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## ***The perception of the colour orange and the creation of the image of a political party***

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**Yaroslava Kellermann** jest studentką IV roku zarządzania Akademii Leona Koźmińskiego w Warszawie (specjalność: zarządzanie strategiczne). Jest przewodniczącą Koła Marketingu ALK, członkiem koła HR ALK oraz członkiem międzynarodowej organizacji ESOMAR. Pomysłodawczyni oraz organizatorka seminarium *Dzień luksusu w Koźmińskim*. Stypendystka ministra nauki i szkolnictwa wyższego za osiągnięcia naukowe. Doświadczenie zawodowe zdobywała m.in. w Polsko-Niemieckiej Izbie Przemysłowo-Handlowej oraz w K2 Internet S.A. Mówi w kilku językach obcych (angielski, niemiecki, rosyjski, włoski).

## 1. Introduction

Political analysts use various tools to ensure the support of their clients' electorate. It is said that already in the 17<sup>th</sup> century such an extraordinary PR invention as kisses for votes was applied by Duchess Cavendish<sup>1</sup>. The modern tools of political communication are sophisticated, because they, among other things, frequently exploit the subconsciousness. Colours are an example of such tools. Some colours like blue, red and green have already become generally known to the voters in the Western World. Others, like orange, can be described as relatively new on the modern political scene. The Orange Revolution in Ukraine is the most spectacular example of using orange in politics. However, there are more examples. There are parties all over Europe, e.g. in Austria, Germany, Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, of which the corporate identity is based on the colour orange, or which use orange in their political campaigns. I allow myself to assume that colour could contribute to the creation of an image (Holz-Bacha 2006). Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to identify the possible reasons why political parties choose certain colours. This will be achieved by testing associations with orange in Germany, Poland and Ukraine. This paper also intends to compare the associations with colours in those three neighbouring countries and states whether there are any differences or similarities in the meaning of orange.

The presented paper consists of eight parts. The first part presents an outline of the scientific literature dedicated to the issue of colours in political marketing. The second part focuses on the method of the research that has been carried out. The results of the research (a semantic profile, a graph of free associations with orange), as well as their interpretations are discussed in the third part of the paper. The fourth part aims to explain the choice of orange in several political parties by presenting possible reasons for such a choice. The fifth part summarizes the achieved results and refers to the hypotheses formulated in the beginning. The limitations to the present research are brought up in the sixth part. The next two chapters discuss the directions of possible research studies with respect to the issue of colours in politics and the chances for their practical use.

## 2. Literature review

Though political marketing has been a topic of interest for many generations of scholars, there is no uniform definition for this notion. There are two main approaches to political marketing. The first approach identifies political marketing

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.historyhome.co.uk/people/georgia.htm> (06.04.2010).

as a perfect tool for reinforcing sales (Cichosz 2004; Albouy 1994; Muszyński 2001; Ulicka 1996; Bongrand 1986). The second one defines political marketing as an exchange process between different subjects operating on the market (Kotler 1999; Lock and Harris 1996; Kolczyński 2005). According to N. O'Shaughnessy and S. Henneberg: "nearly all definitions of political marketing focus, first, on the exchange concept underlying the political activity and, second, on the political marketing activities themselves" (O'Shaughnessy and Henneberg 2002). This paper will follow the approach proposed by Ph. Kotler, since the matter of the use of colours in politics should be analyzed from a broader point of view.

Therefore, the conducted research is based on the assumption that political marketing takes into account similar principles as commercial marketing. If it holds true, then "the product includes promises and favors conveyed by political parties or political candidates. The price is electoral support. And the voter is the customer. The promotion plan includes advertising, rallies, TV debates, flyers, billboards, door-to-door canvassing and other campaign activities" (Schafferer 2006). Having identified product, price, place and promotion, political marketing can influence decisions of the voters during a political campaign. In the model of voter behaviour suggested by B. Newman, one of the vital components is the image of the candidate (de Barbaro 2005; Newman 2004). As this paper focuses on parliamentary elections, I will apply this model to political parties. Thus, the image must be favourable in order to influence political decisions of the voters and, finally, for the candidate to achieve the main goal of the political campaign, which is winning the elections. According to P. Natchez and I. Bupp: "the best single predictor of voting behavior [...] is candidate image" (Natchez and Bupp 1968). An image, in the opinion of D. Nimmo, is a complex of subjective perceptions of the voter "[...] based upon both the subjective appraisals made by the voters and the messages [...] transmitted by the candidate" (Nimmo 1975). These messages include the appearance of the candidate, intonation, gestures, facial expressions, timbre, eye contact, etc. When dealing with a political party, such messages are logo, slogan, graphics, prints and – the subject of this research – colours (Holz-Bacha 2006). The impact of the latter is characterized by a structure of psychological, emotional, optical and cultural dimensions (Szczęsna 2001).

