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A NEW LOOK AT THE PROBLEM OF RUSSIAN INFLUENCES IN UKRAINE

The attempt of identifying of the main aspects of Russian cultural and ideological presence in Ukraine and analysis of popular ways of its interpretation has been carried out. In present years one can observe a tendency of describing cultural and ideological influence in terms of "soft power". Due to its limitations the category of "soft power" might not be the best theoretical frame for capturing all the nuances of Russia's activities in Ukraine.

Key words: Russia, Ukraine, "soft power", "russian peace"("rusky myr").

Jerzy Hałajko. Nowe spojrzenie na problem rosyjskich wpływów na Ukrainie

Niniejszy artykuł jest próbą klasyfikacji głównych aspektów rosyjskiej kulturowej oraz ideologicznej obecności na Ukrainie oraz analizy powszechnych sposobów jej interpretacji. W ostatnich latach można zaobserwować tendencję do opisywania kulturowego oraz ideologicznego wpływu w kategoriach „miękkiej siły". Autor wskazuje, że ze względu na swoje ograniczenia kategoria „miękkiej siły" być może nie jest najlepszą ramą teoretyczną do opisu działalności Rosji na Ukrainie.

Słowa kluczowe: Rosja, Ukraina, „miękka siła", „russkij mir" (Russian Word).

Юрій Галайко. Новий погляд на проблему російських впливів в Україні.

Здійснено спробу визначення головних аспектів російської культурної та ідеологічної присутності в Україні, а також аналізу популярних способів її інтерпретації. За останні роки можна спостерігати тенденцію до описування культурного та ідеологічного впливу у категоріях «м'якої сили». Показано, що з огляду на свої обмеження категорія «м'якої сили» можливо є не найкращою теоретичною рамкою, що дозволяє взяти до уваги всілякі нюанси, пов'язані з діяльністю Росії в Україні.

Ключові слова: Росія, Україна, «м'яка сила», «руський мир».

Юрий Галайко. Новый взгляд на проблему русского влияния в Украине.

Предпринято попытку определения основных аспектов русского культурного и идеологичного присутствия в Украине, а также анализа популярных способов его интерпретации. В последние годы можно заметить тенденцию к описанию культурного и идеологического влияния в категориях «мягкой силы». Показано, что в связи со своей ограниченностью, категория «мягкой силы» возможно не является наилучшей теоретической рамкой, позволяющей принять во внимание все нюансы, связанные с деятельностью России в Украине.

Ключевые слова: Россия, Украина, «мягкая сила», «русский мир».

Until recently, in political science and international relations, unlike in sociology and social anthropology, cultural issues were not regarded as much important and worthy of special attention. The subject of largest interest in a particular country was rather related to its economic and military power. One might speculate that underestimation of what sociologist could call symbolic capital was partly due to the "economization" of politics, resulting in growing attention to the issues of economic performance and growth at the cost of other sides of social life. Yet, since the times of "the war on terrorism", one could observe the growing understanding of importance of non-economic and non-coercive means of execution of power, particularly in international affairs. Hence the growing popularity of the concept of soft power. Although the term soft power had been invented by Joseph S. Nye at the beginning of the nineties, it became widely popular more than ten years later, after the publication of the book Soft Power. The Means to Success in World Politics. In Joseph S. Nye's definition soft power "[...] is the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies."[1] In other words soft power is a power of attraction.

As my main subject of academic interest is the interrelations between popular culture, mass media and politics, I had experienced a brief fascination with Nye's concept of soft power. Shortly before the presidential elections of 2010 I prepared an analysis of the key soft power resources that Russia

[1] Joseph S. Nye, Jr., Soft Power. The Means to Success in World Politics, Public Affairs, New York, 2004, p. X.

had at its disposal in Ukraine.[2] I argued that it had basically two important dimensions: cultural and ideological ones. In the current article I would like to revisit the issue of Russian soft power and address the question of how relevant is the notion of soft power for description of the mechanism of Russian influence in Ukraine. At first, though, it would be useful to review key elements of what might be regarded as Russian soft power in Ukraine.

