

Populism in Ukraine in Comparative European Context

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Populism has deep roots in Latin America where it is usually found on the left of the political spectrum, virulently nationalist and anti-American. Parties labeled

'populist' have grown in popular support throughout the 1990s in Western and Central-Eastern Europe and have won electoral victories in Austria, Italy, Switzerland, Denmark, Slovakia, Poland, and Bulgaria. The term 'populist' has been applied to a heterogeneous group of political groups ranging from the anti-globalisation left and greens to the nationalist right. These include parties opposed to immigration, those who see globalisation as 'Americanisation,' who believe government taxes are too high or oppose excessive government interference in the private lives of citizens and business. Politicians advocating a 'third way' between capitalism and socialism are often labeled as 'populists'.

Western studies of populism have focused on Western and Central-Eastern Europe, not on Eurasia, and this paper is the first to analyse the phenomenon of 'populism' in Ukraine. The term 'populist' was not used to describe Ukrainian politics during Leonid Kuchma's decade-long presidency from 1994-2004 and only began to be used after Viktor Yushchenko's January 2005 election, primarily when discussing against Yulia Tymoshenko and her eponymous bloc (BYuT). 'Populist' is the new negative word in Ukrainian politics, replacing the term 'nationalist' that was widely used by Western scholars as a negative term of reference in the 1990s. The paper is divided into two sections. The first section will analyse the phenomenon of 'populism' in Ukraine within a comparative context of the growth of populism in Western and Central-Eastern Europe. The comparative portion of the paper will analyse whether ten attributes found within Western and Central-Eastern European populism are to be also found within Ukrainian politics. These ten attributes of Western and Central-Eastern Europe populism include (1) need for a charismatic leader (2) drawing on support from

socio-economic discontent found among the ‘losers’ in economic transitions (3) hostility to oligarchs, anti-elite and anti-establishment sentiments (4) a strong emphasis on battling corruption in the elites (5) anti-Americanism (6) opposition to NATO membership (7) antagonism to joining and delegating sovereignty to international and supra-national structures, such as the IMF and European Union (EU) (8) fanning the flames of Islamophobia and xenophobia on racist and security grounds. Populists throughout Europe are xenophobic towards racial and sexual minorities with populists in post-communist countries drawing on extreme nationalist traditions in their countries dating back to the 1930s and 1940s (9) strong opposition to immigration (one of the most defining planks of Western European populism) (10) criticism of multiculturalism as failing to integrate minorities and immigrants and support for alternative policies of assimilation and integration¹. Krastev discusses a similar but different set of ten elements of populism: authentic anger, unrestrained hatred for elites, policy vagueness, economic egalitarianism, cultural conservatism, passionate radicalism, measured euroscepticism, declared nationalism, undeclared xenophobia and anti-corruption². Taking the election platforms and rhetoric of populist party leaders in Poland, Slovakia and Bulgaria, Krastev believes that the four key areas for populism include anti-corruption rhetoric, hostility to privatisation, anti-elite sentiments, and a focus on reversing the social inequalities arising from the transition from communist economic system to a market economy.

The second section of the paper analyses the nature of ‘populism’ in Ukraine by comparing the election programmes of Ukrainian political parties and the rhetoric of party leaders. The paper tests the commonly held Western and Ukrainian hypothesis of

Tymoshenko and BYuT as ‘populist’ or whether the term should be applied more broadly to a wider range of Ukrainian political forces. This section discusses the ten elements of populism found in Western and Central-Eastern Europe by comparing and contrasting the election platforms of Ukrainian political parties. As Table 2 shows, Tymoshenko/BYuT and the Party of Regions *both* fit four of these ten categories while Yushchenko/Our Ukraine fit three of these ten categories. Populism stretches across the Ukrainian political landscape but incorporates fewer of the attributes that are to be commonly found in European populist parties. The populist-nationalist Svoboda (Freedom) party most closely resembles European populist parties, fitting nine out of ten of these attributes but not including the tenth - immigration – only because it remains a non-issue in Ukraine.

Populism in Western and Central-Eastern Europe

Populist parties on the left and right have come to power in Western and Central-Eastern Europe and the ‘populist agenda’ is at the centre of many national politics and encroaching upon establishment parties. Populists in Western Europe have experienced electoral success in the Netherlands (Lijst Pim Fortuyn), Belgium (Vlaams Blok), Denmark, (Danish People’s Party), Switzerland (Swiss People’s Party), Italy (Lega Nord) and, the most documented, in Austria (Freedom Party) where populist-nationalists have been the most electorally successful.

Austria’s Freedom Party (FPA) and its offshoot the Alliance for the Future of Austria (BZA) were closely associated with the charismatic Jorg Haider. The FPA and

BZA exhibit similar ideological tenets to other European populists (i.e. anti-elitism) but Western European populists have grown in popularity because of an issue that does not dominate post-communist societies; namely, immigration. Western European populist parties are rabidly hostile to immigration an issue that has entered the election programme's of establishment centre-right parties, such as the British Conservatives. In the Netherlands, populists defended the country's traditions of tolerance and multiculturalism against what they *perceived* to be intolerant Islamic immigrants. Growing support for Western European populist parties has partly arisen from widespread public disquiet at immigration levels and particularly from the presence of Islamic immigrants. Islamophobia is on the rise throughout Western Europe in response to the perceived unwillingness of Muslims to integrate and a terrorist threat from home-grown Islamic extremists. In the run up to Norway's 2009 elections, Islam has become an important issue raised by the opposition Progress Party who have argued that the governing Labour Party is pandering to the Islamic community³. The issue of Islam has also turned a majority of the populations of France, Germany, Denmark and Austria against Turkish membership of the EU. The backlash has spread to the nationality policies of European governments who have shifted away from multiculturalist policies dominant in the 1970s and 1980s towards an emphasis on integration⁴.

Where Austria is different to other European countries where populism has manifested itself is in its unwillingness to deal with its past; unlike, for example, Western Germany. Austrians see themselves as history's victims and the FPA and BZA capitalise on Austria's competing national identities between pan-Germanism and

Austrian separateness, an identity developed after World War II. Haider described Austria as a 'cultural miscarriage'. Only in Bulgaria does one find another pan-populist movement (ATAKA) but in Bulgaria it is pan-Slavic. The FPA and BZA have drawn on xenophobia, racism, anti-Semitism, cultural nationalism, unrepentant former Nazis and rural, romanticised Austria for their widespread popular support that increased to nearly 30 percent of the vote by the late 1990s⁵.

Following the collapse of the Christian Democratic Party in the early 1990s, Italy has excelled at right-populist politics but without the backlash from the EU that was delivered to far smaller Austria. In March 2009, the People of Freedom Party was launched by Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi through a merger of his populist right Forza Italia, created in 1993 as the successor to the Christian Democratic Party that dominated Italian post-war politics but collapsed in 1991, and the post-fascist National Alliance (formerly the Italian Social Movement). *The Guardian* (28 March 2009) described the launch of Italy's new party of power as the merger of Berlusconi's Forza Italia with, 'the spiritual heirs of Mussolini's fascist blackshirts' while, 'the merger caps his 15-year attempt to lose the post-fascist tag and transform his party into a mainstream conservative force'. The populist Northern League, which had joined coalitions with Forza Italia and the National Alliance, refused to merge into the People of Freedom Party. This would not be the first occasion where a former fascist party has moved to occupy the centre-right niche; in Spain the conservative Peoples Party (AP) grew out of the moderate wing of the Francoist fascist regime.

