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**Jekaterynczuk Andrzej****EUROMAIDAN IN THE CONTEXT OF MANUEL CASTELLS' NETWORKS OF OUTRAGE AND HOPE: SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN THE INTERNET AGE**

*The paper traces the structure of the Euromaidan protests of the late 2013 and early 2014 in Kyiv, Ukraine. The author attempts to compare the phenomenon of Euromaidan to other mass protest actions or the revolutions in the network society of the modern world as described by the Spanish sociologist Manuel Castells. The analysis of sociological data concerning Euromaidan and the Ukrainian society in general allow to treat Ukraine's 'Revolution of Dignity' as a 'rhizomatic', or a 'digital' revolution.*

**Key words:** Euromaidan, Revolution of Dignity, network society, rhizomatic revolution, digital revolution.

**Єкатеринчук А.****ЄВРОМАЙДАН У КОНТЕКСТІ ПРАЦІ МАНУЕЛЯ КАСТЕЛЬСА «МЕРЕЖІ ОБУРЕННЯ Й НАДІЇ: СУСПІЛЬНІ РУХИ В ЕПОХУ ІНТЕРНЕТУ»**

*У статті аналізується структура Євромайдану кінця 2013 – початку 2014 рр. у Києві. Порівнюється феномен Євромайдану з іншими акціями масового протесту чи революціями у мережевому суспільстві сучасного світу, які описує іспанський соціолог Мануель Кастельс. Аналіз соціологічних даних, присвячених Євромайдану та українському суспільству загалом, дозволяє сприймати Революцію гідності та Євромайдан як приклад «ризомної» чи «цифрової» революції.*

**Ключові слова:** Євромайдан, Революція гідності, мережеве суспільство, ризомна революція, цифрова революція.

**Екатэрынчук А.****ЄВРОМАЙДАН В КОНТЕКСТЕ КНИГИ МАНУЕЛЯ КАСТЕЛЬСА «СЕТИ ВОЗМУЩЕНИЯ И НАДЕЖДЫ: ОБЩЕСТВЕННЫЕ ДВИЖЕНИЯ В ЭПОХУ ИНТЕРНЕТА»**

*В данной статье анализируется структура Евромайдана конца 2013 – начала 2014 гг. в Киеве. Сравнивается феномен Евромайдана*

с другими акциями массового протеста или революциями в сетевом обществе современного мира, описанными испанским социологом Мануэлем Кастельсом. Анализ социологических данных, посвященных Евромайдану и украинскому обществу в целом, позволяет расценить Революцию достоинства как пример «ризомной» или «цифровой» революции.

**Ключевые слова:** Евромайдан, Революция достоинства, сетевое общество, ризомная революция, цифровая революция.

On November 21, 2013, civil protests broke out in Kyiv. As it appeared later on, they finally resulted in President Viktor Yanukovich's flight from Ukraine, his removal from power, as well as Russian Federation's occupation of Ukrainian territory and the undeclared Russian-Ukrainian war that, within a year, took the lives of some thousands of Ukrainians, both soldiers and civilians. One of the immediate causes that brought Ukrainians into the streets of Kyiv was a Facebook post by the Ukrainian journalist and blogger Mustafa Nayyem who, on November 21, called on people to protest against the Ukrainian authorities' decision not to sign the Association Agreement with the EU [22]. Protests spread across the country and involved millions of citizens who were dissatisfied with the country's situation, unconditionally demanded changes, democratization and bringing Ukraine closer to the EU, as well as called on to fight with the *ever-present corruption* and demanded to raise the standard of living.

The wave of protests was a surprise not only for the Ukrainian authorities, but also for the political opposition, most of the scholars dealing with social processes, as well as Ukraine's powerful neighbour Russia and its president Vladimir Putin. The present paper aims to describe the Kyivan Euromaidan of the late 2013/early 2014 from the point of view of social science. I will try to outline the socio-demographic, professional and cultural structure of the Euromaidan movement, to present its causes, motivations and demands of its participants, as well as to show its evolution.

