

*Anatoliy Hrytsenko (MP, Our Ukraine-People's Self-Defense Bloc): "Vitaliy, let's open our eyes. If you want, we can make an experiment: let's ask people in this studio how many of them believe that one can protect one's rights in a court without giving a bribe. And then you will give an answer to yourself if we are moving towards Africa or Europe." (May 22, 2009, TRK Ukraine)*

While it is not only within 'Europe as a civilization frame' that Europe and European countries are being contrasted with other geocultural or geopolitical entities and countries, juxtaposition within this frame implies contrasting values, primarily those relating to political culture.

What is crucial about the discussed juxtapositions is that Europe is constructed as a starting point for comparisons. Ukrainian politicians refer to European values as a base point, whereas references to other geocultural entities are employed to emphasize 'obvious' superiority of European values. Such discursive practice constructs Europe not as one civilization among equal others, but as an advanced one.

To conclude, discursive construction of 'Europe' within the analyzed frame is based on the perception of Europe as a natural cultural entity committed to values of democracy, lawfulness and human rights. European identity is being essentialized within this frame particularly through references to such notions as culture, values, mentality etc. Crucially, Ukrainian political elites when referring to 'Europe' in terms of civilization predominantly foreground values relating to political culture. Which is more, they implicitly construct them as universal, contributing to reproduction of Eurocentrism. What kind of relationship between Ukraine and Europe does such perception of Europe entail is what further discussed.

### ***5.2.3.2 'Europe as an advanced civilization'. Implications for relations between Ukraine and Europe***

The discussed patterns of perception of Europe within the analyzed frame suggest implications for construction of relations between Ukraine and Europe that have similarities with those within 'Europe as a model' frame. Namely, Europe is being constructed as a role model for Ukraine. European values implicitly and explicitly referred to by politicians are

represented as desirable, valid and universal.

There is, however, substantial difference between the two frames with respect to ascribing 'Europeanness' to Ukraine. Whereas 'Europe as a model' frame presumes conditional 'Europeanness' that can be achieved through commitment to good 'European' practices, 'Europeanness' within 'Europe as an advanced civilization frame' is being essentialized by the actors of discourse. The logic of essentializing suggests that Ukraine is either European or not. However, analysis of discourse has identified an interesting paradox or ambivalence when it comes to constructing Ukrainian identity. While representatives of Ukrainian political elites frequently ascribe cultural 'Europeanness' to Ukraine through arguments of Ukraine's fundamental belonging to European civilization, many statements alluding to 'European' values entail Ukraine's deficit of those. Hence, the discussed ambivalence results in that although claims of Ukraine's basic Europeanness are constructed as legitimate, Ukrainians are represented as not yet full Europeans. As a result, one can observe a paradox of simultaneous inclusion and exclusion of Ukraine into Europe as a civilization. References to defective state of things in Ukraine, like the above cited one on intrinsic corruption of courts, suggest that Ukraine is not yet good enough to be considered Europe. A similar pattern of downgrading one's own country in relation to Europe has been acknowledged in Poland throughout country's transformation in the 1990s (Törnquist-Plewa, 2002). "When asked to rank Poland in Europe according to economy and civilization, they (Poles) tended to place it far down and often underestimated their own country", Törnquist-Plewa (2002: 237) noted.

In case of the analyzed discourse, downgrading of Ukraine vis-à-vis Europe within 'civilization frame' is primarily achieved through arguments about lack of commitment to democratic (read – European) values in Ukraine.

What is notable with regard to construction of relations between Ukraine and Europe within 'civilization' frame, that is lack of explicit debate on Ukrainian identity among politicians, which particularly contrasts with respective debates in a public discourse of Ukrainian intellectuals. The latter have long been explicitly framing discussion of Ukraine's identity in terms of civilizational choice, alluding primarily to Europe and Russia, as highlighted in the background chapter. This discursive discrepancy is addressed in the analysis of discursive practice shaping construction of 'Europe as an advanced civilization' frame and socio-cultural practices around the discourse.

### *5.2.3.3 Discursive practice and socio-cultural context behind 'Europe as an advanced civilization' frame*

Discursive conventions that guide framing of Europe as an advanced civilization by representatives of Ukrainian political elites also have some similarities with those relating to 'Europe as a model' frame. As in the first case, representation of Europe as a cultural entity/civilization with intrinsically good values finds virtually no contesting. Furthermore, while 'Europe as a model' frame did evoke some soft challenging that rested on arguments about possible irrelevance of 'European experience' – references to inherent goodness of 'European' values are never contested in the analyzed discourse. Values that are denoted as 'European' are constructed as universal at the same time, which has been discussed in the previous section. Such universalism of values, apart from suggesting Eurocentrism, also implies pointlessness of contesting them. Lack of problematization of 'European' values reveals prevailing attitude to Europe as advanced, civilized, and culturally superior – at least, when it comes to political culture. All these markers of 'Europe' have acquired a status of common sense, as they are basically invoked as understandable and consensual.

Another important peculiarity of the analyzed discursive practice around 'Europe as an advanced civilization' frame concerns emphasis on the political values foremost. This may have several possible explanations, as my analysis suggests. Firstly, this may be explained by the peculiarities of the discursive practice framed by the talk show format. That is to say, politicians consider it relevant to refer to political values as they mostly discuss issues related to politics rather than, say, culture. Another possible explanation might concern aspiration or intention to refer to popular perception of 'Europe'. As the above-mentioned survey shows (ENPI, 2011), human rights and democracy are considered to be two of the three most popular features Ukrainians associate the EU with. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that representatives of political elites may unconsciously reproduce such popular perceptions, on the one hand, and try to conform their statements with widespread perceptions, on the other hand. Furthermore, analysis suggests that a great deal of references to Europe within a 'civilization' frame entails discursive strategies of legitimization and deligitimization, as in the case of the 'Europe as a model' frame. Europe as an embodiment of 'European values' is called upon within strategic formulations that are mostly aimed either at justifying one's own attitudes and acts or – more commonly – at depreciating state of affairs in Ukraine and criticizing political opponents. Therefore, as criticism is largely targeted at politicians, officials or state policies, allusion to political values is logical in this respect. Even when actors of the analyzed discourse do refer to more broad 'moral' European values, again such

references are employed within legitimization/deligitimization strategies and are targeted at counterparts primarily. At the same time, representatives of political elites are generally quite careful about extending statements on the deficit of 'European' values in Ukraine to include common Ukrainians. This pattern also illustrates strategic employment of 'Europe as an advanced civilization' frame in the analyzed discourse.

Foregrounding of political values within this frame does resonate with popular perceptions of 'European values' – democracy and human rights are largely considered by Ukrainians as cornerstones of 'Europeanness'. Yet, whereas political elites tend to overlook other values that are associated with 'Europeanness', some facets of 'Europeanness', namely commitment to progress and humanism, constitute widespread perceptions of 'Europe' in the Ukrainian public discourse. In particular, this concerns discourse of Ukrainian intellectuals, many of whom have long viewed Europe as a cultural and moral community.

As I have mentioned in the previous section of analysis, Ukrainian intellectuals have been explicitly framing discussion of Ukraine's national identity in terms of civilizational choice. Within such a framework, signification of Europe as a civilization, a cultural orientation has gained great importance in discourse. As highlighted in the chapter addressing historical significance of 'Europe' as a reference point for Ukrainian society, Ukrainian intellectuals have produced competing visions of Ukraine's identity with regard to Europe. What is, however, common about those competing visions is perception of Europe in civilizational terms and explicit allusion to Europe as a cultural entity in discourse on Ukrainian identity. Here comes already mentioned discrepancy between discourses of intellectual and political elites. The latter are being generally quite careful about defining Ukrainian identity within 'civilizational choice' framework. While Ukrainian politicians do construct 'Europe' as a cultural community with attractive values, they largely refer to it in purely rhetorical terms. Careful references to Europe in terms of 'civilizational choice' might be explained by strategic avoidance of contrasting Europe and Russia. 'Civilizational choice' framework that has dominated discourse on Ukrainian national identity throughout Ukraine's independence has established 'Europe' and 'Russia' as two opposing signifiers/poles. Analysis of discourse of Ukrainian political elites suggests that, with a very few exceptions, they mostly evade contrasting the two in civilizational terms, possibly guided by the assumption that such contrasting would imply ascribing inherent cultural inferiority to one of the poles. It should be noted, however, that Russia and Europe are more commonly contrasted within geopolitical framework, the pattern further addressed in the analysis.

#### ***5.2.3.4 Europe as a civilization: a home or a goal? Dissonance in the discourse of political elites and President Yushchenko***

One more interesting discursive discrepancy identified in the analysis concerns differences between the analyzed discourse of political elites and Ukraine's official discourse following the Orange Revolution communicated primarily by then President Viktor Yushchenko. In the course of the Orange Revolution and his eventual presidency, Yushchenko made consistent references to 'Europe' in most of his speeches constructing 'Europe' as an inevitable civilizational choice Ukraine has made. His argumentation strategy aimed at asserting naturalness of 'European choice' rested on claims of Ukraine's inborn Europeanness. In his numerous statements Yushchenko reiterated the formulae that, "we were born Europeans".

