

Received: 17 July, 2026

Accepted: 03 September, 2026

Published: 30 September, 2026

Construction of the Image of Maidan in the Historiography of the Orange Revolution and Its Influence on the Development of the Institute of the Head of State in Ukraine

Eduard Shcherbenko

PhD in Philosophy, Leading Researcher, Kyiv History Museum, Kyiv, Ukraine; mysl@ukr.net

Cite this article:

Shcherbenko, Eduard (2026). Construction of the Image of Maidan in the Historiography of the Orange Revolution and Its Influence on the Development of the Institute of the Head of State in Ukraine. *Revista Cultura Científica*, (24) pp. 1632–1641. <https://doi.org/10.70517/revcc2624134>

Abstract

The article investigates the construction of the image of the Maidan in the historiographical reflections of actor-narrators of the 2004 civil disobedience movement and reconstructs the mechanisms underlying the formation of a de facto “invisible college” that established an interpretative model of the Maidan based on a positive-sum (win-win) game. The historical-comparative method, narrative analysis, and discourse analysis were applied to documentary materials, memoirs, interviews, and journalistic sources from 2004–2008, while close reading was used to identify the figure of the actor-narrator in reflective texts. The study systematically reconstructs the previously unexplored presence of professionally trained historians at different levels of decision-making and demonstrates how this factor contributed to the peaceful resolution of the unprecedented crisis of the Independence era through a hybrid (r)evolutionary “game” grounded in mutual responsibility. Professional historical education among field commanders (Stets'kiv, Filenko), journalistic leaders (Yanevskyi), and politi-

cal leaders (Lytvyn) helped structure negotiations around the inclusive formula “not a drop of blood, both sides save face.” Representatives of the creative (proto)class, particularly Zabuzhko, integrated the events into the horizon of “great time” through comparisons with the Sich and Vich, while Donii represented the continuity of revolutionary experience. The analysis also identifies limitations in the imaginative horizon of contemporary actor-narrators, including the marginalization of the role of priests and the gender dimension of the events. The presence of professional historians across different levels of decision-making emerges as a previously undescribed factor that contributed to the peaceful resolution of the 2004 crisis. Further research should examine the Church’s transformation into a civil-society actor during 2005–2013 and reconsider the gender dimension of both Maidans through the perspective of trauma studies.

Keywords: actor-narrator, historiography of Maidan, construction of memory, narrative, responsibility, Maidan

1. INTRODUCTION

The Revolution of Dignity of 2013–2014, followed later by the full-scale Russian invasion, pushed the events of the “orange” November–December 2004 period into the background of public attention. Meanwhile, it was during the eighteen-day confrontation, caused by an attempt to falsify the results of the presidential election, that a distinctive complex of conventional and unconventional practices of Ukrainian transitional society took shape—a hybrid “game” that subsequent discussions described as the Maidan phenomenon. Going beyond the boundaries of a number of contemporary “color” revolutions (Serbia, 2000; Georgia, 2003), this experience helped shape the algorithm through which the next nationwide movement of civil disobedience unfolded ten years later, from the student demonstrations of “Euromaidan” to constitutional reform. The task of this study is not so much to reconstruct the events of 2004 themselves as to analyze how they were constructed in the historiographical reflections of direct participants—the actor-narrators who combined practical political activity with professional historical consciousness. Such a perspective makes it possible to consider the Maidan not only as a historical event but also as an object of historiographical construction produced by a *de facto* “invisible college” of interpreters. In other words, the analysis treats subsequent reflection by direct participants as part of the historical process through which the political experience of 2004 acquired a durable interpretative form. The emphasis therefore falls on the relationship between action and narration rather than on a simple chronological retelling of the protest itself.

The source base for research devoted to the events of 2004 was formed mainly in their immediate aftermath and is heterogeneous in genre. At least five groups of texts can be distinguished. First, there were early attempts at scholarly and expert interpretation of the events [1, 2]. Second, collections of documents recorded the official and chronological dimensions of the confrontation [3]. Third, publications were devoted to identifying the origins of the “journalistic revolution” as a component of the protest [4]. Fourth, ego-documents by direct participants from both sides of the confrontation focused mainly on the middle level of management and organization [5]. Fifth, collections of folklore, anecdotes, and memes documented the cultural forms that accompanied the protest [6–8].

