

THE TWO MOVEMENTS: LIBERALS AND NATIONALISTS DURING EUROMAIDAN

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Abstract. *This article offers a hypothesis that two separate yet cooperating movements, liberal and nationalist, participated in the Ukrainian protests of late 2013 – early 2014. To test this hypothesis, we define that a protest movement has its own leaders, purpose and ideology, perception of the current situation and the opponents of the movement, and tactics of action. It is found out that these factors were different for liberals and nationalists participating in the protests. The offered “two-movement approach” allows avoiding false generalizations about the protesters participating in these events, while increasing our explanatory capability.*

Keywords: *Ukraine, Euromaidan, social movements, protest, Ukrainian nationalism, two-movement approach*

Introduction

The winter events in Ukraine had attracted worldwide attention and international compassion towards the protesters. However, the later events in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine overshadowed the popular protests in Kyiv, as scholars directed their attention to the most recent and worrisome developments. Yet we maintain that a better understanding of the winter events, labeled “Revolution of Dignity” by the Ukrainian media (Kyiv Post 2014), is necessary in order to explain the forthcoming events – including annexation of Crimea and civil conflicts in Eastern Ukraine – as well as to be capable of making knowledgeable prognoses for the events that are yet to come in the region.

As will be shown in the next sections, some speakers attempted to extend either liberal or nationalist logic of thinking to the protesters in general, either stating that they championed for their individual rights or describing them as “nationalist” and “Banderite”. Our key point is that, by using a single ideology to describe the views of the protesters, we cannot

effectively analyze the events that went on from November 2013 to February 2014 and had a direct aftermath on the Ukrainian politics afterwards. On the contrary, we witnessed a situation where *two* protest movements – with different leaders, ideology, perception of the regime, and methods – cooperated against a common perceived enemy. The description of the events will be given in the Chronology section. For convenience, we can label one of the movements “liberal” and the other “nationalist.” The reasons for these labels, as well as the similarities or differences between the two, shall be discussed in the following sections, Methodology and Comparison, respectively. Finally, we will show how applying this approach might help in understanding modern Ukrainian politics, in the last section of this paper, Approach Application.

Methodology

If we call certain groups of people “movements”, there is demand for definition what a “movement” actually is. Meyer and Tarrow define social movements as “collective challenges to existing arrangements of power and distribution by people with common purposes and solidarities, in sustained interaction with elites, opponents and authorities” (Meyer & Tarrow 2005, p.4). This presumes the components necessary to define a movement. It has to have certain general goals, or a **purpose** based on ideology; a **perception** of the existing situation and how actions of their opponents contradict their ideology; and certain **tactics** to fulfill their purpose. Moreover, while a movement can generally be organized as a network, the facts that the term “opposition leaders” was used and that some protesters accused public politicians in “usurping Maidan” in order to gain votes for the upcoming elections (Polemika, 2013) assume that the movements had particular **leaders**. Therefore, if we find that a difference existed between liberals and nationalists in all four of these factors, we can clearly accept the hypothesis that there were actually two different movements during Maidan. Otherwise, if all four factors are identical for both liberal and nationalist groups that participated in the protests, we shall reject this hypothesis.

The question remains, however, whether protest movements shall be recognized as different if they are only found to have differences in some of the factors, rather than in all four of them. The difference in persons of the **leaders** is certainly not enough to state that the movements *per se* are

different. After all, there is a difference between Yatseniuk and Klitschko, and their views as well, but there is hardly any reason to assume that their supporters constituted different protest movements. On the other hand, it is certainly impossible to say that two groups constitute one movement if they have a different **purpose**. They might collaborate in a given situation, as long as some of their particular goals coincide, but no longer than that. **Tactics** are not necessary indicative, as different groups in one movement can employ different methods. As for **perception** of the opponent, it is by nature derived from the movement's purpose. For instance, the same government can be attacked from the right side as being too liberal to migrants, and from the left side for conducting an unjust social policy. Therefore, if two groups have an identical perception of their opponent and their failures, it is reasonable to talk of one movement.

Considering everything stated above, we should compare the liberal and nationalist groups that participated in the uprising and find information about their leaders, purpose, perception and tactics. This information shall then be compared to find out whether these two groups comprised two different movements or one movement without essential differences.

Chronology

To understand what happened in Kyiv in late 2013 – early 2014, we first have to recollect the main events of that time, especially those relevant to our topic. In turn, to conduct such a recollection, we shall use the timelines presented by the major non-Ukrainian news agencies – Reuters (2014), BBC (2014), Washington Post (2014), Al Jazeera (2014), - together with an extensive timeline by “Stezhkamy”, a website dedicated to Ukrainian culture (Bodnar 2013), and an archive of events hosted at “Genshtab”, a Ukrainian resource dedicated to domestic politics (Genshtab 2014).

The protests started after the Ukrainian government declared suspension of talks over the association agreement with the European Union, turning to Russia instead. On November 30, at night, several protesters are attacked by riot police and an attempt to disperse the protest is made. As a result, while the protest dedicated to foreign policy

issues and already called “Euromaidan”¹ was already arguably fading, violence against protesters caused Ukrainians to mobilize and start large-scale rallies against the existing regime itself. They seize certain buildings in the centre of Kyiv, including the city hall, “October Palace” (a concert hall), and trade union centre. In return, they are regularly attacked by riot police and internal forces.