*"I as a President, like all Ukrainians, have never doubted that we are a European nation. No matter whether we are a candidate-country for the EU accession or not, our Europeanness is a geographic and historical fact" (Yushchenko, 2005b),*

he said in his speech during celebration of the first anniversary of the Orange Revolution in November 2005. Yushchenko's argumentation strategy also extensively employed references to 'European values' as shared by Ukrainians. He repeatedly argued that Ukrainians demonstrated their 'Europeanness' by commitment to European values during the Orange Revolution.

*"Boundaries of Europe are determined by common values shared by its peoples. Ukrainians proved that freedom, democracy and rule of law are their ideals, which they are ready to protect and maintain" (Yushchenko, 2005b).*

Furthermore, Yushchenko's official discourse aimed at establishing civilizational links with Europe in historical terms. Thus, he alluded to a number of Ukrainian historical personalities as contributors to the common European history and establishment of European values<sup>26</sup>. Analysis shows that Yushchenko extensively employed civilizational framework to construct 'Europeanness' of Ukrainian identity. His discourse on Ukraine and Europe heavily relied on essentializing connection between Ukraine and Europe, which is manifested in lexical choice and metaphors suggesting natural bonds between the two. For instance, he alluded to 'European spirit' that Ukrainians demonstrated during the Orange Revolution (Yushchenko, 2005b), 'two lungs – western and eastern – that Europe is breathing with', referring to Ukraine as an essential part of the 'eastern lung' (Yushchenko, 2005c) etc.

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<sup>26</sup> In particular, he referred to Kyiv Rus Princes Volodymyr Velykyi and Yaroslav Mudryi, hetman of Cossacks Bohdan Khmelnytsky, Pylyp Orlyk and his constitution, poet Taras Shevchenko and some other historical personalities that make up a Ukrainian 'canon of heroes'.



Another important peculiarity of Yushchenko's discourse on 'Europe' concerns employment of a concept of Ukraine's reintegration or return to Europe. This pattern has not been identified in the discourse of Ukrainian elites under examination. Instead, Ukrainian politicians have favored a concept of integration into Europe constructing it in terms of road or path Ukraine needs to get through. In this respect, Yushchenko's discourse is much closer to the prevailing discourse on European integration in the Central-Eastern European countries during transformation period, with 'homecoming' metaphor being a major theme referred to in the European integration discourse of these countries (Hülse, 2006).

By and large, Yushchenko's discourse on the European integration following the Orange Revolution largely exerted the civilizational framework and arguments. Such strategy can be paralleled with discursive strategies employed in the Central-European countries during their transformation periods (Kuus, 2004). It is also indicative that Yushchenko tried to reproduce this framework by aligning the Orange Revolution with events that took place in Central-Eastern Europe in the 1989<sup>27</sup> (Yushchenko, 2005a).

Hence, analysis suggests that whereas Yushchenko's discourse employed civilizational framework to argue about Ukraine's fundamental Europeanness and thus validate Ukraine's European integration claims, representatives of Ukrainian political elites generally avoided explicit definition of Ukrainian identity in terms of its 'fundamental Europeanness'. Instead, they referred to Europe as an advanced civilization primarily within argumentation strategies of legitimization/deligitimization earlier discussed.

What is, however, common for the official discourse of Ukraine as represented by President Yushchenko and political elites – that is reference to Europe as a certain goal. In his inauguration speech Yushchenko directly stated that, "My goal is Ukraine in the united Europe" (Yushchenko, 2005a). Less explicit formulations suggesting Europe as a goal are recurrent in the discourse of political elites throughout the whole analyzed period. Such references are typically invoked within the two analyzed frames, 'Europe as a model' and 'Europe as an advanced civilization' and construct Europe as the Desired Other that is to be achieved and approached.

#### ***5.2.3.5 Europe as a goal and a point of destination***

I have already mentioned in my analysis that 'Europe as a model' and 'Europe as an advanced civilization' frames have significant similarities despite certain distinctions. In this

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<sup>27</sup> In particular, Yushchenko referred to the Berlin Wall and the Polish Round Table, mentioning them and the Orange Revolution as symbols of fast changes in Europe.

section I would like to address one particular similarity that is crucial for the analyzed discourse due to its very wide employment on the one hand and virtual incontestability on the other. I here refer to the construction of Europe as a goal and a point of destination – a recurrent theme within the two discussed frames.

While both frames establish ‘Europe’ as an embodiment of goodness, the first one – through references to ‘European practices’, the second – through allusion to ‘European values’, they also entail an important projection into future. Namely, ‘Europe’ is constructed as something that Ukraine needs to achieve and as a point Ukraine needs to get to.

Representation of Europe as a goal and a destination point is constructed primarily through metaphors of movement. The range of verbs to denote relations between Ukraine and Europe is very illustrative in this respect: actors of the analyzed discourse frequently use such expressions as ‘move to Europe’, ‘approach Europe’, ‘get closer to Europe’, ‘get into Europe’ etc. That Europe is represented as some landmark for Ukraine is also manifested in such popular notions as ‘European vector’, ‘a course towards Europe’, ‘orientation towards Europe’.

*Serhiy Sobolyev (MP, BYuT): “To conclude – no matter how our colleagues are trying to evade the key question...Is country going to develop according to the European vector or does the country change its vector now?” (February 26, 2010, TRK Ukraine)*

Some of these notions are invoked to signify the European integration of Ukraine, which is also frequently constructed in terms of a path Ukraine needs to pass. Construction of European integration in terms of a path constituted an important frame in the pre-accession discourse of the Central-Eastern European countries (Zbierska-Sawala, 2004 cited in Yavorska & Bohomolov, 2010). Yet, the path was also given a meaning of return to home, as mentioned earlier. In case of the analyzed discourse, actors do not refer to ‘returning home’ but rather construct Europe and European Union as a desired realm.

*Vadym Karasiiov (then adviser of the Head of Presidential Administration): “If we want to live humanly (po-liudsky – in Ukrainian), we need to move to Europe, we need to move to the European Union. And don’t say that nobody waits us there...Only thus will we be able to build a state where a human is respected, where your health will be respected” (November 6, 2009, TRK Ukraine)*

The provided example is quite explicit in that movement to Europe is equalled to Ukraine’s integration into the European Union. This pattern was extensively reproduced in the discourse of President Yushchenko who repeatedly emphasized inevitability of Ukraine’s full integration into the EU. However, analysis shows that a lot of references to Europe as a

point of destination rather imply approaching ‘Europe’ in terms of standards of living, borrowing ‘European’ models and policies or suggest ambiguity in this regard.

*Anatoliy Semynoha (politician affiliated with BYuT): “As for “Batkivshchyna”, it has never changed its position. I want to say that socialists, the whole Verkhovna Rada and President’s team took a course towards Europe. And we all say that we are building a market economy. And free competition, equal opportunities for all are at the center of market economy” (October 21, 2005, ICTV)*

The provided quote illustrates the discussed ambiguity: on the one hand, the speaker refers to the ‘course towards Europe’, which may presume European integration. However, his following remark concerns market economy, presumably in terms of a model consistent with the European practices. Thus, it is unclear whether reference to Europe as a landmark implies integration into the EU or approximation with European practices/realities etc. The number of such ambiguous references to Europe in terms of goal/destination theme is quite substantial in the analyzed discourse. Therefore, I argue that references to Europe as a goal and a destination point within ‘Europe as a model’ and ‘Europe as an advanced civilization’ frames implicitly suggest that Ukraine’s pursuit of Europeanness does not necessitate integration into the EU. Instead, ‘Europe’ is strategically invoked by the actors of discourse to allude to taken for granted perceptions of Europe’s goodness.

Such wide rhetorical use of the formula ‘we are moving to Europe’ exemplifies an important strand of conventions guiding discursive practice of constructing ‘Europe’ within the two discussed frames. I have partly referred to this strand in the discussion of legitimization/deligitimization strategies employed by the actors of discourse. Such argumentation strategies rest on allusion to widespread perceptions of Europe as an embodiment of best practices or values. In case of the ‘destination point’ notion, rhetorical use relies on the assumed consensus concerning Ukraine’s ‘European choice’. The rhetoric around ‘European choice’ has been so extensively employed in Ukraine over the last two decades that it has turned into common sense on the one hand and hollow declarations on the other. As ironically noted by Minakov (2000: 54), “Pro-European rhetoric (‘integration into Europe’) has become a slogan our children are likely to make fun of us, just like we made fun of ‘will catch up and overtake’<sup>28</sup>; it (pro-European rhetoric) is an attribute of tastefulness and political integrity in Ukraine”.

Observers also pointed out that ‘European choice’ rhetoric, extensively employed in the official discourse of Ukrainian leadership, lacked tangible policy of European integration

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<sup>28</sup> The author here alludes to the popular communist slogan “Catch up and overtake America!” (“Догнать и перегнать Америку”)

throughout the 1990s-early 2000s and suggested virtually nothing but declarations (Wolczuk, 2003). At the same time, it is since the 1990s that attractiveness of the ‘European choice’ has emerged as commonsensical in the discourse of Ukrainian political elites. The ‘European choice’ as a strategic orientation has never been explicitly challenged in the Ukrainian political discourse. Instead, the course towards European integration of Ukraine has been regarded as consensual in the political discourse since the 1990s, with all major political elites embracing pro-European rhetoric. As I have noted in the contextual chapter, acceptance of the inevitability of the ‘European choice’ as a strategic orientation has largely shaped the discourse of Ukrainian political elites since the Kuchma presidency.

