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TURINYS / CONTENTS

Carnival in Urban Protest Culture:
The Case of Kyiv Early Euromaidan

Iuliia Buyskykh

The paper explores the performative carnival elements of Kyiv's early Euromaidan culture in the framework of the 'protestival' model developed by Graham St John (St John 2008). The timeline of research starts with the beginning of the protest movement in Kyiv and the first student rally in support of European integration on Kyiv's central square, Maidan Nezalezhnosti (November 2013). It ends with the first violent standoff between the protesters and police, resulting in the tragedy of the first deaths among the protesters (January 2014). After that, the nature and direction of protest action have drastically changed, rendering their carnival element utterly irrelevant.

Straipsnyje, naudojantis teoriniu Grahamo St Johno „protestivalio" modeliu (St John 2008), nagrinėjami karnavaliniai elementai, kurie buvo būdingi miesto protesto kultūrai ankstyvuoju Kijevo Euromaidano laikotarpiu. Tyrimas pradėtas prasidėjus protesto judėjimui Kijeve. Tai buvo pirmas eurointegraciją remiantis studentų susibūrimas Nepriklausomybės aikštėje (2013 m. lapkričio mėn.). Tyrimas baigtas prasidėjus pirmam stipriam protestuojančiųjų ir milicijos susidūrimui, per kurį žuvo pirmieji protesto dalyviai (2014 m. sausio mėn.). Šis įvykis visiškai pakeitė šio judėjimo pobūdį ir tikslus, karnavalo elementai pasidarė netinkami.

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Introduction[1]

Former President of Ukraine Victor Yanukovych caused a civic uprising in November 2013 when he decided not to sign an association agreement with the EU. During the 2013–2014 winter the central streets and squares of Kyiv were crowded with indignant people willing to express their protest against the president's decision and the corrupt government that supported it. After hundreds of

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[1] I would like to thank the anonymous reviewer and editors of the journal whose comments and suggestions helped me to improve this study.

years of political unification with the Russian Empire and then the USSR, and a relatively short period of independence, the protestors of Euromaidan insisted that the future vector for their state should definitely be European. At the very beginning of the protest, it was not any political activist or leader who gathered people on Kyiv's main square. It happened to be a spontaneous act of protest that increased due to outraged users of social networks organizing themselves and coming to Maidan Nezalezhnosti square to express their will.

According to Dmitri Gromov, any street political actionism deserves intent observation. It produces numerous social forms and artistic objects, and therefore is of exceptional research interest (Громов 2011: 107). Euromaidan, subsequently also called the Revolution of Dignity by Ukrainian citizens (Shveda 2014: 20), has sparked a huge number of public and academic discussions,[2] reflections, documentary projects, and individual and institutional attempts to classify and explain what happened and its impact on the ensuing tragic events that began to unfold in Ukraine. In my previous publication on Euromaidan (Буйских 2015: 15–45) I touched upon the subject of the changing urban space under the influence of the civil protest and the violent standoff that followed. In particular, I wrote about Kyiv's topology and transformation of the space of its streets, squares, administrative buildings, and religious sites within the context of revolutionary events that took place in the winter of 2013–2014. This paper attempts to describe and systemize carnival elements of urban protest culture vividly manifested during the early period of Euromaidan in Kyiv (21 November 2013–19 January 2014).

Research Objectives, Methods and Ethical Issues

Street protests in support of European integration (local 'Euromaidans' or just 'Maidans'),[3] which turned into protests against the existing corrupt government, took place in other Ukrainian cities as well. For the purposes of this study I selected Kyiv's case because I actively participated in street rallies and therefore had firsthand experience as an eyewitness of the protest. Being involved in civil protests that began to occur in Kyiv at the end of November 2013 as a resident of my state and as a volunteer, I was still conscious that I was in the middle of historical events that constructed an essential field for anthropological research.

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[2] The very first monograph about the Ukrainian crisis in English was by Andrew Wilson and called *Ukraine Crisis: What It Means for the West* (Wilson 2014). See also the book by Ukrainian-Canadian historian Serhy Yekelchyk, *The Conflict in Ukraine: What Everyone Needs to Know* (Yekelchyk 2015). The following volumes are also quite important: Stepanenko, Pylynskyi 2015; Marples, Millis 2015.

[3] 'Maidan' means 'square' in Ukrainian.

The timeline of this study starts with the beginning of the protest movement in Kyiv and the first student rally in support of European integration on Maidan Nezalezhnosti, Kyiv's central square, and ends with the first violent standoff between the protesters and police on Hrushevskoho Street, resulting in the tragedy of the first deaths among the protesters.[4] After that, the nature and direction of protest action drastically changed, rendering their carnival element utterly irrelevant henceforth.

Urban street protest contains both elements of performance and elements of actual carnival. Hence, the Euromaidan phenomenon can be examined as a carnivalesque protest or a 'protestival.' The model of the protestival as a combination of the symbols of the carnival festival was developed by Graham St John. He highlighted that the protestival contains both elements from theater language and practice (performance) and elements of the actual carnival designed to change the world (St John 2008: 167–190). Here I aim to test whether the protestival model can be applied as a research framework for the description of the carnival culture of the Maidan protest movement.