The above-mentioned groups of sources constitute valuable empirical material, but their analytical depth is largely limited by the genre conventions of memoirs, journalism, and documentary chronicles. A systematic historiographical or narratological analysis of the figure of the actor-narrator—a participant in the events who is simultaneously their professional interpreter—has not yet been proposed. Accordingly, the role of entire social strata that influenced the course of the movement remains insufficiently explored, including entrepreneurs, educators, law-enforcement officers, and managers. One exception is the work of Yatseniuk [9], which describes the events from the perspective of the banking sector.

In the contemporary humanities, the interpretation of protest events increasingly extends beyond reconstruction of their factual course toward the study of collective memory, memory politics, and the narrative construction of the past. Using material from Ukraine, Bakke et al. [10] show that perceptions of historical events depend not only on inherited understandings but also on present-day identities and geopolitical orientations. This provides grounds for interpreting the image of the Maidan not as an unchanging imprint of events but as the result of selection, interpretation, and the subsequent actualization of experience.

It is particularly important to consider the agency of professional historians in processes of social mobilization and the production of historical narratives. Yurchuk [11], analyzing the activities of Ukrainian activist historians after Euromaidan, demonstrates the combination of professional historical competence with civic action and the capacity of historians to influence public understandings of the past. Kasianov [12], in turn, emphasizes tensions among academic analysis, memory politics, and war, which are particularly important for critically distinguishing professional reflection from the instrumentalization of history. Such a perspective directly reinforces the actor-narrator perspective proposed in this article.

Recent studies of Ukrainian memory politics demonstrate the active role of state and non-state actors in the selection, legitimization, and redefinition of historical narratives. Kasianov [13] examines decommunization during 2014–2020 as a process in which the past was recontextualized under the influence of contemporary political challenges, while Kasianov [14] traces the evolution of nationalist memory narratives from local practices into a component of national memory policy. In 2026, Pakhomenko [15] continued this line of inquiry by analyzing decolonization as a contemporary component of Ukrainian memory politics and by examining the interaction of different mnemonic actors.

Also important for this article is research on the ways revolutionary experience is transferred into the sphere of cultural memory. Kutsovska [16] shows that memory of the Maidan of 2013–2014 is not static: it is shaped through museum, artistic, and commemorative practices and is gradually integrated into the broader historical narrative of Ukraine. Onyshko [17] emphasizes the significance of the Maidan space and the sites where the Heroes of the Heavenly Hundred were killed as territories of memory. Research on museum representations of war likewise demonstrates that documentation and interpretation can occur almost simultaneously with the events themselves, creating forms of “instantaneous memory” [20].

Contemporary studies also demonstrate the close connection among historical memory, cultural heritage, and political

conflict. Munawar and Symonds [18] show how historical and cultural narratives can be used to legitimize war, while Shiller [19] analyzes the instrumentalization of Second World War memory in counter-revolutionary discourse concerning Ukraine. Ferreira [20], examining Ukrainian museums in the context of full-scale war, emphasizes the interdependence of memory, heritage, and current political reality. These studies confirm the need to consider historical narrative not only as a description of the past but also as a form of social action.

The relationship between a current event and already established models of memory becomes especially pronounced under conditions of social upheaval. Hilmar [21] shows how memory organizations in Ukraine and other European countries made sense of the Russian full-scale invasion through historical analogies, giving the new event meaning by linking it to the past. For an analysis of the Orange Revolution, this approach makes it possible to consider appeals to the Sich, the Vich, revolutionary tradition, freedom, and dignity not merely as rhetorical metaphors but also as mechanisms for historicizing a current event.