My assumption that the concept of ‘moving to Europe’ has turned into unquestioned and rhetorical notion has also found evidence in an interview with Volodymyr Venher, an MP assistant. Venher confirmed that politicians do allude to ‘movement towards Europe’ partly because they consider this formula generally accepted in the society, partly due to that they share a strategic vision of integration into Europe in broad terms (not necessarily through integration into the EU). “They talk about European integration without giving much thinking to it. It’s (such talks) just a matter of slogans”, Venher said noting that representatives of political elites very often have little knowledge about the very process of European integration. “If one came and asked any MP what *acquis communautaire* is or if one asked any MP to name at least one of Copenhagen criteria for EU accession – they wouldn’t answer”, he said. Thus, analysis of the discursive practice of constructing Europe as a destination point suggests that while integration into Europe is seen as consensual, political elites refer to it primarily in rhetorical terms, avoiding substantial discussion on what ‘movement to Europe’ stipulates for Ukraine.

To conclude, analysis of the ‘Europe as a destination point’ theme, a crucial notion within ‘Europe as a model’ and ‘Europe as an advanced civilization’ frames, demonstrates that discursive construction of ‘Europe’ within these two frames is very much a matter of rhetorical use.

#### **5.2.4 Europe as a geopolitical pole**

References to Europe as a geopolitical pole constitute a significant part of the analyzed discursive repertoire of the Ukrainian political elites. Whereas a great number of references to Europe within the two previously discussed frames were made in passing and in a variety of contexts, which doesn’t however belittle their relevance for analysis of discourse, – a ‘geopolitical’ frame is a major frame employed in the direct discussions of political

relations between Ukraine and the European Union. Geopolitical framework is also frequently invoked to talk about Ukraine's foreign policy and international relations at large.

This frame constructs Europe (a signifier denoting the European Union) and Ukraine primarily as geopolitical actors and actors of international relations, which presumes emphasis on governments, governmental institutions and governmental activities rather than societies. Along with the European Union, Russia is present in discourse as another crucial geopolitical actor. Thus, Europe, Russia and Ukraine make a geopolitical triangle recurrently referred to within the 'geopolitical' frame. It is noteworthy that geopolitical frame is the most widely employed one out of all discussed frames by the talk show editorial team when it comes to formulating topics for discussion through host's introductions of the latter. As in the case with representatives of political elites whose references to 'Europe' within geopolitical frame frequently entail references to Russia as well, articulation of issues for discussion by the talk show also constructs Europe and Russia as two major geopolitical poles of matter for Ukraine. Thus, analysis suggests that one of the key conventions guiding discursive practice around the geopolitical frame sets Europe and Russia as two geopolitical poles with Ukraine being in-between them. This convention also presumes contrasting the two in geopolitical terms and locating Ukraine into their spheres of interest. East-West axis and Ukraine's place in it are thus key notions shaping 'geopolitical' frame. Modes of relations between Ukraine, Europe and Russia stipulated within geopolitical framework depend on different strands of opinion regarding Ukraine's foreign policy as the frame under analysis is rather an umbrella frame with significant variations within its bounds. These variations are further addressed with more scrutiny.

Before turning to analysis of in-frame variations, I would like to discuss some other peculiarities distinguishing this frame in terms of contents of discourse and discursive practice from the previously analyzed ones.

As I have noted, the 'geopolitical' frame provides for more explicit discussion of relations between Ukraine and Europe compared to the other frames. It is primarily within this frame that actors of discourse articulate their viewpoint on European integration of Ukraine and issues concerning foreign policy of Ukraine. Whereas references to 'Europe as a point of destination' theme within two previous frames also entail arguments about Ukraine's integration into Europe, 'geopolitical' frame is invoked for more straightforward statements on Ukraine's foreign policy priorities, including policy of European integration. At the same time, analysis of discourse suggests that most of the references to 'Europe' within geopolitical frame concern broad and general formulations on Ukraine's strategic orientation.

There is virtually no discussion of the very process of integration into the EU, its benchmarks, policies required for implementation, harmonization of legislation and other related issues. Similarly, references to Europe in introductions to topics for discussion suggested by the talk show editorial team also concern European integration predominantly in broad strategic terms. Thus, neither the host, nor invited guests discuss European integration as a routine process involving implementation of certain policies, norms, etc. While references to Europe in geopolitical terms are occasional in the host's introductions of issues for discussion, analysis couldn't identify a single program explicitly dedicated to the discussion of the process of Ukraine's European integration in the analyzed sample.

It is also noteworthy that while both Europe and Russia are presented as crucial geopolitical actors, issues relating to Russia and relations with Russia are given more coverage in the analyzed discourse. This is manifested in the number of topics raised for discussion that directly concern Russia or Ukraine's relations with Russia, as well as selection of guests: Russian politicians are far more usual guests at the program compared to their European counterparts.

Another important peculiarity of the discursive practice around 'geopolitical' frame concerns argumentation strategies employed by the political elites. While argumentation strategies differ depending on the stance of actors (which brings us back to the abovementioned in-frame variations), there is one significant common feature in strategies employed within 'geopolitical' frame. Namely, actors of discourse construct their argumentation around the notion of interests, presuming national interests. Thus, discussions of foreign policy issues heavily rely on *realpolitik* rhetoric. Irrespective of whether actors stand for closer relations with Russia or Europe, they formulate their statements with an emphasis on pragmatism as a key guiding force behind foreign policy. Such argumentation strategies imply personification of states, which has been quite typical for discourse on international relations, as Drulak noted (2006). States are constructed as holders of interests, the latter determining modes of relations with other states. Interestingly, the European Union is largely represented in terms of a state within the analyzed frame. Whereas its supranational institutional character is acknowledged, it is predominantly represented as a single political entity with its own interests vis-à-vis Ukraine.

It is also worth noting that although actors of discourse predominantly employ conventions of discussion in terms of geopolitics within the analyzed frame, they do refer to other frames in their argumentation strategies. In particular, this concerns argumentation strategy aimed at emphasizing desirability and validity of Ukraine's integration into the EU.

Not only interests are appealed to; practices and values of Europe are also invoked in rationalization of Ukraine's European integration. Thus, attractiveness of European integration is argued through references to 'Europe as a model' and 'Europe as an advanced civilization' frames. Instead, proponents of 'reserved' approach to Ukraine's integration basically rely on the notion of interests, as further discussed.

Although references to Europe in discussions of foreign policy and European integration issues mostly entail geopolitical connotations within the analyzed frame, they also suggest implications for national identity construction. As dialectical relationship between national identity and foreign policy has been acknowledged by theorists (Prizel, 1998), analysis of discourse on foreign policy issues is indicative of discursive construction of national identity. Analysis of the relationship between national identity and foreign policy discourses is all the more pertinent in case of Ukraine's European integration, as it has been constructed in the political discourse not only as a foreign policy course but as a strategic direction of Ukraine's development.

Along with particular argumentation strategies that distinguish the 'geopolitical' frame from the previously analyzed ones, one more peculiarity of discursive practice should be noted. Whereas references to 'Europe' within previously discussed frames do not commonly cause explicit contestation among representatives of political elites, references within 'geopolitical' frame find such contestation and illustrate different approaches to foreign policy and European integration among different political camps.

Therefore, although references to 'Europe' within geopolitical frame carry some important commonalities, the very frame is rather an umbrella frame, as I have mentioned earlier. While it determines certain conventions and peculiarities of discourse within its boundaries, it also incorporates significant internal variations or sub-frames. These sub-frames, in their turn, yield different argumentation strategies resulting in contested construction of knowledge, relations and identities with regard to Ukraine and Europe.

Several major sub-frames that exemplify different approaches to Ukraine's foreign policy at large and European integration in particular can be identified in the analyzed discourse.

#### ***5.2.4.1 'European choice' sub-frame***

One of the mainstream sub-frames within 'geopolitical' frame concerns explicit articulation of Ukraine's imperative European integration. Such approach entails discursive construction of attractiveness of European integration as the only feasible alternative for the

development of Ukraine. Argumentation strategy within this approach thus rests on both explicit and implicit claims of Europe's superiority over Russia as another possible geopolitical landmark. Strategy of contrasting the two presumes references to 'Europe' within earlier discussed frames, 'Europe as a model' and 'Europe as an advanced civilization'.

**Leonid Chernovetsky** (Mayor of Kyiv): *“What kind of problem do we encounter? Shall we enter the European Union or shall we go the corruption path. We have two ways...By the way, I stand for development of relations both with Russia and America, because we are brothers, because we can't be divided. But...Path with Russia is a historical path with corruption.”* (September 29, 2006)

**Petro Poroshenko** (then Chairman of Council of the National Bank of Ukraine, affiliated with Our Ukraine-People's Self-Defense Bloc): *“There's a world-view choice, where we should go. Either we go... to democratic values, European Union and systems of security related with Europe or we go into the other direction. On no account does it (implying choice of Europe – mine) presume deterioration of relations with Russia...I want to emphasize that the point is – Russian interests. And they, which is quite natural, do not fully coincide with interests of Ukraine. And I as a politician, a citizen and a statesman should be guided by my understanding of Ukraine's interests...”* (February 16, 2007, ICTV)

The provided quotes illustrate rationalization of the 'European choice' through employment of arguments about Europe's development and references to Europe's intrinsically good practices and values. The second quote also exerts the notion of interests as key motivation for European integration. Actors of discourse advocating Ukraine's integration into the EU frequently employ arguments of numerous benefits Ukraine will get once it joins the EU. It is also common to refer to statistical data, various rankings etc. as proof of Europe's progressiveness. In addition, such references also imply that Ukraine's interests, particularly those relating to welfare and efficient governance, will be secured in the European Union.