Numerous scholars of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century (E.H. Weber, G.T. Fechner, H.L. von Helmholtz, E. Hering, C. Ladd-Franklin, J. von Kries, W. Kohler) were interested in the psychological dimension of colour. These scientists revealed that red quickens and stimulates action and blue, on the contrary, calms the viewer down (Rhodes 2005). The psychological dimension of colour is connected to the emotional dimension, where white stands for joy and clarity, green for life and nature, red for affection and revolution (Szczęsna 2001). Moreover, there is an

optical dimension of colour, which is frequently used in advertising, architecture and design. According to the principles applied in design, warm colours make the space smaller and the object closer, cool colours tend to recede and make objects appear to be shorter and smaller. Bright colours like white and yellow intensify the semantic message of a slogan (Kotler 1988; Szcześna 2001). The most complex dimension is the cultural one. Every culture has given specific symbolic meanings to certain colours. An example is the discrepancy between the symbolic meanings of white in Japan and in Europe, as well as the limitations in the use of green and blue in Muslim countries, purple in Latin America, brown in Nicaragua and blue-green in Finland (Hutchings 2003). The concept of taboo can be a factor of great significance in political marketing.

All the dimensions of colour can be used in marketing. Numerous researches have demonstrated that the colours of a shopping environment influence consumer behaviour (Bregman 2004). Colours play a significant role in product packaging with respect to attracting attention (Schmitt 1999) and conveying 'sensorial cues' (Eiseman 2006). A sensorial cue "links colours to all of the senses and conjures up thoughts and perceptions of how the product will taste, smell, feel and, in some cases, sound". Thus product-related expectations arise that lead to the decision to buy (Hutchings 2003). The persuasive characteristics of colours are also extensively used in advertising (Bouveè 1992) and modern web design (Proctor 2005).

The role of colour in political campaigns is less explored. G. Howard examined which colours are the most legible, memorable and preferred by voters (Howard 1984). M. Sawyer stressed the role of colours as part of the "emotional life of social movements" (Sawyer 2007). B. Schüler focused on the development of colours as political symbols. A. Kaiser conducted research on the role of the colours of the German political parties (Kaiser 2003). The role of the colours of clotting of politicians was analyzed by W. Czerko (Falkowski and Cwalina 2006). She demonstrated that some colours (like white and blue) influence voters more effectively than others (like green).

Ever since the demonstrations in Ukraine in 2004, the interest in colours used in politics has been growing. The Orange Revolution provides an example of colour in politics, which, after having become a symbol in one country, aspired to be the colour of democracy and peaceful struggle worldwide<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> [www.thecolourorange.net](http://www.thecolourorange.net) (06.06.2010).

### 3. Method

The process of data collection was divided into two parts. Firstly, a public opinion research was carried out. Information on the associations that people have with orange was collected through an online- survey. The survey consisted of 26 questions and concerned four colours (orange, red, blue and green) in order to divert the respondents' attention from orange. Each question required giving an opinion on the semantic differential scale between two opposite attributes. The scale represents a typical continuum of seven equal intervals invented by Ch. Osgood (1971). Each interval corresponds to the intensity of the meaning: 1 and 7 mean that the object of research is very closely related to the attribute, 2 and 6 mean that there is only a close relation, 3 and 5 stand for a slight relation and 4 represents an equal relation (Osgood 1971). Additionally, respondents could write down their own free association with the colour orange.

Since the research was carried out in several countries (mainly Germany, but also Austria and Switzerland; Poland and Ukraine), the survey was translated into three languages (German, Polish and Ukrainian). A link to the appropriate language version of the survey was placed on the local social network sites (Vkontakte and Contact in Ukraine; StudiVZ, Xing and LinkedIn in Germany, Austria and Switzerland; Goldenline, Grono and Naszaklasa in Poland), as well as on their international equivalents, such as Facebook. Involving social network users in this study was stipulated by the fact that they are usually well-informed about current affairs, interested in politics, open-minded and eager to share their opinions. It is also evident that this kind of research does not require great investments and allows conducting research regardless of geographical boundaries. The results obtained by using purposive sampling cannot be generalized on the whole population (Foreman 1991).

The data was collected in March 2010. The target response was 200 respondents. In fact 438 persons responded. 155 people responded to the Ukrainian version of the survey (48.93% women and 51.08% men). The largest sample came from Germany (163 respondents, 47.14% women and 52.87% men) and the smallest from Poland (120 respondents, 60.18% women and 39.83% men). I assume that the choice of research tool (an online survey) could have influenced the age diversity of the sample. The number of respondents of the age 18–44 varied from 93.39% in Ukraine through 88.34% in Poland to 74.25% in Germany.