Since November 2013, many commentaries and interpretations concerning those events in Ukraine have been published both in Ukraine and abroad. Many of them, however, were primarily of a journalistic nature. They often contained contradictory and conflicting arguments. For example, while some authors treated the outburst of social unrest in Kyiv and the whole Ukraine as a spontaneous phenomenon, others claimed that those events were initiated by the Ukrainian political op-

position and inspired by the West, which was to call in question the protests' spontaneity and imply that this was a coup triggered by the West, an illegal removal of the legally elected president Yanukovych from power.

As Fabio Belafatti claims, the Moscow-centric perspective of some Western commentators who suggest that the Ukrainian society is incapable of a spontaneous uprising for freedom and dignity when not inspired by any 'centre' steering the whole process, is a manifestation of the so-called 'new orientalism'. In his opinion, it is thinking in imperial terms that results in negating the subjectivity of most of Eastern European nations beside Russia presented as '**the only noble nation of Eastern Europe**' [18]. Belafatti's considerations are based on Edward W. Said's concept of Orientalism [24].

Some doubts also arose as to whether the Euromaidan movement represented the whole Ukraine or it was rather an expression of dissatisfaction on the part of the radical or even extremist groups representing a minority of the society and mainly the western part of Ukraine. The phenomenon of the 2013/14 Euromaidan a.k.a Maidan inevitably raises questions about similarities and differences with other massive expressions of civil disobedience over the last years. Some commentators treat the Euromaidan movement as a specifically Ukrainian, unique phenomenon rooted in the tradition of the Zaporozhian Sich [1]. Indeed, the events of the late 2013 and the early 2014, in the first place, bring to mind the 2004 Orange Revolution in Ukraine that also began at the Independence Square in Kyiv. Some scholars, however, have more than a local perspective. In my attempt to describe the Euromaidan movement and mass protests in Kyiv and all over Ukraine, I refer to the approach of Manuel Castells, who focuses his attention on social movements in the framework of the *networking of social life*. To describe them, this renowned sociologist uses such notions as *rhizomatic revolution* and *digital revolution* [19].

The difficulty of describing the problem formulated in this way lies in the fact that the process in question is relatively recent and has not yet finished. One can still observe its development and results. The difficulties in describing the Euromaidan revolt and its evolution are pointed out by the leading Ukrainian sociologist Volodymyr Paniotto [9, p. 21–23]. A relatively small number of strictly scholarly papers dealing with this issue have been published so far. Given a rather limited number of scholarly resources on this topic, I will refer to commentaries and opinions on the civil unrest in Kyiv and the whole Ukraine expressed by

leading representatives of social sciences in Ukraine, mainly sociologists.

The empirical basis for the description of the Euromaidan protests is provided by the three surveys conducted among the protesters in Kyiv. The surveys were conducted jointly by the Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation (DIF) and the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS) on December 7 and 8, 2013 (a total of 1037 Euromaidan participants selected as a random sample were polled), December 20, 2013 (a total number of respondents was 515, sampling represented all permanent locations of Maidan Nezalezhnosti), and February 3, 2014 (a total of 502 persons were polled at every stationary location at Maidan). The repeated nature of the survey allows to observe how the Euromaidan movement was developing and how it responded to the actions taken by the Ukrainian authorities, including the use of force.

The Kyivan Maidan was changing under the influence of external factors, of which the reactions of President Viktor Yanukovich and Prime Minister Mykola Azarov were the most important. It evolved under the influence of the growing repressiveness of the government and the security agencies. Sociologists who surveyed Euromaidan participants in Kyiv distinguished three stages of the protest movement. The first stage called Maidan the Rally lasted to mid-December 2013 and included protests caused by the non-signing of the EU Association Agreement in Vilnius and the brutal beating of defenseless students on the night of 29 to 30 November 2013. The late December, when protest participants settled at the Independence Square, was the period of Maidan the Camp. At that time, the government did not yet take large-scale brutal measures aiming to disperse the protesters. The third stage was Maidan the Sich (being a reference to the tradition of the Zaporozhian Sich). Especially in February 2014, Maidan the Sich became the arena of regular clashes between protesters, on one side, and riot police and internal military forces loyal to President Yanukovich and the government, on the other side. Several dozen protesters were killed as live ammunition was used against protesters.

