

DOI:10.14394/eidos.jpc.2025.0017

Przemysław Bursztyka
Faculty of Philosophy
University of Warsaw, Poland
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4978-198X>
pbursztyka@uw.edu.pl

Standing Together Is Not Enough:
A Phenomenological Outline of Solidarity
(With Constant Reference to Eastern European Experience)

Abstract:

The aim of my paper is to provide a phenomenological outline of solidarity understood as a social phenomenon. I will defend the thesis that solidarity cannot be properly understood either as a concept, or as some institutionalized mechanism grounded in a legal-political order. It precedes and grounds such orders. Solidarity belongs to the social realm within which it can be properly understood only as an event. That is, a radical phenomenon appearing beyond (or even against) all expectations, preceding its own causes, opening a horizon of novelty, of positive social and normative reconstruction (regardless of concrete forms such reconstruction may take). However, as an event it is also ephemeral and transient. If so, the question of its potential impact on the political realm is essentially open. I will also defend the thesis that it is Eastern Europe, where solidarity took/has taken on its most genuine, exceptional forms. My analysis will be based on the examples of the Polish Solidarity Movement, the Singing Revolution, Euromaidan and the Revolution of Dignity, and the Belarusian Revolution.

Keywords:

solidarity, Eastern Europe, event, phenomenology, the social, the political

History challenges and verifies concepts we use to make sense of reality and of ourselves.¹ It shows their limitations: sometimes quite radically by revealing their empty or superficial character, sometimes by showing their insufficiency. In that latter case there is some meaningful excess inscribed into our experience, an excess which escapes any effective conceptualization. Here experience itself calls for more subtle articulations, where concepts should be replaced by idea or symbol. It does not necessarily mean that we should resign from all attempts at using concepts here. Rather it means we should undertake an open-ended effort of re-conceptualization and re-articulation of the experience itself. This is not necessarily (or not always) equal to leaving concepts which we have at our disposal. This effort can take the form of revealing other dimensions of the phenomena to which the concepts in question are to refer. Or regaining meanings which have been forgotten; or projecting new ones.² In the course of history there are some collective experiences which generate a specific surplus of meaning, which undermines the validity of the recognized conceptual frameworks. That is why discursive reason cannot proudly celebrate itself as being independent of the historical reality. It has its ground and origin in it. This paper is to present a tentative phenomenological outline of a very specific experience, an experience shared by tens of millions of people in Eastern Europe in different moments of recent history – the experience of solidarity. The experience which has become a symbol, and therefore has from the very beginning, manifested itself as a task for theoreticians of the social and the political; but has also provided us with a normative orientation as to how we all should think of our common reality, the reality each of us is responsible for, the reality each of us co-constitutes.

1) I would like to express my deep gratitude to the editor Jan Molina and to the anonymous reviewers for *Eidos. A Journal for Philosophy of Culture*. Their critical and challenging comments helped me to improve the essay, clarify some crucial points, and critically rethink many aspects of solidarity. I also thank Peter Wozniak for helping me to polish the final version of the essay.

2) In this sense it is an essay in philosophy of culture understood as an attempt at a certain re-conceptualization of a particular social phenomenon. Philosophy of culture, as it is employed here, is a general philosophical reflection on all processes of meaning-making. In this sense it takes forms of genealogy and archeology of different social-historical actualities and corresponding experiential fields within which humans (being also parts of those actualities) are to orient themselves. Thus, it also takes a form of axiological hermeneutics, which tries to uncover and project values playing such an orientational role. For more on that see Bursztyka, "Toward an Apophatic Philosophy of Culture"; Bursztyka, Kramer, and Rychter, "Philosophy of Culture and *Humane-ization*"; and Rosińska and Michalik, *Co to jest filozofia kultury?*

Over two years ago one of the European governments, overburdened with the number of immigrants, announced a statement calling the EU member-states to activate a “mechanism of solidarity.” The details of this statement are well known. One of them was somehow alarming; to paraphrase it a bit: “either a state takes such and such number of immigrants, or if it refuses, is obliged to pay a very concrete amount of money for every single ‘head’ not taken.” It is striking how close this statement is to the sophisticated logic of colonialism. Of course, “solidarity” here was not related to those suffering (i.e., immigrants). It was clearly seen as a particular relation between the mentioned country and the other EU countries. Immigrants were just an occasion, having no fundamental importance here, but having an assigned exact “price.” However, in my case the confusion was caused not so much by the mentioned quasi-/neo-/semi-colonialist logic standing behind this statement. There was something wrong in this statement, something which initially I could not identify. Eventually, I realized where lied the source of my confusion – and that was the very phrase “mechanism of solidarity.” For a person coming from Eastern Europe, a person whose sense of cultural reality, their axiological sensitivity, the basic modes of self-understanding based on the historical sedimentation of his ancestors – this phrase does not make any sense; even more it seems like *contradictio in adiecto*. This leads me to the first thesis: *solidarity should not and cannot be conceptualized if it is to remain what it is. Solidarity cannot be conceptualized as much as it cannot be institutionalized*. If so, then it goes without saying that any attempts at politicizing it will encounter insurmountable difficulties. One can call for activation of the mechanism of solidarity as much, (and as long) as one wants to. The only problem is the term “solidarity” here stands for something else than what is intended. A genuine solidarity is not something which can be activated or incepted or even demanded. It has its own logic and rhythm. It is somehow a paradoxical phenomenon – being foundational for the social, and more broadly for the human reality, is ephemeral, spontaneous, and, as it were, beyond our control. And yet, without active and conscious participation of all involved individuals it will not be possible. It does not mean that any structural, formalized or habitual forms of solidarity are its fake, or at least, by necessity, superficial forms (although many of them, in fact, are). Rather, it simply means that genuine solidarity *appears*; when it appears, it does so through and as an active and conscious *engagement* transgressing

constraints of reality and our self-limitations, and not as a mechanism, an obedient response to institutional demands.³

The second thesis of my essay is the following: *the Polish Solidarity Movement (1980–1981) and along with it all comparable phenomena, in what I would like to understand as Eastern Europe,*⁴ *were something exceptional, spectacular; something, in a sense, without comparison.* Moreover, they all at once constitute and express a certain community of history and experience, regardless of any particular differences among them (some of them are quite significant).⁵ Taken together they are expressive of the ethos, which has developed throughout the long and dramatic history, and has become the connecting link between the peoples of Eastern Europe.⁶

The word “solidarity” is, in the contemporary social and more broadly cultural discourse as well as in our every-day talks, clearly among the most common words; it is overused and abused. We tend to use it unreflectively, and in most cases to designate relations and phenomena which have very little, if anything, in common with genuine solidarity. The point I want to defend here is that the latter can be approached and

3) It is also important to note that what I will describe, based on given examples, as genuine solidarity is not to be seen as its only true form, as if in opposition to other possible examples of solidarity (including “small,” mundane ones). It is rather to be seen as a radical manifestation of the potential, which is inscribed into each solidary action, a potential of *positive reconstruction of reality*. In this sense one should speak here of certain continuity. I simply claim that this potential – with all positive components of true solidarity – was manifested with the greatest intensity in the solidarities to which I refer in this essay. This reservation does not change the general point I make several times throughout the paper that we have a natural tendency to overuse the word, to apply it even to situations which have nothing in common with solidarity, to confuse it with other experiences (e.g., empathy, compassion), or to use it as an easy rhetorical excuse for a lack of any active response to a particular situation.

4) This meaning of Eastern Europe is based on the two criteria: first, belonging to the European community of values; second, being confronted, for centuries, with Russia – a cultural formation which has never, in fact, belonged to the European cultural project. For more on that See Bursztyka, “Reconceptualizing Eastern Europe.” See also Peluritis, “The Idea of ‘Eastern Europe’”; Mažeikis, “The Role of Philosophy in the De-traumatizing of the Sedimented History”; Gornyxh, “The Other Heading of Europe”; and Rosińska, “The European Experience.”

5) Gintautas Mažeikis proposes a very inspiring philosophical method for cultural diplomacy as philosophically mediated. Although, it is meant to deal with complex inter-cultural relations based on sedimented layers of uneasy (often traumatic) historical experiences, I believe it can also be of some use in cases analyzing differences and similarities in cultural phenomena more generally. See Mažeikis, “Philosophical Mediation in Cultural Diplomacy.”

6) Bursztyka, “Reconceptualizing Eastern Europe,” especially 89–92.

understood only in and through a specific kind of experience, an experience which can never be abstract, superficial, distantiated, or even partial. “Solidarity” should not be reduced to a linguistic cliché or an expression of a hidden lack of concern. Quite to the contrary, it, by its very nature, requires deep personal involvement.⁷ That is why it is phenomenology which seems to be the most promising mode of analysis of the experience in question. Now, the obvious questions are: how should we understand genuine solidarity? What are its basic components? Can we distinguish something like its *eidetic* core? Or perhaps we should rather think of it in terms of a process, or an ephemeral event whose every articulation escapes the limitations of eidetic analysis. I claim – and it is the third tentative thesis of my paper – that: *solidarity is a complex social phenomenon comprising cognitive, volitional, affective, ethical, and symbolic components. As such genuine solidarity manifests itself as a positive, spontaneous ethical action of a collective subject constituted by different individuals regardless of and across differences in their worldviews, social and economic status, age, and so forth. I also claim that genuine solidarity is to be understood in terms of a radical event – that is, one unpredictable with regard to both its causes and effects, and as such having revolutionary potential.*

Conceptual Frameworks

It seems that “solidarity” is among the most popular terms in the contemporary ethical, social, and political (but also economic) discourses. Thus, it is not surprising that researchers representing philosophy, social and political sciences, and economy are somehow relentless in their efforts at conceptualizing solidarity. Efforts which so far have not even arrived at what is the most general meaning of the concept. It is often said that solidarity should be understood as a political principle, a civic value, a public virtue, a basic social bond determining the level of social cohesion, a moral obligation, or a collective sentiment, and so forth.⁸ Needless to say, there is no common agreement as to the importance of the abovementioned determinations. For example,

7) It is not a coincidence that the best works about the Polish Solidarity Movement were written by active participants of those events – not only Poles (e.g., Staniszkis, Krzemiński, Kubik, Touraine).

8) Tava, “Justice, Emotions, and Solidarity,” 39. See also Tava, “European Solidarity.”

some scholars admit that solidarity as a sociopolitical phenomenon comprises affectivity as its essential component, others strongly disagree; some scholars insist on a particular determination, others tend to think that it can be conceived only as a synthesis of all these determinations. Not to mention there is the common usage where the term refers to “a kind of fellowship that can emerge among individuals or social groups on the basis of their convictions,”⁹ goals, and projects regardless of their axiological status. It further increases an initial confusion.

When conceptualizing solidarity: Should we conceive it as a normative phenomenon? Or is solidarity just one among many other social facts, and therefore, nothing more than just a moment of our human factuality? Is it a universal phenomenon, or even more, a part of human nature constituting a universal community of brotherly and sisterly love? Or is it something local, a specific bond strengthening relations only among those who are already close to each other? Is it a specific disposition which is imposed on humans by some metaphysical power (be it Nature or God), and manifesting itself as a kind of moral, indisputable duty or obligation? Or an ephemeral second-order disposition formed in the course of human interactions, a disposition whose activation depends on transient inclination?

The term “solidarity” is used variously to mark the cohesion of a group, the obligations of civic membership, the bond that unites the human family, shared experience, expressions of sympathy, or struggles for liberation. As a moral concept, solidarity has been interpreted as a virtue, a duty, a feeling, a relation, and a conscious choice. Solidarity is used to describe a particular type of community and it is used to describe the bonds of any community. Solidarity is a feeling that moves people to action and it is an action that invokes strong feelings.¹⁰

Originally the very term solidarity had arisen from the legal context. As far as we can tell, the first time it appeared was in Roman law – as *obligatio in solidum* – that is, responsibility of each member of a family or other group to pay the debts of the

9) Tava, “Justice, Emotions, and Solidarity,” 39.

10) Scholz, *Political Solidarity*, 17.

community.¹¹ In modern Europe this rule was brought to the level of a fundamental principle of a shared responsibility of members of a community. So far, so good. However, in these initial characteristics one can already see the germs of potential simplification of its meaning. That is, its tendency for institutionalization, formalization, and bureaucratization. It is clearly visible when we have a look at how the concept of solidarity is characterized in European Union treaties and documents. We learn that it is a dominant aspect of European societies, “a universal value,” a fundamental principle regulating the main sectors such as energy, healthcare, social security, environmental protection, immigration, terrorism, and so forth.¹²

There are two fundamental oppositions which have organized the ethical and the sociopolitical discourse on solidarity from its very beginnings, namely: universality *versus* locality, and normativity *versus* factuality. In the ethical thought solidarity was recognized (not yet named in this way, though) as the principle of universal fellowship of all men as brothers – first in Stoicism and Christianity. The further articulation of a similar universalistic sentiment as a fundament of ethics one can find in utilitarianism.¹³ The first explicit use of the word (as it seems) one can find in Pope’s Pius XII encyclical *Summi Pontificatus: On the Unity of Human Society* (20th of October 1939). Pius XII referred there to “law of human solidarity and charity which is dictated and imposed by our common origin and by the equality of rational nature in all men, to whatever people they belong.”¹⁴ Like in the case of utilitarian ethics, one is almost immediately forced to apprehend these words not in a naively straightforward way, but rather through a fundamental tension: ideal obligation *versus* factuality.¹⁵ The law of solidarity is super-imposed on us because of our common – in this case – metaphysically-theologically determined nature; and that is, irrespective of all factual

11) See Bayertz, “Four Uses of ‘Solidarity,’” 3.