Krastev⁶ believes that the 'capital' of the new populism is Central Europe, a claim that is open to question in the light of electoral victories by populist-nationalists

throughout Western Europe. If Austria is the centre of Western European populism then Poland is the centre of populism in Central-Eastern Europe. Bugarcic accepts that populism can be found in Western as well as Central-Eastern Europe but he argues that it is more of a threat to the new liberal democracies found in post-communist states. Tismaneanu points to the reasons why populism has grown in Central-Eastern Europe: the Leninist past has left a legacy of intolerance, exclusiveness, rejection of compromise, search for charismatic leaders, extreme personalisation of political discourse and ideological chaos. 'Uprootedness, status loss and uncertainty about identity provide fertile ground for paranoid visions of conspiracy and treason; hence the widespread attraction of nationalist salvationism', Tismaneanu argues⁷. Post-communist societies include sizeable groups who feel left out of the rapid transition to a market economy who are disaffected and traumatised. Tismaneanu believes populism draws on these societal feelings creating, 'fragmentation, divisiveness, political convulsions and instability'⁸. Unlike in Western Europe, where populists are faced by well developed establishment mainstream parties, the post-communist environment of Central-Eastern Europe has left a legacy of weak political parties, vague political ideologies, overlapping programmes and liberal democratic parties under siege. In the October 2007 Polish elections the liberal Civic Platform opposition defeated the populist Law and Justice (PiS) by 42 to 32 percent respectively. PiS's election result showed that it retained wide public support unlike its two populist allies, Self Defence and the League of Polish Families (LPR), whose support collapsed to a combined 2.8 percent. The Communist successor Democratic Left Alliance (SLD)⁹ and Peasants Party came in third and fourth respectfully with a combined 22 percent of the vote.

The election results represented a major defeat for Self Defence which had as high as 30 percent support in polls conducted prior to the 2004 election held three years earlier. The collapse in the Self Defence vote showed the degree to which voter support for populists is unstable. In Romania the second largest party for much of the 1990s was the extreme right populist Greater Romania Party (PRM) founded in 1990 on a platform of ultra-nationalism, anti-Hungarian and anti-Roma sentiment. In the 1990s, Greater Romania aligned with the Communist successor Social Democratic Party against the pro-Western liberal opposition. In the November 2000 presidential elections, PRM leader Corneliu Tudor reached the second round where he obtained 28 percent of the vote but was defeated. The PRM subsequently declined in popularity.

In Central Europe, populist parties in Poland have been drawn from the left and right: Andrzej Lepper's Self-Defense¹⁰, the PiS and the LPR. Szczerbiak includes the Polish Peasant Party as a fourth Polish populist party as it, together with Self Defence, are what he terms parties that attract votes from 'transition losers' in Polish rural areas and small provincial towns. Szczerbiak defines Self Defence and the LPR as 'radical-populist' and the LPR as Poland's 'religious right'. Religion plays no role in any major Ukrainian political parties platform. The 'religious right' LPR and PiS are anti-abortion and homophobic, again two issues that are not raised by Ukrainian parties. Self Defence has drawn on voters from the SLD; the closest equivalent in Ukraine would be the populist Progressive Socialist Party, an offshoot from the Socialist Party established in 1991 when the Communist Party was illegal. As a 'left-populist' party, Self Defence and the LPR are eurosceptic, protectionist, hostile to foreign investment and privatisation, and their rhetoric (as seen through Radio Maryja) are at times anti-Semitic

(camouflaged as ‘anti-cosmopolitanism’)¹¹. Anti-semitism only permeates Ukraine’s far right parties, such as Svoboda. The LPR and the PiS have been prominent in anti-Communist *nomenklatura* rhetoric and the adoption of the law on lustration. Lustration was discussed immediately following the Orange Revolution on <http://maidan.org.ua> (a web site prominent during the Orange Revolution and led by activists from earlier anti-regime protests) and lustration was demanded by radical youth NGO’s, such as Pora (Its Time). Nevertheless, lustration never became a serious contender for government policy and was never supported by Prime Minister Tymoshenko. Polish populist parties seek to spend more on social policies, such as health, education, and pensions; social populism that permeates *all* Ukraine’s parties¹².

Populism in Bulgaria has deep roots and has grown in reaction to the post-communist decade of the 1990s when Bulgaria was governed by the Communist successor Socialist Party (BSP) and the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF). In 2001, the ‘centrist populist’ National Movement of Simeon the Second (NMSS) emerged as the first manifestation of a populist counter-reaction to the BSP and UDF monopolisation of Bulgaria’s post-communist politics. Current Bulgarian populism manifests itself in the ATAKA party that won fourth place in the 2005 elections. The 1990s represented, ‘15 years of national betrayal, frauds and criminal plundering’, ATAKA leader Volen Siderov told the Bulgarian parliament¹³. As in other regions of Central Europe the Roma are a target of ATAKA’s hostility but specific to Bulgaria are ATAKA’s additional xenophobic and racist attitudes towards the Turkish minority. Similar to other populist parties ATAKA has a charismatic leader (Siderov), is anti-elitist/establishment and holds left-wing socio-economic views. Although ATAKA is similarly antagonistic to NATO and EU

membership, as are most other European populist parties, alone among them ATAKA has a pro-Russian and pan-Slavic orientation. ATAKA's anti-Americanism is also therefore more pronounced and demanded Bulgaria's troop withdrawal from Iraq and the closure of foreign bases. Yushchenko's 2004 programme called for the withdrawal of Ukrainian troops from Iraq which was implemented in autumn 2005. ATAKA's pro-Russian/Slavic orientation and anti-Americanism ensures it possesses a strong base of support among BSP defectors. Anti-Americanism manifests itself in many – but not all – European populist parties as 'anti-globalisation' (with globalisation understood as creeping Americanisation). Anti-Americanism manifests itself on Ukraine's left and in the Party of Regions.

Populists champion referenda as a way for the *narod* to overcome 'corrupt elites'. Schopflin believes that populist support for referenda is not an instrument of democracy because, 'they pull the voters into the pre-political stance that lies at the heart of populism'¹⁴. In Ukraine all of the main political parties have argued in support of using referenda – the Party of Regions on NATO membership and the Russian language and Our Ukraine and BYuT on constitutional reforms – but few referendums have ever actually taken place in Ukraine's two decades as an independent state. The Party of Regions has insisted that Ukraine hold a referendum on joining NATO prior to an invitation from NATO, an unusual demand unheard of in any other post-communist state seeking NATO membership. Constitutional reforms negotiated during round-table meetings in December 2004 were introduced in 2006 without a referendum, ignoring a Constitutional Court ruling that required them to be put to a public plebiscite. BYuT's 2006 election platform stated that, 'The more referendums a country holds, the more

honest the authorities. So we will build legislation so that referendums become something just as normal as breathing fresh air'. Such rhetoric has remained theoretical and Ukraine during Yushchenko's presidency has not held a single referendum.

Populists disdain the legal institutions of a liberal democracy, particularly the judiciary. In Ukraine a weak and corrupt rule of law has been undermined further by political intervention by *all* parties and the executive in the courts and prosecutor's office. Populists see society divided into two groups: the 'honest *narod*' versus the 'corrupt elite' claiming to speak on behalf of the *narod*. Populist language of 'popular sovereignty' romanticises the *narod* through the 'politics of simplicity'¹⁵. Poland's lustration law is cited as an example by Bugarcic¹⁶ of a witchhunt against the former Communist elite's.