Moreover, on December 1, part of the protesters attempted to siege the Presidential Administration, which resulted in another clash with riot police. Opposition leaders – those heading the largest opposition parties, namely Vitaliy Klitschko of UDAR, Oleh Tiahnybok of “Svoboda” (“Freedom”), and Arseniy Yatseniuk of “Bat’kivschyna” (“Fatherland”) – declared that “provocateurs” were behind that siege. At the same time, they stressed on the importance of peaceful protest, and the tent camp was installed in a matter of days – together with barricades, as it became evident that the regime would use more attempts to end the uprising by force. The protesters, therefore, viewed themselves rather as those defending themselves against the regime; later in this paper, methods of protest shall be discussed closer in the context of their use by the two movements during the revolution.

During one of the rallies, on December 8, the protesters topple a statue of Lenin, installed in the centre of Kyiv during Soviet times and never taken down after Ukraine gained independence. This event might be quite indicative for our study, as it clearly exceeds the declared anti-regime positioning of the protest, showing a negative attitude towards the Communist past of Ukraine. While there were small leftist groups at Maidan (Nikolaenko 2014), they did not make a difference in determining the ideological component of the protest, and some radical leftists openly declare this (Kirichuk 2014). On the other hand, nationalists explicitly supported this act (in fact, the nationalist party “Svoboda” took the responsibility for it (Radio Svoboda 2014a)) and a “Lenin-fall” followed in other cities and towns across Ukraine (Ukrainian Pravda 2014a). In a blog entry written by the author of this article back in February 2013, I cited the rightist idea that, as people of Ukraine is the source of power, they have the right to “combat the heritage of the totalitarian past”, regardless of the

¹ “Maidan Nezalezhnosti”, Independence Square, is where the revolution of 2004 took place, and “Maidan” was later used to refer to the revolution itself. The name “Euromaidan” was therefore used to hint both at a connection with the previous successful anti-governmental protest and the pro-European struggle.

norms set by the other laws (Fedorenko 2013). Apparently, the statue of Lenin was taken down with the same purpose. Not all oppositioners, however, openly supported this act (Svoboda Slova, 2013). The interpretation of this event in the light of the approach discussed in this article will follow.

During early days of December, European and American politicians have arrived to Kyiv to express their support to the protesters. This support was officially based on the ideological proximity, as the Western politicians supported the Ukrainian protesters. For instance, Victoria Nuland, the US Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian affairs, clearly stated: “There should be no doubt about where the United States stands on this. We stand with the people of Ukraine who see their future in Europe” (Akulov 2014). Considering that not all Ukrainians favored European integration, and that, on the other hand, it was the focal point of the protests in Kyiv (at least during their early phase), this can be seen as a clear signal of support to the protesters. This, however, does not actually allow us to determine that all the protesters at Maidan championed for liberal democratic values, or simply battled “for their rights” (Babych 2014).

On December 17, as Putin declared that he is ready to buy \$15 bln worth of Ukrainian debt and reduce the gas price for Kyiv by a third without any announced conditions, it became even more evident that a geopolitical choice between Europe and Russia was on the agenda for Ukraine. Overall, the anti-Russian aspect of the protests in Kyiv was quite evident, and used by the Russian media and certain Westerners (Nazemroaya 2014) to prove the “nationalist” and “Banderite” essence of the protest (Vesti 2014). However, it is questionable whether these definitions are correct, and, even more relevant for this article, whether they can be extended to the protesters overall – as much as we cannot deliberately attribute the logic of combating for individual rights to all the protesters.

A series of attack on the protesters started, culminating in journalist and activist Tetiana Chornovol being hunted and attacked by thugs on December 25th, – allegedly for her journalist investigation related to the mansion that was owned by the ex-President Victor Yanukovych until his escape from Ukraine.

During the New Year and Orthodox Christmas celebrations, Kyiv remained relatively peaceful. The protests resumed on January 12th, and were banned by the court three days later. On 16th of January, Ukrainian

parliament passed the laws that severely limited individual freedoms; in particular, these laws aimed to restrict the freedom of protest, while also criminalizing libel, limiting access to just treatment in courts, allowing the state to effectively limit access to undesired web pages (as it is already done in Russia) and requiring non-profit organizations funded with foreign sources to openly identify themselves as “foreign agents” – again, copying the Russian experience. In fact, these laws were rather anti-liberal, and as most of them are already implemented in Russia (Magrov 2014) by Putin’s regime that speculates on the nationalist rhetoric, they could have been expected to find ideological support among nationalists in Ukraine as well. However, considering that laws limiting, in particular, the freedom of assembly were passed amidst mass protests supported by the Ukrainian nationalists, and that the latter could have become targets of repressions under these new laws, it is natural that the protesting nationalists opposed the new limitations.

The introduction of these laws caused another escalation of the uprising, as, in the coming days, a number of governmental buildings, mostly in Western Ukraine, were seized by the protesters, and two protesters died from gunshots. While, on 28th of January, some of the disputed laws were cancelled and PM Azarov resigned, this did not solve the conflict as, according to the polls, most protesters wanted to oust President Yanukovich as well and did not want to make any concessions (Democratic Initiatives 2013). This is understandable, considering that the protesters did not consider the regime trustworthy. As an illustration, the regime’s *de facto* offer to trade amnesty for leaving the captured governmental buildings was rejected.

