

Deliberative Capacity in Coloured Revolutions: Comparative Analysis of Ukraine and Georgia

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Comments are welcome.

Abstract

The paper compares Georgia's Rose revolution of 2003 and Ukraine's Orange revolution of 2004 from the perspective of deliberative democracy. Both cases are considered successful post-Soviet electoral revolutions. Yet, the differences between their post-revolutionary developments in governance and democratization are striking. To start exploring the reasons for this puzzle this paper evaluates the extent to which deliberative democratic principles – such as inclusion, dialogue, and openness to the other - were present in these two cases. Furthermore, the study evaluates whether the level of deliberative capacity in place may have had causal consequences for the post-revolutionary development. The analysis is based on primary sources' content analysis, secondary literature synthesis and interviews. The paper argues that Georgia's revolution contained greater deliberative capacity compared to the Ukrainian one, yet this was caused by structural circumstances, such as specific ethno-cultural context and socio-economic grievances, as opposed to being a genuinely intended feature.

Introduction

Post-communist coloured revolutions were praised as democratic by both journalists (e.g. Ash 2004) and scholars (e.g. Bunce and Wolchik 2006, McFaul 2004, Kuzio 2005, Karatnycky 2005, D'Anieri 2005, Bojcin 2005, Ó Beacháin 2009). Yet, such an assessment is based on a liberal vision of democracy, which is not the only way of understanding democracy in contemporary political thought. This paper is a continuation of the earlier work in which I assessed the Ukrainian Orange revolution from the perspective of deliberative democracy (Salnykova 2010). Here I similarly call for a more critical assessment of the processes and practices involved in the revolutionary events, but I add a comparative perspective by looking at two coloured revolutions – those of Georgia and of Ukraine.

The paper explores the similarities and differences involved in these two events from the perspective of deliberative democracy. These cases are chosen as two successful post-Soviet coloured revolutions leading to free and fair elections in a peaceful manner through public uprisings. Both events represent electoral revolutions, they took place a year apart, were inspired by similar ideas, followed similar scenarios and had similar enemies and allies. Yet, the differences between these two cases in terms of post-revolutionary developments in the areas of governance and democratization are striking. Thus the paper addresses this variation and evaluates the extent to which deliberative democratic principles – such as broad inclusion, rational dialogue, openness to change, tolerant treatment of the other as an equal, to name a few - were present in these two cases. Furthermore, the study evaluates whether the level of deliberative capacity in place may have had causal consequences for the post-revolutionary development of the two cases. Overall, the paper argues that Georgia's Rose revolution contained greater deliberative capacity compared to the Orange revolution, yet this was caused by structural circumstances as opposed to being an intended feature.

The analysis is based on three components. First, it is grounded on the literature review of the revolutionary events in the two cases read through the deliberative democratic lens. Second, primary sources' content analysis is used, for example, rhetoric of political speeches or songs used during the events. Third, I use interview material with political and social elite from both Georgia and Ukraine¹.

The paper enters the debates in such areas as deliberative democracy and comparative democratization, as well as has a potential to offer recommendation for policy-makers and democracy promoters. The importance of this kind of research is emphasized by Dryzek, who states that to date the researchers have compared only developed liberal democracies, but it is necessary to extend their analysis to other systems, in a research program on the institutional determinants of deliberative authenticity (Dryzek 2009: 1386).

This work also contributes to the analysis of the coloured revolutions. Numerous cases of regime transformation events in various countries of post-Communist space have been clustered together under such analytical concepts as “coloured revolutions”, “electoral revolutions” (e.g. McFaul, Bunce/Wolchik, and Tucker, in Vorobyova 2009: 21) or, more broadly, “velvet revolutions” or “people power” (Karatnycky 2005). Nevertheless, there are many differences between each of those cases that are important for understanding these individual cases as well as for building future policies with respect to these or other countries.

¹ Research for this study is in progress. Although the main argument is not expected to change, the narrative and depth of certain aspects' coverage is likely to be modified.

As Lane has put it, “Coloured revolutions all had in common a proposed socio-political transformation intended to introduce ‘democracy from below’. [...] they shared a common strategy: mass protests occurred within the constitutional framework to widen forms of public participation in the regimes; they were legitimated as a movement for ‘greater democracy’” (Lane 2009: 114). Yet, to what extent did Georgian and Ukrainian revolutions achieve these democratic goals and what broader lessons can their comparison reveal? In what follows, I first elaborate on the theoretical underpinnings of this study. Then I provide a basic narrative on what has happened in the two cases outlining the main similarities and differences. Third, I present the analysis of the deliberative democracy elements in both revolutions, followed by the discussion of their middle-term democratic results. I conclude by summarizing the findings and discussing broader lessons that can be drawn.

Theoretical Background: Deliberative Democracy and Comparative Democratization

This research is rooted in the contrast between liberal and deliberative conceptions of democracy. Although I am far from arguing that these two visions of democracy are necessarily antagonistic or irreconcilable, I base my analysis on the understanding that there are significant distinctions between the two models and that the contemporary democratization studies tend to assume the liberal model of democracy as an ideal type.

Without going into details² it is important to briefly elaborate on what liberal or deliberative democracy stand for. Out of over a dozen of distinctions between the two models the following are the most crucial with respect to the current analysis. First, while liberal democratic model is focused on aggregation of existing preferences, the deliberative democratic model is targeted at preferences transformation through public dialogue (Young 2000). Second, while liberal democracy presupposes a competitive procedure, deliberative democracy also targets reconciliation between the opposing positions despite the objective need to compete. Third, in a liberal democratic procedure legitimacy is based on the decision of the majority; in contrast, in the deliberative model, legitimacy of a decision is grounded on the inclusion of everyone affected to the process of this decision’s production (Benhabib 1996). Fourth, the way “the other” is treated is a crucial distinction: while in the liberal model the other is seen as either an ally or a competitor, the deliberative democracy model suggests viewing others as people with whom an agreement needs to be reached through finding arguments that are compelling to those others (Cohen 1996, Gutman/Tompson 1996, Dryzek 2009).