**Vasyl Filipchuk** (then press-secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs): *“What are our national interests today? These are efficient reform, creation of a normal efficient socio-economic political model in Ukraine. How to make it – that's a major issue for internal political life. Foreign policy is a continuation of satisfying those needs that we have in internal political life. Therefore our foreign policy orientation is at the European Union. Not because we want to have our flag there, but because the EU offers an efficient social model of country's development and an efficient model of economy.”* (May 5, 2006, ICTV)

Within 'European choice' sub-frame, Europe and EU are mainly associated with prospects of Ukraine's transformation into a developed and prosperous country. The provided quote of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson illustrates a significant pattern in the construction of relations and identities within the discussed sub-frame. Namely, the EU is



constructed as an agent of modernization for Ukraine. It is through European integration that Ukraine can modernize and satisfy its aspirations for development and it is the European Union that can foster this process. As the quote below suggests, European institutions are reserved a role of a warrantor of Ukraine's development.

***Hryhoriy Nemyria** (then MP, ByuT faction in the parliament, later Deputy Prime Minister responsible for European integration policy): "If we are talking about organization that will help to modernize Ukraine and draw it into the twenty first century, we should then go together with those countries that are modernizing. Not only practical standards matter, democratic standards too." (May 5, 2006, ICTV)*

The lexical choice for denoting relations between Ukraine and EU is particularly illustrative in this case. Thus the EU (referred here as 'organization') is expected to 'help Ukraine to modernize' and 'draw it into the twenty first century'. Again, integration into the EU is constructed as a chance for Ukraine's update and development.

It is also interesting to note that while argumentation strategy within this sub-frame largely employs claims of attractiveness of European integration, mostly such arguments refer to strategic attractiveness rather than discuss particular benefits European integration can bring. While actors of discourse communicating the discussed sub-frame do mention some benefits, the latter are commonly quite general like economic prosperity, democratic development, protection of human rights etc. Benefits in terms of particular policies and areas are largely overlooked.

Another peculiarity of the argumentation strategy within 'European choice' sub-frame concerns frequent references to documents establishing strategic foreign policy priorities of Ukraine, which are adduced to add authority and credibility to the claims of the need of Ukraine's integration into the EU. It is noteworthy that such references to documents find no contestation from other actors of discourse. Furthermore, the very claims of the need of Ukraine's integration into the EU as a strategic goal do not evoke disavowal. Thus, European integration is consensually recognized as the so-called strategic course for Ukraine as it is frequently referred to in the analyzed discourse. By contrast, integration into NATO generates heated debates although it is occasionally alluded to in the context of 'Europe'. This pattern is particularly vivid in the sub-frame aimed at alienating 'Europe', as highlighted further in the analysis.

I have already noted that claims of European integration as a strategic goal of Ukraine do not cause explicit denial in the analyzed discourse, which represents an important convention guiding discursive practice around the whole 'geopolitical' frame. However,

straightforward advocacy of European integration communicated through ‘European choice’ sub-frame is not even among different actors of discourse. Thus, ‘European choice’ sub-frame is predominantly articulated by representatives of the ‘orange’ political forces (“Our Ukraine” and BYuT), as well as diplomats, including the retired ones, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs bureaucrats.

Another notable peculiarity of the discursive practice around ‘European choice’ sub-frame concerns cautious references to Russia, which entail certain ambivalence. While Russia and Europe are frequently contrasted within this sub-frame, actors of discourse pursuing this argumentation strategy tend to emphasize that European integration of Ukraine does not mean deterioration of relationship with Russia. Explicit acknowledgement of the importance of good relations with Russia within ‘European choice’ sub-frame demonstrates implicit adherence to the geopolitical framework setting Russia and Europe as two poles Ukraine gravitates between. Such references to Russia by proponents of European integration are largely made within conventions of diplomatic rhetoric.

#### ***5.2.4.2 ‘Multi-vector foreign policy’ sub-frame***

Another mainstream sub-frame within the ‘geopolitical’ frame constructs European Union as one of relevant and important partners, but not the only one Ukraine should lean towards. Thus, relations with Europe are constructed as crucial for Ukraine, but not at cost of friendship with Russia. Reasonable gravitation between the two is considered as the most appropriate foreign policy strategy. Such approach exerts a popular metaphor of a ‘bridge’ between Russia and the EU, which Ukraine should provide for.

***Taras Chornovil*** (MP, Party of Regions): “For fifteen years we didn’t have easy relations all the time, but we proved that we can solve problems. And we will resolve all problems. And I hope that Ukraine will be a bridge that will be able to unite both Russia and Europe...and develop normal relations based on our own neutrality between NATO and Tashkent agreement...And I think it’s some sort of a mission.” (February 16, 2007, ICTV)

Argumentation strategy within ‘multi-vector foreign policy’ sub-frame largely employs the notion of national interests and rests on claims of the need to secure multiple interests of Ukraine rather than limit those to one geopolitical pole.

***Dmytro Tabachnyk*** (then MP of Crimean Parliament, Party of Regions): “The most appropriate way for Ukraine, considering different vectors of sympathies, moods in different regions of Ukraine and in order not to get into backyards, behind the ‘iron curtain’, is (pursuing) pragmatic policy based on economic interests. Our markets are located on the territory of the CIS, our markets – in the

*third-world countries too.” (May 5, 2006, ICTV)*

The notion of national interests widely utilized in this sub-frame establishes a ‘realpolitik’ framework as conventional for discussion of foreign policy issues, including European integration.

Within such a framework, the European Union is constructed as a powerful actor securing its interests. Such references presume necessity for Ukraine to follow this line, that is, be guided by its own interests first and foremost. Relations between the two are thus subjected to particular interests and pragmatism.

**Dmytro Tabachnyk** (then MP of Crimean Parliament, Party of Regions): *“The West, as actually a stronger force in the world order, is playing a double game with double standards. Georgia and Moldova have long been members of the World Trade Organization. Why then have they been pushed out from European markets?..What did the status of associate partner give to Ukraine...if now access to Ukrainian tubes, a highly technological product, is shut off in Europe? Is that a friendly signal from the European Union?” (May 5, 2006, ICTV)*

**Petro Symonenko** (MP, leader of the Communist Party of Ukraine): *“I was on the territory of the Western Ukraine at that time. And I told those who criticized me, “Russia doesn’t accept milk? Go ahead, sell into Europe”. They responded to me, “In Europe no one will buy our milk”. Why? Because they have their own farmers, they have their own national interests and they provide their farmers with work.” (May 5, 2006, ICTV).*

The provided quotes are illustrative in terms of construction of relations between Ukraine and Europe within ‘multi-vector foreign policy’ sub-frame. The two are constructed as distinct geopolitical actors operating in a competitive world, which implies that relations between the two should be based on pragmatism and rationality. Europe and the West are represented as pragmatics preoccupied with their own interests, prone to double standards when there is need to protect their interests. Such references suggest that Ukraine should reproduce a similar logic of conduct in order to preserve its interests.

Another important implication stemming from such framework concerns power dimension of relations. Ukraine is represented as a vulnerable actor in a competitive or even somewhat hostile environment dominated by several powerful actors, including the EU. Argumentation strategy of proponents of multi-vector foreign policy thus constructs their approach as a relevant platform for keeping Ukraine safe in a highly competitive geopolitical domain.

**Taras Chornovil** (MP, Party of Regions): *“Yes, we should protect Ukrainian interests. And our Ukrainian interests today require that we do not let us make objects of someone’s politics. We can’t let us be used by people formulating*

*American policy, in a war against Russia, in a war of nerves that nobody needs now and that will end soon. By the same token, we shouldn't become objects in ...policy of our other neighbours.” (February 16, 2007, ICTV)*

**Leonid Hrach** (Communist Party of Ukraine): *“Don't push for the West – the East will not have issues with you. Don't push for the East – the West won't have issues with you. Be neutral. Why can't you just settle?” (February 15, 2008, INTER)*

It should be noted, however, that explicit concerns about geopolitical place of Ukraine vis-à-vis major geopolitical players basically leave the very European Union out of discourse. Instead, actors of discourse communicating 'multi-vector foreign policy' sub-frame largely refer to the Western geopolitical pole through mentions of NATO and the US impact in Europe. Hence, it is NATO, not the EU that is constructed as a major bogey in implicit criticism of Europe within the sub-frame under analysis. This may be explained by several factors. Firstly, concerns about geopolitical standing conventionally imply consideration of security issues. In this respect, NATO represents a more obvious geopolitical agent with security ambitions than the EU. Secondly, and more importantly, NATO as an organization has been historically stigmatized in Ukrainian discourse, following the tradition inherited from the USSR. By contrast, the EU, as analysis suggests, is largely perceived as the union of the rich and developed. Furthermore, discursive conventions guiding construction of 'Europe' and the EU within other frames of references earlier discussed foreground intrinsic goodness of 'Europe' thus complicating criticism as such.