During February, however, some buildings were actually left behind, in particular, the Kyiv city hall, as the pressure to liberate political prisoners grows. There is no de-escalation afterwards though, as 18th to 21st of February bring dozens of deaths in clashes of protesters with riot police and from bullets shot by unidentified snipers. On 21st, the three leaders of the protest sign a pact with Yanukovich, but a day after, the President disappears, fleeing the country, and is removed from office by the parliament. 22nd of February can therefore be considered the ending date of the 2013-2014 protests in Ukraine. This article will not analyze the following events, although the annexation of Crimea and the conflict in Donbass directly followed and were seemingly caused by what happened in

Kyiv. However, the next sections of this article shall use separate facts from later events to illustrate differences between the two movements and to stress how important it is to differentiate them.

Comparison

Leaders. It is relatively easy to determine two leaders of the liberal movement: Arseniy Yatsenyuk and Vitaliy Klitschko. Both of them were perceived by the media as “leaders of the Maidan”, together with Oleg Tiahnybok (Hrytsenko 2014). The question whether Tiahnybok should be perceived as part of the liberal or the nationalist movement is, interestingly enough, disputable, despite his declared nationalist political views. We shall come to this in the end of this chapter.

Yatsenyuk and Klitschko were both leaders of the largest opposition parties, “Bat’kivschyna” and UDAR²; their positions “obliged” them to take the leadership. However, Petro Poroshenko added another dimension to the picture of the “liberal” movement. He was the main winner of the situation, appearing “at the right time, at the right place”, while distancing himself from the other leaders of the opposition that compromised themselves by negotiating with Yanukovich (Mokan 2014). In mid-November, Poroshenko wasn’t even in the questionnaires of the sociologists (KIIS 2013); and in late February, he became an obvious leader of the campaign (KIIS 2014), successfully claiming the presidential office three months after.

At the same time, the nationalist movement, considering its different perception, goals and methods, did not accept either Yatsenyuk, Klitschko, or Poroshenko as their actual leaders. As Dmytro Yarosh, leader of the “Right Sector”, put it: “Nobody out of the opposition trio showed himself to be the leader of the nation” (Ukrainian Week 2014). Interestingly enough, in this article, he refers to the “three leaders of the opposition parties”, obviously putting Tiahnybok in the same position as the clearly liberal politicians. Yarosh himself can be described as *the* leader of the nationalist movement; as a Ukrainian news agency TSN put it, “a journalist who became leader of the nationalists” (TSN 2014a). This is understandable, as the “Right Sector” is an umbrella organization that incorporated a number

² The acronym stands for “Ukrainian Democratic Alliance for the Reforms”, while the word “udar” means “strike” – a clear reference to Klitschko’s career as a professional boxer.

of nationalist organizations (Rublyovskiy 2014), and except for Tiahnybok's "Svoboda", there is essentially no competitors for them among the Ukrainian far-right. Only two nationalist candidates, Yarosh and Tiahnybok, ran at the May 2014 presidential elections. While Oleh Lyashko, who, as will be discussed below, expresses right-populist statements and took some part in the uprising, is one of the most popular politicians in today's Ukraine, he was not even included in polls back in February 2014, gaining popularity with time. However, the actions and popularity of Lyashko will be discussed later in this article, among the cases that can be effectively analyzed with our "two-movement approach".

Purpose. The November protests were dedicated to the issue of the association agreement with the European Union. People gathered on the Maidan because they were disappointed with the fact that the probability of signing this agreement dropped sharply; some of them perceived this as a threat of rapprochement with Russia (Democratic Initiatives 2013). At this point, the attitudes of the nationalists and liberals seemed to have much common, concentrating on the issue of foreign policy and criticizing the government for refusing to sign the agreement with the EU. The only difference was that the nationalists strived rather for a geopolitical alternative (as compared to Russia), while the liberals rather saw European integration as their desired goal (UDAR) (Bat'kivschyna 2012). It is understandable, as some nationalists have an alternative ideal perception of Europe, more traditionalist and conservative than it currently is. This concept, "the Europe of free and sovereign nations", is, in particular, popularized by Marine Le Pen (Willsher 2014), and supported by Tiahnybok's "Svoboda" (Myts 2009) who criticizes the EU for being "denationalized" (Ukrinform 2012). The "Right Sector" opposes accession to the European Union (and NATO) altogether, as they declared strife for Ukraine as a "subject of geopolitics, rather than an object" (TSN 2014b).

As for the purpose of the two groups, the difference is expectedly dictated by different values. We shall assume that the program of the "Right Sector", published at their official web page, represents the political position of the nationalists. We shall then compare its main points with the programs of parties clearly belonging to the liberal movement, UDAR and "Bat'kivschyna", and with "Svoboda", whose affiliation to either of the movements seems doubtful.

The “Right Sector” is explicitly opposed to “cosmopolitanism and globalism” (while also declaring tolerance towards non-Ukrainians). They also oppose “perversions”, including “promiscuity, homosexuality, and denationalization”, and consider that the “national cultural space” should be limited from the destructive influence of the “foreign low-grade anticulture”. This indicates their support of the traditional values. Ukrainians are recognized as “masters” of Ukraine, yet other nations have the same rights and duties. Economic ideology of the “Right Sector” is seemingly populist, as they combine liberal criticism of overregulation and manual control over the economy with attacking the current regime and the opposition for the lack of protectionism, while the big business is criticized for claiming excess profits at the expense of Ukrainians (Pravyi Sektor 2014a).