In the context of numerous distinctions between liberal and deliberative models of democracy from the point of view of political theory John Dryzek suggests to shift the way democracy is being understood in other subfields, such as comparative politics, as well. He emphasizes that the liberal – minimalist or electoral – definition of democracy misses a key aspect of democracy – that of deliberation (Dryzek 2009: 1380). Instead, he contends that the more authentic, inclusive, and consequential political deliberation is, the more democratic a political system is; and that democracy cannot do without deliberation (Dryzek 2009: 1380). Therefore, as effective deliberation is central to democracy, it should also enter any definition of democratization. Dryzek draws attention to the fact that while this deliberative aspect is ubiquitous in theory, practice and promotion of democracy, it is at the same time missing in comparative democratization studies. He concludes, therefore, that comparative democratization studies have missed the most important aspect of democracy (Dryzek 2009: 1379).

² Extended account on the differences between liberal and deliberative conceptions of democracy is in Salnykova 2010.

The fact that deliberation is central to democracy also leads to the importance of paying attention to the deliberative aspects of democratization projects as this paper does. I share the understanding that deliberation is connected to consolidation of democracy. Therefore, a stable and vibrant democracy can only be built through an authentically deliberative democratization project. For Dahl (1989) consolidation of democracy consists of regime endurance, inclusion, and legitimacy. As deliberative democracy is conducive to inclusion and legitimacy it, therefore, should also lead to regime endurance as a result. Dryzek similarly argues that “due to its ability to promote legitimacy, heal division, ... effectively solve social problems, and promote reflexivity deliberative capacity of a system contributes to state building as well as democratic consolidation” (Dryzek 2009: 1394).

Despite this, democratization literature relies on minimalist democratic indicators following the liberal conceptions of democracy such as Schumpeter’s (1962) alternative elections and pluralism as regime’s only essentials or Dahl’s (1972) polyarchy principle where several elite groups have access to the power struggle thereby ensuring competitiveness and rotation of elites. The emphasis in democratization literature is on the formal institutional side of political process (Grugel 2002: 60-62). For example, Bunce/Wolchik (2009: 288) write that “[E]lections are the indicator of democracy – a form of government that has become a global norm” (in Lane 2009: 116).

In an attempt to challenge this bias Dryzek suggests including deliberation into the analysis and I am attempting to follow this suggestion in this paper. He acknowledges that applying deliberative principles to evaluate instances of communication does not automatically translate into a concept that is useful in analyzing and evaluating whole regimes or political systems. Therefore, he suggests an account of deliberative capacity which refers to the extent to which a political system possesses structures to host deliberation that is authentic, inclusive, and consequential. A polity with a high degree of authentic, inclusive, and consequential deliberation will have an effective deliberative system according to him (Dryzek 2009: 1382).

A general scheme for a deliberative system according to Dryzek is composed of the following elements:

- 1) Vibrant public space that features a diversity of viewpoints. It can be expressed, for example, through media, social movements, activist associations physical locations where people can gather and talk (cafes, classrooms, bars, public squares), the internet, public hearings, and designed citizen-based forums of various sorts.
- 2) Empowered space - meaning institutions producing collective decisions like legislatures, a corporatist council, sectoral committees, a cabinet, or a constitutional court.
- 3) Transmission of influence from public space on empowered space realized through political campaigns, the deployment of rhetoric, the making of arguments, or cultural change effected by social movements (Dryzek 2009: 1385).
- 4) Accountability of empowered space to the public space, which is key to the generation of broad deliberative legitimacy.
- 5) Decisiveness – meaning that the first four elements are consequential in terms of influencing the content of collective decisions.

A system with high deliberative capacity will feature authentic deliberation in the first four elements; it will be inclusive in the first two; and it will be decisive. These five requirements

constitute a starting point for the description and evaluation of all real-world deliberative systems and their comparison across space and time. It is in this sense that deliberative capacity provides the basis for a comprehensive approach to the study of democratization (Dryzek 2009).

Dryzek's framework is a step forward in the work on the intersection of political theory and comparative politics and helps to think more specifically about how the communicative quality of different political systems can be compared. I am using this framework here, however, not to analyze the political systems of Georgia and Ukraine overall, but rather to look at the particular instances of the Rose and Orange revolutions, as well as on the consequent political developments. The application of Dryzek's framework may, therefore, be somewhat rough as it was rather developed to assess systems, not events. Yet, as Dryzek himself specifies, quantitative measures of deliberative authenticity can inform comparison, but they cannot tell the whole story. Thus histories of the development or attenuation of deliberative capacity can be investigated, and comparative case study may be useful in locating the aspects of deliberative capacity present in one society but not in another (Dryzek 2009: 1388). In this latter and broader way I am applying Dryzek's deliberative capacity framework in this paper.

Factual Background

Both Rose and the Orange revolutions are part of the fourth wave of democratization and represent electoral revolutions. Both have followed the fraudulent elections, were based on non-violent, pro-democratic and pro-European agenda, and involved massive popular uprisings in support of the democratic opposition. Both revolutions were also much of a surprise to observers both inside and outside these post-Soviet republics.

Fairbanks describes the Georgian events in the following way:

“Georgia seemed to be going the same way with a typically fraudulent post-Soviet parliamentary election on 2 November 2003. But then came a stunning reversal. A brief and nonviolent series of mass protests—the so-called Revolution of the Roses (22–23 November 2003)—forced 75-year-old incumbent president Eduard Shevardnadze to resign. This paved the way for fresh voting on 4 January 2004 in which the Rose Revolution's leader, a 36-year-old U.S.-educated lawyer named Mikheil Saakashvili, swept into office unopposed with 96.2 percent of the vote” (Fairbanks 2004: 110).