'Multi-vector foreign policy' sub-frame is quite evenly represented in the analyzed discourse throughout the whole period under examination, which indicates its conventionality accepted by most actors of discourse. Such conventionality might be explained by practice of formulating Ukraine's foreign policy in multi-vector terms, both explicitly and implicitly, which was established and strengthened during the presidency of Leonid Kuchma, as I have discussed in the contextual chapter. Multi-vector approach was argued to represent a sensible way of handling foreign policy issues, allowing significant degree of flexibility that was utilized by then ruling elites to balance between West and Russia (Kuzio, 2003). While explicit multi-vector foreign policy has eventually been widely criticized in Ukraine and abroad, idea of balancing between the two geopolitical poles remains one of the mainstream in the discourse of Ukrainian political elites. More account on multi-vector foreign policy of the late 1990s-early 2000s and its implications for European integration of Ukraine is provided in the background chapter.

As for the analyzed period, ‘multi-vector foreign policy’ sub-frame also proved to be a convenient framework for the discussion of foreign policy issues as it allows for substantial flexibility and discursive ambivalence. Thus, for instance, representatives of the Party of Regions extensively employed the discussed sub-frame to emphasize the need for closer cooperation with Russia and argue against an allegedly one-sided (Europe-oriented) approach taken by the Orange leadership. At the same time, they largely admitted a strategic goal of European integration, particularly after their leader’s victory in the presidential elections of 2010.

#### ***5.2.4.3 ‘Europe as a rejector’ sub-frame***

Similar to ‘multi-vector foreign policy’ approach is another strand within the geopolitical frame, which I define as ‘Europe as a rejector’ sub-frame. The major similarity of the two sub-frames concerns one of the central arguments employed within respective argumentation strategies, that is, Ukraine should not seek and expect geopolitical protection or shelter from any geopolitical actor (implying West and Russia), but rather place a priority on interests of its own.

However, whereas ‘multi-vector foreign policy’ sub-frame employs the argument of multiple interests, which presumes balancing of Ukraine’s foreign policy between Russia and the West, exponents of ‘Europe as a rejector’ sub-frame construct their argumentation strategy focusing primarily on the argument about Ukraine’s need of self-sufficiency. Within such argumentation strategy, actors of discourse shift focus of discussion from foreign policy issues to internal ones through emphasis on the priority of internal development of Ukraine. It is also noteworthy that advocates of ‘Europe as a rejector’ sub-frame largely avoid explicit references to multi-vector foreign policy approach, which might be explained by the aura of scepticism and condemnation around this approach that is strongly associated with President Kuchma’s much criticized foreign policy. Instead, the discussed line of reasoning implies that necessity of pragmatic foreign policy that would balance geopolitical interests is an outcome of pragmatic approaches taken by other geopolitical actors towards Ukraine. In particular, this argumentation strategy refers to Europe and exerts disappointment over Ukraine’s unsuccessful European integration efforts following the Orange Revolution. Thus, argumentation strategy shaping ‘Europe as a rejector’ sub-frame suggests that Ukraine is forced to be pragmatic and bound to foster self-sufficiency because no one will take care of it.

*Arseniy Yatsenyuk (MP, Our Ukraine-People’s Self-Defense Bloc, candidate for*

*Presidency at the time of the program): “We need gas resources in Russia. Russia needs transit. We need European consumers. That’s the formula that can change the price for us...Everyone has his own interests. Don’t take offence at Russians. Everyone defends his own (interests). Europeans – theirs. Russians – theirs. Americans – theirs. And you know, there is practically no difference between them. I’m telling this to you as a former Minister of Aoreign Φfairs. There’s only one difference: Americans and Europeans are smiling, Russians – no. Otherwise everyone is standing for his own (interests). Therefore we also have to stand for our own (interests).” (November 20, 2009, TRK Ukraine)*

***Anna Herman** (MP, Party of Regions): “I want to respond to the questions, how we can keep independence and how can we keep sovereignty and who can guarantee our sovereignty. Will Moscow be able to guarantee Ukraine’s sovereignty? We know that Moscow doesn’t believe in tears...But Brussels also doesn’t believe in tears. We also know this. That is why we have to build our own strong state that will be able to secure its sovereignty...Neither Moscow, nor Brussels will protect our sovereignty.” (November 20, 2009, TRK Ukraine)*

The provided quotes construct Europe and Russia as self-centered geopolitical actors. Ukraine shouldn’t expect protection or assistance from. What is more, the suggested statements equate Russia and Europe in their conduct towards Ukraine. They also reveal certain disappointment with Europe since the statements allude to preconceptions of Europe’s difference from Russia and suggest they are fallacious. The second example provides an interesting case by its employment of a metaphor “Moscow does not believe in tears”, referring to the title of a popular Soviet film of the 1980. The context of metaphor employment suggests that neither Russia nor Europe are likely to guard Ukraine’s sovereignty and interests, which implicitly constructs them as potentially hostile with regard to Ukraine. The quotes are also illustrative of another pattern within the analyzed argumentation strategy, that is, shifting of focus from seeking partnerships abroad to internal development, which I have touched upon earlier.

‘Europe as a rejector’ sub-frame thus rests on the discursive strategy of alienating Europe through representing it as reluctant to accept Ukraine and satisfy its aspirations to join the EU.

***Dmytro Tabachnyk** (then MP of Crimean Parliament, Party of Regions): “European Union as an economic community is not ready to accept Ukraine, it is quite clear. And despite all our desperate attempts to present another half-nod or half-smile as a friendly signal, no one out of more or less influential people in the EU can call even a twenty-year old term as a real term for Ukraine’s accession.” (May 5, 2006, ICTV)*

***Taras Chornovil** (MP, Party of Regions): “President has to save his face after such Heleteys let him down inciting him to sign unconstitutional decrees and*

*made him a laughingstock for the whole Europe, where he wanted to go...Even President of Poland...who states he sympathizes President of Ukraine...says that Poland is now the last advocate of Ukraine... That's it. They put an end on us". (May 11, 2007, ICTV)*

While the provided instances of discourse construct Europe as indifferent towards Ukraine, criticism of speakers is mainly targeted at the Ukrainian authorities that are blamed for failed European integration. In this case, 'Europe as a rejector' sub-frame is employed by opposition politicians to deligitimize foreign as well as domestic policies of the Orange elite.

More revealing is, however, another discursive pattern identified in the analysis with regard to employment of 'Europe as a rejector' sub-frame. Thus, analysis of discourse showed increasing employment of this sub-frame over the period under examination. In particular, it gained prominence in the discourse of candidates for presidency during the election campaign of 2009-2010. What is even more noteworthy, references to 'Europe' in terms of its rejection of Ukraine were extensively communicated by several candidates representing former Orange camp, particularly – Arseniy Yatsenyuk and Anatoliy Hrytsenko to a smaller degree.

References to 'Europe as a rejector' sub-frame, extensively permeated in the electoral discourse of the 2009-2010 election campaign, assert inefficiency of the European integration policy implemented by the Orange elite and suggest the need to reconsider the whole approach.

***Arseniy Yatsenyuk** (MP, Our Ukraine-People's Self-Defense Bloc, candidate for Presidency at the time of the program): "We were told five years ago that we will join the European Union...tomorrow. But his didn't happen. The whole Ukraine knew about it. Only the European Union didn't know that. But maybe we will finally understand that our future is not in accessions, our future is in actions, our future is in our beliefs (...). Don't wait for aid neither from the West, nor from the East. It is only here, in Ukraine, in Kyiv. Understand this." (November 6, 2009, TRK Ukraine).*

***Arseniy Yatsenyuk** (MP, Our Ukraine-People's Self-Defense Bloc, candidate for Presidency at the time of the program): "There is one simple formula here: for 18 years some have been trying to sell Ukraine to the West...Others are trying to join Russia...My task is to make us understand that we don't need to join anyone. We have to fight with Ukrainian inferiority complex. We have to realize that we are not a secondary European country. And those who don't know geography well...I will present them with a map...We are Europe. And we don't need to cry out for joining anyone. The longer one stands on the knees, the harder it is to stand up and unbend." (November 20, 2009, TRK Ukraine)*

The provided quotes exemplify several important patterns constitutive of the analyzed sub-frame, some of which have already been mentioned in the analysis. Firstly, the statements suggest that Ukraine should leave aside its aspirations for European integration as the EU is not going to satisfy them. This brings about significant implications for the construction of relations between Ukraine and Europe within the sub-frame. While ‘Europe’ is discursively alienated here, it is hardly explicitly criticized. That Europe can have interests of its own and pursue them without considering those of Ukraine is normalized in the analyzed discourse. This means that Ukraine and Europe should develop their relations as two separate actors, which is not quite compatible with aspirations to become part of the EU. Secondly, the suggested instances of discourse clearly demonstrate speaker’s efforts to relocate the focus of discussion: instead of talking about European integration as a ‘road to happiness’ we should start building this ‘happiness’ inside our own country, the line of arguments implies. In this respect, allusion to the notion of self-sufficiency contributes to the general argumentation strategy employed within the sub-frame.