According to the Ukrainian historian Yaroslav Hrytsak, the 2013/14 Euromaidan should not be treated as a specifically Ukrainian 'invention', but should be considered within a framework of some broader global trends. Prof. Hrytsak points out similarities and differences between the Euromaidan and the Maidan of 2004. While both revolutionary events features the same actors, the main difference between the Orange Revolution and the Euromaidan lies in the emergence of a new

generation in the Ukrainian society. These ‘peers of independence’ have never known life under the Soviet rule and adhere to other values than their parents and grandparents. Taking these differences into account, one can see the similarities between the Euro Revolution, or Revolution of Dignity in Ukraine, on one hand, and the Occupy movement, youth protests in Brazil, the Gezi Park protests in Turkey, the Arab Spring or the manifestation *at the Bolotnaya Square in Moscow* [3].

The average age of participants of Maidan the Sich was 37. The overwhelming majority were young and middle-aged people (people aged between 15 and 29 made up 33 percent, and those between 30 and 54 made up 56 percent of the total number of protest participants). Given a more dangerous situation at Maidan the Sich, the percent of demonstrators aged between 30 and 54 grew at the expense of younger and older people (see Table 1).

**Table 1. Age of the Euromaidan protests participants.**

	<b>Maidan the Rally</b>	<b>Maidan the Camp</b>	<b>Maidan the Sich</b>
15 to 29	38	34.1	33.2
30 to 54	49	52.0	56.0
55 and older	13	13.09.2015	10.08.2015

Source: Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation (DIF) [24].

Manuel Castells, while describing social movements in the network society, analyses the ‘Revolution for liberty and dignity’ in Tunisia, the Egyptian Revolution, the Arab uprisings, the Indignados movement in Spain, Occupy Wall Street, the so-called ‘Kitchenware Revolution’ in Iceland and so on, and tries to find their common features. Trying to understand the mechanism of the ‘Revolution for liberty and dignity’, he points out: (1) the existence of an active group of unemployment college graduates, who led the revolt, bypassing any formal leadership; (2) the presence of a strong cyberactivism culture and the possibility of the open critique of the regime in the long term; (3) a relatively high rate of diffusion of Internet use [19, p. 29].

Looking for common features among the mentioned movements in Iceland and Tunisia, Castells emphasizes the role of mobile phones and social networks on the Internet that played a major role in spreading images and messages, the mobilization of society, and fostering public

debate. The protests are often triggered by some dramatic event: an economic collapse, a self-immolation, a brutal police action etc. [19, p. 45]. Movements of this type are usually initiated and led not by radicals, but by people of moderate views. For example, in Egypt, the lead was taken by representatives of the impoverished middle class with high percentage of women, and later they were joined by poor people hit by inflation. The demands articulated by protesters included those of increasing the standard of living and democratization of the country, both demands being closely connected with each other [19, p. 95–96].

The events at the Independence Square in Kyiv fit perfectly into this scenario of protests. The initial purpose of the Euromaidan protesters was to force the government to sign the EU Association Agreement. In the absence of reaction on the part of the authorities, the intensity of protests decreased and they were expected to quiet down. The situation changed with the beating of protesting defenceless students by the Berkut riot police on the night of 29 to 30 November 2013. This event made the initially pro-European and pro-EU demonstrations evolve into an unprecedented *antigovernment protest*.

Surveyors asked respondents about their motivation of joining the Maidan protests (see Table 6). The three most important reasons for participation in Euromaidan were, in the following sequence: fierce repressions of the authorities against participants of protests, the refusal of Viktor Yanukovich to sign the Association Agreement with the EU and the wish to change the life in the country. It is noteworthy that in the first survey conducted at Maidan, the answer «The wish to change the authorities in Ukraine» was only the fourth preference. It is clear therefore that the main aim of demonstrators was not so much to change the authorities than to change the way of governance. The association with the EU was treated, on one hand, as a symbol of democracy and better living, and on the other hand, as an instrument which would force political elites to change the style of government and respect the fundamental rights of citizens. The significance of the desire for change in the country increased slightly only during the most violent attempts to disperse Maidan the Sich. The threat to life and health of the protest participants by repressive measures of the authorities only slightly decreased the significance of Viktor Yanukovich's refusal to sign the Association Agreement with the EU as a motivation for their participation in the protests. This is shown in Table 2.