The second part of the research was qualitative and included interviews with experts. They were represented by political analysts from three countries – Germany, Poland and Ukraine. The interviews were conducted online. The

German part of the paper was supported by D. Meier from the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Politische Beratung (Berlin) and F. Gadinger from the Institute of Political Sciences of the University of Duisburg-Essen (Essen). Polish expertise was granted by PhD. W. Jabłoński from the University of Warsaw. V. Fesenko from the Center of Political Analysis “Penta” (Kyiv) provided valuable comments for the Ukrainian part of the research.

Three detailed hypotheses were formulated at the beginning of the research. Two of them concern attributes determined by the author. The third one is linked to the free associations of the respondents. These hypotheses are:

H1: Orange will be more frequently associated with patriotism in Ukraine than in any other country where the research is conducted.

H2: Representatives of all countries will perceive orange as the colour of democracy.

H3: Respondents from Germany, Poland and Ukraine will relate orange to the Orange Revolution of 2004 in Ukraine.

## 4. Findings

The main materials for the analysis were provided by the semantic profile of the colour orange. Generally speaking, the curves of associations in Germany, Poland and Ukraine happen to be rather similar, except for some segments. This paper will pay particular attention to the differences and will try to identify their sources.

**Figure 1.** Semantic profile of the colour orange

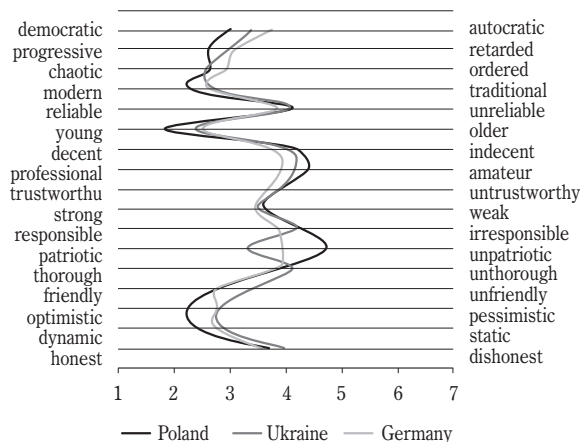
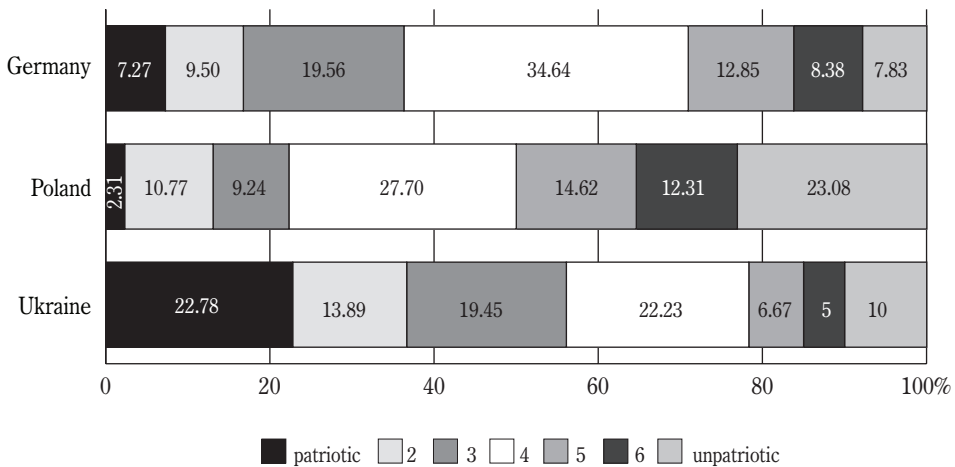


Figure 1 presents the semantic profile of orange. First of all, the means of the 26 answers from the respondents from Germany, Poland and Ukraine were collected. Subsequently, these means were placed on the semantic differential scale. Finally, the dots were connected.

The biggest differences emerge between Poland and Ukraine in the pair patriotic/unpatriotic. The Ukrainians ( $\bar{X} = 3.32$  and  $\sigma = 1.49$ ) tend to perceive orange as more patriotic than the Poles do ( $\bar{X} = 4.7$  and  $\sigma = 1.43$ ). The Germans ( $\bar{X} = 3.94$  and  $\sigma = 1.10$ ) finds themselves in the middle between Poland and Ukraine. Having taken into account the Ukrainian sample structure, it is probable that perceiving orange as patriotic is a result of the Orange Revolution of 2004. W. Jabłoński confirms such an assumption: “Everything depends on the environment in which communication takes place. And events from the past are part of this environment. Some Ukrainians feel naturally connected to the colour orange, because it has become the colour of some kind of political break. The Poles, on the contrary, do not know orange in such a context”<sup>3</sup>.