Obviously inspired by this example, yet still much unexpected, the Orange revolution followed in 2004. During the presidential elections scheduled for November 2004 the incumbent political forces led by President Leonid Kuchma were trying to ensure the victory of the chosen successor - the Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich – by all means. The opposition was hoping to win the elections with a strong candidacy of a former National Bank Head and ex-Prime Minister Viktor Yushenko. The falsified official results of the run-off between the two candidates showed the victory of the incumbent's favourite who has received 49,46% of the vote with Yushenko coming second with 46,61%. However, the mass people's uprising against the electoral fraud succeeded in protecting the democratic procedure and defending the victory of the challenger (51,99% vs. 44,2%).

The only formal difference between the revolutions was that the Rose revolution has followed the parliamentary elections, while the Orange revolution happened with respect to the presidential ones. This fact is not inconsequential and technically poses a problem for the democratic assessment of the Rose revolution from the liberal perspective since Saakashvili

became a leader of the country after parliamentary elections which were only supposed to form a new parliament. This concern has soon disappeared, however, as Saakashvili's political status was legitimized *post factum* by his tremendous victory in the presidential elections that quickly followed.

From the liberal point of view both revolutionary movements were successful. First, these revolutions targeted the protection of free and fair elections – that are central to the liberal notion of democracy. Second, they were conducted largely through the efforts of massive bottom up people's uprisings that became a basis for these revolutions' legitimacy. Electoral revolutions are defined as a regime change, which “transforms elections in authoritarian settings into genuinely competitive and fair processes with substantial popular involvement” (Bunce/Wolchik 2006: 289). In this sense both revolutions represent successful electoral revolutions. Yet, at this the similarities end.

The first crucial difference lies in the developments after these revolutions, which are discussed later in this paper. The second important contrast between the two revolutions is their underlying grievances. Although in both cases electoral fraud was the trigger to mass uprisings, the trigger is not the underlying cause. The reasons, for which people cared about the change of power, differed in the two cases.

Despite the fact that Georgia has uneasy relations with Russia, two breakaway republics, autonomous republic with Muslim heritage, significant national minorities and underwent several ethnicity-related civil wars during the period of independence, I was surprised to consistently hear from almost all my interviewees that ethnicity³ is not a major issue in Georgia. In contrast, in Ukraine, where no civil wars occurred between the sub-national units, ethnicity was and remains one of the significant issues in both social and political discourses. On the other hand, while economic well-being is always an issue of primary importance to any electorate, Ukraine did much better economically and socially in the years preceding the revolution, than did Georgia. These observations lead to a major difference between the Rose and the Orange revolutions.

Analysts and observers of the Georgian case conclude that the civil uprising of 2003 was mainly grounded on socio-economic grievances. Even though Rose revolution represented an electoral revolution, which by definition means that it has opposed the fraud in the electoral procedure, many of my interviewees revealed that democratic justice *per se* was of lesser importance to the masses on the street, than the realization of the need to start reforms at any cost. As one of the interviewed activists of the Rose revolution has put it: “*People cared least about the problem of democracy*”⁴. The pace of reform slackened already in the mid-1990s (Fairbanks 2004: 113). And “*since 1998 Shevarnadze performed extremely poorly in managing the country and extreme corruption flourished*”⁵. By the time of the 2003 election “*Shevarnadze have already had his day [izzhyl sebia-original], there was no government, only gangs, the state was disintegrating, corruption everywhere, survival was impossible, and lawlessness towards the criminals everywhere*”⁶. By making promises which could never be kept given budgetary realities, Saakashvili appealed to those who felt most injured by market forces (Fairbanks 2004: 114). In the words of Fairbanks:

³ In this paper “ethnicity” is used in a broad sense and refers to all ethnic, cultural, religious etc. issues that can potentially be ethnicized in a public discourse.

⁴ Interview with David Zurabishvili, Republican Party of Georgia, June 2010.

⁵ Interview with David Jijelava, analyst at GeoWel think tank, June 2010.

⁶ Interview with David Zurabishvili, Republican Party of Georgia, June 2010.

“Georgians, witnessing the vigorous foreign and domestic monitoring effort, had dared to dream of a clean and free election. They had put up with years of deprivation and failed reforms, hoping for improvement after Shevardnadze retired. Now they had been forced to watch as he had scraped his “party of power” back together and attempted a managed succession—the mess, it seemed, would never end” (Fairbanks 2004: 116).

The underlying nature of the Rose revolution is described in the following quote:

“A mistake made by many observers, mostly Western, is that they compare the Rose revolution to velvet revolutions in CEE. [...] Velvet revolutions were political revolution trying to adjust political structure, by rejecting the imposed Soviet system, to the needs of their modern societies. In Georgia the situation is different: half of population lives in countryside, Georgia has not yet fully modernized. Rose revolution was social revolution and targeted modernization and overcoming backwardness first of all”⁷.

The ethno-cultural factor was also present in the Rose revolution to some extent. Thus, Fairbanks continues:

“That the margin of Shevardnadze’s narrow parliamentary majority came from Ajaria was twisting the knife in the wound. The area is ruled by Aslan Abashidze ... notorious for his abject subservience to Russia, Georgia’s old adversary and colonial overlord. ... Shevardnadze, it seemed, was trying to hold on to power by conniving with Abashidze to sell Georgia out to foreigners (Fairbanks 2004: 116).

