

**A President's Portrait in Domestic Protest: The Anatomy of Hate**

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Abstract

The extreme level of tension during the Euromaidan in Ukraine has caused a real explosion of urban post-folklore creativity. These folklore forms have many distinctive features of traditional folklore, but they are also characterized by their means of transmission. For instance, anonymous inscriptions could appear anywhere. Such texts have their own dramaturgy, and they recreate the development of the Euromaidan events (from simple appeals to give people an opportunity to determine their own destiny to openly hostile discourse that portrayed the former President of Ukraine, Victor Yanukovich, as the main enemy of the Euromaidan). Among those attested: distortions of Yanukovich's name; demonstration of contempt for his image; insults; mention of his criminal past and ongoing corruption; and prophecies of his fate. One of the defining features of such texts is the violation of prohibitions on the use of dysphemisms and vulgarity as a verbal weapon against an enemy. We will also discuss the basic functions of protest folklore and hate speech.



*Crowds on the Maidan (author's photo)*

The Euromaidan was the second Ukrainian revolution of this century. It was a public protest that took place in the main Kiev's square *Maidan Nezalezhnosti* (Maidan) from November 2013 until February 2014. It was characterized by an unprecedented rise of patriotism and strengthening of national identity (as reflected in the wide usage of national colors, symbols, and images). Its primary symbols illustrated a demonstrative public turn to religion, and, at the same time, collective expression of a sharply negative attitude toward the social and political situation in the country, in particular toward the Ukrainian political elite and its leaders.

Just as during the events of the Orange Revolution 2004, there was a burst of political folklore created by so called, ‘mobile’ folk communities (characterized by their temporary, open, and dynamic nature). Such communities may be regarded as subculture united solely by ideological principles and political preferences. Other features, such as age, social status, religion, etc., are secondary in such communities.



*Ukrainian flags with protest slogans in Independence Square (author's photo)*

The Euromaidan folklore cycle was partly similar to folklore documented during the Orange Revolution [Britsyna, Golovakha 2005: 3-16; Lysiuk 2005: 50-63], but there were differences resulting from the context, i.e., Euromaidan was a longer period of political action permeated with tragic events. During the initial period, it had carnival nature, but later the mood became embittered and aggressive (the last “carnival like” surge was recorded on 19 January 2014 as a protest against the dictatorial laws of 16 January 2014).

Comparison of the folklore of the Orange Revolution with Euromaidan texts demonstrates the close link of this folklore with “post-written” culture, i.e., transmission in handwritten, printed, and electronic forms (posts in the social networks and text messages). In particular, the use of Photoshop to create these materials was widespread. One of the important features of the Euromaidan folklore was intertextuality, i.e., the use of the creative potential of existing texts (well-known phrases, plots, images, symbols, etc.) from many spheres of national

and world culture. More so than in 2004, a strongly positive self-assessment of the protesting community, and correspondingly low assessment of the opponents of the movement were demonstrated. Thus, there were a lot of serious and satirical texts that became increasingly more rude and obscene. This vulgar language was used to delegitimize the authorities.

As Britsyna and Golovakha (2005: 10) documented during the Orange Revolution, now minor genres dominated among all the material collected as well. However, most of these material centered on language games rather than anecdotes. Due to the lack of trustworthy official information, rumors and gossip were widespread. The chant repertoire turned out to be much less common than in 2004. Those that did exist were used purely to identify like-minded people and were not reminiscent of children's taunts. A number of naïve lyric, epic, and short satirical poems were attested as well; reformulations of popular or folk songs ("*Vitya, ciao*", "*Gorila shyna*" [A tire was burning], called "*kolomyikas*") and folk theatre "*vertep*" (static and living nativity scenes based on the Bible plots) became common. However, the most frequent form of folk text attested during Euromaidan was protest lore in the form of inscriptions and/or drawings (posters, stickers, leaflets, and graffiti). These folk textual and graphic forms are not exclusively Ukrainian nor a novelty. They have also been attested during both World Wars in Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States, as well as during democratic revolutions in the late 1980s and early 1990s in Central and Eastern Europe (as well as other contemporary states ) as a means of popular protest, also in [see Hagar 2001 for a discussion].

During Euromaidan, various visual forms of anonymous inscriptions and drawings – handwritten, printed, penciled, painted etc. – were placed on all the suitable surfaces that within the space called 'Maidan's Room for Freedom of Speech.' They were displayed on the pavement as well as on clothing and accessories, but occurred mainly on kiosks, walls, fences and posters. Due to the bilingualism and biculturalism of the Euromaidan protesters, both Ukrainian and Russian languages were used, and a number of English texts were collected as well. We consider these verbal and visual texts to be classified as folklore because they demonstrate its main features, including anonymity, collective creation, a degree of variation together with a wide range of improvisation, functionality, and inclusivity. Moreover, another inherent feature of these texts was the combination of verbal, physical, and behavioral codes [Tolstoy 1995: 24], so that spoken and written texts, pictures, and sometimes objects, performances and ceremonies all must be interpreted as meaningful symbols.



*Protest slogans on a Maidan barricade (author's photo)*

These multi-lingual and multi-code texts had their own evolution, recreating the development of the events and directly reflecting the dynamics of the protest. They strayed from the initial, general appeal to give people the opportunity to determine their own destiny and to associate with the EU and turned into extremely sharp rhetoric and openly hostile discourse directed against particular people in the government.



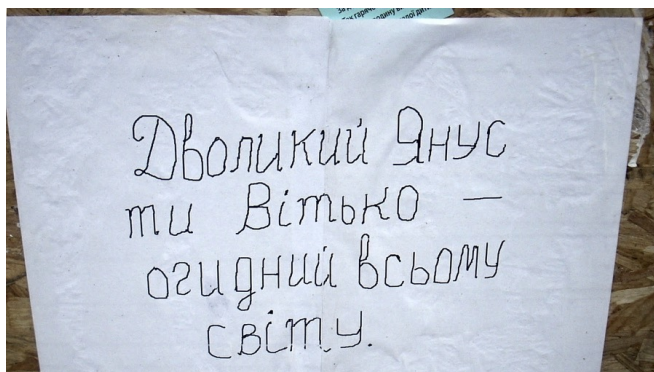
*Multi-lingual protest posters (author's photo)*

The most attention was given to the former head of the Ukrainian state Viktor Yanukovich, who became a metonym for the regime. Therefore, his image became representative of the main villain in the protests. It dominated public consciousness until March 2014, when he receded into the background (1), and some new themes appeared, namely Crimea, Vladimir Putin, and a forthcoming war with Russia.

The verbal and visual texts aimed at the former President of Ukraine demonstrated contempt for his image, distorted his name, insulted him with all means available, including sacral eschrology (obscene nicknames and damnation). These texts made reference to his criminal past and ongoing corruption and foretold his fate (retirement, getaways, and even violent death). In this paper I will trace the topics of these texts. Because my task is to demonstrate how the image of a president can be reflected in mass folk creativity, many comments related to Yanukovich (for example, his trips to other countries or his relations with Putin ending with the line *Хутін – пуй, Бандюкович – путінський холуй!* [Dutin (instead of 'Putin') is a pick (instead of 'dick'), (2) Bandyukovich is Putin's flunky!]) etc. will be omitted from consideration, because they merit special study.

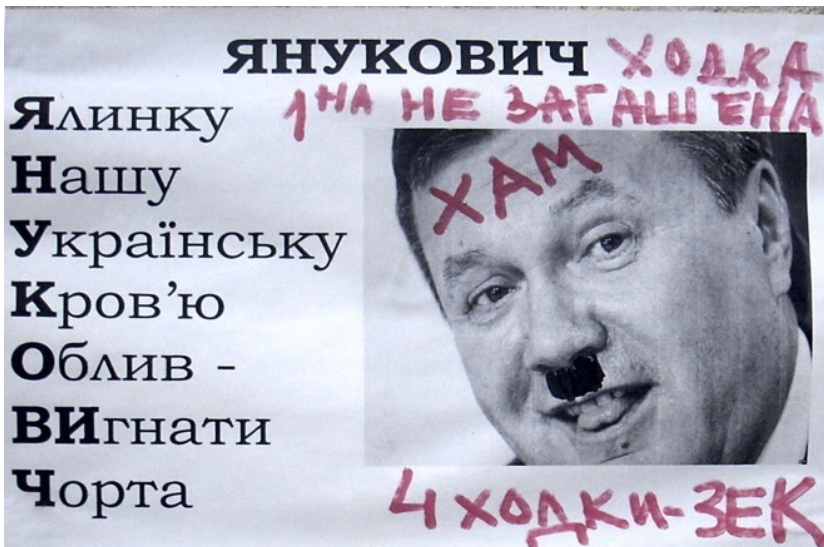
#### Folk teasing and bullying

One of the striking small folk genres attested at the Euromaidan were the *expressive titles* given to the protestors' political enemies, primarily dysphemisms, i.e., strong expressions with negative connotations offensive to people or groups. Similar *expressive titles* of the political enemies have been used in Ukrainian political life since the 1990s, for example during the Orange Revolution, where they were an effective political weapon [Lysiuk 2005: 62–63]. There were three main types of political dysphemisms: 1) *anthroponyms* based on proper names; 2) nicknames based on some personal characteristics; and 3) general vulgarities or swear words.