*Arseniy Yatsenyuk (MP, Our Ukraine-People’s Self-Defense Bloc, candidate for Presidency at the time of the program): “I beg your pardon, but I will say: what is this self-depreciation? We need to join something, we will go...Is it that some go only to the European Union, others go only to Russia? Isn’t our Ukraine a European state? I want to tell you clearly...Stop, please, these talks about Ukrainian self-depreciation...We ourselves are able to be a strong country. And we will see who will take us for a model in 20 years and whom we will adjoin.” (November 6, 2009, TRK Ukraine).*

Lexical choice and metaphors denoting relations between Ukraine and Europe within ‘Europe as a rejector’ sub-frame also convey notable patterns shaping construction of relations between the two. Analysis suggests that Ukraine is largely objectified vis-à-vis Europe, i.e., represented as an object of Europe’s foreign policy rather than a proactive geopolitical actor. It is Europe that determines what kind of relationship it will have with Ukraine, neither the other way around nor on the mutual agreement basis. This is vividly expressed through a metaphor ‘they put an end to us’ employed in one of the suggested quotes.

Objectification of Ukraine with regard to Europe is also expressly manifested in a commonly used formula ‘does Europe need/want us’. This formula, frequently invoked in the discussion of Ukraine’s relations with its foreign partners by various actors of discourse, including the host of the program, implies a passive role for Ukraine in the international relations. As an object, Ukraine is bound to worry about its own attractiveness for Europe – a



pattern illustrating Ukraine's ongoing quest for identity.

'Europe as a rejector' sub-frame also constructs Ukraine as an immature geopolitical actor. This is achieved through statements urging for a more pragmatic and realistic foreign policy from Ukrainian part, which implies that so far Ukraine has been naïve in its foreign policy and European aspirations.

References within the discussed sub-frame construct Ukraine as a poor relation trying hard to get into a family of the rich and superior. Such framework of relations implies Ukraine's powerlessness vis-à-vis Europe. Actors of discourse communicating 'Europe as a rejector' sub-frame utilize such unappealing image of Ukraine as a starting point to argue for reconsideration of Ukraine's foreign policy as such and European integration policy in particular. By representing Ukraine as an inferior and fortuneless geopolitical actor, they justify urge for changes and emphasize contrast between Ukraine's status quo and their projected vision of Ukraine's future standing. Thus, for instance, one of the quoted references suggested that in 20 years it is not Ukraine that will be incorporated somewhere, but rather someone might want to join Ukraine due to its attractiveness.

Frequent appeals to the need of self-sufficiency and criticism of the inferiority complex of Ukrainians are typical for the argumentation strategy employed within the discussed sub-frame. These appeals might be explained by peculiarities of the discursive practice accompanying election campaigns. Such rhetorical appeals constitute part of mobilization strategies employed in election campaigns. Interestingly, the cited statements, although suggesting quite radical solutions like implicit suggestion to give up or at least hold European integration of Ukraine, were virtually left without contestation, with a very few exceptions. This might mean, among other things, that such claims are perceived by actors of discourse as mobilizing electoral rhetoric rather than serious and substantial stance that requires debate and response. This strand of interpretation finds indirect evidence in that employment of 'Europe as a rejector' sub-frame reached its peak during the election campaign of 2009-2010 and largely declined throughout the rest of the analyzed period, that is, year 2010. Furthermore, it is also noteworthy that actors of discourse heavily utilized 'Europe as a rejector' sub-frame to delegitimize policies implemented by the Orange leadership and President Yushchenko as a chief proponent of European integration in particular.

While impact of the discursive practice of election campaigns on the discourse under investigation is likely to be significant, other factors influencing the discourse should not be ruled out too. The discursive shift towards alienating 'Europe' that characterized election

campaign of 2010 contrasts with the previous election campaigns into the parliament that have also been included in the time frame for analysis. This suggests that it is not only conventions of discursive practice shaping election campaigns that contributed to the discussed shift concerning Europe. To analyze this shift, reference to a wider political and discursive context would be in place.

First of all, it is crucial to note that the discussed shift illustrates the major change in the discourse on Europe throughout the analyzed period of time. Whereas other frames of references to Europe are quite evenly represented in the discourse, 'Europe as a rejector' sub-frame manifests a significant shift in constructing 'Europe' within geopolitical framework in the post-Orange Ukraine. My analysis suggests that 'European choice' rhetoric has been largely conventionalized in the public discourse of Ukrainian political elites, even though it may be criticized for its declarative character and lack of real problematization. In this respect, construction of Europe as a rejector and push for reconsideration of European integration is quite radical because it suggests that European integration as a goal in itself lost credibility to a certain extent.

Indeed, identified discursive shift illustrates disillusionment with European integration of Ukraine in late 2000s that replaced tremendous Euro-enthusiasm instigated by the Orange Revolution. General disappointment with Ukraine's progress regarding European integration, particularly contrasting with optimistic expectations confidently expressed by the new Orange leadership, contributed to eventual reinvigoration of multi-vector foreign policy approach in the discourse of Ukrainian political elites. Thus, three major candidates for presidency struggling in the 2010 election campaign advocated relevance of multi-vector approach to a greater or lesser extent (Yermolenko, 2009). While the multi-vector model of foreign policy was well established in the discourse of Ukrainian political elites throughout 1990s-early 2000s, presidential campaign of 2009-2010 that followed a five-year period of the Orange leadership, brought about another theme for exertion, the discussed sub-frame of Europe's rejection of Ukraine. Also, it is during the last years of the Orange elites in power that some new issues bearing negative overtones with regard to Europe were raised by Ukrainian politicians within the analyzed setting. I here particularly refer to such issues as Ukrainian guest workers in European countries and EU visa policy towards Ukrainians. These issues were invoked to argue about disrespectful attitude to Ukrainians as another illustration of Europe's rejection of Ukraine. Therefore, a new political context around European integration policy, as elaborated with more detail in the background chapter, contributed to the change of conventions guiding discursive construction of Europe in

geopolitical terms in the post-Orange Ukraine.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSIONS

Analysis of mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites revealed a number of patterns and trends shaping discursive construction of 'Europe', which I would like to address here and discuss their implications.

First of all, the study has established that Europe is indeed a crucial signifier in the Ukrainian political discourse, which is evidenced by abundant references to Europe within multiple contexts. Secondly, analysis of references to Europe in the investigated discourse, as well as exploration of the broader socio-political and cultural context, demonstrates that Europe is a much-contested signifier in the Ukrainian public discourse.

The analyzed discourse is marked by competitive representations of 'Europe'. Contestation of representations and identities observed in the discourse illustrates, among other things, complex processes of transformations Ukraine and Ukrainian society have been undergoing since the breakup of the USSR and declaration of Ukraine's independence. Whereas identities and representations are matters of discursive construction, negotiation, reconstruction and transformation by definition, as argued by the employed theoretical framework, societies in transition are particularly prone to get engaged into discursive struggles over meanings, representations and identities. Divisive legacies still shaping reconsideration of collective identities in Ukraine, including national identity, discursive contestation has been particularly vivid in the post-Soviet Ukraine.

By focusing analysis on the discourse of Ukrainian political elites in the talk show setting, which exemplifies the mediatized political discourse, the study has identified a broad range of references to 'Europe' entailing different modes and dimensions of discursive representations.

One of the central dimensions of discursive construction of 'Europe' concerns recurrent representations of Europe as a crucial landmark for Ukraine. This mode of representations is particularly epitomized in the two frames I have addressed in my analysis, namely, 'Europe as a model and a source of norm(s)' and 'Europe as an advanced civilization' frames. Both frames establish Europe as some kind of an ideal Ukraine should strive for. Accordingly, Europe is represented as an embodiment of best practices and values.

'Europe as a model' frame is widely employed by Ukrainian politicians through references to the 'European experience' as relevant and desirable for Ukraine. 'European' practices and policies are constructed as normative. It is noteworthy that most of the

references to such popular notions as ‘European standards’ or ‘European experience’ are articulated as self-explanatory. Thus, analysis of the textual data shows that Ukrainian politicians do not commonly explain what exactly they mean by references to ‘European standards’ or ‘European practices’. This pattern suggests some important implications. First, it demonstrates that Europe, which is commonly equated with the European Union, is largely constructed as a single and homogeneous entity in the mediatized discourse of Ukrainian politicians. Similarly, the notion of ‘European’ is also constructed as a generalized and homogeneous signifier. The discussed homogenization of ‘Europe’ and ‘European’ shows that both notions are rather unproblematized in the discourse of Ukrainian political elites. The second implication of the analyzed pattern concerns establishment of ‘Europe’ and ‘European’ as good and positive by default. Since references to ‘European experience’ are commonly invoked as self-explanatory to signify appropriate practices, policies, decisions etc. – Europe is thus implicitly constructed as an embodiment of ‘goodness’. In much the same way, the notion of ‘European’ is constructed to mean something good and progressive.

The wide employment of such references by Ukrainian political elites illustrates commonsensical assumptions of inherent goodness associated with ‘Europe’.

Along with implicit signification of ‘Europe’ and ‘European’ as synonyms to ‘good’ and ‘positive’, actors of the analyzed discourse explicitly ascribe various positive traits to ‘Europe’ and ‘European’. Analysis has identified a number of positive lexicalizations that accompany references to Europe and European, which presumes a synonymous relation between them. Most frequently, Ukrainian politicians refer to ‘European’ as a synonym to developed, high-quality, well-functioning, progressive, democratic etc. It is particularly noteworthy that the adjective ‘European’ is frequently used along such an attribute as ‘normal’ in a meaning of ‘appropriate’. With a number of miscellaneous positive attributions ascribed to Europe, the latter turns into a measure of appropriateness, against which Ukraine is assessed.