Mark Beissinger (2007: 271) maintains that both Georgia and Ukraine possess “strong regional dimensions within the dominant cultural group”. He elaborates that “in Georgia the major base for the opposition was in Western Georgia in the area of Mingrelia – a region long associated with Georgian nationalist Zviad Gamsakhurdia and in which Shevardnadze has always been unpopular” (in Ó Beacháin 2009: 214). Yet, despite the campaign has evoked some nationalist themes (Fairbanks 2004: 114), compared to other factors, this regional factor played a negligible role in Georgia’s Rose revolution (Ó Beacháin 2009: 215).

In contrast in the Ukrainian case, democratic fairness, as well as the pro-Western civilizational choice and the establishment of alternative ethno-cultural dynamics boosting the development of Ukrainian language and culture comprised the dominant grievances of the revolutionary population. While economic factors were also important in the Ukrainian case, it can be argued that those were not so much the people, but the millionaires who wanted to oppose the billionaires holding power in the words of Anders Åslund. Adding to this difference, Ukraine’s incumbent President Kuchma had far greater support both among the political elites and among the population than Shevardnadze did, as he had secured some living standard advance over the years of Ukraine’s independence (Wheatley 2005: 193).

To summarize, both Rose and Orange revolutions represent successful electoral revolutions that led to immediate advance of democracy in terms of establishing fair electoral results. Yet the underlying social forces behind the two revolutions differed significantly. While Georgia’s uprising was most interested in fair elections in order to establish greater economic redistribution and start reforms as well as foster the multi-faceted modernization project, the Ukrainian revolutionary public was concerned more with democratic, ethno-cultural and civilizational choice matters.

⁷ Interview with Levan Ramishvili, Liberty Institute, June 2010.

Deliberative Democracy in Rose and Orange Revolutions

The difference in the underlying grievances has affected the deliberative capacity of the two revolutions as well. To illustrate this I look to what extent certain deliberative democratic principles were present in the Georgian and Ukrainian cases.

Argument basis and legality

An important feature of deliberative democracy is its grounding in rational argument and focus on legitimacy. In contemporary democracies courts often function as sources of legitimacy for nontrivial decisions. It is, therefore, relevant to look at the role of courts in the two revolutions. As Fairbanks put it:

“An irony regarding the limits to modernity in Georgia and the country’s revolution was the lack of any significant tendency to appeal to legal procedures. Saakashvili is a highly trained lawyer and had served as justice minister. But the movement that he led was an affair of the streets, not the courts. It was populist, not legalist. It took U.S. urging to get those angered by the election theft to file suit against the CEC [*Central Electoral Committee - ASJ*]” (Fairbanks 2004: 121).

The role of the court was very different in Ukraine. It was ultimately the decision of the Constitutional court to proclaim the results of the run-off invalid and to pronounce the need for a repeat voting. Thus, while the people power mattered in the situation overall, neither people nor the Orange revolution leadership made any anti-regime decisions, but waited for the decision of the legitimate legal body instead.

Role of Communication

As talk is the basis of the deliberative democratic process I look at the place of communication in the revolutions and campaigns preceding them. For Wheatley (2005: 182) the main feature of the Georgian 2003 campaign was the fearless determination by Saakashvili to campaign in those areas where there was a tacit understanding that the opposition was not welcome. In support of such a conclusion, Ó Beacháin (2009: 218) provides the quote from an interviewed adviser and electoral team member noting that “*Saakashvili was the first guy who refused to play these [elite power] games... and suggested doing the door-to-door system*”.

Similar strategy was chosen by Yushenko in Ukraine. Young, handsome and casual candidate for presidency from the opposition was travelling from constituency to constituency, talking to people for several months prior to elections until he was hospitalized with dioxin poisoning.

Participation and Public Sphere

The very experience of the bottom-up massive people’s uprising was an important historical precedent for both Georgian and Ukrainian societies. It has demonstrated to the population that participation by ordinary citizens can affect elite politics, thus building-up efficacy of the countries’ populations. Moreover, these revolutionary events have emphasized a different concept of the quality of democracy relating it to authenticity and substantive democratic control exercised by competent citizens.

Yet, the other potential outcome of transformatory participation – turning citizens into more tolerant through the enlargement of their mentality – did not occur to the same extent in the case

of Ukraine due to sharp differentiation between the opposing groups during the Orange revolution. There are no indications of such differentiation in Georgia which allows evaluating the Rose revolution's public sphere in a more positive light. It needs to be acknowledged, however, that the absence of such polarizing features in the Georgian case is rather a consequence of the circumstances described in the previous section. Since the underlying needs behind the Rose revolution were largely socio-economic and were shared by the dramatic majority of the population (as the results of the post-revolutionary presidential elections showed) the revolutionary public was united around the common grievances. Second, since ethnicity did not figure prominently in the Rose revolution rhetoric polarization did not occur along this line either.

Personification of politics

The public-spiritedness demonstrated by Georgians and Ukrainians during the revolutions did not last long. Soon after the revolutions apathetic citizens returned to the *status quo ante* in terms of their political behaviour practices.

The reason for such a backlash may lie in the fact that the revolutionary public sphere was centered on the personalities of political leaders in both cases: Saakashvili and Burdjanadze in Georgia and Yushenko and Tymoshenko in Ukraine. Each of these political figures had unique characteristics, and was favoured by different parts of the electorate, yet it is obvious that all four of them have attracted incredible support to their respective revolutions. As people's uprisings were so much associated with their leaders, when these leaders turned into power-holders and started making mistakes the citizens became disenchanted not only in these leaders but also in the revolutions that were associated with them.

Such personification of the political process is an important feature in both cases, and probably is characteristic of the post-Soviet region more generally. Welton (2006: 29) writes about the inclination in Georgian politics towards the cult of the personality, where leaders are elected for their charismatic personality rather than their policy prescriptions. As a result many, including the government, seem to believe it is more important to appear strong than reasoned and consistent (Welton 2006: 30). A very similar situation is in place in Ukraine. Thus the leaders themselves were seen as the panacea for their respective nations, rather than what their programs or arguments suggested.