Proponents of a 'third way' can be labeled as populists. In November 2003, Tymoshenko explained her differences with Yushchenko: 'I believe that Ukraine should take its own "third way" between ideological extremes in theory and practice to a more harmonious model and new societal standard'¹⁷. Tymoshenko's 'third wayism' has its roots in Hromada's¹⁸ ideology which was re-invented as 'solidarism' in the 2006 BYuT election programme. Third wayism and solidarism does not necessarily have its roots in fascism. Solidarity intellectual Smolar has pointed out that the early Polish Solidarity movement also supported Poland's 'third way', describing the West as lacking spirituality and excessively materialist in rhetoric reminiscent of criticism of the West made by the Russian writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn. 'In Poland there was also the hope, currently forgotten, that the Solidarity movement could overcome the tensions between

the elites and the people, the intelligentsia and the nation, and the workers and the middle class', Smolar writes¹⁹. Solidarity sought to, 'combine what were perceived as the good sides of both capitalism and socialism, of both individualism and collectivism'²⁰. Such language is reminiscent of Tymoshenko's and BYuT's rhetoric and election platforms on solidarism.

Jasiewicz describes the competition between two outgrowths of the Polish Solidarity movement: PO, representing liberal Poland, versus PiS, representing the 'politics of social solidarity'. PiS emphasises the importance of shared values and traditions (social solidarity) and an exclusivist, homogenising view of Polish identity and culture. BYuT shares Social Solidarity the former with the PIS but not the latter tenet. PiS propounds the need for a moral rejuvenation of society, is economic nationalist, euro-sceptical and anti-elitist. PiS allies on the left (Self Defence) and right (PLR) hold populist-nationalist inclinations, are both anti-communist and clerical with the PLR representing, 'the reincarnation of Polish extreme nationalism in its ideologically purest form'²¹ The competition between 'liberal' and 'social solidarity' Poland could be contrasted with Yushchenko/Our Ukraine and Tymoshenko/BYuT respectfully but, as we shall argue later, only up to a point. Tymoshenko/BYuT do not incorporate many of the programmatic principles common to populist parties in Europe, such as euro-scepticism, xenophobic and economic nationalism and, on the part of Self Defence and LPR, anti-semitism and homophobia. *All* Ukrainian political parties (Our Ukraine, BYuT, and the Socialist Party (from round two) which supported the 2004 Orange Revolution did so from the viewpoint of the need to morally rejuvenate Ukrainian society. This widespread view was widely supported in Ukrainian society in response to

a decade of Kuchma's corrupt presidency and the Kuchmagate scandal during which he was accused of murder and abuse of office.

The first Ukrainian politician to introduce solidarism into Ukrainian elections was in fact Kuchma who included 'A Social state – a society built on solidarism' in his 1999 re-election programme. Solidarism made its debut in the section entitled 'We Will Build a Socially Responsible State' where Kuchma promised that economic growth would come about through 'an active social policy'. Nearly word for word, the Party of Regions repeated the same phrase in its 2006 election platform where we read support for: '**Social policies** on the basis of a stable growth in the national economy'.

BYuT's 2006 election platform incorporated 'Solidarism' and explained it in such a way: 'A person does not exist by himself – his knowledge, culture, and the product of his environment is tied to other people'. BYuT's 2006 platform included 'Economic Solidarism' and a 'Just Social Policy'. Our Ukraine's 2006 platform promised an equally populist 'Everyone – Justice!' and in the 2007 pre-term elections NU-NS expended much of its energy on the populist slogan of removing parliamentary immunity²².

BYuT's 'third way ideology between capitalism

and socialism – solidarism – was similar to that which Smolar defined as the original ideological orientation of Poland's Solidarity. BYuT's 2006 election platform explained

that, 'We must build a harmonic path of love. I would like for our Ukrainian idea

to gain a specific content. Therefore today, I can pronounce, perhaps for

the first time at such a high gathering, the word 'solidarism' - an ideology

that was born at the beginning of the 20th century and was presented to

society by the world's greatest philosophers, including Ukrainians. In fact,

solidarism in its pure form is harmony and justice'. After criticism of the use of the term 'solidarism' by, amongst others Prime Minister and Our Ukraine leader Yuriy Yekhanurov, BYuT dropped the term and it was not incorporated in its 2007 pre-term election platform. Our Ukraine leading member Roman Besmertniy was asked about his views of Tymoshenko and replied, 'love in politics is out of the question. There exist political interests. Our interests do not coincide. I've never supported advocates of ideologies that verge on radical trends. Solidarism, proclaimed by Yuliya Vladimirovna, was the foundational element of Fascist ideology in its time'²³. Former President Kuchma described Tymoshenko's views as 'neo-bolshevik slogans' while presidential secretariat head Viktor Baloga described BYuT's policies as, 'undertaken by the ideologists of totalitarian regimes'²⁴. Ukrainian politicians had little understanding of alternative roots of solidarism, such as the Polish Solidarity movement.

Ideological flexibility and pragmatism have been the hallmarks of populist parties throughout Europe. Heinisch describes Haider's FPO as ideologically subordinated to political expediency and opportunism, as seen in its flexibility and the dramatic shifts in its programme²⁵. Taggart defines populists as 'highly chameleonic'²⁶. Karatnycky and Motyl describe Tymoshenko as, 'something of a political chameleon, her Fatherland Party flirting with social democracy and then joining the centre-right European People's Party political group in the European parliament'²⁷. Ukrainian analyst Leshchenko finds it unusual that Tymoshenko wears Louis Vuitton but at the same time promotes solidarism, presumably assuming that populists and the left should not be fashion conscious²⁸. BYuT has been heavily criticised by Ukrainian analysts for its ideological amorphousness²⁹. The ideological flexibility of populists means they can be found on the

left or right and they can combine right-wing nationalism with left-wing socio-economic policies. *All* Ukraine's political parties are 'chameleonic' and ideologically vacuous to varying degrees and, more importantly, there is little connection between their election programme's and their post-election policies. These twin factors could explain why Ukraine's political parties are distrusted by 70 percent of the population and trusted by only three³⁰.

Yushchenko and Tymoshenko have been divided by personality, politics and gender. Tymoshenko explained these differences: 'I am not a fan (of the president) if I can say so honestly. This is because I know a lot more than you do', a hint at the president's alleged corruption³¹. Tymoshenko's centre-left views, first seen when she entered politics in the 1998 elections in the Hromada party, are different to Yushchenko's liberal centrism but *both* have exhibited ideological flexibility³². Tymoshenko remains an unusual politician by virtue of her gender; few women have reached the pinnacles of senior politics and government in the established Western democracies, let alone in young democracies such as Ukraine or other post-communist states where women's rights have not progressed to the extent they have in the West³³.

Taggart describes populists as 'reluctantly political' who only enter politics when they feel 'threatened by crisis'³⁴. Tymoshenko entered politics during the 2000-2001 Kuchmagate crisis that she co-led and during which she was briefly imprisoned. It is arguable whether Tymoshenko is a 'reluctant politician' in Taggart's definition of populists as she is Ukraine's most accomplished politician and most successful election campaigner, increasing the vote of BYuT in each successive election since it first fought an election in 2002. Ukraine's most reluctant political leader was Yushchenko who

refused to join the Ukraine without Kuchma protests and was pushed into opposition in April 2001 after parliament voted no confidence in his government. Between then and the 2004 elections Yushchenko wavered between working with BYuT and the Socialist Party in opposition or doing a back-room deal with the regime. Yushchenko acted similarly in the Orange Revolution, joining the mass protests while negotiating deals with the regime at round-tables that excluded Tymoshenko.