The object of this study includes carnival elements of Maidan culture that I was able to highlight and systemize on the basis of photographs and my own diary of these events. The pictures I had taken and my everyday notes comprised the huge visual and empirical data I aim to analyze here. This paper is based on the principle of participatory action research, which has at its core my observations and emotions as a participant of the protest movement and a volunteer, partially shared on my Facebook page and later published as a book under a pseudonym (Orlova 2014).[5] My research intentions were influenced strongly by the works of Kirsten Hastrup and preliminarily by her concept of reflexivity,

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[4] The first stage of violent confrontation between the demonstrators and the police began on 19 January 2014. During January 22–27 four men were killed (three shot by snipers, one killed by the riot police), and about 150 people were maimed, injured, arrested, or made to disappear. Since that day the spontaneous memorials, dedicated to the memory of the perished, appeared throughout Maidan Nezalezhnosti and the nearest streets and squares in front of the Orthodox churches. On 18 February 2014, the next and the most tragic wave of violence occurred, lasting for two days. The Mariinsky Park near the Ukrainian Parliament, Maidan Nezalezhnosti, and a part of Instytuts'ka Street became one huge area of death for 93 people shot by snipers or killed by the riot police. According to the official statistics of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine, 105 people perished or died of severe injuries during the period of two weeks after 22 January (На Майдані… 2014). However, the volunteer lawyers of the community 'Euromaidan-SOS' promulgated their independent statistics, according to which 121 people perished (Максименко 2014). Those who died at Maidan are now called the Heavenly Hundred (*Nebesna Sotnya*) in Ukraine.

[5] The use of personal experience as a source to describe the revolutionary events in the city, where the researcher was both an eyewitness of social resistance, is well-known in anthropology. In particular, this is the blog of the German anthropologist Samuli Schielke dedicated to the events of the Egyptian revolution in 2011 (Schielke 2012).

which she considers an 'immanent part of every empirical ethnography' (Hastrup 2004: 91). She underlines that if reflexivity is a part of ethnography, this means that the anthropologist becomes his or her own informant, and reflexivity implies an awareness of the self as both a subject and an object (Hastrup 1995: 51, 82). In the street protest situation, when recording was not possible, reflexivity, being a research instrument, helped me to construct my own position in the field and understand my double role: as an observer of the ongoing events and as a researcher.

According to the researchers and simultaneous participants of anti-corruption demonstrations in Buenos Aires in 2002, gathering materials during street rallies was in itself an 'interactive process'. Therefore, they emphasize that 'the researcher's own interpretations and actions while conducting fieldwork become a legitimate object of subsequent analyses' (Brom, Dalle, Elbert 2004: 3). Consequently, the style and orientation of this paper are based on the vulnerable writing methods developed by Ruth Behar (Behar 1996). According to her research, the personal experience and emotions of the anthropologist conducting a study are closely tied to the material he or she gathers. This method accentuates the experience of the researcher conducting fieldwork and his or her emotions, motivations, and self-criticism through the self-reflective nature of the very research process. Thus, I will try to 'make my emotions part of my ethnography' (Behar 1996: 19) in this paper.

To gather visual materials, I used the burst shooting method, which is, capturing photographs of all objects that have symbolic meaning. I have to mention that three years after the protests occurred, my emotions became more subdued and I was able to systemize the huge amount of material I gathered. The time lapse helped me to rethink those events as 'ethnographic data' that is no longer breaking news but is still extremely valuable and requires thorough research. Nevertheless, the distance could not relieve personal pain caused by the events of winter 2013–2014 in Kyiv, which now are further aggravated by the protracted crisis in Ukraine. All of these factors could not but have an effect on the emotional component of this study.

Protests and the Central City Area: The Terrain of Resistance

Change in the public space under the impact of the protest movement began on 22 November 2013. The first spontaneous protest rally gathered on Maidan Nezalezhnosti in Kyiv in the evening of 21 November 2013, continuing from the late hours into the morning of the next day and turning into daily rallies. According to Maciej Kowalewski, 'urban space is not only convenient for protests and revolutions; it also tied to the latter and exists in the collective memory of urban inhabitants through them' (Kowalewski 2013: 19). Kowalewski considers that the

existence of large public spaces in cities, such as markets or central squares where people can gather, makes these places a convenient location for the expression of resistance. Moreover, once the connection between a revolution space and a particular place becomes firmly established in the collective memory, it becomes something obvious for the coming generations, who follow the tradition of gathering together in a chosen place (Kowalewski 2013: 19). Speaking about Kyiv, I'd like to emphasize the exceptional role played by the main square of Ukraine's capital as the space where most political protest movements, beginning from the Revolution on Granite in 1990 (when the Maidan was still named October Revolution Square), took place. It is the space which also saw the mass protest campaign 'Ukraine without Kuchma' in the winter of 2000–2001, the Orange Revolution of 2004, and the Tax Maidan campaign of 2010. As we see, most mass forms of street political actionism in Kyiv were localized specifically on the Maidan, even if they began in some other place. The same concerns the 2005 rallies aimed against the 'Orange' leadership. It is important to emphasize that both parties of the political conflict recognized and have legitimized the protest marking of Kyiv's main square's space. Maksim Gatskov points this out, too, stressing that:

> The protest camp on Independence Square in Kyiv as an informal political "institute" was legitimized by the 2004/05 Maidan that produced [...] a ready-to-use protest template, for nobody in Ukraine needed the meaning of "Maidan" explained to them, a word which, perhaps like perestroika, is now entering the international political dictionary […] (Гацков 2014: 71).

According to the American anthropologist and geographer David Harvey (Гарві 2012), the main squares in national capitals, in particular, Syntagma in Athens, Tahrir in Cairo, and Plaça de Catalunya in Barcelona where people gathered to express their political views and put forth demands to the government, became examples of public space turning into common urban space marked by meanings of resistance. In the time of protests the street turned from a public space into a space of revolutionary movement and the place of its bloody suppression (Гарві 2012). In Kyiv's case it was Maidan Nezalezhnosti as the common space of political protest since 1990 that became the place and symbol of street actionism and civil expression of will.

As the rallies, picketing of administrative buildings, and demonstrations were turning into a movement of civil confrontation, a kind of temporal community appeared, transforming the central city area. The Maidan's temporal community consisted of representatives of various social, gender, and age categories, nationalities, and religious beliefs. To prove this point, it is important to take a close look at the socio-demographic statistics of the protesters. First, let's refer to the Maidan's generalized portrait drawn on the basis of a sociological survey held on 7–8 December 2013 by the Ilko Kucheriv Foundation for Democratic

Initiatives and the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (Соціологи… 2013). Almost one thousand protesters were polled in total. According to this survey, the Kyivans and residents of other cities were represented on the Maidan in equal proportions at the time: 50% / 50%. Moreover, 92% of the protesters claimed that they were not affiliated with any political party, nongovernmental organization, or movement. The average age of Euromaidan protesters was 36. Most of the protesters were people between the ages of 30 and 54. Thirty-eight percent of respondents were younger than thirty and only 13% were older than 55. In terms of the occupation of the Maidan's participants, the largest group (40%) comprised specialists with higher education, followed by students (12%), businessmen (9%), pensioners (9%), executives (8%), and workers (7%) (Соціологи… 2013).

Such diversity could not but become an area for the creation of a special cultural background and transformation of the city center's space. While appearing, protest folk culture (songs, poems, and chants), graffiti and murals, placards, and music and theater performances aimed to convey the requirements of protestors to the government.

The Visual Self-representation of Protesters

Every evening from 22 to 29 November 2013 people gathered at 18:00 for a rally by the Independence Column on Maidan Nezalezhnosti square. In the first few days, the attendance was low and was composed mostly of students and intelligentsia (scientists, academics, artists). On Sunday, 24 November, a thousand-strong rally was held. It began by the Taras Shevchenko Monument in the park next to the Red Building of Taras Shevchenko National University, moving in several columns, partially up Volodymyrska Street and partially down Taras Shevchenko Boulevard to Khreschatyk Street. Being a participant of the rally, I considered myself to be a researcher at the same time. That was my reason for taking photos and sharply observing what was going on around me. The rally turned out to be a vivid outburst of carnival culture which manifested itself in its entire diversity – clothes, hairstyles, decorations, and the masks worn by the protesters. The 2013 rally was the first instance when the traditional Ukrainian wreath as an element of attire for all the women, from little girls to old ladies, became part of a protest movement and subsequently gained huge popularity. People also brought children with them, even coming with baby carriages adorned by national flags, yellow-and-blue ribbons, and balloons of the same colors (Figure 1). Balloons were also used to mark the space of rallies: ribbons and balloons were tied to street fences, tree branches, lampposts, and door handles on administrative buildings at Khreschatyk Street. Since that day, yellow-and-blue ribbons and flags began to appear inside *marshrutkas* (share taxis) and on private cars.

Figure 1. A young married couple with their child during the street rally on 24 November, 2013, at Khreshchatyk Street (Photo by Iuliia Buyskykh)

The yellow-and-blue ribbon symbolizing the Ukrainian national flag was an identifier of 'ours'. It gained new symbolic meaning during the whole 2013–2014 winter, becoming a symbol of new freedom more truly than those obtained in 1991. According to my observations, the yellow-and-blue ribbon was continuously worn and actively used during the first month and a half of the protest movement, that is, until the tragic events on Hrushevskoho Street after 19 January 2014 when the first protestors were defeated. In many aspects, during the early Maidan it seemed that the feeling of festivity would not abandon people on the square, despite the outbursts of violence between the protesters and police on 30 November, 1 December, and 11 December 2013. This feeling stemmed from the unprecedented unity, togetherness, and closeness of worldview with friends and strangers alike. Similar impressions can also be found in Vadim Lurie's article. Being an anthropologist from St. Petersburg who participated in anti-governmental rallies in St. Petersburg and Moscow, on Bolotnaya Square and Prospekt Sakharova in late 2011–early 2012, he wrote:

> As for me, these days were festivities. I was a citizen who suddenly had gotten the previously unseen feeling of unity and spiritual closeness with strangers. I was a reporter-photographer who found himself in the very midst of visual culture and was barely able to keep shooting. I was an anthropologist trying to find out what's going on in modern society (Лурье 2012: 3).