**Table 2. What made you come to Maidan?**

	<b>Maidan the Rally</b>	<b>Maid- an the Camp</b>	<b>Maid- an the Sich</b>
The refusal of Viktor Yanukovych to sign the Association Agreement with the EU	53.5	40	47.0
Fierce repressions of the authorities against protest participants	69.6	69	61.3
Opposition leaders appeals	5.4	6.7	2.8
The wish to change the authorities in the country	39.1	38.9	45.6
The wish to change the life in the country	49.9	36.2	51.1
The solidarity with friends, colleagues, relatives, who are also at Maidan	6.02.2015	4.1	3.7
Rollback of democracy, the threat of dictatorship	18.9	13.7	17.5
It is fun and interesting at Maidan	2.2	1.2	0.4
The wish to take revenge upon the authorities for everything they do in the country	5.2	9.6	9.8
The threat that Ukraine will join the Customs Union and in general will turn towards Russia	16.9	14.4	20.0
Money that I was paid (was promised to be paid)	0.3	0.2	0
Other (what exactly)	3.3	8.2	4.6
It is difficult to answer	0.5	0	0

Source: Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation (DIF) [24].

It is symptomatic that appeals of the parliamentary opposition leaders are very rarely mentioned as a reason for joining the protests. It was a valid reason only for about three to seven percent of respondents. It confirms a lack of trust not only in the ruling camp, but in the political class en bloc and in all the institutions associated with the sphere of politics. Thus, the survey results cited above undermine the assumption that the Euromaidan was the work of the parliamentary opposition aiming mere-

ly to seize power in the state while leaving the quality of political life unchanged. They also dismantle the argument that people were paid for their participation in the Euromaidan protests. Money paid (or promised to be paid) was mentioned among the reasons for participation in the protests by maximum 0.3 percent of respondents. Thus, this is a figure which is very close to statistical error. The leaders of the protest are not politicians, but social activists and journalists, which makes the events at Kyiv's Independence Square similar to the revolutions described by Castells (e.g. those in Egypt and Tunisia).

The apolitical nature of the Maidan movement, especially on its earlier stage, is pointed out by Wojciech Konończuk i Tadeusz A. Olszański, the authors of the study published by the Warsaw-based Centre for Eastern Studies (OSW). Initially, the protests were of an anti-party character with only Ukrainian national flags and the EU flags being seen at rallies [21]. It may be considered symbolic that initially two Euromaidans functioned side by side: the first one, located at the Independence Square, was a grassroots non-formal initiative of social activists and students, while the second one was organized by the leaders of the parliamentary opposition at the European Square some several hundred metres away. The two Euromaidans merged into one, or rather that of the opposition joined that of activists and students on November 26, 2013 [15].

Since then, three leaders of the parliamentary opposition, Arseniy Yatsenyuk, Vitali Klitschko and Oleh Tyahnybok became the official voice of Maidan, but never got full support and trust of the protests participants. As the authors of the mentioned OSW report claim, there was lack of one powerful leader of the 2013/14 Maidan protests who would be recognized as an authority, as it was during the 2004 Orange Revolution. This had to result in problems in communicating and articulating expectancies. Konończuk and Olszański rightly observe that there are no reliable sources which might demonstrate the political views of demonstrators.

The authors also point out the deep roots of Maidan in Ukrainian national and patriotic symbolics, emphasizing the fact that the red-and-black banner of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army gained the status of an all-national symbol, deprived of any radical and xenophobic content, unlikely to fall on fertile ground at Maidan [21]. This observation is particularly relevant in the context of the large-scale propaganda campaign led first by the Party of Regions and then by the Kremlin aiming to convince public opinion in Ukraine, Russia, and the West that Maidan was the work of extremists, fascists and radicals emblemized

by the Right Sector [11; 16]. Following the initiative of the historian Andreas Umland, a group of leading intellectuals, scholars and experts who had been working on Ukrainian issues for years, both from Ukraine and abroad, signed a collective statement «Kyiv's Euromaidan Is A Liberationist And Not Extremist Mass Action Of Civic Disobedience» published in the Kyiv-based Den newspaper. The text was an expression of disagreement with the groundless accusations of extremism and fascism leveled against Euromaidan in order to discredit the protest movement [23]. Historical myths and a Moscow-centered perspective presenting a barrier to western observers who tried to understand the essence of the Ukrainian reality were aptly described by, among others, Timothy Snyder [13].