12) See Tava, “European Solidarity.”

13) According to John Stuart Mill the fundament of ethics is “the social feelings of mankind; the desire to be in unity with our fellow creatures... It also leads him to identify his feelings more and more with their good, or at least with an ever greater degree of practical consideration for it. He comes, as though instinctively, to be conscious of himself as a being who of course pays regard to others.” (Mill, *Utilitarianism*, 57–59) It is very difficult to resist the temptation of asking: “What if not?”

14) Pius XII, *Summi Pontificatus*, 35.

15) It is worth remembering the times in which this document was released and the significant silence of Pius XII during the second world war.

particularities. Such a law of solidarity has no specific limitations – it is universal, and as such should be applied without exceptions. Furthermore, and by implication, any violation of such a law is equal to a violation of rational human nature. If so, we are clearly moving here in a kind of vicious circle.

A very strong objection to such universalistic aspirations of the law of brotherly love or solidarity was raised by many ethical thinkers with David Hume as the first notable example. Recently it was Richard Rorty, who expressed it in a very convincing way. In this perspective sentiments such as brotherly-love or solidarity should be seen rather as *exclusive*; limited to groups of people who are close to us, with whom we share interests, affections, history or a relationship of kinship. In short, to people with whom we can identify ourselves in more concrete terms. As Rorty put it: “our sense of solidarity is strongest when those with whom solidarity is expressed are thought of as ‘one of us,’ where us means something smaller and more local than the human race. That is why ‘because she is a human being’ is a weak, unconvincing explanation of a generous action.”¹⁶ Obviously, the question of potential limitations of this “local” solidarity poses problems of its own.

The very first sociopolitical articulation of “solidarity” can be found already in Plato and Aristotle. According to the author of *The Nicomachean Ethics* – the very foundation of society, and the basic social bond is, common to all humans, a “will to live together.” Such a will is best expressed among friends – that is why for Aristotle “friendship” serves as a model for all forms of a genuine social groups – starting from family and ending with *polis* – as a community of communities, or an all-encompassing community of friends sharing the same, broadly understood purposes and the same noble way of life.¹⁷ A very interesting tension one can find in Plato. On the one hand, there is in the *Republic* a vision of a perfectly just state; a state based on the principle of unity and simplicity. Since Plato sees the private property as the main origin of social inequality and division, he opposes the very idea of such property and suggests that the guardians of this state should hold everything in common. On the other hand, in his *Laws* Plato claims that when we speak about well-organized (i.e., rationally) *polis*, there must be an untouchable right to

16) Rorty, *Contingency, Irony, Solidarity*, 191.

17) See Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, books VIII–IX.

property.¹⁸ This paradox, or contradiction, can be explained if we realize Plato's reflection is situated here within the tension between the *ideality* of the perfectly just state and *factuality* of a concrete state, which can always be only a partial, imperfect actualization of the idea.

These tensions find their further articulations, within modern social and political thought, on the one hand in "Durkheim – Tönnies controversy"; on the other hand, in the open-ended debate between liberalists and communitarians. What is at stake here is not only the status and the conception of solidarity be it mechanic or organic, contractual or participatory, but also, and even more importantly, the status and the character of the relation between individuals and communities. There is no room here for reconstructing this debate. However, the mentioned stakes call for some basic distinctions. There are different kinds of social relations between individuals, and there are different kinds of communities. Consequently, there could be different solidarities.

Sally Scholz in her book *Political Solidarity* distinguishes three separate kinds of solidarity – social, civic, and political – and supplements this typology with an additional faked kind, which she called "parasitical solidarity." The first kind is social solidarity expressive of the basic ties between members of a particular group, and of the level of their interdependence. In her view social solidarity is both descriptive (manifests a level of social cohesion based on shared consciousness, history, and experience), and normative (comprises daily responsibilities and obligations of the members of a group). "Established customs, social mores, laws, or codes express the expected obligations individual members have to one another in the group... . The obligations accrue with group membership and thus may be externally imposed."¹⁹ In this sense social solidarity can have at once progressive and conservative character. A subcategory of this kind of solidarity can be cultural solidarity "when the social cohesion rests on shared traditions, languages, and practices."²⁰ In the same way, one can speak, for example, about "racial solidarity" or, in the broadest sense, "human solidarity." Now, with the latter example, we end up in the mentioned

18) See Plato, *Laws*, book XI, especially 913a–915c.

19) Scholz, *Political Solidarity*, 21.

20) *Ibid.*, 22.

above predicament of universalism. In all other cases, solidarity becomes confined to those who are like us, that is, it is bound by the relation of similarity and identity.²¹ Furthermore, the additional weakness of this kind of solidarity is that, in my opinion, there are no convincing arguments for using here the category of solidarity. We can simply speak about social ties, communal responsibility, identification with the group (in acting and speaking), and so forth. It is true we have a natural tendency to use the word in those contexts. However, in most cases we do it in a superficial way. There must be some additional conditions fulfilled if the usage of this word is to be justified.

The second kind is civic solidarity which pertains first to “the relationship between citizens within a political state.”²² What is crucial here is that this relationship is mediated through a state – “that is, by virtue of their membership in a political state, each citizen is obliged to all others citizens, and vice versa... . The social bond of citizenship just means that one can expect certain protections from all others... . The state is usually the vehicle through which those protections are issued.”²³ The work of civic solidarity is directed toward any vulnerabilities, barriers, and injustice which prevent some individuals from active participation in public life. What is crucial here is the presumption, underlying the very idea of civic solidarity, that addressing the needs of the individuals will do good to the whole of society. Now, the obvious questions arise: Do we really need the concept of solidarity here? Can any case of addressing social injustices be determined an act of solidarity? Does one not reduce here solidarity to different kinds of responses, where not all of them have anything in common with what we usually identify as solidarity? It seems that we can do without this concept. In my view, what is to be rendered here by “solidarity” can be fully covered by justice as a fundament of a well-arranged

21) We should remember here about Habermas’ and Arendt’s warnings pertaining to the superficial forms of quasi-solidarity permeating any ideologized community of those who are of the same kind. Such communities (whatever form they take) in fact have nothing in common with solidarity – they are based on radical exclusion. The latter has a double character – external (“‘they’ do not belong to us; therefore ‘they’ pose a threat to us”) and internal (“you have to be like us”). In this sense, they negate solidarity, which should be based on recognition of plurality inherent to any community. Needless to say, that the most horrific examples of such “communities” based on “solidarity” were totalitarian regimes.

22) Scholz, *Political Solidarity*, 27.

23) Ibid.

and just state.²⁴ Furthermore, if, as Scholz herself claims, the vehicle of this kind of solidarity is a state then it goes without saying that civic solidarity is prone to different distortions among which the most obvious can be administratization and bureaucratization.²⁵

The third kind of solidarity distinguished by Scholz is a political one. It differs quite significantly from the other kinds with several respects. First, it is not to be seen in terms of a certain lasting disposition serving either as a fundament, more or less abstract, of social cohesion, or in terms of shared interests, shared attributes, location, or simplified mutual protection. It is an active, real response to a real situation of injustice and oppression. In this sense it has an oppositional, reactive character.²⁶ Second, it is based on a deep sense of personal involvement of individuals belonging to a group/collective (be it a smaller or larger group), committed to addressing, in an active way, the cause. Third, belonging to such a group has profound implications for the sense of identity of individuals. And last but not least, political solidarity is permeated by positive moral content.²⁷

The oppositional nature of political solidarity is rich with positive moral content. Political solidarity is formed by the mutually undertaken obligations of individual members of a solidary group. Political solidarity entails multifaceted relations that inform many of the duties of political action

24) This point is obviously debatable. For example, Jürgen Habermas is the most passionate advocate of the opposite view – justice must be supplemented by solidarity; it is its inevitable reverse. As he argues – while solidarity “is rooted in the realization that each person must take responsibility for the other because as consociates all must have an interest in the integrity of their shared life context in the same way... *Justice* concerns the equal freedoms of unique and self-determining individuals, while *solidarity* concerns the welfare of consociates who are intimately linked in an intersubjectively shared form of life – and thus also to the maintenance of the integrity of this form of life itself. Moral norms cannot protect one without the other: they cannot protect the equal rights and freedoms of the individuals without protecting the welfare of one’s fellow man and of the community to which the individuals belong.” (Habermas, “Justice and Solidarity,” 47)

25) It seems that Scholz herself is conscious of that – she makes relevant remarks following Kees Schuyt. See Scholz, *Political Solidarity*, 30.

26) This, “offensive,” aspect of solidarity is also strongly underscored by Habermas for example in his famous lecture “Democracy, Solidarity, and the European Crisis.”

27) See Scholz, *Political Solidarity*, 33–35.

as well as the duties to others... . The moral content of political solidarity does not begin with impartiality or neutrality, as do most conceptions of ethics. On the contrary, context, situation, and experience provide the source and content of morality within political solidarity.²⁸

Political solidarity arises out of real problems and concerns of real people.

As I have mentioned earlier – we like the word “solidarity,” we like to use it, to overuse it, to abuse it. It is a perfect candidate for expressing superficial sympathy, a concern devoid of a special sense of commitment,²⁹ familial responsibilities, similarity, and so forth. Scholz describes this phenomenon by the concept of “parasitical solidarity” – a term denoting phenomena which may resemble a genuine solidarity with some regards, but they either are lacking essential moral aspects, or “they are meant to appear as a form of solidarity only for rhetorical purposes.”³⁰ The best examples of such “pretenders” that can be mentioned are: “solidarity” among criminals or more specifically members of criminal gangs, camaraderie, sympathy, similarity, pressure from peers, or members of professional groups. In most such cases we are confronted either with imposed obligations, or with a superficial sense of unity (in comparison with that typical for a genuine solidarity), or with significant deficiencies of moral or affective components.

It seems that Scholz’s distinctions and clarifications have clear advantages, even if the notions of social and civic solidarities are still haunted by formal and conceptual shortcomings (and that makes them permanently questionable). The notion of political solidarity, in turn, allows us to more clearly distinguish fundamental components of experience of genuine solidarity such as its active nature, a deep sense of unity with the members of a group, or, perhaps most importantly, its ethically positive character.

However, regardless of all its merits, it also suffers from some shortcomings which makes it only a limited theoretical tool when it comes to the analysis of historical examples of solidarity in Eastern Europe. First, the insistence on using the label

28) Ibid., 35.

29) Let us just consider this common phrase “On a day like this we all are X” so often used by politicians (but not only them), when some tragedy happens to a group of people in some far-distant country. There is no doubt that that it is driven by a sense of agitation. And very often, it is nothing more than that – a simple expression of agitation.

30) Scholz, *Political Solidarity*, 47 n.

“political” leads to a very broad understanding of the political without debasing (like, for example, in Arendt) the social and, consequently, to the moments of the mixing or even confusing these two realms. It is a simple consequence of her insistence on the need to acknowledge, with all doubts she expressed about it, social solidarity. Interestingly, it is mainly political solidarity (and not social) which can bring about any positive, social change. Second, it is unclear how Scholz’s distinctions can be applied to genuine solidarity-actions which articulate themselves in collective actions transgressing constraints of the local, state, and oppressed communities. Third, as a consequence, the clearly oppositional nature of political solidarity makes it impossible to think solidarity as an inclusive, virtually all-embracing positive phenomenon, rather than based on an antagonistic fundament. It is one thing to state that the experience of solidarity stems from suffering or oppression; and it is completely another thing to maintain that solidarity is to be essentially determined by its inherent “against!” Without making a very clear distinction here all Eastern European solidarities will be unconceivable.

Phenomenology of Solidarity

As we saw above – most of the attempts at conceptualization of solidarity as a universal phenomenon/disposition/virtue to be a fundament either of ethical systems, social life, or even a political mechanism end either in contradictions (or at least in insurmountable tensions) or must admit strong limitations and in this sense – they fail. From the phenomenological perspective solidarity can neither be taken for granted (as if it was reducible to legal obligation) – which seems to be too hastily assumed by the proponents and defenders of the notion of “social solidarity” and, obviously, by communitarians. Nor can it be rationally and scrupulously added to the socio-political agenda of liberalism, where it functions, as it were, as *deus ex machina*, or is too optimistically based on a faith that as angelic beings we will always act with consideration for the common good and that necessarily means, acting with regard for the welfare of vulnerable individuals, and against all social injustices. Nor can it be superimposed on us by some ultimate authority. There is nothing like a mechanism of solidarity, which can be activated or not depending on political motivations, and current exigencies of economy. This is, I believe, what we can draw, in a positive sense, from Eastern European solidarities.