Despite the substantial body of recent research on memory politics, the memorialization of the Maidan, national narratives, and the interaction of history with contemporary conflicts, the mechanism through which the primary image of the Orange Revolution was formed by its own participants in close temporal proximity to the events remains insufficiently studied. The participant's dual role as an actor in political action and, simultaneously, as a narrator who gives that action historical meaning requires particular attention. The presence of people with professional historical education at various levels of decision-making, and the possible influence of a historical mode of thinking on the choice of models of non-violent interaction, have not received systematic treatment. This gap makes it appropriate to analyze the corpus of ego-documents, memoirs, interviews, and journalism from 2004–2008 as a space in which the primary historiographical image of the Maidan was constructed. The problem is therefore not merely the absence of additional descriptions of the Orange Revolution, but the lack of a systematic account of how participants who possessed professional historical training interpreted their own actions while the memory of the confrontation was still being formed. This temporal proximity is central to the research problem addressed here.

The aim of the study is to identify the distinctive features of constructing the image of the Maidan in the historiographical reflections of direct participants in the Orange Revolution of 2004 who combined participation in socio-political processes with their subsequent interpretation and narrative representation. Particular attention is focused on the role of actors with professional historical education in forming an interpretative model of the events based on the non-violent character of the protest, negotiated interaction, and mutual responsibility between the parties. This approach makes it possible to consider the Maidan not only as a political event but also as an object of historiographical and memorial construction.

To achieve this aim, the study reconstructs the principal groups of actor-narrators and their characteristic interpretative strategies; determines the mechanisms through which the events of 2004 were incorporated into broader historical narratives and symbolic models of the Ukrainian past; and analyzes the role of professional historical consciousness in developing a peaceful scenario for resolving the political crisis. A separate task is to establish the boundaries of the image of the Maidan formed by the actor-narrators, particularly by identifying the religious and gender dimensions that were insufficiently represented in early reflection and by determining prospects for further reinterpretation of the Orange Revolution in the context of contemporary studies of collective memory.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The source base of the study consists of approximately 30 materials from 2004–2008: interviews and memoirs of direct participants in the events (“field commanders,” representatives of the political leadership, and representatives of the creative class), essays, publications in periodicals (“Dzerkalo Tyzhnia,” “Ukrainska Pravda,” “Vechirnyi Kyiv,” “Gazeta po-Kyivski,” etc.), as well as official speeches and documentary chronicles. These materials were considered together because they preserve different but complementary forms of participant reflection, ranging from immediate journalistic commentary and official documentation to retrospective memoir writing. Their combination makes it possible to compare practical decisions with the meanings later assigned to those decisions by participants themselves.

The research was conducted within a qualitative historical-narrative paradigm using four methods. The historical-comparative method was used to compare the events of 2004 with earlier precedents (the Sich, the Vich, the 1906 election campaign in Galicia, and the student “Revolution on Granite” of 1990) and with the subsequent Revolution of Dignity of 2013–2014. Narrative analysis was used to reconstruct the figure of the “actor-narrator” and to identify structural elements in the self-description of the events, including plot, symbolism, and temporal markers. Discourse analysis was used to identify key metaphors and explanatory models employed by participants, including the “positive-sum game,” “invisible college,” and “synchronized network.” The close-reading technique was used for a detailed examination of key fragments of ego-documents and essays in order to identify traces of professional historical reflection within them.

The chronological reconstruction of events was carried out by comparing open documentary sources with dates mentioned in participants’ recollections. The study has methodological limitations: the sample of testimonies is not statistically representative but was formed according to the accessibility and significance of each source for the stated

research problem. Ego-documents also contain the retrospective distortions generally inherent in memoir literature. These limitations were taken into account when formulating the conclusions of the study, which are predominantly qualitative rather than quantitative. Accordingly, the study does not claim statistical generalizability. Its purpose is interpretative reconstruction: to identify recurring narrative structures, historically informed modes of explanation, and the limits of the source corpus while preserving distinctions among the different kinds of evidence included in that corpus.

3. RESULTS

3.1. CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS (NOVEMBER 22 – DECEMBER 8, 2004)

To establish the context in which key decisions were made, Table 1 presents a chronology of events showing the gradual intensification of the confrontation and its eventual resolution through a “pact of the elites.”