The apolitical nature of the Maidan protests is confirmed by survey results. Table 3 shows that the overwhelming majority of protesters were people who came to Kyiv on their own, not being organized by any political party or civil movement. Such people constituted 92 percent of participants at Maidan the Rally, 76 percent at Maidan the Camp and 83.5 percent at Maidan the Sich. Thus, the answers shown in Table 3 confirm the earlier conclusions about Maidan as a definitely spontaneous and grassroots initiative.

**Table 3. If you are visiting, was your journey organized or you traveled on your own? (poll results).**

	<b>Maidan the Rally</b>	<b>Maid- an the Camp</b>	<b>Maidan the Sich</b>
Organized – by one of the parties	1,8	11,9	3,0
Organized – by one of public organizations (or movements)	6,3	11,9	13,3
I came on my own	91,9	76,1	83,5

Source: Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation (DIF) [24].

Castells, while referring to the example of the 2011 Egyptian Revolution, recognizes the importance of the live streaming technology which enables live coverage of events and following them, and frees social actors from the authorities' monopoly in information policy. Besides, in every case, an impulse that appears in the virtual space presumes – sooner or later – a takeover of the physical space, such as squares

and places of symbolic significance for a particular community. As a result, community solidarity is transferred from the cyber space to the real world [19, p. 57–59]. In this context, the Internet stands as a safe space where networks of outrage and hope connect and, extending their reach to the physical space, get into interaction with the society. This mechanism makes it possible to provide an alternative to the networks of power [19, p. 81].

The presence of new movements on the Internet results in an unprecedented intensity of artistic activities and political creativity (satirical videos, Internet memes and vlogs were created which played both soothing and mobilizing roles). This form of activity was especially helpful in addressing and mobilizing the youth population [19, p. 107]. Another common feature of the discussed movements is their horizontal multicentred structure. They lack one leader, which is treated by some critics as their weakness, while others emphasize the regime's difficulty in suppressing them in view of the lack of a single decision-making centre. Castell calls these new social movements with similar characteristics in the networked world 'digital revolutions' [19, p. 103–107] or 'rhizomatic revolutions' [19, p. 140–145].

The above outlined internal structure of the Euromaidan movement reported by sociological surveys allows to analyze it as a form of global tendencies described by Castells and not as a local phenomenon un-found elsewhere in the world. Yaroslav Hrytsak refers to the World Values Survey [26] demonstrating that in the Ukrainian society, the centre of gravity is being transferred from survival-directed values typical of closed societies to self-expression values typical of open societies. At the same time, a reverse process takes place in Russia where the focus is shifted to the values associated with a closed society. Ukraine's shifting towards western values became possible due to a steady economic growth up to 2008 that raised and strengthened the middle class. But the economic growth alone is not a sufficient factor. Within the same period, the middle class emerged in Russia as well. To make the evolution from the closed society's values to those of the open society possible, economic growth should be accompanied by democracy [3].

In his video interview *published on YouTube* on November 25, 2013, Hrytsak stresses that Euromaidan is the work of the young generation with college degrees but without future. Its representatives have no opportunity to make a career when not turning to corruption and nepotism. In Hrytsak's opinion, Euromaidan is a rebellion of young mobile people who are active users of social network services and who have reasons

and ambitions to live like middle-class people, but in Ukraine they are more and more like the proletariat. These people are aiming at changing not politicians but the state, and this is where their scepticism towards the hitherto political elites stems from [4]. The oligarchy system in Ukraine was a barrier for the generation of the young and the active travelling abroad and speaking foreign languages. This system effectively fought against bottom-up entrepreneurship, while the mechanisms of corruption reached the most advanced level among political and business elites which, after all, can hardly be separated from each other.

In Ukraine, like in other countries examined by Castells, a huge role was played by independent media epitomized by the Hromadske. tv *internet television channel*. The Euromaidan events, including the attempts to brutally and violently disperse the protesters, were live streamed to audiences all over the world and commented on an ongoing basis in the cyber space, at the so-called virtual Euromaidans, e.g. on Facebook. This allowed for mobilization of Ukrainians in Ukraine and abroad, encompassing recent migrants from Ukraine as well as Ukrainian national minority communities on different continents. Both groups became genuine ambassadors of Ukraine's democratic and pro-European aspirations in the world.