On the other hand, UDAR declares respect towards freedom of a person, supporting limitation of state intervention into one’s life. They stress on “goals unifying us rather than historical myths or ideologies”, while striving towards integration of Ukraine to the “modern developed world”. UDAR offers the civic concept of a nation, in contrast to the one offered by the nationalists. They do not offer protectionism, while also being against unnecessary regulation and oligarchs (UDAR). Deregulation is also among the goals of Bat’kivschyna, which dismisses “bans” and “isolation” as ways of tackling the problem of globalization, supports the civic concept of a nation and European integration (Bat’kivschyna 2012).

Finally, “Svoboda” says nothing about globalization, while striving towards NATO and an alliance with states “from Baltics to the Black Sea”, willing to protect cultural and moral values and “spiritual health”. In economy, “Svoboda” seems to stand closer to “Bat’kivschyna”, as both tend to use leftist rhetoric (“social justice”) and ideas (e.g. progressive taxation), than to the “Right Sector” (Svoboda 2011).

It therefore turns out that the four analyzed parties all have notable differences in either political or economic dimension of their ideologies. However, as Euromaidan started over a political issue (European integration), and went on over the issues of rapprochement with Russia and individual rights, the social slogans played only a secondary role, sometimes even resulting in conflicts among the protesters (Botanova 2013) (Left Opposition 2013). The “overall increase of the standards of living in Ukraine” was among the least important requirements according

to the polls, far behind “putting an end to repressions”, “signing the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement”, or “resignation of the government” (Democratic Initiatives 2014). Corruption was probably the only social-economic issue that was strongly stressed upon during the protests. Punishment for corrupted officials is even separated from the “increase of the standards of living” in the abovementioned poll, and had steadily higher support (up to a difference of 21% in January). Certainly, there is no difference in attitude towards corruption between the four parties. Therefore, as the social-economic issues turned to be secondary during the protests, it is reasonable to group parties by the political dimension of their views. The vision of both foreign and domestic policy by these four parties shows difference between politically liberal, pro-Western “Bat’kivschyna” and UDAR, on one side, and nationalist “Right Sector” and “Svoboda”.

Perceptions. As we defined already, the first stage of the protests – up until November 30th – was characterized by concentration on foreign policy issues. The protesters, both nationalist and liberal, criticized the regime for not signing the association agreement with the EU.

However, after coercion was used against the protesters, the differences in perceptions of the two movements became more pronounced. The liberals stressed the fact that civic rights were violated and were aimed at holding a peaceful protest to protect them up to the latest stages of the uprising (Semenchenko 2013). This is a logical tactics of behavior regarding an authoritarian regime challenged by the democratic opposition. “Right Sector”, on the other hand, viewed this as a reason to declare the regime “dictatorial”, and installing an “internal occupation”, and since mid-January, to attempt overthrowing it (Radio Svoboda 2014b). Moreover, “Svoboda”, while ascribing to the peaceful protest tactics, accused Yanukovych of having given up the national interests by an agreement with Russia (Svoboda 2013a).

The perceptions have changed after the conflicts with the state forces got violent and brought casualties among the protesters. This statement might be illustrated by the polls by the “Democratic Initiatives” Fund, conducted during the Euromaidan protests (Wave I, 7-8 December 2013), in the stationary tent camp (Wave II, 20th December 2013) and in stationary sites where protesters resided during the clashes with the riot police (Wave III, 3rd February 2014) (Democratic Initiatives 2013). It is presumed that the nationalists, who had had paramilitary training

experience in camps organized throughout Ukraine since the 1990's, took a more active part in the clashes with the riot police (Shuklynov 2014), and therefore were more represented in the third wave. There are poll results indirectly indicating that the more clashes happened, the more nationalists were probably involved: the share of Russian-speaking protesters dropped by more than ten per cent from December to February, while the share of people who came from Western Ukraine increased.

During the third wave, as compared to the second one, 7.7% less protesters reported acting due to repressions against protesters, while 5.6% more decided to protest due to the danger of Ukraine entering the Customs Union or making a turn to Russia.

As the questioned protesters were asked to name the demands they support among those declared on Maidan, only 49% respondents supported signing the Association Agreement with the EU during the third wave, as compared with 71% during the first one and 58.6% during the second one.

In February, 82.7% protesters were ready to leave Maidan only after all their requirements were met, as compared to 63.6% in wave II. These requirements in 85.2% cases included resignation of Yanukovich (as compared to 65.7% in the second wave) and, in 62.5% cases, a constitutional change that would limit the competencies given to the President (as compared to 42.8% in the second wave). The protest also got less social, as only 41.1% of the respondents answered that they support the demands for higher standards of living (5.8% less than in the first wave); interestingly enough, the number of working class representatives increased by 7.5% during the same period.

From these observations, we can derive a number of conclusions important to determine perceptions of the liberal and nationalist groups. First, the drop in numbers of those motivated by repressions against protesters, even despite the conflicts getting more violent with time, coincides with the reports that more nationalists were involved in later phases of the uprising. Considering this, the idea that pro-Russian foreign policy played a higher role for the nationalist movement in their negative attitude to the government than civil rights violations seems more founded. At the same time, the European integration became less important for the protesters – corresponding the ideological positions of the “Right Sector” and “Svoboda” towards the foreign policy, which are explicitly anti-Russian, but not pro-EU.

Second, the protesters were obviously more radical and more demanding in February. While this can be explained by the change of situation, including violent attacks on the protesters, the increase in numbers of nationalists can also be associated with more radical demands. Their support for a return to parliamentary republic might have been simply caused by the situation whereby they, as the opposition, suffered from an authoritarian rule of the president.

