Department of Psychology

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Emerging Identities:

Political Action between Protest and War in Ukraine

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ABSTRACT

Ukraine has entered a critical stage of its democratic transition in 2013/14 when the state's authority was challenged by protests, which led to profound transformations of the political system in a span of four months. The Euromaidan revolution started as a protest against the decision of Ukraine's then government to seek closer ties to Russia rather than sign a negotiated free-trade deal with the European Union. This presented a unique opportunity for social psychological researchers to examine the factors determining both individual-level behavioural intentions to engage in collective action and their intergroup consequences. Focusing on the political events in Ukraine, this dissertation politically contextualizes, historically traces, and empirically investigates the antecedents and consequences of politicized group consciousness and proposes a theoretical framework for the systematic understanding of identity-driven collective behaviour. I develop five interdependent lines of investigation on the social psychology of collective action by answering the following questions: 1) What predicts collective action for social change via aspirational group identity? 2) Under which conditions are people more likely to express their aspirational identities through persuasive rather than confrontational (direct, potentially violent) collective action? 3) What social psychological mechanisms govern a synchronized expression of multiple aspirational identities when social protest is outlawed? 4) What drives people to engage in political solidarity action with another group presumed to be socially and/or politically oppressed (i.e. Crimean Tatars)? 5) How do people explain the legality and morality of their own collective behaviour when evaluating the political outcomes of ingroup activism? The studies presented in this dissertation are based on several large scale surveys, collected in the immediate aftermath of the political events in Ukraine (January – February, 2014; March – April, 2014; and March – April, 2017). The research contributes to an increasing body of research examining how intergroup disputes over realistic and symbolic

resources may pertain to intractable conflicts between social groups and discusses the

mechanisms behind their resolution. I argue that the Ukrainian case substantiates the claim

that socially constructed and instrumentally politicized aspirational group identities play a

crucial role in both conflict spiral and conflict prevention.

RIASSUNTO

L'Ucraina è entrata in una fase critica della sua transizione democratica nel 2013/14, quando il governo dello Stato è stato contestato delle proteste che hanno portato a profonde trasformazioni del sistema politico nell'arco di quattro mesi. La rivoluzione dell'Euromaidan è iniziata come una serie di manifestazioni contro la decisione del governo ucraino di cercare legami più stretti con la Russia piuttosto che firmare il negoziato accordo di associazione con l'Unione Europea. Questo evento storico ha rappresentato un'opportunità unica per i ricercatori in psicologia sociale di esaminare i fattori che determinano le intenzioni al comportamento a impegnarsi sia in un'azione collettiva a livello individuale sia nella valutazione (analisi) delle conseguenze della protesta a livello inter-gruppo. Basandosi sugli eventi politici in Ucraina, questa tesi di dottorato contestualizza politicamente, traccia storicamente e analizza empiricamente gli antecedenti e le conseguenze dell'identità di gruppo politicizzata e propone un quadro teorico per la comprensione sistematica del comportamento collettivo orientato a favorire il cambiamento sociale e strutturale. Vengono sviluppate cinque linee interdipendenti di indagine sulla psicologia sociale dell'azione collettiva, che rispondono alle seguenti domande: 1) Cosa prevede l'azione collettiva per il cambiamento sociale attraverso identità di gruppo aspirazionale? 2) Quali condizioni determinano maggiori probabilità che le persone optino per un'azione collettiva di tipo persuasiva piuttosto che conflittuale (diretta, potenzialmente violenta) nel perseguire un cambiamento sociale? 3) Quali meccanismi psicologici governano l'espressione sincronizzata di identità multiple favorevoli al cambiamento sociale? 4) Che cosa spinge le persone a impegnarsi in un'azione di solidarietà politica con un altro gruppo che si presume essere socialmente e /o politicamente oppresso (cioè, Tatari di Crimea)? 5) Come le persone spiegano la legalità e la moralità del proprio comportamento collettivo quando valutano i risultati politici dell'attivismo dell'ingroup? Gli studi presentati in questa tesi di dottorato si

basano su una serie di indagini su larga scala, eseguiti nel periodo immediatamente successivo agli eventi politici in Ucraina (gennaio - febbraio 2014, marzo - aprile 2014, e marzo - aprile, 2017). La ricerca si inserisce all'interno di un crescente numero di ricerche volte ad esaminare come le dispute tra gruppi sulle risorse realistiche e simboliche possano riguardare i conflitti difficili tra i gruppi sociali, e discute i meccanismi alla base della loro risoluzione. In questa tesi di dottorato il caso ucraino dimostra che le identità di gruppo aspirazionali, costruite socialmente e strumentalizzate politicamente, svolgono un ruolo cruciale sia nella spirale del conflitto sia nella sua prevenzione.

DECLARATION BY AUTHOR

I declare that this dissertation/thesis is my own original work. I have clearly stated the contribution by others to jointly-authored works that I have included in my thesis. All citations, references and borrowed ideas have been duly acknowledged. It is being submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Development of Psychology, University of Milan-Bicocca, Italy. None of the present work has been submitted previously for any degree or examination in any other University.

Maria Chayinska

University of Milan Bicocca

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PUBLICATIONS DURING CANDIDATURE

Journal publications

Chayinska, M., Minescu, A., & McGarty, C. (2017). Political solidarity through action (and inaction): How international relations changed intracultural perceptions in Ukraine. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*. doi: 10.1177/1368430216682354

Chayinska, M., Minescu, A., & McGarty, C. (2017). 'The More We Stand For – The More We Fight For': Compatibility and Legitimacy in the Effects of Multiple Social Identities. *Front. Psychol*. 8:642. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2017.00642

Manuscripts under review or in preparation

Chayinska, M., Minescu, A., & McGarty, C. (2017).Understanding the Ukrainian Euromaidan movement as the emergence of a new social identity. *Manuscript under review.*

Chayinska, M., & Minescu, A. (2017). Towards a Contextualized Understanding of Dissent: Integrating Legitimacy of Protest with the Social Identity Model of Collective Action. *Manuscript in preparation.*

Chayinska, M., &Minescu, A. (2017). 'They've Conspired against Us': Understandings the Role of Attributions of Responsibility in Social Justification of Ingroup's Collective Action. *Manuscript in preparation*.

Conference publications and presentations

Chayinska, M. & Minescu, A. (2016, July). "I act because I believe". How the perceived legitimacy of protest affects collective action intentions in Ukraine". International Society of Political Psychology (ISPP), Warsaw, Poland

Chayinska, M., McGarty, C. & Minescu, A. (2016, July).Enacting Polemical Social Representations: Social Disidentification and Collective Action in Ukraine. Final Cost Action Is1205 Conference, Limerick, Ireland

Chayinska, M. & Minescu, A. (2015, June). 'Let my people go' or 'Let my people stay'? Understanding solidarity-based collective action in Ukraine. European Association of Social Psychology (EASP) Small Group Meeting on the "Dynamics of intergroup relations: Majority and minority perspectives on improving intergroup relations", Budapest, Hungary

Chayinska, M. & Minescu, A.(2015, June). "I act because I believe". How the perceived legitimacy of protest affects collective action intentions in Ukraine". EASP Medium Size Meeting on Social Justice: Inequality and Recognition, Castle Oppurg, Germany

Chayinska, M., McGarty, C. & Minescu, A. (2015 , July). With or Without Europe: How Ukrainians' Opinion Based Identities Predict Protest. 38th Annual Meeting of the ISPP, San Diego, United States of America

Chayinska, M. & Minescu, A. (2014, July). The Ukrainian Revolution: How Perceived Conventionalism and Social Disidentification Affect Collective Action. 37th Annual Meeting of ISPP, Convention, Rome, Italy

Chayinska, M. & Minescu, A. (2014, July). Delineating Operational Boundaries of Politicized Identities: The Role of Perceived Conventionalism and Social Disidentification in the Implementation of Collective Action, 28th International Congress of Applied Psychology (ICAP), Paris, France

Publications related to this thesis

Chapters 2, 3, and 6 of this thesis contain elements from the manuscripts currently under review for publication, of which I am the principal author. The studies were carried out under supervision of Dr. Anca Minescu and approved by the Research Ethics Committee of University of Limerick. The versions of Chapters 4and 5are published as manuscripts in collaboration with Prof Craig McGarty (Western Sydney University). For all the studies reported in the manuscripts, I was responsible for recruiting participants, designing the surveys, collecting and analyzing the data. The first drafts of all the manuscripts submitted for publication were written entirely by myself. I then improved all sections after critical feedback and comments from my co-authors.

Contributions by others to the thesis

My advisors, Anca Minescu and Francesco Paolo Colucci, each contributed to the key ideas in this thesis. Both advisors also gave comments and suggestions on the written text. Craig McGarty contributed to the interpretation of the results for Chapter 2, 4 and 5.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The Macro-to-Micro Link: Understanding a Bottom-up Social Change

The past century has been characterized by extraordinary social change and political unrests. From the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, to Hungarian Revolution of 1956, and to the twenty first century's uprisings such as the "Arab Spring", "Gezi Park", and "Euromaidan", the past 100 years have seen popular anti-establishment mobilisations resulting in substantial social and institutional transformations. By focusing on Ukraine's Euromaidan Revolution and its aftermath, the present thesis explores the social-psychological processes associated with a bottom-up social change. The aim of the present programme of research is to understand the occurrence of Ukraine's Euromaidan Revolution in terms of social psychology of collective action and to systematically explore the usefulness of reconciling the macro and micro approaches in explaining a bottom-up social change.

Collective action has typically been understood as any behaviour where an individual acts on a group's behalf to improve the status, social power, or conditions of a group as a whole (Wright, Taylor, & Moghaddam, 1990). Such a collective action takes place in a particular social political context in which structural and institutionalized intergroup relationships are inherently determined by history and politics. But what do we know about the ways in which historical, political and intergroup contexts shape collective action and the outcomes it may bring about? My central assumption is that a crucial axis of variability in the dynamics of bottom-up possibilities and top-down conditions in the understanding of collective action has received meager attention in social psychological theories, with notable exceptions discussed later in this thesis. I propose that a potential counter-force to the top-down policies and institutionalized identity politics is the individuals' collective action based on the insusceptibility to accept certain arrangements, perceived to be socially unjust.

Therefore, I conceive of social change as a dynamic interplay of individual and intergroup processes on the one hand and specific macro-level conditions (i.e., structural inequalities, institutional arrangements) on the other hand, and suggest that it should be analysed as such. At the individual level, I propose that intergroup conflicts, revolutions, and today's global social justice movements, – of which the Euromaidan movement is an iconic example, – are in part driven by *aspirational group identities,* a particular kind of group consciousness, premised on shared opinions, ideas, and aspirations of social change. These aspirations typically evoke when people encounter a conflict between the way the world is and the way they believe the world should be (e.g., Smith, Thomas, & McGarty, 2015). Such aspirations were famously voiced out by Martin Luther King, Jr., whose "I have a dream" speech so firmly described the future he, and other supporters of the civil rights movement, stood for. The mere existence of aspirations perhaps does not guarantee the desired social change but I will attempt to untangle the processes by which these emergent aspirational identities – the sense of "who we are and what we stand for and against" – are being socially constructed towards collective action (see Chapter 2 for explanation). At the macro level, I emphasize the role of the political opportunities as they are institutionally and historically embedded in the particular setting (see Chapter 3 for more details). Whether and how structural changes in political opportunities affect one's intention to engage in social protest? I will approach this question by exploring the mechanisms through which political opportunities translate into action in the context, where forms of protests were outlawed during the course of the anti-establishment movement.

Although this thesis is an attempt to analytically integrate the macro-level dimension with the subjective and interpretative dimension of social change, my research is oriented towards a more situated understanding of bottom-up processes. I define a *bottom-up social change* as a specific, contextual, identity-driven process, stemming from shared opinions

about problematic conditions in the world and one's aspirations to improve these conditions through action.

Focusing on the political events in Ukraine, I argue that that macro level change of the country's geopolitical position vis-à-vis Russia and the West as well as a certain quality of the political system (i.e., transition to democracy) can only occur through individuals' mediation of that change though collective action (see Figure 1.1).

Path 4

MACRO

Ukraine's geopolitical position: European Union vs. Customs Union

Ukraine's transition to democracy

Path 1

Path 3

Subjective Positioning

Group identifications
- Identification with Ukraine
- Disidentification from the EU & CU
- Identification with Online Protest Community
- Identification with Street Movement

Group-based Appraisals
- Perceived ingroup efficacy
- Group-based anger

Perceptions of political system
- Perceived legitimacy of protest, the rule of law
- Appraisals of social injustice
- Perceived loyalties of third groups

Aspirational identity

Collective action

Types of collective action
- Persuasive
- Confrontational
- Political solidarity

Perceived morality and legality of ingroup's collective action

MICRO

Path 2

Figure 1.1. Bottom-up Political Change in Ukraine

Essentially, I aim to show how, for instance, the president Yanukovych's decision (top-down policy) to give up the idea of Ukraine's full-fledged membership within the European Union and his declared intention to join Russia-centered integration project, so called Customs Union, have affected the dynamic bottom-up processes(e.g., identification, disidentification, sense of collective efficacy, group-based anger) triggered by one's perception of illegitimacy of the regime and its politics. Also, I aim to show how the annexation of Crimea by Russia (top-down change) have influenced the intergroup conflict within Ukraine, and in particular, shaped people's intentions to engage in political solidarity action in support of Crimea's indigenous group, the Tatars. These and other political events within Ukraine in 2014-2017 have urged me to analyse social change through the lens of macro-to-micro link. This approach lays the foundations of an overall theoretical framework across the studies of this thesis.

While the present thesis explores the contingencies of these interactions in concrete times and settings, that is, 2013/14 Ukrainian upheaval and individuals' evaluation of its political consequences three years later, I aim at identifying universal social psychological processes that capture those interactions. Thus, I anchor my review in the broader geopolitical landscape and use historical knowledge of the intergroup relations in Ukraine in order to provide a comprehensive and more grounded approach to the understanding of bottom-up political change as a social-psychological phenomenon. Definitions of key concepts used throughout this thesis are provided in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1. Definition of Key Concepts

Concept	Definition	Source
Dependent Variables		
Collective action	Any behaviour where an individual acts on a group's behalf to improve the status, social power, or conditions of a group as a whole.	Chapters 1-6
Persuasive collective action	Form of protest with the primary purpose of influencing/persuading third parties (or even opponents) to share a political goal	Chapters 3-4
Confrontational collective action	Form of protest that confronts opponents with direct action that may disrupt their activities.	Chapters 3-4
Political solidarity	Form of collective action in which allies tend to align their aspirational identities to an oppressed group's political loyalties through a shared political orientation to the status quo and a sense of common cause.	Chapter 5
Perceived morality of collective action	Appraisal of ingroup collective behaviour as virtuous and upright	Chapter 6
Perceived legality of collective action	Appraisal of ingroup collective behaviour as legal and just	Chapter 6
Independent Variables		
Disidentification	Mechanism of an averse social categorization, which occurs in response to arrangements that imply involuntary change in group's loyalties or aspirations.	Chapters 2, 3, 5
Collective efficacy	Individual-level beliefs in conjoint capabilities of a group to achieve social change through action	Chapters 2-6

Table 1.1 continued

Group-based anger	Specific emotion aroused by an appraisal of an outgroup's actions toward the ingroup as illegitimate	Chapters 2-3
Perceived injustice	Individual-level appraisals of unfairness towards the ingroup.	Chapters 2-5
Aspirational group identity	Particular kind of group consciousness, premised on shared opinions about problematic conditions in the world and aspirations to improve them through action	Chapters 1-6
Mediators		
Perceived legitimacy of protest	Subjective beliefs about one's entitlement to demand social change through action within collectively defined limits of legitimacy	Chapters 3-4
Perceived compatibility of identities	Degree to which the content of multiple social identities (and the values assigned to it) are perceived at the individual level to be coherent and in congenial combination with one another.	Chapter 4
Perceived political loyalties	Feelings about one's political allegiance	Chapter 5
Conspiracy beliefs	Underlying worldview in which events, processes and circumstances are associated with particular interests of shadow beneficiaries.	Chapter 6

Research Methodology: Online Public Opinion Surveys

My investigation of context-embedded social change calls for the positivistic research methodology able to provide data on how opinions held by members of public get translated into collective action via social psychological processes. I thus aim at deconstructing the phenomenon of bottom-up political change into smaller fragments of the observable reality, all of which can be measured and quantified. As such, an online public opinion survey strategy has been chosen for this research.

There are several reasons which guided this decision. First, survey strategy allows addressing a sizeable audience while providing data from "people in context" (e.g., Minescu, 2012). The idea has been to achieve a sample as representative as possible to the general population under study, to increase the generalizability of our findings.

Secondly, public opinion surveys are optimal for testing external validity of conceptual models outside laboratory settings (e.g., Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). By incorporating a series of snapshots, survey data provide an account of whether and how a proposed deductive approach has been accurate.

Thirdly, although there is apparently a risk of selection bias occurring due to the non-representative nature of the Internet population and the 'volunteer effect' through self-selection of participants (e.g., Eysenbach, & Wyatt, 2002), the strategy of using online surveys designed for self-completion has been regarded as more efficient for large-scale cohorts with respect to responsiveness, workflow, and time costs (e.g., Uhlig, Seitz, Promesberger, Eter, & Busse, 2014).

Finally, because the studies reported in the present thesis have addressed sensitive issues such as political participation under Ukraine's semi-authoritarian regime, the use of online public opinion surveys permitted the level of anonymity and thus protection to

participants. This should have also increased the disclosure rates, which are higher in anonymous online surveys compared to the other methods of data collection.

Research Background

      As any social movement, the Euromaidan is a dynamic by-product of the "real-world" historical events. This thesis explores Ukraine's 2013/14 bottom-up social change in the time and place, where it had occurred in the immediate aftermath of the key events. The Euromaidan revolution encapsulates a momentous period in the modern Ukrainian history, a four-month uncompromising social resilience with horizontal decentralized organization and, at its peak, the use of transgressive repertories, which led to profound transformations of the political system. The most striking reforms came about in February 2014 when under the pressure of protesters then President Viktor Yanukovych abandoned office and fled the country, and a week later an interim government composed by the oppositional parties was established (e.g., Urquhart, 2014). In March 2014, Ukraine has transited from a series of internal political insurrections to becoming a pivotal arena in a significant geopolitical conflict over the states' territorial integrity (see the geographical position of Ukraine between the West and Russia on Figure 1.2 and conflict-affected zones within the country on and Figure 1.3).

Figure 1.2. Position of Ukraine on the Conventional Geopolitical Map. Image source: www.geocurrents.info

Figure 1.3. Location of the conflict-affected areas in Ukraine. Image source: www.geocurrents.info

Following referendum on Crimea's status, the Russian Federation annexed Ukraine's peninsula, sparkling a new wave of protests inside the country, and instigated an ongoing war-conflict in the Eastern provinces. In 2017, three years after the 2014 Euromaidan revolution (and at the time of writing), Ukraine is a long way away from political stability: slow reforms and high corruption rate open the door for rising public discontent and frustration within the country, while the hostilities in conflict-affected Eastern provinces have marked a rising death toll in the Ukrainian military (Ukraine Reform Monitor, 2017). This social-political situation has provided an opportunity of testing our hypotheses through public opinion surveys in the immediate aftermath of key events (see Table 1.2).

Table 1.2. Project's Timeline

Survey and Timeline	Key Milestones
Survey "Euromaidan" January – February, 2014	▪ President Yanukovych rejects potential agreement with the EU and chooses to strengthen ties with Russia-led CU ▪ Parliament passes anti-protest laws. ▪ Clashes turn deadly: 88 people are killed in 48h ▪ Parliament annuls the anti-protest law. ▪ President Yanukovych flees Ukraine
Survey "Crimea" March – April, 2014	▪ Crimea holds a secession referendum ▪ President Putin signs laws completing Russia's annexation of Crimea ▪ Ukraine launches 'anti-terrorist operation' in the East
Survey "Aftermath of Euromaidan" March –April, 2017	▪ The government announced a doubling of the minimum wage to 3,200 hryvnia ($119). Reforms are slow and public frustration grows. ▪ Conflict in the East escalates: the situation remains tense with a rising death toll in the Ukrainian military ▪ EU Parliament approves visa-free regime for Ukraine

THE PRESENT RESEARCH

I argue that social psychological research has a tremendous potential in explaining the existent Ukrainian political situation and transition processes, which led to collective action towards social change in 2013-2014. Placing my research in the context of the Euromaidan revolution, I develop several lines of investigation on the social psychology of collective action and dedicate each chapter of this thesis to answering the following questions:

1) What predicts collective action for social change via aspirational group identity? (Chapter 2);

2) Under which conditions are people more likely to express their aspirational identities through persuasive rather than confrontational (direct, potentially violent) collective action? (Chapter 3);

3) What social psychological mechanisms govern a synchronized expression of multiple aspirational identities when social protest is outlawed? (Chapter 4);

4) What drives people to engage in political solidarity action with another group presumed to be socially and/or politically oppressed (i.e. Crimean Tatars)? (Chapter 5);

5) How do people explain the legality and morality of their own collective behaviour when evaluating the political outcomes of ingroup activism? (Chapter 6)

Each of these questions are addressed in each of the 5 empirical chapters of this thesis.

In Chapter 2, I look at the processes behind the formation and expression of aspirational group identities. Integrating ideas from the social identity model of collective action with psychological reactance theory and the motivational model of collective action, I propose a framework examining antecedents and consequences of the Euromaidan identity. I introduce group disidentification as a mechanism of averse social categorization, a concept that will be further addressed in the subsequent chapters.

In Chapter 3, I extend the path model explaining collective action by adding perceived legitimacy of protest as a new intervening variable. I test whether perceptions of how legal and legitimate protest is in society explains why people may or may not get politically active. In two studies, using different samples, I examine whether perceived legitimacy of protest determines individuals' intentions to engage in non-violent collective action (Study 1) and the degree to which it predicts individuals' engagement in persuasive as opposed to confrontational collective action (Study 2).

In Chapter 4, I investigate the mechanisms behind a synchronized expression of multiple aspirational identities. I examine how the perceived compatibility (i.e., normative overlap) between identification with the Euromaidan street movement and the online protest community led to their congruent expression by predicting collective action. Additionally, I examine whether the effects of perceived legitimacy of protest can be extended to online activism, often regarded as slacktivism. I elaborate on the distinction between persuasive and confrontational forms of action and link them to the perception of political opportunity structure.

In Chapter 5, I suggest that political solidarity with a third outgroup may be considered as a form of collective action as long as it is predicted by the same constructs (e.g., collective efficacy and sense of injustice) as collective behaviour in pursuit one's own ingroup goals. Secondly, I argue that people are more likely to support the oppressed group (i.e., Crimea Tatars) when they perceive that the political loyalties of this third group are in line with one's own ingroup aspirations. This alignment between estimated outgroup loyalties and ingroup aspirations is tested by looking at the relationships between disidentification from the European Union and the Custom Union and perceiving that Crimean Tatars' political loyalties as leaning towards the EU or CU.

In Chapter 6, I link social attribution theory with models of collective action, by examining the use of causal arguments to explain outcomes of ingroup collective action. I argue that individuals with situationally limited perceptions of group efficacy will be likely to use conspirational beliefs to explain the undesirable political outcomes of own collective action. I also propose that the tendency to blame conspirators against one's ingroup will be associated with the perception of ingroup collective behaviour as more moral and legal.

As a whole, this dissertation contributes to the field of the social psychology of collective action. First, it is designed to provide evidence for disidentification as a predictor of the formation and expression of aspirational group identities. Secondly, it argues that the perceived legitimacy of protest (i.e., perceiving protest as a legitimate and legal political mechanism) is an explanation for why people choose to persuade opponents through collective action rather than to confront them. Thirdly, this research examines the role of multiple identities in generating political action and emphasizes the role of the ideological compatibility between those identities as a facilitator of bottom-up movements. Fourthly, it explains why people engage in political action on behalf of another group. Finally, it explores how attributions of responsibility for the outcomes of ingroup collective efforts are used to bolster the morality and legality of ingroup actions.

Collectively, this research programme aimed at explaining the essential elements of the bottom-up social change, namely its emergence, development, and achievements, through the lens of existing social psychological theories. The research presented here contributes to the handful of studies examining collective action in non-Western contexts (e.g., Bilali, Vollhardt, & Rarick, 2017; Saab, Tausch, Spears, & Cheung, 2015) and the few studies investigating collective action in settings affected by ongoing conflicts (e.g., Shuman, Cohen-Chen, Hirsch-Hoefler, & Halperin, 2016).

CHAPTER 2

UNDERSTANDING THE UKRAINIAN EUROMAIDAN MOVEMENT AS THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW SOCIAL IDENTITY

This chapter sought to provide an answer to the question of 'What predicts collective action for social change via aspirational group identity?' Integrating the ideas from the social identity model of collective action with psychological reactance theory and motivational model of collective action, I examine the pathways leading to the formation and expression of Euromaidan as an aspirational group identity predicting collective action.

A modified version of this chapter was submitted for review in May 2017, as:

Chayinska, M., Minescu, A., & McGarty, C. (2017). Understanding the Ukrainian Euromaidan movement as the emergence of a new social identity. *Manuscript under review.*

Abstract

The present research examines the concept of Euromaidan identity as an aspirational group identity that resulted as reactance to political regulations that imply changes in group aspirations. The Euromaidan aspirational identity is a kind of group consciousness, predicted by identification with a social category whose rights were oppressed (Ukrainian nation) and disidentification from 2 categories imposed by the geopolitical setting (European Union and Customs Union). We also examine the extent to which the emotional-cognitive appraisals of the context (i.e., anger, group efficacy and injustice) predict the Euromaidan identity and the degree to which this emergent aspirational identity predicts collective action. We found evidence ($N = 3129$) consistent with the proposal that Euromaidan identity was predicted by disidentification from the Russian Federation-dominated Customs Union and identification with the Ukrainian national identity. The sense of increased group efficacy did not predict the formation of Euromaidan identity, but significantly explained collective action.

Keywords: collective action, social identification, disidentification, group consciousness

Understanding the Ukrainian Euromaidan movement as the emergence of a new social identity

The 21st century has borne witness to new social movements that have caused remarkable changes in political landscapes. These movements have attempted to transform both domestic political systems and international affairs, and in some instances have succeeded in accomplishing specific political goals such as reforming laws and overthrowing authoritarian regimes. These new social movements are often seen to span many different social category memberships and institutions and are frequently expressed or described in new labels such as Occupy, Los Indignados, the Arab Spring articulating a common identity, aspiration or goal. Efforts to understand the formation of these identity-based movements as emergent, bottom-up multi-actor mobilization against existing societal arrangements has been greatly aided by the suite of theoretical resources that were developed in social psychology before the phenomenon emerged so spectacularly (e.g., Mummendey, Kessler, Klink, & Mielke, 1999; Postmes, Haslam & Swaab, 2005; Simon & Klandermans, 2001; van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008). However, the understanding of the mechanisms underlying a formation of such emergent social movements remains underexplored.

The current research adopts an integrative approach for understanding the formation and expression of aspirational group identities of social movements. The aim of the present paper is threefold. First, we contend that social movements are driven by *aspirational group identities*, a particular kind of group consciousness, premised on shared opinions about problematic conditions in the world and aspirations to improve them through action. This kind of group consciousness comes from shared concerns given the common belonging to other social groups. We thus propose that aspirational group identities are generated through two inter-related processes – identification with a social category whose rights were

oppressed and disidentification from the categories that imply unwanted changes in group aspirations.

Secondly, based on reactance theory (Brehm, 1966; Worchel, 2004), we suggest that these group identities are formed in response to certain regulation that imply unwanted changes in group aspirations. This psychological reactance is likely to occur through the perceptions of social injustices and unfairness of the current political system. To our knowledge, no systematic empirical research has attempted to examine the formation of politicized group identities through the lens of psychological reactance theory.

Finally, we propose that aspirational group identities are also "protest" identities, and thus, able to predict collective action towards social change. Based on social identity model of collective action (van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008), we argue that group-based anger over injustices coupled with perceptions of the system of governance as biased and perceptions of the ingroup as capable to achieve social change (i.e. group efficacy) will predict aspirational group identities, which, in turn, will determine collective action on its behalf. Taken together, we aim to show that such a collective action is the act of "speaking out" for both what people "stand for" as a group and for what they "stand against". Before describing our theoretical model in detail, we briefly outline the political and historical context of this study.

International and National Context

In the period between November 2013 to May 2014 Ukraine, an Eastern European country of 46 million that was formerly part of the Soviet Union, transited from a series of internal political disputes to become a pivotal arena in a significant geopolitical conflict (Soldak, 2014). The protests began in Ukraine's capital Kyiv on 21 November 2013 in response to then President Yanukovych's last-minute refusal to sign the Association Agreement with the European Union (EU). The protests were widely understood to be pro-

European, first by Ukraine's opposition parties who branded the protest movement as Euromaidan – a 'neologism compounded from the name of Kyiv's Independence Square ('maidan' meaning a city square) and the adjectival prefix that signifies alignment with Europe' (e.g., Onuch, 2014, p. 45).