In what follows I will provide a phenomenological outline of this experience in a few points. What is at stake in the following analysis is to reveal some eidetic moments of genuine solidarity not by means of an abstract speculation, but by means of a truly phenomenological step, that is, a return to things themselves – real, historical experiences. Let me just briefly repeat what I formulated at the beginning of the paper as one of its theses. Genuine solidarity is understood here as *a complex social phenomenon comprising cognitive, volitional, affective, ethical, and symbolic components*; and it *manifests itself as a positive, spontaneous ethical action of a collective subject constituted by different individuals regardless of and across differences in their worldviews, social and economic status, age, and so forth*. In the course of the analysis, not only will the abovementioned components become visible, but a specific ontological status of the phenomenon, its spatio-temporal characteristics, and the nature of the solidary subject will also manifest.

1. The Inexplicable Character of the Phenomenon – Solidarity as an Event

Let me start from the mode of manifestation of solidarity/Solidarity. As stated above, and in constant opposition to the proponents of the so called “social” and “civic” solidarities, if we want to ascribe to this term any serious significance, we cannot assume that it is something simply given. We should not too hastily take it for granted. *Solidarity happens*. It is an event. It is so in a phenomenological sense, that is, as a radical phenomenon which transcends our powers of understanding. That is, it indicates an experience of nothing *objective*, of no-object, an experience the meaning of which constantly unfolds and is inseparable (even in a purely formal sense) from its manifestation.³¹ According to Jean-Luc Marion the event should be characterized by

31) In this sense it transgresses the constraints of Husserl’s phenomenology still remaining within the limits of the Cartesian paradigm of subject-object division. The experience of solidarity in the sense I propose here cannot be understood, as I hope should be clear from the first part of the essay, in terms of something being there to be experienced and its modes of manifestation. Husserlian understanding of the phenomenon based on the so-called essential correlation of appearance and appearing (or *noesis* and *noema*) is not very helpful in this regard. Marion’s notion of saturated phenomenon fits much better here. That is, solidarity gives itself as and only in different modes of its active manifestation. In this sense the phenomenon of solidarity is not, at any moment, an effect of experience, or an experience of something external. Rather *it is given only as an experience*. As such it carries transformative potential for those taking part as well as for their social reality.

three distinctive features. First, it is radically *unique*, unrepeatable; “it comes from itself and without precedent, the event of unknown cause remains a found event, absolutely unique.”³² Second, it is characterized by *excessiveness*, which is to say, it transcends all preexisting conditions and causes. It cannot be conceived, so to speak, in its entirety. It is given in an excess of meaning beyond and against actual points of reference, available categories and schemes of understanding. Rather it inaugurates an infinite hermeneutics of horizons where meaning and importance of the event are constantly challenging our power of understanding, are still presenting a task. It also means that whatever explanations one can produce for its appearance, whatever causal chains can be established – all that can be done only *ex post factum*; moreover, they always will be partial and transient. Third, the event is to be determined solely by its *possibility*. Since in the very moment, and mode, of its manifestation, the event escapes all efforts at reducing it to whatever precedes it. In this sense it is not reducible to any essence, the actualization of which it would be. It manifests itself only and exclusively in and as its very possibility. Therefore, it not only transcends metaphysical schemes, but more importantly, it constitutes itself as, in a sense, an absolute point of reference, that is, having an authority to redefine reality. Thus, this three-fold characteristic decides not only about its facticity, but also about its transformative, revolutionary power. As Marion claims – because “it exceeds the preceding situation, the event not only is not inscribed therein, but in establishing itself, redefines a partially or entirely different situation.”³³ In this sense the event has power of possibilization, a potential for reconstructing and reconfiguring cultural reality. And that also includes the possibility of thinking and acting otherwise.

Solidarity, in the context of my analysis, gave itself precisely in such a mode. And as such it could not be explained – that is, reduced to a set of preexisting conditions and causes. When solidarity happened, it did so in a unique and unrepeatable way. It did so in an excessive way, beyond or sometimes even against all predictions, against all odds. It can also be expressed by saying that all its preconditions, causes, prognoses become clearly visible only *ex post factum*. Furthermore, since ontologically it is determined as possibility – its effects could not, and cannot, be predicted

32) Marion, *Being Given*, 170.

33) *Ibid.*, 172.

either. In all cases, it surely has led to a complete change of social, axiological, symbolic – and more broadly cultural – landscapes. It surely has still given itself as an absolutely unique point of reference for those who experienced it, as well as for the subsequent generations. It has still had potential for ethical renewal of societies, even if it is so often cynically used (i.e., abused) for political purposes.

It is hard to imagine how such a phenomenon as the Solidarity Movement was possible in the social landscape of Poland in 1980; that is, a landscape marked by almost complete lack of social capital, where instead of basic ties of trust and shared responsibility for the common good there were only captive minds, common distrust and suspicions, inertia, disrespect toward the common good; or, at best, this socially futile phenomenon of “stabilization” leading to a omnipresent, unbearable feeling of social impotence. A Polish sociologist Ireneusz Krzemiński in his book on the Solidarity Movement and its legacy (certainly one of the best works on the topic) makes precisely such a point. When one undertakes an analysis of the Polish sociopolitical landscape *ex post factum*, it is almost striking how easily one can identify the whole chain of meaningful social, political, economic, and religious phenomena which altogether had created preconditions for the Revolution of Solidarity.³⁴ And yet, the very fact of its appearance cannot be simply reduced to these preconditions. Perhaps one of the best proofs of this was the inability of the existing models of social analysis either to recognize these preconditions, or to really understand the social processes constituting the movement itself.³⁵ Correlatively, it was impossible to predict what it would bring about – there were moments of hope, and those of deep despair. Nobody at those moments was capable of predicting what we now know – that the very moment solidarity had created, for a time being, a completely new social and ethical landscape, the fate of the political regime was already determined.

Similarly, it is difficult to exhaustively explain how in the highly polarized Ukraine of 2013 such a phenomenon as Euromaidan and the Revolution of Dignity was possible. One can obviously argue that both the sociopolitical and axiological orientations of the Ukrainian people, or the already well-established democratic model of the political, were sufficient conditions for the event. However, one should

34) Krzemiński, *Solidarność*, 215–16.

35) *Ibid.*, 229–30.

remember that it is not fully accurate to speak about this orientation in the singular. Furthermore, it is one thing to arrange mass manifestations of a younger generation to vividly express disagreement with a political decision of the state's ruler; and it is completely another thing to stand up collectively in defense of the fundamental values of the community; and to do so in a great mass movement, uniting representatives of all generations, ethnicities, religious denominations;³⁶ the movement expressing the collective will of political, social, and axiological self-determination of the people.³⁷ The effects of the Revolution of Dignity – from the defeat of Yanukovych's regime, through the axiological renewal of the social sphere, to the barbaric Russian attack on Ukraine – are visible and tangible. Were they at the moment when Ukrainian people stood up in a spectacular solidary, all-nation effort to determine their future(s)? One can have reasonable doubts here. In any case, the Revolution of Dignity (with all its implications and consequences), and its legacy are still *possibility*.

The same holds for the Belarusian Revolution of 2020. The Belarusian people, for decades submerged in a state of inertia, in a negative acceptance, based on a "social contract" with the authoritarian political power guaranteeing a reasonable level of social-economic security in exchange of political obedience, out of the sudden stood up in defense of something which has been for a very long time forgotten. It is true that there was a long-lasting tradition of Belarusian democratic opposition; but it was equally true that it had no nation-wide resonance. It is true that there were many preconditions for social reawakening.³⁸ And yet, the events of 2020 and 2021, as much as their outcomes, have no precedence in the recent Belarusian history, nor can they be explained by reduction to the mentioned preconditions. The mass, social, trans-

36) See, for example, Kvit, "The Ideology of the Euromaidan Revolution," especially the section "Ideological Consensus."

37) This was well-expressed by Katya Gorchinskaya – one of the participants of the Euromaidan: "In a way, this is a war. It is a war for a new civilization in Ukraine. Based on values such as solidarity, dignity, respect for an individual and clear and equal rules of the game for all. This is no longer about Europe or integration – it's about who we are and where we want to go. This is about a nation being born. Mutilated by years of misrule, impoverished by looting, it emerges slowly from the ruin. This process is massive and we don't know how well this birth is going to go. But it's happening now and here, in Kyiv, and it's both painful and awesome. The only place to truly feel the pain and grandeur of this national awakening is to stand there right on Maidan." (Quoted after Stern, "What Europe Means to Ukraine's Protesters")

38) See Barkouski and Gniazdowski, *Przebudzenie Białorusi*, especially 20–24, 154–64.

generational movement – comprising people from all political worldviews, all professions (including members of political system and state police), and all provenances – has allowed Belarusians to assert and affirm their subjecthood on both a social and political level. One of the significant outcomes of the Revolution is the fact that the democratic orientation of the Belarusian people received a developed, institutional representation capable of persisting over time. Even though the situation, as we speak, is very dramatic with Lukashenka's regime escalating all forms of brutal repressions against any democratic impulses, nobody can fully predict what will come out of all these processes. In any case, the Revolution has negated the regime's omnipotence. And along with that, *possibility* has entered the stage.

2. The Question of the Political and the Social

Genuine solidarity can be experienced only beyond the political. And this was probably at the heart of all Eastern European solidarities. To better understand this point, we need to make clear what the concept of "the political" designated in the context of the historical phenomena I refer to. In contemporary philosophical and social discourses, the very notion of the political is somehow ambivalent. On the one hand, it is the sphere in which the actions of collective subjects can undertake liberating efforts, and it is in this sense we can speak, for example, about new political subjects. On the other hand, it is a sphere of relentless work of non-transparent forces which determine ever new forms of subjection of individuals and social groups: shaping their bodies, lifestyles, systems of values, forms of self-understanding, and so forth. It is in the first of these senses that Scholz, among many others, speaks about political solidarity, the term denoting a collective solidary subject whose goal is to lead to a social change. There is also another positive understanding of the political which still holds its position – though, nowadays more in a form of an ideal, a regulative idea than reality available to all. I mean here Hannah Arendt's concept of the political – the pluralistic realm constituted by a multitude of free and equal participants who project and creatively sustain this realm by speaking and acting, in a free and courageous way. In this sense the political constitutes a world, which at once grounds, and makes possible human freedom. From this perspective the social is seen as debasement and distortion of the political. In opposition to the latter – it is not a realm of free, joint, pluralistic, and

deliberative efforts of arranging the world as a space of freedom. Rather, it is first the monstrous sphere of a permanent confusion of public and private interests, the sphere of atrophy of genuine intersubjective ties; and second, the social is usually associated with promoting the one-sided perspective of a particular group, or social class. We can speak here about a class struggle which instead of striving toward a total reconstruction/renewal of the world is focused on achieving a societal goal of defeating particular, limited to the interests of a particular group, social injustices.³⁹

These understandings of the political (and the social) not only do not take into consideration the notion of the political, connecting it simply with the political power and associated institutions, but also seem to overlook the role of civil society as a connecting link between the political and the social. If we negate, or overlook, this phenomenon, then we either risk inflating the notion of the political in which case it is meant to comprise all forms of collective social actions, or we are on a path of disconnecting the political and the social in which case political institutions feel less and less bound by the real concerns of the people whom those very institutions are supposed to represent.

More importantly, the abovementioned (mis-)understandings of the political (as well as the social), do not fit well into the semi-totalitarian, autocratic context in which most Eastern European solidarities had to operate. First, they do not take into consideration the simple fact that the political had been fully taken over by a limited group of the privileged. Second, as a consequence, they do not take into consideration the fact that this reality (and it fits equally to Polish Solidarity, Baltic states in Soviet times, Ukraine under the autocratic rule of Yanukovich, or Lukashenka's regime) was marked by an abysmal

39) Arendt, *The Human Condition*; Arendt, "What is Freedom?" For these reasons (and a couple of others) it seems that Arendt's theory does not seem to provide adequate theoretical frameworks for an analysis of the Polish Solidarity Revolution. As a side note: This is also probably the main reason why the term "solidarity" was treated for a very long time in modern social and political thought either with ironical distance or with, at least moderate, distrust (until the 1980s). First, because it was associated with solidarism embracing all social groups, not taking into consideration differences between interests of class/social groups, and too naively assuming the will of those located higher in the social hierarchy to support, often unconditionally, lower social groups. Second, because of the inherent limitations of the notion, that is, of associating it exclusively with a particular social group, the proletariat. The theoretical and practical pitfalls of such a perspective very quickly became all too obvious. The complete change of the theoretical perspective has been provoked mainly by the rise of the Polish Solidarity Movement, which has revealed completely new layers of meaning inscribed in the very notion of solidarity and its corresponding social phenomenon. See Krzemiński, *Solidarność*, 19–21.

gap between the political and the social. Or put differently, the people were radically alienated from the political. Moreover, this gap providing the privileged with almost unlimited political power led not only to the atrophy of the political (becoming, at different stages, more and more impotent, demoralized, and demobilized), but, what is much more important in the context of this analysis, to a complete neglect of the social sphere.