Indeed, representatives of Ukrainian political elites commonly resort to comparisons of practices and processes taking place in Ukraine and Europe, contrasting the two. Within such comparisons, Europe is primarily represented as a source of progressive solutions, whereas Ukraine – as backward.

Analysis of actors’ attributions of the term ‘European’ to denote certain practices, ways of doing things in various contexts demonstrates establishment of ‘Europeanness’ as adherence to particular modes of conduct and commitment to certain practices. Europeanness is thus constructed as some sort of condition that can be achieved through commitment to

such practices. Again, actors of discourse commonly fail to provide explicit elaboration of the particular meanings they put in such notions as ‘European practices’ or ‘European way of doing things’. It is crucial, however, that they allude to commonsensical assumptions of inherent goodness or worthiness associated with ‘Europe’ and ‘Europeanness’.

Apparent prevalence of positive attributions to the notions of ‘Europe’ and ‘European’ shapes construction of Europe’s overall attractiveness in the mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites. Analysis suggests that attractiveness of Europe, as represented in the examined discourse, largely rests on the perceptions of Europe as an embodiment of prosperity and development. Such perceptions also find manifestation in the frequently employed notions of ‘European standards of living’ and ‘European quality of life’, which are also invoked as self-explanatory to signify welfare, prosperity, social security etc. The significant extent to which Europe is associated with prosperity in Ukrainian discourse is epitomized in a popular metaphor ‘to build Europe in Ukraine’. This metaphor is widely employed by Ukrainian politicians as a rhetorical device to denote promises for reforms and prosperity.

I have shown in my analysis that perceptions of Europe as a realm of welfare, widely conveyed in the analyzed discourse, are consonant with public perceptions of Europe and the European Union in Ukraine. Public opinion polls confirm that Ukrainians commonly associate Europe with economic prosperity. Analysis of socio-cultural context provides numerous illustrations of widespread perceptions equating ‘Europe’ with prosperity, ‘European’ – with progressive and high-quality. Hence, the discussed mode of references to Europe as an ideal model vividly demonstrates relation between the analyzed discourse of Ukrainian political elites and broader socio-cultural practice shaping perceptions and attitudes to Europe.

Representation of Europe as an attractive model entails a particular mode of relations between Europe and Ukraine, which I have termed as relations of a ‘role model’ and a ‘wannabe’. While Europe is constructed as Ukraine’s ‘Other’ through comparisons and juxtapositions, it is not a hostile ‘Other’. Rather, it is a sort of an object of attraction, the desired ‘Other’. The constructed mode of relations, however, implies ambivalence. Whereas Europe’s attractiveness is conveyed as commonsensical, Ukraine’s aspirations with regard to Europe suggest ambiguity. On the one hand, references within ‘Europe as a model’ frame indicate aspirations to become part of Europe, thus suggesting the need of integration into the EU. On the other hand, many references entail aspirations to become ‘like Europe’, meaning to be as prosperous and developed as European countries. The latter option presumes that

Ukraine's Europeanness can be secured through comfort and welfare and does not necessitate institutional integration into Europe. A lot of references within the discussed frame are articulated in such an ambiguous way that it is unclear which alternative of the two discussed they suggest. This pattern of discursive construction of 'Europe' reflects contestation of identities and representations by the Ukrainian political elites. Shall Ukraine join the EU in order to become truly 'European'? Or it can achieve 'Europeanness' by pursuing reforms, yet remain outside the EU? Are prosperity and efficient governance sufficient prerequisites for identifying Ukraine as a full-fledged European country? These questions are matters of implicit and explicit contestation in the analyzed discourse of Ukrainian politicians.

Not only the discussed issues with regard to 'Europe as a model' frame find contestation in the investigated discourse. Although all political elites seem to share a consensus regarding essential goodness of European practices, references to this commonsensical assumption entail contestation as well. Thus, representatives of different political elites compete for the substance of the discussed commonsensical assumption. Since 'European experience' or 'European practices' are quite broad and abstract notions, different political elites try to impose their vision, emphasizing those aspects of assumed 'Europeanness' that are advantageous to them. Another crucial pattern shaping employment of references to Europe as a model concerns the use of such references within strategies of legitimization and delegitimization. Hence, representatives of Ukrainian political elites commonly refer to 'Europe' and 'European practices' in order to justify, neutralize or condemn this or that practice, policy, proposal etc. Usually such references are targeted at political opponents. At the same time, even those references to 'European practices' that are employed within strategies of legitimization and delegitimization cause little direct confrontation. This suggests that most political actors are quite comfortable with the flexibility of 'European experience' or 'European practices' notions, since it allows them to fill the notions with those emphases they need in each particular case. Thus, analysis of the discursive conventions shaping references to Europe within 'Europe as a model' frame demonstrates that political elites do not try to establish what in fact makes this or that practice 'European'. The discussed flexibility of these notions on the one hand, and their assumed commonsensical goodness and progressiveness, on the other hand, is widely utilized by all political elites within their discursive strategies aimed at supporting their claims and demeaning those of opponents.

The examined pattern of discursive conventions guiding construction of Europe in the analyzed discourse can be partly explained by the peculiarities of the talk show discursive

setting. As my analysis suggested, the talk show setting has been providing few constraints for the mode of interaction between participating politicians. As a result, they have been increasingly practicing manipulative shifts of discussion focus, avoidance of responses to tricky questions, imposing their own agenda and employment of populist rhetoric. In addition, they have largely regarded the talk show as a site for personal posture and intimidation of opponents rather than a platform for a reasoned debate. Within such a discursive setting, representatives of political elites have been quite comfortable with leaving rhetorical references to ‘European practices’ unexplained, thus contributing to the overall ambiguity, which has been shaping construction of ‘Europe’ in their mediatized discourse.

Another mode of representations establishing Europe as a landmark concerns references to Europe in terms of an advanced civilization. Most of such references entail construction of Europe as an embodiment of inherent cultural virtues. This is achieved through direct attribution of the term ‘civilized’ to Europe, as well as via synonymous use of such predications as European and civilized, which are quite typical in the analyzed discourse. The examined textual data suggest that Europe is commonly represented as a cultural community united by sharing some fundamental values. Europeanness is thus constructed as inherent. Perception of Europe as a civilization is communicated through references to such abstract notions like mentality, culture, spirit etc. – all signifying essential character of ‘Europeanness’. Among values that are invoked to signify Europe, democracy, lawfulness and respect to human rights find most representation. These values are implicitly and explicitly denoted as ‘European’. Representatives of Ukrainian political elites refer to such values as desired, valid and universal. Claims of their universal relevance suggest that Ukrainian politicians reproduce Eurocentrism in their discourse. Furthermore, they recurrently contrast Europe with other geocultural entities in civilizational terms. Within such juxtapositions, Europe and ‘European values’ are constructed as apparently superior. Consequently, Europe is represented not as one civilization among equal others, but as an advanced one. Such discursive practice establishes Europe as a starting point for comparisons, a landmark Ukraine should strive for.

The discussed mode of representation of ‘Europe’ suggests some crucial implications for the construction of relations between Ukraine and Europe. Like in the previous case, Europe here is also constructed as a role model, with ‘European values’ defined as appealing and appropriate for Ukraine. However, the civilizational framework of references implies that Europeanness is an inherent and fundamental quality. This presumes that Ukraine is either innately European or not. The analysis of Ukrainian political elites’ discourse demonstrates



ambivalence conveyed by actors of discourse with regard to Ukraine's civilizational Europeanness. Whereas Ukraine is largely ascribed cultural 'Europeanness' through claims of Ukraine's essential belonging to European civilization, it is also argued to lack truly 'European' values. Ukraine and Ukrainians are thus constructed as inborn Europeans but not yet full Europeans. Accordingly, references within the discussed framework suggest a paradox of simultaneous inclusion and exclusion of Ukraine into Europe, which provides yet another illustration of competitive construction of representations and identities with regard to Europe and Ukraine.

Representations of Europe within the two discussed frames, 'Europe as a model and a source of norm(s)' and 'Europe as an advanced civilization', establish Europe as a landmark, a point that needs to be reached by Ukraine. Such establishment is achieved through extensive use of metaphors suggesting movement. Actors of the analyzed discourse commonly denote relations between Ukraine and Europe in terms of Ukraine's movement and approximation to Europe. The lexical choice employed to signify relations between the two is particularly illustrative. Thus, Ukrainian politicians frequently use such expressions as 'move to Europe', 'get closer to Europe', 'get into Europe' etc. to frame Ukraine's policy towards the EU. Furthermore, the very Europe is constructed as a sort of a destination point, with such notions as 'European vector' and 'a course towards Europe' commonly alluded to.