The protest rhetoric, that initially forwarded a pro-European agenda, transformed with the use of nationalist and anti-Russian slogans such as 'Ukraine – above all' and 'Ukraine is not Russia' after the Ukrainian President decided not to sign a long-awaited free-trade deal with the EU. This was avoided in order to forge stronger ties with the Russian Federation-dominated Customs Union (CU) instead (e.g., Diuk, 2014). Within Ukraine, where the general population has supported Euro-Atlantic integration and aspired to full membership in both the EU and NATO, such a move was seen as an unexpected change in the economic and political direction of the government's domestic and foreign policies. The other direction was the Kremlin-led Customs Union, a regional integration project designed to challenge the increasing influence of the Western European counties in the post- Soviet region and, particularly, within Ukraine(e.g., Lutsevych, 2016; Schwarzer & Stelzenmüller, 2014).

The Euromaidan: Background and Demographics

Both sociological analyses and electoral geography suggest that the divide between Ukraine's European-facing west and the Russian-facing east has been an enduring feature of both domestic and foreign politics since the early 1990s (e.g., Barrington & Herron, 2004). However, the division can largely be expressed along the lines of opposing political values rather than binary ethnic, linguistic or geographic divides (e.g., Riabchuk, 2012). The decision of Ukraine's then President Yanukovych to seek closer ties to Russia rather than sign a negotiated free-trade deal with the EU provoked a counter-mobilization of citizens who shared commitment to Western-style democracy and market reforms.

The initial mobilisation involved approximately 800,000 citizens across the country in late November 2013, with the numbers increasing up to two million from mid-January 2014 onward, as the struggle between the authorities and the Euromaidan movement escalated. Reportedly, the Euromaidan movement was supported by middle-class, middle-aged participants who were linguistically cosmopolitan (i.e., speaking both Ukrainian and Russian as native languages), relatively weakly affiliated with the major political parties, and receiving their information via news websites and social media, engaged in both street or online collective action (e.g., Onuch, 2015).

Aspirational Group Identity as Group Consciousness

Recently, scholars (e.g., Bliuc, et al, 2015; Duncan, 1999; Thomas, McGarty, Reese, Berndsen, & Bliuc, 2016)have turned to analysing social psychological mechanisms behind formation of new social change movements in terms of group consciousness. According to Duncan, group consciousness is "identification with a group in which an individual recognizes the group's position in a power hierarchy, rejects rationalizations of relative positioning, and embraces a collective solution to group problems" (Duncan, 1999, p. 612). This conceptualisation resembles the way in which Simon and Klandermans (2001) proposed to define politicized social identification. Innovatively, however, Duncan (2012, p. 781) has suggested that by considering individual-level differences in the study of collective action we will be in a better position to explain why some people "develop group consciousness and become politically active, whereas others do not". Duncan's(1999, 2012) integrative motivational model of collective action thus encompasses three key elements: individual differences, group consciousness, and collective action.

Thomas and colleagues (Thomas, et al., 2016) extended this model by approaching the formation of group consciousness through the interplay between individual differences and social psychological group processes, seen as distal and proximal factors in

understanding specific forms of collective action (e.g., humanitarian aid). These authors have suggested that political issues can be experienced as meaningful and personally relevant at the individual level (via personal political salience, social dominance orientation, values).However, when reflected by the cognitive and affective reactions to group injustice and group efficacy, political issues are likely to be more proximal predictors of action at the group level.

The current research adopts an approach that examines the role of political issues, as they are subjectively perceived, in predicting formation and expression of aspirational group identities. More specifically, we examine the processes that lead to cognitive and affective elaboration of an ideological standpoint that fuel identification with the new movement as well as determine collective action on its behalf. We define *aspiration group identities* as a particular kind of group consciousness, premised on shared opinions about problematic conditions in the world and aspirations to improve them through action.

Collective Action as Reactance in Response to Unwanted (Geo)political Changes

Traditionally, collective action has been understood as any behaviour where an individual acts on behalf of a group to improve the status, social power, or conditions of the group as a whole (e.g., Wright, Taylor, & Moghaddam, 1990). According to the social identity theory, such behaviour will be used as a strategy when group boundaries are perceived as impermeable and when the (inter)group status is seen as both illegitimate and unstable (e.g., Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Some extreme forms of collective action (i.e., revolt) tend to evoke in response to coercion, seen as an attempt to constrain people against their will, when no effort is given to persuade the opponents. What matters for social change research is that the more people perceive that coercive acts embody threats to their freedoms, the more will they generate reactance and over time "foster the contrasting group identity and

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countervailing beliefs that produce sustained oppositional power and collective conflict" (Turner, 2005, p. 16).

We approach Euromaidan as an aspirational group identity in the Ukrainian context from the perspective of psychological reactance theory (Brehm, 1966; Worchel, 2004), a framework that to our knowledge has not been previously linked to collective action research. According to this theory, a perceived restriction in freedom ignites an emotional state, called psychological reactance. Freedoms are defined as specific beliefs about what people can and cannot do (e.g., Miron & Brehm, 2006) as well as about what they are and are not as a group (e.g., de Lemus, Bukowski, Spears, & Telga, 2016).By reacting, individuals typically form opinions that opposes the policies they were coerced to adopt(e.g., Laurin, Kay, & Fitzsimons, 2012; Miron & Brehm, 2006).

Conceptualizing reactance as a construct amenable to self-report, Dillard and Shen (2005) have proposed that it entails a blend of emotional and cognitive processes. In particular, they have argued that reactance involves two main components: anger directed to the source of any restriction as well as negative cognitions such as perceived injustice (see Rains & Turner, 2007, for further validation of this operationalization).This approach resonates with recent theorizing in collective action research including SIMCA (e.g., Tausch et al., 2011; van Zomeren, Spears, Fischer, & Leach, 2004; van Zomeren, et al, 2008), which, similar to psychological reactance theory, suggests that group-based emotions such as anger intertwined with the perception of group-based inequality or deprivation as unfair or illegitimate, drive collective action against those responsible.

The main difference between these two models is that reactance theory traditionally focuses on individual freedoms whereas SIMCA explains people's reactions to injustices experiences at the group level. Nevertheless, these two approaches have in common one major assumption: people are likely to take action in response to the perceived attempts to

restrict their will on an unwanted basis. In the present research we also examine whether reactance, operationalized through the emotional cognitive appraisals of the context, will lead to the formation of Euromaidan as an aspirational group identity.

The Present Research

The current research involves a structural analysis of the antecedents and consequence of the Euromaidan identity. Existing research has shown that in the context in which some powerful outgroup tries to determine, define, and/or dominate the interests of another group, high identifiers will be likely to endorse ingroup affiliation and adopt behavioural reactions to protect their group (e.g., Gaertner, Dovidio, Anastosio, Bachman, & Rust, 1993; Stephan, Ybarra, Martinez, Schwarzwald, & Tur-Kaspa, 1998). We suggest that when faced with the government's abrupt decision to change Ukraine's geopolitical course from the long-negotiated integration with the EU towards a reunification with Russia-centered CU, people may experience a psychological reactance that will manifest itself through interrelated processes leading to the formation of the "Euromaidan" identity, as a particular kind of group consciousness.

First, we expect that social identification with Ukraine – a social group at the core of the geopolitical configurations of power in the Eastern Europe - will predict a formation of the Euromaidan identity as it opens the possibility of re-categorisation. This reasoning is supported by social identity theory (Tajfel, 1975; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) that posits that when external circumstances render the maintenance of the boundaries and distinctiveness of subjectively valued group insecure (i.e., when one's state faces political integration with supranational entities), this is likely to result in feelings of threat, which in turn should elicit attempts to express commitment to this group and engage in collective action to either preserve the current system of social relations or demand desired change.

Secondly, encountered with problematic state of affairs, people may feel the need to define themselves by what they are *not* to restate their aspirations (e.g., Becker & Tausch, 2013; Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind, & Sohlheim, 2009; Major& O'Brien, 2005). In response to the unwanted change in group loyalties and aspirations stemming from the geopolitical decision on Ukraine's future, people may reject the anticipated integration with Russia-led alliance through disidentification. This act of "speaking out" of what people stand *against* may pave the basis for the Euromaidan identity.

Although the protests had started under the EU flags in late November of 2013, people's frustrations at Europe's hesitant policy towards pro-democratic protests which had escalated into the insurrection (Diuk, 2014) by the time of data collection may also be expressed through disidentification from the EU as a political force incapable to help resolve the crisis in Ukraine. Still, according to the polls in January 2014, 38 % of the respondents were in favour of the economic integration and deepening political association between Ukraine and the EU, whereas 29 % preferred the CU and 25 % opted for "neither" (Sociopolis, 2014).Hence, our structural model accounts for the effects of disidentification from the EU, too. We expected disidentification from the EU, in essence meaning a lack of commitment to this political entity, to be negatively associated to the Euromaidan identity.

Accounting for the effects of Ukrainians' disidentification from two major political players on the formation of this movement may substantially proxy individual-level attitudes towards the anticipated geopolitical changes in the context of a larger push and pull between the West and Russia.

Thirdly, for identity-based collective action to be sustainable, it must be empowered by efficacy beliefs and directed to a third party by feelings of anger (as opposed to the self-focused emotions of guilt or sympathy) (e.g., Tausch et al., 2011; Thomas, McGarty, & Mavor,2009; van Zomeren, et al., 2008). In other words, a group's commitment to engage in

action towards social change is intensified by a shared emotional understanding about who is responsible for group grievances and beliefs about the probability of achieving change through agentic action. In line with social identity model of collective action (SIMCA, van Zomeren, et al., 2008), group efficacy and group-based anger are thought to be robust 'off-the-shelf' predictors of collective action. We make a step further by suggesting that both collective efficacy and group-based anger towards the oppressor are instrumental for the formation of aspirational identities. We thus assume that people's feelings of anger about the government's decision to delay Ukraine-EU association agreement coupled with the sense of collective efficacy to change this state of affairs will predict identification with the Euromaidan and identity-driven collective behaviour.

Finally, the process of mobilization for collective action is thought to be intensified with one's experience of group inequalities and injustice (Simon & Klandermans, 2001; van Zomeren et al., 2008). However, when people perceive the authorities as fair and just they are likely to accept their political decisions even if they disagree with them; this is because people tend to care more about *how* decisions are made than they do about *what* decisions are made (e.g., Skitka & Mullen, 2002b; Tyler & Smith, 1999). Building on this notion, we suggest that in the context of the anticipated geopolitical changes, people's concerns with procedural fairness, that is, whether establishment and institutions act in trustworthy, unbiased ways, may also explain whether they are ready to engage in the protests that had taken a form of an anti-establishment movement. We thus expect that the more people perceive authorities to be fair the less they will be willing to come together to oppose the government's policies through collective action, and *vice versa*.

Theoretical Contribution

The present research makes three novel contributions to the literature. First, the present research suggests that collective action is an expression of aspirational collective

identity, a particular kind of group consciousness. Secondly, we argue that aspirational group

identities are generated in a heightened state of psychological reactance in response to

regulations that imply unwanted change in group aspirations. We further propose that this

identity is generated through two inter-related processes – identification with a social

category whose rights were oppressed and disidentification from the categories that imply

unwanted change in group's aspirations. We understand *disidentification* as mechanism of

averse social categorization, which occurs in response to the imposition of the unwanted

policies. Thirdly, we propose that a sense of collective efficacy and group-based anger

toward the oppressors and their policies contribute to the formation of a new Euromaidan

aspirational identity, whereas appraisals of the state establishment as fair will be negatively

associated with the Euromaidan identity and collective action.

The current research adopts an integrative approach for understanding how collective

action is predicted via aspirational group identities. We test a theoretical model with the

hypotheses that a) the 'Euromaidan' is an aspirational group identity, predicted by

disidentification from the Russian Federation-led CU (as opposed to disidentification from

the EU), and social identification with the Ukrainian national identity; b) it is generated

through psychological reactance to potential geopolitical changes, where reactance is

operationalized by the emotional-cognitive appraisals of the context (unfair government and

anger at its policy), and a sense of collective efficacy; c) the emotional-cognitive appraisals

of the context contribute to the formation of the aspirational identity, and d) identification

with Ukraine and disidentification from CU predict collective action directly and indirectly

via the Euromaidan identity and via the emotional cognitive appraisals of the context(see

Figure 2.1).
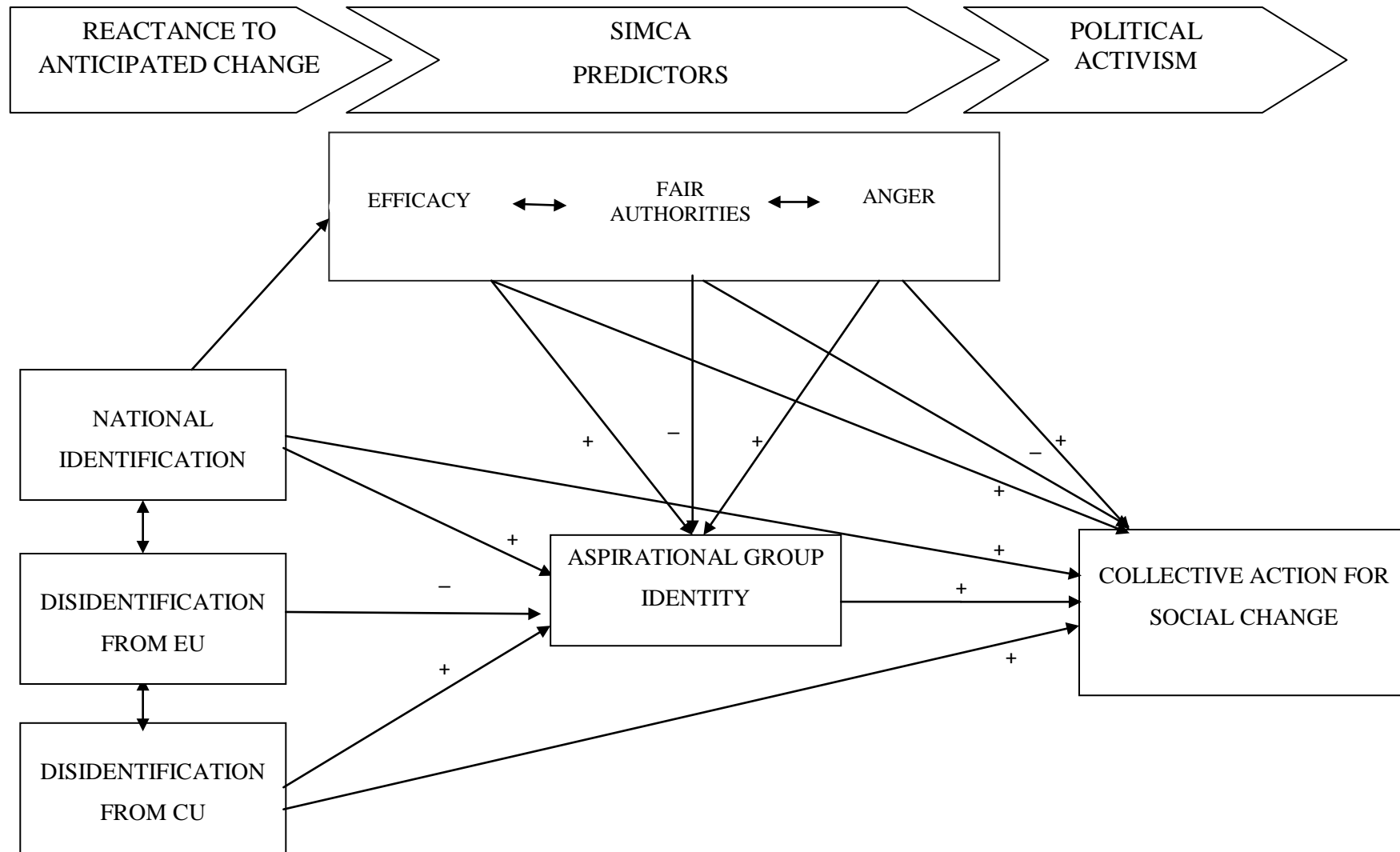
Figure 2.1. Conceptual model of collective action for social change. The presence of the predicted relationships is marked with "+" for a positive and "-" for a negative direction of the associations.

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants ($N = 3129$) were approached through a public online survey posted to Facebook pages that were generally discussing political events in Ukraine. The data were collected between January 25 and February 19, 2014, at the time of the large protests in Ukraine in response to the political crisis. The questions of the survey focused on socio-demographics and attitudes toward current political issues. The items were available in Ukrainian. Participants were required to be of the Ukrainian nationality and aged over 18.

The sample ranged in age from 18 to 70 (*M* age 31.43 years, $SD = 8.51$) and comprised 60.8 % women. Participants were highly educated (66.6 % having graduated from university), 47 % were employed full time, and 67.3 % indicated Ukrainian as their first language. Some 77.9 % reported that they completed this survey while in Ukraine, 22.1 % - while living abroad.

Measures

After consenting to participate, participants completed socio-demographic measures, and then were asked to complete the survey. First, we assessed the extent to which participants identified with the Euromaidan movement, using a modified Inclusion-of-the-Other in-the-Self-Scale (the IOS-scale, Aron, Aron & Smollan, 1992) where higher numbers were indicative of a smaller felt distance between oneself and others participating in the movement. Next, participants rated six items from Leach et al. (2008) used to measure their identification with Ukraine(e.g., "I often think about the fact that I am a part of the Ukrainian people, "I am glad to be part of Ukraine", "I feel solidarity with people in Ukraine"), α =.94.These and other measures below used five point Likert scales labelled from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). To assess disidentification from the EU and the CU we used six items from Becker and Tausch (2013) for each category respectively (e.g., "I feel a

distance between myself and EU/CU", "I would regret that I belong to EU/CU"), "I have nothing in common with most members of EU/CU"), EU (α=.74) and the CU (α=.91).Participants also completed Collective Political Efficacy Scale (Yeich & Levine, 1994), α = .81 and asked to indicate how in general fair or unfair they think the functioning of the police, courts, the current parliamentary majority, and the national government is in granting/representing the constitutional rights of Ukrainians. We combined these four items to form an index assessing fairness of authorities (α = .85). To assess anger, respondents were asked to rate how 'irritated', 'angry', 'furious', 'displeased', and 'fearful' they felt about the decision to delay Ukraine-EU association agreement. The five items loaded on one component (62.34 %); (KMO = .844; Bartlett's test of sphericity: $\chi^2(10) = 7564.535$, $p = .000$; Determinant =.109), and were treated as a scale for measuring a group-based anger, $\alpha = .85$. Eleven items assessed the extent to which participants were willing or not willing to participate in different actions (e.g., "to sign a petition"; 'to attend a non-violent street action"; "to display symbolic attributes of the protest on their vehicle/clothes", "to donate money"), $\alpha = .90$.

Results

Preliminary Analysis

Preliminary analysis was performed to ensure there were no violations of the assumptions and breaches of normality. The correlations between all variables, means, and standard deviations are presented in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1

Correlations and Descriptive Statistics (*N* =3129)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	*M*	*SD*
1. Identification with the Euromaidan		.247**	-.242**	.249**	.287**	.123**	-.324**	.373**	3.98	1.13
2. Identification with Ukraine			.099**	.341**	.368**	.281**	-.069**	.336**	4.31	1.13
3. Disidentification from the EU				.005	-.070**	.044*	.211**	-.044*	1.66	.66
4. Disidentification from the CU					.450**	.318**	-.175**	.398**	4.01	1.21
5. Group-based anger						.279**	-.147**	.385**	3.35	1.17
6. Collective Efficacy							.000	.340**	3.51	.96
7. Fair Authorities								-.176**	1.75	1.32
8. Collective action									3.97	.89

Note. * p< .05; ** p < .01. *** p< .001

Main Analysis

The hypothesized model involving antecedents and consequences of the Euromaidan collective identity was estimated using structural-equation modelling via SPSS Amos 24. All exogenous variables were allowed to correlate. Results are depicted in Figure 2.2. Overall, the model fit the data well: $\chi2$ ($df = 1$) = 1.37, $p = .242$, CFI = 1.000, IFI = 1.000, TLI = .997, RMSEA = .009, (CI: Low = .000, High = .043, PCLOSE =.982 (see Kline, 2011). As expected, Euromaidan identity was predicted by identification with Ukraine (β =.16, $p<.001$), disidentification from the EU ($\beta = -.20$, $p<.001$), and disidentification from the CU (β =.09, $p<.001$). The perception of the authorities as fair ($\beta = -.25$, $p<.001$) and anger over the delay of Ukraine – EU agreement ($\beta = .14$, $p<.001$) were also related to the Euromaidan identity, whereas the sense of collective efficacy was not ($\beta = .02$, $p = .174$). Collective action intentions were predicted by the Euromaidan identity (β =.23, $p<.001$), but also triggered by identification with Ukraine (β =.13, $p<.001$) and disidentification from the CU (β =.18, $p<.001$) both directly and indirectly via collective efficacy (β =.19, $p<.001$) and anger (β =.15, $p<.001$). Although collective efficacy boosted collective action intentions, it did not translate into the formation of the Euromaidan movement (β =.02, $p = .174$). Appraisals of state authorities as fair was found to be a non-significant predictor of collective action intentions ($\beta = -.04$, $p = .006$).The results of this study present fairly clear evidence for the hypothesis that Euromaidan identity was formed through two interrelated processes – disidentification from the Russian Federation-led CU (as opposed to disidentification from the EU), and social identification with the Ukrainian national identity. Likewise, the formation of this identity was predicted by one's anger over the government's decision to delay Ukraine-EU agreement and beliefs that the state authorities were acting in an unjust way. The sense of collective efficacy did not contribute to the formation of Euromaidan identity; we will return to this finding further in Discussion.
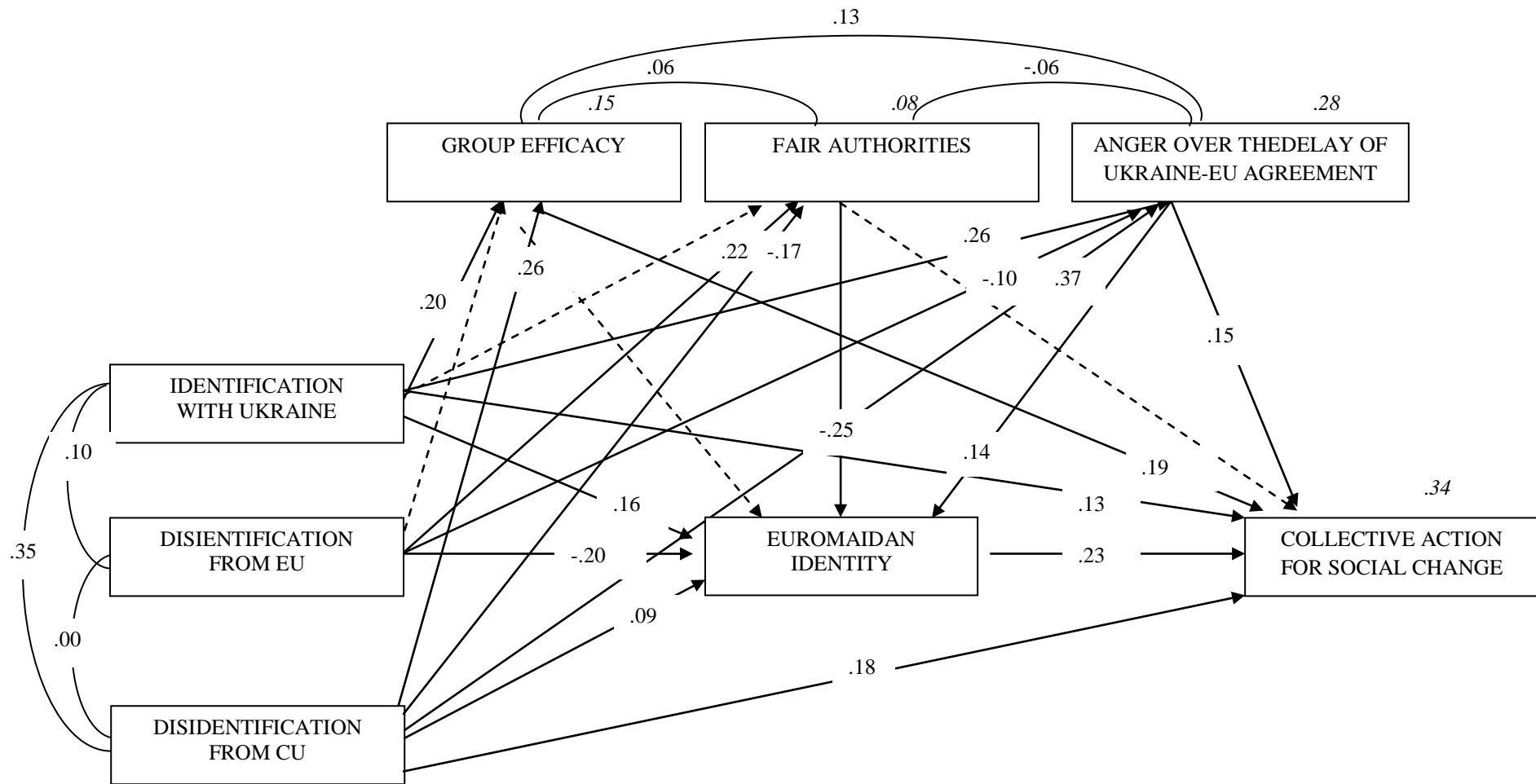
Figure 2.2. Structural model for collective action for social change ($N = 3129$). *Note*. Figure contains standardized parameter estimates, all *p* <

.001. Non-significant paths are shown as broken arrows

Discussion

In general, these findings support our hypotheses regarding the process underlying formation and expression of aspirational identities. We found evidence consistent with the proposal that the Euromaidan collective identity is an outcome of the aggregated group aspirations generated in a heightened state of psychological reactance. The Euromaidan aspirational identity was predicted by identification with a social category whose rights were oppressed and disidentification from the category that implied unwanted changes in the group aspirations. We additionally provided evidence for two indirect mediation paths from identities (i.e., Ukraine, anti-EU and anti-CU) to collective action: the first one through the aspirational Euromaidan identity and the second one through the emotional-cognitive appraisals of the context (i.e., reactance-based anger, perception of the system of governance as unjust and ingroup as capable of attaining social change). This adds to the literature on identity-driven collective action by pointing to the interactive and mutually constituting nature of engaging in social movement.

Our findings reinforce the credibility of the theoretical framework derived from the psychological reactance theory (Brehm, 1966, 1993; Miron & Brehm, 2006), the social identity model of collective action (van Zomeren et al, 2008), and the motivational model of collective action (Duncan, 2012), by identifying the antecedents and consequences of the emergent aspirational group identity.

Rather than attempting to directly measure the perceptions of individual concerns associated with reactance(e.g., de Lemus et al., 2016; Laurin, et al., 2012) and/or collective angst in response to a physical or symbolic ingroup extinction threat (e.g., Wohl, Branscombe, & Reysen, 2010), as has been already done in the literature, we sought to exploit the role of disidentification and social identification – two inter-related processes believed to be activated under the circumstances that render the maintenance of boundaries

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and distinctiveness of subjectively valued group insecure(e.g., Barreto & Ellemers, 2002; Becker & Tausch, 2013; Ellemers, Spears & Doosje, 2002;Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

We, thus, showed that the Euromaidan aspirational identity had emerged in the contexts of the anticipated geopolitical changes when Ukrainians were facing political reunification with Russia as opposed to the integration with the Western Europe. Such state of affairs evidently made people distance themselves from the incongruently imposed social category (i.e., Russia-led CU) and articulate their commitment to the national identity. Moreover, people's anger over the government's decision to cancel Ukraine-EU agreement and their perception of the system of governance as unfair contributed to the formation of this identity.

Surprisingly, the relationship between collective efficacy of agentic action in achieving social change and the formation of the Euromaidan identity was found to be non-significant. We reason that the context of political corruption has an impact on the way people perceive a strategic non-violent action in achieving social change to be effective. The non-significant path from collective efficacy to Euromaidan identity may express individuals' doubt that in the current system of governance people can make a difference. However, having their aspirations articulated through the emergent sense of "we-ness" with other like-minded individuals, people may build this sense of efficacy and express it through collective action (see, the significant path from collective efficacy to collective action).We will return to this notion in Chapter 3.

Additionally, we found that people, who actively opposed Ukraine's integration with the Russia-led Customs Union and strongly endorsed a group-level self-investment into national social category via the process of social identification, were likely to engage in collective action directly but also on behalf of the Euromaidan social movement. These findings resonate with the ideas proposed by Duncan (2012) and Thomas et al (2016) about

the roles of ideologies in giving rise to discrete group memberships, formed through the development of a specific group consciousness. Similarly, we showed how the new aspirational group identity found its expression in collective action towards social change. Consequently, the formation of the Euromaidan identity can be seen as part of the development of an ideological standpoint of 'who we are as a group and what we stand for and against'. In addition, our model provides the way of considering SIMCA's key constructs (van Zomeren, et al., 2008) – i.e., perceptions of injustice (cognitive and affective) – that are known to mediate the relationship between identity and action, also as the proximal predictors of the formation of aspirational group identities. We will elaborate on the possibility of multiple causal orderings between SIMCA predictors and a few social-psychological outcomes in Chapter 3.

The take-home message from this research is that social movements are driven by aspirational identities that are formed in reactance to group injustices and generated through inter-related processes – identification with a social category whose rights were oppressed, disidentification from the categories that imply involuntary change in group's aspirations, coupled with the appraisals of system of governance as unfair and fuelled by anger over injustices. Understanding of what people disidentify from is crucial, because protest is in essence an act of "standing against".