So, when we think about the shape of the political in communist Poland, in Lukashenka's autocratic, semi-totalitarian Belarus, in the Baltic states in Soviet times (but also to a lesser degree in seemingly democratic Ukraine of Yanukovych), it is very clear that despite all the differences, the vision of the political has, in all these cases, much in common. It is founded upon and driven by similar logic – *the logic of self-legitimizing undivided sovereignty*. But this logic, in order to maintain itself as absolute and undivided sovereignty, is at the same time an aggressive logic of division, separation, and enmity. Its main task is to make any genuine social ties impossible. One of the crucial practical implications here is not only the vertical structure of political power (in itself, and in relation to society), but also using verticality as a means of control of society. That is why the first and absolutely foundational moment of Solidarity Revolutions – actualized by means of different strategies in each of these events – was what I would call, using phenomenological terminology, *the suspension of the political*, putting it, as it were, into brackets; and therefore, acting *as if* the vertical structure imposed on sociopolitical life was no longer operative.⁴⁰

40) One should remember that the question of the political in all the examples referred to is a complex one. The center of gravity of the political power, the Moscovian Leviathan stood behind and above the Polish communist regime as much as it stands today behind Lukashenka's regime, and as much as it was giving warning snarls before EuroMaidan and while seeing a lack of satisfactory effects it took further brutal steps. From active engagement in the attempts to suppress the EuroMaidan Revolution, through the war in Eastern Ukraine, up to the full-scale war against Ukraine – it showed its monstrous nature and possible scenarios for realizing its imperialistic aspirations. When the Polish Solidarity Movement was born, the memories of the Russian, brutal interventions in Hungary (1956) and Czechoslovakia (1968) were pretty much alive. When the Belarusian Revolution of 2020–2021 exploded, its participants were well aware of the bitter price Ukraine has paid for its sovereignty. In that context the suspension of the political was one of the constitutive, core-components of the solidarities, but it was also an effect of sober reasoning. The solidarities were not meant, planned or experienced in terms of an insurrection, a peaceful one only on the initial, preparatory stage, and then, at a proper phase, violent and bloody. The real, and only, challenge they thrown down to the political regime was this turning back from the political and concentration on reconstructing social ties – something of which the political regimes had not even a semblance of understanding.

The activists of the first Solidarity (1980–1981) understood from the beginning that confrontation with the abovementioned logic of political power could only contaminate the ideals of the movement, to say the least. That is why they turned back toward the political and created a spectacular social, *radically inclusive community*. The community which was programmatically expressing a lack of interest in the political. The Polish Solidarity Revolution was not a rebellion or uprising destined to take over political power, or to create a new political state; it did not even intend to transform itself into a political party.⁴¹ Furthermore, its members were very cautious and reluctant toward any activists within the movement who tended to politicize, or radicalize it,⁴² as well as to any activists appealing to a necessity of using violence.⁴³ Neither the leading role of the Polish communist party, nor even the “loving relationship” with Soviet Russia were challenged at any moment. Of course, it would be mistaken to interpret this feature of the movement only in a naively idealistic way. It was a part of a very sober, realistic strategy – “if we want to achieve our goals, we cannot get involved in a political struggle which can lead to an eruption of physical violence.” Precisely for these reasons Jadwiga Staniszkis called it a “self-limiting revolution.”⁴⁴ That is also why one of its components was to escape any, so to speak, ideological temptation, a kind of ideological silence.⁴⁵ If it was to clear a space for pluralistic, democratized society it could neither get involved into ideological struggle with political power, nor got involved in internal ideological clashes which would very quickly tear it apart from within (with a significant contribution of the communist rulers, only waiting for such an opportunity). Thus, there was also a positive aspect of this self-limitation articulated in the prevalent attitude of the members of the movement, a dialogical attitude. The main principle of genuine dialogue is that each perspective is inherently limited, that truth lies in-between different perspectives. That is why the way to truth leads through an open debate where different points of view clash, but only after first being respect-

41) Touraine, *Solidarność. Analiza ruchu społecznego 1980–1981*, 104–105, 143, 167.

42) *Ibid.*, 291–92.

43) *Ibid.*, 295. See also, for example, Krzemiński, *Solidarność*, 381.

44) Staniszkis, *Poland's Self-Limiting Revolution*.

45) *Ibid.*, 19.

fully recognized. I think that this dialogical principle is among the fundamentals, if not the fundament, of the whole movement.⁴⁶

Thus, what was truly exceptional and unheard of before was this kind of positive resignation from the real political struggle. But if so, what exactly was the Solidarity Movement? It seems that it was such a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that any simple, univocal answer (either from the sociological, phenomenological, or historical perspectives) is simply impossible. However, what is important at this stage of my reflection is that it can be determined as *non-political, non-violent, revolutionary social movement*. Alain Touraine described it, in a very condensed way, as “a total social movement striving toward positive reconstruction of all dimensions of public life.”⁴⁷ That means, it was at once: a social movement; a movement of liberation of society in a sense of providing all members of society with a sense of dignity and agency, with a possibility of speaking and acting, with a sense of being a subject of its own history;⁴⁸ and obviously, it was a trade-union movement. In this sense, it connected unionist,

46) See Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 21–24; Krzemiński, *Solidarność*, 25–26, 362–63, 382–96.

47) Touraine, *Solidarność. Analiza ruchu społecznego 1980–1981*, 29.

48) That was connected with regaining “forgotten” moments of history, and restoring a sense of its continuance, of recollecting many historical symbols. It added a kind of symbolic depth to the Solidarity Movement. The crucial role in this process played by the first visit of John Paul II and his sermons, where almost every single sentence pointed out the significance of Polish history and evoked the sense of subjecthood of Polish people taken both collectively and individually. In this sense they provided a meaningful connection between the past, the present, and possible future. Something similar can be said about sermons of Józef Tischner – one of the chaplains of the Solidarity Movement. This dimension of a positive cultural reconstruction was exhaustively elaborated by Jan Kubik whose excellent phrase “siła symboli przeciw symbolom siły” [“the power of symbols against the symbols of power/force”] very adequately and aptly indicates the essence of that cultural revolution.

Such a symbolic shift was at the heart of all Eastern European solidarities. Instead of entering a kind of clash with the regime symbols and their logic, Eastern European solidary subjects projected their own symbolic spaces which restored human sense of agency, dignity and subjecthood. And that was possible also because the mentioned symbolic spaces were not created in a void, they were not abstract and formal; rather they were based on regaining a sense of historicity, a vital sense of a historical continuity of their national, cultural communities. In this sense, it is impossible to conceive these solidarities without symbolic dimension; as much as it is impossible to conceive the latter as not being embedded in the history of the peoples of Eastern Europe. In all these cases the old symbols returned in the new meaningful contexts; and they returned as vital links connecting the historical past, present and possible future(s). In this way they not only *pluralize* and *possibilize* history, but, more importantly, they provide the communities with the sense of their historical subjecthood.

democratizing, and national components. But most importantly it restored a deep sense of horizontal social bonds;⁴⁹ and it did so beyond or regardless of hierarchical structures imposed by the political system.

Hence, it was not only a transformation of spontaneous energy of mass protest into the form of a trade-union, but then also a transformation of the latter into a mass social movement. It was not only an upward movement of the working class, but it very quickly led to the suspension of vertical structures; not only that, it also led to deterritorialization of hierarchical desires. And that was expressed in a very significant linguistic shift – solidarity was a community of all, community of those who act and speak, and who while speaking are equal – that is, use the same semantic skills.⁵⁰ However, that was possible for, at least, two reasons: first, the movement rejected the old semantic codes along with all of their implied social-ontological frameworks. *The reality of solidarity is not only experienced differently, it is a different reality.*⁵¹ Second, the movement was a collective cognitive effort where participants of ongoing debates not only acquire more developed semantic and argumentative skills, not only invent new words, or reveal new meanings – or restore a true meaning – for the old ones, but in this way they learn how to think about reality in different ways, how to provide semantic frameworks for possible actions and initiatives. These ongoing debates were spectacular examples of genuine thinking-with-others, of a reawakened collective reason, which got uncontested superiority over worn out schemes of party-state cynical-instrumental rationality.⁵² There is obviously another cognitive component involved here – while speaking and thinking-together the solidary individuals learn-together how to make democracy. Under the semi-totalitarian regime, which itself was no longer capable of enlivening its own forms of reasoning, over ten million people became involved in the spectacular undertaking – to use a pleonasm – that of the democratic process of learning how to make democracy, how to establish democratic procedures and a democratic system of self-governance (e.g., the complex

49) A similar aspect, as one of the most crucial ones, was underscored also by Ireneusz Krzemiński. See Krzemiński, *Solidarność*, 68.

50) Staniszkis, *Poland's Self-Limiting Revolution*, 18–19.

51) Ibid., 9 (see footnote 3 on that page).

52) See Krzemiński, *Solidarność*, 390–91.

structure of trade unions which served as a kind of semi-institutional infrastructure of this social democratic experiment). Ultimately, how to negotiate with political power without crossing any red lines, how to implement democratic rules, how to introduce and cultivate respect for laws, which were supposed to arrange lives and work of millions of Poles.

This whole landscape has provoked some theoreticians of the social to admit that, even though the movement avoided involvement in politics, it created an alternative form of the political. Ireneusz Krzemiński speaks about “debating” or “participatory” direct democracy that clearly connects Polish Solidarity with a tradition of the democracy of noblemen in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, as being expressive of the same ideals.⁵³ David Ost, in turn, being as it seems fully aware of the specific nature of the movement’s delicate attitude toward explicitly political issues, wrote in his celebrated book about “political anti-politics.”⁵⁴ In my opinion there is no need to create such a neologism. The meaning of the Polish Solidarity Movement – gathering over ten million people of all generations, all political worldviews, including countless members of the communist party, members of all classes and professions, of all social circles – is that society is capable of self-assertion regardless of the political order, that it is capable of self-governance despite the omnipotent impotence of the political power, that it is capable of undertaking responsibility for its fate. Thus, perhaps instead of insisting on politicization of the social we can think about democratic social self-governance rather in terms of *the pre-political* understood as a phase in which civil society prepares a stage and frameworks for a real political change, and tests possibilities and its own limitations. Hence, it would still remain within the limits of the social/social-ethical.

The clear distinction between the political and the social was also true, I believe, in the case of EuroMaidan. What characterized it, besides its spontaneity, was a large degree of decentralization, a distance even toward the representatives of the political opposition (e.g., Klitschko, Yatsenyuk or Tymoshenko) – “The Leader was Maidan itself”⁵⁵ – an initially non-political, but clearly normative orientation. The Ukrainian people resolutely stood up in defense of what they considered to be a fundament of their

53) Ibid., 406.

54) Ost, *Solidarity and the Politics of Anti-politics*.

55) Hrycak, *Ukraine*, 518.

self-understanding. The impressive level of mobilization and self-organization, a sense of unity and mutual support, creativity in modes of resistance against unjust (and unwise) regulations, ability to assess the risks of stepping back in crucial moments, ability of individuals to undertake initiatives; all this shows how powerful Ukrainian civil society is. During their long and dramatic history, the Ukrainian people have developed an ethos which expresses itself in mass mobilization in defending the social against all vicious tricks of the political power (both external and internal), intending to deprive them of their sense of agency and dignity.

I wrote that the Polish Solidarity Movement comprised all social circles, professions, generations, and so forth. But it took some time to create the spirit of such an all-national community. It seems that Polish people had to mature to it. Before it happened, we had had revolts of students (1968) only partially supported by other circles, then by physical workers (1970 and 1976) largely unsupported, and so forth. This point precisely makes the Revolution of Dignity in Ukraine (as well as the Belarusian Revolution) something exceptional. It started, as is well-known, from the peaceful protest of students, and within days it became – as Jaroslav Hrytsak called it – “Noah’s Ark.”⁵⁶ It was almost impossible not to find representatives of all possible ethnic, religious, and linguistic groups along with representatives of all political orientations. One could see there truly unbelievable images – for example, right sector activists moving arm in arm with leftists or with Ukrainian Jews. All of them united by the same fundamental motivation – to defend the right for self-determination.

The same holds true in the context the Belarusian Revolution which, even though triggered by political events, not only cannot be reduced to the political sphere, but most importantly is to be understood essentially as the civic reawakening of the people. The moment of transgression of the constraints imposed by the earlier-mentioned “social contract,” and standing up of the people aware of their will of self-determination, of their cultural identity, was rendered very well in one of the songs by *Tor Band*: “We are not cattle, herds and cowards. We are a living nation, we are Belarusians! With faith in our hearts, we hold the line. The banner of freedom over our heads.”⁵⁷

56) Hrytsak, “Ignorance Is Power,” 222. See also Kvit, “The Ideology of the Euromaidan Revolution.”

57) The original Belarusian version: “Мы не быдло, стадо и трусы. Мы живой народ, мы белорусы! С верой в сердцах, держим мы строй. Знамя свободы над головой.”