As Castells observes, digital revolutions were born in societies with *a high level of access to the Internet*. Tunisia and Egypt that are at the top of Internet access rankings in Africa may serve as examples. In this regard, Ukraine occupies one of the last places in Europe, although its indicators in absolute values are comparable to those in Tunisia, Egypt and Turkey. According to data provided by GfK Ukraine, in 2013, 50 percent of Ukrainian citizens were Internet users, and their number increased by as many as six percent since 2012 [2; 20]. The June 2013 report of the *Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation* shows that the Internet became the major source of political information for more than 21 percent of Ukrainians [12].

Euromaidan is similar to rhizomatic revolutions in terms of socio-professional structure and level of education of the protests participants. According to *official governmental statistics*, one in fifteen Ukrainian citizens was registered as a private entrepreneur [5]. At Maidan, private entrepreneurs (businessmen) constituted about 10 to 17 percent at the time of clashes with the police, which would mean their overrepresentation among the protest participants.

**Table 4. Education of the Euromaidan protests participants.**

	<b>Maidan the Rally</b>	<b>Maidan the Camp</b>	<b>Maidan the Sich</b>
Incomplete secondary school	0.8	2.2	4.3
Secondary and vocational school	22.1	38.9	43.1
Incomplete higher education (student)	14.4	10.3	9.5
Higher education	62.7	48.7	43.1

Source: Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation (DIF) [24].

**Table 5. Occupation of the Euromaidan protests participants.**

	<b>Maidan the Rally</b>	<b>Maidan the Camp</b>	<b>Maid- an the Sich</b>
Manager (deputy manager) of the enterprise, institution, department	8.0	4.2	4.5
Specialist (with higher or vocational education)	39.5	21.7	26.7
Worker of law enforcement agencies, military man	1.4	2.7	3.0
Entrepreneur (businessman)	9.3	12.3	17.4
Clerk of servitorial staff (without special education)	2.4	2	4.2
Worker	6.7	14.4	15.2
Agricultural worker, farmer	0.6	1.9	2.9
Pupil	0.4	1.1	–
Student	13.2	10.1	6.2
Non-working pensioner	9.4	11.2	7.4
Housewife	1.5	0.1	0.3
I do not have permanent employment, but have several odd jobs	3.1	8.5	4.5
I am temporarily unemployed and do not have any sources of income	2.4	7.7	8.5
Other	2.3	2.1	0.2

Source: Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation (DIF) [24].

On the one hand, it may appear surprising, since this very professional category has much to lose. But on the other hand, it is businessmen who, along with students (or, more broadly, the youngest generation born already in the independent Ukraine), are most interested in an effective eradication of corruption that kills entrepreneurship and blocks the development of the middle class in Ukraine. Most of the protests participants had a higher education. In fact, Euromaidan was a representation of the whole Ukrainian society. On the one hand, we can see that the protests were driven by young people and those who aspired to the middle class, businessmen and qualified professionals clamouring for democracy and fight against corruption. On the other hand, manual workers and the unemployed who took to the streets were probably more concerned with welfare issues, but at the same time understood the importance of a joint action against the oppressive brutal authorities.

Maidan was not a homogeneous phenomenon in terms of language used by its participants. The protesters included both *Ukrainophones* and *Russophones* (see Table 6). Almost half of the demonstrators at Maidan, during all three stages of the protests, were people who spoke Russian at home or were bilingual, speaking Russian and Ukrainian in equal measure. It can be seen that the percentage of Ukrainian-speaking participants of the protests grew when the Independence Square became a less safe place (Maidan the Sich).

**Table 6. What language do you mainly speak at home?**

	<b>Maidan the Rally</b>	<b>Maidan the Camp</b>	<b>Maidan the Sich</b>
Russian	25.9	19.6	15.6
Ukrainian	54.6	52.5	59.0
Both Russian and Ukrainian	18.6	27.6	24.0
Other	0.4	0.3	0.8
It is difficult to answer	0.5	0	0.5

Source: Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation (DIF) [24].