Limitations and Further Directions

Although we obtained a large general population sample in the midst of tumultuous historical events, it must be noted that the present research has several important limitations. One is that we used a one-shot cross-sectional correlational design while focusing on a single political context, namely Ukraine's Euromaidan movement and, therefore, additional empirical evidence stemming from either longitudinal data or experimental data is crucial for firmer causal conclusions.

Secondly, collective efficacy's role in determining formation of the Euromaidan identity was not revealed, while, as expected, it played an instrumental role in shaping intentions to engage in collective action. One way of thinking of these findings is that this specific context (i.e., Ukraine's semi-authoritarian regime) tends to impose a particular set of structural constrains on subjective (social-psychological) resources in the formation of social movement. Future research should address why the link between collective efficacy and emergent identity has been problematic and whether the neglected variations between external efficacy (regime responsiveness) and internal efficacy (subjective political competence), influence this pattern. It is also possible that ingroup's sense of political efficacy is more related to other beliefs that are present in the geopolitical space, such as the belief that other more powerful agents are more influential than any grass-root level agent (see Chapter 5).

Thirdly and finally, because the proposed model is based on shared variance between variables it may not be able to adequately explain the emergence of collective action in terms of the qualitative transformations and points of transition from inaction to action (e.g., Livingstone, 2014) or in the meaning of politicized and personal identities, and the relation between the two (e.g., Turner-Zwinkels, van Zomeren, & Postmes, 2015). Investigating whether and how the effects of antecedents and consequences of emergent collective identities, conceptualized as the typical response in the immediate, experienced setting, vary by time, would be a desirable direction for future research. However, we suspect that the very nature of social change presents specific explanatory challenges for a researcher and does not extensively lend itself to experimentation, while providing a natural laboratory for a situated understanding of the realpolitik phenomena, which would not have been attainable for examination otherwise.

CHAPTER 3

**TOWARDS A CONTEXTUALIZED UNDERSTANDING OF DISSENT:
INTEGRATING LEGITIMACY OF PROTEST WITH THE SOCIAL IDENTITY
MODEL OF COLLECTIVE ACTION**

This chapter focuses on the question: 'Under which conditions are people more likely to express their aspirational identities through persuasive rather than confrontational (direct, potentially violent) collective action?' I show how subjectively perceived legitimacy of protest affects one's intentions to engage in collective action and the form that this action may take.

A modified version of this chapter will be submitted for publication in June 2017.

Abstract

This paper proposes that one's perception of legitimacy of protest – defined as subjective beliefs about one's entitlement to demand social change though action within collectively defined limits of legitimacy–predicts persuasive as opposed to confrontational collective action. Additionally, we propose a pathway to identity formation through disidentification, social identification and the emotional-cognitive appraisals of the context. We tested our hypotheses in Ukraine, a country, where street and online forms of protest were outlawed by the parliament during the course of a political-change campaign. Results revealed that disidentification from the Russian-Federation led CU (as opposed to disidentification from the EU), perceived injustice and group-based anger predicted the Euromaidan identity (Study 1–2) and that perception of protest as legitimate explained individuals' intentions to engage in persuasive (Study 1–2) as opposed to confrontational collective action (Study 2). Links between the emergent nature of the Euromaidan aspirational identity and the larger political opportunities structure are discussed.

Keywords: perceived legitimacy of protest, collective action, disidentification, social identification

Towards a Contextualized Understanding of Dissent: Integrating Legitimacy of Protest with

the Social Identity Model of Collective Action

Much theorising and empirical research in social psychology has been devoted to understanding of how the social political context enables or constrains expression of politicized group identities. Although existing social-structural arrangements and embedded political opportunities are thought to be crucial for one's identity expression(e.g., Reicher & Haslam, 2013; Spears, Greenwood, de Lemus, & Sweetman, 2010), reflection on how they affect individual participation in collective action has received insufficient attention. We offer insights into the social identity model of collective action (SIMCA, van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008) by looking at why people get involved in collective action and how they get to do so.

Top-down structural conditions, such as ideologies, legal rules, and political changes, which define the structure of political opportunities, may *objectively* influence possibilities of challenging groups to demand change. What we aim to show in this paper is that a *subjective* perception of these opportunities may be crucial for the dissenters, too. More precisely, we focus on the volatile aspect of political opportunity structure – the right to peaceful protest that have proven to be a subject of legal restrictions in many political contexts around the world[1]. Do people think it is legitimate to exercise their right to social protest or do they think

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[1]The high-profile cases of criminalization of protest commonly occurred in response to the mass anti-government demonstrations in Russia (2012), Egypt (2013), Ukraine (2014), and Turkey (2015), – the countries, which according to Freedom in the World report (2016), have experienced democratic setbacks. However, the similar trend in governments' treatment of civil liberties has also been seen in so called established democracies like, for instance, those of the Bill 78 in Quebec, Canada (2012), H.R. 347 the anti-occupy laws in the U.S. (2012), and New South Wales government's anti-protest bill in Australia (2016). Moreover, the data provided by the CIVICUS (2016) indicates that 2016 was marked as the 10th consecutive year of decline in civil liberties with

that social protesting in their country is an illegal conduct? These are questions that can only be answered by group members themselves and are likely to yield different answers according to both contextual and individual differences. The recent international evidence of the restrictions of civil rights urges a nuanced theoretical understanding of the ways in which perceiving the right to protest may explain why people may or may not get politically active. To this end, we propose to measure individuals' perceptions of legitimacy of protest as a proxy variable for "assessing" structural opportunities in the context in which collective action occurs. We integrate SIMCA with our understanding of politicized collective identity as a socially-constructed, context-dependent phenomenon and extend it with the new explanatory variable.

To this end, we first briefly overview the main propositions of SIMCA and discuss some of its limitations. We move on to analysing identity of social movements as a dynamic process. We then operationalize the concept of the perceived legitimacy of protest and show how it may be associated with two distinct forms of collective behaviour – persuasive and confrontational action. Finally, we present results of two studies testing our extended path model. It is our belief that by carefully articulating these group-level mechanisms that lead to the formation and development of the social movements we are in a better position to analyze individuals' political participation as a bottom-up identity-driven process.

An Integrated Perspective on the Contextualized Understanding of Collective Action

The Social Identity Model of Collective Action (van Zomeren, et al, 2008; 2012), an empirical attempt to integrate the psychological literature on collective action, accentuates four interrelated mechanisms. First, forwarding the social identity perspective of collective

about 86% of the world's population (or more roughly 6 out of 7 people in over 100 countries) describing their rights to peaceful protest as being curtailed or denied.

action (e.g., Drury & Reicher, 2005; Tajfel & Turner, 1979), it suggests that one's identification with the group whose rights were oppressed determines intentions to engage in collective action, especially when individuals hold moral convictions about their ingroups' collective disadvantage (van Zomeren, et al, 2012). Secondly, collective action is impelled by one's perception of injustice (unfairness, illegitimacy) towards the ingroup. In line with the relative deprivation framework (e.g., Walker & Smith, 2002), SIMCA suggests that perceived injustice activates specific action-oriented emotions such as group-based anger (e.g., van Zomeren, Spears, Fischer, & Leach, 2004; Witte, 1992), regarded as a copying behaviour for fear, or contempt, an aggravated version of anger (e.g., see Tausch et al., 2011), characterized by lack of reconciliatory intentions. Thirdly, SIMCA posits that individuals' intentions to engage in collective action are determined by their perceptions of collective efficacy in solving group problem through joint effort (e.g., Klandermans, 1984; Louis, Taylor, & Douglas, 2005). Low efficacy, in contrary, pertains to collective inaction and has been routinely related to the perceptions of authorities or other relevant powerful groups as unresponsive to (e.g., Wright, 2001), or even oppressive of (e.g., Drury & Reicher, 2005), ingroup's attempts to attain social change. Lastly, the model suggests that social identification functions both as a direct and indirect (i.e., through group-based anger and group efficacy) predictor of collective action. These effects have formed the cornerstone for a series of theoretical statements on, and further empirical investigation of, the identity processes and collective behaviour (e.g., Shuman, Cohen-Chen, Hirsch-Hoefler, & Halperin, 2016; Tausch et al., 2011; Thomas, McGarty, & Mavor, 2009).

Despite substantial evidence for processes identified in SIMCA, there are some limitations to this model of collective action. First, from this perspective, a politicized group identity has been commonly treated as an independent variable and, as such, little attention has been paid to the notion that it is – in itself- a dynamic system of interrelations and the

outcome of other social psychological processes. Recent developments in the collective action literature (e.g., Thomas et al., 2015; Reicher, 2004) suggest some new pressing questions regarding the emergent nature of politicized group identities that need to be addressed with empirical research.

Secondly, the model tends to overlook the possibility that in certain contexts social protest may be regarded as an illegal conduct, and, as such, it is difficult to predict how an individual perception of the possibility to demand social change through protest will be translated into action as well as whether the other SIMCA variables will keep their predictive power under these circumstances. We shall address those limitations in the following sections.

Aspirational Group Identity as a Dynamic System of Interrelations

Collective action research has put forward the question about mechanisms underlying formation of a new identity that "emerges" for the purpose of fostering social change. According to Postmes and colleagues (e.g., Postmes, Haslam, & Swaab, 2005; Sassenberg & Postmes, 2002), it is a bottom-up process constructed through communication and consensualization of group norms and, thus, inferred from expressions of individuals' originally idiosyncratic positions. With the primary interest in the link between small group dynamics and subsequent collective action, McGarty and colleagues (McGarty, Bliuc, Thomas, & Bongiorno, 2009) have coined the term "opinion-based group membership" to describe a group membership based on a shared understanding of "who we are" and "what we are about as a group". Later, Smith and colleagues (Smith, et al., 2014) have suggested that new shared social identities "develop when people are motivated to communicate their opinions and ideas about social change because they encounter a conflict between the way the world is and the way they believe the world should be" (p. 2). These authors have proposed that the formation of such identities requires the articulation of ideas about desired social

change, which, in turn, need to be negotiated and agreed upon during interaction. It should be noted that this process of identity formation has been assumed for relatively small groups consisting of co-present individuals engaged in carrying out a shared task or fulfilling a common goal (see e.g., Gee & McGarty, 2013; Postemes, et al., 2005).

Geared towards establishing (or preventing) a particular state of affairs, opinion-based groups may also refer to social causes that unite people who do not have an experience of the interpersonal contact such as, for instance, "Black Lives Matter" in the US or "pro-choice"/"pro-life" international movements, but who may come to identify themselves in terms of a social group capable of taking a collective stance as well as undertaking collective action. It is quite plausible that these social movements too emerged through social interaction processes via new technologies that can provide previously unconnected individuals with a forum for social interactions (e.g., Spears, Lea, Postmes, & Wolbert, 2012).

Based on the premises of the opinion-based group identity model (McGarty, et al., 2009), we suggest that new or emergent group identities originate from a shared set of aspirations of the world and one's place in it. This shared set of aspirations becomes generated in a heightened state of psychological reactance to potentially threatening events: peoplecan become a group through rejecting an alignment to incongruent or stigmatizing categories (i.e., disidentification) and through restating their commitment to valued group identity (i.e., social identification) (see Chapter 2). The SIMCA mechanisms discussed above are likely to play an active role in the formation of new identity through the emotional-cognitive appraisals of the context. Therefore, the first step towards extending SIMCA is to examine how an aspirational collective identity is a dynamic system of interrelations, assuming that SIMCA constructs shown to predict engagement in collective action may also lead to the formation of the aspirational identity that drives this action.

Legitimacy of Protest as an Element of Political Opportunity Structure

The concept of political opportunities generally relates to the degree of influence that individuals and groups exert within the social political structure, their ability to demand and achieve social change, even if authorities or other powerful social groups oppose them.

Thinking of legitimacy of protest as a potential explanatory variable of collective action, a crucial question we need to ask is, 'legitimate for whom?' In this respect, Spears and colleagues (Spears, et al., 2010) have argued that it is important to distinguish between *external* legitimacy (i.e., social form) imposed by a particular social order, society or system, and *internal* legitimacy (i.e., social- psychological form) as it is perceived by some disadvantaged social group within that society or system. The relationship between external and internal legitimacy appears to be intricate and to depend on a variety of factors. For instance, external legitimacy may be embedded in the social-political structure in the form of hierarchy enhancing myths (see e.g., Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) and system justifying beliefs (Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost, Burgess, & Mosso, 2001), that is, consensually shared social beliefs about group-based oppression and social inequality.

Skitka and Mullen (2002) have suggested that the way people reason about political legitimacy and obey the law (regardless of whether they are the direct recipient or a third party perceiver of certain procedural arrangements) is determined by their overall perception of whether authorities act in an unbiased, trustworthy way, and provide people with opportunities for voice. Collective action research has documented the relationship between the perception of institutions as unresponsive to the citizens' needs and demands and anti-establishment collective action: people who experience mistrust in authorities and, in particular, in law-making institutions, are likely to undertake protest actions bypassing the institutional channels (e.g., see Mannarini, Boffi, Brondi, & Sarrica, 2015; Tyler & Huo, 2002).

The structure of political opportunities is not fixed but rather context-dependent, dynamic and variable. We aim to understand how people perceive their (current) opportunities to demand social change through protest so that we can better understand how political participation is shaped by these contextual constraints.

One possible way of extending SIMCA towards a more contextualised understanding of dissent, is integrating it with the concept of the *perceived legitimacy of protest*, defined as subjective beliefs about one's entitlement to demand social change within collectively defined limits of legitimacy. It appears plausible that in the situation where a parliament poses either temporary or permanent restrictions on social protest, individuals and groups will be likely to align their collective behaviour with their own perceptions of what they think is lawful and what is not. That is, when perceiving protest as a legal and constitutional form of civil participation, individuals may be likely to take persuasive collective action, aimed at influencing/persuading third parties (or even opponents). Conversely, when perceiving protest as an illegal form of political participation, individuals may be likely to adopt a more radical, confrontational collective action, aimed at disrupting opponents and their activities.

Study Aims

We aim to test a theoretical model, in which SIMCA main predictors (i.e., group-based anger, collective efficacy, and injustice appraisals), disidentification from the CU (as opposed to disidentification from the EU), and social identification with the national Ukrainian identity are expected to predict the Euromaidan identity (Study 1 and 2) and perception of legitimacy of protest is expected to predict collective action above and beyond the other predictors (Study 1) as well as explain why people opt for persuasive as opposed to confrontational collective action (Study 2). Our hypotheses are summarised in Figure 3.1.

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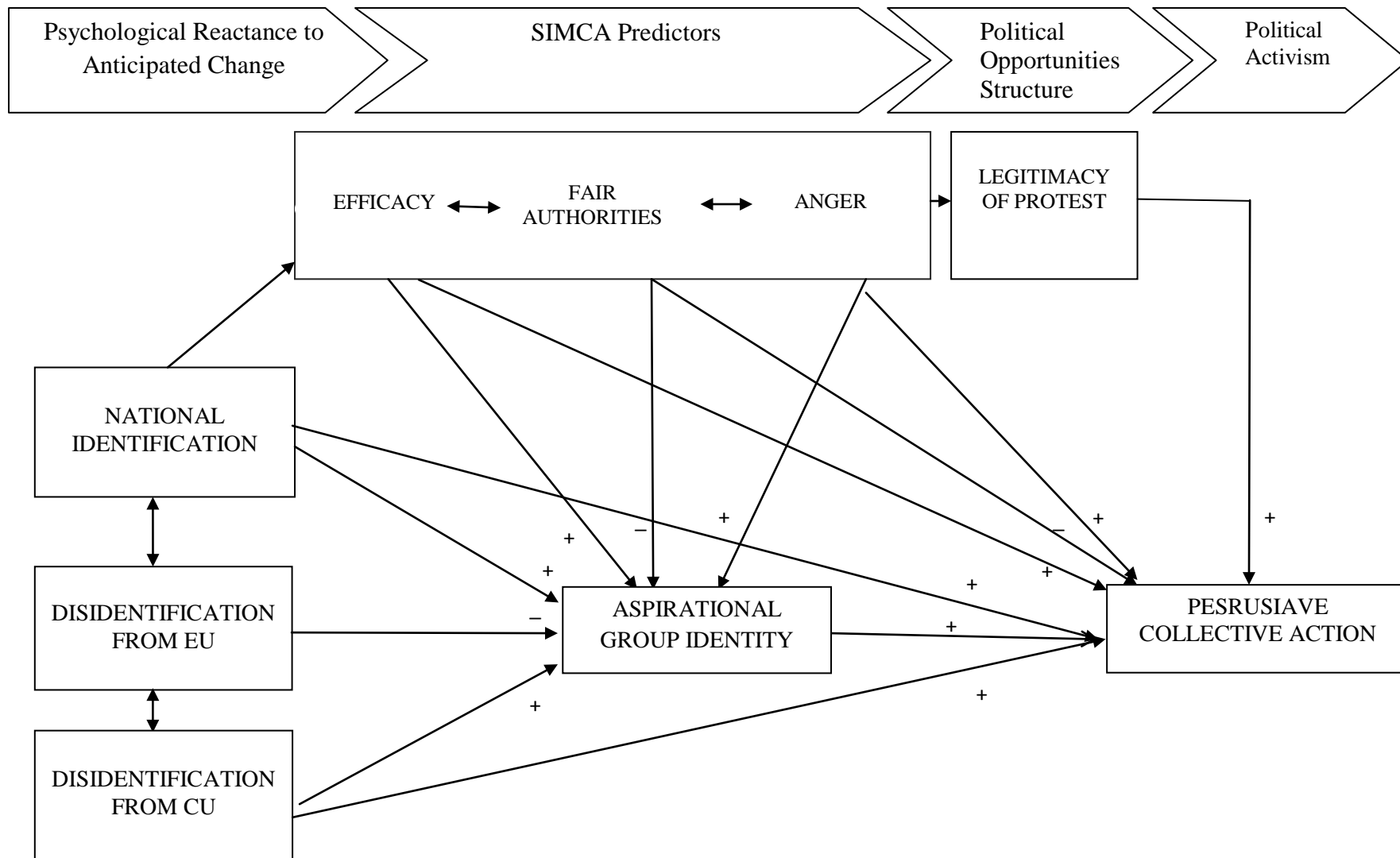
Figure 3.1. Expanded conceptual model of social identity predicting persuasive collective action

Study I

Background

After a set of pro-Western protests – the Russian-aligned majority of the Parliament of Ukraine passed a set of anti-protest laws that included measures limiting street assemblies and internet freedoms (Cohen, 2014). The new laws, passed on 16 January 2014, criminalised all unauthorised meetings and gatherings in public places, and the online dissemination of "extremist information" (without providing a clear definition of 'extremist', Centre for Civil Liberties, 2014). Consequently, activists had become detectable and punishable by authorities and 82 of street protesters were killed, more than 1,100 injured and 234 arrested in the period after the new laws were introduced (Ukraine Crisis: Timeline, 2014).

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants were approached through a public online survey posted to Facebook pages that were generally discussing political events in Ukraine. The data were collected between January 25 and February 19, 2014, at the time of the large protests in Ukraine in response to the political crisis, and immediately after the passing of laws that restricted people's right to protest. The questions of the survey focused on socio-demographics and attitudes toward current political issues. The items were available in Ukrainian. In order to guarantee coherence and validity of the questions, all items were translated from English to Ukrainian and back using a standard translation-back-translation procedure (Brislin, 1970). Participants were required to be of the Ukrainian nationality and aged over 18.

In total, the responses from 3129 participants were used in the data analysis. The sample ranged in age from 18 to 70 (*M* age 31.43 years, *SD* = 8.51) and comprised 60.8 % women. Participants were highly educated (66.6 % having graduated from university), 47 %

were employed full time, and 67.3 % indicated Ukrainian as their first language. Some 77.9 % reported that they completed this survey while in Ukraine, 22.1 % - while living abroad.

Measures

Socio-demographics. Participants indicated age, gender, ethnicity, country of birth, current residence, prior experience of living abroad, educational level, employment status and mother tongue (i.e., Ukrainian, Russian, other).

Identification with the Euromaidan. We assessed the extent to which participants identified with the Euromaidan movement, using a modified Inclusion-of-the-Other in-the-Self-Scale (the IOS-scale, Aron, Aron & Smollan, 1992) where higher numbers were indicative of a smaller felt distance between oneself and others participating in the movement.

Identification with Ukraine. Participants rated six items from Leach et al. (2008) used to measure their identification with Ukraine (e.g., "I often think about the fact that I am a part of the Ukrainian people, "I am glad to be part of Ukraine", "I feel solidarity with people in Ukraine"), α =.94.These and other measures below used five point Likert scales labelled from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree).

Disidentification from the European Union and the Russian-led Customs Union. To assess disidentification from the EU and the CU we used six items from Becker and Tausch (2013) for each category respectively (e.g., "I feel a distance between myself and EU/CU", "I would regret that I belong to EU/CU"), "I have nothing in common with most members of EU/CU"), EU (α=.74) and the CU (α=.91).

Collective Efficacy. Six items from the Collective Political Efficacy Scale (Yeich & Levine, 1994) were used to assess participants' perceptions of the ability of a collective group to enact political changes (e.g., "Dramatic change can occur if people banded together and

demanded political change", "Politicians would listen to the protestors if we pressured them to"), α = .81.

Fair authorities. We asked how in general fair or unfair participants think the functioning of the police, courts, the current parliamentary majority, and the national government is in granting/representing the constitutional rights of Ukrainians. We combined these four items to form an index assessing fairness of authorities (α = .85).

Group-based anger. To assess anger, respondents were asked to rate how 'irritated', 'angry', 'furious', 'displeased', and 'fearful' they felt about the decision to delay Ukraine-EU association agreement. The five items loaded on one component (62.34 %); (KMO = .844; Bartlett's test of sphericity: χ^2 (10) = 7564.535, p = .000; Determinant =.109), and were treated as a scale for measuring a group-based anger, α = .85.

Perceived Legitimacy of Protest. Beliefs about legitimacy of protest were assessed using four items: 'These people were wasting their time protesting (recoded)', 'I think protesting on the streets was a valid form of behaviour in Ukraine', 'Protesting changed nothing (recoded)','I think protest is a healthy part of democracy' ', α = .51.Principal components analysis yielded one component with eigenvalues greater than 1 that accounted for 42.45 % of the variance(KMO = .615; Bartlett's test of sphericity: χ^2(6) = 977.764, p = .000; Determinant =.724),

Persuasive collective action. Eleven items assessed the extent to which participants were willing or not willing to participate in different actions (e.g., "to sign a petition"; 'to attend a non-violent street action"; "to display symbolic attributes of the protest on their vehicle/clothes", "to donate money"), α = .90.

Results and Discussion

Preliminary Analysis

Preliminary analysis was performed to ensure there were no violations of the assumptions and breaches of normality. The correlations between all variables, means, and standard deviations are presented in Table 3.1. Next, we performed a hierarchical multiple regression analyses to test whether perceived legitimacy of protest predicts collective action above and beyond disidentification, social identification, and SIMCA's constructs, and whether it should be included in a final model[2]. At Step 1, disidentification from CU, identification with Ukraine, identification with the Euromaidan, group-based anger, group efficacy, fair authorities were significant positive predictors of persuasive collective action, *adjusted* R^2= .25, ΔF (1, 2994) = 31.82, p=.000. At Step 2, adding perceived legitimacy of protest to the regression model significantly increased the summarised effect of all other variables, *adjusted* R^2= .29, ΔF(1, 2993)=153.79, p = 000, and was itself a significant predictor *β*= .22, *p*=.000.

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[2]For reasons of parsimony and in view of the high power derived from the large sample size we do not report the regression effects. Details of the regression analyses are available upon request.

Table 3.1

Correlations and Descriptive Statistics (N = 3129)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	*M*	*SD*
1. Identification with Ukraine	1	.099**	.341**	.247**	-.069**	.281**	.368**	.210**	.336**	4.3	1.13
2. Disidentification from the EU			.005	-.242**	.211**	.044*	-.070**	-.248**	-.044*	1.66	.66
3. Disidentification from the CU				.249**	-.175**	.318**	.450**	.260**	.398**	4.01	1.21
4. Identification with Euromaidan					-.324**	.123**	.287**	.377**	.373**	3.98	1.13
5. Fair Authorities						.000	-.147**	-.279**	-.176**	1.75	1.32
6. Collective Efficacy							.279**	.260**	.340**	3.51	.96
7. Group-based Anger								.280**	.385**	3.35	1.17
8. Legitimacy of Protest									.412**	4.61	.54
9. Persuasive Collective Action										3.97	.89

Note. * p< .05; ** p < .01. *** p< .001

Main Analysis

Using structural-equation modelling via SPSS Amos 24, we examined a model that represents our argument. Results are depicted in Figure 2.2. The hypothesized model fit the data very well, $\chi 2$ $(df = 2) = 41.24$, $p=$. 000. Moreover, other fit indices also indicated excellent fit: CFI = .993, IFI = .993, TLI =. 836, RMSEA =. 068, (CI: Low = .051, High = .086, PCLOSE =.044 (see Kline, 2011). We find evidence for the predicted pathways to persuasive collective action through Euromaidan identity and perceived legitimacy of protest. In the middle of Figure 3.2, we find evidence for the predictive role of disidentification from the CU and identification with Ukraine for the Euromaidan identity; likewise we find that two of SIMCA's constructs – perception of the authorities as fair and anger over the delay of Ukraine – EU agreement – were also related to the Euromaidan identity, while group efficacy was not; we turn to this point in the general discussion. Perceived legitimacy of protest produced the strongest path coefficients on persuasive collective action, further suggesting that our decision to extend the SIMCA model with this construct was valid.

As can be seen on Figure 3.2, the model included three non-significant parameters: disidentification from EU was not significantly related to group efficacy, indicating a clear pro-European tone of the emergent movement. Also, the association between the appraisals of authorities as fair and perceived legitimacy of protest was not significant, thus, providing evidence for a problematic character of the surrounding political opportunity structure. Finally, appraisals of the state's authorities as fair were not significantly related to persuasive collective action.
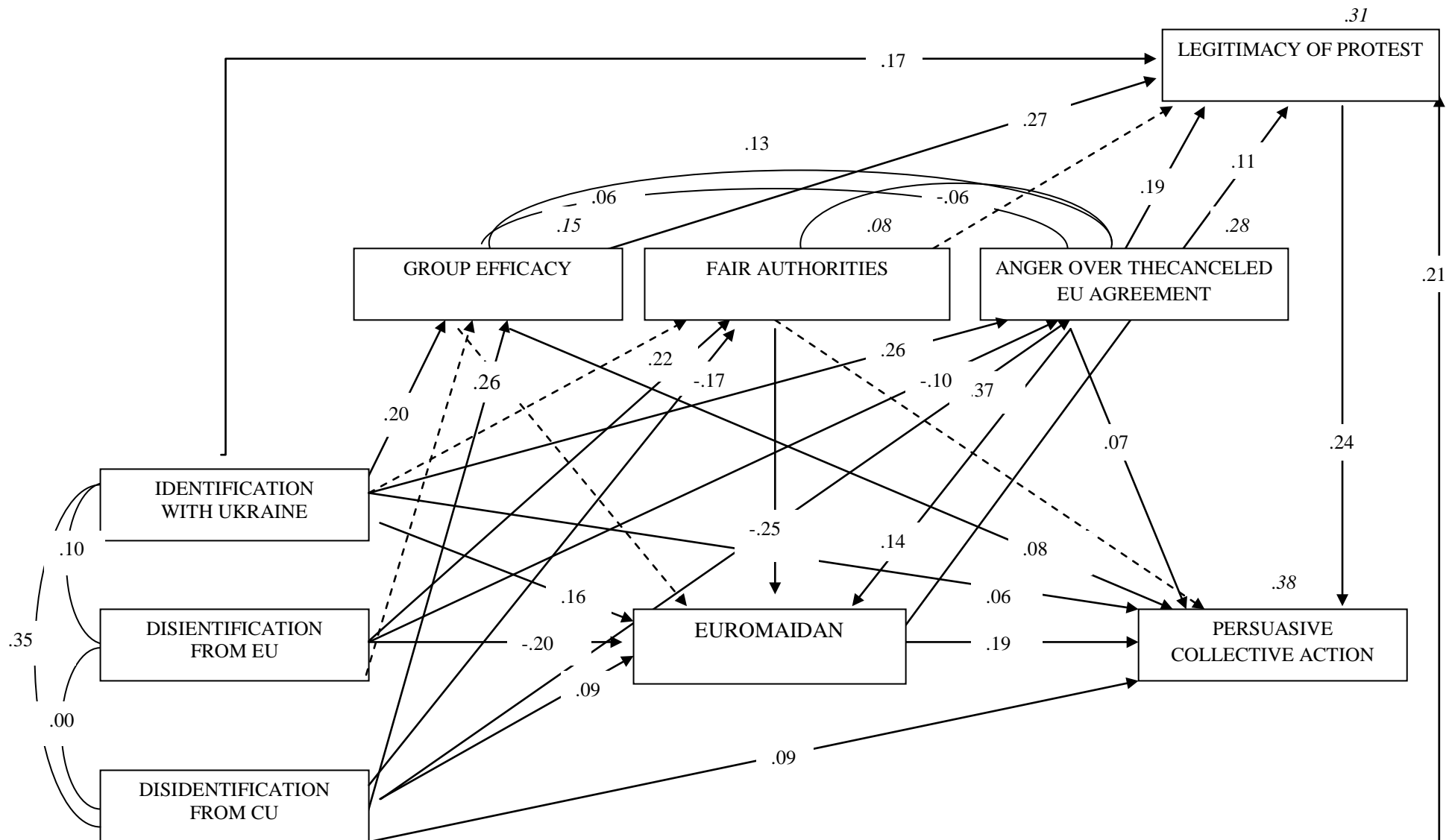
Figure 3.2. Structural model for persuasive collective action (*N* = 3129). *Note*. Figure contains standardized parameter estimates, all *p* < .001. Non-significant paths are shown as broken arrows.