Figure 2 presents the division of the answers to the question aimed at measuring associations with patriotism. It illustrates that the majority of answers given by the Germans, the Poles and the Ukrainians differ from each other significantly.

**Figure 2.** The division of answers in the pair “patriotic/unpatriotic”



Source: own analysis.

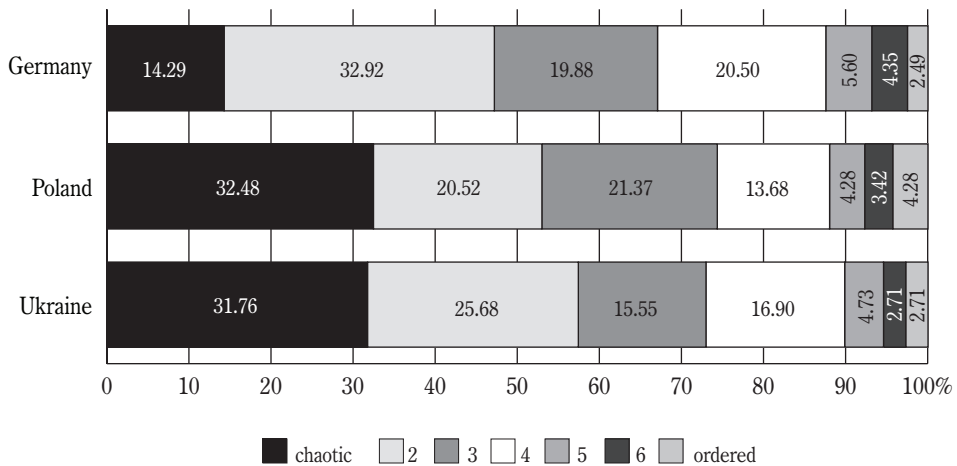
<sup>3</sup> Interview with W. Jabłoński.

In Ukraine, patriotism also goes hand in hand with chaos ( $\bar{X} = 2.57$  and  $\sigma = 1.33$ ).

V. Fesenko explains that the way of perceiving orange in Ukraine “[...] is the consequence of perceiving the recent political situation. It is not so much about the colour itself, but the political players, whom we used to call ‘orange’. [...] there are various associations with orange in the Ukrainian society. For some people orange represents Maydan [the central square of Kyiv, where the demonstrations of 2004 took place], for others it relates to the defeats and problems of the period after that, among other things, the presidency of Victor Yushchenko, and for some orange is a symbol of political opponents”<sup>4</sup>.

Figure 3 presents the division of answers relating to the association with chaos, which were given by the respondents from the three countries. More Poles and Ukrainians than Germans perceive orange as chaotic. Consequently, according to the majority of the Germans orange is less chaotic than according to the Poles and the Ukrainians.

**Figure 3.** The division of answers in the pair “chaotic/ordered”



Source: own analysis.

The association with patriotism is additionally emphasized by other characteristics, such as young, modern, progressive and democratic. According to W. Jabłoński these positive attributes could come from sports rather than from politics. “Orange is the colour of the Dutch football team. In 1988, when the

<sup>4</sup> Interview with V. Fesenko.



European Championships took place in Poland, the football team from Holland defeated the Russians. Maybe that is the reason why the Poles like the Dutch”.

The link between the association of youth with the Orange Alternative of the eighties was not confirmed by the Polish expert. He claims that the rebellious movement was not widely known and remained only in the memory of a few intellectuals.

At the same time there were some rather negative associations like amateur, unreliable, indecent, irresponsible, untrustworthy. Such an ambivalence could possibly result from the fact that the political associations with orange still remain undefined in Poland. The second assumption is linked to the negative connotations of orange as a symbol. Though it is an extremely difficult task to find negative meanings of orange, sometimes it means ferocity (Cirlot 2002), or lack of intimacy (Обухов 1997). A third theory was provided by W. Jabłoński: “We have a split personality. On the one hand, we miss vivid dynamic colours. On the other hand, when somebody overuses them, it is perceived as tacky”<sup>5</sup>.

In Ukraine, negative connotations with orange could possibly originate from the political events of 2004. As mentioned earlier, a part of the Ukrainian society considers orange to be a symbol of significant political change. However, five years after the Orange Revolution, people got more and more disappointed as a result of the the post-revolutionary events.

The German semantic profile of orange looks similar to the profiles of Poland and Ukraine. Ukrainian connotations with orange in Germany could be excluded altogether. This assumption is supported by F. Gadinger from the Institute of Political Sciences of the University of Duisburg-Essen (Essen). “We have not carried out any research concerning the impact of colours on political images so far. Nevertheless, I cannot imagine that the choice of orange could be caused by the Orange Revolution in Ukraine”<sup>6</sup>, claims the German expert.