Carnival Elements in the Maidan Protest Culture

Various elements of carnival became an indispensable component of the Maidan, producing new senses as a response to the transformation of the very protest movement. Mikhail Bakhtin has probably been the main scholar to theorize about the carnival as a moment of rebellion. According to his theory of carnival that he applied to all manifestations of New Age culture, carnival meant temporal liberation from 'dominating truth and existing order, temporal abolition of all hierarchical relations, privileges, norms, and bans' (Бахтин 2010: 18). Moreover, the grotesque quality of carnival and its universalism and laughter were related to 'unofficial' truth, whereas seriousness in the culture of power was always official, authoritarian, and combined with restrictions, bans, and violence (Бахтин 2010: 45).

Emphasizing carnival as a structural component of protest, it is important to understand that urban carnival culture with its grotesque characteristics, laughter, and hyperbolization has opposed itself to official culture and any government from the very beginning. Quoting Lauren Langman, 'Carnival proclaimed "fuck you" to power as it brought the elites down to earth' (Langman 2014: 5). Speaking about the liminal nature of the carnival itself, I refer also to Victor Turner's anthropology of performance and his definition of carnival as

> A denizen of a place which is no place, and a time which is no time, even where that place is a city's main plazas, and that time can be found on an ecclesiastical calendar. For the squares, avenues, and streets of the city become, at carnival, the reverse of their daily selves (Turner 1988: 123).

As an indispensable component of Kyiv's protest actions, carnival accompanied all forms of protest inspired by the Maidan: from Auto Maidan to Sunday *Viches* (rallies at the main square every Sunday) and campaigns near administrative buildings. Elements of carnival in Maidan culture were manifested in the active and often aphoristic self-representation of the participants of rallies and campaigns. Everyone holding a printout of some text, sign, or banner or delivering some small performance would become the center of a small symbolic space attempting to appeal, in a hilarious carnival form, to the political authorities (President Yanukovych, Prime Minister Azarov, Kyiv Mayor Popov), law enforcement authorities (the 'Berkut' riot police), and Russian President Vladimir Putin, who supported Viktor Yanukovych's regime. I suppose that the very idea

Figure 2. A little dog on old lady's shoulder. Sunday rally at the Maidan Nezalezhnosti square on 15 December, 2013 (Photo by Iuliia Buyskykh)

of protestival was reflected in these public performances when ordinary people acted in an unusual way. Many authors have commented on the temporary aspect of the protestival as a condensed moment of inversion and break of reality, where people are free to dare and to be; to challenge power relations, hierarchies, and privileges; and ultimately to create an alternative world (St John 2008; Bogad 2010; Werbner, Webb, Spellman-Poots 2014).

It could be assumed that the protestival during the early Maidan protests manifested itself in the following forms:

1. The visual self-representation of the protesters, which contains elements of folk costume; headwear; clothes; footwear; such accessories as hats, scarfs, gloves, earrings, trinkets, bracelets, and belts; ribbons, pins, and large and small flags in national colors; masks; balloons in national colors or with motivating inscriptions; painted skin art, such as hearts in national colors painted on cheeks; makeup and hairdos; decorations for dogs and cats that owners took with them to the rallies (Figure 2); and car decorations, etc.

2. Signs, posters, placards, and banners (large signs; small printouts with texts, illustrations, or appeals to the government; sheets of paper glued to clothes, handbags, backpacks, motorcycles, or cars, etc.).[6]

3. Decorations for the barricades. The latter had a symbolic rather than defensive purpose during the early stage of the Maidan. However, decorative elements, particularly toys, were present there to the very last and the most tragic phase of violent confrontation (Буйских, 2015: 24, 26–33).

4. Burials and hanging effigies of the politicians and political parties, and elements of funerary culture (funeral wreaths, tombs, and coffins for politicians and government institutions).

5. Musical performances: playing piano, which became one of Euromaidan's main symbols;[7] performances by various music bands on the Maidan's stage and in administrative buildings occupied by the protesters; improvised cacophonic musical performances delivered using sticks, barriers, and iron drums in which a bonfire was lit; dramatized stage performances; traditional Christmas and New Year fancy-dress performances of carols; and Christmas *vertep* (traditional puppet theater that performed both religious and secular satirical plays).[8]

6. Separate performances inside the Maidan protest movement, like the 'lie-down' protest on the steps of the Office of the Prosecutor General on 6 December 2013, the 'saucepan' protest on 20 January 2014, the artist campaign near Lukyanivskyi Investigative Isolator (SIZO) on 18 January 2014 aimed to free activists, and many others.