Discursive construction of Europe as a destination point has been largely shaping the notion of the 'European choice', an expression widely employed to signify Ukraine's strategic goal of European integration since the mid-1990s. Analysis of the socio-political context showed that the 'European choice' theme, vigorously declared in the official discourse of Ukraine's leadership since the Kuchma presidency, has emerged as consensual among different political elites in Ukraine. Despite ambivalent foreign policy pursued by Ukrainian leadership throughout the late 1990s-early 2000s and failed policy of European integration, all major political forces in Ukraine resorted to the pro-European rhetoric constructing 'European choice' as Ukraine's essential strategic orientation. The Orange Revolution brought reinvigoration of the 'European choice' notion, both in the official discourse of country's leadership and in the broader public discourse. All in all, the course towards Ukraine's European integration as a strategic priority has been accepted by all major political forces and has never been explicitly challenged in the Ukrainian political discourse.

Whereas Ukrainian political elites have adopted pro-European rhetoric, they largely failed to suggest a comprehensive policy of European integration. As a result, European integration has been regarded as an attractive but distant and abstract prospect. Accordingly,

Ukrainian political elites have embraced the 'European choice' notion as a convenient yet non-binding formula, which they widely refer to in their discourse.

Analysis of the mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites confirmed this observation, as many references to Europe in terms of destination point imply significant degree of ambiguity. On the one hand, such references indicate the need for a full-fledged integration into the European Union; on the other hand, they rather allude to approximation with European practices and adoption of 'European' models and policies, which does not require a full political integration into the EU. Thus, analysis of the discursive practice of constructing Europe in terms of a destination point demonstrates that while integration into Europe is seen as consensual, political elites refer to it primarily in rhetorical terms, avoiding substantial discussion on the very process of European integration, its peculiarities and implications for Ukraine.

Whereas 'European choice' as an abstract notion alluding to distant prospect of European integration of Ukraine generally finds no direct contestation in the mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites, immediate foreign policy issues, including those concerning EU-Ukraine relationship, induce more explicit competing interpretations in the analyzed discourse. Discussions of political relations between Ukraine and the European Union, as well as other foreign policy matters, result in contested construction of representations and identities within another crucial framework of references employed in the analyzed discourse, the one pertaining to geopolitical discursive conventions.

References to Europe as a geopolitical pole constitute a significant part of the analyzed discursive repertoire of political elites in Ukraine. By employing a geopolitical framework, Ukrainian politicians construct Europe (European Union) and Ukraine as independent geopolitical actors pursuing their interests. It is noteworthy that employment of the geopolitical frame to discuss relations between Ukraine and the EU commonly entails references to Russia as another crucial geopolitical actor. Thus, Europe, Russia and Ukraine constitute a geopolitical triangle recurrently referred to within the discussed frame. Ukrainian political elites construct Ukraine as located in the spheres of interests of Europe and Russia, which presumes its peculiar place within the East-West axis.

Geopolitical dimension of the analyzed discourse manifests different representations of Europe and modes of relations between Europe and Ukraine as constructed by competing political elites. The study has identified three mainstream approaches communicated by Ukrainian politicians in the examined discourse.

The first approach concerns explicit assertion of the necessity of Ukraine's integration

into the European Union. The imperative need of integration into the EU is argued through the emphasis on Europe's attractiveness. Europe is thus represented as the only viable alternative for the development of Ukraine. Furthermore, actors of discourse advocating the discussed approach construct Europe as an agent of modernization for Ukraine. It is argued that Ukraine can modernize and undergo transformation into a developed and prosperous country only through the process of European integration.

The discussed approach was predominantly endorsed and communicated by the representatives of the 'Orange' political forces, namely, Our Ukraine-People's Self-Defense Bloc and Yuliya Tymoshenko's Bloc (BYuT), during the analyzed period. Diplomats and officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also advocated the irrevocability of the European integration of Ukraine. This finding of analysis in fact reflects the political context shaping foreign policy development and implementation in the post-Orange Ukraine. As I have discussed in my analysis of the context, the 'Orange' leadership endeavored to reestablish Ukraine's commitment to the European integration and facilitate the actual process of integration following the Orange Revolution, which was manifested in the discourse of the representatives of the 'Orange' elite, particularly during the Yushchenko presidency.

Another mainstream approach shaping the discourse of Ukrainian political elites with regard to 'Europe' in the geopolitical terms pertains to the multi-vector foreign policy approach. Within this approach, Europe or the European Union is represented as one of the strategic partners of Ukraine, but not the only one Ukraine should lean to. Instead, this approach advocates reasonable gravitation between the EU and Russia as two crucial partners. Politicians promoting the 'multi-vector' foreign policy approach frame their argumentation strategy through emphasis on the need to secure multiple interests of Ukraine rather than limit those to one geographical pole, implying Europe. Within such an approach, EU is constructed as a powerful and pragmatic geopolitical actor preoccupied with its own interests. Such representation of Europe suggests the need for Ukraine to follow a similar line of conduct and develop relations with Europe on the grounds of pragmatism.

Analysis of the mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites in 2005-2010 indicates that the 'multi-vector' foreign policy approach was mostly advocated and communicated by the representatives of the Party of Regions, a major opposition political force in the post-revolutionary Ukraine, which, however, reestablished its leadership following Yanukovich's victory in the presidential elections in February 2010.

The 'multi-vector' foreign policy approach and respective discursive framework are

not, however, Party of Regions' invention. As I have shown in the contextual overview, such a framework was established and strengthened throughout the 1990s-early 2000s to shape an ambivalent foreign policy of Ukrainian leadership. As for the analyzed period, such an approach also proved to suggest a convenient framework for the political elite of the Party of Regions. Thus, the representatives of this party utilized the discussed frame to emphasize the need for closer cooperation with Russia and to criticize an allegedly one-sided (read EU-oriented) approach pursued by the 'Orange' leadership. After Yanukovich's victory in the presidential elections, representatives of the new ruling elite have been repeatedly acknowledging a strategic goal of European integration, although observers noted an actual shift of foreign policy priorities towards cooperation with Russia. All in all, the 'multi-vector foreign policy' approach and its discursive dimension have eventually been reestablished in Ukraine.

It should also be noted that the 'multi-vector foreign policy' framework has largely remained conventional to a lesser or greater extent throughout the analyzed time span and the entire period following Ukraine's declaration of independence. Observers and scholars argue that ambiguous foreign policy pursued by Ukrainian leaders, as well as respective ambiguity with regard to discursive representations of geopolitical actors, reflects essential ambivalence of Ukrainian society when it comes to foreign policy orientations and national identity at large. The observed pattern illustrates complex socio-political environment shaping competitive construction of representations and identities in Ukraine.

Finally, the third mainstream approach shaping construction of 'Europe' in geopolitical terms that has been identified in the mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites concerns construction of Europe as a 'rejector of Ukraine'. This approach is similar to the 'multi-vector foreign policy' stance in that it rests on the assertion that Ukraine should not expect protection from any geopolitical actor but rather concentrate on its own national interests. At the same time, proponents of the discussed approach design their argumentation strategy to emphasize the primacy of self-sufficiency, which Ukraine dramatically lacks. Within such an argumentation strategy, Europe is represented as a self-centered geopolitical actor, indifferent to Ukraine's aspirations. Accordingly, it is argued that Ukraine should leave aside its hopes to be accepted into the EU and develop its foreign policy as an independent actor, particularly focusing on internal transformations.

It is crucial to note that the discussed approach was increasingly communicated towards the end of the Yushchenko's presidency. In particular, references to 'Europe' as a rejector reached its peak during the presidential election campaign of 2009-2010. This trend

was largely related to the growing public disillusionment with the policy of European integration that replaced immense optimism following the Orange Revolution. Thus, both, Yushchenko's competitors from the opposition political forces and former political allies, capitalized on the public disappointment by shifting their discourse towards criticism of Yushchenko's European policy on the one hand and EU's reluctance to accept Ukraine, on the other.

The proposed overview of research findings demonstrates complex processes of discursive construction of identities and representations in contemporary Ukraine. Two key patterns have been shaping these processes: a variety of competing representations and ambiguity entailed in most of them.

Analysis of the mediatized discourse of Ukrainian political elites has demonstrated tensions accompanying self-identification of Ukrainians through references to 'Europe'. Thus, whereas representatives of Ukrainian political elites establish Ukraine as inherently European in geographical terms, their representations of 'Europeanness' in terms of practices and values suggest ambiguity for identification of Ukraine and Ukrainians as European. Furthermore, such representations of 'Europeanness' suggest ambiguous implications for Ukraine's self-determination with regard to strategy of European integration.

Different frames of references to Europe, as well as competing representations of Europe identified in the investigated discourse imply different modes of relations between Ukraine and Europe, with the variety ranging from relations of a 'role model' and a 'wannabe' to a 'rejector' and a 'rejected victim of geopolitical games'. Such competing representations of Europe and Ukraine vis-à-vis Europe, along with the claimed consensus regarding 'European choice' of Ukraine, manifest negotiation and contestation of identities and foreign policy orientations in the discourse of Ukrainian political elites.

An overt ambiguity of the analyzed representations of 'Europe', constructed by the political elites, illustrates ambivalent attitudes and foreign policy orientations of Ukrainian public undergoing construction of national identity. At the same time, analysis suggests that Ukrainian political elites utilize the discussed ambiguity to convey their representations of Europe as commonsensical. The prevalence of ambiguous references to Europe in the analyzed discourse is also explained by the peculiarities of the discursive setting of the talk show. Largely unconstrained by the talk show format and the host, politicians eagerly resort to strategic formulations and rhetorical references to 'Europe', yet more contributing to the overall ambiguity shaping construction of 'Europe' in their mediatized discourse.

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