*Insulting names for Yanukovich in a protest poster (author's photo)*

The new pejorative anthroponyms were created on the basis of the actual names of well-known politicians. The disregard for these politicians was manifested by using some intimate or purely official forms of addressing them, such as by their first name, or by only their patronymic, or by their surname. We can group them in a following way: A) unceremonious truncating of surnames and their distortion; B) dismissive derivatives; C) paronomasia, i.e., replacement with paronyms or similar words that possess stronger negative senses. For example, desecration of the fourth Ukrainian President's name included: A) unceremonious truncation of his surname: *Ia*. [I, me], *Ianuk*, *Ianyk*, *Ianik*, *Ianek*, *Ianiek*, *Iandzek* etc., also *Ovoch/Ovoshch* [Vegetable] (from the suffix *-ovykh* 'being a son of the root word'), B) adding diminutive or augmentative suffixes with negative connotation to his name: *Vit'ko*, *Vit'ka*, *Vitëk*; *Ianukovyshche*, C) and many distorted forms of his surname from innocent anagrammatic and paronymous ones, such as *Iakunovykh*, *Iakubovykh*, to the more strong "ideological" names, *Ianukovoch/Ianukovoshch* [Yanukovegetable], *Ianuchar* (a paronym of *Ianychar* [janissary]), *Yankee* (the nickname of Americans was used in its original Latin spelling), *Ianuchescu/Ianushescu* (modeled after the Romanian dictator Ceaușescu's surname), *Ianus* (a personification of the Roman god of falsehood), later *Ialynkovykh* (from ukr. *ialynka* [fir-tree, Christmas-tree]) (3), *Ianukrovykh* (from *krov* [blood]), and finally to much more offensive soubriquets that were much more distant phonetically from his name: *Bandiukovykh* [Bandit's son], *Gan'bovykh* [Shame's son], *Swinukovykh* [Pig's son], *Gamniukovykh* [Shit's son]. Moreover, a new patronymic was invented: *Legitymykh* (because he liked to emphasize that he was a legitimate president).



*Insulting backronym based on the name Yanukovich (author's photo)*

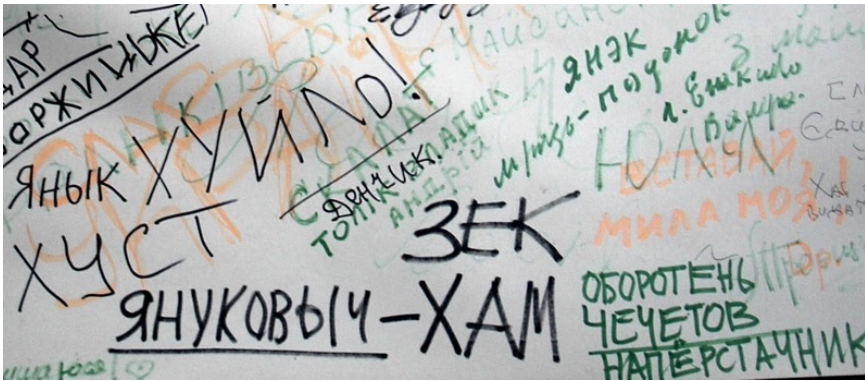
There were also some attempts to find the hidden meaning of the President's surname, to decipher it by the means of "sacred" linguistics like: A) backronyms: *Я*линку *Н*ашу *У*країнську *К*ров'ю *О*блив *В*Игнати *Ч*орта [He has flooded our Christmas tree with Ukrainian blood – expel the Devil] (the bolded letters spell out *Ianukovych*), B) anagrammatic riddles: *Я* / 4 рази *Н*юхав *н*ари, / *г*валт *У*вав *д*івчат / та *К*рав мільярди, / *з*араз *х*Очу / *В*есь *н*арід / *П*остав*И*ти на коліна / *І* за *Ч*уба всіх *т*ягати [I have sniffed pallets 4 times, raped girls, and stolen billions, now I want to put all people on their knees and pull them by the forelock], and C) even a cryptogram with "code keys" found in English and Russian: *YanukoВИЧ АЗАРoff PUTin*. As a trash bin was located next to this text, we decrypted it as follows: [Yanuko (is) HIV (Rus. VICH), (throw) AZAR off (and) PUT in (to the bin)].



Anagrammatic riddle based on the name Yanukovich (author's photo)

Still other nicknames relied on a knowledge of the President's biography or his physical appearance. For example, the plump Yanukovych was nicknamed FOLKLORICA 2015, Vol. XIX

Shrek, and, due to his unusual walk, he was also called *Pinguin* [Penguin]. Yanukovich's ambiguous past resulted in such sobriquets as *zlodiy/vor* [thief], *bandit/bandiuk/bandiugan* [bandit], *grabizhnyk/razboynik* [robber], *aferyst/aferyst* [conman], *moshennik* [swindler], *shuler* [rook], *napërstochnik* [thimbletrigger], *nasyt'nyk divchat* [rapist of girls], *професор судимых наук* [professor of criminal sciences], *kaznokrad* [embezzler]: *Схаменулась Україна, / Схаменулась і повстала, / Що донецького бандита / Гетьманом обрала* [Ukraine has revolted, / Revolted and rebelled, / Cause it elected a Donetsk bandit as the Chieftain] (a paraphrase of the historical song “*Зажурилась Україна, що нічим прожити...*” [Ukraine is grieved since it had nothing to live on...]). The criminal theme was reflected in the use of a corresponding criminal jargon as well. President was called *zek* [a jailbird], *Ham* [Cad, Boor] (there was a rumor Yanukovich had actually received this nickname while in jail), (4) *pahan* [godfather], *stukach* [snitch]: *Zeka get'!* [Jailbird away!], *Zek voniuchyi!* [Smelly jailbird!], *Тільки не zek!* [Just not jailbird!], etc.



*Inscriptions referring to Yanukovich's prison background (author's photo)*

Another popular group was based on the errors and comments from his public speeches: Proffesor, ProFFesor with 2 or more upper or lowercase letters *Ff* (to remind that Yanukovich has personally written this word incorrectly in his autobiography, which is characterized by such mistakes), and even *akademik* [academician]. His electoral slogan as a presidential candidate *Тому shcho...* [Because...] seemed to people to ring especially false, and it was decoded as *Tomushcho tiamushche* [Because it (*sic!* – *N. L.*) is sly]. His other election slogan *Pochuiu kozhnogo* [I will hear everyone] also generated a number of texts: *Янукович та Азіров! Знайшлися ваші слухові апарати! Заберіть і почувте народ!!!* [Yanukovich and Azirov! Your hearing aids have been found! Pick them up and hear the people!!!]; a portrait of Yanukovich with a bandaged ear was accompanied by the inscription: *Він дуже багато чув. Але скоро буде кричати він і ніхто його не почує. Підпис Ван Гог* [He has heard too much. But soon he will scream and nobody will hear him. Signed Van Gogh]. Finally, a full performance was presented on the Euromaidan during which some students



brought an enormous model of “Yanukovych’s ear” onto the stage while chanting an appeal for him to hear them and promising to bring him a brain as a bonus.

Finally, the profane expressions collected during Euromaidan focused on Yanukovych’s qualities and capabilities. At the beginning of Euromaidan, his moral, mental capacity and psychic state were described with dysphemisms that did not go beyond typical conversational norms: *moral’nyi/prorosyys’kyi urod* [moral/pro-Russian freak], *duren’* [fool], *profan* [ignoramus], *nenormal’nyi* [crazy], *vyrodok* [degenerate], *debil* [moron], *negidnyk* [scoundrel], *brehun/brehlo/lzhets* [liar] etc.; cf. the Ukrainian-English couplet: *Я дебіл, в країні срач! I’m happy very much!* [I am a moron, there is clutter in the country!]; or a confession attributed to him, *Президент Янукович: Я знаю, що я дурний!* [President Yanukovych: I know I’m stupid!]; or this assessment, *Дволикий Янус ти Вітько – огідний всьому світу* [Vit’ko, you are a two-faced Janus disgusting to all the people].



*Protest poster with spelling errors denigrating Yanukovich’s language ability  
(author’s photo)*

Subsequently, when the degree of resentment of the president had risen dramatically, the nicknames began to drift to more abusive invectives: *Janyk CHMO* [Yanyk is a schmuck] (the inscription was in the snow in a parking lot), *loh* [goof], *ham* [cad], *zhlob* [dolt], *pokyd’ok* [scum], *podonok* [jerk], *mraz’* [filth]: *Нам не страшен Вітя жлоб* [We are not scared of the dolt Vitia]; *Морда хама і тупе лице і за народ болить яйце!* [(He has) the muzzle of a cad and a blocky

face, and (his) testicle suffers for the people!). At the same time people also used some rude vulgarisms: *padlo* [crud], *padliuka* [scoundrel], *svoloch'* [riffraff] (in Ukrainian, these words are used only as offensive ones): *Народ має не лише своїх героїв та достойників, але й своїх падлюк та негідників* [People had their heroes and dignitaries, but its scoundrels and villains too]; *Міністр МВС Захарченко падлюка, а Янукович щось гірше* [The interior Minister Zakharchenko is a scoundrel, and Yanukovich is something worse]; *Яка ... тебе породила падло?* [What a ... has give birth to you, crud?]. Sometimes the heroes of the favorite books assisted in the creation of epithets: *Тітка Секлета просила передати, що ви, пане Професоре, велика падлюка!* [The aunt Sekleta asked to tell that you, Mr. Proffesor, are great scoundrel!]. (5) Moreover, the names and rhymes began to include plenty of bawdy words after the attempt at a bloody dispersal of the Euromaidan protestors on the night of November 30, 2013. Later the scatological content increased and intensified in response to subsequent brutal actions by government officials.

Every society normally imposes restrictions on the use of profanities, of course. Ukrainian society once had extremely strict norms for public verbal behavior (both written and spoken). The public use of swearing and obscenities are prohibited here by this custom. Moreover, the Ukrainians consider themselves to be opposed to the Russians in this regard, claiming that Ukrainian language has no native vulgar expressions and that all profanities were borrowed from Russia. There are also the written regulations forbidding swearing in public and use of offensive evaluative judgments against any person (see Article 173 of the Code of Ukraine on Administrative Offences and the Article 277 of the Civil Code of Ukraine). In addition, the Ukrainian intellectuals who took part in the Euromaidan typically do not use such language, observing customary prohibitions on cursing. Therefore, breaking of these taboos and the mass use of obscenities during the people's rebellion was unusual in this context.