Solidarity and Inclusion

Unprecedented solidarity that was manifest on the central squares of Tbilisi and Kyiv is an outstanding asset from the point of view of deliberative democracy since it precludes extreme individualism and fosters cooperation and communication with others about the matters of common future. However, there was a significant difference between these solidarities as well.

In the Georgian case – again, due to more uniform underlying grievances – the Rose revolution solidarity was almost unopposed. Although pro-Shevarnadze rallies also took place, one of the interviewees elaborated on their superficial and artificial nature:

“First, there was a fear that clashes might happen between the supporters of Saakashvili and Shevarnadze, but when Saakashvili's supporters approached

*people brought to Tbilisi by Abashidze to oppose the Rose revolution they simply went away. No one wanted to be hurt for some 10 or 20 laris*⁸.

The Orange revolution, in contrast, has created strong social solidarities among the adherents of the different political force. As an interviewee mentioned: *“We had more than one maidan⁹: an Orange maidan in support of Yuschenko and a Blue maidan in Support of Yanukovych”*¹⁰. The solidarity (or rather solidarities) that were created was segmental: with people being cooperative with the like-minded and highly suspicious with respect to people from the other camp. In the words of a leading Ukrainian historian Yaroslav Hrycak (2007) the Orange revolution acted as dynamite in terms of polarizing the two social groups supporting the different candidates in those elections. A classical scheme theorized by Sunstein (2002) has taken place: as the two opposing camps have limited their deliberation to dialogue with the like-minded people only – the outcome was even greater polarization between the two groups.

This relates also to the issue of inclusion. Formal inclusion in terms of voting rights is not a problematic issue in the case of Ukraine since all the people residing on the territory of Ukraine at the time of the Soviet Union collapse have received citizenship and with it a right to vote. At the same time, the lack of rhetorical inclusion can be seen as a significant shortcoming of the Orange revolution as people who did not share similar visions of cultural and foreign policy were not seen as “proper Ukrainians” by both groups.

From this it also follows that the Orange revolution represented a public space that combined two contradictory functions in terms of its treatment of discourses. On the one hand, it was challenging the discourses produced by the oppressive state, but on the other hand, it itself produced an oppressive discourse in terms of exclusion and misrecognition of a significant part of Ukraine’s population.

Binary Thinking

The participants of the Orange Revolution viewed power-holders and political institutions through a binary opposition of “clean versus dirty” or “moral versus immoral” (Amelchenko 2006: 62). As one of the revolution supporters has put it: *“... I see that now there exists good and evil. For the first time we have a candidate, behind whom there are the powers of good”* (in Petراسиuk 2004). Behind such a dichotomous vision two processes were on-going: demonization of the opposite political force and moralization - up to sacralisation - of own candidate contrasted to the sinfulness of the other (Schotkina 2004). Kniazytskyi agrees that the point of the pre-Orange revolution campaign boiled down to the demonization of the opponent and canonization of own leader: *“Yanukovych – bandit, raper and venal”* – said some; *“Yuschenko – an American spy and a fascist”* – responded the others (Kniazytskyi 2005, in Halchynskyi 2006: 51).

Pavlyuk (2005: 293) concludes that “public discourse of that period abounded in numerous expressions of polarization: *“this presidential campaign is a choice between democracy and authoritarianism”*, *“we choose between values of democratic society and the prospects of totalitarianism”*, *“freedom or tyranny”*, *“opposition of criminal Ukraine and Ukraine under the rule law”*. In the words of Russian political scientist Andrei Piontkovskii¹¹ “the elections in

⁸ Interview with David Jijelava, analyst at GeoWel think tank, June 2010.

⁹ Short for “Maidan Nezalezhnosti” (“Independence Square” in English) – a place where the Orange revolution has taken place.

¹⁰ Interview with Natalia Amelchenko, Kyiv-Mohyla Academy professor, October 2009.

¹¹ Can be found in *Postup* from 9-15 September 2004

Ukraine are considered almost as a kind of Armageddon, the last battle of good and evil, the forces of Russian, and respectively, American influence on post-Soviet terrain” (in Pavlyuk 2005: 295). Overall, the assessment of the world was conducted in the categories of us versus them (Amelchenko 2006: 63), which is a stance on which deliberative democratic development through consensus-seeking is problematic.

Contrasting this feature of the Orange revolution to the Georgian case it becomes clear that this level of extreme attitudes was avoided in the Rose revolution. None of the interviews so far has confirmed that anything close to the demonizing/sanctifying rhetoric was present in the Georgian case.

Difference-blindness

Polarizing tendencies established during the Orange revolution have also led to the difference-blind attitudes on the part of its leadership and supporters. President Yuschenko did not accept the otherness of “the other” in his rhetorical appeal both during the revolution and in his subsequent public policy. Although he declared to be the President of entire Ukraine and serve all the people of Ukraine, he did not acknowledge the strikingly obvious fact that these people are very diverse and holding distinct values and attitudes in terms of cultural heritage, historical memory, heroes and holidays (Amelchenko 2006: 66). His rhetoric and actions on the post of a President addressed a number of culture and history related issues, such as the interpretations of the World War II and struggle against Stalinism, Holodomor of 1932-1933, the traditional Ukrainian culture, the language issue, the Cossack tradition and so on. Yet the decisions that he made were not justified in terms that would be at least understandable to the part of population that did not share the same values and attitudinal predispositions. Yuschenko was moving forward the cultural agenda of those who voted for him, and ignored the fact that this was only a partial representation of the nation’s views. Many commentators also followed this path. For example, Halchynskyi argues: “The face of the Ukrainian people, the magnitude of its soul, the deep roots of Ukrainian spiritual traditions and its highest moral values have been expressed in the pathos of Maidan” (Halchynskyi 2005: 43-44). Such representation of the “Ukrainian people” is undemocratic and destructive for the Ukrainian society at large. Saying that the highest expression of Ukrainian-ness happened on Maidan means that all the Ukrainian people who did not support the Orange revolution – that is 44% of those who voted in 2004 – are not Ukrainians or Ukrainians that are not good enough.