Table 1. *Chronology of events in November–December 2004*

Date	Event
22.11	Protests begin in Kyiv and gain support in most regions after the opposition leader calls for a vote of no confidence in the CEC
23.11	V. Yushchenko takes the presidential oath in the Verkhovna Rada during an extraordinary session
24.11	The CEC announces the official election results, while the Supreme Court prohibits their publication
25.11	Opposition MPs block an attempt to publish the CEC results in a government departmental publication
26.11	First roundtable meeting with the participation of international mediators
27.11	The Verkhovna Rada adopts a resolution aimed at resolving the crisis
28.11	Congress of deputies in Severodonetsk; the idea of a regional referendum is proclaimed
30.11	Pro-government factions attempt to overturn the decision of 27.11; Chairman V. Lytvyn closes the meeting
01.12	The government resigns following the Verkhovna Rada vote
03.12	The Supreme Court annuls the results of the second round and orders a rerun
08.12	“Package voting in the Verkhovna Rada and adoption of constitutional reform

Source: Compiled by the author based on a comparison of documentary sources and dates mentioned in the memoirs of the participants.

The dynamics summarized above indicate a gradual increase in the mobilization resources of the opposing parties under the initial working formula “not a drop of blood, both sides save face.” The implementation of this formula depended on the coordinated use of the movement’s communication and institutional resources, including the round-table negotiations conducted with the participation of international mediators.

3.2. ACTORS WITH PROFESSIONAL HISTORICAL EDUCATION IN THE DECISION-MAKING SYSTEM

Analysis of ego-documents and publications allows us to state that individuals with professional historical education were represented at several levels of decision-making, from the “field” level to the diplomatic and institutional levels: among the “field commanders” (Stets'kiv, Filenko), among leaders of the journalistic community (Yanevskyi), and within the highest political leadership (Lytvyn).

The testimonies of participants make it possible to trace the mechanism through which the confrontation moved toward a peaceful course. Stets'kiv, a member of parliament and one of the “field commanders,” describes an episode near the Presidential Administration building on Bankova Street: when student demonstrators began handing flowers to police officers, it became clear that the protest was assuming a peaceful character [22]. A similar episode concerning the blockade of the Cabinet of Ministers building two days later is described by Parubii, who notes that the spontaneous presentation of flowers and orange ribbons by demonstrators to the security personnel became an important lesson that redirected his tactical approach toward the gradual occupation of the opponent’s space rather than toward violent confrontation [23].

The willingness of the actor-narrator to make unusual and sometimes unprecedented decisions is also illustrated by an episode on the second day of the protests, when the flow of demonstrators was directed along a longer route through the Central Election Commission rather than directly toward the Verkhovna Rada. This decision, made contrary to instructions from the protest leadership, was later assessed by an international observer as a demonstration of a scale of mobilization exceeding that of the Belgrade protest in 2000 [22]. Yanevskyi offers a class-based interpretation of the events, presenting the “Orange” Revolution as a revolution of the newly emerging urban middle class, confronted with a choice between preserving wealth earned through work abroad and publicly defending personal dignity [24]. The integrative role of institutional and communication resources in the movement is also reflected in accounts of Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski, a participant in the “round table,” concerning the position of Verkhovna Rada Chairman Lytvyn, who insisted on a political rather than a purely legal means of resolving the crisis.

3.3. REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CREATIVE CLASS AND BEARERS OF REVOLUTIONARY TRADITION

A separate group of actor-narrators consists of representatives of the creative milieu, who interpreted the events through comparison with phenomena situated within the horizon of “great time.” Zabuzhko employs a strategy of historicization by constructing a dialogue around the elective character of the hetman institution and the tradition of Magdeburg law [25].

A bearer of more recent Ukrainian revolutionary experience is Donii, a leader of the student “Revolution on Granite” of 1990, who contrasts the aesthetics of the Russian revolution—the tank as an image of aggression and power—with the aesthetics of the Ukrainian revolution—the tent as an image of non-violence, duration, and theatricality. Through this contrast, he explains why all three attempts at “velvet revolutions” in 1990, 2000, and 2004 lasted no less than two weeks [26].