The colour was used by the CDU [Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands] during the elections for the European Parliament in 2004, as well as during the domestic ones in 2005 (Holz-Bacha, 2006). Dominik Meier from the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Politische Beratung (Berlin) does not see any links to the popularity of orange in Ukraine: “The colours of the CDU logo – red and white – were already being used by opponent parties. There is no way somebody could create a positive campaign using black – the traditional colour of the conservatives. That is why the CDU chose orange – a colour of strength and freshness”<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Interview with W. Jabłoński.

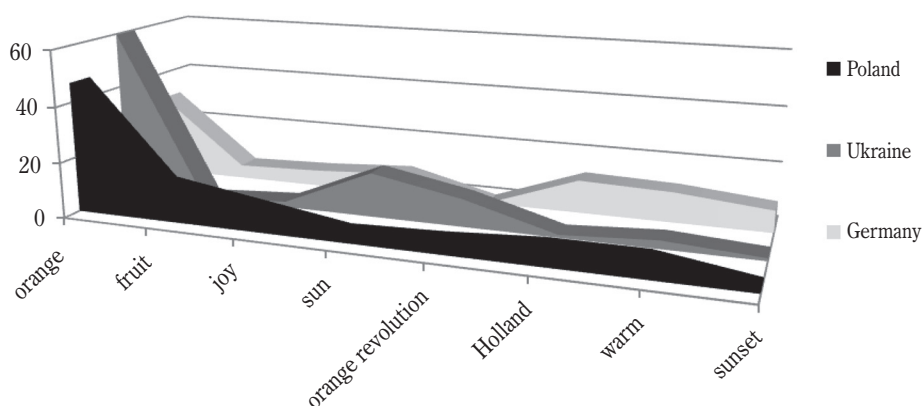
<sup>6</sup> Interview with F. Gadinger.

<sup>7</sup> Interview with D. Meier.

The survey published on the Internet also asked to give free associations. In all three countries orange was related to a fruit – either its specific kind (orange, mandarine) or a fruit as a category. The biggest number of such associations comes from Ukraine. I suppose that this is linked to the memory of one of the main heroes of the Orange Revolution – the orange. It is worth mentioning that the orange has become a legend since Lyudmila Yanukovich [wife of one of the candidates for president of Ukraine] spoke to the people of Donetsk. She argued then that American oranges contained some sort of substance, which inspired people to demonstrate on the central square of Kyiv<sup>8</sup>.

Figure 4 illustrates the top five of the most frequently mentioned associations with orange collected in Germany, Poland and Ukraine. The associations that were mentioned only once are not included.

**Figure 4.** Free associations with orange



Source: own analysis.

It is interesting that the Germans and the Poles relate the colour orange to the sun less frequently than the Ukrainians. The sun itself is not orange, but it does have this kind of glow at the end of the day during sunset. So I could put forward the hypothesis that the frequency rate of associating orange with the sun depends on the number of sunny days in Germany, Poland and Ukraine. The more sunny days, the higher the probability of a colourful sunset. In order to prove this hypothesis I will present some climate facts. According to research studies, there

<sup>8</sup> <http://korrespondent.net/strange/108188> (30.11.2004).

are on average 2400 sunny hours a year in Ukraine<sup>9</sup>. There are 1740 sunny hours a year in the hottest town of Germany – Freiburg im Breisgau<sup>10</sup> and 1650 sunny hours a year in Skierniewice in Poland (Pietras 2009).

## 5. Discussion

Do political parties choose their corporate colours deliberately? The choice of orange by the party *Nasha Ukrayina* was frequently discussed in the mass media. Orange, as the colour of *Nasha Ukrayina*, was chosen by Y. Lesyuk, a psychologist with more than 20 years of experience. A. Sharomov is convinced that this was not a coincidental choice: “The nature of red is revolution, a coup. The authors of research insist: the more yellow red contains, the more irritation turns into excitation. It is easy to understand why in 2004 the best visual decision for the opposition was the colour orange” (Шаромов 2008).

Y. Lesyuk said at the beginning of the presidential campaign that the spin doctors from Yushchenko’s team did not create an artificial image for him, but tried to reflect the candidate’s personality. In a broader sense, the campaign was based on the concept of unity<sup>11</sup>. “It is a good, warm colour... It carries only one kind of power – the power of unity”<sup>12</sup>. He also added that orange had an especially strong impact in the winter (Якушик 2007), which was carefully planned before.