Populism in Ukraine

The term ‘populist’ is used by Ukrainian politicians as a means of negative criticism but without an understanding of its European-wide meaning. Party of Regions leader Viktor Yanukovych has regularly described, for example, *all* his orange opponents as ‘populists’. Asked about the orange camp, Yanukovych replied, ‘Total populism and a pack of lies – that is their essence’³⁵. President Yushchenko meanwhile, has repeatedly accused Tymoshenko governments of ‘populism’ in such a vein: ‘the economic course proposed to Ukraine is the war-like populism of 1917’³⁶. Elements of European populism have permeated the politics and economics of *all* Ukrainian parties³⁷ while, at the same time, most elements of European populism are *not* to be found in Ukraine with the exception of the populist-nationalist Svoboda party. Svoboda leader Oleh Tyahnybok’s criticism of the ‘populist policies’ of the Tymoshenko government is an additional case in point of a lack of understanding in Ukraine as to what constitutes populism. Tyahnybok praises the president’s proposals for ‘social justice’ because it allegedly complies with Svoboda’s programme of ‘economic nationalism and social justice’³⁸.

Svoboda's programme fits nine out of ten policy planks of European populism (see Table 2).

One of the most persistent critics of Tymoshenko/BYuT's 'populism' has been President Yushchenko and the criticism has been ironically directed at her government's implementation of his 2004 election programme. Anatoliy Grytsenko, head of Yushchenko 2004 campaign's analytical centre, pointed out that Yushchenko had no programme until summer 2004 and the Razumkov Centre think tank, that Grytsenko headed, developed his 'Ten Steps' and fourteen draft decrees³⁹. In the 2004 elections, opposition candidate Yushchenko was allied to Tymoshenko and following round two this alliance was joined by the Socialist Party and the Party of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs. Yushchenko laid out his election programme 'Ten Steps towards the People' in July 2004 and between 12 October-4 November 2004 published 14 draft presidential decrees. The 'Ten Steps' and fourteen decrees became the basis for the Tymoshenko government programme approved by parliament in February 2005; the programme's preamble stated, 'The government programme is based on, and develops the basis of, the programme of Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko's 'Ten Steps towards the People'...⁴⁰

The 'Ten Steps' and fourteen draft decrees are replete with what would be understood to be social-populist policies. The 'Ten Steps' explains that, 'Social programmes are not a devastation of the budget, but investments in the people, in the country and the nation's future'. Yushchenko pledged in Step two that if he is elected, 'My Action Plan will ensure priority funding of social programmes. The way of finding

budgetary money for this purpose is easy: not to steal, not to build luxurious palaces and not to buy expensive automobiles'. Clearly populist by any definition of the term.

Table 1. Viktor Yushchenko's 2004 Election Programme

Ten Steps Towards the People	14 Draft Decrees
1. Create 5 million jobs.	1. Promote Social Defence of Citizens.
2. Ensure priority Funding for Social Programmes.	2. Take Steps to Ensure the Return of Lost Savings to Citizens.
3. Increase the Budget by Decreasing Taxation.	3. Increase Support for Child Allowance.
4. Force the Government to Work for the People and Battle Corruption.	4. Establish the Criteria for Analysing the Activities of Heads of Local State Administrations.
5. Create Safe Living Conditions.	5. Reduce the Terms of Military Service.
6. Protect Family Values, Respect for Parents and Children's Rights.	6. Create a System of People's Control of the Activities of State Authorities.
7. Promote Spirituality and Strengthen Moral Values.	7. Struggle against Corruption of High Ranking State Officials and Civil Servants in Local Governments.
8. Promote the Development of the Countryside.	8. Reduce the Number of Inspections of Businesses and Ease their Registration Process.
9. Improve Military Capabilities and Respect for the Military.	9. Withdraw Peacekeeping Troops from the Republic of Iraq.
10. Conduct Foreign Policy that Benefits the Ukrainian People.	10. Defend Citizens Rights to Use the Russian Language and other Minority Languages in Ukraine.
	11. Ensure the Basis for Good Relations with Russia and Belarus.
	12. Ensure the Rights of the Opposition in Ukraine.
	13. Adopt First Steps to Ensure Individual Security of Citizens and to Halt Crime.
	14. Strengthen Local Government.

Maksymiuk analysed the ‘Ten Steps’ and draft decrees and found them to be lavish promises. Yushchenko promised to keep the pension increase of the Yanukovich government that had doubled the minimum monthly pension from 137 to 285 *hryvni* adding \$207 million each month to the government’s pension cost. Yushchenko promised to establish a minimum wage of 423 *hryvni* a month and outlined a 12-fold increase from 725 to 8,460 *hryvni* for each newly born child. Most controversially, a draft decree promised to compensate Ukrainians for lost Soviet bank savings by recognising them as Ukraine’s internal debt and begin repaying them in part from funds received from top-up payments made by businessmen for enterprises obtained during Ukraine’s privatization (see later). The draft decree drew on the ‘Ten Steps’ found in Our Ukraine’s 2002 election programme that called for the creation of a, ‘working mechanism to return debts to Ukrainian citizens’ lost in Soviet bank savings from top-up payments paid by businessmen made after a review of ‘dishonest privatisations’. Reviewing Yushchenko’s extensive social populist 2004 election programme, Martyniuk asks, ‘Where is Yushchenko going to take money to finance his generous social payments?’⁴¹

‘Populist’ parties and movements require charismatic leaders that are in short supply in Ukraine. The most charismatic Ukrainian politician is Tymoshenko, the leaders of the Socialist and Communist Parties (Oleksandr Moroz and Piotr Symonenko), NU-NS (Vyacheslav Kyrylenko and Mykola Martynenko) and the Party of Regions (Viktor Yanukovich) lack charismatic leaders. Yushchenko has little charisma and during the Orange Revolution were over-shadowed by Tymoshenko whose speeches played a major role in mobilising popular protests. Yanukovich admitted that, ‘I have

said more than once that I have not learned to speak as eloquently as some. I was raised in an atmosphere that valued work over talk, and I was shy about seeking a lot of words. This was my failing'⁴². In Ukrainian elections, parties and blocs invariably add the name of their leaders to the party or bloc in the hope of adding votes by drawing on the name and popularity of leaders. Yushchenko has proposed to return Our Ukraine to its 2002 name Viktor Yushchenko "Our Ukraine" bloc.

'Populism' is often associated with times of crisis and manifests itself during times of change. Crises inject a sense of urgency into politics with business no longer being undertaken 'as usual'. Taggart argues that, 'Populism is not the politics of the stable, ordered polity but comes as an accompaniment to change, crisis and challenge'⁴³. Everyday politics, and establishment parties, particularly in young democracies such as Ukraine, find it difficult to deal with crisis conditions that emerge. Populists have been successful in drawing on, 'that sense to inject an urgency and an importance to their message'⁴⁴. Ukraine was in crisis for much of President Kuchma's second term in office from 2000-2004 and the regime proved unable to halt the rise of the opposition⁴⁵. Integrating crises into our discussion of 'populism' could mean that what have become known as democratic revolutions in Serbia (2000), Georgia (2003) and Ukraine (2004) should be included in discussions of European populism as much populist as democratic revolutions. The Serbian, Georgian and Ukrainian revolutions drew on populist anti-elite/oligarch rhetoric in the name of the *narod* whose vote had been stolen by corrupt elites. Public anger at Ukraine's 1990s transition to a market economy was deep and profound. The National Academy of Sciences annual surveys asked Ukrainians which group they believed had most influence in Ukrainian society to which

the largest response until 2004 was always ‘organised crime and the mafia’⁴⁶. Anti-elite rhetoric is common across the Ukrainian political spectrum and anti-oligarch sentiment ran deeply in the 2004 elections and Orange Revolution. Opposition candidate Yushchenko raised the issue of putting ‘bandits in jail’ throughout the 2004 election campaign and ‘Ten Steps’ supported a price supplement to be paid by Ukrainian businessmen who it was widely believed had become owners of enterprises at knock-down prices.