Nowadays, Russia's "soft" presence in Ukraine is to large extent a result of expansion of its entertainment industry, accompanied by mass media penetration. Russian popular music prevails in Ukraine's chain radio networks, some of which are owned or franchised by the Russia-based companies. The overwhelmingly large part of the Ukrainian book marked is occupied by Russian production, either imported or illegally trafficked into the country. The supply of Russian books covers a significant part of demand for fine literature, non-fiction, publications on science and humanities as well as academic textbooks and the literature for children. It is noteworthy that those are not only books written by Russian authors, but also translated into Russian from other languages. Russian press also is freely distributed in Ukraine, although mostly those are "localized" versions of the titles, that were popular at the times of Soviet Union. For example, "Komsomolskaya Pravda v Ukrainye" ("Komsomolskaya Pravda in Ukraine") is published under franchise agreement, has its own Kyiv-based editorial office and is owned by Ukrainian publishing house (and thus in formal terms is a "Ukrainian" title). Nevertheless, the framing of that newspaper still remains Moscow-centric and appeals to the group of readers having a nostalgic attitude towards the Soviet Union. "Komsomolskaya Pravda v Ukrainye" has one of the largest circulation in the country and along with other "in Ukraine" titles occupies a significant share of the newspaper market. Finally, a large number of Russian television channels are easily accessible in Ukraine through cable TV networks and via satellite broadcast. They usually enjoy popularity that is no larger than few percent share of Ukraine's TV audience. However, the influence of the Russian television in Ukraine probably is far more stronger than one might judge from the number of people watching it. This could be explained by the fact that for Ukrainian television the Russian one very often serves as a point of reference. One needs to take into account the position of national media field in relation to global media field, as larger and more powerful fields tend to influence smaller and weaker ones. What Pierre Bourdieu wrote about the "economic-technical, and especially the symbolic dominance of American television", perceived as "a model and a source of ideas, formulas, and tactics"[3] for other televisions, could be referred to Russian television, in case when one look at it from the perspective of the Ukrainian one. That is partly why Ukrainian TV channels heavily rely on imports of content produced by and for Russian television, including films, series and soap-operas, comedy and music shows etc (they also take a great share of the home-video market as are also available for purchase on DVD and Blue-ray disks at local shops). Thus, Russian entertainment content takes a significant share of broadcast time. Moreover, Ukrainian TV channels extensively employ numerous Russian TV stars, journalists, presenters, editors and other media specialists. All of the outsourced journalists and presenters are free to use their native Russian even on air. Considering the above mentioned tendencies, Ukrainian television more and more resembles the Russian one. As one can see, the Russian Federation has been successful in developing and preserving cultural components of what is usually referred as soft power. Furthermore, Russian cultural presence in Ukraine is reinforced by the illegal circulation of counterfeit production and file-sharing activities.

Russian cultural hegemony in the area of the ex-Soviet Union is reflected in the ideological concept of "Russian World"[4], promoted by Russian Orthodox Church and some of the state-funded NGOs. The concept has a double meaning: on the one hand, "Russian World" should embrace all the "canonic" territories on which Russian Orthodox Christianity prevails, on the other one, every person who is loyal towards Russian language and culture can belong to it. The concept of "Russian

[2] The premises of this analysis were presented at the XIV Polish Sociological Congress in September 2010 in Krakow. The paper was used as a base for the chapter "Przestrzeń językowa a pole polityczne na współczesnej Ukrainie", in Wokół teorii i empirii języka volume, Katarzyna Leszczyńska, Katarzyna Skowronek Eds., Wydawnictwa AGH, Kraków, 2011. The current article focuses mostly on how the term soft power is used for description of Ukraine's condition, rather than exploring in details patterns of Russian cultural and ideological influence.

[3] Pierre Bourdieu, On Television, The New Press, New York, 1998, p. 41.

[4] Russian World is an established English translation for "Русский Мир».

World" growth out of the realities of Russian cultural presence in post-Soviet countries and at the same time is intended as ideological legitimization of its perpetuation.[5]