“There is no permanent idea in politics. The lack of this idea was compensated by a trademark, [...] which created identity, united psychologically and motivationally. [...] An image of a political movement is shaped by slogans and programmes, so it is created by verbal means and text, while the visual side often remains passive. [...] The visual trademark of the Orange Revolution was the best political basis that anybody could ever imagine [...]” (Родькин 2005).

It seems to be clear that the orange colour of the party *Nasha Ukrayina* was deliberately chosen by professionals. Orange was successful not only in Ukraine, but was also exported to Moldavian and Azerbaijan politics (Сухенко 2007). Regardless of that, *Nasha Ukrayina* partly withdrew the orange colour

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<sup>9</sup> [http://www.franko.lviv.ua/faculty/geology/phis\\_geo/fourman/E-books-FVV/Interactive%20books/Meteorology/Weather%20Forecasting/Weather%20Ukraine/Maps/Klimat%20regionu%20Ukraine/Climate%20Ukraine.htm](http://www.franko.lviv.ua/faculty/geology/phis_geo/fourman/E-books-FVV/Interactive%20books/Meteorology/Weather%20Forecasting/Weather%20Ukraine/Maps/Klimat%20regionu%20Ukraine/Climate%20Ukraine.htm) (14.06.2007).

<sup>10</sup> DPA/GR on: [www.welt.de](http://www.welt.de) (12.06.2007).

<sup>11</sup> Штаб Ющенко на завершающем этапе кампании намерен сконцентрироваться на идее объединения нации on: <http://www.worldnews.org.ua/news1214.html> (14.12.2004).

<sup>12</sup> Ibidem.

a few years later and replaced it with a blue-yellow composition, which was used before 2004<sup>13</sup>.

V. Fesenko says that the colours were changed “[...] because strong negative associations with orange political representatives appeared and strengthened in society. It was part of a political rebranding”<sup>14</sup>.

The CDU was the first German party that used orange for its visual identity. The General Secretary of the CDU, L. Meyer, explains the party’s choice as follows: “The main aim was to express the unique strength of our party, the link to unity and diversity. [...] Our new look should demonstrate both: strengthen the unity and give the space for diversity”<sup>15</sup>. The German orange seems to be less successful than the Ukrainian. One of the main reasons for that could be its strong association with the seventies (Schmidt, 2005). Such a connotation disturbs the intention of the CDU to create the image of a modern and young party. The second reason could be the fact that orange, after brown, belongs to the least favourite colours of the Germans (Holz-Bacha 2006). Though orange was often criticized by the media, it is still one of the colours used by the CDU<sup>16</sup>.

Orange also appears on the Polish political arena – as part of logo of the political party PO [Platforma Obywatelska]<sup>17</sup>. “Orange is associated with warmth, it is a symbol of something new, an alternative”, M. Grabowski explains the choice of this colour<sup>18</sup>. Orange accompanied by blue remains the colour of the PO till present day. However, W. Jabłoński is convinced that the implementation of orange was not successful for the PO. “Orange is present in the logo of the PO, but it did not create a broader context in which the party would be associated with orange, so that their representatives would be called “the orange”, like in Ukraine”<sup>19</sup>, the Polish expert says.

Another Polish party, the PiS [Prawo i Sprawiedliwość], also uses orange combined with blue in its logo. The reason to use orange, according to A. Bielan, was to stress the uniqueness of the party: “Our party is different than the other

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.minjust.gov.ua/0/28346> (29.03.2010).

<sup>14</sup> Interview with V. Fesenko.

<sup>15</sup> *Der Siedler, Das Magazin für Mitglieder und Freunde der CDU Brieselang*, Frühjahr 2004, p. 7 on: <http://www.cdu-brieselang.de/48.0.html> (12.06.2010).

<sup>16</sup> [www.cdu.de](http://www.cdu.de) (05.06.2010).

<sup>17</sup> [www.platforma.org](http://www.platforma.org) (05.06.2010).

<sup>18</sup> *Apel do podświadomości*, Rzeczpospolita, 03.08. 2001, No 180 on: <http://wyborcza.pl/1,76842,2618364.html> (05.06.2010).

<sup>19</sup> Interview with W. Jabłoński.

ones and that is why we also use a different colour”<sup>20</sup>. Nevertheless, orange was eliminated as a symbol of the PiS in 2005. “Orange was removed, even though it has its positive context – Ukraine. But there is no possibility to base a presidential campaign on this colour, because it does not go with red and white. Additionally, this colour [orange] is less serious. It is good for standing out at the beginning, when the party is created, but this function is exhausted”, argued J. Kurski (Wąs, Sterlingow 2005).

Summing up, the authors of the orange colour in politics stress that this colour was chosen not only in order to stand out, but also to convey a set of meanings, such as unity, uniqueness, youth and modernity.