Such difference-blindness is of crucial significance given that due recognition is a vital human need (Taylor 1994; Kymlicka 1991). Taylor explains that a person or a group suffer real damage if society around them mirrors back to them a demeaning picture of themselves. Non-recognition or misrecognition inflicts harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted and reduced mode of being (Taylor 1994). As a result such policies and rhetoric produced further polarization, while the decisions that were made did not gain broad legitimacy and became easy targets for policy reversal by the new administration that came to power in 2010.

Difference-blindness is connected to the concept of majority predominant in the Orange revolution. The assessments of the Orange revolution often refer to the “awakening of the Ukrainian people”, “nation-wide opposition to the rigged election” and similar phrases, which are obviously at odds with the real situation in which almost equal parts of the population were divided over the visions of their preferred shared future. From this it is clear that in such assessments the majority was conceived from the formally numerical perspective and even though this quantitative majority was only slightly higher than the almost equal in size minority it did not preclude identifying this majority with the nation overall.

From this it also follows that the kind of rationality used on the Ukrainian maidan was not relational, the principle of reciprocity was largely absent and the view of the other was either liberal – as a competitor – or outright paternalistic rather than viewing the other in a deliberative democratic way as a group with which consensus needs to be reached.

Notably, such dynamics were absent in the Georgian case. The difference-blindness of the kind that was present in Ukraine was not possible in Georgia primarily due to the extreme visions of themselves by the objective “others” in the Georgian society. While Azeri and Armenia populations have an underestimation of own special status and identity, the breakaway republics or even the autonomous Ajara overestimate their difference from Georgia up to full or extensive self-isolation.

Ethno-cultural issues were hardly present in the rhetoric of the Rose revolution. This is despite the fact that Georgia has two separatist republics, substantial Armenian and Azeri populations in Samtskhe-Javakheti and parts of Kvemo Kartli regions, as well as an autonomous region of Ajara (Ó Beacháin 2009: 214-215), which differs from the rest of Georgia by traditionally strong Islam (Derluguian 1998). In this situation it could be expected that a diversity of needs and viewpoints should exist among those different ethno-cultural or religious populations and the fact that they were not channelled in one way or another through the Rose revolution might seem surprising. Yet the absence of separatist republics concerns is explained by the fact that these republics themselves “claim no part in Georgian affairs” (Ó Beacháin 2009: 214). In the words of my respondent “*Abkhazians do not want anything in common with Georgia, they either want to be independent or if that is impossible – part of Russia*”¹². Similarly, the situation is not standard with the national minorities as Armenian and Azeri populated regions always vote for the incumbent with regional bosses delivering the vote. As for the autonomous Ajara, its leader has also separated himself from the mainstream Georgian politics and even his support to Shevarnadze was rather personal and did not express wish of the Ajaran people (Ó Beacháin 2009: 215). Abashidze’s alienation from Georgia’s political struggles is illustrated by the following quote: “*He disobeyed Shevarnadze on many occasions. Technically he was a member of Georgian parliament, but he never even visited Tbilisi to take part in its sessions*”¹³. Thus the strongest, ethnic opponents of Shevarnadze’s regime, those in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, were not part of mainstream Georgian politics, and other potentially troublesome minorities had been domesticated (Ó Beacháin 2009: 216).

Hypothetically, it could be expected that the Rose revolution public could express certain negativism towards the Ajaran or national minority population given their almost uniform support to the Shevarnadze regime. Yet none of the interviewees up to now has confirmed this. Instead the main negativism was addressed towards Shevarnadze and his circle, which was based on objective wrongdoing and was not a matter of identity recognition.

Emotions

Both Georgian and Ukrainian revolutions fascinated the observers by their spirit of non-violent and festive protest. Numerous participants of these events described them using a carnival metaphor and many analysts described those carnivals in rich details (e.g. Wheatley 2005: 183). As Fairbanks put it “On the evening of 23 November 2003, Tbilisi became the scene of a city-wide party set to car horns and rock music” (Fairbanks 2004: 122). Similarly, the emotional component of the Orange revolution, consisting of rhetoric and music to a large extent (Klid

¹² Interview with David Jijelava, analyst at GeoWel think tank, June 2010.

¹³ Interview with David Jijelava, analyst at GeoWel think tank, June 2010.

2007), was the one that fascinated both those on Maidan and those observing the revolutionary events in Ukraine and worldwide. It is this affective component that has stimulated unprecedented mass mobilization despite the freezing temperature and the threat of violence. Finally, this emotional component has attracted the international media and created a massive boomerang effect in terms of the foreign countries response to the revolution (Salnykova 2006: 77).

At the same time, however, these emotions were not very democratic in their nature as they precluded critical thinking, led to the development of unrealistic expectations and prevented pragmatic communication with the other. In fact, instead of promoting deep democracy affective motivations of the electorate are rather constructing a populist regime of what is known as delegative democracy (Kubiček 1994). From the deliberative democratic perspective such non-pragmatic attitude is a poor ground for consensus, which according to Habermas (1984) is supposed to be grounded on reasonable arguments¹⁴.

Shared language

One of the factors facilitating deliberation according to Dryzek (2009) is shared language. This point is based on the argument that democratic politics need to be conducted in the vernacular as democracy across language groups can be problematic (Kymlicka 2001). In this respect Georgia happened to be in a better condition since Georgian was the language of the entire citizenry unlike in the case of Ukraine, where a language choice (between Ukrainian and Russian) was mostly interpreted as a way of addressing specific part of an electorate. Reaching an electorate that spoke a different language with the meaning of what was said was and remains challenging in Ukraine.