These results lend support for our integrative approach in the sense that disidentification from the CU and identification with the national identity predicted the Euromaidan identity. SIMCA's sense of injustice (conceptualised and measured here as the reversed: 'fair authorises') and anger were also found to be robust predictors of the aspirational identity. Furthermore, perceived legitimacy of protest explained variance in persuasive collective action better than other predictors. This suggests that our integrative approach is a valid one. However, a possible caveat to Study 1 is that we did not examine the effects of these predictors on confrontational collective action. We address this in Study 2.

Study2

Method

Participants and Procedure

The procedure in Study 2 was similar to that used in Study 1. The data were collected between March 28 and April 30, 2014, following the cancellation of nine out of 12 anti-protest laws during the special session of the Ukrainian Parliament. We therefore assessed the construct of legitimacy of protest with an extended and slightly modified scale than in Study 1.

In total, the responses from 1820 participants were used in the data analysis. The sample ranged in age from 18 to 77 (*M* age 33.87 years, *SD* = 9.61) and comprised 51.7 % women. Participants were highly educated (57.4 % having graduated from university), 44.2 % were employed full time, and 57 % indicated Ukrainian as their first language. Some72.7 % reported that they completed this survey while in Ukraine, 24.7 % - while living abroad (mostly in European countries, 15.5 %, and in North America, 4.4. %).

Measures

Socio-demographics. Participants indicated age, gender, ethnicity, country of birth, current residence, prior experience of living abroad, educational level, employment status and mother tongue (i.e., Ukrainian, Russian, other).

To measure respondents' identification with the Euromaidan, identification with Ukraine ($\alpha = .95$), disidentification from the European Union ($\alpha = .78$) and the Russian-led Customs Union ($\alpha = .91$) we used the same scales as in Study 1.

Group-based anger towards ideological opponents. To assess anger, respondents were asked to rate how 'angry' and 'irritated' they felt about people who support the annexation of Crimea to the Russian Federation, $\alpha = .77$.

Collective Efficacy. Four items were used to assess participants' perceptions of ingroup's collective political efficacy (e.g., 'I think that Ukrainian people can stop the annexation of Crimea', 'I think that people in Ukraine can defend their rights over Crimea', 'Ukrainians as a nation can change a lot, and 'I think Ukraine has already lost the fight against Crimea' (reverse coded)), $\alpha = .83$.

Injustice appraisals. Seven items were used to measure participants' sense of injustice ('Having the referendum in Crimea was against the Constitution of Ukraine', 'Not all ethnic groups participated in the Referendum in Crimea', 'The results of referendum are not legitimate', 'Having the referendum was justified' (reverse coded), 'Russian foreign policy in the Crimea is illegitimate', 'Russian current campaign towards separatism in Southeast of Ukraine is illegal', and 'Russian invasion of Crimea is a legitimate peacekeeping campaign' (reverse coded), $\alpha = .84$.

Perceived Legitimacy of Protest in Ukraine. Beliefs about legitimacy of protest were assessed using seven items: 'These people were wasting their time protesting (item 1, recoded)', 'I think protesting on the streets was a valid form of behaviour in Ukraine' (item 2), 'Protesting changed nothing (item 3, recoded)', 'I think this was irresponsible behaviour

(item 4, recoded)', 'I think there should be more protests in Ukraine' (item 5), 'This was not typical Ukrainian behaviour' (item 6), and 'I think protest is a healthy part of democracy' (item7). Principal components analysis yielded two components with eigenvalues greater than 1 that accounted for 51.15 % of the variance. Loadings, after oblique rotation, revealed that relatively items 1 – 6 with factor loadings ranging from .45 to .76 loaded primarily on the first component (36.73 %), whereas item 7 (i.e., 'I think protest is a healthy part of democracy') loaded highly .97 on the second component (14.43 %). The items of the first factor captured the respondents' beliefs about social protest as an instrumentally effective and legal way of achieving social change in Ukraine, while item 7 (i.e., 'I think protest is a healthy part of democracy') did not explicitly mention Ukraine as a context, and as such, might could have been interpreted by the respondents in a more generic way. We, thus, decided to exclude it from the subsequent analysis. A repeated principal component factoring analysis with oblique rotation extracted one factor that predicted 42.81 % of the variance, with factor loadings ranging from .45 to .76. The items were averaged to yield composite of individual's perception of legitimacy of protest in Ukraine, α=.71.

Persuasive and Confrontational Collective Action. Respondents were asked to indicate how willing they were to participate in ten different offline collective actions. Principal components analysis yielded two components with eigenvalues greater than 1 that accounted for 55.45 % of the variance. Loadings, after oblique rotation, revealed that relatively non-violent, persuasive actions (e.g., 'voice group's claims in social network pages', 'display symbolic attributes (flags, stripes) of my group, 'participate in marches and motorcades', 'donate money for the cause of my group', 'compile a blacklist (list for lustration, sanctions)' and 'participate in flash-mobs and art events organized to support the cause of your group') loaded primarily on the first component (41.10 %); seemingly extremely confrontational actions (e.g., 'blockade activity of ideological opponents', 'sneer at

opponents' symbolic attributes (e.g., flags)','participate in mock political funerals', 'sabotage political events of opponents') loaded on the second component (14.35 %).The items were averaged to yield composites of individual's likelihood to engage in persuasive (α=.84) and extremely confrontational (α=.70) collective action. The two scales were moderately correlated ($r = .592$, $p<.001$).

Results and Discussion

Preliminary analyses

The correlations between all variables, means, and standard deviations are displayed in Table 2.2. We employed the same analytic strategy as in Study 1. We first ran hierarchical regression analyses for two outcome variables. At Step 1, disidentification from CU, identification with Ukraine, identification with the Euromaidan, group-based anger, group efficacy, fair authorities were significant positive predictors of persuasive (*adjusted R^2= .40*, ΔF (1, 978) = 4.707, p=.030) and confrontational (*adjusted R^2= .16*, ΔF (1, 979) = 39.081, p=.000) collective action.

At Step 2, adding perceived legitimacy of protest to the regression model significantly increased the summarised effect of the other variables on persuasive *(adjusted R^2= .44, ΔF (1, 977) = 68.620, p = 000)* and confrontational *(adjusted R^2= .17, ΔF (1, 978) = 12.120, p = 001)* collective action. Perceived legitimacy of protest had a significant effect on persuasive ($\beta = .29$, $p = .000$), but not significant for confrontational ($\beta = .08$, $p = .047$) collective action.

Table 3.2

Correlations and Descriptive Statistics (N = 1820)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	*M*	*SD*
1. Identification with Ukraine		-.084**	.300**	.281**	.288**	.476**	.455**	.497**	.386**	.168**	4.47	.99
2. Disidentification from the EU			-.092**	-.132**	-.061	-.183**	-.153**	-.232**	-.127**	.034	1.72	.67
3. Disidentification from the CU				.276**	.356**	.370**	.318**	.370**	.293**	.263**	3.76	1.10
4. Identification with Euromaidan					.243**	.228**	.303**	.367**	.382**	.200**	2.83	1.14
5. Group-based Anger						.399**	.305**	.381**	.315**	.304**	3.81	1.26
6. Injustice Appraisals							.437**	.629**	.347**	.177**	4.73	.72
7. Collective Efficacy								.468**	.418**	.253**	3.65	.97
8. Legitimacy of Protest in Ukraine									.553**	.272**	4.31	.77
9. Persuasive Collective Action										.578**	3.72	.89
10. Confrontational Collective Action											2.73	1.02

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

Main Analysis

We then examined the full set of explanations identified in our conceptual model by means of a structural equation modelling using SPSS Amos 24. The observed chi-square (χ^2) for the proposed model was significant, $\chi2$ ($df = 3$) = 32.588, $p = .000$. Because the p value of the χ^2 is highly sensitive to sample size, the relative χ^2 statistics measured by the *CMIN/df* were examined (Cheung & Rensvold, 2002). The values of the other indices fall within the cut-offs as advocated by Bentler and Bonett (1980) indicating acceptable model's fit: CFI = .990, IFI = .991 and TLI = .824. Inspection of the 90% confidence interval (CI: Low = .052, High = .097) for the RMSEA =.074 suggested that based on the current sample, the model could not be disconfirmed (PCLOSE =.036).

The results presented in Figure 3.3 are consistent with our conceptualization. Disidentifcation from CU and identification with Ukraine both positively predicted identification with the Euromaidan. Collective efficacy and group-based anger contributed to the formation of the Euromaidan protest identity. Identification with Euromaidan produced strong path coefficients on persuasive and moderate path coefficients on confrontational collective action. Confirming our hypothesis, perceived legitimacy of protest positively predicted persuasive forms of collective protest, while also predicting confrontational forms of collective action.
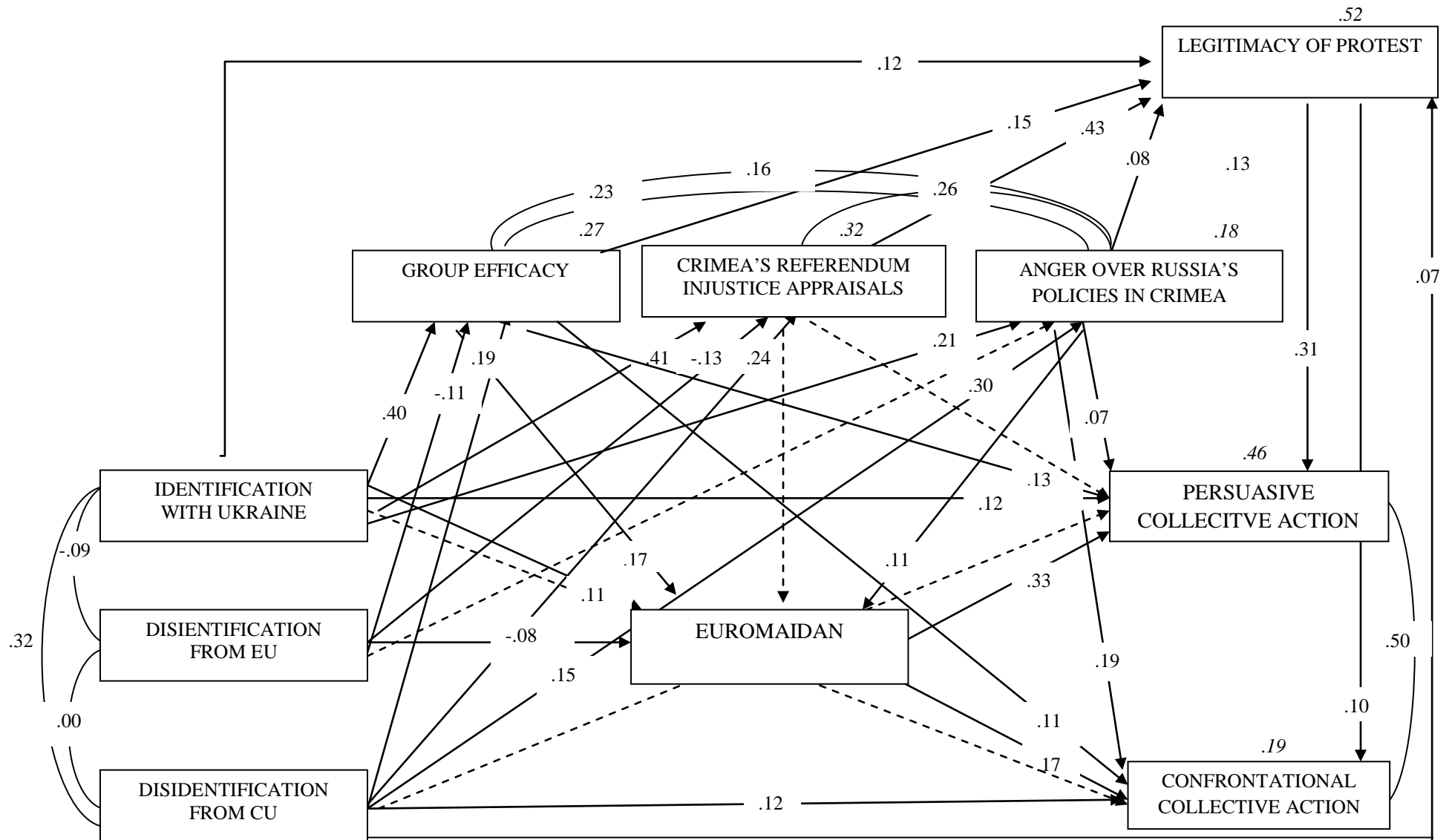
Figure 3.3. Structural model for persuasive and confrontational collective action (*N* = 1820). *Note*. Figure contains standardized parameter estimates, all *p* < .001. Non-significant paths are shown as broken arrows.

General Discussion

We began this article by claiming that, despite its high explanatory and predictive power, the Social Identity Model of Collective Action, limits our understanding of two context-embedded aspects of identity-driven social movements – their emergence and development. We sought to address these limitations of the model by proposing a theoretical model whereby identification with a social category whose rights were oppressed and disidentification from the arrangements that imply involuntary change in group's loyalties or aspirations coupled with one's emotional-cognitive appraisals of the context drive formation of politicized group identity. Additionally, we suggested that one's perception of legitimacy of protest – defined as subjective beliefs about one's entitlement to demand social change within collectively defined limits of legitimacy–predicts persuasive as opposed to confrontational collective action

Findings from our two studies suggest that at time of acute disputes over Ukraine's geopolitical position (i.e., political integration with the countries of Western Europe as opposed to the re-unification with the Russian Federation), disidentification from Russia-led Customs Union as opposed to disidentification from the European Union was a predictor of the Euromaidan identity, likewise a social re-categorization of national Ukrainian identity contributed to people's emergent commitment to the cause. In particular, across two studies we showed that in the context of the anticipated geopolitical change, disidentification acts as a warning signal that highlights the emergent sense of 'who we stand against' , which due to the processes of psychological reactance leads to the formation of a new aspirational identity. Another striking evidence of Ukraine's democracy in the making stems from the data: in Study 1, collective political efficacy did not significantly contribute to the formation of the Euromaidan identity (despite a bivariate correlation of $r = .123^{**}$), as people were still unsure about their ability to change the political situation.

However, in Study 2, collective political efficacy – the grass-root level process – was found to be a positive predictor of the Euromaidan identity (see Figure 3.3), which also was reflected in the correlational patters ($r = .303^{**}$). In the historical progression of events in Ukraine, it also makes sense to examine how people evaluate their collective efficacy in retrospect, in other words, how they attribute causality to the results of ingroup's political action considering that there are other influential actors in the geopolitical space; an issue to which we will return in Chapter 6.

Our second main argument was that collective action research has generally overlooked a very important question of whether people believe they are *at all* entitled to demand social justice within the legitimate channels. We then turned to the real-world events in Ukraine, a country, where street and online forms of protest were outlawed by the parliament during the course of a social-change campaign. Under these circumstances, do the predictions of SIMCA still apply? Theoretically, we proposed that dynamic relationship between the set of our predictors and collective action may be explained above and beyond the effects SIMCA predictors, by including one's perceptions of system-level constrains in terms of the perceived legitimacy of protest. In two studies, we tested its effects in predicting collective action and the form this action may take. Our findings suggest that this construct clearly contributed to the prediction of both persuasive and confrontational forms of action and it did so across two separate samples in the historical progression of events in Ukraine.

For the most part, this is key and an original contribution of this research, because it proposes the construct that equips researchers in the field with a measure of the context-sensitive variable. In the context of Ukraine, at the time of the data collection the political opportunity structure was changing dramatically due to the introduction of anti-protest laws and their subsequent annulment, therefore measuring respondents' beliefs about their 'right to protest' helped us shed light on the potential social-psychological causes of radicalization of

street movement. Still, given the intensity of the events and the aggressive violent turn in response to the authorities' interventions, confrontational forms of action were explained to the lesser extent than persuasive forms of action.

It is worth noting that we extended and slightly modified the items assessing the legitimacy of protest to be able to better capture respondents' beliefs about legitimacy in Ukraine as the official status of the protest in this country was changed twice during the month (January 2014). Taken in abstract, two of the items we used across two studies (e.g., "These people were wasting their time protesting" and "Protesting changed nothing")may also be seen as those that relate to the perception of collective efficacy. However, we argue that applied contextually these items tapped into the need of assessing one's beliefs about protest as both a legal and instrumentally effective way of achieving social change. Yet, we recognized a need for further operationalization of this construct and taking a more rigorous approach to its measurement in terms of content validity.

Relatedly, there is also some evidence consistent with the notion that people's own beliefs about various channels of political participation are indicative of their political orientation. We investigated respondents' beliefs about the rights to protest in a volatile situation, where the conflict with authorities was ripe, and where the origin of the social protest movement was about the orientation towards a more liberal and democratic political climate of Western Europe compared to that of Russia. We found that the perceived legitimacy of protest was associated with disidentification from CU (correlations: .26*** in Study 1, and .370 in Study 2, see Tables, 3.1 and 3.2) but not with disidentification from EU.

Additionally, relationship between appraisals of the authorities as fair and perceived legitimacy of protest in Study 1 indeed showed how the situation was still volatile: people may have not yet realized how the Ukrainian political authorities were responding to the public demands. Bivariate correlations indicate that those who perceived the authorities as

fair were less likely to perceive protest as a legitimate way of action ($r = -.279**$). However, by the time of Study 2 and in the more politically distant situation of Russia's interference in Crimea, the injustice appraisals referring to Russia's actions in Ukraine, correlated strongly with the perception of protest as legitimate ($r = .629***$). These data are an example of how relevant political values, attitudes and beliefs are context-depended and sensitive. Equally, in a situation where the authorities in question (in Study 2, Russian authorities) are a clear catalyst of the cause of the protest (i.e., Crimean cause), people have less doubts about the "right" thing to do, and their beliefs about the authorities' legitimacy are linked with their participatory beliefs – that protest should help change the political situation. We will return to this point in Chapter 5.

Finally, findings from this research suggest that political activism during Ukraine's Euromaidan movement can be seen as an overall process of repositioning at the subjective level by realigning one's group identities in relation to the geopolitical situation, and by forging new politicized identities that crystallize people's commitment to action for social change. Part of this repositioning has also to do with individuals' perceptions of collective efficacy, social injustices, and group-based anger against the oppressors (what we already know from SIMCA, van Zomeren et al., 2008), but also with more specific beliefs about one's entitlement to participate in the processes of democratic deliberation and public decision-making, thus, the new concept, perceived legitimacy of protest, is a crucial and timely addition to the literature.

Limitations

Part of the strength of the present research is that it is, to our knowledge, the first social-psychological attempt to analyse emergent aspirational group identity and real-world collective behaviour in their immediate aftermath, among the real protagonists of the

Euromaidan revolution, the most serious insurrection in modern-day Ukraine leading to the change of the state regime. Even so, our research has some methodological limitations.

The first set of limitations has to do with self-selection in the sample. With such a vibrant topic as a social revolution, there is certainly selectivity in who volunteers to express their opinion for the research. We acknowledge that the very process of collecting data on public opinions through online surveys may bias our understanding of the big picture of the event such that the political voice of the opponents of the movement as well as of politically apathetic and civically disengaged individuals, may not be propitiously represented in our sample. Nevertheless, the research carried out here points to a number of potentially fruitful opportunities for a mixed method research like, for instance, analysing national online news coverage (and reader comments) of protest-related issues(e.g., the introduction of anti-protest laws) to understand the way in which dominant messages are being conveyed and in which the audience is categorised, as well as whether authorities and population are included in a common category. Quantitative content analysis may then involve examination of multiple variables (e.g., keywords in context, volume of mentions, circulation of the message in media)thought to be important moderators of the content elements.

The second main issue is generalizability of the theoretical claims we have made. As social scientists committed to investigate real world political collective behaviour, we are aware that such data excels in ecological validity and will never attain the reliability of studies, based on nationally representative survey data or controlled designs and measures, such as laboratory experiments. A more systematic examination of the ideas proposed here could be the subject of a further research, conducted using longitudinal mixed methods approaches and tested across contexts.

Conclusions

In the present research we have underscored the processes behind formation and expression of aspirational group identity. First, in the context of the anticipated geopolitical changes, identification with Ukraine and disidentification from Russia-centered Customs Union (as opposed to the disidentification from the European Union) led to the formation of Euromaidan identity, as the quintessence of the oppressed group's aspirations for social change. Individuals' appraisals (cognitive and affective) of social injustices coupled with the sense of collective efficacy contributed to the formation of this identity. Secondly, perceived legitimacy of protest meaningfully predicted one's engagement more in persuasive than confrontational collective action, such that the more people believed that they are entitled to demand social change the more they were likely to persuade their opponents rather than confront them through collective action. Overall, the results offer insights into social identity model of collective action and raise questions about importance of contextualised understanding of bottom-up social change.

CHAPTER 4

'THE MORE WE STAND FOR – THE MORE WE FIGHT FOR': COMPATIBILITY AND LEGITIMACY IN THE EFFECTS OF MULTIPLE SOCIAL IDENTITIES

This chapter sought to provide an answer to the question of what social psychological mechanisms govern a synchronized expression of multiple aspirational identities. I examine whether the perceived compatibility (i.e., normative overlap) between identification with the Euromaidan street movement and the online protest community will lead to their congruent expression. Additionally, I further examine whether the effects of the perceived legitimacy of protest can be extended for the online activism, often regarded as slacktivism. I elaborate on the distinction between persuasive and confrontational forms of action and link them to the perception of political opportunity structure.

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Abstract

This paper explores the expression of multiple social identities through coordinated collective action. We propose that perceived compatibility between potentially contrasting identities and perceived legitimacy of protest serve as catalysts for collective action. The present paper maps the context of the "Euromaidan" anti-regime protests in Ukraine and reports data ($N = 996$) collected through an online survey following legislation to ban protests (March – May, 2014). We measured participants' identification with three different groups (the Ukrainian nation, the online protest community, and the street movement), perception of compatibility between online protest and the street movement, perception of the legitimacy of protest, and intentions to take persuasive and confrontational collective action. We found evidence that the more social groups people "stood for", the more they "fought" for their cause and that identifications predicted both forms of collective action to the degree that people saw the protest and the online movement as compatible with each other and believed protest to be legitimate. Collective action can be interpreted as the congruent expression of multiple identities that are rendered ideologically compatible both in online settings and on the street.

Keywords: multiple social identities, perceived compatibility, perceived legitimacy of protest, collective action, political activism

'The More We Stand For – The More We Fight For': Compatibility and Legitimacy in the Effects of Multiple Social Identities

A very relevant issue to address when examining the dynamics of grass-roots collective action is what type of commitments drive individuals' behaviour and how the real-world structural context conditions collective efforts to attain social change. Although collective action is routinely understood as efforts by members of a disadvantaged social group to overturn an injustice, the concept itself suggests the need to look beyond a single, nominal social category membership as the seed of dissent towards contested and multifaceted political agency and, thus, multiple politicized collective identities as a potential explanation of the drivers of social movements for social change. Did the Russian revolution of 1917 establish the dictatorship of the proletariat? Are efforts 100 years later to "make America great again" directed to the benefit of all (US) Americans? Perhaps, but it also seems plausible that in these, and many other cases, that there is a number of salient social categories that may be relevant at the same time for either a community or the same individual actor. The multiplicity of actors, political agendas and group identities are likely to achieve higher mobilization power in certain contexts, and social psychological models of collective action should be able to account for effects of such multiple identities.

The present research is designed to answer specific questions about how identification with distinct social groups coheres to underpin engagement in coordinated collective action. In particular, we aim to understand the process through which multiple social identities of self are translated into synchronized political action as well as conditions under which people opt for different forms of collective action. We seek to understand this phenomenon in relation to the wave of political activism in Ukraine starting in 2014.

Psychological research has demonstrated that people belong to a number of social groups and affiliations that can be potentially mobilized and politicized and has posited the question of whether these multiple commitments of self can lead to a synchronized expression (e.g., Cruwys, Steffens, Haslam, Haslam, Jetten, & Dingle, 2016; Curtin, Kende A., & Kende, J., 2016). Despite the increasing interest the underlying mechanisms of the expression of multiple identities remain unspecified.

The matter is complicated further because social movements may reflect not only multiple agendas but multiple methods. Some of these methods involve building support by persuading potential supporters to join a movement whereas others involve disrupting or even destroying opposition. Scholars have sought to understand the causes of extreme, non-normative and violent collective action (e.g., Becker & Tausch, 2015; Jiménez-Moya, Spears, Rodríguez-Bailón, & de Lemus, 2015; Moskalenko & McCauley, 2009; Shuman, Cohen-Chen, Hirsch-Hoefler, & Halperin, 2016; Thomas & Louis, 2014; Thomas, McGarty, & Louis, 2014) by distinguishing them from moderate, normative, and peaceful action. We appreciate that all of these distinctions have merit for various purposes In this study, we rely on the distinction between *persuasive action* –as a form of protest with the primary purpose of influencing/persuading third parties (or even opponents) to share a political goal and *confrontational action,* conceived as a form of protest that confronts opponents with direct action that may disrupt their activities. The advantage of this distinction is that labels for action such as "non-normative", "unlawful", "violent" and "extreme" are subject to locally applicable definitions that are often within the power of authorities to define. This is generally problematic where those authorities are themselves the targets of action, but is specifically problematic where forms of protests are outlawed during the course of a campaign. In Tunisia in early 2010 street protests were both illegal and very uncommon (McGarty, Thomas, Lala, Smith, & Bliuc, 2014). Protests continued to be illegal right

through to the point that the Ben Ali regime was overthrown but they had become common right across the country by early January 2011. In Ukraine in 2013/14 public demonstrations, most famously in the Maidan Square in Kyiv, had become regular and heavily supported events, but in January of 2014 they were declared to be illegal, prompting a new wave of intensified protests.

A recognition of context in promoting and constraining the expression of social identities has prompted analysis of the perception of political opportunities in relation to the anticipated outcomes of protest efforts (e.g., Reicher & Haslam, 2013; van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2013; Williams, 2004). However, little attention has been paid to the role of the perception of legitimacy of protest in predicting different forms of collective action.

The present research readdresses these issues and suggests a framework for understanding the expression of multiple social identities situated in a specific historical context. The key objective of the present research is, therefore, to examine the mechanisms behind a synchronized expression of multiple social identities in explaining persuasive and confrontational collective action. In line with the social identity approach, we first propose that collective action can be explained to a greater extent by accounting for multiple social identities whose ideological contents are aligned rather than by focusing on a singular salient category membership (hence the title of this paper 'the more we stand for – the more we fight for'). In particular, based on self-expansion theory (Aron & Aron, 1996; Aron, Aron, & Norman, 2004), we assume that people expand their self-concepts to include different identities of groups and communities they belong to, and this can occur without individuals necessarily incorporating or nesting one social identity into another. This psychological process, also referred to as the inclusion of other in the self, is thought to be achieved through an increasing overlap between the representations of self and social groups (e.g., Tropp & Wright, 2001).

Secondly, we argue that the ideological content of these identities need to be (or become) compatible with each other in order for them to drive collective action (see Bliuc, McGarty, Hartley, & Muntele Hendres, 2012; McGarty et al., 2014). We thus suggest that holding a shared (civic) vision based on the *perceived compatibility of multiple identities* provides solid psychological ground for engaging in collective action.

Another important consideration, in addition to the compatibility between identifications, is the degree to which the *political opportunity structure* (e.g., Meyer, 2004; Tarrow, 1998), that is, system-level constraints of individual-level intentions to take collective action, imposes a particular set of expectations regarding the ways in which those multiple identities may be expressed. In other words, if the norm that protest is a legitimate way of engaging in collective action is aligned with multiple identities, then the perception of protest as legitimate will help explain the effects of these identities on collective action. This is a particularly timely and contextually relevant operationalization, capturing people's perception of a key feature of the political opportunity structure in contested times of transition.

Compatibility of Multiple Identities and Political Activism

The idea that collective action may be explained through politicization of multiple social identities has recently received more attention in collective action research (e.g., Curtin et al., 2016; Curtin &McGarty, 2016; Louis, Amiot, Thomas, &Blackwood, 2016; building on earlier insights by Klandermans, van der Toorn, & van Stekelenburg, 2008, and Simon & Ruhs, 2008).

It has been argued that the psychological processes behind the simultaneous expression of multiple identities might involve the formation of opinion-based groups (see McGarty, Bliuc, Thomas, & Bongiorno, 2009), where the content of commitments (*what 'we' stand for and what 'we' stand against,* see Chayinska, Minescu, &McGarty, in press), rather

than strength and salience of social identification, has been shown to be the key factor to understanding politicization and action engagement. Smith, Thomas, and McGarty (2015; see also Smith, Gavin, & Sharp, 2016) conceptualize this as the formation of an *identity-norm nexus* where people come to see shared views about how to change the world as an aspect of self. Qualitative analysis by Curtin and colleagues (2016) also revealed that individuals who experience marginalization and privilege *at the same time*, and arguably identify with advantaged *and* disadvantaged groups, tend to simultaneously express these multiple identities to the extent to which these identities may be subsumed under a broader identity category (i.e., interpretable as involving commitment to a common cause).