Finally, low relative importance given to the social problems by the protesters, even despite increase in the number of workers in February, indicates that we were correct in suggesting that political issues, rather than social or economic, were central to the protest.

Having said that, we can allow ourselves to postulate that the liberal and nationalist groups, most probably, had different perceptions of the regime and the current situation during the protests.

Tactics. One of the largest differences between the two movements can be seen in the differences between the tactics they chose to pursue their political goals. While the liberal movement openly declared and insisted that their protests were peaceful and public pressure had to be the main tool of influence over the government in power (Euronews 2014), the nationalists chose to use direct action instead. Again, this divergence was not immediate; the first conscious use of force against the law-enforcement was observed on 1st of December, as the Presidential Administration was attacked. The only nationalist organization that then declared armed resistance against the government was “Brotherhood” (this declaration was later deleted from their web page but remains in the online archives) (Bratstvo 2013), and these events were described as a provocation by some media (Butusov 2013). The leader of “Brotherhood” Dmytro Korchynskyi himself is, according to Anton Shekhovtsov (an expert on the Ukrainian far-right), “widely considered an agent provocateur” (Shekhovtsov 2013). However, there is evidence that at least not all the participants of the attack were conscious provocateurs (DailyLviv 2013). Moreover, while “Tryzub” has officially denied their participation in the events of the 1st of December (UkraNews 2013), some observers, including Shekhovtsov, maintain that the “Right Sector” and its member organizations – Tryzub, C14 – actually took part in these events (Shekhovtsov 2013).

Further on, upon the attempt to impose stronger state control over rallies and the freedom of speech via the bills passed on 16th of January, the Right Sector was participating in clashes with the police on Grushevskogo str. (Radio Svoboda 2014b) At that time, the “liberal” movement was still using the rhetoric of a peaceful protest (Euronews 2014). This led to the ironic messages from the Russian media, which labeled clear clashes “peaceful protests” (Tolokin 2014). Again, mixing up the two movements, as if they were one or strongly interdependent, makes it impossible to understand their actions properly.

On the other hand, Oleh Tiahnybok from “Svoboda” had to resort to the rhetoric of the “peaceful revolution” (Censor 2013); he does not speak about the “continuation of the revolution”, but instead talks of the compromise with the moderate Bat’kivschyna and UDAR and future legislative work (Chernyshev 2014). Meanwhile, “Right Sector” attempted to put an ultimatum to the parliament, forcing it to pass a number of bills or face the threat of “Ukrainian patriots returning from the frontlines to the parliament walls” (Pravyi Sektor 2014b). They have organized a protest action in order to force the MPs to pass the bill on lustration, with the “Right Sector” speaker shouting that they will “bring [Molotov] cocktails for the fat pigs in the parliament to drink” (Pravyi Sektor 2014c).

The “Right Sector” continued to pursue this strategy even after the successful finish of the protest. They issued an ultimatum August 16th, when the “Right Sector” announced that “internal counterrevolution” emerged in Ukraine, declaring themselves to be “the avant-garde of the Revolution” repressed by the police. They demanded to fire the “anti-Ukrainian MIA officials” and free the detained “Right Sector” activists in 48 hours, else the party will have to withdraw their squads from Donbass and start a “march on Kyiv” to facilitate “quick reforms in the MIA” (Pravyi Sektor 2014d). A day later, Dmytro Yarosh issued a video address, declaring that the detained activists were liberated and the dismissal of Volodymyr Evdokimov, allegedly pro-Russian deputy head of the MIA, and therefore the “march” is cancelled (Bereza 2014). However, the very fact that the “Right Sector” turns to the language of threats to the regime is illustrative.

The difference of tactics employed by “Svoboda” seems clear: they seemingly do not intend to use direct action, and followed this rhetoric even during Maidan. For instance, while proclaiming the goal of the “national revolution”, Tiahnybok accented on the key role that the Western

support shall play, and that they should “put pressure” on the government via rallies and strikes (Svoboda 2013b) (Svoboda 2013c). Therefore, while retaining the nationalist ideology, Svoboda acted as if it was part of the liberal movement.

To finish this paragraph, it is important to note that while the liberal movement identified itself as “peaceful”, it did not stop them from seizing governmental buildings. In particular, representatives of “Bat’kivschyna” were reported to participate in capturing the Kyiv city council and the trade union centre (Rakurs 2013) and did not oppose the seizure. A different way of behavior was observed during January clashes, when the liberal politicians still called for a peaceful protest while fights on Grushevskogo street were already underway (Euronews 2014).

Argumentation Summary

We have compared the groups of liberals and nationalists on Maidan in four aspects to check whether we can define them as different protest movements that collaborated with each other. It was found out that the purpose of both groups was clearly different in attitude to European integration and to traditional values, just as expected. Political dimension of the ideology was defined to be instrumental in differentiating the movements, as the protests were centered on political issues. The nationalists had a different perception of the regime and the situation, as they were seemingly more disturbed about a possible turn to Russia in foreign policy than about civil rights violations or prospects of European integration. Moreover, in February, when the share of nationalists participating in the protests grew, more protesters were radical in their demands, aiming at ousting Yanukovych and stripping the president from his broad competencies. Finally, the nationalist movement employed different tactics of protest, openly resorting to direct action rather than conducting peaceful demonstrations, unlike liberals. Therefore, considering that the leaders were clearly different, we can conclude that two separate movements, liberal and nationalist, participated in the winter events in Kyiv, cooperating with each other.