To conclude, from the deliberative democracy perspective both revolutionary processes were far from ideal. Although, both revolutions were successful in mobilizing participation and solidarity, they have also been based on emotions and personification of the political process than on a rational, argument-based discussion.

Yet it can be argued that the Georgian case was more in line with deliberative democracy criteria, or rather less violating these criteria even if not on purpose. Although the Ukrainian revolution was more based on court decisions, it was also characterized by social divisions, polarization, and a different-blind or paternalistic vision of the other. Therefore, Georgia's revolution contained greater deliberative capacity compared to the Ukrainian one, yet this was caused by structural circumstances, as opposed to being an intended feature.

Among these circumstances there was a special situation with Georgia's ethno-cultural diversity, in which minorities were either fully isolated or fully domesticated. In addition, the socio-economic misery that preceded the Rose revolution created almost unanimous anti-Shevarnadze attitude in the population.

¹⁴ The issue of the place of emotions in deliberation is highly debatable. Many argue that emotions need to be included as legitimate forms of expressions in a deliberative setting. I find this stance valid in cases when stakeholders are unable of making arguments due to their distinct background. At the same time, I am not an advocate of emotions in settings when argument-based discourse is being substituted by "what feels good" by those who are fully capable of leading an argument-based discussion.

Revolutionary Outcome: Successes and Failures in Terms of Democracy

While the short-term outcomes of both Rose and Orange revolutions were similar and included fair elections and legitimate president supported by the wide masses, the middle-run results of the revolutionary elites' activities were different.

In Ukraine both 2006 and 2007 parliamentary elections that were held during the presidency of the Orange president Yuschenko were free and fair (Vorobyova 2009: 22), and the country was consistently assessed as the most successful in terms of advancing democracy in post-Soviet space (World Audit 2009; Campbell/Pözlbauer 2010; FH 2010). The developments in terms of electoral democracy were less optimistic in Georgia. Although the Georgian government demonstrated major advances in governance and reform (Welton 2008: 3), Georgian democracy demonstrated backlash in significant areas such as freedom of elections, freedom of speech and freedom of opposition. "While Saakashvili came to power as a lauded democratic reformer, he was soon castigated by the opposition for persecuting opponents and curbing media freedom" (Broers 2005: 334). The opposition, led by the United National Movement, has alleged political killings, on top of the taking of political prisoners by the Saakashvili regime (Lane 2009: 122), and conducting unlawful arrests (Wheatley 2005: 203). One of the interviewees has shared: *"I was a very active participant of the revolution, was very close to Saakashvili, even considered him my friend. But not now. When you go into opposition – you die for him, believe me"*¹⁵.

The run up to the local government elections in 2006 were troubling in two respects; first they seemed to suggest that the Government was more interested in securing absolute and unqualified victory than subscribing to meaningful democratic standards (Welton 2008: 3), and the Georgian opposition claims that government creates barriers to opposition (Welton 2006: 36). Thus OSCE had significant concerns about both partial repeat of parliamentary elections in 2004 (OSCE/ODIHR 2004) pointing to implausible turnout, clear fraud and media bias, as well as the extraordinary presidential elections in 2008 mentioning significant vote tampering and media bias (OSCE/ODIHR 2008).

Second, these elections showed, once again, that the opposition was utterly incapable of finding a common platform. Conventional political opposition in Georgia has been extremely weak since the Rose Revolution (Welton 2008: 27). This failure to oppose arguably constitutes the greatest threat to the democratic transition of post-Revolutionary Georgia. Georgia has, so far, failed to transfer power through elections. Until the opposition is able to offer a credible alternative to the party of government popular dissatisfaction will have no avenue for democratic change (Welton 2006: 4). In Ukraine, in contrast, several opposition centers acted as a counterbalance to president Yuschenko, most notably his competitor in the Presidential run – Viktor Yanukovich, but also his former ally – the "goddess of the Orange revolution" – Yuliya Tymoshenko.

Deliberative democracy principles of dialogue and inclusion were obviously not followed as well. Georgian government had shown little interest in inclusive politics, and Georgian politics generally continued to be characterized by mutual abuse on the part of all political groups more than reasoned argument (Welton 2008: 3). As a 2005 report on Civil Society in Georgia states:

"The government believed that it had already absorbed a large part of the best human resources available in the Third Sector. Thus, listening to the remaining CSO activists was seen as less important, especially as the government did not lack public support. Within the donor community the opinion prevailed that the funding flows should be diverted to the new government, since this would be the shortest and most effective way

¹⁵ Interview with David Zurabishvili, Republican Party of Georgia, June 2010.

of achieving the country's goal of democratic development. The media paid less attention to CSO-organised events, as it no longer considered this community an important actor in public life" (Nodia 2005: 20, in Welton 2008: 28).

The personality driven political climate that puts a premium on the strength of leaders dominates in the country. As a result, the government likes to make firm decisions, backed up, if necessary, with the use of force. At the same time, both sides often prefer inflammatory language to reasoned dialogue and compromise (Welton 2006: 4). Cooperation did not advance either, instead, the division over who supported the Rose revolution and who did not took place (Welton 2006: 32). In contrast, in Ukraine cooperation is more vivid across such lines, even though the public does not support such political behaviour treating it as betrayal¹⁶ rather than as pragmatic cooperation for the common goals.

A similar situation took place in the area of the freedom of speech and mass media. Media freedom was among the few areas in which Ukraine's Orange leadership has managed to succeed (Dyczok 2009). The contrary has happened in Georgia. As one of the interviewees has shared:

*"In terms of the freedom of speech and mass media it was much freer before, I can say this without doubt, it cannot even be compared. If we take national-wide TV channels, almost all of them are governmental now, not even almost – all; there are only 2 more free but they only work here in Tbilisi. The last independent channel was Imedi, ... but gradually it changed, it is also governmental now"*¹⁷.