Turner-Zwinkels, van Zomeren, and Postmes (2015) have shown that politicization of social/personal identities is not merely a matter of increasing allegiance to multiple political agendas; it is the overlap in the normative content of these identities and a subjective internalization of their agendas through which the political becomes personal that predicts commitment and action. Similarly, Louis and colleagues (2016) contend that one of the reasons why activism in one domain (i.e., identification with Cause 1) might predict and facilitate the likelihood of activism in other domain (i.e., identification with Cause 2) is the ideological or normative alignment between these movements. According to these authors, it is therefore necessary to explicitly measure whether and how such a normative consensus leads to collective action.

Other scholars have highlighted that a meaningful interconnectedness of available multiple identities(e.g., Case, Iuzzini, & Hopkins, 2012; Greenwood, 2012) or so called 'identity-value fit' (e.g., Kutlaca, van Zomeren, & Epstude, 2016) tends to facilitate their simultaneous expression, and that holding a number of social commitments, as opposed to a sparse social identity profile, is beneficial to life transitions. However, there appears to be one crucial condition: the multiple identities one holds need to be perceived to be compatible with

each other (e.g., Benet-Martinez & Haritatos, 2005; Iyer, Jetten, Tsivrikos, Postmes, & Haslam, 2009; Riketta & Nienaber, 2007).

Taken together, these findings suggest that the more people perceive their multiple social identities to be compatible the higher the level of identity integration. Conversely, the perception of two or more identities being in opposition to each other, perhaps due to conflicting values and norms, signals a lower level of identity integration. We extend this line of research by suggesting that that expression of multiple politicized identities through collective action is more likely to occur when individuals do not have to make an 'either–or' choice between two or more commitments. In other words, when a high level of identity integration between multiple identities is present, thus when identities are perceived as more compatible, collective action is more likely to emerge.

Based on this literature review, we suggest that the greater the degree of normative or ideological compatibility between multiple social identities the more likely it is that they will lead to coordinated collective action for the same cause. Thus, the present study investigates the potential mediating role of perceived identity compatibility in the relationships between the identification with the online protest community and street movement and intentions to take persuasive and confrontational collective action. We conceptualize perceived compatibility between multiple identities as the extent to which their content (and the values assigned to it) are perceived at the individual level to be coherent and in congenial combination with one another. In other words, for multiple identities to be psychologically compatible, we assume, the identification with one social group must not be perceived as conflicting with identification with another group.

While we see ideologies as a perfectly viable basis for the formation of social identities (most obviously in relation to political groupings such as socialist and fascist) our focus here on the link between ideology and identity is chiefly in terms of the *perceived*

compatibility of identities as they relate to participation in protest. Thus one pro-democracy, pro-European protester may hold an ideological commitment to non-violence or to obeying national laws (even when they are seen to be unjust) and another might believe that democratic ends justify violent means, or that 'bad' laws need to be broken. We turn to these matters now.

Perceived Legitimacy of Protest

It has been widely accepted that the context within which politicized collective identities emerge plays an important role in the understanding of political collective action and its consequences. Past research has paid insufficient attention to the fact that the legitimacy of engaging in protest against authorities or for a particular cause is itself a very contested aspect of social structure, and therefore varies across political contexts. Although it is commonly taken for granted in liberal democratic settings that political structures accommodate the right for participation in protest, this is not true in most parts of the world throughout history. This pattern may potentially challenge the cross-cultural applicability of findings from Western democratic contexts to other contexts where transition between political regimes and democratization is an ongoing process and challenging reality.

Some political science research (e.g., Corcoran, Pettinicchio, & Young 2011; Meyer, 2004; Tarrow, 1998) indicates significant links between democratization and protest such that a change in some dimensions of the political opportunity structure tends to affect an individual perception of the feasibility of protest. For instance, analyzing the data from the World Values Survey, Corcoran et al (2011) have revealed that the perception of political institutions as open (a macro-level factor) affected individuals' sense of efficacy (a micro-level factor), which in turn was found to determine intentions to take collective action. Social psychological research illustrated these processes in the analysis of McGarty and colleagues (2014) looking at the protests against repressive regimes in North Africa in 2010 and 2011. In

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this context, protest came to be seen as feasible after striking novel images of anti-regime protest were recorded on camera phones, uploaded to social media video sharing sites (e.g., YouTube), and from there, broadcast through external satellite television networks (Al Jazeera) to citizens in Tunisia and Egypt. Arguably in this context online mobilization was not alienated from street protest but was a precondition for it: part of a broader global pattern that Castells (2012) describes as the occupation of specific online spaces preceding the occupation of physical public spaces. Also, McGarty and colleagues', research (2014) captures the transition in people's perception that protest is "allowed", and the agency with which actors expanded this legitimacy of protest from the online to the street contexts.

Perceiving protest to be a legitimate political act is likely to result in collective action involving conventional, persuasive forms of action, but perhaps less so in the more confrontational forms of action (e.g., Becker & Tausch, 2015; Simon et al., 1998; Thomas & Louis, 2014). In the present study we examine whether *perception of protest* as a legitimate instrumental tool to achieve social change may also be rooted in the process that governs expression of multiple politicized identities. Specifically, we suggest that the ideological alignment (i.e., perceived compatibility) between different social identities *along with* perceiving protest as legitimate will explain how the relevant politicised identities will generate collective action. These processes are assumed to explain why and how multiple identities may align to predict engagement in collective action. In other words: 'the more we stand for' (multiple identities), 'the more we fight for' (increased collective action), because ideologically 'we' are fighting for the same goals (perceived compatibility) and because 'we' perceive our actions in protest as legitimate (perceived legitimacy of protest).

Current Study

We tested these ideas in the context of the 2014 Euromaidan movement – an uprising against the refusal of the then Ukrainian national government to sign the Association

Agreement with the European Union. After a set of pro-Western protests – the Russian-aligned majority of the Parliament of Ukraine passed a set of anti-protest laws that included measures limiting street assemblies and internet freedoms (Cohen, 2014). The new laws, criminalised all unauthorised meetings and gatherings in public places, and the online dissemination of "extremist information" (without providing a clear definition of 'extremist', Centre for Civil Liberties, 2014). In the space of a few months, the political opportunity structure changed: the legitimacy of protests came to be contested in the midst of a political identity crisis of allegiances towards Ukraine, Europe or the Russian-led Customs Union among protesting Ukrainians. This is an especially intriguing context because of the legislative change. A growing social movement that sought to promote closer ties with Western Europe was confronted with new laws that made both street and online protest illegal. Obviously, however, street protests remained more detectable and punishable by authorities and 82 of street protesters were killed, more than 1,100 injured and 234 arrested in the period after the new laws were introduced (Ukraine Crisis: Timeline, 2014).

We captured this moment in this study, looking at whether and how participation in an online protest movement become an acceptable alternative to street protest, whether online activism may represent the legitimate continuation of the protest by other means in order to preserve the future of Ukraine, or whether online protest become an unsatisfactory and alienated substitute: expressing what Morozov (2009, 2011), Gladwell (2010) and others might deride as slacktivism, clicktivism or even in Morozov's terms "the net delusion" (see Schumann & Klein, 2015; Thomas, McGarty, Lala, Stuart, Hall, & Goddard, 2015).

We tested a model in which perceived identity compatibility and perceived legitimacy of protest mediate the relationships between multiple identities and collective action. We expected that, in the context of anti-government protest, people may find that there are more than one group or community that best represents their interests, and if they perceive that the

values of these several groups are compatible (not conflicting), they will be likely to express their joint claims on behalf of those communities (the more we stand for – the more we find for).

We included three different social identifications as predictors of action: identification with the street protest movement, identification with the online protest movement, and Ukrainian national identification. We expected all three to be relevant predictors but the inclusion of national identification allowed us to address the possibility that identification with the single most relevant existing social category could provide an adequate (and parsimonious)account. Ethnic identification in terms of Ukrainian and Russian heritage represented other alternatives to measure single identities, and may seem obvious choices to external observers in view of recent dramatic conflicts in Ukraine. However, the civic ideology of the modern Ukrainian state (in which most participants would have been socialised) eschewed categorizations based on ethnicity in favour of a wider national identity category (see Prizel, 1998).

We expected that both persuasive and confrontational forms of collective action would flow from identification with the three different social identities (identification with Ukraine, identification with the online protest community, and identification with the Euromaidan street movement). Moreover, perceived compatibility and perceived legitimacy are expected to explain the effects of multiple identities on collective action. We generally also expected that the predictive power of the model including multiple identities and perceived compatibility and legitimacy will be stronger for persuasive than confrontational forms of collective action. This is because when considering persuasive collective actions, people are more likely to act out of a coherent ideological alignment between their multiple identities and the normative beliefs about these identities and about protest. When it comes to confrontational forms of collective action, this alignment between identities and normative

beliefs might not be necessary. We tested these hypotheses with survey data collected during the 2014 protests.

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants were approached through a public online survey posted to Facebook pages that were generally discussing political events in Ukraine. The data were collected between March 28 and April 30, 2014, (as soon as possible after the January 26 passage of laws that restricted people's right to protest led to larger protests in Ukraine). The questions of the survey focused on socio-demographics and attitudes toward current political issues. The items were available in separate Ukrainian and Russian versions of the survey instrument. In order to guarantee coherence and validity of the questions, all items were translated from English to Ukrainian / Russian and back using a standard translation-back-translation procedure (Brislin, 1970).Participants were required to be of Ukrainian nationality and aged over 18.

In total, the responses from 996 participants were used in the data analysis. The sample ranged in age from 18 to 77 (*M* age 33.87 years, *SD* = 9.61) and comprised 51.7 % women. Participants were highly educated (57.4 % having graduated from university), 44.2 % were employed full time, and 57 % indicated Ukrainian as their first language. Some72.7 % reported that they completed this survey while in Ukraine, 24.7 % - while living abroad (mostly in European countries, 15.5 %, and in North America, 4.4. %).

Measures

Socio-demographics. Participants indicated age, gender, ethnicity, country of birth, current residence, prior experience of living abroad, educational level, employment status and mother tongue (i.e., Ukrainian, Russian, other).

Identification with Online Protest Community and the Street Movement. We measured self-expansion with the online protest community and with the street movement using a modified Inclusion-of-the-Other in-the-Self-Scale (the IOS-scale, Aron, Aron, & Smollan, 1992). The IOS task depicted five pairs of circles (numbered one to five), ordered by degrees of increasing overlap between the pairs. Self-expansion refers to a "fundamental human motivation to enhance potential self-efficacy [which is the ability to accomplish desired goals by attaining] greater material, social, and informational resources" (Aron & Aron, 1996, Aaron, et al., 2004). Participants were asked to indicate how close they felt towards online protest community and street movement respectively by selecting one of the five pairs of circles. Higher numbers are indicative of a smaller felt distance between oneself and others participating in the movement.

Identification with Ukraine. Six items from Leach et al. (2008) were used to measure identification with Ukraine. These and other measures below used five point Likert scales labelled from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). These items captured Leach and colleague's (2008) dimensions of centrality (e.g., "I often think about the fact that I am a part of the Ukrainian people"), satisfaction (e.g., "I am glad to be part of Ukraine"), and solidarity (e.g., "I feel solidarity with people in Ukraine") of identity, that comprise the second order dimension of group-level self-investment and are considered to be particularly important for collective political action. The items were averaged to form a composite measure of identification with Ukraine (Cronbach's alpha (α) =.95).

Perceived Compatibility. To measure perceived compatibility between the online protest community and the street movement we used four items adapted and modified from Riketta and Nienaber (2007):'this online community is another platform for the street protest', 'by becoming members of Online Protest Community people safeguard the very existence of the street protest', 'in general, the mission statement of Online Protest

Community fits well with the mission statement of the street protest', and 'the ideas of Online Protest Community concerning interaction and cooperation correspond to the ideas of the street protest'), α = .79.

Perceived Legitimacy of Protest. Beliefs about legitimacy of protest were assessed using a 6item scale: 'These people were wasting their time protesting (recoded)', 'I think protesting on the streets was a valid form of behaviour in Ukraine', 'Protesting changed nothing (recoded)', 'I think this was irresponsible behaviour (recoded)', 'I think there should be more protests in Ukraine', 'This was not typical Ukrainian behaviour', α = .71.

Persuasive and Confrontational Collective Action. Respondents were asked to indicate how willing they were to participate in ten different offline collective actions. Principal components analysis yielded two components with eigenvalues greater than 1 that accounted for 55.45 % of the variance. Loadings, after oblique rotation, revealed that relatively non-violent, persuasive actions (e.g., 'voice group's claims in social network pages', 'display symbolic attributes (flags, stripes) of my group, 'participate in marches and motorcades', 'donate money for the cause of my group', 'compile a blacklist (list for lustration, sanctions)' and 'participate in flash-mobs and art events organized to support the cause of your group') loaded primarily on the first component (41.10 %); seemingly extremely confrontational actions (e.g., 'blockade activity of ideological opponents', 'sneer at opponents' symbolic attributes (e.g., flags)','participate in mock political funerals', 'sabotage political events of opponents') loaded on the second component (14.35 %).The items were averaged to yield composites of individual's likelihood to engage in persuasive (α=.84) and extremely confrontational (α=.70) collective action. The two scales were moderately correlated ($r = .592$, $p<.001$).

Results

Statistical Analyses

The preliminary analyses involved bivariate analysis and hierarchical multiple regression. In this step, predictor variables were centered when computing interaction terms to minimize colinearity. The main analysis involved a test of the mediational model. Data analyses were performed using SPSS 24 and Amos 24. Fit statistics, including χ^2 test (which can be affected by sample size), root mean square error of approximation (*RMSEA*), comparative fit index (*CFI*), and Akaike Information Criterion (*AIC*) were evaluated (Kline, 2011). The standardized paths between the variables included in the model were examined. The magnitude of effect sizes for the regression paths was determined as .10, .30, and .50 for small, medium, and large effects (Cohen, 1992). A *p*-value of less than .05was considered to be statistically significant in all of the analyses.

Preliminary Analysis: Do Multiple Politicized Identities Predict Collective Action?

Data screening was performed to ensure there were no violations of the assumptions. The descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations are presented in Table 3.1.

Table 4.1

Correlations and Descriptive Statistics for All Variables (N = 996)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	M	SD
1 Identification with Ukraine	--	.274	.263	.317	.475	.402	.179	4.49	.96
2 Identification with OPC		--	.396	.383	.359	.467	.306	3.26	1.14
3 Identification with SM			--	.216	.357	.524	.297	2.84	1.13
4 Perceived Compatibility between OPC and SM				--	.406	.425	.228	3.77	.87
5 Perceived Legitimacy of Protest					--	.550	.287	4.33	.76
6 Persuasive Collective Action						--	.592	3.73	.89
7 Confrontational Collective Action							--	2.74	1.04

* *p*< .05; ** *p*< .01. *** *p*< .001

Note. OPC = Online Protest Community, SM = Street Movement, all correlations *p* < .001

First, we performed a hierarchical multiple regression analyses to test whether identification with several politicized categories predicts collective action better than one salient identity and whether interaction terms should be included in a final model along with main effects[3]. Overall, the regression analyses indicated that multiple identities have additive positive effects on both types of collective action (on persuasive collective action, *adjusted R^2=.403*, on confrontational: *adjusted R^2= .132*) and that adding perceived compatibility and perceived legitimacy of protest significantly improved the explanatory power of both models, respectively, *adjusted R^2= .49*, $\Delta F(2,994)=89.41$, $p<.001$, and *adjusted R^2= .153*. ΔF $(2,994)=13.03$. Details of the regression analyses are available from the corresponding author.

Main Analyses: Do Compatibility and Legitimacy Mediate the Effects of Multiple Identities on Participants' Intentions to Engage in Persuasive and Confrontational Collective Action?

We tested a model in which perceived legitimacy and compatibility were considered as possible mediators of the effects of the three forms of identification on persuasive and confrontational action. Correlated error terms were allowed at each layer of the model. After

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[3]The preliminary analysis includedcentred interaction terms between each of the two identities (i.e., identification with the online protest community and with the street movement), and perceived compatibility, as well as perceived legitimacy of protest. In fact the only significant interaction term was in the model explaining persuasive collective action where the interaction of the effect of identification with the online protest community and perceived compatibility was significant: $\beta = .08$, $p = .037$. For reasons of parsimony and in view of the high power derived from the large sample size we do not consider these interaction effects in the main analyses.

the initial runs, we adjusted the models by setting two paths that had non-significant regression weights in the original models to zero, in particular the paths from the street movement identity to perceived compatibility (β = .03, p = .207) and from the Ukrainian identity to confrontational collective action (β = .01, p = .738). Figure 4.1 shows the adjusted fitting model. Goodness-of-fit values for this final model fall within the cut-offs as advocated by Bentler and Bonett (1980) indicating good model's fit: χ^2 (2) = 1.594, p = .451, *CFI* = 1.000, *RMSEA* = .000 (confidence interval: Low = .000, High = .043), *PCLOSE* =.978, *AIC* = 67.594.

The final model shows that identification with the street movement was a significant direct predictor of both persuasive and confrontational action and that identification with the online protest movement was a direct predictor of only persuasive action. Ukrainian national identification was an indirect predictor of both forms through perceived legitimacy and compatibility.

*Figure 4.1.*Path analysis. Model for the pathways to persuasive and confrontational collective action via perceived compatibility and perceived legitimacy of protest. *Note*. Figure contains standardized parameter estimates, all *p* < .001. Non-significant paths are shown as broken arrows.

Discussion

This study explored the mechanisms by which multiple identities predict collective action. First, we found empirical support to our hypothesis that collective action can be explained to a greater extent by accounting for multiple social identities with potentially aligned contents rather than by focusing on a singular salient category membership ('the more we stand for – the more we fight for'). Importantly, these relationships were found to be significant for both persuasive and confrontational forms of collective action.

The effects of identification with the online protest community are noteworthy. In particular, we found that both persuasive and confrontational collective action were predicted by identification with the online protest community due to increased perceptions of compatibility between the online and the street protest, but also due to the higher perception that protest is legitimate. These findings are intriguing as they contribute to the ongoing research on political participation through the Internet (e.g., Schumann &Klein, 2015; Thomas et al., 2015), which has been criticized as a low-cost and low-risk activism lacking commitment and social impact (e.g., Gladwell, 2010; Morozov, 2009). Our results indicate an alignment of identification with different groups, irrespective of the online-offline divide, and perceived compatibility between identifications and the perceived legitimacy of protest seems to equally and independently predict collective action.

In our case there was no evidence that online protest was seen to be a defective or unsatisfactory form of action even alongside widely disseminated images of street protests that were globally distributed. It is important to bear in mind though that in Ukraine in 2014, as in other parts of the world, both online dissent and street protest were illegal. The Ukrainian government may have unwittingly increased the value of online dissent by banning it at the beginning of 2014, in the midst of the political crisis. Additionally, the online community of protestors offered a platform for the Ukrainian diaspora to become involved,

whereas their participation in the street protests was logistically difficult if not entirely impossible. Future research may examine longitudinal changes in the relationships between multiple identities across various platforms of collective action, using individual-level analysis to track people's enduring participation in fighting for a common cause.

Secondly, our data revealed that, beyond the direct effect of multiple identities, the perceived compatibility between them adds to our understanding of people's engagement in collective action and explains the effects of identifications with the online community and with Ukraine. *What* "we stand for" and *how* we "stand for" the multiple communities we belong to (online, at the more abstract level of the national community), is of equal if not additional importance to our single memberships in any of them. Our study contributes to the theoretical discussion regarding the role of normative overlap between the agendas of different social groups in explaining cross-domain activism (e.g., Curtin et al., 2016; Louis et al., 2016) and long-term commitment to political causes (e.g., Smith et al., 2015; Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015). The results offer the interpretation that participation in collective action came to express national identification where Ukrainians saw protest as the right (legitimate) thing to do and where they perceived online and street protest to be compatible.

One possible way of thinking about these findings is that a capacity to form, synthesize, politicize and merge several opinion-based groups centered on short-/medium-term issues into a multi-goal campaign may serve as a key factor to understanding the processes behind coalition buildings and global activism. This also helps us understand the failures of mobilization: when networked campaigns use a vague idea-framing and related ideological noise that cannot justify involvement for a global cause, thus failing to bring people together. At the individual level, failure to cohere multiple group memberships into concerted collective action could be explained by exactly this lack of ideological overlap and miss-specification of the identity-norm nexus (Smith et al., 2015). Although the present study

was not designed to explicitly measure a link between formation of identities with overlapping injunctive contents and coordinated collective action, we believe that the curvilinear nature of this relationship requires a further examination.

Finally, consistent with our expectations, we found that expression of multiple social identities through collective action was also explained by individual perceptions of legitimacy of protest. Specifically, our findings indicate that higher degrees of identification with all politicized identities led to increased perceptions of protest as a legitimate method for achieving social change, and thus to higher likelihood of engaging in persuasive and confrontational collective action. In fact, our theoretical analysis helped us to identify and test this intriguing puzzle within the context of Ukraine, in the immediate aftermath of the introduction of criminal penalties for political dissent. The revealed pattern is important as it suggests that recognizing both between-group and inter-personal variations in people's beliefs about protest (and incorporating the concept of perceived legitimacy of protest in collective action research) can help explain more general processes of choosing tactics from a spectrum of possibilities within a repertoire of contention. It is noteworthy to highlight that the effects of identifying with the street protest were only mediated by the perceptions of protest legitimacy and not by perceiving identity compatibility. Capturing people's perceptions of protest legitimacy is also a way of operationalizing people's engagement with the political opportunity structure, at times of political change and transition. This is much needed for developing a more dynamic theoretical model of the multiple links between identity and politics in constantly changing political environments.

Our findings raise other important questions: whether and under what conditions radicalization (confrontational political action) emerges from activism (non-violent political action)? To what extent do the tactics that one employs depend on political circumstances (e.g., legal criminalisation of dissent) and will variations in perceived legitimacy of protest

produce similar patterns of collective behaviour in both liberal and developing democracies? In other words, if variances in the perception of legitimacy of protest can help explain particular cases, can this conceptual approach generate testable models that hold across contexts? The answers are beyond the scope of this paper, but one factor may be due to the individual perception of political opportunities (e.g., Meyer, 2004) and, therefore, an elaborated conception of perceived legitimacy of protest that considers a broad range of conjunctural and issue-specific factors is recommended for future research.

To sum up, our findings support the idea that the expression of multiple politicized identities—their *agency*—can be understood to a greater extent when considering the political context and the rules of the game in which those identities are endorsed and internalized —that is, the surrounding ideological and political opportunity structure. However, it is important to advance our understanding of how various real or virtual communities, structured around non-contiguous spaces, may trigger confrontational (potentially radicalized) and persuasive collective behaviour. Our models explained the latter to a greater extent, but not the former. Finally, we urge collective action research to continue to operationalize and test how the fluidity of the political opportunity structure affects the emergence of social and political identities, and the relationships of compatibility or opposition between these identities. A more complex framework capturing the diversity and multiplicity of identities (and relationships between them: such as perceived compatibility) as well as their relationship to the political context (the political background of legitimacy) will better equip us to understand and predict the paths to social change.

Limitations

Reflecting on the external validity of our findings, we must exercise caution, due to the cross-sectional nature of our design, sample characteristics, and our use of self-report explicit measures of various politically sensitive issues. Therefore, although we obtained a

large general community sample (in two languages), at a crucial time of the political crisis (shortly after the passing of laws that restricted people's right to protest),we cannot account for the potential selection bias in the sample, or for the powerful effect of 'history' happening at the time of the study. While we do not wish to assume causal links between, for example, perceiving protest as legitimate and engaging in certain types of collective action, we would still like to argue that it is important to capture the variation in people's beliefs about protest in a model predicting collective action. These variations will naturally be in tune with the changes in the political structure, and they are likely to have been particularly relevant for the Ukrainian setting. Further studies at different times in the development of a political crisis, and in contexts with variable degrees of democratization, will strengthen our empirical and theoretical ability to predict collective action.

Secondly, our results support the notion that the perceived compatibility between multiple identities is an independent predictor of collective action in addition to the combined effects of multiple politicized identities. This invites further refinements of the measures of compatibility and the three identification types. We assessed identification with three categories by using two different scales (i.e., item-based for national identification with Ukraine and the IOS pictorial measures for identifications with the online protest community and the street movement). This methodological discrepancy may account for the relative small covariance of these identifications. It is important to monitor how our understanding of the effects of multiple identities on collective action may depend on the measurement type. At the same time, we would note that concerns about ecological validity should prevail over the exclusive reliance on conventional measures. It might have been much more intuitively easy for people to respond with a pictorial measure when thinking about their self-inclusion in communities that were new and emerging at the time of the study. At the same time, when

assessing national identification, the more established measures are perhaps best to assess the depth and strength of people's group attachments.

Lastly, we operationalized perceived compatibility using several questions about the overlap between identity categories (i.e., referring to their ideological content). We did not explicitly measure the specific normative content and normative compatibility of the groups' political agendas. This measure might seem, on one hand, comparatively superficial. On the other hand, its predictive validity indicates that participants responded to these questions with the two communities (online and street protest) in mind. Once more, due to the emerging nature of these group identities and communities of protest, in the midst of the political instability and crisis, a more in-depth measure might have been both impractical and unnecessarily complicated. This leaves room for future research to test whether normative compatibility between multiple politicized identities explains other intergroup behaviours, beyond predicting collective action.

Conclusions

Summing up, we propose that collective action in the 2014 Euromaidan protests can be interpreted as the congruent expression of multiple identities that are rendered ideologically compatible both in online settings and on the street. This study investigated multiple identities that are related to the specific political context of a country in transition to democracy, caught in months-long upheavals and street protests, at a time when online interactions allowed for increased transnational mobilization and involvement in politics. The questions were: how do people negotiate their identities with their country, the online community of protesters and the street movement? Would these identities converge to support a concerted political agenda, thus increasing collective action intentions? Or would they be redundant in capturing people's feelings and engagement with the various groups? In addition, how do these multiple identities relate to the political opportunity structure where

protest itself was classified as illegal by the government, in a country grappling with an emergent democratic culture? We found evidence that the more social groups people "stood for", the more they "fought" for their cause and that identifications predicted both forms of collective action to the degree that people saw the protest and the online movement as compatible with each other and believed protest to be legitimate.

We explained persuasive form of collective action to a greater extent compared to the confrontational form of action. Perhaps, negotiating multiple identities and looking for ideological alignment is a strategy that is more easily employed by those with moderate political agendas. Future research should explore how the dynamics between multiple identities (creating dissonance and lack of compatibility) might be employed to temper engagement in more confrontational or radical political actions.

CHAPTER 5

**POLITICAL SOLIDARITY THROUGH ACTION (AND INACTION):
HOW INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS CHANGED INTRACULTURAL
PERCEPTIONS IN UKRAINE**

This chapter sought to provide an answer to the question of what drives people to engage in political solidarity action with another group presumed to be socially and/or politically oppressed (i.e. Crimean Tatars). I argue that psychologically speaking, the solidarity movement is in part governed by the same social-psychological processes as the movements committed to an ingroup's cause (Chapter 1 – 3, see also van Zomeren et al., 2008). I argue, however, that a crucial psychological mechanism that defines political solidarity as a form of collective action is an individual's tendency to align own aspirational identities to the oppressed group's political loyalties via process of disidentification (i.e., 'they stand against what we stand against, therefore, we are going to protect them').

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Abstract

The present research sought to explain the mechanisms behind rival Ukrainian solidarity campaigns advocating protection of the same minority group – Crimean Tatars in the immediate aftermath of Russia's 2014 annexation of the peninsula. Adapting the social identity model of helping and solidarity, we proposed that political solidarity is a form of collective action in which allies tend to align their aspirational identities to the oppressed group's political loyalties via process of disidentification by distancing themselves from incongruent stereotypes attributed to the ingroup. We proposed and found supportive evidence ($N = 657$) for the notion that both action (facilitation pathway) and inaction (inhibitory pathway) in support of the Crimean Tatars derived from disidentification with powerful supranational forces (the European Union or the Russian Federation-dominated Customs Union) and are mediated by perception of the Crimean Tatars' loyalties towards Russia and Ukraine. The findings provide initial evidence for a new understanding of political mobilization in support for third groups as a group-level emergent phenomenon in the context of identity threat.

Keywords: political solidarity, social identification, disidentification, collective action

Political Solidarity through Action (and Inaction): How International Relations

Changed Intracultural Perceptions in Ukraine

On19 March2014 Russian President Putin signed a declaration of annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation. Crimea had been an autonomous region within Ukraine. This modification of internationally recognized territorial borders provoked strong international criticisms especially from the European Union and the United States of America. Within Ukraine, public opinion was sharply split between supporters and opponents of the annexation of Crimea by Russia, and both sides initiated solidarity campaigns on behalf of the people of Crimea. These solidarity campaigns initially were expressed through peaceful collective action such as fund-raising drives, flash-mobs waving flags and singing anthems, and they rapidly gained a global visibility as two competing social movements within broader Ukrainian society that positioned themselves as rival champions of the rights and aspirations of the Crimean people (e.g., Baczynska, 2014; Mirovalev, 2014). Interestingly, despite their opposite views on the Russian annexation of Crimea, the rival solidarity campaigns advocated the protection of the Crimean Tatars — a minority ethnic group representing 12% of the population of Crimea.

There are of course many instances of solidarity campaigns throughout the world but there are far fewer where competing social movements position themselves as champions of the same minority. This relative novelty and the recent global prominence of the events in Ukraine suggest it is a timely juncture to explore the socio-psychological factors that facilitate and inhibit solidarity action.