Poster reading "Profanity-free zone" (author's photo)

The Maidaners periodically regarded this behavior with disdain. There were attempts to establish restrictions concerning the use of swearing and obscenities among the protestors. “Officially” their individual use had been banned in the Maidan, both in spoken and written communication. For example, *Територія, вільна від матюків* [Area free from profanity] declared a poster hanging on the Monument of Independence in the middle of the square. *Писати можна будь-якою мовою, але без використання ненормативної лексики (матюків), хоч і зрозуміло, що це важко!* [You can write in every language but without the use of profanity (foul words) though, understandably, it's really hard!...] was written on the first page of the real Maidan *Notebook/Book of comments* where participants were invited to write their own remarks on the situation. However, at the same time, the public used profanities (anonymously), and still later the collective (choral) recitation or chanting of obscenities became acceptable. Thus, there was an unspoken permission to say or write dysphemisms regarding enemies and the “gang” (though self-appointed “censors” sometimes destroyed or corrected the most shocking inscriptions).

While many politicians were attacked, the most cruel remarks and obscenities were aimed at the former Ukrainian President. The dirtiest abuses of his regime were linked, of course, to obscene vocabulary primarily referring to “anus-excremental” and “sexual” organs [Mokienko 1994: 62–63]. That means that due to the initial biculturalism of the Euromaidan both cultural matrices were used: the true Ukrainian (and wider, pan-European) type (excremental culture), and the typically Russian one focusing on sex-culture rather than on excitement. Thus, the insults were created within the frameworks of both cultures.

Obscenities includes references to excrement, the rear end and the process of defecation, as in *Янукович – це зеківська базарна баба, (б) яка думає тільки про свій клан та свою жопу!* [Yanukovych is a criminal vulgar person who thinks only of his clan and his ass!]. Remarks about sending Yanukovych away relied on this particular type of reference: *Ми в Європу, Яник в жопу* [We are going to Europe, Yanyk up the ass]; *Иди в дупу* [Go up the ass], *Яника в ж...* [(Send) Yanyk into an a...]: *Ви нас підманули, ви нас підвели. / Ми ідем в Європу, ви ж ідіть туди* [You have cheated us, you have tricked us. / We are going to Europe, you can go there] (near the sketch of an ass). English was used in these insults as well: *Янукович* [Yanukovych], *kiss my ass too!!!* The creators of the new texts also included references to abnormal defecation: *Свято наближається / І господар разом з ним. / Яник скоро всрається / Зробить свято в нас* [Holiday is coming / And the host along with it. / Soon Yanyk will crap / And all of us will rejoice].

Yanukovych's legendary golden toilet bowl was exploited as a parallel with this the motif. For example, the following text was placed on one of his photos: *Шахтер, рабочий, спасибо за золотой унитаз* [Miner, worker, thank you for my golden toilet bowl]. This golden pan was opposed to a toilet bowl in a prison. The following inscription was applied to a picture with a prisoner sitting on a toilet in a cell: *Я тут сидів і гірко плакав, бо мало їв і мало какав* [I sat here and wept bitterly because I ate a little and pooped only a bit]. In the other half of

this picture the same character sat on the golden toilet-throne with a crown in his hand: *Тепер сиджу і вже не плачу – Бо наглядач і сильно скачу!* [Now I am sitting and crying no more – Because I am an overseer and I can jump up higher!]. A model of the gilded toilet bowl into which everyone could throw empty plastic cups and other trash was installed next to the public toilets in the Maidan; the slogan on it stated: *Янукович мой унітаз своїм золотой!* [Yanukovych, clean your golden toilet bowl yourself!]. Such a plea was also included in his Testament (7): *На могилу поставте – Мого унітаза / І на ньому прив'яжіте – з триколуру банта / Бо народ уже не схоче – / Такого гаранта* [Set my toilet bowl on my tomb / And tie a bow made of the tricolor (a hint at the Russian flag) / Because people will no longer want / Such a guarantor]. Finally, in June 2014 portraits of Yanukovych and Putin appeared on the urinals in one of Kiev's pubs, while in Lviv toilet paper with a portrait of smiling Yanukovych labeled *Vidchuiiu kozhnogo* [I'll feel everybody] (a paraphrase of his electoral promise *I'll hear everybody*) went on sale at a fairly high price.

Sexual insults include references to genitals and coitus, such as *Ianiek huilo* [Yaniek is a shit-dick], *Посадили куц каліни, а вироста туя, вибрали президента – а вибрали х...!* [We planted a guelder rose bush, but an arborvitae has grown, we picked out a president – but a d... was picked out!]; in imitation of a humorous folk song, we found, *Признаюся, українці: президент я хуїв!!!* [Ukrainians, I confess: I am a dick of a president], *Знають старші і малі, що господар у...ді!* [The elderly and toddlers know the ruler is in a c...t!]. Sometimes some “esoteric”, i.e., English, expressions were used: *F\*\*\*k off, Вітя* [Vitia] (a picture of a closed fist with the outstretched middle finger accompanied this text). Allusions to sodomy and homosexuality were especially frequent and often relied on vernacular forms of the word pederast (*pidoras, pidor, pidar*): *Ianukovych pidaras* [Yanukovych is a faggot], *Ianyk – pidar* [Yanyk is a pedo] (: *Вітя Яник – Дед Мороз, / Голова из ваты. / Кровь и слезы ты принес, / Пидор ты горбатый!* [Vitia Yanik is a *Ded Moroz*, (8) / His head is made of cotton. / You brought blood and tears, / You are a humpback faggot!], *Лиш пробачте, українці, / Жителям Донбасу, / Що довірили країну / Мені... пидарасу...* [Ukrainians, forgive / The Donbas residents / Who entrusted the country / To me... a faggot...], *Хай буде все пучком, / а Яник П'ятачком, / Азаров (9) Віні Пухом, / А Путин ослом надутим. / Аминь* [Let everything be perfect, / Let Yanyk become a Piglet, / Azarov a Winnie the Pooh, / And Putin the sad Donkey. / Amen]. (10) Some also contained criminal expressions such as *Яник – питух, Беркут – хуеркут* [Yanyk is a cock/rooster, (11), *Berkut* is a cock-thing]. (12)



Poster with sexual profanities referring to Yanukovich and the Berkuts  
(author's photo)

In light of generally accepted standards of decency, softened forms were sometimes used instead of these more offensive expressions in a type of language game. Examples were extremely diverse and included primarily a series of euphemisms created to reveal a secret (and potentially sexual) sense of ordinary, inoffensive words to the audience. The games included examples with: backwards words, as in *Яник іди на йух* (the inverse of *hui*)! [Yanyk go to kcoc! (the inverse of *cock*)], *Чувокунья* [the inverse of *Yanukovych*]; words-in-words created with internal capital letters: *НАХіба мені влада яка мене ігнорує!* [Why should I have a government that ignores me! (the first word in this phrase can be read as NAH..., i. e., FUCK!)]; omission of certain letters: INK PNH [Yanyk, fuck you (or in the direct translation, Yanyk, go onto a dick)]; ellipsis: *vybraly h...* [we elected a d...k], *u ...di* (in a c...t); paronomious consonances leading to an indecent reading of a word: *Lider re-gey-analov!* [Leader of the **re-gay-anuses!**]. The popular slogan *Ia. pidaresht* (a play on 'I'm a fag' from the original phrase *Януковича під арешт* 'Yanukovych must be arrested') alongside a picture of the President behind bars was widespread and appeared in hand-written inscriptions, on printed labels and even on home-made girls' earrings. In mid-December 2013, the members of a flash mob on *Khreshchatyk* built the word *Pidaresht* with their own bodies. One particularly productive example was based on the filthy nickname *gandon* [condom] used for the President. It formed an original paronymous chain: *Honduras*, then *ananas* [pineapple], cf. *Наш проффесор "Гондурас" / Опозорил весь Донбас* [Our Proffesor Gonduras / Shamed all the Donbas], *За Новий рік без ананаса!* [To the New Year without the pineapple!]. Finally, there was a pearl of cross-linguistic word play combining Ukrainian and English: *Yahoo!єю з нашого президента!* [I am wonder-stricken by our fucking President!] [for more details about language games, see Lysiuk 2015]. Other newly coined Ukrainian political obscene expressions appeared at this time as well: *Ну ты Янукович!* [What a Yanukovych you are!], also: *Мать твоя Йолка!* [Fuck your Christmas-tree!], later – *Крымвоиумат!* [Fuck your Crimea!].



*Demonstrators spelling out pidaresh (pederast) (author's photos)*

### Dehumanizing the image

People's hatred of the leader also resulted in a demonstration of contempt for his image and the consequent outrages directed at it: his portraits were inverted; sketched and crossed out; painted and penciled as if in school textbooks and "decorated" with different stickers and insulting inscriptions over his face. Leaving aside his "innocent" portraits with a red clown nose, it can be argued that there were attempts to reject his claim on domination or to align him with infamous dictators. It was common to target his humanity by imputing him phyto-, zoomorphic and demonic characteristics.

Because people considered Yanukovych unworthy to be President, the politicization of his image served to ridicule his claims to reign. Thus, a number of "titles" given to Yanukovych's image removed him out of the frame of universal values and represented him as a dictator and tyrant. In particular, there were the images of Yanukovych wearing a crown. The inscription on one of them said: *Спасибо жителям Донбасса от президента пид...аса* [Thank you, Donbas residents, from the President ped... st]. Another poster depicted a naked man with horns, clad only in a tie and a very long mantle supported from behind by two naked males with an paronymous inscription: *А король-то гонник* [A king is a hooligan]. (13)

The claims of *gore-presydent* [woe-president], *Perzident of URKaine* (from *urka* [hooligan] in Russian criminal argot) to be the "father of the nation" seemed absolutely untenable and were reflected in the epithets associated with his image: *Україна – не Росія, Янукович – не месія!* [Ukraine is not Russia, Yanukovych is not the Messiah!]; *Бандюкович – враг України* [Bandiukovich is an enemy of Ukraine]; *Янукович... вы оставили в наследство своим детям и внукам позор, презрение, ненависть и проклятия* [Yanukovych... you have left shame, contempt, hatred and curses as the inheritance for your children and grandchildren]. The well-known "hit" *Батя, я стараюсь* [Dad, I am trying (lit., exerting myself)!] recorded by the first lady Liudmila Yanukovych, whose name became the synonymous with fool in urban folk texts, was used to ridicule him: *Батя, ми стараємось* [Dad, we are trying]; *Батя, ми старались – втікайте*

птахи, як не заховались! [Dad, we are trying – birds, flee if you have not hidden yet!]; (14) *Батя, хочу стать сиротой – постарайся!* [Dad, I want to be an orphan so exert yourself!]; *Яник ты перестарался!* [Yanuk you overexerted yourself!].