## 6. Conclusions

The hypotheses formulated for the research were tested by means of quantitative and qualitative methods.

The first hypothesis was verified positively. The Ukrainians associate orange with patriotism stronger than the Poles or the Germans do. Such a result could be explained by the memory of the historical protests of 2004 in Ukraine and by the structure of the sample.

The second hypothesis was also confirmed. It stated that the representatives of all countries would perceive orange as a colour of democracy. However, the association with the characteristic democratic/autocratic was the strongest in Poland. The Ukrainians associated orange with democracy slightly less frequently than the Poles. Such a result could be caused by the disappointment as a result of the post-revolutionary period and the presidency of V. Yushchenko. The Germans associate the orange colour with democracy less frequently than the Poles or the Ukrainians do.

The third hypothesis assumed that all the respondents from Germany, Poland and Ukraine would associate orange with the Orange Revolution of 2004. This hypothesis was rejected, because the respondents from these three countries did not all associate orange first and foremost with the events of 2004 in Ukraine. The most frequently mentioned associations with orange were the fruit orange, fruit in general and Holland. Though there were some mentions of the Orange Revolution related to the orange colour in every country, this number was quite insignificant.

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<sup>20</sup> *Apel do podświadomości*, Rzeczpospolita, 03.08.2001, No. 180 on: <http://wyborcza.pl/1,76842,2618364.html> (05.06.2010).

The presented paper discusses the perception of orange and its influence on the image of political parties. As a result of quantitative and qualitative research, I have come to the conclusion that colour could contribute to the process of creating and maintaining a certain image, however its impact, according to experts, is trivial. V. Fesenko argues: "In practice, the image of political parties in Ukraine is determined, first of all, by the personality of its leader, secondly, by the political moods and the interests of the voters who are represented by the party, and thirdly, by the ideological position of that party. Finally, the advertising image of a party is formed during the political campaign and colour is part of that. However, political colour is only an indicator, which helps to differentiate one party from another. It is an element of political marketing, but not the most significant one"<sup>21</sup>. W. Jabłoński adds that "[...] in our image-dominated culture colour plays an important role, though in the PR of the candidates it always remains to be merely an element of a broader strategy (logo, slogans, topics and events in mass-media etc.)"<sup>22</sup>.

## 7. Limitations

The limitations of the study originate from the method of the research itself. Since the main tool of the research was an online-survey posted on social network sites, there are two types of limitations. The first one is the online character of the research. The second one is the structure of the sample, which is a consequence of the character of the survey. As a result of these limitations, the sample mainly consisted of younger people, who often visit social network sites and are active Internet-users in general.

Another important limitation is that there is always a possibility of influencing the answers of respondents by the way of formulating a question. The survey was constructed in such a way that the overwhelming majority of all the attributes of the colours used in the survey were determined by the author. Only one question assumed an open answer.

While conducting the research I intended to reduce the negative impact of the disadvantages of the applied research tools. That is why other colours like red, blue and green were included in the survey. Accompanied by these colours orange drew much less attention of the respondents than it would if it was presented on its own.

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<sup>21</sup> Interview with V. Fesenko.

<sup>22</sup> Interview with W. Jabłoński.

## 8. Further research and managerial implications

The recommendations for further research could be based on the limitations discussed above. First of all, the method of research should be modified, so that the sample would be more representative. It would be necessary to collect quantitative data by distributing a survey in a traditional way. An online-survey could also be taken into account, but its scale should certainly be wider.

Secondly, it would be interesting to test how associations with certain colours relate to age. People older than 45 have a richer life experience, which could influence their opinion on colours.

Thirdly, I would recommend to examine the relation between the colour orange and party orientation. During the present research I noticed that all parties using orange could be divided into two blocks. The first one is rather democratic (Nasha Ukrayina, Platforma Obywatelska, CDU) and the second one rather populist and nationally oriented (Austrian BZÖ, Hungarian Fidesz, PiS before 2005). It would be interesting to determine the cause of such a division.

The results of this study could easily be used in the field of political campaigns. Its role could be especially important in times when the number and types of tools in political communication are constantly growing. Having obtained a set of associations with a certain colour one can make a decision concerning this colour within the political context. The proper use of colours can make a party stand out among its rivals, as well as create its unique image on the political arena.

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## Appendix 1. Questionnaire posted online

Dear Sir and Madame,

I am a student of the Leon Kozminski University in Warsaw. I am preparing a research project, which concerns the usage of colours in marketing. Your answers will help me writing an article on this subject. I would be very grateful if you took part in it. The questionnaire is anonymous. The survey will take you approximately 10–15 minutes. Thank you very much in advance!