Approach Application

“Svoboda”: Special Case

The case of “Svoboda” and their supporters might seem somehow complicated. While their purpose is clearly nationalist, akin to that of the “Right Sector”, their leader was among the three “leaders of the opposition” – together with Yatseniuk and Klitschko. As much as his liberal counterparts, Tiahnybok called for a peaceful protest up until the later stages of the uprising. As for the perceptions, they are quite hard to determine for a single party, as the polls used for these sections were conducted among all protesters. The best we could do is to presume that, as the share of nationalists who participated in the later phases of the protest increased, the change in opinions might be attributed to this increase. While a broad press statement by Andriy Illenko from “Svoboda” related to the “capitulation to Russia” (Svoboda 2013a) might be an indication of the attention given by the party to this issue, we cannot *a priori* declare that the issue of repressions was not as important for the party.

Therefore, we have a complicated case whereby the party leader cooperated with the leaders of the liberal movement, calling for the tactics of protest analogous to that of the liberals; at the same time, the purpose of “Svoboda” corresponds to that of the “Right Sector”. Moreover, a “Svoboda” MP declared that those who started clashes with the riot police on Grushevskogo street were “provocateurs”, even though “those who followed were heroes” [<http://ua.112.ua/politika/vo-svoboda-vmazhaye-iniciatoriv-zitknen-na-vulici-grushevskogo-provokatorami-15674.html>]. Finally, regarding the purpose, in late November, Tiahnybok expressed hopes for the “global community” to “react” at the actions of the “bandit regime [of Yanukovich]” (Svoboda 2013b). This is rhetoric uncharacteristic for a nationalist party. To sum up, the case of “Svoboda” might be an illustration that the border between the two movements might at times be blurred – although, as we defined in the beginning of the article, their purpose allows us to define “Svoboda” as part of the nationalist movement.

“Nationalism Proliferation”

Some authors attempt to prove that the use of Banderite symbolic and slogans justifies calling the uprising “nationalist” (Dyachenko 2014). In particular, the greeting “Glory to Ukraine!” – “To the Heroes glory!”, used by the Ukrainian insurgents during World War II, red-black flags of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, and the mob chant “Who does not jump is a

*moskal*³ can be used as examples of nationalist symbols used at Maidan.

Andreas Umland, in his article for Kyiv Post (2013), criticizes the use of such symbols for "undermining Ukrainian nation-building". Umland's article refers to one of the key arguments used by some nationalists: that, for most protesters, the meaning of these symbols is devoid of ethno-nationalism, and that they utilize these symbols "uncritically". After all, these symbols were used by the Ukrainian insurgents, a liberationist movement; and it is understandable why they were reused in times where people felt threatened by the authoritarian regime, especially considering that this regime received backing from Russia.

The fact that the two nationalist candidates in the presidential campaign received less than 2% of the vote between them shows that their ideology did not receive massive support in the society; on the other hand, Poroshenko and Tymoshenko, the two candidates clearly representing the liberal movement, captured over two thirds of the vote between them (CVK). While "nationalism proliferation" might have occurred in symbols and slogans, there is hardly any reason to suggest that political support for nationalism increased. Usage of a nationalist symbol, such as a red-black flag, does not allow us to automatically define a person as "nationalist". It might simply mean following a trend that might have been set up by the radicals; patriotism has already been called "fashion" in today's Ukraine (Persnyi Nacionalnyi 2014). Therefore, while it is true that nationalist symbols, much like nationalist ideas, can create misunderstanding within the society, we must not fall into false generalizations by associating these symbols with the ideology of the whole uprising in Ukraine. Instead, we can talk of the two movements that both employed the nationalist symbols to capture public attention and mobilize the protesters.

Avoiding Liberal Generalization

While some commentators attempt to attribute nationalist ideology to the protesters at Maidan overall, thereby making a false generalization, there is an opposite mistake often made by Ukrainian and Western commentators. Their vision of the uprising is that "people stood for their rights", "willing to be in Europe". The abovementioned quote of Victoria Nuland, who saw the

³ A derogatory term for Russians used in Ukraine.

protesters as “people of Ukraine who see their future in Europe”, fails to stand the test of the opinion polls, which show that only 49% of people fighting at Grushevskogo street saw signing the EU-Ukraine association agreement as an important demand of the protest (Democratic Initiatives 2013). As the rightists who were active in the fighting either deny European integration (“Right Sector”) or see it in a similar way to European far-right (“Svoboda”), such a generalization seems even more far-fetched.

In a Ukrainian Pravda column, a commentator mentions that “Maidan became symbol of fighting for own rights” (Babych 2014). Again, as we defined above, there is no particular reason for such a generalization, as the nationalist movement seemed relatively more interested in escaping rapprochement with Russia than in guaranteeing civil rights. New York Times, either simplifying or failing to understand this, speaks of Ukraine as the “pivot of a struggle between individual freedom and imprisoning empire” (Cohen 2014). It is however hard to seek individual freedom protection from the parties who speak of “spiritual health”, or, as in case of “Svoboda” with their constitutional project, who struggle to “ban (...) cultivation of immoral (...) behavior, (...) sexual perversions and everything contradicting the spirituality of the Ukrainian nation” (Article 18) and allow the state to intervene into one’s personal life if it “is of immoral character” (Svoboda 2007).