Drawing of Yanukovich above the name Iosyf Adolfovych Pinochet (author's photo)

He was not presented as respected and caring father but as a ruthless tyrant. He was called a *dyktor* [dictator] (*Україні не потрібні диктатори* [Ukraine does not need any dictators]), *uzurpator* [usurper], *provokator* [provocateur], *fashyst* [fascist], *okupant* [occupant], *Iuda* [Judas], and *запроданець МоSSковії* [betrayer to MoSSkovia]. (15) This trend was exhibited in the Christmas verteps as well, where Yanukovych and the prime minister Azarov appeared as the tyrant Herod and as a devil.

A related trend in the political folklore of the period was associating the President's images with characteristic external features or attributes of famous world dictators, e.g., China's Mao Zedong (depicting him with Asian-style eyes); Adolf Hitler (in a Nazi uniform with a short moustache and penciled swastika in a circle); or Augusto Pinochet (in the military uniform of the Chilean junta). He also appeared in some composite images of a stereotypical tyrant with a thick black beard, a pirate patch over one eye and in a white admiral jacket with epaulets and countless awards and medals (akin to Leonid Brezhnev). They were accompanied by inscriptions such as *Іосиф Адольфович Піночет* [Iosyph

Adolfovych Pinochet]. Sometimes he was pictured in a company of Nicolae Ceaușescu, Saddam Hussein, Muammar Kaddafi, etc.

Zoomorphization was another means to cast aspersions on Yanukovych and resulted in a complete dehumanization of the President's image. This process was manifested in the use of general and specific names referring to fauna: *Ianukovych tvar'!* [Yanukovych is a creature], *tvaryna* [animal], *ZVIERIUKA!!!* [beast], *potvora* [monster], *vovkulaka* [werewolf], *vovk* [wolf], *vovziura* [dire wolf], *Ianyk suka* [Yanyk is a bitch], *bydlo* [cattle, beast], *kozěl* [billy-goat], *shchur* [rat], *klishch* [mite], *gnida* [nit], etc.: *Бидло – воно і в Африці бидло. Тільки в Україні воно президент* [A beast is a beast even in Africa. It (sic! – N. L.) is a president only in Ukraine]. (16) Sometimes he appeared as a predator or cannibal in keeping with the idea that he preyed on the people, as we see in the list above: *З'їв м'ясо на людях, тепер до кісток обгризає* [He has eaten the meat of humans, now he is gnawing their bones].

Despite these predatory masks he wore in the visual and verbal folk texts expressions equating Yanukovych with cloven-hoofed animals were most common among the animal references. Yanukovych was often called *svynia* [she-pig], *kaban* [swine], *knour* [hog], and *hriak* [castrated boar] (all these "titles" means also a coarse person). A number of his images were "adorned" with a pig's snout, and he was often depicted in the form of a pig, for example, like a boar dressed in the costume of a Christmas tree and accompanied by two policemen with sticks, or like a carcass with a snout leaning on trident next to the inscription: *Викуримо кабана з Межигір'я!* [Expel the boar by fire from Mezhygiria!], cf.: *Станеться все просто, / ніби два на два. / І лежать на полиці, / що висить на йолці / Буде надсвиняча суперголова.* [It'll happen simply / as if two multiply by two. / And the overpig's superhead / will lie on the shelf / hanging on a Christmas tree]. This trend persisted at least until the end of February 2014, when a photo of a huge singed boar's carcass lying on a peasant yard with an inscription *Ianukovych* on its side was published in the press. While animal references were most common, one nickname based on Yanukovych's name, *Ovoch/Ovoshch* [a vegetable] was popular as well, cf. euphemistic slogans: *Вживайте більше овочів та фруктів* [Eat more vegetables and fruits], *Овощ созрел – пора убирать* [The vegetable is ripe, it's time to harvest].





*Image of Yanukovich as a pig with the inscription “Expel the boar by fire from Mezhygiria!” (author’s photo)*

Demonization of the President’s image became especially prevalent after the bloody crackdown on the Euromaidan. At that point, streams of blood were drawn on his portraits, mostly on the hands, lips, and face. In one caricature, the leader sat next to a Christmas tree decorated with red apples and squeezed them into a bucket of blood-like juice. Sometimes he was depicted as a vampire with fangs and bloody lips. These images were accompanied by inscriptions like *Krovosisia* [Bloodsucker] (17), *Vit’ka Krovavui* [Vyt’ka the Bloody!], *Твої руки залляті кров’ю дітей України!* [Your hands are stained with the blood of children of Ukraine!].



*Poster of Yanukovich referred to as a hog (author's photo)*



*Poster of Yanukovich with a Christmas tree and bucket of "blood" (author's photo)*



*Poster titled Bloodsuckers (author's photo)*

In essence, the President was reviled and depicted as a devil, Satan, or an evil spirit, as the following inscriptions affirm: Яник, покайся черт, тобі місце в пеклі! [Yanyk, heck, repent, your place is in the hell!]; Згинь, нечиста сила! [Perish, devilry!]; Сатанинская власть Януковича иди в приисподнюю! [Satanic power of Yanukovich, go to the hell!]; Захистимо нашу Україну від сатани та його прихвоснів в кепках із Москви! [Let's defend our Ukraine from the Satan and his henchmen clad in kepis from Moscow!]; Україну – в ЄС, а Януковича – в п'ятьму! [Let Ukraine go to the EU and Yanukovich to the darkness!]. We have also a text in style of the well-known (likely fake) letter from the Ukrainian Cossacks to the Turkish Sultan: Лист українському хаму Віктору Ялинковичу / Ти зрадник, чорт москальський, / проклятого чорта брат і товариш, / Путіна підстилка! / Який ти в чорта президент, / коли українських дітей під кийки кидаєш, / А сам по світу жебрачиш? Франківська Січ [To the Ukrainian boor Viktor Yalynkovych: / You are a traitor, Moskal (Muscovite) devil, / brother and friend to the cursed devil's, / Putin's litter! / What a devilish President you are / if you toss the Ukrainian children under the bludgeons, / and you are begging all around the world? Frankivsk Sich]. (18) The insults were strengthened by composite amorphous images of the leader, as in a picture of him with a red snout, a sparse beard and horns alongside the words *Ia smerdiu* [I stink], or one with horns, a pig snout, thick fur all over his body, male genitalia and hooves. Therefore, the words attributed to the Virgin Mary seemed apt to the protesters: Прокляну до сьомого коліна за невинну кров людини! [I'll curse to the seventh generation for the innocent human blood spilled!]. I should note that a single Antimaidan example opposed these texts and pictures of Yanukovich as a demon: нукович!!! Ты наш БОГ и мы вам верим!!! м. Ханженково [Yanukovich!!! You're our GOD and we believe you!!! The city of Hanzhenkovo].

Despite this evidence of some support, as the Euromaidan wore on, more and more people expressed a negative attitude toward the president on posters: *Ми не любимо Я.* [We do not like Ia.]; *Не любимо Януковича...* [(We) dislike Yanukovich...]; *Ми хочемо нормального Призедента* [We want a normal Pryzedent (sic, author's mistake in the inscription)]; *Я зневажаю свого президента* [I despise my president]; *Янукович! Ми тебе мали на увазі* [Yanukovich! We do not care for you]; *Єнакієво его падлу не любить, Путин полюбяє* [Yenakievo (19) does not like him, a crud, but Putin does]; *Ганьба Януковичу! Борислав сміється, а Яник плаче* [Shame on Yanukovich! Boryslav laughs and Yanyk cries]. (20)



*Yanukovich as the devil with pig snout and genitalia exposed (author's photo)*

At times people expressed their outrage simply by writing *Ненавижу* [(I) hate (you)] on his portrait. At others, they appealed to well-known book characters to express their disapproval: *Януческу и Азареску, вас никто не любит кроме уголовного розыска, который тоже вас не любит. Остап Бендер* [Yanushesku and Azaresku, nobody likes you, besides the Criminal Investigation Department, who does not like you either. Ostap Bender]. (21) Sometimes, some special inscriptions appeared: *Я. ракова пухлина на тілі України!* [Ya. is a cancer on the body of Ukraine!], *Якщо Янукович обіцяє мир – готуйтеся до війни (Майданна мудрість)* [If Yanukovich promises peace – prepare for war (Maidan wisdom)]. Not surprisingly, stickers reading *Майданемо Я.* [Let's maidan Ya.] (a neologism, to maidan means 'to throw somebody off the throne') were also popular.



*Yanukovich as a clown saying “I stink” (author’s photo)*

Some made direct appeals and requests to the leader as well: *Яник, дурний, чи шо?* [Yanuk, you are stupid, are you not?]; *Вітя, нам не треба такий господар!* [Vitia, we do not need such a riler! (instead of ruler, in Azarov’s dialect)]; *Вітя, зроби подарунок українцям на Новий рік!* [Vitia, make a gift to Ukrainians for the New Year! (i.e., disappear)]. At times, these appeared in the form of commands or veiled threats: *Конституція – не шапка, поверни вкрадену владу!* [The Constitution is not a hat, return our stolen full powers!]; *25 декабря Чаушеску не успел понять, что происходит...* [On 25 December Ceaușescu had no time to understand what had been going on...]; *Янукович, не підпишеш і не підеш мирно, буде гірше!* [Yanukovich, if you do not resign and do not go away peacefully, it’ll be worse!]; *Вітя! Їжачок тобі коко знесе!* *Єнакієво* [Vitia! A hedgehog will carry a small egg for you! (22) Yenakievo].