On the institutional level the paths have similarly diverged. The Constitution re-crafted under Saakashvili became less democratic, and has strengthened the executive branch (Wheatley 2005: 194). In contrast, with Yuschenko coming to power in Ukraine, it was the parliament that became stronger according to the constitutional changes adopted during the Orange revolution negotiations.

As for electoral rule changes post the revolutions, they are in line with the general tendencies in the two cases. In Georgia the 7% threshold established since the Rose revolution played out negatively against the opposition. Welton provides a quote from the International Republican Institute country director on this issue:

"...the 7% barrier is a giant obstacle to political participation in Georgia. I cannot stress that enough.... In the last [parliamentary] election the Labor party were excluded by 0.1% and if the New Right/Industrialist coalition had gained a 0.2% lower vote then there would have been no opposition parties entering the parliament" (in Welton 2006: 37).

Curiously, he mentions, this issue did not gain a lot of attention from the opposition parties, probably because it would require them to tacitly accept their relative weakness (Welton 2006: 37), which is unacceptable in the local political culture.

Needless to say, such developments violate not only deliberative but even the minimal liberal criteria for democracy. As one of the interviewees has put it: *"After the Rose revolution,*

¹⁶ In particular, cooperation between former Orange and anti-Orange leaders is perceived painfully. In addition, official Crimean Tatar representatives in the Parliament of Ukraine refuse to cooperate with any structures that include representatives of the Communist party.

¹⁷ Interview with David Zurabishvili, Republican Party of Georgia, June 2010.

*Saakashvili and some others from the Liberty Institute, took a course on building a liberal authoritarianism, if I can say so, that is they wanted to forcefully establish some liberal values*¹⁸.

Concluding Remarks: Link between Deliberative Capacity and Revolutionary Outcomes

Both Orange and Rose revolutions were successful from the point of view of liberal democracy in terms of their immediate results. The deliberative democratic assessment reveals some differences, however. Deliberative capacity was to a greater extent present in the case of Georgia's Rose revolution, which was mainly due to the fact that the Orange revolution was associated with polarizing, exclusive, difference-blind or paternalistic rhetoric.

However, it is also clear that Georgia's "higher score" is not the result of a more benevolent or skilful leadership of the Rose revolution. It is rather the result of certain lucky objective circumstances that Georgia was in and Ukraine was not. In other words, the Rose revolution simply did not reveal the hidden problems, while the Orange revolution did.

The first circumstance that differed between the cases was the ethno-cultural structure of society. In Georgia ethnicity was not a pronounced part of the revolutionary rhetoric since breakaway republics and the autonomous Ajara have isolated themselves from Georgian politics. As for the national minorities, such as Azeri and Armenian, they traditionally do not have any separate agenda in the context of Georgian politics. The ethno-cultural context was very different in the case of Ukraine, where many ethnicity-related issues were pronounced by either adherents or opponents of the Orange revolution. As a result the revolutionary events were marked by significant polarization, exclusion and difference-blind or paternalistic attitudes between the social groups.

The second difference was in the socio-economic underpinnings of the revolutions. Although important in both cases, the socio-economic grievance was much more pronounced in Georgia. This was due to the fact that Georgia's president Shevardnadze has achieved much poorer results in reform and basic social needs provision than did the Ukrainian president Kuchma. As a result, the socio-economic grievance was the main one behind the Rose revolution and has, therefore, contributed to the consolidation of the Georgian public.

It can also be mentioned that the same circumstances that led to distinct levels of deliberative capacity during the revolutions have also impacted the possibility for effective governance and reform by the new presidents. Thus having an almost unanimous popular support to reforms, Saakashvili managed to be more successful than Yushenko, who was supported by much lower numbers of the population and did not consider economic reforms as his primary task.

At the same time, while deliberative capacity was greater in the Rose revolution, the democratic achievements after the revolutions were more sound in Ukraine. This seems to contradict the theory that deliberation is an important pre-requisite to democracy consolidation. Yet, it is not necessarily so. Since the high deliberative score of the Georgian revolution is based on structural circumstances it cannot be considered as an indicator of an authentic deliberative democratic space. As the deliberative space created during the Rose revolution was rather unintended, it is not surprising that in the post-revolutionary era inclusion and toleration have vanished and a civil war, pressure on the opposition and other anti-democratic moves were made by the government

¹⁸ Interview with David Zurabishvili, Republican Party of Georgia, June 2010.

thus violating not only the deliberative democracy standards but even the most minimal requirements for a liberal democracy. In contrast, the fact that post-revolutionary liberal democratic achievements were high in Ukraine allows suspecting that the potential for deliberative democracy was greater in the Orange revolution than there was realized. If the revolution was planned with an eye on how the existing ethno-cultural diversity could be addressed the polarization that have occurred could have been much softer.

It becomes clear that for deliberation to be an asset for future democracy consolidation this deliberation needs to be authentic and needs to be present in the larger political system and not in a separate events like, for example, an electoral revolution. At the same time, the violation of deliberative principles even during a separate crucial event can have lasting negative consequences for the future development of the political system. This is illustrated by the case of Ukraine where the polarization, that was manifest during the Orange revolution, found its way into the post-revolutionary political decisions and resulted in power reversal associated with the backlash in democracy among other changes. The case of Ukraine also demonstrates that deliberation indeed can lead to polarization as some of the critics of deliberative democracy argue (e.g. Shapiro 1999) if conducted among the like-minded people only (Sunstein 2002). Thus an important policy implication from this case is that deliberate democratic processes and spaces need to be carefully crafted ahead and regulated in terms of what should and should not be said (Warren 2006).

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