The stylistic construction of the protest was also shaped by actors outside the political or expert sphere. The initiator of the orange-ribbon action, Ya. Vedmid, explains its launch by the need for a simple symbol of voter self-identification, which had previously been absent from opposition actions [27]. The leader of the group “Grindzholi” notes that the rhythm of the protest slogans naturally fitted hip-hop, a genre in which the group had not previously worked [28]. A synthesis of the interpretative strategies employed by different groups of actor-narrators is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. *Groups of actor-narrators and their interpretive strategies*

Group of actors	Representatives	Interpretive strategy	Source
“Field commanders”	Stets'kiv, Filenko, Parubii	Shaping a peaceful scenario through real-time tactical decisions	Dmytrycheva et al. [22]; Parubii [23]
Journalist community	Yanevskyi	Social-class interpretation of the revolution	Yanevskyii [24]
Political leadership	Lytvyn	Institutional and political resolution of the crisis	Lytvyn [3]
Creative (proto)class	Zabuzhko	Fitting events into the horizon of “big time”	Zabuzhko [25]
Bearers of the revolutionary tradition	Donii	Aesthetic opposition “Tank–Tent”	Donii [26]

Source: Compiled by the author based on analysis of ego-documents, memoirs, and interviews from 2004–2008.

3.4. GAPS IN THE NARRATIVE: THE ABSENCE OF PRIESTS AND THE GENDER DIMENSION

The reconstructed narrative of the actor-narrators has clear limits to its imaginative horizon. First, the religious dimension does not acquire the status of an independent narrative within the analyzed sources. This absence is especially noticeable when compared with the Revolution of Dignity of 2013–2014, during which the public role of clergy became considerably more visible.

Second, the gender dimension of the events is recorded selectively in the sources. In a field study of women who participated in the protests, a recurring narrative formula described violence or threat as directed against the broader community: one respondent described the perceived threat as affecting herself, her family, and her surrounding social environment [29]. A structurally similar, although substantively different, reaction appears in an account by a political scientist concerning changes in electoral attitudes among the Kyiv bureaucracy following the demonstrative visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin to Kyiv: sociological surveys reportedly recorded support for the opposition candidate in Kyiv rising to more than 60% after the visit.

3.5. THE FRAGILITY OF THE PEACE SCENARIO: THE INSTITUTIONAL DYNAMICS OF NEGOTIATIONS

The peaceful resolution of the crisis was not guaranteed in advance. The sources record changes in the positions of the opposition’s “hawks” and “doves.” According to Lutsenko, some former “radicals,” who had previously insisted that the crisis could not be resolved without the participation of President Kuchma, abandoned this demand at the decisive moment in favor of political reform [22].

The public speeches of then-President Kuchma formed part of the discursive framework surrounding this process. In his address marking the 13th anniversary of Independence, he articulated freedom as “first and foremost the freedom of the people” and later declared the inadmissibility of “revolution,” thereby introducing key concepts into the public space to which his future successor added a third concept—dignity [30].

4. DISCUSSION

The results obtained allow the phenomenon of the Maidan of 2004 to be interpreted from several complementary theoretical perspectives.

First, from the perspective of Collingwood’s philosophy of history [31], history is inseparable from the activity through which historians reconstruct and interpret human action. Accordingly, the presence of professionally trained historians among the “field commanders,” leaders of the journalistic community, and senior political leadership makes it possible to view the protesting citizen as an actor-narrator who participates in making historically significant decisions while

simultaneously drawing experience from the extended horizon of the community of the “dead, the living, and the unborn.” In this sense, the actor-narrator becomes a bearer of heightened responsibility for the consequences of a decision. From this perspective, the Maidan phenomenon appears as a kind of synchronized network, or “computing cloud,” oriented toward producing a solution capable of stabilizing the system according to the rules of a positive-sum (win-win) game. This interpretation is consistent with the gradual increase in mutual responsibility between the parties identified in the results. This interpretation does not imply that historical education mechanically determined political behavior. Rather, it treats professional historical consciousness as one element within a wider configuration of experience, responsibility, institutional position, and situational decision-making that can be reconstructed from the available narratives.

Second, Yanevskyi’s class-based interpretation of the revolution can be read alongside Anderson’s broader account of imagined political communities [32]. Within the inherited Soviet political imaginary, the revolutionary scenario could still be perceived as a fundamentally legitimate element of historical development and could easily converge with the Marxist model of class revolution. This legitimizing framework operated despite the fact that the 2004 movement was directed against important elements of the Soviet institutional and political legacy—a paradox that deserves separate study within postcolonial memory studies.