Poster reading with reference to *Ostap Bender* (author's photo)

Formulaic categorical labels were commonplace as well: *Я проти Януковича!* [I am against Yanukovych!], *Я против Я.* [I'm against Ya.]. These formulas may be considered to be both personal and collective protests in view of the signatures placed alongside them on behalf of real or virtual people or firms and companies, villages, towns, cities, districts, regions and all of Ukraine: *Донбас проти Яніка* [Donbas is against Yanyk], *Енакиєво против Бандюковича* [Yenakievo is against Bandiukovich], *Джон Траволта проти Януковича* [John Travolta is against Yanukovych]. This trend began on 29 December 2013, when many drivers placed the stickers bearing slogans against Yanukovych on the license plates of their cars.

As a negative character, the ex-President also became an example not to follow in the Maidan guidelines themselves: *Друже! Не чини з Майданом, як Янукович!* *Не плюй у нього!* *Не кидай на нього своїх недопалків!* *Негайно прибирай своє сміття!* [Friend! Do not do to the Maidan as Yanukovych does! Do not spit on it! Do not leave your cigarette butts on it! Tidy up your garbage

immediately!]. A poster hanging on one of the small fir-trees in the Maidan seemed especially lighthearted in this regard: *Грайки не красти! Ти ж не Я.!* [Do not steal the ornaments! You are not a Ya.!).

The creators of Maidan folklore also focused on the biography of the President, mythologizing and hyperbolizing his criminal past ever more as time went on. Yanukovych was accused of 6 murders for hire (Kravchenko, Kirpa, etc.); 13 criminal cases from the Soviet era (his godfather had purified him or he had bought him off); and 4 prison sentences (he was a boor in prison). There were also suggestions that he participated in massacres, looting, and other violence in Yenakyevo in his youth, and that he ordered the heads of cities and district administrations where he had not been elected president to appear before him and knocked their teeth out himself.

The criminal episodes of Yanukovych's past came into the spotlight. He was positioned as a liar and con artist and a thief: *Бум!! Кручу, верчу обмануть хочу!* [Boom!! I am twisting and twirling, since I want to cheat everyone]; *Все починалося з жуйки в магазині, яку я вкрав...* [Everything started with the gum I'd stolen in the shop...] (inscription on a smiling Yanukovych's picture). Some episodes in his youth, like thefts of passerbys' winter hats, were also common: *Вітя! Ти вкрав і надів чужу шапку* [Vitia! You have stolen someone's hat and put it on yourself]. This theme was developed in simple verses: *Не йде Вітя у Європу / Ні за які бабки, / Бо в Європі вже не носять / Ондатрові шапки!* [Vitia does not go to Europe / For any money, / Cause in Europe nobody wears / Muskrat hats!]; *Большой начальник какие страсти / Обман и сила и он у власти / Захват богатства сбылись надежды / Сбивает шапки везде как прежде / Украл он деньги всего народа / И как нам снять его урода?* [The great boss, what a passion / The fraud and strength, and he has complete power / The capture of wealth, and his hopes have come true / He plucks hats everywhere as before / He has stolen all the people's money / And how can we remove him, the monster?]. Some requested that he return his ill-gotten gains: *Вітя верни деньги* [Vitia refund money]; *Яник, верни деньги* [Yanyk, give money back]; *Ходка перша не загашена* [The previous term has not been not repaid]. Many of these inscriptions were expressed ungrammatically with a merciless doublespeak and the use of jargon: *Енакиєво проти зека насильника 4 ходки в зоні...* [Yenakyevo is against the prisoner and rapist who have [sic] been 4 times in the penal colonies...], *Янукович – 4х ходок в тюрму – зек* [Yanukovych – 4 times was in prison/a prisoner], *Я. пахан ссучился / На зоні стукач* [Ya. is a Godfather, he became a bitch/snitch in the penal colony].

The main purpose of the biographical excursions was to show the “scammer” was unable to change. The left side of one poster was entitled *Колись Золота юність Я.* [Before: Ya.'s golden youth] and contained the picture of his figure (with an inscription *Vitia* on the chest) taking off someone's hat with a hook. The right side read: *Сьогодні: Почерк та нутро не змінились! Методи, знаряддя та мрія залишились ті самі!* [Today: The style and the innermost parts have not changed! The methods, tools and dreams remained the same!]; there a couple of *Berkuts* (23) were catching somebody using the same hooks. The center of the poster bore this inscription: *Чорне ніколи не стане білим!* [Black can never



become white!]. Below was a moralistic conclusion: *Зек при владі – горе для народу, наука для виборців і щастя для клану та сім'ї* [The criminal as a ruler is grief for the people, lesson for voters and fortune to the clan and the family]. Another poster formulated a similar opinion in verse: *Каким он был – таким остался. / Таких в “Элите” не один. / И хоть ПроФФФесором назвался – / ПАХАНОМ будет до седин* [He has been the same as he is now. / There are plenty of such persons among the “elite”. / And even though he named himself a ProFFFFesor / He will be a GODFATHER till he turns gray].



Poster entitled *Before: Ya. 's golden youth* (author's photo)

As noted above, initially the activity of Yanukovich as the president was not overly criticized. However, the first violent dispersal of the peaceful Euromaidan protest received enormous publicity. These events gave birth to a popular motif Christmas tree on the blood (see note 3), The posters decried the violence: *Спасибо Януковичу за палочки и елочку!* [Thanks to Yanukovich for sticks and a Christmas tree!]; *Який президент така і йолка!* [What a president so such a Christmas tree!]; *Чому Яник робить усе через жйюлку?* [Why does Yanyk make everything through the arse/Christmas tree?]. (24) One of the posters depicted a three-tiered pyramid crowned by Yanukovich; *Berkuts* in helmets armed with batons were situated on each level of this pyramid, and torn posters and a pool of blood were arrayed beneath.

A paraphrase of a well-known anti-Soviet slogan *Комуняку на гілляку* [(Let us hang every) communist on the (tree) branch] generated a new euphemism (*to hang a person*) on a Christmas tree: *Зека на йолку* [(Let's hang) the prisoner on FOLKLORICA 2015, Vol. XIX

the Christmas tree]; *Янукович – на ялинку* [(Let's hang) Yanukovych on the Christmas tree]; *Я. на криваву йолку* [(Let's hang) Ya. on the bloody Christmas tree (on a child's drawing done with colored pencils)]; *Я. на кривавій йолці* [Ya. (is hanging) on the bloody Christmas tree]. Sometimes the Christmas tree itself joined in the dialogue: *Вітьок, жду тебе. Йолка* [Vitëk, I am waiting for you. (Signed) Christmas tree]. Thus Yanukovych and his henchmen were often depicted at the top of a tree; one inscription read: *Янукович – наша зірочка* [Yanukovych is our star], (25) cf. a caricature drawn with colored pencils where Azarov and Yanukovych sit on the top two branches of the same tree. A similar motif existed in metaphorical form: *Перетравимо Ялинковича на хвойний екстракт* [Let us digest Ialynkovych into conifer extract]. Later this motif expanded: *Ялинковича на йолку, Азірову – в піпу морковку! Табачника – на смереку* [(Let's hang) Ianynkovych on a Christmas tree, (let's put) a carrot into Azirov's pussy, (Let's hang) Tabachnyk on a spruce]; (26) *Я. – на йолку, Азірова – на Колиму, Захарченка – у тюрму, Уряд – у відставку!* [(Let's hang) Ya. on a Christmas tree, (let's send) Azirov to Kolyma, Zakharchenko to prison, Government into resignation!] (an appended slogan on the side read: *А Шпонку – в ополонку!!!* [And (let's throw) Shponka into an ice hole!!!]); *Беркут на птахофабрику!* [(Let's send) the *Berkuts* to a poultry farm!].

Noting that Yanukovych was also portrayed as a “worthless” governor: *Я. Україна готова до вступу в ЄС! Це ти не готовий до влади* [Ya., Ukraine is ready to join the EU! It is you who is not ready to rule] the creators of posters also described his misdeeds in more detail to suggest his unfitnes: *Яник, покайся! Не по поняттям бити дітей, жінок!* [Yanyk, repent! It is not decent to beat children, women!], *Пробачення за вбивство тобі не буде так вирішили на Україні люди* [You will not be forgiven for killing as Ukrainian people decided]; *Привіз люців за наші гроші щоби сказали ти хороший, а ти є катюга!!* [You have brought the scums using our money in order for everybody to say you were good, and you were a butcher!!].