[6] The semantics and symbolism of protest folklore in urban areas were examined in the materials of political events in different states. (Britsyna, Golovakha 2005: 3–17; Марценюк 2005: 60–65; Михайлюк 2004: 15–22; Чебанюк 2005: 177–191; Архипова, Сомин, Шевелева 2014: 125–148; Мороз 2014: 149–164; Chaffee 1993; Salamon 2001: 277–308).

[7] The so-called 'Europiano' was installed in Kyiv's public space in several places. First it was placed on Bankova Street, near the Administration of the President in front of the line of riot police. Then two pianos, painted in national Ukrainian colors and the EU circle of stars, appeared near the Kyiv City Administration on Khreshchatyk Street and near the main post office at Maidan Nezalezhnosti. Everyone who wanted to play the piano was welcome to do so.

[8] Here we can draw an analogy with the protests against Slobodan Milosevic in another post-socialist state, Serbia in 1996–1997. In winter of 1996–1997 participants of street demonstrations in Belgrade made spectacular performances with fireworks and exhibited elements of theater and music performances using all possible means from pots to pans. According to Silvija Jestrovic: 'To make their presence visible, protesters lit up their street processions with all sorts of devices from candles to fireworks, symbolizing the act of breaking through the oppressive system of ''darkness'' created by the ruling political party' (Jestrovic 2013: 46). See the paper by Milena Dragićević-Šešić exploring the streets of Belgrade as political carnivalized space for further details (Dragićević-Šešić 2001: 74–86).

7. The New Year Tree at Maidan Nezalezhnosti (the *yolka*), which was covered with various protest placards and flags.[9]

The last vivid outburst of carnival culture on the Maidan I personally observed was at the rally of 19 January 2014 when people protesting against the 'Black Thursday'[10] laws came to the square wearing masks, colanders, saucepans, buckets, chamber pots, or 'medieval' helmets on their head instead of the hardhats banned by one of these laws. After the first escalation of the conflict and the first deaths after 22 January 2014, the Maidan's carnival component was reduced to the minimum and was almost unseen at the subsequent rallies. Some of its elements were still present on posters, placards, and barricades.

Carnival Death and Symbolic 'Funerals' as a Part of Street Protest

After briefly characterizing the carnival forms of protest in Kyiv, I would like to go into more detail about one category I am interested the most in – that is, the carnival funeral, a symbolic killing of politicians and elements associated with the mortuary sphere at the demonstrations between 21 November 2013 and 19 January 2014.

I observed the first appearance of the carnival character of Death at the abovementioned rally of 24 November 2013, when the column of protesters traveled from Taras Shevchenko National University to Besarabska Square and then arrived at Khreschatyk Street. Death was represented by a man in a white mask resembling the mask of a character from the American horror film

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[9] The *yolka*, meaning 'spruce' in Russian, is a quite popular Internet meme in Ukraine dating back to early December 2010 when the police dispersed the Tax Maidan and former President Victor Yanukovych explained the violent crackdown on protesters by reasoning that the Maidan had to be cleared for the New Year Tree (*yolka*). Speaking in Ukrainian, he used the Russian word *yolka* instead of the Ukrainian *yalynka*, faltering in his speech as he couldn't find the right word, which instantly gave birth to the *yolka* meme. This word attained much more negative connotation after 30 November 2013. The brutality of the police was officially attributed to the refusal by protesters to let municipal workers who allegedly were bringing equipment for erection of the New Year Tree come through to the square. After that, the yolka meme became '*yolka*-on-blood', and Victor Yanukovych received a new nickname: 'Yalynkovych' (a portmanteau of the words *yalynka* (spruce) and 'Yanukovych') (Янукович... 2013). The unfinished structure of the New Year Tree quickly became covered with protest posters, placards, and flags, both national flags and those of other countries whose citizens came to the Maidan to support Ukrainians.

[10] On Thursday, 16 January 2014 (which people called 'Black Thursday'), the Verkhovna Rada enacted a number of scandalous laws that essentially restricted the rights and freedoms of citizens. That was done through the illegitimate way of raising of hands, i.e., with a complete violation of the procedure. Next day, on Friday, 17 January 2014, the protest action 'Dictatorship–no!' was performed on the Maidan. The activists, who organized that performance, wore masks, mostly home-made ones that were very similar to the mask of the *kolyadniki* – the participants of Yule processions in Ukrainian traditional winter rituals. The rally against the 'Black Thursday' laws took place again on Sunday, 19 January 2014.