Collective action has increasingly been understood in terms of a triangular relationship between the activist group (on behalf of the ingroup) engaged in a power struggle with political opponent (outgroup) seeking to convince and attract the general population (or

another "third party") to support their cause(e.g., Simon &Klandermans,2001). Recent research on solidarity behaviour suggests that it may also be understood as collective action. Thus, solidarity collective action is a form of collective action, where allies act collectively to improve the conditions of another group presumed to be socially and/or politically oppressed (e.g., Glasford & Calcagno, 2012; Saab, Tausch, Spears, & Cheung, 2015; van Zomeren, Postmes, Spears, & Bettache, 2011). The antecedents of such emergent solidarity action (often linked to what is called *ally activism*, see Curtin & McGarty, 2016 for an overview and Curtin, Kende, A., & Kende, J., 2016; Droogendyk, Wright, Lubensky, & Louis, 2016; Russell & Bohan, 2016, for relevant treatments)are fundamental to understanding why relatively powerful groups decide to act on behalf of the powerless. The present research is, thus, designed to contribute to a more systematic understanding of political solidarity as a group-level emergent phenomenon by scrutinizing it in the context of the recent turmoil in Ukraine.

The Antecedents of Political Solidarity Action

Building on self-categorization theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987), Subašic and colleagues (Subašic, Reynolds, & Turner, 2008) proposed a political solidarity model of social change based on the assumption that political solidarity rests on a psychological shift in majority self-categorization that ultimately redefines authority as an out-group and minority as an in-group. More precisely, the model assumes that dynamics of social change is located at the intersection between individual self-categorization processes and the social reality of intergroup relations, in which solidarity captures not only a 'sense of unity in diversity' and a coming together for a common cause, but also that the majority, despite not being directly disadvantaged by the authority's actions or the status quo, comes to embrace the minority's cause as its own. These authors argue that under such conditions, it is more likely that majority starts to question the legitimacy of those in positions of authority,

which increases the ability of protesters to challenge existing relations of domination and achieve social change.

The perception of common fate, through the processes of common ingroup categorization has been argued to be a plausible source of political solidarity. For instance, Glasford and Calcagno (2012) have revealed that a commonality-focused message facilitates political solidarity between minority groups through recategorization, when individuals' perceptions of group boundaries from "us" and "them" transform into a more inclusive "we". Hence, one of the bases for undertaking collective action in political solidarity is the perception of a common fate.

Yet, these models hold in common that the political solidarity is more likely to come into play if people, who are neither direct perpetrators of group-based injustices, nor the direct targets, re-categorize/ redefine ingroup boundaries to the extent they see disadvantaged group as a part of their group ('we-ness'). In this respect, a common fate or, more precisely, a common cause, may refer to current or future social and political outcomes that befall all members in the face of external peril.

Our treatment of the determinants of political solidarity is further guided by Reicher and colleagues' (Reicher, Cassidy, Wolpert, Hopkins, & Levine, 2006) social identity model of helping and solidarity that assumes that individuals' support of third groups follows reasonably from intergroup inclusion (i.e., attitude towards a third group as part of a common ingroup rather than as constituting a separate outgroup), category norms (i.e., help for those in danger is a core aspect of ingroup identity), and category interest (i.e., belief that ingroup will be harmed if a relative third group is persecuted). The core idea in this model is that intentions to act in solidarity are bound up with, and predicated upon, perceptions of common goals, meaning that that those who will receive the support are not "other" but rather are included within the psychological boundaries of the in-group, 'us', and that by offering to

help an oppressed group, allies seek to protect and advance their own political interests. Drawing on the social identity model of helping and solidarity, we argue that a) allies tend to align the perceived political views of oppressed groups to construct an aspirational identity that includes the oppressed group as part of the ingroup (i.e., 'they stand for what we stand, therefore, we are going to protect them') and that b) collective action in political solidarity with an oppressed group is determined largely by allies' attempts to affirm the distinctiveness of their aspirational identity by distancing themselves from incongruent values and negative stereotypes attributed to an ingroup.

We also argue that in order to explain the political acts of support for a cause, we must begin with considering two conceptually distinct yet interrelated notions from the social psychological research. First, the present research suggests that collective action is a dynamic outcome of the aggregated identity-based aspirations, the main engine of both social conflict and social change (McGarty, Bliuc, Thomas, & Bongiorno, 2009). Secondly, we propose that a fuller explanation of political solidarity as a group-level emergent process requires going beyond a traditional route of the social identity approach (i.e., the notion of 'who we are and what we stand for', see e.g., van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008) towards the understanding of antagonistically charged processes of *disidentification* ('who we are not and what we stand against', see Becker &Tausch, 2013). We, thus, attempt to extend Reicher et al.'s (2006) framework (developed in a retrospective qualitative study) by proposing a theoretical model with the hypothesis that a)collective action in support of Crimean Tatars in response to the Russian annexation of Crimea is determined as a dynamic outcome of the ingroup's aspirational identity, that is constructed to a considerable extent through the perceived political alignment of the oppressed group's loyalties (i.e., perception of Crimean Tatars being more loyal towards Russia vs. Ukraine and vice versa), and b) that this political alignment can be explained through the process of ingroup's disidentification from the

supranational geopolitical forces, the European Union and the Russian Federation-dominated

Customs Union, in which Ukraine was enmeshed.

Establishing Political Solidarity Action as Collective Action

One question that emerges is, given the prevailing definitions of collective action (see

Wright, Taylor, & Moghaddam, 1990) as action to improve the conditions of one's own

group, whether political solidarity action qualifies as collective action. Although political

solidarity action may technically fail to meet that definition, treating collective action and

political solidarity action as two forms of the same construct (that we might term socio-

political action) is defensible where both can be shown to be driven by the same factors.

Recent theory and research have advanced understanding of solidarity action by

proposing independent explanatory and predictive pathways. Saab and colleagues (Saab et

al., 2015) have coined the term 'solidarity-based collective action' to point to a specific

collective action taken by outsiders or third-party publics – individuals, who are neither the

'direct perpetrators of group-based injustices, nor the direct targets' (p. 1). By emphasizing

the synthesis of collective efficacy and emotional reactions to perceived injustice, these

authors have proposed the model with dual distinct pathways. According to this approach, the

first route rests on two types of efficacy: the perceived political efficacy of collective action

(i.e., efficacy at achieving social change) and identity consolidation efficacy (i.e., efficacy of

collective action at affirming, confirming, and strengthening the identity of the protesting

group).

The second route to solidarity-based collective action entails emotional reactions to

perceived injustice such as sympathy, seen as a response to a disadvantaged outgroup's

suffering which involves feeling compassion for them (see also Harth, Kessler, & Leach,

2008; Thomas, McGarty, & Mavor, 2009) and moral outrage, conceptualized as anger

experienced regarding an injustice suffered by an outgroup and characterized by blaming a

third party such as an authority, rather than the ingroup (see also Leach, Snider, & Iyer, 2002; Thomas & McGarty, 2009). In this model, perceived injustice (regarding policies of authorities) determined solidarity-based collective action tendencies indirectly via both moral outrage and sympathy.

This approach helps to specify measurement criteria for our study. If solidarity action is (functionally)collective action then solidarity action should be predicted by the same factors that have been isolated in numerous studies as the drivers of collective action. As specified in the SIMCA model of van Zomeren et al (2008) these factors are social identification, group efficacy, and a sense of grievance. This set of factors (that Duncan, 2012, interprets as *group consciousness*, for empirical tests see Bliuc et al., 2015; Thomas et al., in press) also appear in the EMSICA model (see Fattori, Pozzi, Marzana, & Mannarini, 2015; Thomas, Mavor, & McGarty, 2012).

Study Background

In the period between November 2013 to May 2014 Ukraine, an Eastern European country of 46 million that was part of the former Soviet Union, has transited from a series of internal political disputes to becoming a pivotal arena in a significant geopolitical conflict (Soldak, 2014).Different sets of Ukrainian citizens have sought closer ties with either the nations of the European Union (EU) or with the Russian Federation-dominated Customs Union (CU). During this time Ukraine was embroiled in a series of political and military conflicts starting with the Euromaidan revolution beginning in November 2013 – an uprising against the Ukrainian national government's resistance to closer ties with Western Europe– to the subsequent Russian invasion and annexation of Crimea (Grant, 2015; Yuhas & Jalabi, 2014) through to an ongoing civil war that continues to the time of writing.

The multi-ethnic region of Crimea became the center of an acute international dispute when Russian military forces occupied the region in March 2014. The State Duma of the

Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation claimed to restore 'historic and legal justice' by reversing the decision to transfer the region to the Ukrainian Republic in 1954. In turn the United Nations General Assembly rejected the unauthorized invasion and violation of the internationally recognized borders (Ostrov, 2015; United Nations, 2014). Tensions continued to escalate within Ukrainian society as an ideological gulf developed between supporters of close ties with (chiefly Western) Europe and supporters of closer ties with the Russian-led CU.

While the annexation of any part of a sovereign nation is likely to have repercussions, the tensions that have arisen over the fate of the region's main ethnic minority group, the Crimean Tatars, attract particular attention. Crimean Tatars tended to occupy lower socio-economic status positions in Ukrainian society and have been subject to periods of historical discrimination both in modern Ukraine and in the preceding Soviet Union and Russian Empire (Malyarenko & Galbreath, 2013).

Whereas ethnic Russians and Ukrainians living in the peninsula were widely expected by Ukrainians to have ethnically aligned loyalties so that ethnic Ukrainians were expected to oppose annexation and ethnic Russians to support it(the validity of this widespread assumption is questionable but it is beyond the scope of this paper), Crimean Tatars' views were less widely known. This allowed supporters and opponents of annexation to place competing constructions on the position of Crimean Tartars. Thus, it was possible for both supporters and opponents of annexation to position their policies as protecting the interests of Crimean Tartars. For instance, Zaur Smirnov, who following the annexation was appointed to the position of the head of Crimea's committee on inter-ethnic relations by President Putin, said he was convinced that 'Russia's annexation of Crimea is good news for the Crimean Tatars', indicating that approximately70% of those people were in favour of joining Russia (Walker, 2015). Speaking at the first World Conference on Indigenous Peoples in New York,

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Klimkin said that Ukraine stands firmly by 'those suffering from aggressions, annexations and the ideology of hate', making the clear point that the Crimean Tatars are 'part of Ukraine' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, 2014).

However, because Ukrainian national identity has, ever since the collapse of the Soviet Union, been defined in civil rather than ethnic terms (Prizel, 1998), the idea of protecting or supporting the Crimean Tartars invited a realignment or redefinition of Ukrainian national identity that could support two opposing positions. One position was that the Russian annexation should be opposed because it denied self-determination to the Crimean Tatars who wished to maintain their membership in the Ukrainian state. The opposing position was that the Russian annexation should be supported to protect the Crimean Tatar minority from their ethnic Ukrainian oppressors and the turmoil of the fractured Ukrainian state.

Returning to our analysis of political solidarity: if the social re-categorization approach being suggested here is correct, we would expect to find that, in the face of Russia's annexation of Crimea, Ukrainians would express their support for Crimean Tatars by reconstructing boundaries of the Ukrainian national identity. We would expect Ukrainians to support solidarity collective action ('to rescue the Crimean Tatars) to the extent they perceive their identity-based aspirations to be common with those of the oppressed minority (see also 'togetherness' or 'shared grievances', Drury, Cocking, & Reicher, 2009; Simon & Klandermans, 2001). Additionally, we would expect group-based experience of injustice towards the oppressed minority and collective political efficacy to be predictive of political solidarity (similarly as they predict collective action for in-group's cause, see van Zomeren et al., 2008), but through the independent, direct path.

Study Aims

The present study tests a hypothesized theoretical model of identity-driven political solidarity that proposes that a) both action and inaction are dynamic outcome of the ingroup's aspirational identity, that is constructed to a considerable extent through perceived political alignment with the third group's loyalties and b) that this political alignment can be explained negatively through the process of the ingroup's disidentification from other forces. We expected to show that committed collective action in support of Crimea Tatars' cause is an expression of Ukrainian national identity in a similar way as found Reicher et al. (2006), where majority group members (i.e., Bulgarian opinion leaders) expressed their support for the minority group (Bulgarian Jews) by reconstructing boundaries of the national identity, in the face of the threat to the Jews from Nazi Germany. We thus expect that both action (the facilitatory pathway) and inaction (inhibitory pathway) depend on the way allies align their vision of Crimean Tatars' loyalties (i.e., the perception of Crimean Tatars being more loyal towards Russia vs. Ukraine and vice versa) as a consequence of disidentification from the supranational actors EU and CU.

In particular, we expect that the more Ukrainians strongly oppose Russian Federation policies (disidentification with the CU), the more likely they will be to perceive Crimean Tatars as loyal to Ukraine and, therefore, will support collective action to rescue Crimean Tatars from the annexation (facilitation pathway). We also expect that the more Ukrainians oppose connections to Western Europe (disidentification with the EU), the more likely they will be to perceive Crimean Tatars as loyal to Russia and, as such, will refrain from acting because they will not see the necessity to rescue them (inhibitory pathway).

The idea that people will use perceived political alignment of third parties to construct their aspirational identity and will then express their own identity-based interests to rescue the oppressed group may seem counter-intuitive because research suggests that pro-social

behaviour (e.g., intergroup solidarity) builds upon a sense of inclusive victimhood (e.g., Vollhardt, Nair, &Tropp, 2016) and emotional reactions to injustices such as sympathy (e.g., Saab et al., 2015). We, however, suggest that political solidarity may be explained through the expression of political aspirations, wherein the majority group members intentionally link to the third group's cause to defend and/or promote their own political interests. Our thinking here is in line with Subašic et al. (2008), who define political solidarity as 'a strategy for achieving social change', in that we attempt to explain the process by which the ingroup translates its identity-based aspirations.

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants were approached through a public online survey posted to the social networks pages (e.g., Facebook) that were generally discussing political events in Ukraine. The data were collected between March 28 and May 11, 2014, at the time of large protests in Ukraine in response to the Crimean cause. The questions of the survey focused on socio-demographics and attitudes toward current political issues and inter-group relations. Items were presented in Ukrainian and Russian. In order to guarantee coherence and validity of the questions, all items were translated from English to Ukrainian / Russian and back using a standard translation-back-translation procedure (Brislin, 1970).Participants were required to be of the Ukrainian nationality and aged over 18.

In total, the responses from 1033 participants were used in the data analysis. The sample ranged in age from 17 to 77 (M=33.87 years, SD = 9.61) and comprised 53.4 % women. Participants were highly educated (57.6 % having graduated from university), 44.9 % were full time employed, and 57 % indicated Ukrainian as their first language.

Measures

Socio-demographics. Participants indicated age, gender, ethnicity, country of birth, location in Ukraine (e.g., Eastern Ukraine, Crimea) where they spent most part of their lives, current residence, prior experience of living abroad, educational level, employment status and mother tongue (i.e., Ukrainian, Russian, other).

Identification with Ukraine. Six items from Leach et al. (2008) were used to measure identification with Ukraine. These and other measures below used five point Likert scales labelled from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). These items captured Leach and colleague's (2008) centrality ("I often think about the fact that I am a part of Ukrainians", "Being Ukrainian is an important part of how I see myself"), satisfaction (e.g., "I am glad to be part of Ukrainians", "I think that people in Ukraine have a lot to be proud of"), and solidarity (e.g., "I feel solidarity with people in Ukraine", "I feel committed to a people from Ukraine") components of identity, that are considered to be particularly important for predicting collective political action. The items were averaged to composite identification with Ukraine (Cronbach's alpha (α) =.95).

Disidentification from the European Union and the Russian-led Customs Union. To assess disidentification from the EU and the CU we used six items from Becker and Tausch (2013) for each category respectively. Items were designed to capture three components of disidentification, namely detachment (e.g., "I feel a distance between myself and EU/CU"), dissatisfaction (e.g., "I would regret that I belong to EU/CU"), and dissimilarity (e.g., "I have nothing in common with most members of EU/CU"). We averaged six items for each category to composite opinion-based from the EU (α=.78) and the CU (α=.91).

Perceived Illegitimacy of Russia's Foreign Policy in Crimea. Seven items were used to assess participants' perceptions of the legitimacy of the referendum on Crimea status (e.g., "Having the referendum in Crimea was against the Constitution of Ukraine", "Russian invasion of Crimea is a legitimate peacekeeping campaign", reversed), α = .84.

Collective Political Efficacy. Four items were used to assess participants' perceptions of the ability of a collective group to affect the political decisions over Crimea's status (e.g., "I think that people in Ukraine can defend their rights over Crimea", "Ukrainians as a nation can change a lot"), $\alpha = .83$.

Perceived Loyalties of Crimean Tatars. For the purposes of the current study, instructions were developed to mirror participants' perceptions of the Crimean Tatars' future aspirations in the negotiation for intergroup power and status, but most importantly to accommodate their polar and contested political aspirations. Participants were asked to indicate how many Crimean Tatars they think feel closer to a) Ukraine than to Russia and b) to Russia than to Ukraine, $r = -.22$, $p < .001$. Responses were given on a scale that ranged from 0% to 100%. By increasing the number of response categories we sought to reduce the probability of singularity, which frequently occurs in the web-survey studies, and, accordingly to approach normal distribution, a crucial assumption of most correlation based methods (Treiblmaier & Filzmoser, 2011).

Political solidarity action. To measure willingness to engage in collective action, participants indicated how much they agreed or disagreed with the following statements: 'to do anything to protect the Crimean Tatars' interests', 'to join the Self-defence forces of Crimea', 'to support Ukrainian mobilization against the annexation of Crimea', 'to fight against threat to territorial integrity of Ukraine', 'to demand re-election of Crimea's parliament', 'to fight other people if it means to protect 'my people', $\alpha = .73$.

Results

Preliminary Analysis: Is Solidarity Action Collective Action?

Data screening was performed to ensure there were no violations of the assumptions. The descriptive statistics, Cronbach's α of the main study variables and bivariate correlational analysis are presented in Table 5.1. There were moderate to high correlations between the

SIMCA/EMSICA predictors (i.e., Duncan's, 2012, indicators of group consciousness) and commitment to take collective action on behalf of Crimean Tatars. That said though, there was a clear tone to the results. Solidarity action was more likely to be associated with views consistent with opposition to Russia's action in Crimea, a matter we return to in the Discussion.

As the causal order of the predictors is not a concern here (SIMCA vs. EMSICA) we performed an ordinary least multiple regression analysis to assess the power of the three indicators of group consciousness to predict collective action. The results revealed that efficacy ($\beta = .42$), perceived illegitimacy ($\beta = .12$) and Ukrainian national identification ($\beta = .14$) predicted intentions to take action in solidarity with the Crimean Tatars' cause (all $p < .001$, with adjusted $R^2 = .32$, $F (3, 971) = 154.73$. These findings resonate with past evidence for the causal role of efficacy and injustice in predicting collective action tendencies (e.g., van Zomeren, Spears, Fischer, & Leach, 2004; Wright, et al., 1990) and indicate that political solidarity action can be treated as collective action.

Table 5.1

Correlations, Descriptive Statistics and Reliability for All the Considered Variables (N =657)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	*M*	*SD*	*Alpha*
1. Identification with Ukraine	--	-.08**	.30**	.48**	.46**	.20**	-.18**	.39**	4.49	.97	.95
2. Disidentification from the EU		--	-.09**	-.18**	-.15**	-.18**	.20**	-.18**	1.72	.67	.78
3. Disidentification from the CU			--	.37**	.32**	.17**	-.19**	.29**	3.76	1.10	.91
4. PI of Russia's Foreign Policy in Crimea				--	.44**	.36**	-.35**	.40**	4.73	.72	.84
5. Collective Political Efficacy					--	.28**	-.16**	.56**	3.65	.97	.83
6. PL of Crimean Tatars towards Ukraine						--	-.22**	.28**	86.29	17.24	//
7. PL of Crimean Tatars towards Russia							--	-.19**	15.57	23.63	//
8. Political Solidarity Action								--	3.56	.82	.73

Note. PI = Perceived Illegitimacy, PL = Perceived Loyalties, ** *p*< .001.

Main Analyses: Predictors of Identity-driven Political Solidarity

To test our main model that disidentification with external forces drives support for political solidarity action through differing ascribed loyalties for the Crimean Tatars, we conducted mediation analysis using the MEDIATE macro (Hayes, 2013; Preacher & Hayes, 2004). This analysis estimates the direct, indirect effect, standard errors and confidence intervals. Non-parametric bootstrapping with 5000 resamples was used to establish 95% confidence intervals for indirect effects. The results are shown in Figure 5.1. There were two significant indirect effects on political solidarity action with Crimean Tatars for each of the disidentification variables. Disidentification with the CU was positively related to solidarity action through perceived loyalty of the Crimean Tatars to Ukraine, β= .023, SE = 0.009, 95% CI = .009, .044, and it was negatively related to solidarity action through perceived Crimean Tatar loyalty to Russia, β = -0.31, SE = 0.014, 95% CI = -.067, -.009. Conversely, disidentification with the EU was negatively related to solidarity action through perceived loyalty of the Crimean Tatars to Ukraine, β =-.015, SE = .009, 95% CI = -.036, -.001, and it was positively related to solidarity action through perceived Crimean Tatar loyalty to Russia, β =.006, SE = .004, 95% CI = .001, .019.There was, however, a clear divergence in the pathways in that the direct effect of perceived Crimean Tatars' loyalty with Russia was not a significant predictor ($p<$ .08) of solidarity action when the other predictors were in the model.

$R^2 = .064$

Disidentification CU

3.036 ***

Crimean Tatars' Perceived Loyalties towards Ukraine

-2.299 **

.007 ***

$R^2 = .117$

.093 ***

Political Solidarity

-4.077 ***

-.139 ***

Disidentification EU

Crimean Tatars' Perceived Loyalties towards Russia

-.003 (p = .08)

5.404 ***

$R^2 = .064$
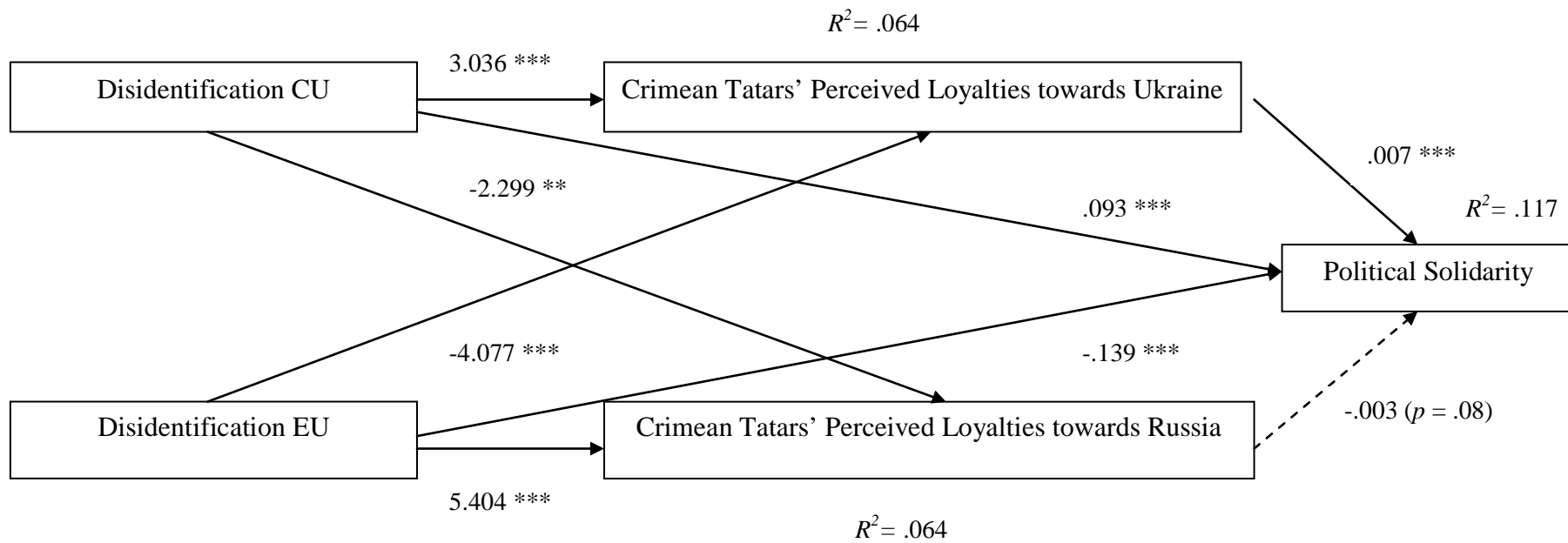
Figure 5.1.Mediation analysis: Effects of disidentification with CU and EU, and perceived loyalties of Crimean Tatars' towards Russia and Ukraine on political solidarity action. Note. The non-significant path is shown as broken arrow ($N = 657$)

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Discussion

In general, these findings confirm our hypotheses regarding the process underlying political solidarity action. We found evidence consistent with the proposal that the perceived loyalties of Crimea Tatars functioned as mediators in the relationship between disidentification with external groupings and political solidarity action. This adds to the literature on collective action by pointing to the oppositional nature of social movement formation. Social movements, even those that form in support of a group, may have their roots in the desire for separation from another political entity (a third or even fourth party).

Clearly though, political solidarity action had an anti-Russian tone. This is not surprising as the time of the data collection was soon after the annexation and supporters of that annexation may have believed that Crimean Tatars' interests were being protected by Russia. That said, the anti-EU position was associated with lower levels of action. Put another way, anti-EU sympathies appeared to inhibit rather than facilitate action.

Our findings reinforce the credibility of the theoretical framework derived from Reicher and colleagues' (2006) analysis and extend collective action literature by identifying social psychological mechanisms associated with grassroots political solidarity. The data confirmed the central hypotheses of the model and provided empirical evidence of the 'real-world' social psychological responses to external political intervention in a particular intra-cultural conflict.

Similar to the argument regarding the relation between intergroup inclusion and intended mobilization (Reicher et al., 2006) we found that people, who actively opposed Ukraine's integration with the Russia-led Customs Union, were likely to perceive Crimean Tatars' as loyal to Ukraine rather than Russia ('they are a part of us and thus we must protect them'). Consequently, people who were more likely to reject integration with the European Union were found to perceive Crimean Tatars as being more loyal to Russia as opposed to

Ukraine. Arguably, such perception requires a certain level of ingroup projection, that is, the tendency to use ingroup instead of outgroup characteristics to define an inclusive category.

Although research has advanced the understanding of socio-psychological conditions, under which such an intergroup inclusion occurs (e.g., Levine, Prosser, Evans, & Reicher, 2005; Wenzel, Mummendey, Weber, & Waldzus, 2003), the relationship between extending group boundaries, identity content and intergroup behaviour requires a further examination. We suggest to further look at processes of disidentification as important channels of redefining the ingroup position in the social world, especially when it comes to understanding a more complex intergroup situation. Social psychological understanding of identity categories tended to focus more on intra-group homogeneity and similarity, at the expense of the equally strategic processes of increasing inter-group differentiation and maximizing the cultural and political "distances" from relevant outgroup agents.

Moreover, the study also revealed that commitment to collective action in solidarity with the third group is based primarily on the expression of in-group's political aspirations, rather than the perceptions of what the third group's political loyalties would be. There is extensive research on pro-social behaviour and outgroup helping suggesting that category constructions can affect intentions to take committed action in solidarity when the minority outgroup does not threaten in-group's symbolic values (e.g., Abrams & Hogg, 1990; Dovidio, Gaertner, & Saguy, 2008; Haslam, Reicher, & Levine, 2011).

We made a step further by suggesting that political solidarity is a group-level emergent process in which individuals tend to use presumed political alignment of oppressed groups to construct aspirational identity of ingroup (i.e., 'they stand for what we stand, therefore, we are going to protect them').Thus, we suggest that individuals and groups seek to rationally maximize their own political interests, rather than act altruistically "in favour" of the third group. Importantly, as research in collective action has outlined (e.g., Tarrow, 1998),

when members of the silent majority express their concerns on behalf of a minority group, the authorities are more likely to pay attention to the minority cause (Simon & Klandermans, 2001). We turn this around, suggesting that in a polarized situation, where the "majority" is split in different factions, third outgroups will be used strategically to attract attention of authorities and external agents to the respective ingroup goals. The majority group factions are likely to use third outgroups to tilt the moral and political leverage in their favour. Thus, our contribution to the literature is pointing to the importance of expanding the dyadic analysis of intergroup relationships (ingroup versus outgroups), to account for the larger complexity of "real-world" political contexts. Relating to third outgroups and engaging on behalf of their political struggle is not necessarily the expression of altruistic concerns. It is also not entirely a 'cold' calculation of political advantage ("using third outgroups for ingroup goals"). There is an important social psychological mediation that has to do with people's ability to create and redefine identity categories. People perceive the world, and the orientation of specific third outgroups, through the lens of their own chosen group identity. Through this reconstruction of one's own identity that aligns the third outgroup's orientation to the in-group's cultural and political orientation, ingroup members will commit to collective action on behalf of that group (as an expression of their "newly redefined" identity).

Limitations

Although we obtained a large general community sample (in two languages) very shortly after the annexation, these strengths should not blinker us to some limitations in our study. First, the survey was a single shot cross-sectional design without random sampling. Our ability to infer cause or assess prevalence of phenomena from such a design are limited.