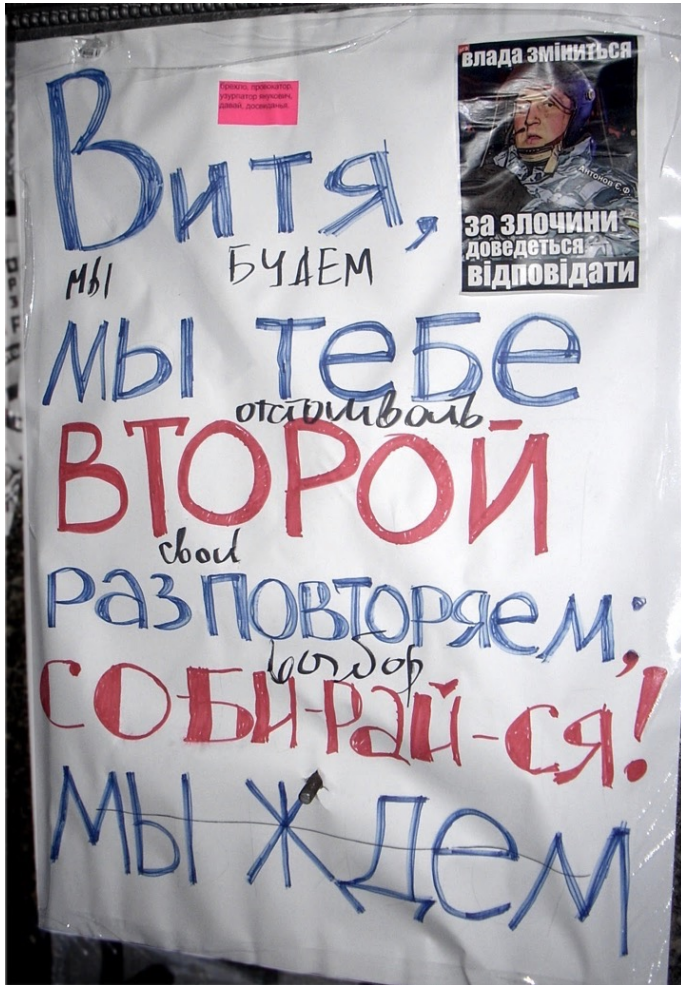
After the first Automaidan “visit” to the leader’s house in the village of Novi Petrivtsi near Kiev, the protesters focused on that site. This luxurious manor with a palace known as Mezhygiria [this noun exactly means ‘Between hills’] was renamed Megazhyria [Megafatness] or *Megazhopie* [Megaass]; the euphemism *muzei kaznokrada* [the embezzler’s museum] also appeared. There was an inscription *Janukovychu Mezhygiria* [Mezhygiria to Yanukovych] with the syllables *giria* crossed out and replaced by *ochi* [eyes]: *Janukovychu Mezhyochi* [(Beat) Yanukovych between his eyes]. The idea of destruction of this property was put forth also: *Повернем гнів на Межигір'я, / Пустелю зробимо з подвір'я, / Підсмалимо ми хаму пир'я, / Бо втратив наше він довір'я (Богородчани)* [Let's turn our anger at Mezhygiria, / Make the courtyard a desert / Let's sing the boor's feathers, / For he has lost our confidence (Bogorodchany)]. Finally, the problem of the presidential house resulted in searches for a decent home for him. The following inscriptions *Янукович тут живе. Обережно, дуже злий* [Yanukovych lives here. Be careful, he is very wicked] and *Адміністрація президента Яндзека* [Yandzek Presidential Administration]

were placed on the public toilet stalls on the main Kiev street Khreshchatyk, while *Ianyka hata* [Yanyk's house] was written on a garbage tank.



*Display referring to Yanukovich's future imprisonment (author's photo)*

The ultimate fate of the ruler attracted much attention as well. Plenty of scenarios were suggested, from the peaceful to bloody, including retirement, silent disappearance, escape, becoming the subject of an international manhunt, imprisonment, and death (from suicide and murder to execution by hanging). In particular, people made reference to his retirement in requests, promises and "vows": *Янукович, будь ласка, піди у відставку!* [Yanukovich, please do resign!]; *Моя бабуся станцює брейк, коли ця гніда піде у відставку* [My grandmother will breakdance if this nit retires]; *Не буду пити до відставки Я.* [I will not drink till Ya.'s resignation]. The idiom *плетсти ланті* [lit. 'to weave bast shoes'; in this context this phraseologism means 'to prepare a plot for getting rid of somebody', 'to try to send somebody away'] spawned a bunch of figurative expressions. An inscription *На третю "ходку" від народу* [For the third "trip" (i.e. imprisonment) from people] was placed on a poster next to the picture of prison bars and worn and dirty shoes, with hat and bag had been hanging above them; two boots labeled *Dlia Janukovycha* [For Yanukovich] hung next to one of the tents with the writing: *Нам – валянки, Януковичу – ланті!* [Felt boots for us, bast shoes for Yanukovich!]; and a big boot with a puppet of Yanukovich inside it was placed on the main Euromaidan Christmas tree.



Poster with the slogan “Vitia, we repeat for the second time: Get ready! We are waiting”

More compassionate people expected him to disappear quietly and inconspicuously: *Янукович, уйди!!! Не забирай у мене дитинство!* [Yanukovych, go away!!! Do not take away my childhood!] (this inscription was next to the image of a baby with the state’s two-colored flag); *Витя, уйди тихо!* [Vitia, go away quietly!]; *Витя, мы тебе второй раз повторяем: Со-би-рай-ся! Мы ждем* [Vitia, we repeat you for the second time: Get ready! We are waiting for it]. People’s expectations were clarified by the slogan *Я., давай до свидания!* [Ya., let’s say goodbye!], and the song-remake *Vitia, chao!* with the refrain *Прощай, гаранте, не повертайся...* [Goodbye, Guarantor, do not come back...]. It is interesting that this request played the role of a Christmas wish in modern ritual: *Я написал “Янукович, уходи” на бумажке, поджег этот*

кличок *бумаги, а пепел бросил в шампанское и выпил его* (Константин Образцов) [I wrote “Yanukovych go away” on a piece of paper, set fire to this piece of paper, added the ashes to my champagne and drank it (Constantin Obraztsov)].

More impatient individuals demanded that the president leave Ukraine: *Янукович, ідить геть від нас* [Yanukovych, go away from us!]; *Йди геть від нас!* [Go away from us!]; *Геть Іанукровуша* [Yanukrovych (go) away]; *Ната геть!* [Twerp, (go) away!]; *Янукович, геть іди і Азірова веди!* [Yanukovych, go away and take Azirov with you!]; *Геть Бандюковича і його Азіровичів!* [Bandiukovych and his Azirovychs, go away!]; *Геть дурнів і профанів України!* [Fools and profaners out of Ukraine!]; *Злочинну, корумповану владу Януковича геть з України!* [Criminal, corrupt government of Yanukovych, get out of Ukraine!]. Some inscriptions predicted his extinction, so that no traces of him would remain in the country: *Янукович, изыди из Украины* [Yanukovych, begone from Ukraine]; *Янукович зникни геть з людських очей!* [Yanukovych, vanish from people's eyes!]; *Окупант Бандюкович! Згинь, згинь з чужої тобі України* [The invader Bandiukovych! Vanish, vanish from alien to you Ukraine]; *Янукович, щоб ти щез, / Хочеться сказати, / Щоб не було вже кому / З “йолкою” вітати!* [Yanukovych, we would like to say: (we) hope you disappear/ And there will be no one / To ‘greet’ us with a “Christmas tree”!]. The prospect of eliminating Yanukovych resulted in numerous slogans with the preposition ‘without’: *Україна без Януковича!* [Ukraine without Yanukovych!]; *В Європу без Януковича* [Into Europe without Yanukovych], *Мукачєво – без Яника* [Mukachevo without Yanyuk]; *Суми, Колядинець за Україну без зека!* [Sumy, Kolyadynets are for Ukraine without the jailbird!]; *Гадяч – за Україну без ЗЕКА!* [Gadiach for Ukraine without the jailbird!]; *Єнакієво без Хама* [Yenakievo without the Twerp], *За Новий рік без ананаса!* [To New Year without the pineapple!]; *За Різдво без Я.* [To Christmas without Ya.]. The authors of these numerous slogans positioned themselves within a particular group (from smaller ones like urban areas or youth subcultures to bigger ones, such as villages, towns, cities, regions, and, at last, the entire country).

Sometimes posters pointed out particular places for him to flee to: *Їзжай домой, хряк!* [Go home, you castrated boar!]; *Хаме Януковичу! Збирай чорну беркутню та чимчикуй на рідну Донеччину ... і тихенько на кладовище – там твоє пристанище...* [The boor Yanukovych! Pick up your black Berkuts and walk to your native Donetsk region... and quietly to the cemetery – where your shelter is...]; *Вітя, час додому* [Vitia, it is time to go home] (prison bars were drawn there). Often he was “sent” somewhere even more distant: *Яник, їдь на безлюдний острів!* [Yanyuk, go to a desert island!]. On the occasion of his visit to China, the preferred direction of emigration was further clarified: *Нехай їде в Китай!* [Let him go to China!]; *Я., Їдь в Китай, там і залишайся!* [Ya., go to China and stay there!]; *Яник, їдь в Китай і там лишись. А краще у Північну Корею* [Yanyuk, go to China and stay there. Better still, go to North Korea]. Russia was mentioned as well, usually as a place of detention: *Янукович: Чемодан – вокзал – Магадан (Дружковка)* [Yanukovych: suitcase – train station – Magadan (27) (Druzhkovka)], cf. the naive verse: *В Україні сніг іде і в Києві слизько, /*

Утікай, гад Янукович, бо Кличко вже близько, <...> / Тікай просто в Магадан, там будеш ще більший пан, / Там будеш ще більший пан, жити будеш як султан... / У братви будеш на зоні старшим підарем в законі... [It is snowing in Ukraine and it is slippery in Kiev, / Flee, bastard Yanukovich, because Klychko is nearby, <...> / Run away to Magadan, there you will be a great lord, / There you will be a great lord, you will live as a sultan... / You will be a senior pedo in-law among the criminals in a penal colony...]. He was even directed to another planet: Марсонавти! Заберіть їх! [Marsonauts! Take them away!]. As discussed above, the most common place where Yanukovich was “sent” was the ass.

Yanukovich’s flight from the country on 21 February 2014 was anticipated beforehand as well: *Янукович, беги, беги!* [Yanukovich, run, run!], *Вітя! Знав би – втік!* [Vitia! If you knew you would flee!]; *Вітя, шухер! Кранты!* [Vitia, chickie! Curtain!] (inscription under the severed head of the Libyan dictator Saddam Hussein). His aides were also warned: *Прокурори, судді, депутати, / Ваш пахан не втримає руля, / Крисам треба вже тікати / З тонучого корабля.* [Prosecutors, judges, MPs, / Your godfather will not keep the rudder, / So rats have to flee / The sinking ship].