Along the concept of "Russian World" the ideology of "sovereign democracy" could be also perceived as an element of Russian soft power. Some of the authors writing on Russian soft power ambitions do not consider "sovereign democracy" a part of it, as they believe that this ideology is unable to get popular support abroad and that it is restricted to domestic use. Their skepticism over export capability of the concept of "sovereign democracy" is most probably related to their understanding of soft power strictly according to Joseph S. Nye's definition and therefore assuming rather "positive" ways of influencing other countries. For example, Jarosław Ćwiek-Karpowicz has even expressed serious doubts whether Russia can successfully fulfill its soft power potential: "Although Russia possesses influential soft power channels to post-Soviet states like access to its labor market, language proximity, a common culture, and enormous energy resources, Moscow has been unable to enhance its attractiveness among its closest neighbors. Russian authorities focus most of all on loyal constituencies (such as compatriots living abroad) and seek to mobilize people who already follow Russia's goals and principles. Russia's insufficient soft power activism in the post-Soviet area is also due to its neo-imperial attitude toward neighboring states. Moscow is not able to offer them an attractive vision of integration without building patterns of strong dependence. Therefore, its proposal of close political and economic cooperation seems quite dangerous for the sovereignty and long-term development of its neighbors."[6] The author also believes that "the notion of soft power holds strong normative potential based on domestic standards and norms of social and political life that are practiced in the state seeking to enhance its influence abroad. It is impossible to create an appealing external image without dealing effectively with domestic problems. Russia has many problems with corruption, the abuse of human rights, the lack of democracy, and the rule of law. Thus its model of political and socio-economic transformation cannot be seen as a positive example for other post-Soviet countries."[7] However, in reality not all the elements of soft power must necessary meet the objective needs of a particular country or the expectations of its ordinary citizens to be considered as useful. There are elements of soft power which might appeal to members of elites (various components of soft power may have different target groups), having their own objectives and considerations. One should also remember that soft power is a phenomenon not solely limited to democratic countries (the recent experience of China and the past one of the USSR might serve as a good example[8]). For corrupt and often authoritarian elites of post-Soviet countries following the premises of "stability" and "the rule of a strong hand" — the attributes of "sovereign democracy" — could be seen as one of the viable options. Given the control over media, one can imagine that creating public demand for such a system of power would not be that impossible. As was proved by the Russian example, popular culture and mass media turned to be effective instruments for manufacturing general support for "strong leadership". Therefore, the greatest attraction of "sovereign democracy" is that it could be used as a tool of petrification of the rule of post-Soviet elites. Since "sovereign democracy" is claimed to be an "adjusted" version of democracy, "appropriate" for cultural and historical realities of the post-Soviet political world, it could serve as a model for neighboring countries. Moreover, one might speculate that similarly to "Russian World", "sovereign democracy" is already an attribute of existing political reality in many of those states. Even though political regimes of post-Soviet countries are not referred to as "sovereign democracies", they have much more in common with Russian system of power than with liberal democracies of the developed world. What is shared by many of the post-Soviet regimes is that their undemocratic system of government is masked under the cover of virtual constructions simulating democratic institutions. This imitative, undemocratic and manipulative nature of the political regimes of the ex-USSR countries is perfectly unveiled by Andrew Wilson in his book Virtual Politics. Faking

[5] More on the dualistic nature of the ideology of "Russian World" can be found in The "Humanitarian Dimension" of Russian Foreign Policy Toward Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and the Baltic States, Gatis Pelnēns, Ed., Riga 2009, p. 35.
[6] Jarosław Ćwiek-Karpowicz, "Limits to Russian Soft Power in the Post-Soviet Area", DGAPanalyse no. 8, July 2012, p.1.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Nye himself briefly reviews soft power capacity of the USSR and China — see Nye, J., Op. Cit., pp. 73-75, 83, 88,

Democracy in the Post-Soviet World.[9] Regardless of how different may seem political regimes of the post-Soviet countries, be it "sovereign" or other sort of "virtual" democracy, the outcome of the political process is rather similar. The main "product" of all those systems is "stability", or in other words, ability of reproducing of post-Soviet political patterns. The main reason of why Russia's ruling class had chosen to label the existing system of power a "sovereign democracy", whereas the elites of post-Soviet countries restrain from it, is a geopolitical one. Only the core can be considered sovereign, while the position of periphery is more dependent on the external factors. Hence, adjective "sovereign" stresses great power ambitions, at the same time democracy with adjective — as was with "peoples democracies" — underlines that it differs from what is considered democracy in the West.