Figure 3. A man, personifying Death, holding a scythe with the inscriptions in Russian on the one side and Ukrainian on the other: 'Authorities, I'm after you!' on the blade and 'Yanukovych, where are you?' on the shaft. Street rally on 24 November, 2013 (Photo by Iuliia Buyskykh)

Scream, wearing black athletic trousers, a black athletic jacket and a black hooded raglan (Figure 3). He walked in the column of protesters, stopping at intersections from time to time and brandishing a scythe with inscriptions in Russian on the one side and Ukrainian on the other: 'Authorities, I'm after you!' on the blade and 'Yanukovych, where are you?' on the shaft. I frequently observed him on the Maidan up until the end of December 2013. He constantly cracked hilarious jokes about politicians and the corrupt government, sang loudly, and danced with his scythe in the crowd of protestors. His emphatic anti-behavior could be also perceived as a part of a performance manifested by the protestival on the Maidan.

The carnival elements of funeral culture that could often be seen on the Maidan included funeral wreaths and gravestones laid for a number of politicians. The first time I saw a wreath with black mourning ribbons was at the rally of 1 December 2013. In subsequent days funeral wreaths were laid on the steps of Kyiv City Council's building occupied by protesters. In particular, one of the wreaths had a ribbon with the inscription: 'To the Kyiv Council from the Kyivans' (Figure 4).

On 8 December 2013, a self-made poster appeared on the New Year Tree (*yolka*), which by that time had already been covered with various flags and placards. Eight sheets of paper were pasted to a piece of cardboard, displaying the following inscriptions: 'President of Ukraine. 2010–2013. Everlasting Memory,' 'The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. 2010–2013. Everlasting Memory', 'The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. 2010–2013. Everlasting Memory.' The same inscriptions concerned judicial and legal pro-government and corrupt institutions, and the last inscription said, 'In loving memory from the bottom of hearts and good

will, the people of Ukraine betrayed by you.'[11] It had a black ribbon attached to the upper right corner and two carnations at the bottom. Also, on 12 December 2013 a mini-installation appeared on the *yolka*. Two flat black iron plates were hung on the frame of the tree on top of the posters, imitating gravestones for the President Yanukovych and Prime Minister Azarov and having the following inscriptions: 'Here's where Viktor Fedorovych Yanukovych shall rest in peace. Born 09 July 1950. Died as a politician and man (on the night of Sunday) 30.11.2013'; 'Here's where Mykola Yanovych Azarov shall rest in peace. Born 17 December 1947. Died as a politician and man (on the night of Sunday) 30.11.2013'. Beneath them, the anonymous author of this installation laid a funeral wreath.

Figure 4. An installation of a funeral wreath near Kyiv City Council's building occupied by protesters. The inscription on the ribbon says: 'To Kyiv Council from the Kyivans'. 8 December, 2013 (Photo by Iuliia Buyskykh)

Effigies of the president himself, members of Yanukovych's family (whose sons and relatives held high offices within the Ukrainian political elite) or other politicians were rarely observed on the Maidan. After the tragic events of 18–20 February 2014, an anthropomorphic effigy of the Communist Party appeared near the main post office, dressed in red clothes with 'CPU' (Communist Party of Ukraine) inscribed with a felt-tip pen and symbolically hung on a power transmission line. In the early phase of the Maidan, approximately in mid-December 2013, I was able to find only an effigy wearing a fur hat and *valenki* (felt boots) near the House of Trade Unions. It indirectly implied Yanukovych's personality and his criminal past by representing two memes known since the Orange Revolution's protests: *valenki* and fur hats. But I didn't see this effigy destroyed in one way or another. Another effigy appeared some time later by a barricade near the National Conservatoire. It was hung on a tree and symbolically decapitated – the body was hung separately, as was the shapeless 'head' to which a caricatured portrait of Viktor Yanukovych with a red clown ball on its nose was attached with broad sealing tape.

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[11] Here there is a word play using the phase 'преданный вами' (betrayed by you) instead of 'преданный вам' (faithful to you).

I didn't observe any acts of effigy destruction in the Maidan Nezalezhnosti square itself. The only performance of this kind was a symbolic funeral of the then governing Party of Regions (whose leader was the then incumbent president Yanukovych). Thus, on 6 February 2014, activists of the Guy Fawkes Followers movement, better known as Anonimus, walked across the Maidan and up Instytutska Street in a funeral procession, carrying a coffin with portraits of members of the Party of Regions glued on the inside and funeral wreaths lying within. The procession stopped in the Pechersk area of Kyiv, at Lypska Street 10, by the Party of Regions office where the activists placed the coffin and wreaths ("Анонимус"... 2014; В Киеве... 2014).[12]

Riding the wave after the Maidan and subsequent Russian annexation of Crimea, symbolic burnings of effigies of corrupt politicians and oligarchs from Yanukovych's old team took place in various cities across Ukraine. For instance, on 4 October 2014 a group of young people in Odessa burned an improvised corruption effigy resembling the odious politician Sergii Kivalov, chairman of the Central Election Commission during the rigged 2004 presidential election that sparked mass demonstrations on the Maidan that later turned into the Orange Revolution. A gravestone for Corruption with Kivalov's portrait on it was placed near the Odessa Academy of Law where he was the rector and personified local corruption (В Одессе... 2014). In February–March 2015, one year after the tragic finale of the Maidan and annexation of Crimea, symbolic rallies were held in several Ukrainian cities, such as the burning of Putin's effigy in Sumy during *Maslenitsa* (Butter Week) instead of the effigy of Winter, or the burning of Putin's effigy on Freedom Square in Kherson (Активисты... 2015) and the burning of Yanukovych's effigy in Mariupol (Мариупольские… 2015).