Third, the appeal by representatives of the creative class to the phenomena of the *Sich* and the *Vich* [25] can be interpreted as the construction of symbolic tradition and social memory [33]. The twentieth century, with its era of national liberation struggles, is largely left outside this interpretative frame, a gap that may be explained by the difficulty of incorporating the controversial Soviet period into a coherent narrative of continuity. At the same time, the practice of understanding protest through categories derived from family experience and school history lessons contributes to narrative coherence and demonstrates society’s need to place a spontaneous event within a pedagogically and symbolically ordered historical continuity.

Fourth, Hrytsak offers an explanatory model for the success of the peaceful scenario by attributing to Yushchenko a shift in the axis of public discussion from language and culture toward the category of human dignity. In this interpretation, the shift made it possible to mobilize the “Ukraine of the overwhelming majority” rather than two imagined or manipulated minorities. Hrytsak supports this thesis through an analogy with the visit of John Paul II to Lviv, when an appeal to dignity as a fundamental Christian virtue was associated with the maintenance of public order without coercion [34]. This thesis corresponds to the finding presented above concerning the introduction of the key concepts of freedom and dignity into public discourse through the speeches of Kuchma and his successor.

Fifth, the generational dimension captured in Donii’s juxtaposition of the symbols of the “Tank” and the “Tent” makes it possible to interpret the events of 2004 as a watershed between two cohorts of public leaders according to the degree to which they inherited a Soviet “leader-centered” political culture. Donii himself addresses this problem in his earlier work on the experience of the 1990 student revolution [35]. The path of the “elegant revolution,” as characterized by the protest leader, also enabled a “flow of sacredness” during the revolutionary festival [36], thereby contributing to the development of a distinct revolutionary tradition differentiated from the model of October 1917.

The identified gaps in the narrative—the relative absence of priests and the selective representation of the gender dimension—require separate critical consideration. The formula of experiencing protest as a threat to the wider community, recorded in Suslova’s study [29], echoes the classical Marxist metaphor of a nation that “cannot forgive a moment of omission.” Yet the persistence of such a metaphor in the academic reception of the events is itself symptomatic of the limited gender perspective of the discourse of that period rather than a neutral explanation of the gender dimension of the protests. It is significant that the outbreak of mass protest in 2013 did not occur at the beginning of the student “Euromaidan” but after the first attempt at violent dispersal, when the event was articulated in categories understandable beyond professional political discourse. More generally, the limited visibility of priests and of gender-specific experience in the narratives of contemporary actor-narrators reveals the historical particularity of the imagined community of 2004 as a predominantly secularized, postmodern community of the transitional post-Soviet period. The transformation of the Church into an independent actor of civil society during 2005–2013, together with a reconsideration of the gender dimension of both Maidans through trauma studies, therefore constitutes an important subject for further research.

Finally, the established fragility of the peaceful scenario—including the threat of bringing in miners, changes in the emotional background, and divisions between “hawks” and “doves”—supports the conclusion that constitutional reform as a final “pact of the elites” was not a predetermined outcome. Rather, it emerged through a consistent increase in the level of mutual responsibility assumed by the actors within a limited time horizon. From the perspective of precedent, if the civil-disobedience movement in 2004 required legitimation as a political actor, particularly through the “round table” format, then ten years later the Maidan itself had become a source of legitimation for subsequent actions. More generally, the transformation of the unique “Orange” protest of 2004, through reflection by actor-narrators, into a hybrid (r)evolutionary “game” can be interpreted, in light of Kasianov’s analysis of memory politics [13], as a form of habituated memory: it no longer requires additional justification but instead functions as one of the explanatory models for subsequent events.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The conducted research allows us to conclude that the presence of people with professional historical education among the “field commanders,” leaders of the journalistic community, and the highest political leadership of the Orange Maidan was an important, although previously insufficiently described, factor in the development of a peaceful scenario for resolving the crisis. Analysis of ego-documents, memoirs, interviews, and journalism from 2004–2008 indicates the formation of a network of actor-narrators who not only participated in the events but also simultaneously endowed them with historical meaning through appeals to the Sich, the Vich, revolutionary tradition, freedom, dignity, and responsibility. The scientific novelty of the study lies in systematizing this factor and substantiating the concept of the actor-narrator as an analytical category for studying the primary historiographical construction of the Maidan. At the same time, the research revealed the limits of the narrative that was formed, including insufficient representation of the religious and gender dimensions and the fragility of the peaceful scenario under conditions of changing emotional backgrounds and shifting positions among political groups. The practical significance of the results lies in the possibility of using the proposed model in further comparative studies of the Orange Revolution and the Revolution of Dignity, as well as in analyses of the mechanisms through which direct protest experience is transformed into public memory. The limitations of the study are related to the non-representative character of the selected testimonies and the uneven representation of different groups of participants. Prospects for further research include analyzing the role of the Church between the two Maidans, reconsidering the gender dimension of the protests, and tracing the transformation of early narratives of 2004 within contemporary Ukrainian memory culture. The proposed interpretation should therefore be understood as a qualitative explanatory model rather than as a claim of direct causal determination. Its value lies in making visible a relationship among historical training, participant self-description, negotiated political action, and the subsequent construction of public memory that has received comparatively little explicit attention.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