Similarly to specific treatment of concept of democracy Russia's elites also have different approach to the idea of soft power. As noted by Andrei Tsygankov, in Russia understanding of the notion of soft power is much broader than what Joseph Nye assumed under this term: "soft power is defined as the power to influence others through co-optation, rather than coercion, and can be divided into three components: political legitimacy, economic interdependence, and cultural values"[10]. Therefore, considering this perspective, it is easier to understand why "sovereign democracy" may be regarded as an element of Russian soft power: it could be capable of supplying a pretense of external legitimacy for undemocratic regimes of the post-Soviet world. As long as particular state is loyal to Russia and its elites are advocates of "stability", Moscow might provide its support making it easier to withstand the hypothetic international pressure related to fulfillment of democratic standards, basic freedoms, human rights etc.

More empirically-oriented researchers believe that the a study of mechanisms of Russian influence in neighboring countries should go beyond the concept of soft power, regardless whether understood in narrow or broader sense. One of the proposals is somehow awkwardly named "humanitarian dimension" approach. It should cover the analysis of widely understood soft power and thus include such phenomena as the ideology of "sovereign democracy", as well as the use of methods that are usually considered as not related to the notion of soft power — such as media manipulation, information warfare and propaganda campaigns[11]. An example of Russian activities, that have considerable influence on the social and cultural environment in the post-Soviet countries is the use of human rights rhetoric for exerting pressure on them. In Ukraine this trend was manifested by bringing to agenda the issue of the supposed "deprivation" of Russophone Ukrainian citizens of the rights to use Russian language.[12] In the past the campaigns for protection of such understood human rights usually coincided with the attempts of Ukrainian governments to extend the public use of Ukrainian and its presence in mass media. This was the case, when in 2006 Ukrainian was introduced in film distribution. The preoccupation with preservation of the dominant position of Russian language is one of the priorities of Moscow's politics towards the post-Soviet countries. However, even though Joseph S. Nye considers language an important element of soft power[13], one would have difficulties to qualify Russia's highly manipulative use of the language issue as its element.

Another aspect, that would not fully fit the paradigm of soft power, is the politics of public memory in the ex-USSR states and attempts of Russia to impose its official vision of the "common past". In this field diplomatic pressure, propaganda campaigns were used along with rather coercive menace of introducing persecution for "falsifying history". That is where Moscow's monologue of power is clearly visible, even though being manifested in the form of representational force. According to definition given by Janice Bially Mattern: "Representational force is a form of power that operates through the structure of a speaker's narrative representation of 'reality'." It "[...] wields a blunt, nonnegotiable threat intended to radically limit the options of the subjects at whom it is directed. [...] like physical force, representational force aspires to leave its victim's no 'out'."[14] This is precisely what can be said about Russia's

[9] Andrew Wilson, Virtual Politics. Faking Democracy in the Post-Soviet World, Yale University Press, New Heaven and London, 2005.
[10] Andrei P. Tsygankov, "If Not by Tanks, then by Banks? The Role of Soft Power in Putin's Foreign Policy", Europe-Asia Studies, Vol. 58, No. 7, November 2006, p. 1081.
[11] See The "Humanitarian Dimension" of Russian Foreign Policy Toward Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and the Baltic States, Gatis Pelnēns, Ed., Riga 2009, pp. 43-44.
[12] Ibid., p. 252.
[13] See: Joseph S. Nye, Op. Cit., pp. 75-76.
[14] Janice Bially Mattern, "Why 'Soft Power' Isn't So Soft: Representational Force and the Sociolinguistic Construction of Attraction in World Politics", Millennium: Journal of International Studies, Vol.33, No.3, 2005, pp. 586, 602.