‘Populists’ are often seen as seeking a moral purification of society and politics is therefore defined in terms of a struggle of good against evil where compromise is difficult. In the 2004 Ukrainian presidential elections *both* sides – the opposition who saw a Yanukovich victory as the triumph of criminal clans and Ukraine’s turn towards authoritarianism *and* the authorities who brought out the canard of civil war arising from Yushchenko’s election because he was an ‘American satrap’, anti-Russian and ‘Ukrainian nationalist’ - depicted the elections as a fundamental choice between good and evil. In each of Ukraine’s three presidential elections in 1994, 1999 and 2004, *both* leading candidates’ election rhetoric resounded with warnings of dire consequences if the other were to win the elections. In 1994 and 1999, Leonid Kravchuk and Kuchma warned respectfully of the threat to Ukraine’s independence if the ‘pro-Russian’ Kuchma and Communist leader Petro Symonenko respectfully came to power. In 1994 and 2004, Kuchma and Yanukovich warned Ukrainians respectfully against permitting the ‘nationalist’ Kravchuk or ‘nationalist’ Yushchenko to come to power. In the 2002 parliamentary and 2004 presidential elections the authorities revived Soviet era denunciations of western Ukrainian nationalism reminiscent of Soviet ideological

tirades against 'Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism'. In the 1999 elections, Kuchma warned against voting for the Communist candidate, copying Russian President Boris Yeltsin's successful tactic three years earlier.

Social populism is commonplace throughout Ukrainian politics and is not solely confined to Tymoshenko and BYuT: 'Social populism became an aspect and the main basis of our politics. The situation is developed in a closed circle: politicians year by year, from election to another election, make promises and again more promises. Voters again and again demand such promises. The promises are not fulfilled'⁴⁷. Election programmes have little value beyond election campaigns and therefore are replete with lists of promises that are routinely ignored after the president or parliament are elected. Yushchenko's 2004 election programme ('The Ten Steps') are an example of this lack of accountability of Ukrainian politicians to their voters. Davyd Zhvannia, a business supporter of Yushchenko in 2002-2004 and NU-NS deputy asked, 'But, 10 steps towards the people – is it not populist? And that which Yushchenko promised to return Oshadbank savings when he was a candidate for president? And this is not populism?'⁴⁸

Ukrainian parties often seek to claim the status of an outsider in politics defending the *narod* against a corrupt elite. All Ukrainian parties claim to represent the *narod*, a factor seen in the extensive use of 'narodniy' in party names. On the eve of the 2004 elections campaign, Prime Minister Yanukovich said, 'The authorities should be effective and act first of all in the interests of people'. On the eve of the second round of the 2004 elections, Yanukovich claimed that – unlike Yushchenko – he was a 'new man' in Kyiv: 'I was wondering when they would start caring about the people and the

country. I came to Kyiv with one goal in mind – to figure everything out and try to restore justice’⁴⁹.

Populist election rhetoric is common to *all* political parties in Ukraine and is especially prevalent among ideologically amorphous centrists. In the 1994 elections, Kuchma campaigned in support of upgrading the status of the Russian language, never making it clear if this meant Russian would become an ‘official’ language or a second state language. In the 2004, 2006 and 2006 elections, Yanukovich and the Party of Regions campaigned on the populist slogan of upgrading Russian to a second state language. As this is impossible to undertake without 300 votes to change the constitution, Ukrainian politicians have never raised the issue after being elected president (i.e. Kuchma’s two terms as president in 1994-2004) or in government (i.e. the 2006-2007 Yanukovich government). Six days after becoming prime minister again, Yanukovich said that, ‘the language problem has been artificially created by politicians’⁵⁰.

Social populism is common to *all* political forces in Ukraine during election campaigns. In October 2004, the Yanukovich government doubled wages and pensions to attract voters, particularly the Communists, the majority of whom voted for him in round two and repeat of round two. Fuel prices were cut, state pensions increased and coal miners were given back pay. In the 2002 and 2004 elections, Yushchenko focused heavily on the socio-economic gains of his government in re-paying wage and pension arrears. Yushchenko vetoed the 2007 budget, complaining that the provisions for pensions was too low. In the 2002 elections, the number two on Our Ukraine’s list was Oleksandr Stoyan, head of the Federation of Trade Unions, in a bid to attract trade

union voters. Under pressure from the authorities Stoyan defected from Our Ukraine to the pro-presidential majority in parliament. Presidential candidate Yanukovych signed a 'Social Contract' with the Federation of Trade Unions to attract trade union voters and Stoyan was elected to parliament in the 2006 elections within the Party of Regions.

Yushchenko unveiled a new 'Social Initiative' in 2006-2007 to counter the Yanukovych 'Anti-Crisis' government. Pavlo Rozenko, head of the social policy department of the presidential secretariat, explained that President Yushchenko had urged Ukraine's government social ministers to formulate a social and educational strategy for 2007-2008 at a meeting held with them in March 2007. 'The president said he was ready to support their ideas aimed at developing the social sector together with the government and parliament', he said, adding that the absence of such a programme showed that the social ministers 'lack competence'. During the 2006 budgetary debates, Yushchenko insisted that the government should not cut social spending and criticised the fact that, 'No social initiative was put forth'. Yushchenko complained that the Yanukovych government's policies would have reduced pensions, family allowances, and wages⁵¹. Deputy head of the presidential secretariat Besmertnyi declared that one of the new priorities set out to governors (heads of local state administration) is to minimise job losses and unemployment during the global financial crisis⁵². Presidential secretariat head Baloga threatened Kyiv Mayor Leonid Chernovetsky on numerous occasions during the global crisis about his attempts at reducing subsidies and the mayor's policies to reduce gaps in the budget⁵³.

Re-privatisation, as Krastev points out, is a key area of the populist policy arsenal because it responds to the public in post-communist countries coming, 'to expect a

revision of the most scandalous, privatization deals'⁵⁴. Karatnycky and Motyl have described Tymoshenko's flirtation with nationalisation and then rapid privatisation as an example of her chameleon populism⁵⁵. The 2005 Tymoshenko government's programme of re-privatisation grew out of Yushchenko's 2004 election campaign programme and the radicalised rhetoric of the Orange revolution of 'Bandits to Prison!'. The 2005 Tymoshenko government was lambasted for seeking to therefore implement a programme that Yushchenko and Our Ukraine had agreed to support during the 2004 elections. Prior to any re-privatisation the government would need to undertake an audit of which enterprises had been illegally obtained during Ukraine's privatisation, a step that Yushchenko's 2004 election programme specifically called for⁵⁶. Then secretary of the National Security and Defence Council Petro Poroshenko was an ardent, but duplicitous, critic of Tymoshenko's ideas for re-privatisation. In April 2005, Poroshenko made an offer to Borys Kolesnykov, a senior Party of Regions deputy who was described as the first 'bandit' set to go to jail, after advising him that he was set to be criminally charged. Poroshenko's offer was simple but crude: in exchange for no criminal charges Kolesnykov and his business associates in the Party of Regions would transfer to Poroshenko and his colleagues two television stations (TREK Ukraina and NTN) as well as an undisclosed number of enterprises. Kolesnykov rejected the offer, was arrested and spent four months imprisoned⁵⁷.