This is particularly relevant when we try to consider Euromaidan in terms of digital revolutions. Castells, while analysing revolutions in Tunisia and Iceland, emphasizes the fact that these states' societies are ethnically and culturally homogeneous, and heterogeneity of a society can significantly increase the chances of a revolution for success, pro-

viding support of different social groups that adhere to different values [19, p. 57]. The lack of linguistic unity among the citizens of Ukraine did not split the society, although linguistic and ethnic heterogeneity was especially politicized by the pro-Yanukovich party, as well as by pro-Moscow elements and *the Kremlin propaganda machine*. Sociological studies, therefore, debunk yet another myth. The discussed survey results show that the mentioned propaganda activities at the macro level did not produce the expected results.

The analysis of the empirical data concerning Euromaidan and treating the 2013/14 Ukrainian protests in terms of a rhizomatic revolution allows for drawing conclusions that are more than local in scope. The protests that started in Kyiv and spread all over Ukraine within a short period of time aroused immense interest in Russia. Russian sociologists compared the protests in Kyiv to those they had observed earlier in Moscow and Saint Petersburg. They arrived at the conclusion that a sociological portrait of the protesters in Saint Petersburg after the 2011 elections is very similar to that of Kyiv's Maidan of 2013: 66 percent of them were people with higher education, 57 percent were males. There was a minor difference in age between the participants of the two protests. In Saint Petersburg, the average age of the demonstrators was lower than in Kyiv, with as many as 50 percent of them being younger than 30. Middle-aged and older people appeared to be less active. Another difference concerned the level of institutionalization of the protesters. In Saint Petersburg, one third of them declared affiliation with political parties and civil movements, while in Kyiv only about 10 percent of the pollees made similar declarations. Russian sociologists also point out the differences between the protests held in Moscow and Kyiv. The Moscow protest after the 2011 elections was participated mainly by *residents of the capital city and its outskirts*, while residents of Kyiv comprised only about 50 percent of the total number of participants of Maidan the Rally [6]. This may serve as evidence of stronger economic barriers and mental differences between residents of Moscow and Saint Petersburg, on one hand, and the rest of Russia, on the other. Unlike in Ukraine, protests held in the largest and wealthiest cities of Russia do not win mass support in other regions.

On the other side, the Internet access rate in Russia is significantly higher than that in Ukraine (in 2014, it reached 66 percent) [10], which might be a favourable factor in launching mass protests such as those in Ukraine. One can go so far as to draw a bold parallel between the case of Tunisia and Egypt, which, according to Castells, being the most demo-

cratic states in the region infected the culturally similar countries with the virus of a digital revolution and thus caused the Arab Spring, and that of Euromaidan, which may be contagious to the vast, multiethnic, authoritarian and corrupted Russian Federation. It seems that Vladimir Putin, who repeatedly turned to the idea of imposing restrictions on the Internet and increasing the state's control over social network websites, aptly identified the source of threat for the current status quo in Russia [7].

The characteristics of the Euromaidan movement based on sociological surveys and its comparison to digital rhizomatic revolutions in the networked society described by Castells allow to consider Euromaidan as a representation of the whole Ukrainian society. They both reveal its heterogeneity and show features that are common to Euromaidan and other discussed revolutionary events.

The cited survey results show Euromaidan as a grassroots protest guided by values and not by a leader (unlike it was during the 2004 Orange Revolution). Euromaidan thus appears to fit into mechanisms described by Castells as 'networks of outrage and hope'. What is important is its decentralized horizontal structure epitomized by a bottom-up, Internet-based dimension of this form of civil protest. The process is driven by young, active, mobile, entrepreneurial and moderate people who aspire to the middle class. Its distinctive feature is the lack of one decision-making centre and one leader, which may result in organizational chaos, but, on the other hand, raises difficulties for regimes that suppress protests. As one leader is eliminated, there immediately appear next ones in different places. On that account there is hope that democratization of the Ukrainian society is a consistent trend that would be difficult to reverse even by military means. One can formulate even more advanced conclusions here. If the war of Russia against Ukraine is treated as a manifestation of the Kremlin's fear to catch the virus of revolution from Russia's close neighbour, we may soon expect some serious perturbations in the Russian society and/or those of other post-Soviet states. Their scope and intensity will surely depend on whether and, if yes, when key reforms are implemented in Ukraine that result in improving the standard of living of its citizens.

*Translated from Polish by Andrij Saweneć*

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