The common desire was to declare Yanukovich a fugitive from justice who was blamed for serious crimes: *Розшукується Я. В. Ф., відшукується на прізвиська Хам, Ялинкович, Шрек, Бандюкович. Wanted de Ukrainian people* [Wanted Yanukovich Viktor Fedorovich, responding to the nicknames Boor, Yalynkovych, Shrek, Bandiukovich. Wanted by the Ukrainian people]. The prison prospect would sometimes get a metaphorical embodiment, since these slogans were written next to the drawing of bloody chains: *Руки прочь от України!* [Hands off Ukraine!] (at the top), *Яник, давай руки!* [Yanyk, give (us) your hands!...] (at the bottom).

More often the motive of retribution was clarified in direct demands to punish the ruler: *Наперсточника к ответу!* [The con artist must pay!]; *Зека на зону* [The prisoner – to a penal colony] (alongside a plate in the hand of a dummy in an *ushanka* ‘fur hat’); *На нари голими геть!!* [To strip naked and to sit on the bunks!!]; *Долой Бандюка на зону* [(Let’s send) the bandit down to a penal colony]; *Яника за ґрати, на нари – там йому і кінець!* [Let’s set Yanyk behind bars, on the bunks – and there is his end!]; *Нас не подолати – Яника за ґрати!* [We cannot be defeated – Yanyk has to be behind bars!]; *Зека за ґрати і ґрати, ґрати, ґрати* [Let’s put the prisoner behind bars and let’s play, play, play]; *Зеківську потвору під замок в комору!* [Let’s lock the prison monster in a cellar!]; *Вітьок іди на третій строк!* [Vitěk go (into prison) for the third term!]. People who were supposedly more familiar with penal laws clarified their statements with specific details: *Помни за нари, суши сухари* [Remember bunks, dry the rusks]; *52-я зона ждет* [The 52nd colony is waiting] (the word *special* was ascribed below); *Вітя, тебе чекає зона. 52! Опасная* [Vitya, a colony is waiting for you. The 52nd! Dangerous]; *Підараса на нари і в позу!* [Put maricone on the bunks and in the pose!]. This environment probably generated “*Песню о родном городе*” [A **sonng** of the native town] with music by “the great

Ukrainian poet Chekhov and lyrics by the Odessa folk composer Anna Akhmetova:" (28) *Голуби летят над нашей хатой, / Голубям давно покою нет, / Ждут они проффэсора с Мыколой...* [The pigeons are flying over our hut, / The pigeons did not rest for a long time, / They are waiting for professor and Mykola (Azarov)...]. The references to prison included scatological elements as well: *Хама на парашу!* [Sit the boor on a slop bucket!]; *Бандюкович Вітька Я. нари + параша – ось ваше!* [Bandyukovych Vit'ka Ya. Bunks + slop bucket



*Display with Yanukovich's prison cell  
(author's photo)*

– that's yours!]; *Бандюган Вітька Янукович і вся твоя братва – нари + параша = оце ваше!* [Bandit Vit'ka Yanukovych and all your lads – Bunks + slop bucket = these are yours!]. One well-known Maidan composition also emphasized this motif: a scarecrow-like Yanukovych-prisoner, dressed in a striped jumpsuit and with his hand up and tied with chains, was sitting on a golden toilet bowl in a cage. He had

a hat-crown on his head and a funeral wreath was nearby. *Пахану – хана – Сказала страна* [The godfather is fucked – the country has said] was written on another poster.

Sometimes the motif of imprisonment acquired an expanded form, covering his inner circle: *Зека на нари, Азірова на переробку, Табачника на самокрутку!* [(Let's send) The prisoner on the bunks, Azirov for processing, Tabachnyk for a hand-rolled cigarette!]. This scenario was seen as a gift of fate: *Свято наближається* [Holiday is coming] (inscribed on portraits of Yanukovych and M. Azarov behind bars).

On New Year's Eve, people expressed wishes to get rid of the hateful leader: *Залиш непотріб у старому році!* [Leave garbage in the old year!] (on a picture of Yanukovych with a crooked smile); *Уходящому году – уходящего президента!* [The leaving President into the departing year!]; *Панове! Геть старі онучі / І прострочені товари! / Азіров – На смітник вонючий, / А Янек – знов на нари!* [Gentlemen! Down the old leg wrappings / And expired products! / Azirov go to a stinky dump / And Yanek on the bunks again!].

Essentially, the Maidaners agreed on the general conclusion that Yanukovych was finished, because as they said no leader could survive such hatred from the populace. Soon the protesters transitioned from mere hints of the political death of Yanukovych (on 29 December 2013 the Automaidan brought him a coffin to Mezhygiria) to direct depiction of his own demise, despite the Christian ethos of the Euromaidan and its daily collective prayers (cf. the opinion of an Internet user, "Hmm, what extent of hatred must you bring out of your citizens to result in their everyday hopeful questions of: "Is it true that he croaked?" And replies provided with frowns: "No, it is not true." And this happens in allegedly Christian Ukraine..." (Sergei Lazarev).

The verbal wishes for his death became common: *Smert' Ianyku!* [Death to Yanyk]; *Smert' Ianukovychu* [Death to Yanukovych]; *Ianyk, umri!* [Yanyk, die!]; *Die, fucking politicians!* (in English), *Tyran pomre!* [The tyrant will die!]; *Zrobь tse!!!* [Do it!!!]; *Разом – сила – Янику могила!* [Together we are a force and Yanyk's grave!]; *Вперед ногами у відставку!* (Ukr.)/*Вперед ногами в отставку!* (Rus.) [Feet-first into resignation!]. Others cursed him to various fates: *Яничар, будь ты проклят!!!* [Janissary, be cursed!!!]; *Щоб ти зкис / Щоб ти скис!* [So that you will turn sour]; *Янукович, щоб ти здох!* [Yanukovych, so that you will kick the bucket!]; *Здохни надло janik* [Janik, crud, croak]; *Янукович, най тя качка копне!* [Yanukovych, let a duck beat you! (a folk curse)]. The popular rocker slogan was used as a model as well: *Цой жив, Янукович – нет!* [Tsoi (a rock singer) lives, Yanukovych does not!]. Some personal appeals to the higher authority in the form a prayer for his death were also observed: *Любий Боже! У минулому році / Ти забрав мого улюбленого співака, Майкла Джексона, / У цьому, мого улюбленого актора Патріка Свейзі. / Дозволь мені нагадати, що мій улюблений політик – Віктор Янукович* [Dear God! Last year / Thou took my favourite singer, Michael Jackson, / This year Thou took my favorite actor Patrick Swayze. / Let me remind Thou Viktor Yanukovych is my favorite politician].

An assassination of the leader was also prophesied. A printed poster depicting him with a red spot on his forehead (from a sniper rifle with laser sight) gained popularity. The President was also reminded: *Вітя! Є вихід!* [Vitia! Here is a way out!] (his face was depicted with a pistol pressed to his temple). They also mentioned death on the gallows: a President's dummy in a grey suit hanging by the throat with a red ribbon was accompanied by the inscription *Ianukovycha povisym* [We will hang Yanukovych].

In preparation for his ultimate fate, Yanukovych's portraits were decorated with mourning ribbons and memorable slogans (both in the Maidan and, for example, on the building of the Ivano-Frankivsk Regional Council). The epitaphs read: *Prieziedient Ukrainy 1950–2013* [Ukrainian President 1950–2013]; *Viechnaia pamiat'* [In eternal memory]; *Бо серце згнило, 1950–2013* [Because the heart was rotten, 1950–2013]; *Ой чом, чом, земле моя, / Ти носила такого, як я...* [Oh why, why, my land, / Did thou bear such a person as me...]. Black plates with the words *Тут буде спочивати Янукович Віктор Федорович / Народився 09 липня 1950 року помер як політик і як людина (В ніч з суботи на неділю) 30.11.2013 р.* [Here will rest Yanukovych Viktor Fedorovich / Who was born 9 July 1950, and died as a politician and as a man (on the night between Saturday and Sunday) 30/11/2013] were seen everywhere. In view of this perspective, his last will and testament was written: *Як умру – то поховайте мене в Межигір'ї, / Закопайте на могилі чучіло у пір'ї, / В Гондурасі заховайте партійну окрасу / І спасибо передайте жителям Донбасу!* [When I will die bury me in Mezhygiria, / And bury a jackstraw in feathers on my grave. / Hide the party decoration in Honduras / And pass my thanks to the residents of Donbas!]. (29)

As we can see from these texts, the uprising of the masses against the ruler was, in large part, a rejection based on his immorality, as repeat offender and



criminal and as a head of the state who thought only about his own enrichment. People protested against his erratic policies that contradicted his campaign promises and his reluctance to conclude an agreement with the EU. The final judgment by the people was summarized by the following verse: *Не будеш більше моїм диригентом, / Бо ти за безцінь продав честь мою. / Я тебе породив президентом – / Я в тобі президента вб'ю!* [You will not be my conductor anymore, / Cause you sold my honor for nothing. / I have born you as a President – / I shall kill the president in you!]. (30)

Hate speech serves to insult, denigrate, curse, drive people away and to expressing accusation, death wishes, and the like. It features expressions aimed to attack a person or a group on the basis of gender, ethnic origin, religion, race, disability, or sexual orientation. As we see in this case, the people's hatred can be directed against rulers they perceive to be tyrannical and expressed in folk texts.

However, the use of hate speech in this material leaves us with a paradox. Though the means of hate speech are perhaps much more numerous than those with positive or polite connotations, such speech is treated as both a historical and cultural violation of social taboos. This is especially true when hate speech is used in situations where a tangible social distance exists between a speaker and an addressee. In this case, there was a wide gulf between the former President and other representatives of power in Ukraine and the common people. What prompted people to break this taboo during the Euromaidan? Why was teasing and mocking of the President and the authority so widespread? Why did it become a special game, a kind of competition, despite all the declarations of commitment to the European values? The answer lies in the nature and in the wide range of functions of this semiotic phenomenon.