The act of burning the effigies of politicians is quite widespread throughout the world and not even confined to Europe.[13] In particular, Venezuelans have

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[12] Analogies could be drawn with the events of the so-called Snow Revolution in Russia. According to the authors and compilers of the 'Protest ABC' *(Azbuka Protesta)*, in response to the accusation of protesters' 'venality' by the Russian TV channel NTV, the protesters took to the TV center in Ostankino in Moscow. There, they 'buried' the television company and brought funeral wreaths and flowers to the building (Лурье 2012: 128).

[13] The carnival burial of an effigy is an old European tradition, a spectacular performance reproduced, year after year, at, for instance, the Carnival of Venice (Carnival funeral) or in Spain's autonomous community Murcia (the famous Burial of the Sardine). One of the vivid examples of a carnival funeral is, for instance, the burial of Greece at the famous Carnival of Vevčani in Macedonia in 2012. This is an annual carnival held on 13-14 January, on the New Year according to the Julian calendar observed by the Eastern Orthodox Church. So, in January 2012 the Carnival responded to political events in the following way. The procession carried a coffin wrapped in the Greek flag (slightly burned), which symbolized the existence of Greece from birth to death. The coffin was accompanied by a cross-shaped gravestone and a news pamphlet reading: 'Good News! Suddenly, after a prolonged agitation we are left without our dear neighbor, the former Turkish province of

burned the effigies of the U.S. President Barak Obama and his opponent Vene-zuelan President Nicolás Maduro as a tribute to the Easter tradition of 'burning Judases' – effigies of politicians who disappointed the citizenry (Чучела... 2015). I would also like to emphasize that the burial or burning of an anthropomor-phic effigy is not a product of modern times and is not related solely to political events. These acts have been known to be practiced as a part of the traditional calendar, funerals, and occasional rituals of various Slavic and Eastern Roman peoples. In particular, they include the burial of the *rusalka* in the Ukrainian tra-dition and the burial of the cuckoo (*kukushka*), Kostrubonka, Kostroma, Yarilo, Sukhotinka, and Mokrotinka in the Russian tradition, Kalojan in the Romanian and Moldovan traditions, and Herman in the Bulgarian tradition (Мойсей 2008; Велецкая 2003).

Svetlana Adonieva has traced the connection between traditional pluvial rites involving destruction of a ritual effigy and today's practices of ritual de-struction of an effigy as an act of protest. In particular, she emphasizes that we face a 'typical structure of symbolic social acts, which practical realization va-ries depending on static and dynamic contexts' (Адоньева 2016). According to Adonieva, 'static context' means time, space, and set of participants for a ritual act, while 'dynamic context' is defined as the role characteristics of performers and the roles they choose for themselves within the context of action (Адоньева 2016). In other words, by destroying such a materialized metaphor as an effigy, certain societies rid themselves of something dangerous or 'improper,' thus as-serting their identity and values.

Therefore, carnival funerals and the symbolic 'killing' of politicians' and parties' effigies during the early Euromaidan in Kyiv correspond with both the traditional mechanisms of destroying an effigy within the ritual context and the general European tradition of a ritual funeral during street carnivals.

Conclusion

Reflective anthropology was the initial point of research inspiration for me and helped me to cope with the challenges of being an emotional participant of the protest movement and a researcher of urban protest culture. Relying on the theo-ry of carnival by Mikhail Bakhtin, I made an attempt to summarize and dissect the huge visual and empirical material concerning carnival elements created by the temporal community of protestors on Kyiv's Maidan Nezalezhnosti square.

(Hell-ass) (Greece, Hellas, Ellada, Yunanistan or whatever they call themselves). They were 181 years old. Born 1830 (London Protocol)–Died 2011 (Hague).' The pamphlet also mentioned the 'family' mourning the departure of Greece: the EU, the United States, Russia, Serbia, Egypt, etc. At the end of procession, the Greek flag was burned (Europe's... 2012; Toli 2012).

I suggest that the culture of the early Euromaidan protest movement developed in the frames of the protestival model (St John 2008), as the urban street protest contained both elements of performance and elements of carnival. Elements of carnival in Maidan culture manifested primarily in the active, satiric, and aphoristic self-representation of the participants of rallies, campaigns, and annual Sunday rallies.

I highlighted the number of various forms in which the carnival component of the protest movement manifested itself. Among them are the visual representations of the protestors involving national and state symbols; signs, posters, placards, and banners; decorations for the barricades; musical and theater performances; traditional Christmas and New Year fancy-dress performances of carols; and destruction of politicians' effigies and elements of mortuary culture (funeral wreaths, tombs, and coffins for politicians and entire government institutions). The protestival of the early Euromaidan called for social resistance; connected people through acts of cultural expression via musical and theater performances, puppets, and various forms of folklore; and gave a voice to the protesters themselves, thus creating an exceptional people's forum.