FUNDING

This research received no external funding.

DATA AVAILABILITY

Data are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI AND AI-ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WRITING PROCESS

In the course of preparing this manuscript, the author employed ChatGPT to improve the linguistic quality and readability of the text. After using this AI tool, the author conducted a comprehensive review and made the revisions necessary to ensure the accuracy, integrity, and scholarly rigor of the manuscript. The author bears full responsibility for the final content of the published work, including any errors or inconsistencies that may remain.

REFERENCES

- [1] Kulchytskyi, Stanislav. *The Orange Revolution*. Genesa, 2005.
- [2] Shapoval, Yurii, editor. *In the Colors of the Orange Revolution*. ExOb, 2007.
- [3] Lytvyn, Volodymyr. *Ukraine—2004: Events, Documents, Facts*. 3 vols., 3 Media, 2005.
- [4] Kipiani, Vakhtang, compiler. *The Power of Darkness and Temnyks: A Reader on Political Censorship in Ukraine, 2001–2004*. Prosvita, 2005.
- [5] Katerynychuk, Mykola. *Lawyers of the Orange Revolution*. Yustinian, 2005. <https://nlu.org.ua/article.php?id=141>
- [6] Dubynianskyi, Mykhailo. *A Thousand Smiles of the Orange Revolution*. Fakt, 2005. <https://nlu.org.ua/article.php?id=141>
- [7] Dzikovskyi, P., editor and compiler. *Novellas of the Orange Revolution*. Concept by O. Myronov, Vidrozhennia, 2005.