The breaking of some social taboos becomes especially obvious during periods of social destabilization such as war, revolt, and disasters, when the usual social structures and social order are destroyed. Social norms then disintegrate, and the society becomes characterized by unstructured *communitas* [Turner 1983: 177]. During Ukrainian Maidan 2013-2014, *communitas* was characterized by a giant crowd, reaching up to a million at times, with an ever-changing contingent, as people came, stood on the square for some time, then left to return to their lives while others came to take their place. Similarly, those who slept on the Maidan in tents took shifts to preventing the government from occupying the area. This crowd was not homogeneous, but should be characterized as extremely diverse in terms of ethnic, religious, class, gender, age, and educational features. Only a single characteristic was shared: full rejection of the state leaders and their course towards lifetime rule.

During such periods of social destabilization, primitive instincts, aggression and folk elements, including socially unacceptable lexicon prevail. In crisis-ridden Ukraine, all the aggression was poured into bad words that had actually transformed into quasi-patriotic slogans. Moreover, these slogans spread like wildfire across the country and were not limited to the Maidan. With regards to the functions of this language, we can distinguish two types: cognitive and communicative.

The cognitive function lies in modeling reality. Modeling does not entail mirroring or reflecting reality exactly, but rather its transformation, i.e., deformation, based on certain principles. By means of modeling, any symbolic content can be ascribed to the phenomena we experience. Thus, any physical object can be ascribed with additional connotations and be associated with an invented, newly interpreted or distorted piece of history. By these means, Maidaners created their own political anti-myth that depicted negative images of their enemies while discrediting and disparaging them. Because the enemies of the Euromaidan were the former authorities at all levels, including the President, the Cabinet of Ministers and the Supreme Council, endowing them with the unflattering titles discredited and dishonored them, demonstrating the degree of rejection and exclusion they had caused among the people. Abnegation of the elementary ethical norms and rules of etiquette relative to the most powerful persons in the state became an expression of rejection not only of these individuals, but the state and the order established therein as well.

Communicative functions include a range of social features (political/ideological, regulative, identifying/demarcating, and social-psychotherapeutic, etc.) as well as the magical function. The latter provides an appeal to higher powers outside the human society. It is essential that defamation of the politicians on the Maidan could serve as a demonstration of people's political position and their ideological principles. Thus, we can recall the traditions of "folk humor" in the medieval world. Mikhail Bakhtin described it as folk "carnival consciousness" and the language of the *hoi polloi*, who opposed elite culture and the official language [Bakhtin 1990]. By playing with this counter-culture and colloquial language, common people could flip the social construct upside down, and appeal to the "bottom of the material body," i.e., vulgarity and bawdiness, permitting them to create a counterbalance to the official ideology. In this case, an appeal to curses and to vulgarity – ridiculing everything and everyone – turned out to be a form of resistance against the state system.

In these terms, laughter restores social equality, as a challenge to authorities and their social privileges, it protests against their dominant status, and shames them for their gestures and deeds. Therefore, the obscenities and cuss words have become a language of superiority people used to derogate the rulers.

The identifying and demarcating functions were used to identify with one's political associates and, at the same time, to separate oneself from opponents. In the circle of the Euromaidan, participants violated taboos through the use of foul language, and such usage became almost a norm. What was once considered to be deviant behavior on the part of an individual turned into a kind of valorous feat that allowed open expression of one's political position and an expression of disobedience to the norms accepted by the state. Ultimately, it was an act of resistance to the existing order.

One of the major functions of the obscene and hate-filled may be termed psychotherapeutic, according to Claude Levi-Strauss [1983: 168-182], or anti-crisis, according to Bronislaw Malinowski [1998: 38-54], i.e., the function of relieving stress related to the matters of life and death, natural disasters, and social crises such as wars, revolutions, riots, etc.). Following Freud, this phenomenon

can be seen as a kind of latent mechanism for the replacement of the aggressive impulses and socially unacceptable instincts of the crowd as well as a tool to abate powerful social and socio-cultural tensions. Since the beginning, the protest in Ukraine was fundamentally a nonviolent, peaceful action, but all the aggression poured spontaneously into harsh words against persons considered guilty of causing this social and political crisis.

As it turns out, harsh expressions have a physiological dimension. They have the hypoalgesic effect allowing people to increase their pain tolerance, to increase heart rate, and to decrease perceived pain [Stephens, Atkins, Kingston 2009: 1059-60]. Similarly, some psychologists urge their patients not to subdue their emotions, but let them out. Thus, such behavior could be considered to be mentally healthy during the periods of "extreme stress." The Maidaners were overwhelmed with emotion, and their survival instinct prompted them to let it out in symbolic forms. These forms allowed the participants to express their fury and their passions and gave them an emotional release [Dewaele 2004: 207-209]. We see a similar analysis in the work of James C. Scott, who called both humor and obscenity the "weapons of the weak" [1985]. However, our analysis of the Maidan indicates that they did indeed turn into weapons for those who deny the supremacy of force and who choose as their weapons not violence, but talk from a position of superiority.

The magic function plays an important role in this context as well. In early culture, swearing was regarded as a highly effective weapon. In mythology, swearing and desecration were considered to be the sacred and secret "language of power," suitable for communication with the higher supernatural beings, and, moreover, permitting a person to exert actual pressure on those forces [Uspensky 1981: 49-53]. In pre-Christian ritual, blasphemy, or eschrology, was represented in a number of agricultural and family rites for the stimulation of fertility and promotion of fecundity [Baiburin and Toporkov 1990: 105-107]. We see a similar use in Ukrainian bawdy folk songs. At the same time, however, ritual blasphemy has traditionally been used in a negative sense – to humiliate foes or rivals, 'to curse them to death.' In the case of the Maidan, blasphemy acquired the status of a new modern eschrology. Dirty words became a kind of a ritual, similar to rituals of casting the demons out or to exorcism.

Thus, contemporary anthropology of protest includes hate speech as a core element, which may be described in two dimensions, social and sacred. The most important feature of Maidan hate speech was breaking a taboo on swearing and cursing. It became a public act of non-violent resistance to "evil," a form of protest against the regime and the political enemies of their homeland. It is also served as a means of self-identification, i.e., designation of belonging to the Ukrainian political nation that emerged on the Maidan.

#### NOTES

1 20-21 February 2014 were named "the bloody days of Ukraine" because during this period the most violent events took place, and more than 100

activists were killed by snipers. At night on 21 February, V. Yanukovych fled the capital of Ukraine for Russia.

2 It is built as a spoonerism.

3 The unfinished frame of Christmas-tree became one of the main Maidan symbols. It was called a bloody fir-tree because of violent dispersal of the protesters on November 30, 2013, under the pretext of its installation.

4 In criminal argot, a *boor/cad* means a convict who steals things from other convicts.

5 This is a paraphrase from the famous Ukrainian comedy *Chasing Two Hares* by Myhailo Starytsky.

6 The phraseological unit '*bazarna baba*' does not mean 'a bazaar tradeswoman', but 'a clamorous, rude, stupid quarrelsome person, brawler'.

7 This is a folk remake of the classic poem by the favorite Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko with the same title.

8 A Soviet analogue of Santa Claus.

9 The prime-minister Mykola Azarov is known in particular as the inventor of '*azirivka*' - the warped Russian pretended to be Ukrainian.

10 This text contains the references to the well-known soviet anecdote cycle about the personages of the classic book by A. Milne imbued with homosexual motives. Its structure partly reminds children's rhymes for distribution of roles in a game.

11 The Russian word *pietuh* usually means 'a rooster'; and it is used as the name of 'a passive gay' in criminal argot.

12 All these texts have evident anti-gay orientation, which indicates on a real gap between pro-European statements and traditional non-tolerant worldview of Ukrainians. Hence, the first Ukrainian gay-parade in Kiev in June 2015 named "March of Equality" was attacked with stones and smoke bombs.

13 The word *gopnik* [hooligan] sounds like *golyi* [naked]; it is an allusion to H. C. Andersen's tale "The Emperor's New Clothes."

14 The last phrase contains the allusion on a child game of hide and seek.

15 In the last case, two upper Latin letters in the midst of the Cyrillic text referred to the emotionally heavily loaded historical abbreviation SS, i.e. Schutzstaffel [Defense Corps] known for its crimes against humanity during World War II.

16 A remake of a gambler's byword 'An ace is an ace even in Africa'.

17 In such a way the Russian word for bloodsucker was "translated", or rather distorted, into Ukrainian by Azarov.

18 Sich was a military and administrative organization of the Ukrainian Cossacks.

19 It is interesting that the most unrepeatable statements were often signed on the behalf of the Yenakieve, Yanukovych's hometown.

20 This pseudo-quotation derives from Ivan Franko's novel titled *Boryslav Laughs*.

21 This is a paraphrase of one of the favorite sentences of the protagonist of the satirical novel *Golden Calf* by the famous Odessites Ilya Ilf and Yevgenii Petrov.

22 A hidden allusion to the known case when Yanukovich lost his consciousness and fell down to the ground frightened by an egg thrown at him.

23 Soldiers of the special police units named *Golden Eagle*.

24 The Russian word *elka* [fir tree] is presented in Ukrainian transcription here as well as in plenty of other inscriptions due to Yanukovich who used this Russian word in his official speech pronounced in the state Ukrainian language.

25 In Soviet New Year tradition, every fir tree should be decorated with a five-finger star.

26 Vitalii Zakharchenko and Dmytro Tabachnyk were Ministers, Viktor Pshonka (here: Shponka) was the Prosecutor General of Ukraine.

27 At Stalin times during 1930s Magadan became one of the worst places of exile where many prisoners died.

28 This remark reminds the case when Yanukovich confused the surname of the famous Russian-Ukrainian poet Akhmatova with the surname of Donetsk oligarch Akhmetov in his public speech; here the Russian writer and dramaturg Chekhov becomes an "Ukrainian poet".

29 One more piece from the folk remake of *Testament* by Taras Shevchenko.

30 The last two lines refer directly to Gogol's famous historical novella *Taras Bulba* where the protagonist kills his son-traitor with the words: I have born you, and I shall kill you!

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