To put it differently, the political moment, in the Belarusian context, was open and inclusive, and in this sense remained somehow *pre-political*. It was not about a particular political orientation or program – it was about restoring the rule of law and justice. It was about *giving voice to Belarusian people* – that is, giving to Belarusian people the sense of dignity, participation, and agency – and above all a sense of a community. This is why the Belarusian Revolution comprised all political orientations regardless of any ideological differences.⁵⁸ And that is the main difference between the old political opposition in Belarus and the spirit of the Revolution – to slightly paraphrase Józef Tischner (speaking in the context of Polish solidarity), “Before we will opt for this or that program, we need to get our house in order.” In this sense it was above all expressive of the most fundamental social impulse, the impulse resonating within hundreds of thousands of Belarusians of all provenances, professions, generations, political, and ideological orientations. The impulse which led to the suspension of the vertical structure of political power, the power which ultimately lost its legitimization.⁵⁹ All this was very well expressed by Tatiana Shchyttsova:

The year 2020 brought the sense that we – our relationships, interactions, communication, and mutual assistance – are the country. Therefore, we have rediscovered our country. It has ceased to be an abstract concept and has become embodied by the people around us. They were no longer “alien.” The political aspect of our revolution had an ancient Greek meaning: citizens who hear and want to hear each other in order to *collectively determine the rules of social life*. The new neighborhood communities, some of which (in Minsk) I had the opportunity to speak at, have become convincing evidence of the enormous potential for self-governance in Belarusian society. Through joint protest actions, we were discovering

58) It was clearly visible in the political program of Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya which was, in a sense, clearly negative. It did not promote any specific political orientation. Neither did it represent any specific social-economic class, or groups of interest. It rather aimed at the restoration of the rule of law, at the regaining by the Belarusian people their constitutional rights. See Shchyttsova, “A Philosopher on the Streets of Belarus,” 2.

59) Ibid., 1–2, 4.

the political perspective of our being together, which also included a new sense of mutual interest in each other.⁶⁰

What is worth noting is that Belarusian solidarity (likewise Ukrainian) exploded spontaneously. One of the main slogans of the Belarusian Revolution, gathering people from all social groups and generations, driven by the ideals of justice, dignity and equality, was: “It is only this summer that we met.” It does speak for itself.

3. Beyond Negativity: Solidarity as an Affirmative Social and Ethical Action

One of the features of solidarity understood as an emancipatory social phenomenon – or political solidarity, to use Scholz’s terminology – which can be found in the vast literature on the topic, is its negative, reactive, and adversative nature. A German philosopher Kurt Bayertz writes: “One permanent characteristic of this type of solidarity ... is that it involves a commitment *against* an opponent, from whom positive goals must be wrung. This leads to a *negative* component; ... it is not only exclusive, in that it excludes particular individuals or groups, but adversative, in that it opposes particular individual or groups.”⁶¹

The different aspects of solidarity’s negativity can be found in such different philosophers as Habermas, Rorty, and Arendt. Most of the philosophers agree that solidarity stems from experiences of suffering, humiliation, and radical injustice. And consequently, it has this kind of reactive nature. Furthermore, as Arendt claims, besides this initial affective component of negative nature – solidarity as such is “cold and dispassionate.”⁶² It does not belong to “the order of heart,” but rather to practical reason, and therefore it can be determined as “a principle that can inspire and guide action.”⁶³ These determinations have their indubitable value. However, they seem to be limited with regard to two issues. First, even if we agree that solidarity as such has always a negative source, it does not necessarily entail its negative or reactionary

60) Shchytsova, *Solidarnost’ potryasonnykh*, 6. Quoted after Barkouski, Gniazdowski, *Przebudzenie Białorusi*, 23–24. Italicization mine.

61) Bayertz, “Four Uses of ‘Solidarity’,” 17.

62) Arendt, *On Revolution*, 89.

63) Ibid.

nature. Second, I believe *Arendt's view on solidarity as simply belonging to reason*, that is, deprived of affective component *is incorrect*. Moreover, her view is based on the wrong assumption opposing rationality and affectivity.

The exceptional character of Eastern European solidarities lies in the fact that they somehow reverse the abovementioned determinations. It is true that they stem from the experienced suffering, or at least, painfully experienced injustice – in most cases, violation of human rights, or a structural disregard and disrespect toward human dignity. Hence, they were obviously motivated *to transform* the sociopolitical reality in which such injustices were possible. And precisely here lies the crucial point: the power of the solidarities lies in the fact that they went beyond simple negativity; above all else they were positive projects of the social reality. What characterizes them in the first place – and this is true as much about Polish first Solidarity, as it is about the Revolution of Dignity, Lithuanian Sąjūdis, and the Belarusian Revolution – is that, as paradoxical as it may sound, *they are essentially not against something or someone. Genuine solidarity is, above all, for something*.⁶⁴ The protests on Maidan initially were not against Yanukovych and his regime. If he had signed the EU Association Agreement – most likely there would be no EuroMaidan. In the case of the Belarusian Revolution, the event which triggered the mass protests was the official verdict of the fraudulent elections. And yet, one can assume (with good reasons) that if the dictator Lukashenka would respond positively to the possibility of negotiations, where one of the potential outcomes would be at least a partial restoration of a rule of law, then it is likely that the mass protests would not turn into the revolution. Instead, he chose, as the only possibility, a radically violent, brutal, inhumane way of suppressing the protests.

Genuine solidarity is not exclusive. It is radically inclusive. It does not divide reality between friends and foes, “us” and “them.” It tends to transgress all limitations. Everyone can get involved. During the first wave of the Polish Solidarity Movement there were countless examples of representatives of the regime (of lower and middle rank) who were undergoing an ethical conversion and joining the movement. Many of them were creating “horizontal structures” within the communist party. During the Belarusian Revolution there were examples of *silaviki*, who resigned from their

64) See Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 13.

state-position in the name of social justice; and even among those lacking the courage to do so there are still those who try to play a double role.

But most importantly, solidarity goes far beyond simple mass resistance. It is a project of the renewal of social reality with many (if not all possible) regards. But as such a project, it is not purely theoretical. It always starts with immediate action wherever there is free space for it. This can be exemplified in a renewal of the ethos of work (from physical to academic) in Poland in the 1980s, as much as (the abovementioned) cognitive efforts to recognize the nature of the democratic principles and possible ways of affirming and implementing them under a semi-totalitarian regime. Similarly, this can be exemplified by the spectacular level self-organization of everyday life during EuroMaidan including all basic rules of conduct (e.g., prohibiting alcohol), and very vibrant cultural and intellectual activities arranged to cherish and foster revolutionary efforts as based on cognitive efforts – efforts of learning on the nature of the defended values and the ways of their implementation (e.g., Open University which was actively operating during EuroMaidan). Also, immediately after the events there was, among participants, a truly impressive level of shared responsibility for the common good. In the weeks, and months, following the events when the state institutions, including state police and army, fell into a void of pragmatic impotence – the people in Kyiv (and not only), resolutely filled that gap by taking responsibility for restoring and maintaining the social order with all possible regards;⁶⁵ by making decisions essential for defending all democratic values in the name of which the participants of the Revolution of Dignity resolutely stood up.

The same holds for the axiological dimension of the Belarusian Revolution essentially determined by the most fundamental European values of: freedom, human dignity, truth, and respect for others and for the common good.⁶⁶ There is one special Belarusian word which is expressive of the whole meaning of the Revolution. It is a

65) See, for example, Zabużko, *Najdłuższa podróż*; Plochy, *The Gates of Europe*; Hrycak, *Ukraina*.

66) There is this touching example of Belarusian protesters, who before standing on the benches in Minsk took off their shoes... See Barkouski and Gniazdowski, *Przebudzenie Białorusi*, 173–74. I think it is difficult to find a more significant, more telling example of the high respect by the protesters for the common good. Confronted with the regime disrespecting them and treating everything as its resources, they were able to set an example for how a simple resource of the autocratic regime can be spontaneously transformed into the common good.

verb *shanavat*’ which means at once a care for a person’s life and a respect for a person’s dignity.⁶⁷ I think it would not be a mistake to say that the restoration of such an existential-axiological attitude – where the value of human life in its psychophysical and moral nature is a real cornerstone⁶⁸ – was at the heart of all Eastern European solidarity revolutions. It seems that only on this ground, only by means of the movement of the fundamental *ethicization* of the whole of reality, can a projection of a new social reality be realized.⁶⁹ This also implies – so characteristic for all these phenomena – refusal to use violence, which was obviously partially based on the pragmatic recognition of the situation. However, it was essentially an expression of the most fundamental motivation of Eastern European solidarities; if a new reality is to be established, it must be done beyond the territory annexed by the regime. And that also means beyond its symbolic codes, beyond ideology, beyond all means of its superficial self-assertion, and all forms of false self-legitimization – among which physical, psychological, and symbolic violence take precedence. The whole point here lies not only in a pragmatic avoidance of violence – for example, the participants of EuroMaidan undertake some forms of violent self-defense⁷⁰ – but in a positive resignation from undertaking a prin-

67) Shchytsova, “The Strength of the Strengthless,” 41.

68) It is interesting how this fundamental value of Christianity and the tradition of Enlightenment overlapped in the Eastern European solidarities; how, for example, the Pope John Paul II’s teachings resonated also in the minds of secular and clearly atheistic members of the Polish Solidarity.

69) Ryszard Kapuściński described the climate of the Polish cities in 1980 in the following way: “The mood of the streets calm but tense, an atmosphere of seriousness and confidence born of a sense of righteousness. Cities where a new morality prevailed. No one drank, no one made brawls, no one woke up lashed by a stupefying hangover. Crime dropped to zero, mutual aggression died out, people became friendly, helpful and open to each other. Complete strangers suddenly felt that they were, one to another, needed.” Kapuściński, “Reportaż piąty.”

70) However, it is important to avoid some misunderstandings as to the nature of EuroMaidan. It is often said that what distinguishes it from, for example, the Polish Solidarity or the Belarusian Revolution was that at some point it included violence. It is certainly true. And yet, this violence was exclusively “negative” – that is, used as a form of self-defense. It is remarkable that in forcing Yanukoych to step down the participants of the Ukrainian Revolution did not make it by means of offensive violent actions, but rather by their resoluteness, by the power of their resistance. It is significant that after Yanukovych’s escape they did not allow themselves to get under control of their violent impulses (something quite natural for many revolutions and rebellions). Instead, they got full control over these impulses and used all their energy to restore and maintain law and order. It is very telling that even when they entered into the Byzantine residence of Yanukovych (the symbol of his depravation and disrespect to Ukrainian people), they resigned from demolishing it and left it intact.

ciple of violence as one of the main rules of the new social reality. Not only that; the idea went further – it was meant to go even beyond the feelings of hatred, contempt, or resentment. Perhaps, the best articulations of that positive, deeply ethical attitude one can find in artistic works. Here I mean specifically two songs written in the very dark times. Songs expressive of the spirit of genuine solidarity. The first of them, “Prayer at Sunrise,” was created by the leading bards of the Polish Solidarity – Jacek Kaczmarski, Zdzisław Łapiński, and Przemysław Gintrowski – and was meant as a form of spiritual exercise which is to create and express the only ethically appropriate alternative to the Polish communist regime and its fundamentally unethical principles, principles that prevented the formation of social bonds:

*I will accept your harshest judgement / I will surrender to your power / But
please guard me from contempt / And from hatred shield me God.*⁷¹

The second song, “Zorami,” was created by the contemporary Belarusian fantasy, folk-rock band *Irdorath* as a response to their imprisonment and the tortures they experienced (along with their countless fellow citizens), for their active participation in the Belarusian Revolution. It seems that “Zorami” goes even further than the Polish song in its striving toward a positive affective stance which can transform the hearts not only those who have fallen victim of the most inhumane atrocities – refusal of feelings of revenge, hatred, resentment, but has also a potential to enlighten the hearts of those responsible for the atrocities. There is no denial here. The evil is pointed out, named, and judged with a deep sense of personal dignity. And yet, there is a truly moving expression of transgression beyond the darkness, beyond a seemingly uncontested rule of evil. And it is so no longer in the form of ideal to be actualized with the ethical/spiritual support of the Divine Power, but rather as a self-imposed ideal:

*In the darkness, it's so easy to hide a crime, / It is easier even to ignore it,
/ In the darkness, there is no one to blame – what a relief, / The moans of
the tortured seem not so loud ... / ... / When we were being broken, we
were turning gray... / ...*

71) Kaczmarski, Gintrowski, Łapiński, “Modlitwa o wschodzie słońca,” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xCl6umYvmjE>.

Ref: *One flies arrow-like, another hides in the burrows, / We'll be the star-lights, we'll be the star-lights, / Over the foreign and native wide-open spaces / We'll be the star-lights.*

The ashes of downcast idols will be blown by the wind, / The starry waves will wash clear the dark./ The one who hasn't understood, will not understand, / But from the heights, / We shall shine to those who're awake, / To our tormentor, to our once friend, it should suffice, / They are to be enraged and howl from their own graves, / We're to sympathize and to shine and shine and shine and shine and shine ...