Olexandra Matviychuk, from Centre of Civil Liberties, attempted to state that “Euromaidan was essentially evolved as struggle for human rights”, and that the attempts to “give the seal of resistance a fascist face” were “cynical” (Open Society Foundation 2014). While it is clear that attempts of attributing nationalist, xenophobic, or fascist ideology to all the protesters are not grounded well enough, the opposite statements look either too naïve or deliberately whitewashing the protesters.

Again, our approach postulates that Euromaidan was a complicated intertwine of two protest movements, and failing to mention either one or thinking of them as a unitary movement prevents us from correct interpretations of both the protest events themselves and their aftermath. As Umland correctly mentioned (Umland 2013), the usage of nationalist symbols causes erroneous attribution of nationalist ideas to all the protesters. The following events in Donbas, where the local population supported separatists in the aftermath of Euromaidan, illustrate that this misattribution did happen. Considering that the current government in

Ukraine was formed by the leaders of the protest, we can easily understand how the government that mostly consists of liberal politicians turned into a “fascist junta”, a term used both by the Russian media (Pravda 2014) and the separatists (Zaria Novorosii 2014). We see that the failure to apply the “two movement” approach caused political turmoil, and it would be wise at least for the scientists not to make the same mistakes.

The Next Revolution

The nationalist movement, whose perception is that the occurring changes are insufficient, and who are aimed at a “national state” rather than a compromise, have already threatened the incumbent Ukrainian regime to continue the revolution. Ultimatums issued by the “Right Sector” and discussed above might be an illustrative example here.

The current government, in particular, has declared that the local authorities would be able to exercise the freedom of regulating humanitarian affairs, including language and culture (Dzerkalo Tyzhnia 2014); it would be possible that some areas will introduce a “special status” for Russian (Radio Svoboda 2014c). This might signal constitutionalization of the “regional language” concept, considering that Poroshenko openly criticized the parliament’s attempt to cancel the bill that allowed using Russian as a “regional language” in certain areas (Korrespondent 2014). Finally, special language rights were expected to be granted to the occupied territories of Donbas, according to the second Minsk agreement (Liga.net 2015).

While humanitarian issues are not a priority today, as the Ukrainian anti-terrorist operation gathers support from all the ideological camps, they might become hot and disputed again during the upcoming electoral campaign, and a factor for the nationalists to mobilize their electorate. In particular, “Right Sector”, “Svoboda” and the Radical Party (headed by Oleg Lyashko) might be expected to raise the language and culture issue in their campaign.

Another issue where the nationalists can show themselves as a radical alternative to the existing government is the Minsk agreement. As the sides agreed, certain parts of Donbas territories – ones that are currently controlled by the separatists – would receive a certain “special status” (Ukrainian Pravda 2014b). There is also a widespread dissatisfaction

with the “liberal” government, the slow pace of reforms it was bound to implement, the lack of immediate success in the anti-terrorist operation in Eastern Ukraine (despite Poroshenko’s promises in early June to finish the ATO in a week (Espresso.tv 2014) (Senchenko 2015). Finally, the delay in implementation of the EU-Ukraine association agreement also caused speculations about the “third Maidan” (TSN 2014c). As reported by Gorshenin Institute in October 2014, 38.1% of Ukrainians would support the “third Maidan” if the government does not fulfill its promises (LB.ua 2014). Therefore, there is a chance of conflict between the two movements looks set to follow, and we should be ready to face and correctly interpret this conflict.

Oleh Lyashko is a prime example of exploiting this mood. The “Radical Party” is rather a one-man project. It is evidenced by the party’s full name, “Oleg Lyashko’s Radical Party” and the fact that the party’s deputy head and #2 in its electoral list for the 2014 elections (Ukrainian Pravda 2014c), Andriy Lozovyi, is a 25-years-old consultant, only known for “helping to organize Euromaidan” (Politrada 2014). The other MP candidates in the top-10 electoral list for the 2014 elections included two military commanders, a singer, a swimmer, and a volunteer – quite clearly, the party is attempting to be as populist as possible.

As analysts state, Lyashko attempts to create an image of a “fighter”, a “hero”, while making right-wing populist statements. In particular, he called the ceasefire “treacherous” (Lyashko 2014a) and the delay in implementing the association agreement “treason of the Maidan ideals” (Lyashko 2014b). The “Aidar” battalion, commanded by Serhiy Melnychuk who received a place in the top-10 of the Radical Party, includes representatives of the “White Hammer” (Hlukhovsky 2014), a radical nationalist organization, and Ihor Mosiychuk, a nationalistic journalist, supported Lyashko back in May (Mosiychuk 2014) and eventually got onto the party list.

Again, while, judging in the paradigm that viewed the protesters as a unitary movement, it seems to be a schism among the protesters. However, if we apply the interpretation given in this article, the Radical Party can rather be viewed as a party that exploits “fashion” for patriotism, together with the revolutionary mood of the people disappointed by the slow pace of the reforms. There was no schism because Lyashko was never part of the Maidan trio; instead of the “peaceful protest” rhetoric, he was calling to

direct action by symbolically giving out pitchforks, symbol of a peasant revolt (Segodnia 2014). As for the perceptions, in late February, Lyashko remembered “the fate of Ghaddafi” in his talk at Maidan, again showing himself as a politician with radical rhetoric. In the 2014 elections, his party called for banning Russian media, and visa regime with Russia, among other points of the program (Radykalna Partiya Olega Lyashka 2014). Therefore, we can ascribe the Radical Party to the nationalist movement – even understanding that, in essence, nationalist and revolutionary slogans are used by them for populist purposes.