The Tymoshenko government was criticised throughout 2008-2009 by the president and presidential secretariat for being 'populist'⁵⁸. Aslund, a staunch critic of the 2005 Tymoshenko government, praised the sound policies of the second Tymoshenko government in dealing with the global financial crisis: 'Ukraine has shown

exemplary crisis management thanks to a few Ukrainian top officials – notably Prime Minister Yuia Tymoshenko – and a good job by the international financial institutions’⁵⁹. Tymoshenko – unlike European populists – has not been hostile towards cooperating with the IMF and negotiated a \$16.4 billion Stand-by Agreement in October 2008 that places strong demands of economic and budgetary discipline upon Ukraine.

During Tymoshenko’s 2005 government, Western and domestic critics lambasted her as a supporter of re-privatisation over privatisation when in fact only one re-privatisation took place (Kryvorozhstal). This criticism ignored the government’s facilitation of Ukraine’s only transparent privatisation of Kryvorizhstal that transferred \$4.8 billion to the budget. When initially privatised in July 2004, foreign tenders were blocked from competing and Kryvorizhstal was sold to two Ukrainian oligarchs (Viktor Pinchuk and Renat Akhmetov) for \$800 million. The Party of Regions has a long record in undertaking privatisation in a non-transparent manner and supporting domestic protectionism at odds with WTO membership. The Party of Regions opposed the sale of Kryvorizhstal to a foreign company in 2005. The President’s additional election promise to make Ukrainian oligarchs pay a one-off surcharge on enterprises they had illegally taken control of was ignored after Yushchenko was elected and any suggestion by Tymoshenko that it should be undertaken was condemned as ‘populism’. Yushchenko’s 2004 programme proposed that additional funds going to the budget would be partially used to finance repayment of Soviet bank savings, a proposal that Yushchenko had first aired in the 2002 Our Ukraine programme. The second Tymoshenko government began to implement this policy in January 2008 but the step was immediately criticised as ‘populist’ by President Yushchenko. Defence Minister

Yuriy Yekhanurov said, 'One thousand *hryvni* is not a resolution of the poverty question. And, more importantly not that of justice. This is a question of the formation of an electoral base of populism'⁶⁰. BYuT included the repayment of Soviet bank deposits in its 2007 election programme and the Tymoshenko government acted on this election promise. Oleksandr Morozov, one of the founders and financial sponsors of Our Ukraine in 2002, pointed out that the return of these deposits was in Yushchenko's 2004 election programme and that it represented, 'the renewal of trust by citizens to the state and to the banking system'⁶¹. President Yushchenko and the presidential secretariat disagreed, lambasting the government for returning the bank savings:

As the president, I took direct personal control of the situation. One of the main principles was to force the government and political elites to abandon economically unsound and politically populist social subsidies. The government made some mistakes that need to be corrected. Thus, disbursement of money triggered inflation, especially since this summer⁶².

Following the removal of the Tymoshenko government in September 2005, President Yushchenko and Prime Minister Yekhanurov, then head of Our Ukraine, established close relations with what were termed 'Ukraine's national bourgeoisie' (i.e. oligarchs)⁶³ and top-up surcharges for cheaply privatised enterprises in the 1990s were no longer raised. Yekhanurov, who had headed the State Property Fund in the 1990s when many of the privatisations had taken place, opposed the one re-privatisation of Kryvorizhstal and became one of Tymoshenko's fiercest critics.

During the second Tymoshenko government its attempts at continuing transparent privatisation policies were undermined by the president: 'the leadership of the SPF (State Property Fund) with the support of the presidential secretariat is blocking the privatisation process'⁶⁴. The government planned to privatise 400 assets in 2008 with proceeds of UAH8.6 billion transferred to the budget, a portion of which would cover the repayment of Soviet bank savings. Between February-April 2008 the president blocked the privatisation programme by drawing on national security arguments. In early 2007, during the Yanukovych government, President Yushchenko had insisted that the privatisation of the most contentious of the slated privatisations, the Odesa Port Plant, be included in the 2007 privatisation programme and a law putting this into effect was signed by the president on 26 January 2007 with a tender for the Odesa Port Plant slated for 15 August 2007. But this changed after Tymoshenko returned to head the government in December 2007 and a March 2008 presidential decree ruled that the energy, military-industrial complex, transportation and residential services were 'strategic' sectors and exempted from privatisation. The Tymoshenko government's privatisation plans were thwarted because of the popularity of the government's repayment of Soviet bank savings which made Tymoshenko's popularity (as a potential presidential candidate) a threat to the president's re-election. In a 6 May 2008, statement, Presidential Secretariat head Baloga complained that costs from the privatisation of the Odesa Port Terminal should go towards economic growth, societal needs, and not for a 'one-off PR resonance' for Tymoshenko⁶⁵. As Yushhchenko and Baloga repeatedly stressed, they did not agree with a portion of the proceeds from privatisation going towards continuing the re-payment of Soviet bank savings.

Economic protectionism and nationalism are advocated by European populists and often lead to euro-scepticism. Ukraine's economic nationalists are to be found on the extreme right (Svoboda) and centrists who support 'economic nationalism'. President Kravchuk's administration pursued economic nationalism and economic protectionist policies among centrist parties, such as the Party of Regions, is commonplace⁶⁶. Donetsk, home to the Party of Regions, is the most protectionist region in Ukraine where foreign investors, whether Western or Russian, have been discouraged. In 2005, then opposition leader Yanukovych condemned the sale of the re-privatised Kryvorizhstal plant to a foreign owner and supported its retention in Ukrainian hands. The Tymoshenko government managed the re-privatisation and Ukraine's most transparent tender and supported its sale to a foreign buyer. The Party of Regions economic protectionism lies at the heart of why they voted in 2005-2006 with the left in parliament against legislation required to join the WTO⁶⁷. Drawing on economic protectionist rhetoric, the Party of Regions record of voting against WTO legislation in 2005-2006 outshines that of other parties in parliament, even those on the left.

Grain export quotas were introduced in 2006 and 2007 by the Yanukovych government over fears of higher bread prices. Respected economist and NU-NS deputy Volodymyr Lanovyi described the Yanukovych government's policies as returning the country to 'Kuchmaeconomics' by doling out subsidies to sectors controlled by oligarchs, focusing on exports at the expense of the domestic market and working less effectively for structural change than the two preceding Orange governments led by Tymoshenko and Yekhanurov. Gas subsidies for households have been kept in place by *all*

governments. The price of gas sold by Russia to Ukraine has increased each year from 2005 and is set to reach 'market' prices (i.e. the European average) in 2010. All three governments between 2005-2007 were reluctant to increase consumer utility prices as gas prices increased. Prime Minister Tymoshenko negotiated the January 2009 gas contract that foresees a move to 'market' prices in 2010. President Yushchenko has always sought to maintain subsidised gas prices through the use of the opaque gas intermediary RosUkrEnergo and tasked the National Security and Defence Council to criticise the 2009 gas contract. The Party of Regions voted against the IMF-mandated legislation required to release the second tranche of the Stand-by Agreement because they disagreed with increasing utility prices: 'The Party of Regions will not permit the adoption of those policies that transfer all of the weight of the crisis on to the shoulders of the poorest category of our citizens. We state that we categorically protest at the policies of the current authorities and will defend those people with all of the lawful methods at our disposal'⁶⁸. Reducing subsidies to household utility prices had not been proposed by any government in 2005-2007 because, 'both Yushchenko and Tymoshenko have so far baulked at such an electorally unpopular move'⁶⁹. In 2009, the Tymoshenko government's plan to reduce household energy subsidies during a period of growing unemployment and on the eve of presidential elections will not be electorally popular.