Ref: *One flies arrow-like, another hides in the burrows, / We'll be the star-lights, we'll be the star-lights, / Over the foreign and native wide-open spaces / We'll be the star-lights.*⁷²

These kinds of ideals – even if we consider them, and there are good reasons to do so, as normative/regulative rather than purely factual – are expressive of the essence of solidary community. Above all, *it is an ethical community*. Community of those who share the same positive values and ideals, axiological sensibility, and normative principles; community of those who regardless of the differences between them are ready to stand up together to defend them, as much as to stand in the place of the other. More importantly – *it is an ethical community of those who understand that standing together is not enough*. That is so, since genuine solidarity is not to be understood in terms of achievement, or, more broadly, in terms of a certain telos. Rather it constantly unfolds its immanent potential. In this sense, it is a specific form of a collective exercise in self-perfection, a constant striving toward ethical excellence. It is this aspect which makes it victorious in relation to an un-ethos of semi-totalitarian (and totalitarian) regimes. The latter are based on uncritical, dogmatic self-confirmation; thus, they are essentially lacking a genuinely

72) This is a part of the whole song (I skipped the whole first verse and some fragments of the second one) translated into English by Nadia Irdorath – a frontwoman of the band (with a few corrections of mine). The song was written and is performed in Belarusian. For the original performance and description of the context in which the song was created as well as Belarusian lyrics and English translation see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5DjYddmyjNM>.

ethical moment. They often introduce pragmatic self-correction but never introduce a moment of striving toward perfection (e.g., a regime can easily invent new propagandist tools convincing people that its goal is social justice, and yet their real goal is to cover the fact that the regime does not care about social justice at all; moreover, a real care about social justice presents a serious threat for the regime). Furthermore, they always tend, in the name of their instrumental self-maintenance, to erase all meaningful spaces: the spaces of mattering.⁷³

The Baltic states between 1987 and 1991 was a stage of one of the most spectacular revolutions – the Singing Revolution.⁷⁴ The non-violent resistance movement taking place parallelly in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania consisted of a whole set of activities which were meant to express the Balts' will of self-determination. It comprised strikes and demonstrations, mass protests, human chains, and different acts of civil disobedience. All these activities were expressive of collective national revival in all these states, they projected spaces of mattering; that is, their acts of setting forth values and ideals, norms and principles determining the ethos of the Baltic peoples, their will of independence and freedom, their will for establishing their own social-ethical reality, a reality liberated from the totalitarian constraints of Sovietism. The specific trademark of these events was their musical dimension: songs – those just created and those taken from cultural heritage, those promoting national awareness and those opening the horizon of possible future(s) – were like a permanent accompaniment of all their activities. Some of these activities were simply collective performances of songs, which were expressive of social-ethical-national communities; they were at once expressions of these communities and their constitutive moments. Like in the case of the dramatic events in Vilnius in January 1991 (nowadays referred to as Day of the Defenders of Freedom), when peaceful protesters constituted a human chain and sung self-affirmative songs over against Soviet tanks and armored vehicles sent to pacify Lithuanian aspirations for independence.

73) Taylor, *Sources of the Self*.

74) See, for example, Thomson, *The Singing Revolution*; Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution*; Kudiņš, "Phenomenon of the Baltic Singing Revolution"; and Tavanna, "The Singing Revolution and Estonia." *tavanna.org*.

4. Who Is the Solidary Subject?

This question is probably one of the most complicated questions that any researcher on solidarity must confront. Perhaps the most common, natural response would be to characterize it in collective terms, or to see it as emerging at the intersection between community and an individual.⁷⁵ Or similarly as a subject balancing between individualism and universalism, where neither of these poles can give justice to the experience of genuine solidarity. Universalism, as I already mentioned, presumes a kind of limitless abstract subject of solidarity understood as humankind. From a phenomenological perspective this presumption is, at best, purely formal and *de facto* presents nothing more than an empty ideal. Individualism, in turn, does not even constitute a proper starting point for an experience of solidarity. If the latter is to have any significance it must be based on the transgression of individualism and its constraints. The solidary subject certainly is not a simple collective subject – it is not any kind of agglomerate of many or even countless egos. Neither is it a collective subject in the sense of an absolute precedence of a group over individuals, where the group would take a kind of separate existence. “The group does not take on a separate existence but exists through individual commitment and yet the group nonetheless transcends the mere aggregation of its parts.”⁷⁶ So, in this sense, as Scholz claims, it would be equally wrong to conceive (in a communitarian manner) of a solidary subject as a group constituted by common traits and characterized by a common consciousness which would determine individual actions in advance. “Instead of group consciousness causing the collective action, collective action in political solidarity causes group consciousness.”⁷⁷ It is difficult to disagree with these statements. However, it seems that we are moving here in a kind of circle where an individual commitment is recognized as a constitutive factor, and yet, it gets its meaning only through a collective action. The latter, in turn, “is irreducible to individuals’ actions.”⁷⁸

75) See Scholz, *Political Solidarity*, 18.

76) *Ibid.*, 134.

77) *Ibid.*

78) *Ibid.*, 136.

Polish philosopher Józef Tischner provides some promising guidelines. In his perspective a solidary subject is not to be conceived as an aggregate of solitary subjects who, in some miraculous way, get together and form a community. It cannot be the case – if only for this reason that a solitary ego is not even a point of departure here. If such a phenomenon as solidarity is to be possible – and we should admit that its factuality confirms its possibility – then we should start not with a solitary Cartesian ego, but rather with subject which from the beginning is being-with-others. In all our activities (even the simplest and most mundane) – as Tischner claims, clearly inspired by Heidegger – we are essentially related to and dependent upon others. We can do things because others have provided us with the tools which make our projects doable. We do things for the sake of others. We can undertake our projects only because others have provided us with meaningful possibilities. Simply put, whatever we do we are always essentially (and not just accidentally) related to others – as *Dasein* (being-in-the-world) we are always already *Mitsein* (being-with-others). Our work and actions can make any sense only within a set of significant intersubjective relations.⁷⁹

However, with the experience of solidarity things get more nuanced. First, the experience of solidarity is the moment of revelation of these interconnections, which for most of the time are somehow hidden before us, and in this an illusion of separation and individualism is constantly being created. Second, this moment of revelation cannot take place only on the ontological plane. The question of solidary subject must go beyond ontology toward ethics. It is not only that a subject appears at the intersection of anonymous relations, dependencies, and interdependencies. But neither is it a simple relation of face-to-face – like the Buberian version of philosophy of dialogue – where I can become who I am because of you; and where one could rightly speak about priority of “we” over “I.” In the experience of solidarity what comes first is “he/she/they,” who suffer and demands our ethical commitment. I transgress my subjectivity to co-constitute “we,” because of “them” – Tischner teaches us.⁸⁰ In this sense we are moving beyond the Heideggerian concept of *Dasein* as *Mitsein* (and even the horizon of understanding *Dasein* as *Mitdasein*), we are also moving beyond simple dialogical

79) See Heidegger, *Being and Time*, especially § 26.

80) Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 20.

concept of subjectivity claiming a simple priority of “we.” *The expression of solidarity is not only: “We stand together.” It is: “We stand together for them.”* One can wonder what would happen if Yanukovych had not given orders to Berkut to beat students on the first days of Maidan; or if Lukashenka did not brutally suppress the first manifestations after the fraudulent elections. In both cases, what transformed mass manifestations into revolutionary movements was a spontaneous act of standing together for those who experienced radical violence. In the Polish context the spectacular revival of social bonds was articulated in standing together as a mutual, reciprocal support of ethical nature. Physical workers, too often considered as the subject of the Solidarity Movement,⁸¹ were seen as those who, undertaking responsibility, were doing so for and in the name of other social groups. And correlatively, other social groups were undertaking all possible efforts for and in the name of physical workers. The logic was simple – in all cases “we” spontaneously undertook responsibility for “them.” What is interesting here is how genuine solidarity – localized, by its very nature – tends to gradually transgress the limits of groups to which we belong – families, groups of shared interest, class, regional communities, even national communities.

The very recent example here can be the solidarity of Poles in the first months of the barbaric Russian attack on Ukraine. This was truly a spectacular phenomenon: for months, it was difficult to find in Poland a person who did not do at least some little things to help, not to mention all those who took days off (or even their sabbatical) from work to fully devote themselves to organizing broader and more systematic forms of help, or those ready to share their homes with Ukrainian refugees. It was like a mass, all-national movement also comprising people not only having no special knowledge about Ukraine, its people, and its culture, but even those being somehow prejudiced; the movement, which triggered by the initial shock and agitation very quickly turned into resoluteness. People, often not knowing each other before, were constituting spontaneously collective subjects to provide different forms of support for

81) For an interesting, and well-argued, refutation of the commonly recognized opinion that it was working class, and of the similarly recognized controversy “working class or intellectuals,” who were the subject of the Solidarity see Kubik, *Sila symboli przeciw symbolom sily*, 315–26. As Kubik argues any attempt at identifying one social class or group as the subject here fundamentally misses the essence of the Solidarity. Since in the first place it was a cultural-normative community of all who shared the same values, ideals, and symbols and in this way constituted a completely new cultural-political class.

Ukrainians. Most of them were highly systematic and well-arranged. Many of them were based on a careful recognition of the real needs of Ukrainians. Most importantly, even though the Polish state followed with the institutional support, it was in the first place a gradually unfolding social response – *we-stand-together-for-them*.⁸²

It is also difficult not to think here about The Baltic Way – the great life chain which took place on August 23rd, 1989. The life chain going from Vilnius through Riga to Tallin (that is, stretched for almost 700 kilometers) consisted of over 2 million people from Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. People largely unknown to each other and yet standing-with-and-for-another to send out the profound message: “Here we stand as the free peoples!”

It seems that what constitutes a solidary subject is a spontaneous movement of projecting oneself in place of the other. However, it is not a matter of a specific exercise of vicarious imagination. If that were the case, there would be no special difference between solidarity and empathy or compassion. Genuine solidarity does not speak in solemn declarations, or distantiated expressions of agitation. It speaks through responsiveness to the call coming from the others. And this responsiveness takes on a form of active responsibility for their fate.⁸³ It does not make much sense to speak about limits of solidarity. When solidarity encounters limits, it ceases to be itself. Likewise, it does not make much sense to think of it in terms of a solitary subject who first responds to the call of the others. When I respond to this call, when I make a commitment, I always already find myself co-constituting a certain community.

At the beginning of September 2020 Maria Kalesnikava – one of the leaders of the Belarusian Revolution – got arrested and was tortured only to force her to leave Belarus. When she refused, her captors brutally forced her into a van and drove her to the Ukrainian border. From Ukraine, she was supposed to fly to Germany. Her plane ticket and passport were ready. As the van approached the border, Kalesnikava

82) While thinking about a possible genesis of this phenomenon one could ground it in the ethical legacy of the Solidarity, but also in a preexisting community of historical experience. That would also explain unshakable solidarity of the Balts. Those who were unlucky enough to be confronted, for centuries, with the darkness of Russian imperialism are in a better position to understand the existential danger in which Ukraine finds itself. Tischner, clearly inspired by Patocka’s celebrated phrase “solidarity of the shaken,” claimed that solidarity is “the brotherhood for the stricken.” Tischner, *Etyka solidarności*, 20.

83) See Ibid.

destroyed her passport and jumped out of the car. The vicious plan of the Belarusian regime failed. Was it an act of a solitary subject who first asserts itself and only then responds to the call of the others? Was she alone in her acting and feeling? A couple of months later in a note from the Belarusian prison she wrote:

I knew they would at least imprison me, if not kill me. But I could not break my word and abandon my incredible friends ... my Belarusians. We all survived this together, overcame our fears together, and paid an unimaginable price for our future freedom ... I do not regret my decision. I am not afraid. And I know that thousands of Belarusians share this feeling. We now know with absolute certainty that freedom lies within each and every one of us.⁸⁴

Kalesnikava's courageous act was undertaken for, in the name of, and in place of "her Belarusians." It was realized from within a space preceding a distinction between an individual and a community. Being, in fact, an act of self-denial, of transgressing the limitations of her subjectivity, it did make sense only as expressive of the collective solidary subject – "her Belarusians."

Marci Shore, in her excellent book on the Ukrainian Revolution of Dignity reported many confessions of those taking a part in it.⁸⁵ There are two things especially striking in these confessions. First, those who took part in these events consistently claimed that in the experience of solidarity with others and for others they experienced tremendous (in both meanings of the adjective) and irreversible transgression of their individuality; revealing in this way the ultimate truth of their subjectivity. There is more to it; based on the testimonies of EuroMaidan participants, what they experienced after the Revolution was a peculiar emptying or even hollowing out of

84) Quoted after Bota, *Kobiety Białorusi*, 176–77. Maria Kalesnikava was sentenced (under the accusation of political extremism) for eleven years in a penal colony under radically inhumane conditions. As I am writing these words Lukashenka's regime is introducing a project (inspired by the old, infamous Russian policy) to subject political prisoners to obligatory psychiatric treatment. Everyone knows very well that only insane people oppose a "just," "legitimate," "fairly elected," sovereign whose only concern is to take "proper care" of his people.