In a similar fashion, anti-government right-wing slogans are used by some unaligned MPs in the newly-elected parliament. In particular, they include Borys Filatov – close ally of Igor Kolomoys’kyi, Ukraine’s richest oligarch – and Volodymyr Parasyuk, a Euromaidan activist, who entered a new parliamentary group “Ukrop”⁴ together with the “Right Sector” leader Dmytro Yarosh and its ex-member Boryslav Bereza, as well as Andriy Biletskyi, an active neo-Nazi (Shekhovtsov 2014) elected in one of the majoritarian constituencies (iPress 2014). By defining themselves as the “patriotic opposition”, they draw a line between themselves and the acting MPs among the ex-Party of Regions politicians who are now also in opposition to the government. “Ukrop”, together with the “Svoboda” MPs, aims to criticize the government for lack of patriotic action – or, as Bereza put it, “are dissatisfied with what is going on” (iPress 2014).

Conclusion

As Euromaidan protests passed, there were a number of erroneous attempts to generalize them as being either a “civil rights” movement, or a nationalist “overthrow”. In this study, we used four basic criteria of a social movement derived from a definition by Meyer and Tarrow: leaders, purpose, perception of the situation and the opponents, and tactics of action. Upon that, we compared those groups that could have been called liberal and nationalist respectively to test whether they can be defined as separate movements.

It is evident that they had different leaders – although Tiahnybok, the leader of “Svoboda” was closer to the liberal leaders of the protest. In

⁴ “Ukrop” (translated as “dill”) is a derogatory name for anti-Russian Ukrainians, commonly used by Russians since 2014. The parliamentary group ironically adapted that name, also stating that “Ukrop” stands for “Ukrainian Opposition”.

fact, leader of the nationalist movement, Yarosh, criticized all of them for being incapable to become “leaders of the nation”.

As for the purpose and therefore the ideology, both groups showed different attitude to individual freedoms and traditional values, as well as to foreign policy. The nationalists either preferred to avoid European integration overall (“Right Sector”) or strive for a different concept of Europe, akin to that of the European far right (“Svoboda”). On the other hand, they stressed on turning away from Russia more than UDAR or “Bat’kivschyna”, the parties which represented the liberal group. The nationalist parties used such terms as “spiritual health” or “spirituality of the Ukrainian nation”, and both of them declared tackling threats to this “spiritual health”. Liberal parties of Euromaidan avoided this language, promoting freedom of an individual instead, and, unlike the rightists, refusing to use bans to contain the ongoing globalization processes. Differences in the social-economic dimension of ideology were also present, as UDAR and “Right Sector” seemingly were more economically liberal, while “Bat’kivschyna”, together with “Svoboda” leaned to the left. However, as we found out, the protests concentrated on political, rather than social, issues, and therefore the political dimension of the ideology defined purpose of the movement.

Determining perceptions of separate parties was relatively complicated. The liberals accused the regime in violating civil rights, thereby perceiving themselves as a protest movement oppressed by the authoritarian regime. On the other hand, nationalist referred to the regime as “dictatorial” and installing “internal occupation”, and therefore, already since mid-January, declared strife to overthrow it. Comparing results of the polls conducted among protesters in relatively December with that of the polls conducted at the barricades in February, when seemingly more nationalists participated in the protest, we see that more people were only ready to leave Maidan after all of their requirements were met. (This included ousting Yanukovich.) On the other hand, fewer protesters considered signing the EU-Ukraine association agreement important. As for motivations to participate in protest actions, more protesters were afraid of a potential turn of Ukraine to Russia as compared with December, while fewer reported themselves coming to Maidan due to repressions against other protesters.

Finally, while the liberals called for “peaceful protest” up until the latest phases of the protest, different tactics of protest were used by the nationalist movement, as they resorted to direct action already in December, and declared fighting to “overthrow the regime” in January. The exception here is “Svoboda”, as they called for a peaceful protest together with the liberals.

Considering that differences in all four criteria are evident, we can conclude that, during the events of Euromaidan, two separate yet cooperating protest movements existed, rather than a single unitary movement. This approach is important to correctly understand both Euromaidan itself and its aftermath. For instance, we are now able to disprove false generalizations that attempt to attribute either nationalist or liberal ideology to the uprising as a whole. Exactly these generalizations, calling the protest movement “peaceful”, “striving for individual freedoms”, “pro-European”, from one side, and “nationalist”, “aggressive” from the other side, caused a conflict with no winners. They allowed certain politicians to call all the protesters “Banderites” because the nationalist movement participated in the uprising and nationalist symbols were uncritically used – therefore, this false generalization was extended to the government installed by the leaders of the protest. In turn, the possibility of living in a country ruled by a “fascist junta” brought popularity to the separatist movement in Donbas.

As scientists, we are obliged to be more critical in our judgments. The “two-movement approach” offered in this paper allows us to analyze the events of Euromaidan and its aftermath more effectively. It might also be useful in analyzing and correctly interpreting the events that are yet to come. In particular, the recent rise of anti-governmental, right-wing populism in Ukraine, which might have been erroneously interpreted as a schism in the “Euromaidan camp”, can now be viewed as a continuation of the nationalist movement. Overall, using the offered approach, we shall be able to answer the “what about” questions without falling into false generalizations.

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