approach to "common history". The post-Soviet countries are expected to have similar to Russia's official interpretation of their past. Otherwise they can be perceived as having harmful intensions towards Moscow's vital interests. In their analysis of Russian soft power in Ukraine Alexander Bogomolov and Oleksandr Lytvynenko came to crucial for understanding its mechanism conclusion: "Soft power is typically based on projections of shared future prosperity and success. In Russia's case, however, its soft power is strongly associated with discourses of a shared past and with the common values, culture and history that arise from it. From this political perspective, Russia sees 'Ukrainian nationalism' as an existential threat."[15] That explains why Moscow pays such a great attention to the issues of history interpretation and language — these are resources upon which largely rests its soft power in Ukraine as well as in some other post—Soviet states. Those governments or groups within post-Soviet countries that do not share "the proper" version of history and refuse special status for Russian are often labelled "nationalist". This term, however, may be misleading, especially for people coming from outside the former Soviet Union as it has there a different connotation and tradition of use, and therefore needs additional explanation. In many cases when the word "nationalist" is used in Russia or in other ex-USSR countries, especially towards individuals or groups with other than Russian ethnic background, it follows the logic of negative labeling that was common under the communism. The accusations of "nationalism" were often directed against political opponents of the Soviet regime, like dissidents, or even against ordinary people, for example in case when in their day-by-day practices they consistently preferred to use their native language (such as Ukrainian) instead of "internationalist" Russian. Thus, the label was and still is widely used for social construction of the Other. In her analysis of this linguistic practice Tatiana Argounova-Low has chosen to avoid the English term nationalism and instead throughout her text uses a transcription from Russian — natsionalizm. She argues that this term widely served for manipulative purposes, as a tool for coercion and control, an "instrument for exclusion of non-conformists".[16] Hence, those are "normal" (post-)Soviet obedient people who belong to the "civilization"[17] of Pax Sovietica and/or "Russian World", whereas subversive "nationalists" are excluded from it and regarded as enemies. After conducting a series of empirical field studies in Ukraine, Stephen Shulman came to conclusion that there are visible dependencies between cultural and political identities in Ukraine. In his view, there are two different national identities: "Eastern-Slavik" (I would rather call it "Post-Soviet") and "Ethnic Ukrainian" (in my opinion this one is also a rather irrelevant term, a much better would be to use mere "Ukrainian" instead). People of the "Eastern Slavik" identity believe in similarity of Ukrainian and Russian cultures and are less likely to support democracy. Those with the "Ukrainian Ethnic" one perceive Ukrainian and Russia cultures as different and at the same time are more likely to share the democratic values.[18] Considering these findings, it is easier to understand why "nationalists" are regarded as prime villains of both "Russian World" and "sovereign democracy".

By these examples one could observe that there are strong interrelations between Russia's cultural and ideological resources. These major elements of Russian soft power are largely based on symbolic and particularly linguistic capital, accumulated by Russia in the past. Not only Russian language serves as a fundament of the ideological construct of "Russian World"[19], it is also used as a criterion for inclusion and exclusion, for drawing the line between "us" and "them". However, the highly manipulative way of using these resources as well as their origin might be a reason for considering them not falling with criteria allowing to fully qualify them as elements of soft power, at least understood in terms of Joseph S. Nye. One needs also to remember how the notion of soft power and in what context is used in Russia in relation to its neighboring countries. For instance, it is not accidentally that in his reflection on Russian soft power Tsygannkov homogenizes all the variety of

[15] Alexander Bogomolov and Oleksandr Lytvynenko, "A Ghost in the Mirror: Russian Soft Power in Ukraine", Russia and Eurasia Programme, January 2012, REP RSP BP 2012/01, www.chathamhouse.org.

[16] Tatiana Argounova-Low, "Natsionalizm: Enemies and Scapegoats", Sibirica, Vol. 6, No. 1, Spring 2007, pp. 30-31, 49.

[17] As noted by Alexander Bogomolov and Oleksandr Lytvynenko, 'civilization' is an positively-biased euphemism of 'empire', see: "A Ghost in the Mirror: Russian Soft Power in Ukraine, Russia and Eurasia Programme, January 2012, REP RSP BP 2012/01, www.chathamhouse.org.

[18] Stephen Shulman, "National Identity and Public Support for Political and Economic Reform in Ukraine", Slavic Review, Vol. 64, No. 1. (Spring, 2005), pp. 59-87.

[19] For more on this see Gatis Pelnēns, Ed., The "Humanitarian Dimension" of Russian Foreign Policy Toward Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and the Baltic States, Riga 2009, p. 45.