-
- [8] *Yes! Ukrainians Win by Laughing*. Prepared by Oleksandra Kosarieva, edited by Oleh Chornohuz, VUS, 2005.
- [9] Yatseniuk, Arsenii. *Banking Secrecy during the Orange Revolution*. NVP Polihrafservis, 2008.
- [10] Bakke, Kristin M., et al. "Politicizing Memory: Evidence from Ukraine." *Problems of Post-Communism*, vol. 72, no. 1, 2025, pp. 16–35.
- [11] Yurchuk, Yuliya. "Historians as Activists: History Writing in Times of War. The Case of Ukraine in 2014–2018." *Nationalities Papers*, vol. 49, no. 4, 2021, pp. 691–709.
- [12] Kasianov, Georgiy. "Challenges of Antagonistic Memory: Scholars versus Politics and War." *Memory Studies*, vol. 15, no. 6, 2022, pp. 1295–1298.
- [13] Kasianov, Georgiy. "In Search of Lost Time? Decommunization in Ukraine, 2014–2020." *Problems of Post-Communism*, vol. 71, no. 4, 2024, pp. 326–340.
- [14] Kasianov, Georgiy. "Nationalist Memory Narratives and the Politics of History in Ukraine since the 1990s." *Nationalities Papers*, vol. 52, no. 6, 2024, pp. 1235–1254.
- [15] Pakhomenko, Sergii. "Decolonization in Ukraine's Memory Politics: Anticolonialism versus Ambivalence in the City of Odesa." *Nationalities Papers*, 2026, pp. 1–27.
- [16] Kutsovska, Galyna. "Maidan, Memory, and Museum: Relations between Aesthetics and Revolution, 2014–2021." *Baltic Worlds*, vol. 17, nos. 1–2, 2024, pp. 74–94. <https://balticworlds.com/maidan-memory-and-museum/>
- [17] Onyshko, Lesia. "The Future Memorial to the Heroes of the Heavenly Hundred in Kyiv: A Territory of Memory." *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, vol. 65, nos. 3–4, 2023, pp. 370–377.
- [18] Munawar, Nour A., and James Symonds. "Empires of Lies? The Political Uses of Cultural Heritage in War." *The Historic Environment: Policy & Practice*, vol. 14, no. 3, 2023, pp. 308–325.
- [19] Shiller, Sydney. "Second World War Memory as an Instrument of Counter-Revolution in Putin's Russia." *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, vol. 65, nos. 3–4, 2023, pp. 432–452.
- [20] Ferreira, Maria Leticia Mazzucchi. "Memory before Memory: Museums and War in Ukraine." *Tempo e Argumento*, vol. 16, no. 42, 2024, article e0105.
- [21] Hilmar, Till. "Signifying the Present in Links to the Past: Memory Organizations React to the February 24, 2022, Russian Full-Scale Invasion of Ukraine." *American Journal of Cultural Sociology*, vol. 14, 2026, pp. 405–438.
- [22] Dmytrycheva, O., S. Rakhmanin, and T. Sylina. "Anatomy of the Soul of the Maidan." *ZN.UA*, 10 Dec. 2004. https://zn.ua/ukr/politics_archive/anatomya_dushi_maydanu.html
- [23] Parubii, Andrii. *Commandant's Notes: Chronicle of the Ukrainian House—Fortress of the Orange Revolution*. Liha-Press, 2005.
- [24] Yanevskyi, Danylo. *Chronicle of the Orange Revolution*. Folio, 2005. <https://nlu.org.ua/article.php?id=141>
- [25] Zabuzhko, Oksana. *Let My People Go: 15 Texts about the Ukrainian Revolution*. Fakt, 2005. https://library.zu.edu.ua/doc/lustopad_2014.pdf
- [26] Donii, Oles. "Their Tank against Our Tent." *Ukrainska Pravda*, 4 Dec. 2004. <https://www.pravda.com.ua/articles/2004/12/04/3005024/>
- [27] Solodko, Pavlo. "People Who Created the Style of the Revolution: Part One." *Ukrainska Pravda*, 22 Nov. 2005. <https://www.pravda.com.ua/articles/2005/11/22/3020805/>
- [28] Lebedeva, K. "The Author of the Anthem Is the Presenter of the 'Weather' Programme." *Vechirnyi Kyiv*, 8 Dec. 2004.
- [29] Suslova, Olena. *People Who Surprised Us in a Country We Did Not Know*. Information and Consulting Women's Center, 2005. <https://www.wicc.net.ua/media/people%20surprising%20us.pdf>
- [30] Kuchma, Leonid. "The Highest Happiness Is to Bring One's Native Country into the Orbit of Modern Civilization." 2000, 27 Aug.–2 Sept. 2004.
-

-
- [31] Collingwood, R. G. *The Idea of History*. Edited by T. M. Knox, Clarendon Press, 1946. https://books.google.com/books/about/The_Idea_of_History.html?id=7S8XAQAAMAAJ
- [32] Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Rev. ed., Verso, 2006. <https://catalog.folger.edu/record/269498>
- [33] Connerton, Paul. *How Societies Remember*. Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- [34] Hrytsak, Yaroslav. "Reply." In "On the Discussion of 'Two Ukraines'." *Krytyka*, no. 12, 2004, p. 13.
- [35] Donii, Oles. *The Generation of the Velvet Revolution: How Do We Survive until 2009?*. Smoloskyp, 1999. <https://catalog.lounb.org.ua/bib/419264>
- [36] Ozouf, Mona. *Festivals and the French Revolution*. Translated by Alan Sheridan, Harvard University Press, 1988. https://books.google.com/books/about/Festivals_and_the_French_Revolution.html?id=xucNAQAAMAAJ