Second although the results did show strong support for the facilitatory pathway cautionary note here is that the stronger support may reflect the sampling. More anti-CU

participants volunteered for the study and therefore the power may have been greater to detect effects related to that response profile.

Third and finally, in this form of survey research it is difficult to gauge the authenticity of these politically charged responses. In particular, we do not know whether both solidarity campaigns are equally sincere in relation both to judging and wishing to support Crimean Tatars, but we suspect that there were elements of realpolitik in the thinking behind both campaigns.

Conclusion

We have proposed explanatory models of how ingroups relate their political concerns to third groups via processes of identification and disidentification as well as collective action, thus indicating why and how we could mobilize people's support for groups that are positioned more remotely from the immediate inter-group situation. Our study is an illustration of how intra-group polarization (between two factions of the Ukrainian population) is related to external political actors (EU and CU) and associated with a particular pattern of inter-group attitudes and collective action intentions on behalf of another group (vis-à-vis the third group of Crimean Tatars).The result suggests that collective political action and inaction are often *about* social categories (i.e., subjective perception of content and boundaries) not merely *between* them (Bliuc et al., 2012).

We trust that similar analyses of multiple group contexts could be employed to explain how we can garner support for groups that may not be easily constructed as "ingroup", but whose plight might be more readily endorsed by identifying a common "enemy". For example, Europeans might not be inclined to see the similarities with Syrian refugees from a religious or cultural point of view, but politically, many Europeans, and much of Syrian society, are opposed to the Islamic State terrorist group and the current Syrian government. Understanding the content of political identities to include allegiances to

particular political projects or the rejection of other projects may lead to a more

comprehensive analysis of political activism, in a world where "traditional" ethnic or

religious group memberships, and the essentialization of these categories seems to accentuate

conflicts and discrimination, rather than promote solidarity and cohesion.

CHAPTER 6

UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF ATTRIBUTIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY IN SOCIAL JUSTIFICATION OF INGROUP COLLECTIVE ACTION

This chapter sought to provide an answer to the question: "How do people explain the legality and morality of their own collective behaviour when evaluating the political outcomes of ingroup activism?". I examine whether individuals with limited perceptions of group efficacy to achieve a particular social change will be likely to attribute responsibility for negative outcomes to powerful outgroups through the endorsement of conspiracy beliefs. I also investigate whether such an attributional tendency will be associated with the perception of ingroup collective behaviour as moral and legal.

A modified version of this chapter was adapted from a manuscript in preparation to be submitted for publication in June 2017.

Chayinska, M., & Minescu, A. (2017). 'They've Conspired against Us': Understandings the Role of Attributions of Responsibility in Social Justification of Ingroup's Collective Action. *Manuscript in preparation*.

Abstract

We argue that individuals with limited perceptions of group efficacy to achieve a particular social change will discount their own role in producing negative political outcomes by attributing responsibility to conspiracies against them as a social group. Such an endorsement of conspiracy beliefs will be associated with perception of ingroup collective behaviour as moral and legal. Hypotheses were tested in the context of political activism in Ukraine, three years after the 2014 Euromaidan revolution. We found ($N = 314$) that the more people perceived the consequences of collective efforts in stopping Crimea's annexation as ineffective the more they would be likely to blame conspiracies against them as a social group than themselves. This mediation was not significant for the perceived efficacy in changing the Yanukovych regime, deemed to be a positive outcome of Euromaidan protests. Implications for social attribution theory are discussed.

Key words: conspiracy beliefs, attribution of responsibility, collective action, social identification

'They've Conspired against Us': Understanding the Role of Attributions of Responsibility in

Social Justification of Ingroup Collective Action

Research on attributions of social responsibility has advanced our understanding of when and how groups are praised or blamed for their conduct (e.g., Coleman, 2013; Hewstone, 1990; Rudolph, Roesch, Greitemeyer, & Weiner, 2004). Very little attention, however, has focused on how individuals' explanations for the misfortunes of their ingroup relate to beliefs in conspiracies by an outgroup against ingroup, and social justification of collective behaviour against the outgroup. Given that the spiral of conflict typically involves the appraisals of ingroup's actions as moral and legitimate, the motives attributed to outgroups takes on particular psychological relevance as Kennedy and Pronin, (2012) observe. We argue here that individuals' beliefs in conspiracies against their groups, and particularly blaming a political system— coupled with the tendency to justify own collective behaviour, may help both to initiate conflict and prevent its resolution. An understanding of the processes behind attributional tendencies and social justice may help finding solutions to political issues and encourage sustainable peace-building.

The present research is designed to extend and complement the research on social attribution and intergroup behaviour by answering the question: how do people explain political outcomes of their group's collective action? We report the data from a public opinion survey, collected in war-torn Ukraine three years after the 2014 Euromaidan revolution.More specifically, we investigate the conditions under which individuals blame conspiracies against them as group and how this process affects perception of morality and legality of ingroup's collective action.

Social attribution theory (e.g., Hewstone, 1989; Kelley, 1973) provides a relevant conceptual framework that can be used to formulate assumptions designed to untangle the

intricate nature of current political conflict in Ukraine. This theory suggests that there is the tendency of explaining (attributing social responsibility for) certain events in a way that favours members of an in-group and derogates members of an out-group. More specifically, the attributional bias has been conceptualised using the dimensions (i.e., external and internal) of locus such that in the case of observing an ingroup's collective behaviour, negative outcomes are attributed to external circumstances or causes and positive outcomes are attributed to internal (i.e., dispositional) characteristics of individuals as a social group (e.g., collective political efficacy, see for an overview van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008).

Based on the social attribution theory, we contend that in the context of intergroup struggle over realistic and/or material resources, beliefs in conspiracies serve an important psychological function for individuals. First, we propose that individuals with situationally limited perceptions of their ingroup's efficacy to achieve a particular social change will discount their own role in producing undesirable political outcomes by attributing responsibility to conspiracies against them as a social group.

A second issue addressed in the present research is the extent to which conspiracy beliefs, defined as an underlying worldview in which events, processes and circumstances are associated with particular interests of shadow beneficiaries, will affect social justification of the ingroup collective behaviour in the context of intergroup conflict. In particular, drawing on the notion that beliefs in conspiracy theories serve protecting self-esteem (e.g., Cichocka, et al., 2016; van Prooijen & Jostmann, 2013), we suggest that to the extent that conspiracies against an ingroup's cause are perceived to be a source of group predicament, individuals will be more likely to see their own collective action as moral and just. Finally, in line with the social identity theory (e.g., Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1999; Tajfel & Turner, 1979), we contend that it is important to account for the situational salience of group identities such that

it tends to guide individuals' thoughts and behaviors, especially when the group to which one feels committed, faces threat. In the present study, we conduct correlational and regression analyses to examine how one's social identification with the supporters of the movement (as opposed to identification with its opponents) will relate to respondents' tendency to endorse conspiracy beliefs and, in turn, how these measures will predict evaluation of collective action as moral and legal.We then move on to examining the extent to which one's tendency to attribute responsibility to negative outcomes to the political authorities through the endorsement of conspiracy beliefs will mediate the relationship between perceived efficacy of collective action and evaluation of group collective behaviour as moral and legal.

Why Do People Subscribe to Conspiracy Beliefs When They Fail to Achieve a Social Change Goal?

One possible answer is that beliefs in conspiracy theories satisfy crucial psychological needs, allowing people to make sense of particularly complex and distressing societal events (Hofstadter, 1966; van Prooijen, 2012) and of one's marginalized social condition (Mashuri & Zaduqisti, 2015; Thorburn & Bogart, 2005), avoid feelings of uncertainty and existential anxiety (van Prooijen & Jostmann, 2013; Newheiser, Farias & Tausch, 2011; Shermer, 2011; Whitson, Galinsky, & Kay, 2015), address feelings of anomie and powerlessness (Abalakina-Paap, Stephan, Craig, & Gregory, 1999; Goertzel, 1994; van Prooijen & Acker, 2015), identify specific enemies as responsible for a threatening event (Kofta & Sedek, 2005; Sullivan, Landau, & Rothschild, 2010), direct anger towards those enemies (Swami, Chamorro-Premuzic, & Furnham, 2009),protect the image of the ingroup and offer alternative, self-empowering understandings of social reality (Cichocka, Marchlewska, & Golec de Zavala & Olechowski, 2016;Sapountzis, & Condor, 2013), and, paradoxically, justify system when its legitimacy is under threat (Jolley, Sutton, & Douglas, 2017).

At an intergroup level, believing in conspiracy theories may involve social attribution of responsibility for the undesirable outcomes of one's collective action to influential political actors, who are perceived to have sufficient resources to control, determine and manage the development of a group's cause. Therefore, there are grounds to predict that individuals with situationally limited perceptions of ingroup's efficacy to achieve a particular social change will discount their own role in producing undesirable political outcomes by attributing responsibility to conspiracies against them as a social group. However, to our knowledge little research has directly examined these predictions (for an overview, see Sapountzis & Condor, 2013).

Does Attributing Negative Outcomes to Conspiracies against Ingroup Affect Perception of Ingroup's Collective Action as Moral and Legal?

Just as a locus of attribution depends substantially on one's group membership, intentions, and understanding of a specific event (e.g., Hilton, 1995; Hilton & Slugoski, 1986; Jaspars, Hewstone, & Fincham, 1983), so too does the tendency to evaluate behaviour of ingroup and outgroup, especially in the context of intergroup conflict. Recent investigations into morality (e.g., Brambilla, Sacchi, Pagliaro, & Ellemers, 2013; de Hooge, Nelissen, Breugelmans, & Zeelenberg, 2011; Haidt & Graham, 2007; Gausel, Leach, Vignoles, & Brown, 2012) and legitimacy (e.g., Leidner, Castano, Zaiser, & Giner-Sorolla, 2010; Lerner, & Clayton, 2011; Skitka & Mullen, 2002) suggest that social identification processes are a key aspect of social judgments. More specifically, morality- and legitimacy-based evaluations of group behaviour have been conceptualised as secondary or derivative to instrumental considerations of members of social groups. For individuals with high self-investment such evaluation typically serve to maintain (or restore) a positive group identity and moral image (Ellemers, Pagliaro, Barreto, & Leach, 2008; Leach, Ellemers, & Barreto, 2007), especially when they need to justify collective acts of transgression (Shepherd, Spears, & Manstead,

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2013) or defend their group's wrongdoings (e.g., Castano & Ginner-Sorolla, 2006;Mashuri, van Leeuwen, & Hanurawan, 2016).

In line with the social attribution theory, Crocker and Major (1989; see also Major, Quinton, & Schmader, 2003) have speculated that the tendency of attributing undesirable outcomes to external factors (e.g., blatant prejudice against ingroup) may offer protective benefits to one's self-esteem, shifting the blame from more internal causes such as a lack of ability. In this research, we extended this notion by predicting that in the context of intergroup conflict, social justification of ingroup's behaviour is apt to be the relative degree to which individuals blame undesirable political outcomes on conspiracies against them as a social group.

Study Aims

The present research tests the hypotheses derived from social attribution theory (e.g., Hewstone, 1989; Kelley, 1973) that individuals are more likely to assign responsibility fornegative events to outgroup than to ingroup actors, and that such conspiracy beliefs are less likely to occur when the outcomes of ingroup collective action are perceived to be positive. Our research aims to extend social psychological thinking on attribution tendencies in three ways.

First, we argue that conspiracy beliefs serve as an adaptive coping mechanism through which people tend to attribute responsibility for negative outcomes of collective behaviours to powerful outgroups. Thus, we suggest that the perception of ingroup collective action as ineffective will be more likely to evoke the endorsement of conspiracy beliefs, that is, tendency to attribute responsibility for negative outcomes of own actions to powerful outgroups (e.g., political authorities) who are believed to hold conspiracies against them as a group. Conversely, when people perceive their collective efforts to attain social change as effective, they will be less likely to endorse conspiracy beliefs.

Secondly, in line with the previous research (e.g., Cichocka, et al., 2016; van Prooijen & Jostmann, 2013), we propose that the endorsement of conspiracy beliefs may allow people to explain distressing outcomes of own collective efforts to attain social change by protecting the image of the ingroup. We aim to show that in case when collective action towards a certain social change goal (i.e., stopping Crimea's annexation) is perceived as ineffective, people will be more likely to blame the powerful outgroup in conspiracies against them, and, such an attributional tendency will, in turn, affect one's evaluation of ingroup collective behaviour as moral and legal. Accordingly, we suggest that when people perceive their collective action towards a certain social change goal (i.e., changing the Yanukovych regime) as effective, the mechanism of attributing responsibility through conspiracies will not occur, and thus, the mediation path from the perceived legitimacy to the evaluation of ingroup collective behaviour as more moral and legal, will be non-significant.

Finally, we propose that social identification with the supporters of the movement (as opposed to identification with its opponents) in terms of the degree to which people see themselves as group members, will relate to respondents' tendency to endorse conspiracy beliefs and, in turn, how these measures will predict evaluation of collective action as moral and legal. We test these hypotheses in the context of political activism in Ukraine.

Study Background

In 2017, three years after the 2014 Euromaidan revolution, Ukraine is a long way away from political stability after suffering a violent change of the governance system, an annexation of a part of its territory in Crimea by a vastly bigger and more powerful neighbor, and due to the hostilities in conflict-affected Eastern provinces, that continue to the time of writing. In addition, slow reforms and high corruption rate open the door for rising public discontent and frustration within Ukraine (Holcomb, Conlon, & Hryckowian, 2016; Khylko

& Tytarchuk, 2017). This social-political situation provides an opportunity of testing our hypotheses in the real world intergroup setting and under real world political demands.

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants were recruited using snowball convenience sampling. The data were collected between March 30 and April 21, 2017, three years after the Russian Federation annexed Ukraine's peninsula of Crimea. The questions of the survey focused on socio-demographics and attitudes toward current political issues. The items were available in Ukrainian. In order to guarantee coherence and validity of the questions, all items were translated from English to Ukrainian and back using a standard translation-back-translation procedure (Brislin, 1970). Participants were required to be of the Ukrainian nationality and aged over 18.

In total, the responses from 314 participants were used in the data analysis. The sample ranged in age from 18 to 76 (*M* age 20.85 years, *SD* = 12.89) and comprised 54.8 % women. Participants were highly educated (45.8 % having graduated from university), 55.9 % were employed full time, and 65.4 % indicated Ukrainian as their first language. Some 77 % reported that they completed this survey while in Ukraine, 23.1 % - while living abroad.

Measures

Socio-demographics. Participants indicated age, gender, current residence, educational level, employment status and mother tongue (i.e., Ukrainian, Russian, other).

Supporter of the Euromaidan. We assessed the extent to which participants identified themselves as a 'supporter', 'participant', 'typical member', and 'activist' of the Euromaidan movement; 1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*, α =.78.

Opponent of the Euromaidan. We assessed the extent to which participants identified themselves as an 'opponent', and 'antagonist of the Euromaidan movement; 1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree,* α =.85.

Perceived Efficacy in Changing Yanukovych's Regime. To measure participants' perception of ingroup efficacy in influencing the ex-President's decision to flee Ukraine, we asked 'Overall, how effective, you think, were protesters in changing Yanukovych's regime?' and 'How much do you think protesters achieved their goal to make ex-president step back?'; 1 = *not at all effective*, 5 = *very effective,* α =.81.

Perceived Efficacy in Crimea's Cause. To measure participants' perception of ingroup efficacy in anti-annexation protests, we asked 'Overall, how effective, you think, were protesters in stopping Crimea's annexation?' and 'How much do you think protesters achieved their goal to restore Ukraine's sovereignty through averting Crimea's secession?'; 1 = *not at all effective*, 5 = *very effective,* α =.71.

Blame on Protesters. To assess attribution of responsibility to social protesters, respondents were asked to rate the following statements: 'It is not protesters' fault the social movement on Crimea have not achieved its main goal' (reverse coded) and 'Protesters are to blame for not being effective enough to stop Crimea's annexation'; 1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree,* α =.64.

Crimea-related Conspiracies. To assess attribution of responsibility to an influential political group, respondents were asked to rate the following statements: 'There is an influential secretive group that has long ago decided the 'destiny' of Crimea's question' and 'Political decision about Crimea's annexation has been greatly influenced by a small influential political group'; 1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree,* α =.80.

Conspiracy beliefs. In order to assess conspiracy beliefs (operationalized as the extent to which participants attributed a negative outcome to conspiracies against ingroup rather

than to their collective efficacy in stopping Crimea's annexation), we computed a variable by standardizing attributions to conspiracies against ingroup regarding Crimea and group efficacy in stopping Crimea's annexation, and subtracting attributions to group efficacy from attributions to conspiracies (see also Major, et al, 2003, for this technique).

Perceived morality and legality of collective action. Respondents were asked to rate how 'moral' and 'upright' were the actions of social activists during the Euromaidan events; 1 = *not at all moral/upright*, 5 = *very moral/upright*, α = .66. We then asked how 'illegal' (reverse coded) and 'just' they think were the actions of social activists during the Euromaidan events; 1 = *not at all legal/just*, 5 = *very legal/just*, α = .71. The measures were highly correlated ($r = .653$, $p = .000$).

Results

Statistical Analyses

The preliminary analyses involved bivariate analysis and hierarchical multiple regression. The main analysis involved a test of the mediational model. Data analyses were performed using SPSS 24 and Amos 24. The magnitude of effect sizes for the regression paths was determined as .10, .30, and .50 for small, medium, and large effects, respectively (Cohen, 1992).

Preliminary Analysis

Data screening was performed to ensure there were no violations of the assumptions. The descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations are presented in Table 6.1. There were moderate to high correlations between identification as a supporter and opponent of the Euromaidan and perception of morality and legality of collective action,, which set a clear tone to the results. The perception of collective action as moral ($r = .548^{**}$; $p = .000$) and legal ($r = .496^{**}$; $p = .000$) were more likely to be associated with one's support for the movement. The tendency to perceive collective behaviour of the Euromaidan's protesters as

immoral ($r = -.292**$; $p = .000$) was associated with one's opposition to the movement. There was no significant correlation between the identification with the opponents of Euromaidan and perception of protesters' behaviour as illegal ($r = -.076$; $p = .181$), a matter we return to in the Discussion. Support for the movement was not significantly associated with a blaming the negative outcome of Crimea's cause on protesters ($r = .036$; $p = .520$), but was significantly related to beliefs in conspiracies against ingroup ($r = .165$; $p = .003$). Opposition to the movement was significantly associated with a blame on protesters ($r = .254$; $p = .000$) and beliefs in conspiracies ($r = .112$; $p = .047$).

Conspiracy beliefs. First, we performed a hierarchical multiple regression analysis to test whether beliefs in conspiracy theories regarding Crimea's cause predict perception of ingroup's collective action as moral and legal. At Step 1, identification with the supporters of the movement, identification with the opponents of the movement, were significant positive predictors of perceived morality (*adjusted R^2 = .38, ΔF (2, 311) = 94.968, p=.000*) and perceived legality (*adjusted R^2 = .24, ΔF (2,311) = 50.891, p =.000*) of collective action. At step 2, perceived efficacy of ingroup's collective action in relation to two political causes was found to explain more perceived morality (*adjusted R^2 = .42, ΔF (2, 309) = 13.151, p=.000*) compared to perceived legality (*adjusted R^2 = .25, ΔF (2, 309) = 3.332, p=.037*) of collective action. In fact, only identification with the movement's supporters was found to be a significant predictor of perceived legality at this second step of regression. At Step 3, adding beliefs in conspiracies against ingroup to the regression model significantly increased the summarised effect of the other variables on perceived morality *(adjusted R^2 = .45, ΔF (1, 308) = 20.239, p = 000)* and legality *(adjusted R^2 = .27, ΔF (1, 308) = 7.062, p = 008)* of ingroup's collective action. Separately, beliefs in conspiracies against ingroup had a significant effect on perceived morality($\beta = .19$, $p = .000$) and legality ($\beta = .13$, $p = .008$) of collective action. The results are summarized in Tables 6.2 and 6.3, respectively.

Table 6.1

Correlations and Descriptive Statistics (N = 314)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	*M*	*SD*
1. Euromaidan Supporter		-.001	.399**	.198**	.036	.165**	.548**	.496**	2.45	1.45
2. Euromaidan Opponent			-.338**	-.104	.254**	.112*	-.292**	-.076	1.10	1.32
3. PE in Changing Regime				.361**	-.043	.052	.487**	.309**	3.79	1.00
4. PE in Crimea Cause					.028	-.046	.305**	.219**	2.01	.86
5. Blame on Protesters						.255**	.070	.115*	1.89	1.26
6. Crimea-related Conspiracies							.240**	.197**	3.15	1.56
7. Perceived morality of collective action								.653**	3.84	1.43
8. Perceived legality of collective action									3.30	1.66

Note. PE - Perceived Efficacy

Table 6.2

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting Perceived Morality of Collective Action

Predictors	Perceived Morality of Collective Action								
	Step 1			Step 2			Step 3		
	β	T	p value	β	t	p value	β	t	p value
1. Euromaidan Supporter	.542	12.135	.000	.449	9.484	.000	.418	9.010	.000
2. Euromaidan Opponent	-.291	-6.522	.000	-.218	-4.705	.000	-.240	-5.310	.000
3. PE in Changing Regime				.181	3.462	.001	.174	3.427	.001
4. PE in Crimea Cause				.122	2.658	.008	.140	3.129	.002
5. Crimea-related Conspiracies							.192	4.499	.000
Adjusted R^2		.38			.42			.45	
ΔF		94.968			13.151			20.239	
df_1, df_2		2(311)			2(309)			1(308)	
Sig. ΔF		.000			.000			.000	

*$p<.05$, ** $p<.01$, *** $p< .001$

Note. Blame on Protesters has been automatically excluded from the regression analysis

Table 6.3

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting Perceived Legality of Collective Action

Predictors	Perceived Legality of Collective Action								
	Step 1			Step 2			Step 3		
	β	T	p value	β	t	p value	β	t	p value
1. Euromaidan Supporter	.491	9.971	.000	.444	8.262	.000	.423	7.864	.000
2. Euromaidan Opponent	-.075	-1.529	.127	-.040	-.767	.444	-.055	-1.059	.291
3. PE in Changing Regime				.075	1.257	.210	.070	1.186	.236
4. PE in Crimea Cause				.094	1.811	.071	.107	2.058	.040
5. Crimea-related Conspiracies							.132	2.657	.008
Adjusted R^2		.24			.25			.27	
ΔF		50.891			3.332			7.062	
df_1, df_2		2 (311)			2 (309)			1 (308)	
Sig. ΔF		.000			.037			.008	

*$p<.05$, ** $p<.01$, *** $p< .001$

Note. Blame on Protesters has been automatically excluded from the regression analysis

Main Analysis

To test our main model that the perception of efficacy of ingroup's collective action predicts its evaluation of group collective behaviour as moral and legal through the endorsement of conspiracy beliefs, that is, attributing responsibility to the conspiracies against ingroup than themselves, we conducted mediation analysis using the PROCESS macro for SPSS (model 4; Hayes, 2013; Preacher & Hayes, 2004). We included identification with the support and opposition to the movement as covariates in the models. This analysis estimates the direct, indirect effect, standard errors and confidence intervals. Non-parametric bootstrapping with 10,000 resamples was used to establish 95% confidence intervals for indirect effects. The bootstrapping method provides some advantages comparing to parametric procedures such as regression. This procedure calculates the total and all possible specific indirect effects of the IV on the DV. In bootstrapping, an indirect effect is estimated as being significant if zero is not contained within the 95% lower (LLCI) and upper (ULCI) confidence intervals (Hayes, 2013).

Consistent with predictions, perceived efficacy in changing the Yanukovych regime was negatively associated with conspiracy beliefs, β= -.27, $SE = .10$, $p = .010$, 95% CI = -.4766, -.0666, and positively related to moral appropriateness of collective action, β= .34, $SE = .09$, $p = .000$, 95% CI = .1587, .5123, while it was not significantly related to the perception of collective action as legitimate, β= .19, $SE = .11$, $p = .097$, 95% CI = -.0343, .4117, when controlling for social identification with the supporters and opponents of the movement (see Figures 6.1 – 6.2). As expected, conspiracy beliefs did not mediate this relationship (indirect total effect, β= -.02, $SE = .02$, 95% CI = -.0644, .0043 for moral and β= -.01, $SE = .02$, 95% CI = -.0628, .0183, legal collective action, respectively), indicating that participants were not likely to shift responsibility for the political outcome, which they perceived as a positive consequence of their ingroup's effective collective action. The pattern of findings has

changed when identification with these two social categories was not controlled for: the perceived efficacy in changing the regime became positively associated with the perception of collective action as legitimate, β= .53, *SE* = .09, *p* = .000, 95% CI = .3545, .7113. Although the focus of our research was to examine the role of conspiracy beliefs as an important mechanism of attributions of responsibility in the intergroup setting, future research could further explore the potential role of politicized group identities as of potential mediators.

Perceived efficacy in stopping Crimea's annexation was negatively associated with conspiracy beliefs, β= -1.10, *SE* = .07, *p* = .000, 95% CI = -1.2378, -.9574, and positively related to both perceptions of morality, β= .58, *SE* = .11, *p* = .000, 95% CI =.3663,.8007, and legality, β= .46, *SE* = .15, *p* = .002, 95% CI = .1677, .7557, of protesters' collective action. Conversely, the indirect total effects were significant for both moral, β= -.31, *SE* = .08, 95% CI = -.4611,-.1561, and legal, β= -.24, *SE* = .11, 95% CI = -.4543, -.0350, collective action, respectively. That is, conspiracy beliefs significantly mediated the relationship between perceived efficacy of ingroup's collective action towards Crimea and perceptions of morality and legality, when controlling for social identification with the supporters and opponents of the movement (see Figures 6.3 – 6.4). The pattern of findings remained unchanged when the social identities were not controlled for.
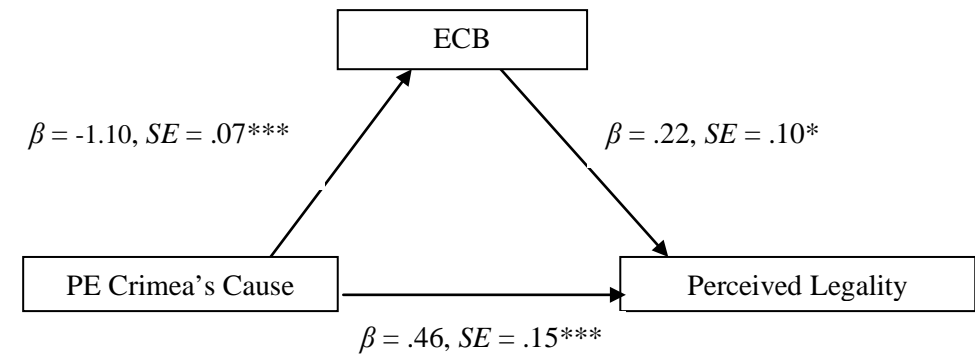
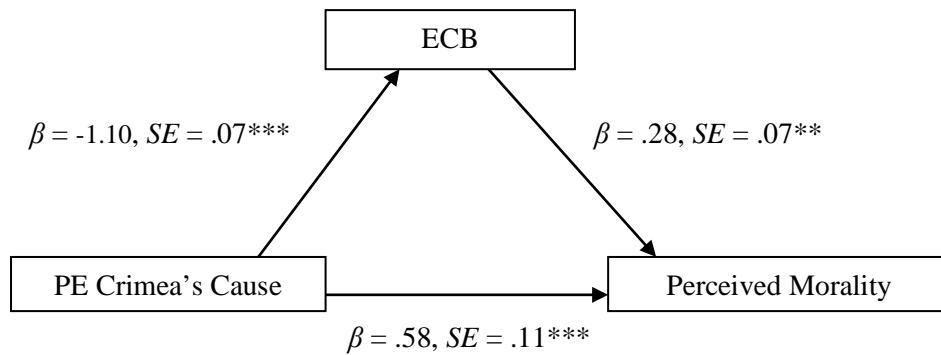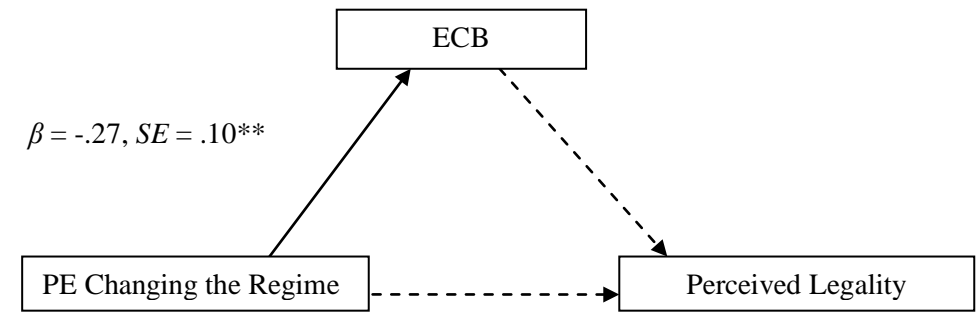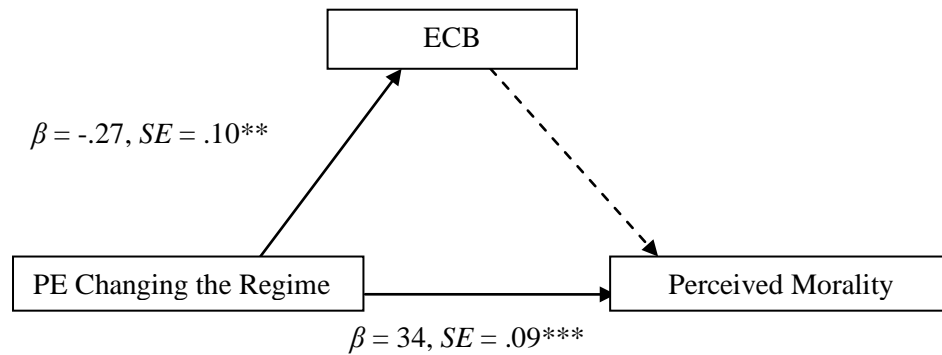*Figure 6.1 – 6.4.*Mediation analyses: Effects of the perceived efficacy (PE) of collective action (T1 and T2) for perceived morality and legality of collective action, through the endorsement of conspiracy beliefs (ECB), controlling for identification with the supporters and opponents of Euromaidan. The broken arrow lines were used to represent the non-significant paths *Note*. *$p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. ***$p < .001$

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that attribution of social responsibility to a conspiracy against ingroup may serve an important psychological function. The research thus extends and complements theories concerned with the role of attributional processes and intergroup behaviour (Coleman, 2013; Hewstone, 1990; Rudolph, et al., 2004) and resonates with the group-level approaches to morality and justice in real-world contexts (e.g., Brambilla, et al., 2013; Gausel, et al., 2012; Shepherd, et al., 2013; Skitka & Mullen, 2002). In the present paper, however, we also sought to reconcile these lines of research and investigate the role of the endorsement of conspiracy beliefs (i.e., a tendency to attribute responsibility of events, processes and circumstances to particular interests of shadow beneficiaries) in relation to individuals' social justification of collective behaviour.