the countries of the ex-USSR by turning them into "Russia's legitimate sphere of responsibility". By these means, newly independent states are denied their subjectivity and reduced to objects of influence. The objectives of exerting the influence on the post-Soviet world are of lesser importance (these might be old ideas of Russian messianism dressed in new cloth of "democratization" or "economic modernization" mission or rather aged idea of following the duty of saving the "civilization"), what seems to be of the greatest priority for Russia is maintaining of dependance patterns. "[...] Russia cannot be denied its own political, military, and economic interests in the post-Soviet world, and Moscow's policies can be interpreted as an effort to preserve existing influence in the region for the purpose of its greater stabilization, rather than imperial control"[20], — argues Tsygankov. At the same time he rejects the assumption that Kremlin conducts neo-imperialist policies towards its neighbors covered under the mask of soft power rhetoric: "[...] the argument about Russia's new soft power imperialism fails to appreciate the nature of soft power as fundamentally a positive sum, rather than zero sum, game. The old definition of power as control is of limited use here"[21]. As it was already mentioned, what is often meant under the term stabilization or "stability" in the post-Soviet world, is in many cases a perpetuation of the post-Soviet corrupt political systems reliant on Russian support. The author's rejection of the accusation of Russia for conducting "soft power imperialism" on the base of the changing nature of power in contemporary world are also questionable. Hard power, or the power of coercion, was almost always accompanied by soft power, or the power of seduction. Both types of power do not replace but rather complement each other. Even a strictly imperial type of control over a given territory has never been a sole domain of the coercive force. Here is how Leela Gandhi, a prominent scholar of colonialism, captures this dual nature of power in relation to situation of imperial domination: "[...] power traverses the imponderable chasm between coercion and seduction through a variety of baffling self-representations. While it may manifest itself in a show and application of force, it is equally likely to appear as the disinterested purveyor of cultural enlightenment and reform. Through this double representation, power offers itself both as a political limit and as a cultural possibility. If power is at once the qualitative difference or gap between those who have it and those who must suffer it, it also designates an imaginative space that can be occupied, a cultural model that might be imitated and replicated."[22] Taking into account the above mentioned reflection as well as the spacial way, in which soft power is perceived in Russia, one can admit that concerns about Moskow's "soft power imperialism" do not seem to be entirely groundless.

Nonetheless, it is necessary to remember that not only Russian interpretation of the concept of soft power, but also the original idea of Joseph S. Nye has its own deficiencies. Apparently, one of the serious shortcomings of the Nye's approach to soft power is ignoring a related to it hidden element of coercion and treatment of the notion of attraction mostly as a static element than a dynamic social process. What Nye appealingly calls soft power could be otherwise described as "soft ways of domination" — critically observes Alexandre Bohas. In his opinion Nye's main problem comes from the fact that "[...] he misses a fundamental part of soft power — the early shaping of taste, collective imaginary and ideals which constitutes a way of dominating other countries. This includes the reinforcing effect of the social process [...]. To be sure, soft power does not physically coerce individuals. Yet it constrains them by moulding them culturally and by socializing them [...] In so doing, domination is allowed without physical violence [...]."[23].

Moreover, the concept of soft power is mostly used for description of capabilities of great powers to influence other countries or each other. Hence, the notion of soft power might be useful for description of certain mechanisms of influence which have at their disposal such players as USA or EU, as well as assess and compare a power of attraction of different geopolitical actors. Russian soft power, on the other hand, is recalled usually in the context of competition for influence with EU and USA in the post-Soviet countries. While the efficiency of what is called Russia's soft power

[20] Andrei P. Tsygankov, Op. Cit., p. 1080.
[21] Ibid., p. 1090.
[22] Leela Gandhi, Postcolonial Theory. A critical introduction, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, 1998, p. 14.
[23] Alexandre Bohas, "The Paradox of Anti-Americanism: Reflection on the Shallow Concept of Soft Power", Global Society, Vol. 20, No. 4, October, 2006, p. 409.

in most cases is largely limited to the post-Soviet world, soft power of other major players — USA, EU and, to a lesser degree, China — manifests a global presence. Furthermore, Russian cultural and ideological influence in post-Soviet countries substantially differs from that of the rest of major geopolitical actors — it is based on former political and economic domination of these nations. Thus, it is far more justified to characterize "attraction abilities" of the Western countries in such post-Soviet country as Ukraine in terms of soft power, than that of Russian Federation.

Finally, the concept of soft power is rather insufficient when one needs to study the internal situation in a given country. While it can help to specify external causes of some of the internal phenomena, it is still hardly useful as an analytical tool for description of condition of its society. The major problem with this concept is that it assumes that the subjects are predominantly those who posses soft power capabilities (i.e. mainly great powers), whereas countries that experience the "power of attraction" are treated mainly as objects of influence. Therefore, for studying the outcomes of foreign influence in a given country it might be more beneficial to refer to different concepts. In case of Russian "humanitarian" presence in Ukraine there are probably better approaches that could provide a conceptual framework for the analysis of its roots, mechanisms and causes — a colonial/postcolonial theory might be a good starting point.