Traditionally those labeled as 'populists' are seen as being against the organisation of political parties. Tymosenko's Fatherland Party has the second largest number of party branches in Ukraine and BYuT is generally considered one of Ukraine's best organised political forces. Fatherland has maintained a centre-left profile since it was

founded in 1999. The Ukraine without Kuchma and Arise Ukraine protests in 2000-2003 were led by the centre-left Tymoshenko bloc and Socialists. The Party of Regions is Ukraine's most well organised party as well as the most ideologically amorphous of Ukraine's parliamentary parties. The Party of Regions is closer to an anti-Orange popular front that brings together pan-Slavists, ex-communists, state paternalist trade unionists, oligarchs, former Soviet functionaries and red directors than it is to a political party.

Populism is the most pronounced in Ukrainian political party platforms and rhetoric on foreign policy that are vague, devoid of substance and purposefully ignore difficult issues, such as NATO membership. In the 1999 elections, Kuchma's re-election platform called for a 'pro-Ukrainian' foreign policy and Ukraine's non-bloc status. In the March 2002 elections, the pro-presidential For a United Ukraine bloc, which incorporated the Party of Regions, did not mention NATO or EU membership merely emphasising Ukraine as a, 'European country by its geopolitical location and cultural traditions'. Three years later in July 2002, President Kuchma initiated Ukraine's first declaration that Ukraine sought NATO membership, a position the 2002-2004 Yanukovich government never disowned. Yanukovich's 2004 election platform briefly covered foreign policy in only three lines, supporting Ukraine's participation in world and regional integration processes and 'progress in Euroatlantic integration'. The Party of Regions 2006 election programme devoted as little space to foreign policy issues, emphasising merely the need for, 'defence of national interests' and completing the creation of the CIS Single Economic Space. The Party of Regions 2007 election programme returns to the concept of Ukraine's non-bloc status, demands a referendum

before Ukraine can join NATO, supports membership in the WTO, EU and CIS Single Economic Space.

Yushchenko's Our Ukraine bloc in the 2002 elections devoted little space to foreign policy, except support for joining the WTO. Yushchenko's 2004 election platform never mentions NATO or the EU mentions only the WTO and good relations with Russia. Yushchenko supported an, 'honest, transparent, consistent, profitable foreign policy' and the tenth of his 'Ten Steps' laid out a vacuous statement: 'Conduct Foreign Policy that Benefits the Ukrainian People'. Our Ukraine's 2006 platform supports Ukraine's, 'integration into European structures' such as the WTO and associate membership of the EU. The 2007 NU-NS programme completely ignored foreign policy. Arseniy Yatseniuk, touted as 'Ukraine's Obama' in the 2009 presidential elections⁷⁰, views on foreign policy are unclear and his supposedly pro-European orientation is based on assumptions, not on his statements or programme. Russian journalists have repeatedly – but unsuccessfully – asked Yatseniuk to outline his views on NATO and the fate of the Black Sea Fleet⁷¹. Social issues dominate Yushchenko and Our Ukraine's election platforms and foreign policy is a marginal issue. Yushchenko and Our Ukraine have *never* once mentioned NATO membership in any of their election programmes since 2002.

BYuT's foreign policy platform is similarly vague as other Ukrainian parties. BYuT's 2002 election platform outlines a foreign policy 'undertaken in the name of one's nation'. The same phrase ('foreign policy will be undertaken in the name of one's nation') is used in BYuT's 2006 election platform with little thought to elaborating Ukraine's foreign policy priorities four years on. BYuT's 2007 election platform re-

produces the exact same formula found a year earlier ('foreign policy will be undertaken in the name of one's nation'). Over the course of three elections BYuT's election platforms – like Yushchenko's and Our Ukraine's – have not mentioned NATO or the EU. The centrist Volodymyr Lytvyn bloc, a member of the orange coalition, has even vaguer foreign policy prescriptions in its election programmes. Besides the standard 'good-neighbourliness' and 'balance in relations with countries that are strategic partners' the Lytvyn bloc takes one step further by calling for a, 'strategy of special relations with Russia, and strengthening Slavic solidarity', something that Yushchenko/Our Ukraine and BYuT never propose. The Lytvyn bloc's contribution to foreign policy is to, 'put an emphasis on 'people's diplomacy' as an effective means of, 'broadening international cooperation in all spheres'.

Euro-scepticism unites populist parties in Western and Central-Eastern Europe, but does not manifest itself in Ukraine, except on the extreme right. *Both* BYuT and Our Ukraine support Ukraine's NATO and EU membership: in January 2008 Prime Minister Tymoshenko, parliamentary speaker Arseniy Yatseniuk and President Yushchenko wrote to NATO seeking a Membership Action Plan at the April 2008 NATO summit. The main party that meets the criteria of a populist party is Svoboda which is euro-sceptic and opposed to NATO membership, seeking to build Ukraine's security independently of blocs, a platform similar to the non-bloc status advocated by the Party of Regions. Tymoshenko and BYuT cannot be classified as euro-sceptic and of all Ukrainian parties BYuT has been the most active in lobbying Ukraine's European integration in Brussels. The Party of Regions is euro-sceptic because its profession of support for Ukraine's EU

membership is not backed up by concrete steps and its reservedness is described as ‘euro-pragmatism’ that it contrasts with Orange ‘euro-romaticism’.

On the question of NATO, Yanukovych has moved across the entire range of possibilities from supporting NATO membership during the 2002-2004 Yanukovych government, to hostility to anything to do with NATO when in opposition in 2005-2006 and since 2007 to support for cooperation with NATO during the second Yanukovych government in 2006-2007. The Yanukovych campaign’s populist anti-Americanism in the 2004 elections⁷² flatly contradicted the fact that it was the Yanukovych government that had sent Ukrainian troops in 2003 to join the US-led coalition in Iraq a year earlier. Yushchenko fulfilled a 2004 election promise to withdraw Ukrainian troops from Iraq.

Table 2. Ten Attributes of European Populism in a Ukrainian Context

1. Charismatic Leader	Tymoshenko/BYuT, Tyahnybok/Svoboda.
2. Socio-Economic Discontent and ‘Transition Losers’	BYuT, Yushchenko (2004), Our Ukraine, Party of Regions, Tyahnybok/Svoboda.
3. Anti-elite and Establishment Sentiments	Tymoshenko/BYuT, Svoboda.
4. Anti-Corruption	Tymoshenko/BYuT, Yushchenko/Our Ukraine, Svoboda.
5. Anti-Americanism.	Yanukovych, Svoboda.
6. Opposition to NATO Membership	Party of Regions, Svoboda.
7. Defence of Sovereignty: Opposition to the IMF and the European Union	Party of Regions, Svoboda.
8. Xenophobia	Svoboda.
9. Anti-Immigration	Not applicable to Ukraine.
10. Anti-Multiculturalism/Support for Assimilation.	Yushchenko/Our Ukraine, Svoboda.