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Karnavalas miesto protesto kultūroje:
ankstyvojo Kijevo Euromaidano atvejis

Julija Buijskich

Santrauka

Viešoji didelių miestų centrinės dalies erdvė dažnai tampa įvairių formų pilietinio pasipriešinimo vieta, kurioje kuriamos naujos miesto folkloro formos ir aktualus viešasis menas kaip atsakymas į metamus politinius ir socialinius iššūkius. Nepriklausomybės aikštė Kijeve (ukr. *Майдан Незалежності*) dar nuo ankstesnių masinių protesto akcijų laikų (1990 m., 2000–2001 m., 2004 m.) tapo ne tik Ukrainos sostinės centrinės aikštės pavadinimu, bet ir politinės veiklos gatvėse bei kovos už pilietines teises simboliu. Tačiau būtent 2013–2014 m. žiemą, per įvykius, kurie gavo Euromaidano, o vėliau Orumo revoliucijos (ukr. *Революція Гідності*) vardą, ji pasidarė unikalia daugybės įvairiausių įvykių, kultūrinių praktikų bei situacijų vieta.

Ukrainoje protesto judėjimas pirmiausia kilo studentiškojo jaunimo ir miesto inteligentijos aplinkoje kaip reakcija į Ukrainos Ministrų Kabineto nutarimą pristabdyti kryptingą eurointegraciją užsienio politikoje ir nepasirašyti asociacijos sutarties su Europos Sąjunga, kurią buvo planuota pasirašyti 2013 m. lapkričio 28 d. O 2013 m. lapkričio 30-osios naktį Kijevo Nepriklausomybės aikštėje išvaikius taikią studentišką demonstraciją eurointegracijai paremti, protesto akcijos įgavo masinį pobūdį ir kitą kryptį – tai jau buvo pilietinis priešinimasis korupcijai, įstatymų nepaisymui valdžios, milicijos, jėgos struktūrų įstaigose, teisės srityje, siekis reformuoti konstituciją ir pakeisti valstybės valdžią.

Vykstantys įvykiai labai paveikė autorę – eilinę Kijevo gyventoją, aktyvią poziciją turinčią pilietę. Tačiau jai, kaip tyrinėtojai etnologei, visa tai, kas vyko aplinkui, dar tapo ir nauju tyrimo lauku, kuris negalėjo nepadaryti įtakos ir tyrimo strategijai. Juk bet kuri politinė veikla gatvėse išsiskiria ypatingais reginiais, kuria daugybę socialinių formų ir meno objektų, todėl yra ypač įdomi tyrinėtojui. Jau per pirmuosius mitingus Kijeve, prasidėjusius 2013 m. lapkričio 21 d., radosi daugybė folkloro, karnavalinės ir juoko kultūros. Kaip ir protesto judėjimai kitose šalyse, Maidanas įgavo daug ryškių bruožų, kurie, viena vertus, saviti vietinėje aplinkoje, o, kita vertus, panašūs į tarptautinę protesto kultūrą ir susiję su pofolkloro ir šiuolaikinio meno formomis. Tai nauji žodžiai, šūkiai, poezijos ir dainų kūryba, anekdotai, mitai, gandai ir apkalbos informacinio karo ir „ančių" paleidimo sąlygomis, taip pat atvirukai, plakatai, karikatūros, grafiti gatvėse, performansai, eksperimentai žiniasklaidoje (pavyzdžiui, projektas „Babilonas'13"), naujieji informaciniai ištekliai (pirmoji pilietinė televizija Hromadske TV).

Šiame straipsnyje, taikant teorinį Grahamo St Johno „protestivalio" (*protestival*) modelį (St John 2008), kuris aprėpia karnavalo, performanso ir protesto elementus, tyrinėjami karnavaliniai elementai miesto protesto kultūroje ankstyvuoju Kijevo Euromaidano laikotarpiu (2013 m. lapkritis – 2014 m. sausis). Tokios chronologinės ribos pasirinktos todėl, kad po 2014 m. sausio 22 d. pasikeitė ir suradikalėjo protesto pobūdis ir jo tikslai, tad prasidėjo policijos ir protestuojančiųjų susidūrimai, per kuriuos žuvo pirmieji protesto dalyviai. Šis įvykis pakeitė patį protesto judėjimą, kuriame karnavalo elementas jau pasidarė neaktualus ir neatliko svarbaus vaidmens, išliko tik tokiomis marginalinėmis formomis kaip gatvės barikadų ir plakatų dekoratyviniai papuošimai. Pagrindinė straipsnyje naudojama medžiaga yra autorės per protesto akcijas padarytos nuotraukos, taip pat jos, kaip tiesioginės įvykių dalyvės, stebėjimai.

Gauta 2016 m. kovo mėn.