85) Shore, *The Ukrainian Night*.

their souls – as if nothing could replace the sense of fulfillment derived from taking part in a solidary community.⁸⁶ Second, two very common psychological reactions – fear, and even anxiety, whenever a particular participant had to leave Maidan, and then relief and relaxation while joining protesters again, even though it meant exposure to a deadly danger.

It is here that we can see more clearly the abovementioned limitations of Arendt's view on solidarity. Unlike pity and compassion (her criticism of both seems to be absolutely correct), solidarity does not belong to the affective order. It has affective origins stemming from an experience of suffering – either one's own, or from being a shocked witness of someone else's suffering. However, in her view, solidarity transgresses its own origins and as it unfolds it shows its belonging to the dispassionate, cold order of reason. Thus, a solidary subject is a rational subject who projects a new, more just political reality with no regard to the "dark movements" of human souls. In contrast to that view, I claim: Solidarity, as a social phenomenon, is an experience which comprises cognitive, volitional, and affective components. And it is hardly possible to assign a status of priority to any of these components. Thus, solidary subject expresses itself in rational decisions, and actions, in collective reasoning; but all this is from the start and constantly permeated by the whole range of affective states – from an initial shock and anxiety, through the feeling of relaxation and elevation, up to a profound and all-pervasive emotion of hope without which the experience of solidarity would not be comprehensible,⁸⁷ but also moments of hopelessness and even despair.

"We could finally stop being scared" – was a (commonly repeated) phrase which expressed an affective background of the Polish Solidarity. And it resonates – as it can be seen in a quote from Kalesnikava – with the Belarusian experience, as much as with the testimonies of the Ukrainians taking part in their revolution; it resonates with the experience of the Lithuanians who joined in the human chain to confront the Russian tanks in January 1991 and knowing that the power of these tanks would not defeat the power of their songs. The creative confrontation with anxiety and over-

86) This transgressive and, in a sense, destructive aspect of the experience of solidarity was also reported by some Poles involved in helping Ukrainian refugees. Some of them experienced, after several months of devoting themselves completely to the task, a form of deep mental burnout.

87) More on that in the next section.

coming it is a condition of possibility of opening a horizon of future(s). “We could start dreaming and making plans” – is another phrase so common among Poles at the very beginning of the 1980s. What is significant in all such expressions is that they are not to be seen as a simple aggregate of initially isolated subjective experiences – it is always “we” who utter them, and who speaks through them. So, they always come from the shared affective experiences. Furthermore, it is hardly possible to identify the origin of these experiences, or a precise moment of their emergence. Everything happens here as if a solidary subject already finds itself as affectively attuned; and it experiences reality always already from within this or that specific affective state.⁸⁸ “It was in the air,” “there was such an elevating feeling,” “the city/town/square/shipyard was filled with hope and all-pervasive enthusiasm” – those are the phrases by means of which participants of these events tried to explain the affective atmosphere effectively transforming their sense of space.⁸⁹ There is no room here for an extensive phenomenological analysis of how these shared emotions constitute a completely different sense of space. But one thing is clear – an extensive notion of space (so easily imposed by political regimes), a space to be conceived in purely instrumental terms, is replaced here by an intensive notion of it having its inherent atmosphere, its centers of gravity, demanding celebration and respect, and so forth.⁹⁰ To put it differently, the shared emotions of solidary subjects transform their spaces into places which are inhabited. And as such providing them with a more refined sense of space – that of possible joint plans, projects, initiatives.

88) Here we can rely on Heidegger’s category of *Befindlichkeit* indicating ontologically “an affective self-finding” as a main aspect of Dasein’s facticity. Dasein as being thrown-into-the-world finds themselves always already attuned in this or that way. Or to put it differently, the world of Dasein (which by its very essence is always a shared world) is always disclosed as having an affective aura of a kind. See Heidegger, *Being and Time*, part one, division one, chapter IV, especially § 29. See also Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, 281.

89) Ben Anderson speaks in this context about a specific affective “excess” generating intensive space-times. See Anderson, “Affective Atmospheres,” 78.

90) Apart from already historically, large-scale examples such as Maidan Nezalezhnosti or the Shipyard in Gdansk, an emblematic example here can be the Square of Change (or Peremen Square) in Minsk. It was a typical backyard in one of Minsk’s neighborhoods, which very quickly turned into a *space* of cultivation not only of the resistance toward the autocratic regime, but of the social community built upon the principles of respect, trust, and mutual support. In this way it profoundly transformed reality of the whole neighborhood turning into an intense space of cultivation of freedom.

5. Temporality of the Experience of Solidarity

As one of my friends said: “solidarity is a moment; all the rest is ideology.”⁹¹ I am in full agreement with this statement. The only question is: what does the word “moment” mean here? Obviously, it is not a quantifiable moment which can be objectively measured and as such belongs to a continual passage of time. It cannot be so if only for this reason that *genuine solidarity* is always, by its very essence, a *disruption*. It disrupts a natural course of experience of reality and of ourselves. Consequently, it suspends the preexisting shape of reality along with its essential constituents and its conditions. In this sense, one can rightly speak about a *negative* moment of the experience of solidarity. However, this negativity is of a peculiar kind. It does not simply negate a given reality. In all the examples of Eastern European solidarities existing political realities were never denied. They were paradoxically confirmed.⁹² Solidarities neither escape from reality, nor even deny it. Their negativity is subtler. It articulates itself through a positive projection of a social reality from within an existing order, despite all circumstances, against all odds. The very fact of this projection (i.e., the very existence of a solidary collective subject) is already a partial actualization of this reality. In this way solidarities are always subversive – as acting from within a certain reality they suspend it by turning the impossible into possible.

In this sense, the temporality of solidarity is of specific kind. The experience itself, obviously, takes place in a present moment – it is “here and now that we stand.” And yet, this “here and now” is already transformed in a profound sense. It is a moment in a sense of belonging to a completely different order of time. It appears through a suspension of time of our everyday concerns, routines, and occupations; time divided into a series of abstract, identical, empty moments; time dividing all individuals immersed in its “objective,” impersonal flow. In contrast to that, the time of solidarity is more like a fulfilled, festive time which constitutes reality having nothing in common

91) I refer here to Professor Gintautas Mažeikis whom I would like to thank for our conversations and many inspiring remarks concerning the phenomenon of solidarity.

92) With the most striking example being the Polish Solidarity in whose context the political power regained, for a short time, a social recognition. However, it was possible since the political power entered into the space projected by the Solidarity Movement – the space of dialogue and debate – and in this way recognized and granted a status of agency to the people. See Krzemiński, *Solidarność*, 68.

with the one we leave while experiencing solidarity. Or to be more precise, since in fact nothing is left behind, it allows seeing and experiencing reality differently; and in this way leads to its profound transformation. This kind of time is experienced in its fullness. But most importantly its very possibility is grounded in and constituted by a sense of belonging to a certain community. It is not a time experienced in solitude, separation, or isolation; it is a time of collective celebration; it is a time in which social bonds are being restored.⁹³

However, this intensive notion of time whose nature lies in transformative duration certainly does not fulfill the temporality of the experience of solidarity. If it were limited to this level, it would be nothing more than a beautiful, but transient and futile eutopia at best. While analyzing the temporality of an experience we should distinguish, besides the temporal character, also its temporal significance. In the case of the experience of solidarity there is no doubt that it is future-oriented. But it is so in a specific way. From phenomenological perspective the future is always given as enrooted in the present and in the past, in a natural straightforward relation to them. It can be given in the form of protention as an immediate, unreflective sketch of the very next phase of a temporal flow, a sketch based on the present moment. So, it is nothing more than a functional extension of the latter. It can also be given in the form of expectation.⁹⁴ It can relate to both the very next phases of a “just having been” as much as to more distant events or states of affairs. However, the dependence on the present (and the past) is still prevalent: “I always expect/anticipate some course of events on the basis of what I experience here and now.” What distinguishes expec-

93) I rely here on Gadamer's distinction between “empty time” – typical for our everyday life, and a festive “fulfilled” or “autonomous time” characteristic for religious festivals as much as for genuinely aesthetic experiences. The essential aspect of the “fulfilled time” is that it always constitutes a certain kind of community. See Gadamer, “The Relevance of the Beautiful,” 41–42. For a festive, ceremonial character of solidarity in the context of the Polish Solidarity see Kubik, *Siła symboli przeciw symbolom siły*, especially chapter 7. Ireneusz Krzemiński also underscores the festive character of the Solidarity Movement manifesting itself on social, political, national, affective dimensions. Krzemiński, *Solidarność*, 67–69. For the performative and carnivalistic character of EuroMaidan see, for example, Shevchuk, Karpovets, “The Performative Practices in Politics,” especially 93–95.

94) See Husserl, *The Phenomenology of Internal Time Consciousness*, especially §§ 8, 16, 24, 26; and Husserl, *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis*, 131, 235–42.

tation from a simple protention is that it is “an active comportment to the future.”⁹⁵ It involves an active interpretation to be always accorded with given circumstances, that is why it is often modalized into probability and likelihood.⁹⁶ Thus, expectation is a directedness toward a future event or state of affairs in its (future) actuality, where all preconditions are already in place.⁹⁷

The structure of temporality as outlined above cannot tell us anything about the experience of solidarity. That is so, since the only possible “deviation” from a regular flow of time takes form of a corrective modalization, and in this sense is nothing but restoration of coherence. In contrast to that, solidarity as a disruption introduces a liberating gap into the coherent temporal flow of experience. One mode of such a gap was already described above; and it was described as insufficient. The other one refers to the mode in which solidarity is future-oriented. It is the future which is no longer determined or motivated in a straightforward way by the present and the past in their immediate forms. It is the future which has no grounding in them. And yet, as I stated above, it does not simply negate them. Above or along with a “natural” flow of time, with the future being its inherent moment, it introduces a different form of the future whose experience is based on a radical openness to possibility.⁹⁸ This can be better understood if we realize that solidarity is driven by hope: that, *there is no solidarity without hope*.

Gabriel Marcel, while describing temporality of hope, used a profound, though paradoxical, formula – “memory of the future.”⁹⁹ What is meant by this character-

95) Steinbock, *Moral Emotions*, 163.

96) *Ibid.*, 164.

97) Hence, it is reasonable to expect being shot while standing-together in the life chain over against Soviet tanks. This could be modalized, depending on circumstances, into probability or likelihood – where instead of being shot, those constituting the chain would, for example, end up in a penal colony. But it would be rather incorrect to say that these Lithuanian heroes expected that their peaceful action would lead to the collapse of the Soviet Union. Likewise, it would be natural to say that the participants of the Belarusian Revolution can expect a further escalation of Lukashenka’s response (with different possible modalizations involved). However, nobody would say that they expected that this bloody autocrat would step down, recognize sovereignty of the people, and confess his sins.

98) Here possibility is not understood in its pure form – typical for imagination/phantasy; or as a real possibility being a neutral component of the texture of a given reality; or a process possibility being in the process of self-actualization.

99) Marcel, “Sketch of a Phenomenology and a Metaphysic of Hope,” 53.

istic is precisely the mysterious power of hope to restore a vital sense of time, to turn objective, impersonal time in which individuals are, as it were, imprisoned, into the lived time. That means finding meaningful connecting links between our past, present, and future. In the experience of solidarity, we – to use the Kierkegaardian idiom – recollect forward; that is, the solidary subject projects its very self into possible future(s). It is here that, above all, its revolutionary power lies. Solidarity, in its Eastern European examples, breaks the vicious circle of inhumane reality by showing something which is completely absent in that reality, namely possibilities. These possibilities are not neutral, or impersonal, they imply an *engagement* and *concern*. In this sense the experience of solidarity goes beyond the abovementioned partial actualization of a new social reality. That is, without denying the constraints and limitations of an existing sociopolitical reality it transcends them in and through a self-sustaining act of awaiting patiently for a complete renewal of the reality.¹⁰⁰ A solidary subject, as driven by hope, does not fall into a dangerous temptation of an immediate transformation (which always implies mass violence); neither does it escape into any form of phantastic illusion which can find its fulfilment in utopia of any sort (which is, in fact, undistinguishable from resignation). It expresses itself through and as *a resolute holding firm* regardless of all circumstances. It actualizes itself in an enduring, “positive non-acceptance”¹⁰¹ of a given shape of reality. It actualizes itself in a constant turning of the impossible into the hopeful.

We never know what the experience of solidarity brings about. And more importantly when. And yet, if we rely on historical examples, we are obliged to admit that it always brings the change. Sooner or later.

Instead of Concluding: Can Solidarity Persist?

It seems that the answer to this question was already given above; and it is clearly negative. In the Polish case the process of atrophy of the community of ideals created by solidarity started already in the so-called second solidarity and terminated after 1989. It was poetically described by one of the bards of the Solidarity Movement Jacek

100) See Ibid., 38, 41–42; Steinbock, *Moral Emotions*, 175.