Conclusion

Western academic discussions of European populism have ignored Eurasia, focusing instead on the rise of populism in Western Europe and post-communist Central-Eastern Europe. This paper seeks to integrate Ukraine within this discussion and test the commonly held assumption of Tymoshenko and BYuT as representing ‘populism’ in Ukraine. The article finds that of the ten commonly understood aspects of populism found in Europe, four are to be found in both the Party of Regions *and* BYuT with Yushchenko and Our Ukraine incorporating three of the ten facets of populism. The Ukrainian party most closely resembling European populists is the populist-nationalist Svoboda which incorporates in its election platform and leaders rhetoric nine out of ten of these attributes. Tymoshenko’s two governments were undermined and condemned as ‘populist’ for introducing policies laid out in Yushhenko’s 2004 ‘Ten Steps Towards the People’ and fourteen draft decrees. Tymoshenko and BYuT are committed to EU and NATO membership⁷³, cooperation with the IMF and support for foreign investment. The Party of Regions led a parliamentary coalition in 2006-2007 with the Communist and Socialist Parties which was lukewarm to EU membership, suspicious of the US, opposed to foreign investment and land privatisation. In foreign policy all of Ukraine’s political parties have ignored contentious issues, such as NATO membership, while failing to explain to Ukrainian voters the merits of joining the WTO and EU.

Ukraine’s political system remains weak, fractured, highly personalised and ideologically vacuous while the judiciary and media fail to hold politicians to account. Such an environment permits social populism to flourish across the entire political

spectrum while not punishing politicians for writing one thing, saying another, and ignoring everything that went before.

¹ See Paul Taggart, 'Populism and representative politics in contemporary Europe', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, vol.9, no.3 (October 2004), pp.269-288 and Cas Mudde, 'In the Name of the Peasantry, the Proletariat, and the People" Populism in Eastern Europe', *East European Politics and Society*, vol.14, no. 2 (March 2000), pp.33-53.

² Ivan Krastev, 'The new Europe: respectable populism, clockwork liberalism', www.opendemocracy.net, 21 March 2006.

³ Thomas Buch-Andersen, 'Islam a political target in Norway', www.bbc.co.uk, 20 April 2009.

⁴ See Rogers Brubaker, 'The return of assimilation. Changing Perspectives on immigration and its sequels in France, Germany and the United States', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol.24, no.4 (July 2001), pp. 531-548 and Ellie Vasta, 'From ethnic minorities to ethnic majority policy: multiculturalism and the shift to assimilation in the Netherlands', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol.30, no.5 (September 2007), pp. 713-740.

⁵ Reinhard Heinisch, 'Right-Wing Populism in Austria. A Case for Comparison', *Problems of Post-Communism*, vol.55, no.3 (May-June 2008), pp.40-56.

⁶ Ivan Krastev, 'The new Europe: respectable populism, clockwork liberalism', www.opendemocracy.net, 21 March 2006.

⁷ Vladimir Tismaneanu, 'Leninist Legacies, Pluralist Dilemmas', *Journal of Democracy*, vol.18, no.4 (October 2007), p.36.

⁸ Vladimir Tismaneanu, 'Leninist Legacies, Pluralist Dilemmas', *Journal of Democracy*, vol.18, no.4 (October 2007), p.37.

⁹ See Taras Kuzio, 'Comparative Perspectives on Communist Successor Parties in Central-Eastern Europe and Eurasia', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, vol.41, no.4 (December 2008), pp.1-23.

¹⁰ Unfortunately similar in name to Yuriy Lutsenko Self Defence party that gave its name to President Yushchenko's 2007 election bloc, Our Ukraine-People's Self Defence [NU-NS]).

¹¹ Clare McManus-Czubinska, William L.Miller, Radoslaw Markowski and Jacek Wasilewski, 'The New Polish 'Right'?', *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, vol.19, no.2 (June 2003), pp.1-23.

¹² Aleks Szczerbiak, 'Old and New Divisions in Polish Politics: Polish Parties' Electoral Strategies and Bases of Support', *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol.55, no.5 (July 2003), pp.729-746.

¹³ Kristen Ghodsee, 'Left-Wing, Right-Wing, Everything. Xenophobia, Neo-totalitarianism, and populist politics in Bulgaria', *Problems of Post-Communism*, vol.55, no.3 (May-June 2008), pp.26-39.

¹⁴ George Schopflin, 'The referendum: populism vs. democracy', www.opendemocracy.net, 16 June 2008.

¹⁵ Paul Taggart, 'Populism and representative politics in contemporary Europe', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, vol.9, no.3 (October 2004), p.278.

¹⁶ Bojan Bugarcic, 'Populism, liberal democracy and the rule of law in Central and Eastern Europe', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, vol.41, no.2 (June 2008), pp.191-203.

¹⁷ Yulia Tymoshenko cited in www.pravda.com.ua, 19 November 2003.

¹⁸ The Hromada party led by former Prime Minister Pavlo Lazarenko entered parliament in 1998. Tymoshenko entered parliament in Hromada but created the Fatherland party in 1999 after Lazarenko's parliamentary immunity was lifted and he fled to the US. See T.Kuzio, 'When Oligarchs go into Opposition: The Case of Pavel Pazarenko', *Russia and Eurasia Review*, vol.2, no.11 (27 May 2003).

- ¹⁹ Aleksander Smolar, 'History and Memory. The Revolutions of 1989-91', *Journal of Democracy*, vol.12, no.3 (July 2001), p.11.
- ²⁰ Aleksander Smolar, 'History and Memory. The Revolutions of 1989-91', *Journal of Democracy*, vol.12, no.3 (July 2001), p.11.
- ²¹ Krzysztof Jasiewicz, 'The New Populism in Poland. The Usual Suspects?', *Problems of Post-Communism*, vol.55, no.3 (May-June 2008), p.8.
- ²² Ukrainian election programmes are cited from the Central Election Commission website www.cvk.gov.ua
- ²³ Internet chat with Roman Besmertnyi at http://www2.pravda.com.ua/conf/bezsmertny_2006.htm?rnd=0.2494127808453684
- ²⁴ Interview with Leonid Kuchma in *Fakty*, 30 September 2005 and statement by Viktor Baloga on www.president.gov.ua, 28 January 2009.
- ²⁵ Reinhard Heinisch, 'Right-Wing Populism in Austria. A Case for Comparison', *Problems of Post-Communism*, vol.55, no.3 (May-June 2008), p.48.
- ²⁶ Paul Taggart, 'Populism and representative politics in contemporary Europe', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, vol.9, no.3 (October 2004), p.275.
- ²⁷ Adrian Karatnycky and Alexander J.Motyl, 'The Key to Kiev. Ukraine's Security Means Europe's Stability', *Foreign Affairs*, vol.88, no.3 (May-June 2009), p.110.
- ²⁸ Serhiy Leshchenko quoted in www.pravda.com.ua, 5 September 2008.
- ²⁹ On BYuT's ideology see the interview with Yulia Tymoshenko in *Zerkalo Nedeli*, 21-27 August 2004, *Korrespondent* co-editor Olga Kryzhanovska, 'Spitting on the memory of Independence Square', *Kyiv Post*, 6 October 2005 and interview with Tymoshenko in *Kommersant-Ukraina*, 22 December 2006.
- ³⁰ Poll cited in www.pravda.com.ua, 21 April 2009.
- ³¹ Yulia Tymoshenko quoted in www.pravda.com.ua, 29 May 2008.
- ³² Olha Dmytrycheva, 'Sertse, tebe ne khochetsia pokoya?', *Zerkalo Nedeli*, 10-16 December 2005. See also Serhiy Rakhmanin, 'Doroha yaka ne vede do Maydanu', *Zerkalo Nedeli*, 26 November-2 December 2005.
- ³³ See Alexandra Hrycak, 'Coping with Chaos: Gender and Politics in a Fragmented State', *Problems of Post-Communism*, vol.52, no.5 (September/October 2005), pp.69-81.
- ³⁴ Paul Taggart, 'Populism and representative politics in contemporary Europe', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, vol.9, no.3 (October 2004), p.278.
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