1. Please give your first association with the colours listed below:

blue	
orange	
green	
red	

2. What association do you have when seeing the colours listed below? Please give your answer by marking the option that seems the most appropriate in your opinion.

	honest						dishonest
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
red							
orange							
blue							
green							

3. What association do you have when seeing the colours listed below? Please give your answer by marking the option that seems the most appropriate in your opinion.

	dynamic						static
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
red							
orange							
blue							
green							

4. What association do you have when seeing the colours listed below? Please give your answer by marking the option that seems the most appropriate in your opinion.

	<b>optimistic</b>						<b>pessimistic</b>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
red							
orange							
blue							
green							

5. What association do you have when seeing the colours listed below? Please give your answer by marking the option that seems the most appropriate in your opinion.

	<b>friendly</b>						<b>unfriendly</b>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
red							
orange							
blue							
green							

6. What association do you have when seeing the colours listed below? Please give your answer by marking the option that seems the most appropriate in your opinion.

	<b>thorough</b>						<b>unthorough</b>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
red							
orange							
blue							
green							

7. What association do you have when seeing the colours listed below? Please give your answer by marking the option that seems the most appropriate in your opinion.

	<b>patriotic</b>						<b>unpatriotic</b>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
red							
orange							
blue							
green							

8. What association do you have when seeing the colours listed below? Please give your answer by marking the option that seems the most appropriate in your opinion.

	<b>responsible</b>						<b>irresponsible</b>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
red							
orange							
blue							
green							

9. What association do you have when seeing the colours listed below? Please give your answer by marking the option that seems the most appropriate in your opinion.

	<b>strong</b>						<b>weak</b>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
red							
orange							
blue							
green							

10. What association do you have when seeing the colours listed below? Please give your answer by marking the option that seems the most appropriate in your opinion.

	<b>trustworthy</b>						<b>untrustworthy</b>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
red							
orange							
blue							
green							

11. What association do you have when seeing the colours listed below? Please give your answer by marking the option that seems the most appropriate in your opinion.

	<b>professional</b>						<b>amateur</b>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
red							
orange							
blue							
green							

12. What association do you have when seeing the colours listed below? Please give your answer by marking the option that seems the most appropriate in your opinion.

	<b>decent</b>						<b>indecent</b>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
red							
orange							
blue							
green							

13. What association do you have when seeing the colours listed below? Please give your answer by marking the option that seems the most appropriate in your opinion.

	<b>young</b>						<b>older</b>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
red							
orange							
blue							
green							

14. What association do you have when seeing the colours listed below? Please give your answer by marking the option that seems the most appropriate in your opinion.

	<b>reliable</b>						<b>unreliable</b>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
red							
orange							
blue							
green							

15. What association do you have when seeing the colours listed below? Please give your answer by marking the option that seems the most appropriate in your opinion.

	<b>modern</b>						<b>traditional</b>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
red							
orange							
blue							
green							

16. What association do you have when seeing the colours listed below? Please give your answer by marking the option that seems the most appropriate in your opinion.

	<b>chaotic</b>						<b>ordered</b>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
red							
orange							
blue							
green							

17. What association do you have when seeing the colours listed below? Please give your answer by marking the option that seems the most appropriate in your opinion.

	<b>progressive</b>						<b>retarded</b>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
red							
orange							
blue							
green							

18. What association do you have when seeing the colours listed below? Please give your answer by marking the option that seems the most appropriate in your opinion.

	<b>democratic</b>						<b>autocratic</b>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
red							
orange							
blue							
green							

19. What opinion do you have about the events of 2004 in Ukraine called the Orange Revolution? Please mark the option that seems to be the most appropriate in your opinion.

Definitely negative	Rather negative	Rather positive	Definitely positive	Indifferent
1	2	3	4	-

20. How would you describe your political orientation? Please mark the option that seems to be the most appropriate in your opinion.

left wing			Central			right wing	I do not have a defined political orientation
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-

### Information about the respondent

Please give some information about yourself

21. Sex

Female	Male

22. Age

younger than 18	
18–26	
27–35	
36–44	
45 and older	



## 23. Place of residence

village	
town up to 50 000 inhabitants	
town over 50 000 up to 100 000 inhabitants	
town over 100 000 up to 250 000 inhabitants	
city over 250 000 up to 500 000 inhabitants	
city over 500 000 inhabitants	

## 24. Education

basic	
middle	
higher (bachelor)	
higher (master)	

## 25. What is your occupation?

I am a pupil/student	
I am an employee	
I have my own business	
I am a pensioner	
I am unemployed	
I do something else (please write what exactly)	

## 26. How would you assess your financial situation on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means a very good situation and 5 stands for a very bad situation?

very bad	rather bad	not bad, but not good	rather good	very good
1	2	3	4	5

Thank you very much for your participation!

Bottom of Form