101) Marcel, “Sketch of a Phenomenology and a Metaphysic of Hope,” 38.

Kaczmarek in his song,¹⁰² one of the anthems of the Movement, “The Walls” ending pessimistically as a prophecy of a secondary enslavement:

He looked at the steady march of the crowds,/Silent he listened to the thunder of their steps,/And the walls grew, grew, grew/The chain dangled at the feet ...

He looks at the steady march of the crowds,/Silent he listens to the thunder of their steps,/And the walls are growing, growing, growing/The chain dangles at the feet ...

When the spirit of the Ukrainian Revolution of Dignity ran out, the old social polarizations (on macro- and micro-scales) returned. The same holds for the spectacular, unprecedented Polish solidarity with the Ukrainian people in the first months of the barbarian-Russian invasion of Ukraine. The support is still very strong and unshakable, but at some point, it had to turn into a more, so to speak, institutionalized form. The moment it happened the old, historical, as well as new tensions entered the stage. And the mutual relations have become a target of different political strategies on both sides; let alone desperate and relentless efforts of the vicious Russian propaganda to replace this spirit of solidarity by at least indifference (and preferably by an open hostility).

Everything happens as if a solidary subject is essentially transient, and is destined to exist for a limited time. And when we think about possible causes – the example of the Polish Solidarity can be somehow instructive. It seems that the main reason for the atrophy of the movement, its spirit, and its most vital ideals, was its politicization. The moment it happened the all-nation community was slowly but surely dividing itself into groups of interests, of worldviews, of opposite political orientations; and almost every group proclaimed itself to be the only legitimate successor of the Solidarity’s legacy; without even realizing that such a claim is always already a denial of that very legacy. The spirit of unity was gradually replaced by political and axiological clashes,

102) The song was inspired, and based on the same melody, by the Catalan song *L'estaca* by Lluís Llach (1968). Even though the general context is similar, it would be mistaken to treat it as a simply Polish version of that song, as one of the reviewers suggested. The message, intention, complex character, general “climate,” and especially pessimistic tone of the last verses of Kaczmarek’s song go far beyond *L'estaca*.

mutual accusations (“It is *they* who betrayed the spirit of the Solidarity”), and even open hostility. To put it bluntly: the spirit of the Solidarity was compromised and corrupted. And it is constantly so. It has become mythologized and as such has been transformed into an instrument of political struggle. Thus, it seems that on the social and the political level there is no trace of it. It has melted into the air.

It seems that solidarity simply cannot function within the political. Unless we want to speak about its institutionalized caricature – then, we can appeal to the “mechanism of solidarity” as often as we wish; the result will usually be highly disappointing. And yet, the political, if it is to be based on justice, responsibility, and freedom, must be somehow grounded on this, resisting any conceptualizations, social potential of and for solidarity. And there is a certain paradox here – the phantom of solidarity hovering in the social element and being a part of collective memory can in an unexpected moment and in unexpected ways re-actualize itself. These are the moments in which *we* recognize that *we can do and act better for the sake of others*; that we can resolutely stand out not to violently rebel against inhumanity, but to transform the darkness of the impossible into the hopeful. In this sense solidarity is always virtually with us. It is an inherent part of the Eastern European ethos.¹⁰³

103) As to the philosophical elaboration of the Eastern European ethos, see Bursztyka, “Reconceptualizing Eastern Europe.” The potential of the Polish Solidarity as an exemplar and inspiration for future attempts at positive reconstruction of the political was also underscored by, among others, Ireneusz Krzemiński. And it is so regardless of all the mechanisms, carefully pointed out by the Polish sociologist, which led to the atrophy of the Solidarity. Krzemiński, *Solidarność*, 408.

Bibliography:

Anderson, Ben. "Affective Atmospheres." *Emotion, Space and Society* 2, no. 2 (2009): 77–81.

Arendt, Hannah, *The Human Condition*. 2nd ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998.

—. *On Revolution*. London: Penguin Books, 1990.

—. "What is Freedom?" In *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought*. New York: Penguin Books, 2006.

Aristotle. *The Nicomachean Ethics*. Translated by Harris Rackham. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1956.

Barkouski, Pavel, and Andrzej Gniazdowski. *Przebudzenie Białorusi. Studia z fenomenologii rewolucji*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 2025.

Bayertz, Kurt. "Four Uses of 'Solidarity'." In *Solidarity*, edited by Kurt Bayertz. Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1999.

Bota, Alice. *Kobiety Białorusi. O rewolucji, odwadze i dążeniu do wolności*. Translated from German into Polish by Ewa Kochanowska. Warszawa: Virtualo, 2023.

Bursztyka, Przemysław. "Reconceptualizing Eastern Europe: Toward a Common Ethos." *Eidos. A Journal for Philosophy of Culture* 7, no. 3 (2023): 67–102. <https://doi.org/10.14394/eidos.jpc.2023.0024>.

—. "Toward an Apophatic Philosophy of Culture." In *Philosophy of Culture as Theory, Method, and Way of Life: Contemporary Reflections and Applications*. Edited by Przemysław Bursztyka, Eli Kramer, Marcin Rychter, and Randall Auxier. Leiden: Brill, 2022.

Bursztyka, Przemysław, Eli Kramer and Marcin Rychter. "Philosophy of Culture and Humane-ization." In *Philosophy of Culture as Theory, Method, and Way of Life: Contemporary Reflections and Applications*. Edited by Przemysław Bursztyka, Eli Kramer, Marcin Rychter, and Randall Auxier. Leiden: Brill, 2022.

Bursztyka, Przemysław, Eli Karmer, Marcin Rychter, and Randall Auxier, eds. *Philosophy of Culture as Theory, Method, and Way of Life: Contemporary Reflections and Applications*. Leiden: Brill, 2022.

Gadamer, Hans-Georg. *The Relevance of the Beautiful and Other Essays*. Translated by Nicholas Walker. Edited with Introduction by Robert Bernasconi. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

Gornyxh, Andrei. "The Other Heading of Europe: From Miłosz to Derrida." *Eidos. A Journal for Philosophy of Culture* 9, no. 1 (2025): 53–72. <https://doi.org/10.14394/eidos.jpc.2025.0004>.

Habermas, Jürgen. "Democracy, Solidarity, and the European Crisis." Lecture recorded on April 26, 2013. Posted April 27, 2013 by KU Leuven with the video title "Top Talk: Jürgen Habermas." YouTube, 1:55:42. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nKPWmuqQgj0>. Accessed March 31, 2025 at <https://contemporarythinkers.org/jurgen-habermas/multimedia/jurgen-habermas-lecture-democracy-solidarity-and-the-european-crisis/>.

—. "Justice and Solidarity: On the Discussion Concerning 'Stage 6.'" In *Hermeneutics and Critical Theory in Ethics and Politics*, edited by Michael Kelly. MIT Press, 1990.

Heidegger, Martin. *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*. Translated by Albert Hofstadter. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988.

—. *Being and Time*. Translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson. New York: Harper Perennial, 2008.

Hrytsak, Yaroslav. "Ignorance Is Power." *Ab Imperio*, no. 3 (2014): 218–28.

—. *See also* Hrycak, Jarosław.

Hrycak, Jarosław. *Ukraina: Wyrwać się z przeszłości*. Translated into Polish by Katarzyna Kotyńska and Joanna Majewska-Grabowska. Kraków: Międzynarodowe Centrum Kultury, 2023.

Husserl, Edmund. *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis: Lectures on Transcendental Logic*. Translated by Anthony J. Steinbock. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2001.

—. *The Phenomenology of Internal Time Consciousness*. Translated by James Churchill. Indiana University Press, 1964.

Kapuściński, Ryszard. "Reportaż piąty." In *Osiemnaście długich dni*. Edited by Stefan Kozicki and Aleksander Rowiński. Warszawa: Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, December 12, 1980. Accessed March 20, 2025 at <https://kapuscinski.info/reportaz-piaty>.

Krzemiński, Ireneusz. *Solidarność. Niespełniony projekt polskiej demokracji*. Europejskie Centrum Solidarności, 2013.

Kubik, Jan. *Siła symboli przeciw symbolom siły: Powstanie Solidarności u upadek socjalizmu państwowego w Polsce*. Translated into Polish by Sergiusz Kowalski. Europejskie Centrum Solidarności, 2020.

Kudiņš, Jānis. "Phenomenon of the Baltic Singing Revolution in 1987–1991: Three Latvian Songs as Historical Symbols of Non-violent Resistance." *Muzikologija*, no. 26 (2019): 27–39. <https://doi.org/10.2298/MUZ1926027K>.

Kvit, Serhiy. "The Ideology of the Euromaidan Revolution." *Kyiv Post*, March 24, 2014. Accessed March 12, 2025. <https://archive.kyivpost.com/article/opinion/op-ed/serhiy-kvit-the-ideology-of-the-euromaidan-revolution-340665.html>.

Lieven, Anatol. *The Baltic Revolution: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Path to Independence*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993.

Marcel, Gabriel. *Homo Viator: Introduction to a Metaphysic of Hope*. Translated by Emma Craufurd. Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1951.

Marion, Jean-Luc. *Being Given: Toward a Phenomenology of Givenness*. Translated by Jeffrey L. Koskey. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002.

Mažeikis, Gintautas. "Philosophical Mediation in Cultural Diplomacy." *Eidos. A Journal for Philosophy of Culture* 8, no. 1 (2024): 98–119. <https://doi.org/10.14394/eidos.jpc.2024.0005>.

—. "The Role of Philosophy in the De-traumatizing of the Sedimented History." *Eidos. A Journal for Philosophy of Culture* 9, no. 1 (2025): 94–113. <https://doi.org/10.14394/eidos.jpc.2025.0006>.

Mill, John Stuart. *Utilitarianism*. Reprinted from 1879 edition. The Floating Press, 2009.

Ost, David. *Solidarity and the Politics of Anti-politics: Opposition and Reform in Poland Since 1968*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990.

Peluritis, Laurynas. "The Idea of 'Eastern Europe': Cultural Synthesis at the Frontier and Enemy Beyond Europe." *Eidos. A Journal for Philosophy of Culture* 9, no. 1 (2025): 29–52. <https://doi.org/10.14394/eidos.jpc.2025.0003>.

Pius XII. *Summi Pontificatus: On the Unity of Human Society*. https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_20101939_summi-pontificatus.html.

Plokhyy, Serhii. *Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine*. New York: Basic Books, 2015.

Rorty, Richard. *Contingency, Irony, Solidarity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Rosińska, Zofia. "The European Experience." *Eidos. A Journal for Philosophy of Culture* 9, no. 1 (2025): 15–28. <https://doi.org/10.14394/eidos.jpc.2025.0002>.

Rosińska, Zofia, and Joanna Michalik. *Co to jest filozofia kultury?* Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2006.

Scholz, Sally J. *Political Solidarity*. The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008.

Shchyttsova, Tatiana. "A Philosopher on the Streets of Belarus." *NewsNet: News of the Association of Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies* 60, no. 5 (October 2020).

—. "The Strength of the Strengthless: Women, Aged, and Disabled People as a Subversive Force in the Belarusian Protest Movement 2020." *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology* 55, no.1 (2024): 28–43. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00071773.2023.2224833>.

Shevchuk, Dmytro, and Maksym Karpovets. "The Performative Practices in Politics: The Ukrainian Maidan and its Carnivalization." *Symposion* 7, no. 1 (2020): 85–97. <https://doi.org/10.5840/symposion2020716>.

Shore, Marci. *The Ukrainian Night: An Intimate History of Revolution*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017.

Staniszkis, Jadwiga. *Poland's Self-Limiting Revolution*. Edited by Jan T. Gross. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984.

Steinbock, Anthony J. *Moral Emotions: Reclaiming the Evidence of the Heart*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2014.

Stern, David. "What Europe Means to Ukraine Protesters." *The Atlantic*, December 13, 2013. Accessed March 12, 2025. <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/12/what-europe-means-to-ukraines-protesters/282327/>.

Tavaana. "The Singing Revolution and Estonia's Non-Violent Independence Movement." *Tavaana.org*. Accessed March 20, 2025. https://en.tavaana.org/singing_revolution_en/.

Tava, Francesco. "European Solidarity: Definitions, Challenges, and Perspectives." In *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of Europe*. Edited by Darian Meecham and Nicolas de Warren. London: Routledge, 2021.

—. "Justice, Emotions, and Solidarity." *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 26, no. 1 (2023): 39–55. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13698230.2021.1893251>

Thomson, Clare. *The Singing Revolution: A Political Journey Through the Baltic States*. Micheal Joseph Ltd., 1992.

Tischner, Józef. *Etyka solidarności. Homo sovieticus*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 2018.

Trach, Nadyia. "'Together we are power!': Identities and Values in Euromaidan Slogans." *Władza Sądzenia*, no. 8 (2016): 95–107.

Zabużko, Oksana. *Najdłuższa podróż*. Translated into Polish by Katarzyna Kotyńska. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Agora, 2023.



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, PO Box 1866, Mountain View, CA 94042, USA.