We explained that in the context of intergroup struggle over realistic and/or material resources, the endorsement of conspiracy beliefs may serve an important psychological function: in the case of undesirable political outcomes of ingroup's collective action, it allows people to shift responsibility from themselves as a social group towards influential actors (i.e., government, supranational elite groups), who are perceived to have sufficient resources to control, determine and manage the development of a group's cause. Furthermore, we derived specific hypotheses as to when the conspiracy beliefs, as a underlying worldview in which events, processes and circumstances are associated with particular interests of shadow beneficiaries, mediates the perception of efficacy of ingroup's attempt to achieve social change and evaluation of ingroup's collective behaviour as moral and legitimate. In this respect, conspiratorial reasoning might be regarded as a prototypical form of intergroup representation (e.g., Sapountzis & Condor, 2013).

The results were very much consistent with our predictions. First, respondents were more likely to assign responsibility of the distinct event with negative outcomes (i.e., social

protests to stop Crimea's annexation) to influential political actors than to themselves (i.e.,

mediation via conspiracy beliefs), compared to the event with positive outcomes (i.e., change

of the Yanukovych regime). The identification with the supporters of the movement, but not

the opponents, facilitated these effects. This relationship indicates the tendency of in-group

favouring /outgroup derogating in explaining events (e.g., Hewstone, 1989; Kelley, 1973).

Participants' social identity in terms of supporters but not opponents of the movement

affected the attributional tendencies towards externality/internality in a deliberate way: that

is, assigning responsibility of events with positive outcomes to internal causes (i.e., 'yes, we

did it') and of those with negative outcomes to external and situational properties (i.e., 'not

our fault'). In this respect our findings complements theories concerned with the role of

attributional processes and intergroup behaviour (Coleman, 2013; Hewstone, 1990; Rudolph,

et al., 2004).

Secondly, the goal of the present study was also to explore whether and how

perception of group efficacy, conspiracy beliefs, and social identification with the supporters

(but not opponents) of the movement, might be related to judgments of morality and legality

of group behaviour. Previous research has clearly identified the crucial roles that social

identity and instrumental concerns can and often do play in the justice reasoning process

(Skitka & Mullen, 2012; van Prooijen & Zwenk, 2009). However, this study demonstrated

that endorsement of conspiracy beliefs plays an important role in the social justification of

group behaviour. We found how the tendency to attribute responsibility to the outgroup

involved in political conflict had important connections to how people evaluated behaviour of

the group they identify with, as moral and legal. These results speak to the self-protective

effects of the attributional processes on self-esteem (e.g., Major, et al., 2003) as well as social

identification (e.g., Mashuri & Zaduqisti, 2015). We show how the respondents who

perceived collective efforts of protesters in changing Yanukovych regime as effective, were

more likely to evaluate their collective behaviour as moral, but not legal. This pattern of results indicates that although morality and legitimacy scales were highly correlated, these are two distinct ways of justifying group behaviour. These findings address the concern that a presumably shared set of moral values does not necessarily reflect justice standards; a point that has been already discussed in the literature (e.g., Skitka & Mullen, 2002b). Importantly, these effects remained unchanged after controlling for social identification. One possible interpretation of these findings is that although group identification is essential for social justification, one's tendency to see ingroup's behaviour as morally appropriate will not translate into the justification of action 'outside the rule of law' such as insurrections, including violent protest and revolution, as people seek to achieve a social change.

These complex patterns of results generally indicate that people who identified with the supporters of the movement (but not with the opponents) were likely to endorse conspiracy beliefs and that such reasoning differently affected their evaluation of own behaviour as morally and legally "right". Interestingly, this indicates how individual agency and structural constraints are in a constant dynamics where people negotiate their desire to do "good" with the official definitions of what is "allowed" and what is considered "public good". The mere suspicion that others may have a more influential role in deciding collective fate (indicated by the presence of conspiracy beliefs) brings on even more concern that our actions are both morally and legally acceptable. Essentially, this can also be explained by the fact that the legal status of protest itself was changed during the social movements of changing the regime. This has created a vacuum of possibilities, where participating in the Euromaidan protests could be perceived as equally legal (by those believing in democratic participatory values) and as illegal (by those abiding by the changed laws at the time of the Euromaidan movement). Asking people to evaluate their collective action retrospectively may have resulted in a similar vacuum effect whereby people are sure of having done the

morally right thing, but still unsure whether this was considered "legal" according to the then-official-government legislation.

Limitations

Although this research is promising, it presents some limitations. First, we did not explicitly explored the notion that beliefs in conspiracies against an ingroup's cause can be addressed by collective response or whether they will lead to one's political inaction and apathy. Some authors have argued that when conspiracy theories are framed as conflicts over sacred values they will be likely to predict intense social commitment and collective action (e.g., Atran & Ginges, 2012; Franks, Bangerter, & Bauer, 2013). An interesting avenue for future research consists of examining the conditions under which conspiracy beliefs, as an underlying worldview in which events, processes and circumstances are associated with particular interests of shadow beneficiaries, may lead to both political apathy and radicalization.

Secondly, the statistical approach we applied did not test the interaction pattern that the total set of independent variables would have allowed. Instead, we tested single predictions and compared results from mediation analyses, in order to understand how perceived efficacy to achieve a political goal interacts with the process of attribution of responsibility, given the two types of political goals (the regime change, and Crimea's cause), and in relation to people's evaluations of collective action as moral and legal. Although a more sophisticated analysis could have enriched the patterns of findings, we opted for the analyses that could give a simple insight into the presence of these processes. Respondents tended to evaluate their actions as both moral and legal, the more they perceived themselves as efficacious in attaining social change. However, those who felt less efficacious in relation to the political outcome that was seemingly less desirable (in the case of Crimea's annexation to the Russian Federation) tended to identify conspirators as a more likely "cause" of that

particular event. This indirect effect of group efficacy via endorsement of conspiracy beliefs indicates the complexity of intergroup relationships in the geopolitical setting, as well as the necessity of theoretical models to be adapted and tested in specific social-political contexts.

Finally, a possible shortcoming of the study presented here, like of all field studies, is that it cannot provide conclusive evidence given its cross-sectional design and a singular context, in which the hypotheses were tested. Despite these limitations, the main strength of this research is that it was carried out in the real world setting and under real world demands and that the results were highly consistent with other recent research using different methods. We urge social psychologists to conduct further research in the natural "laboratory" of current geopolitical events to test the boundaries of theories linking engagement and consequences of collective action to the cognitive processing of causal attributions and evaluations of morality and legality of different courses of action and behaviours.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY AND GENERAL DISCUSSION

By focusing on Ukraine's Euromaidan Revolution and its aftermath, the present thesis explored the social-psychological processes associated with bottom-up social change. The aim of the this research was to investigate the social psychology of collective action in the context of Ukraine's Euromaidan revolution and to systematically explore the usefulness of reconciling the macro and micro approaches in explaining bottom-up social change. In other words, I investigate if the current models of collective action can sufficiently account for specific *macro level factors*, so that we can adequately explain collective action in different political contexts and in different political situations. The overarching research question throughout the previous chapters was: what are the social psychological dynamics predicting collective action that will result in bottom-up changes of the political system?

Focusing on the political events in Ukraine, the main question was analysed along five lines of investigation on the social psychology of collective action:

1) How can we predict collective action for social change via the aspirational group identity?

2) Under which conditions are people more likely to express their aspirational identities through persuasive rather than confrontational collective action?

3) What social psychological mechanisms govern a synchronized expression of multiple aspirational identities when social protest is outlawed?

4) What drives people to engage in political solidarity action with another group presumed to be socially and/or politically oppressed (i.e. Crimean Tatars)?

5) How do people explain the legality and morality of their own collective behaviour when evaluating the political outcomes of ingroup activism?

To answer these questions, I collected survey data three times in the immediate aftermath of (and during) key political events in Ukraine in 2014 and 2017: first, after the introduction of anti-protest laws (January – February, 2014); secondly, after the referendum on Crimea's status and the annexation of the peninsula by the Russian Federation (March – April, 2014); thirdly, three years after the Euromaidan in time when the EU Parliament approved visa-free regime for Ukraine (March – April, 2017).

Analyses include a range of social psychological and political attitudes: from social identification with and disidentification from politicized categories/policies, appraisals (affective and cognitive) of injustices and collective political efficacy (Chapters 2, 3 and 5), to the perception of the legitimacy of protest (Chapters 3 and 4), to the beliefs reflecting ideological compatibility between different politicized social groups (Chapter 4) and beliefs regarding political aspirations of the oppressed minority (Chapter 5), as well as people's retrospective evaluations of morality and legality of the ingroup collective action (Chapter 6). I identified and analysed three forms of collective action for social change – that is, persuasive, confrontational and political solidarity action, – and suggested distinct social-psychological pathways leading to each of them.

Separately, the chapters of this thesis present various angles and perspectives on why and how people engage in the political events of the time. Each chapter is situated in a broader area of social psychological knowledge, drawing on a range of established or more modern theories of identification and disidentification, collective action, social attribution theory, political solidarity and the like. As a whole, the 'macro-to-micro' approach to social change that I have taken here suggests that geopolitical structures and individual agency are complementary forces: the disputes regarding an institutional change of Ukraine's geopolitical position influence citizens via their politicized group identities; this activates human (individual) agency that is capable of changing macro level processes: the direction of

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foreign politics towards the EU as opposed to Russia-centred Custom Union, as well as the governance system within the country.

In this final chapter, I reflect on how the thesis contributes to a more nuanced and systematic understanding of bottom-up social change, describe broader implications for other relevant literatures that investigate intergroup processes such as hostile and pro-social behaviour and ideologies, outline some limitations and challenges of the work, and propose several fertile venues for future research investigating real-world collective action.

General Discussion

I now review the associations between the individual-level social-psychological processes, the main predictors of aspirational identity as well as different forms of collective action(see Paths 1 and 2, Figure 1.1) aimed at changing the political system within Ukraine (Path 3, Figure 1.1). It should be noted that it is difficult to provide a rigorously comparative overview of these associations, because the estimated models were not identical across the chapters, and because the analyses were conducted on different samples resulting from three surveys. The interpretation of any particular effect is conditioned by the effects of all other variables included in the path and/or mediation analyses, as well as specific to the non-representative samples in each study. Thus, my purpose here is not to report and accentuate any statistically based inferences, but rather to broadly discuss the patterns of associations, involved in bottom-up political change as a multi-faceted process. I elaborate on these facets and core messages below.

Becoming a Political Activist: Why "Disidentification" Rather Than "Identification" Matters?

Social identity theorising has become a disciplinary perspective for collective research (e.g., Klandermans & Simon, 2001; van Zomeren, et al., 2008; McGarty, et al., 2009; Reicher

& Haslam, 2013) rather than just a model of particular social phenomena. The critical role of the dynamics of the social self has often been approached as an explanation of the way in which people, whose group and/or a social category of belonging, faced a threat of subordination, denigration, and misrecognition, come to accentuate who they are *not* and what they stand *against* (e.g., Becker & Tausch, 2013; Jasinskaja-Lahti, et al, 2009; Major & O'Brien, 2005). Dissent, disapproval, or simply protest are widely used by individuals and groups to reject and deny conflicting social and political arrangements that are perceived to threaten one's salient social identity (Branscombe, et al., 1999; Wohl, et al., 2010).

In this thesis I broaden the understanding of the dynamics of social self and political engagement by examining the effects of disidentification on both formation and expression of aspirational group identities. My main point here was that understanding of what people disidentify from in a certain context is crucial, because protest is always an act of "standing against". Innovatively, I extended the social identity model of collective action by showing how disidentification from coercively imposed categories contributed to the formation of identity of the social movement. More precisely, I showed that when encountered with the government's decision to delay Ukraine-EU association agreement (perceived to be socially unjust) people came to express their aspirations through disidentification from Russia-centered Customs Union as opposed to disidentification from the European Union, not only though identification with Ukraine. Thus disidentification, in part, defined the Euromaidan identity as the sense of "who we are not" and "what we stand against". This finding is particularly important as it extends previous research on collective action that relies heavily on the effects of social identification and opens up the possibility of incorporating disidentification from context-related relevant causes as an additional explanatory variable. Focusing on the Ukrainian case, I brought research further by suggesting that the immediate political situation can be used to indicate the relevant political categories that people will use

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to orient themselves in the social and political arena. Disidentifying from CU as opposed to the EU was a key finding and innovative idea of this research, and the contribution of these processes to the aspirational identity of the Euromaidan movement, and the direct impact of disidentification on collective action are noteworthy. What yet needs to be examined is how the sense of 'who we are *not* and what we stand *against*' predicts extreme behaviours in intergroup conflicts, and what is the role of conflicting sacred values is in translating one's antagonism into intergroup collective action (e.g., Atran, Axelrod, & Davis, 2007; Sheikh, Gómez, & Atran, 2016). Such future research must necessarily involve longitudinal quasi-experimental design and mixed-method approach to give a fuller and deeper explanation to the concept of disidentification.

Perception of Political Opportunities: From Persuading to Confronting the Political Opponents

Focusing on the political attempts to restrict social protest in Ukraine, I argue that considering the interaction between broad governance characteristics (i.e., state's responsiveness and accountability, rule of law, freedoms of expression and political organization) and individual-level perception of these structural arrangements, is essential to predicting political radicalisation in conflict-sensitive environments. In this thesis, I use a "proxy" measure on how individuals perceive the political opportunity structure, namely perception of legitimacy of protest.

The perceived legitimacy of protest aimed to measure individuals' beliefs about protest as a legal, accepted and democratic process of inflicting political change in their current circumstances, namely Ukraine in 2014. Believing that protest is the "right" way to go about changing the political structure should mean that protesters will be more willing to persuade rather than confront their oppressors (Chapters 3 and 4). In other words, collective

action and social-political change can be achieved by using legitimate and recognized means, such as protest and non-confrontational (i.e. persuasive) actions.

Using another variable, that is, beliefs in procedural fairness, I show that people's beliefs that the governance system is unbiased, trustworthy and responsive will have a negative effect on collective action intentions (Chapter 2 and 3).

Hence, these are examples of how I analyse the perception of broader governance arrangements typical to Ukraine in 2013/14 and its effects on the character of collective action that emerged in response to president Yanuchovch's political actions. Future research can unpack these important structural attributes, as they are subjectively perceived, in facilitating persuasive collective action or, contrarily and at extremes, determining one's intention to engage in action subverting state's governments or authorities.

Ideological Compatibility: How Does It Bring Political Activists Together?

One of the bedrocks of social protest movement is its ideological platform. Keeping this notion in mind, in Chapter 3 I raise the question about the social-psychological mechanism that explains why two or more social groups connect to build a social movement.

I derived my assumptions from the literature on the convergence of ideological platforms (e.g., Curtin et al., 2016; Curtin & McGarty, 2016; Kutlaca, el at, 2016; Smith, et al, 2015; Turner-Zwinkels, et al, 2015). I examined under which conditions people who identified with both the emergent online and street protest communities were likely to engage in anti-government street collective action. To explore this mechanism, I proposed a seemingly simple measure of ideological convergence between multiple aspirational identities, namely the measure of their perceived ideological compatibility. I found that as long as people perceived their membership in both online and street protest communities as ideologically compatible, they were more willing to join street action expressing the demands

of both civil rights groups. Future research may further develop this argument and operationalize the concept in more detail by investigating the mechanisms behind coalition-building dynamics among social movements.

Additionally, the proposed framework seems to have empirical validity, since it could explain the link between Internet-based activism and street protest movement in terms of alignment of ideological content between two categories. The analysis presented here comes to challenge some conclusions of other researchers (e.g., Gladwell, 2010; Morozov, 2009, 2011) that have suggested that the Internet activists are substituting their offline engagement with the possibilities of low-cost and low-risk activism the Internet offers. My investigation of the perception of ideological compatibility between online and offline communities as distal antecedents of synchronized collective action mirrors some recent ideas in the social movement literature. This new line of research looks into how the convergence of interest networks helps explain the emergence of spontaneous, leaderless, and multimodal politicized groups, whose members come together to challenge their oppressors through action in concrete spatial locations as well as online social participation (e.g., Nahon & Hemsley, 2013). Future research is to examine the dynamics that determine the spillover from online to offline collective actions and vice versa in more detail, analysing also its boundary conditions.

Political Solidarity with Third Outgroups: Not a Simple Act of Altruism?

Another crucial issue that I addressed in this thesis is political solidarity and its relation to self-interested rationality (e.g., Reicher, et al, 2006; Subašic, et al., 2008). There is little research on political action on behalf of another group and, therefore, it is unclear what makes relatively powerful groups act collectively to challenge a situation of injustice, oppression, tyranny, or social vulnerability of powerless group, even if they are not directly

related in the immediate intergroup context. Focusing on the territorial disputes in Ukraine's divided society, I examined what made Ukrainians engage in political solidarity action in support of Crimean Tatars. Crimean Tatars are the indigenous population of the peninsula of Crimea, which was annexed by Russia one week before the data collection in March2014.

Two conclusions follow from this research. First, political solidarity can be considered as a form of collective action given that it was found to be predicted by the same social-psychological processes (i.e., appraisals of injustice, sense of collective efficacy, and social identification; see SIMCA, van Zomeren et al., 2008) as the movements in pursuit of an ingroup's cause. Secondly, a crucial psychological mechanism that defines political solidarity as a form of collective action is an individual's tendency to align own aspirational identities to the oppressed group's political loyalties via processes of disidentification(i.e., 'they stand against what we stand against, therefore, we are going to fight for them').

One striking, indeed astonishing feature of political solidarity identified here, is that two conflicting groups can use similar arguments based on their perceptions of minority's loyalties. In the context of divided Ukraine, there were two parallel solidarity campaigns in support of Crimea's Tatars: those who opposed Crimea's annexation to the Russian Federation, and those who supported it. Ukrainians who strongly opposed unification with Russia-centered Customs Union were likely to perceived Crimea's Tatars political loyalties as similar to their own, that is, closer to Europe. These Ukrainians were likely to engage in street protest action to protect 'the rights for self-determination' of the Crimean Tatar minority group, because according to the respondents, their minority rights were violated in the 'unjust' referendum on Crimea's status in March of 2014.

At the same time, Ukrainians who strongly opposed European integration were likely to perceive Crimea's Tatars political loyalties as similar to their own, that is, closer to Russia with its integrating platforms such as the Russian World and the Slavic Brotherhood. These

Russia-oriented Ukrainians were willing to sustain Crimea's Tatars for Crimea's 'historic return home' (i.e., reunification with the Russian Federation, Walker, 2015).

I thus showed that two different social movements both claimed solidarity with the Crimean Tatars in the situation of Crimea being annexed to the Russian Federation, and both movements echoed the specific political aspirations of the majority. The evidence I obtained supports my model and clearly indicates that social identity, territorial disputes, and intergroup processes need to be understood in their social context as they are anchored in history and strengthened by group narratives (e.g., Levine& Manning, 2013; Vezzali, Versari, Cadamuro, Trifiletti, & Di Bernardo, 2016). In other words, simply knowing that somebody is Ukrainian would not predict how people felt towards Crimea being territorially and politically removed from Ukraine. However, knowing how Ukrainians positioned themselves vis-à-vis the two major geopolitical agents – the EU and CU –could more specifically predict Ukrainians' attitudes towards Crimea, and thus their engagement in solidarity political action on behalf of the Crimean Tatars.

Future research may further investigate the extent to which ingroup's aspirations and calculations excel one's altruistic concerns to better understand psychological causes of political solidarity.

Ingroup's Political Goal Unaccomplished: Who to Blame?

In the final chapter of this thesis I investigated the mechanism by which people assign responsibility for undesirable outcomes of their own political action and discussed how using the 'blame game' and finding scapegoats serve the ingroup to justify their own collective behaviour in the context of intergroup conflict. Based on social attribution theory (Hewstone, 1989; Kelley, 1967), I showed how people tend to use conspiracy beliefs when they perceived that their collective efforts failed, and the outcomes of their collective action were

undesirable or negative. Conspiracy beliefs were defined as an underlying worldview in which events, processes and circumstances are associated with particular interests of shadow beneficiaries. In line with the previous research on conspiracy beliefs (e.g., Cichocka, et al., 2016; Sapountzis & Condor, 2013; van Prooijen & Jostmann, 2013), I showed how the endorsement of such beliefs may allow people to simplify and attach meaning to particularly complex and distressing societal events, while protecting the image of the ingroup by offering alternative, self-empowering understandings of social reality. What I also showed is that such a mode of attributing responsibility (to the powerful outgroup) affected people's evaluation of their own collective behaviour as moral and legitimate.

With the survey data collected three years after the Euromaidan revolution, I showed how by holding politicians responsible for the ineffective resolution of Crimea's cause[4], the supporters of the movement bolstered a moral image of their group. In other words, even if people failed to achieve their goal, their group actions are still perceived to be moral and legal, because the failure was due to the "Others". In their essence, such attributional tendencies tend to boil down to the representation of complex political issues into 'black and white' terms: social protesters are depicted as being deprived by politicians and assumed to be conspired against(and undermined) by those who have sufficient resources to control, determine and manage the development of a group's cause.

What is important to bear in mind and is that similar attributional errors, that is, a tendency of blaming establishment, form the core of populism (e.g. Jagers & Walgrave, 2007). Therefore, findings from this research may be regarded as a starting point for new theoretical investigation of how in the context of intergroup conflict people may engage in the social construction of an out-group –both vertically as political elites and horizontally as

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[4]Despite political promises, the annexed Black Sea peninsula of Crimea was not returned into Ukraine's border lines.

societal out-groups – and how this moral and legitimate divide between 'us' and 'them' translates in another form of collective action, that is, electoral behaviour.

To sum up the findings discussed above, I marked the presence of a significant relationship and the direction of the association (as a positive or negative regression coefficient) in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1. Summary of Findings

	Chapter 2	Chapter 3			Chapter 4		Chapter 5	Chapter 6	
	PA	PA	PCA	CCA	PCA	CCA	PS	PMCA	PLCA
Identification with Euromaidan	+	+	+	+	+	ns	n/a	n/a	n/a
Identification with Ukraine	+	+	+	ns	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Disidentification from the EU	+	+	+	+	n/a	n/a	−	n/a	n/a
Disidentification from the CU	+	+	ns	+	n/a	n/a	+	n/a	n/a
Collective efficacy	+	+	+	+	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Fairness of authorities	ns	ns	+	+	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Group-based anger	+	+	+	+	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Illegal referendum	n/a	n/a	ns	+	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Legitimacy of Protest	n/a	+	+	+	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Identification with OPC	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	+	+	n/a	n/a	n/a
Identification with SM	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	+	+	n/a	n/a	n/a
Perceived Compatibility	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	+	+	n/a	n/a	n/a
Illegitimacy of Russia's Foreign Policy in Crimea	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	+	n/a	n/a
Loyalties of Crimean Tatars towards Ukraine	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	+	n/a	n/a
Loyalties of Crimean Tatars towards Russia	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	ns	n/a	n/a
Supporter of the Euromaidan	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	+	+
Opponent of the Euromaidan	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	ns	ns
PE in changing regime (T1)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	+	ns
PE in Crimea's cause (T2)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	+	+
Conspiracy Beliefs	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	T1 ns; T2 +	T1 ns; T2 +

Note: The table presents a summary of findings from the empirical chapters, and indicates the type of association between the various variables ("+" for a significant positive association; and "−" for a significant negative association, "ns" indicates a non-significant association and "n/a" means not-applicable, namely when the respective relationship was not tested in the respective chapter. "PA" – Political activism, "PCA" - Persuasive collective action, "CCA" - Confrontational collective action, "PS" – political solidarity, "PMCA" – Perceived morality of collective action, "PLCA" – Perceived legality of collective action, "PE" – Perceived efficacy, "OPC" – online protest community, "SM" – Street movement

Limitations and Future Prospects

In addition to the contributions of this work to the field, I turn to discuss a few limitations of the current project.

First, although the current work offers insights into the antecedents and consequences of aspirational group identities, a limitation is the reliance on the same social-political context across all the studies. The former Soviet republic of Ukraine provided the research location, and was selected as a typical case of a popular movement. People got to the streets to counteract the effects of the authorities who were deemed to aspire towards the restoration of the Russian Federation-led political union as opposed to Ukraine's integration into Western Europe. Hence, it is possible that the population of Ukrainians (whose public opinions were examined in this thesis) and the geo-political situation arising from the transition process in post-Soviet space may carry distinct features that could have coloured the findings. Further cross-country comparisons will address this shortcoming, by investigating if similar social psychological dynamics of collective action are also present in other countries in transition towards a democratic political system.

Secondly, since the samples of the three studies presented here were not stratified according to probability-based demographic projections reflective of the general population of Ukraine, the external validity of the results is limited. Although by design all studies sought to accommodate political attitudes of both supporters and opponents of the Euromaidan movement, the surveys attracted largely respondents that identified themselves as activists of the Euromaidan. However, rather than seeing this as solely a limitation, these samples also allowed us to portray the complex picture of the Ukrainian activists, at the time of the events, as well as 3 years later. Collecting quantitative survey data over multiple points of time even with samples which are not representative of the whole country, will still reveal the political opinions of 'people mobilized in the context', in real time, from the perspective

of the activists, who made the revolution happen. Thus the external validity in terms of the research taking place at the "right time" had to over-ride the inability to draw on a country-wide representative sample.

Finally, although I discuss the political action in Ukraine in terms of bottom-up social change, this social psychological perspective cannot testify or aim to establish whether the change at the macro level, that is, Ukraine's transition to democracy, had actually occurred. Despite the nuanced examination of the peculiar relations between the means and the meanings characterizing the bottom-up social-political change in this particular setting, the studies provide a social-psychological snapshot of those associations at the micro level. The epistemological challenge related to the study of real-world bottom-up social change is to approach this phenomenon through the lens of history, sociology and social psychology. The remit of social psychology is to explain the macro-micro links and show how micro-level processed end up in particular individual attitudes and intended behaviours. The next level would be to investigate the micro-macro link by investigating how the aggregation of the individual level processes may affect the macro-level structures. This however, was not the remit of this thesis.

Future research and multi-disciplinary approaches are necessary to further specify if the assumptions from the models presented here are conditional or more general, and expand the external validity of the models to different social-political contexts, with longitudinal designs and representative samples.

Conclusion

Focusing on the political events in Ukraine, this dissertation has politically contextualized, historically traced, and empirically investigated the antecedents and consequences of aspirational group identities and proposed a theoretical framework for the systematic understanding of identity-driven collective behaviour aimed at social change.

Specifically, I found that politicized collective identity is a dynamic outcome of the aggregated group aspirations generated in a heightened state of psychological reactance via two inter-related processes –disidentification from the incongruent policies and social identification with the group whose rights were oppressed. I showed the degree to which one's belief in the legitimacy of protest will predict persuasive as opposed to confrontational action that people will pursue towards a specific social change goal. I revealed how the perception of ideological compatibility between distinct aspirational group identities (online and offline) leads to their congruent expression in the street action. I also found that the alignment of ingroup's aspirational identity to the perceived political loyalties of a third oppressed group makes people want to engage in political solidarity action to protect the relatively powerless group, while clearly pursuing political interests of the ingroup. Finally, I showed how people, who identified with the Euromaidan movement, tended to attribute responsibility for negative political outcomes to the political establishment and how this tendency of blaming conspiracies against them as a group affected social justification of their own behaviour.

My main point along the lines of this thesis is that to understand real world collective political participation as a bottom-up identity-driven process, we need to identify the interactions between social psychological processes and the structural and ideological parameters of the geopolitical context of analysis. This subtle shift in the way that a bottom-up social change is understood makes political activism comprehensible in terms of social identity theory framework and allows the truly specific, context-sensitive features of this process to be explored in more depth than it has previously been done.

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