# Russia-West-Ukraine: Triangle of Competition 1991–2013

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**This is an excerpt from *The Sources of Russia's Great Power Politics: Ukraine and the Challenge to the European Order*. Download your free copy here.**

Perhaps the most misunderstood aspect of the origins of the Russia-Ukraine conflict is the idea that there was a clear post-Soviet order in the region that subsequently collapsed. Many see the roots of this collapse in the rise of autocracy in Russia; others see it in Western policy (notably the enlargement of NATO). The fundamental problem with these perspectives is that these putative causes emerged well *after* the initial signs that Russia did not accept the political independence of Ukraine and the territorial loss of Crimea and the Donbas. In this chapter, we examine Ukraine's relations with Russia from the Soviet collapse in 1991 to the 2013–2014 crisis. This analysis shows that Russia never voluntarily accepted Ukraine's independence, made several attempts in the 1990s to assert control over part or all of Crimea, and showed elsewhere (notably Trans-Dniestr) tactics very similar to those employed in Crimea and in the Donbas in 2014 and beyond.

President Putin, justifying the seizure of Crimea in a 2014 speech, referred back to the adoption of Christianity by the Kievan Rus Grand Prince Volodymyr the Great in 988.[1] While there is considerable historical mythology in Putin's claim, it builds on a long literature in Russia and the Soviet Union, asserting that parts of Ukraine are crucial to the foundation of modern Russia.[2] Putin's invocation of this theme exemplifies how Russia's claim to parts of Ukraine is seen as timeless and rooted deeply in history, rather than being contingent upon NATO's perceived expansionism.

**History, National Identity, and Russia's Claims on Ukraine**

In understanding Russia's claims on Ukraine, there are at least four strands of thinking. One strand concerns geopolitics – about threats and opportunities now and in the future. A second concerns international law, which on this case is unambiguously in favour of Ukraine. We leave these two issues aside for the moment to consider arguments about *history* and about *people*, because these profoundly affect claims about what state *should* control a particular territory and the people who live on it. The literature on the topic is immense, and here we simply identify themes that are relevant to Russia's claims. The overarching point is that history helps explain both why Russians (and some Western observers) take at face value claims about Russia's rights in Ukraine and why Ukrainians find those claims so threatening. Similarly, today's 'facts' about demographics and language use are based on histories which lead to conflicting interpretations.

The territory that became independent Ukraine in 1991 had spent various lengths of time under rule from Moscow. The Western region of Galicia had been ruled from Moscow only since 1939, when the Soviet Union, under the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, invaded what was at that time Eastern Poland. Crimea had been part of Ukraine since 1954, when control was transferred from the Russian SFSR to Ukraine. This transfer is often referred to as a 'gift' but appears to have been a matter of administrative convenience for the Soviets, as Crimea was connected to and supplied from Ukraine, not Russia. Crimea (along with much of Southern Ukraine, including Odesa and the region that Putin has referred to as *Novorossiya*) was seized in the late 18th century from the Ottoman Empire and Crimean Tatar Khanate. Kiev and most of the territory to the east of it had been part of Russia since 1667. The region west of

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the Dnipro River was mostly acquired as a result of the partitions of Poland in the late 18th century. While the history is complex, it is not hard to see why many in Russia regard much of Ukraine as 'naturally' part of Russia. However, there are (at least) two problems. First, nearly all this territory was gathered by Russia by the use of force, so the legitimacy of Russian control was never uncontested. What some see as Russian territory, others see as Russian empire. For example, despite the fact that the Baltic States were controlled by Russia for many years before their post-World War I period of independence, their 'Russianness' was never accepted uncritically. Second, and related, many of the people on this territory did not identify as Russians, a matter that became complicated over time.

Therefore, the national identity of the residents of different parts of Ukraine has become an important part of discussions over who the territory should belong to. A variety of claims have been made about different regions of Ukraine, what language people speak, and whether they are 'really' Russians or a separate Ukrainian people. This is not that unusual as it may sound, for Polish nationalists led by Roman Dmowski through to the 1940s believed that Ukrainians were not a nation. Russian and Polish nationalists both saw evidence of foreign conspiracies lurking behind Ukrainian attempts to claim a separate national identity and build an independent state.

National identity, language, ethnicity and regionalism have been the most thoroughly researched topics concerning Ukraine. The results of this research show a complicated and nuanced mixture of identity factors. Most citizens of Ukraine speak both Ukrainian and Russian, sometimes mixing them, and sometimes switching depending on the circumstances (e.g. speaking one with family and another at work). The connection between language and national identity is murky: many people who speak primarily Russian identify as Ukrainians. The language question becomes politicised when a choice must be forced, an issue that comes up primarily in schools and in government business.

Ukraine's tumultuous history has made it harder to address these issues today. The question of whether the Ukrainian language should be promoted either for its own sake or for the interest of the country's unity is made much more fraught by the legacy of Russian and Soviet policy in Ukraine. The Tsarist Russian government in 1876 passed the *Ems Ukaz* (decree), banning publications in Ukrainian, in order to block a rise in Ukrainian national sentiment. After the Soviets took control and briefly allowed a flourishing of Ukrainian (and other non-Russian) cultures, Stalin cracked down, imprisoning Ukrainian nationalists and national communists and promoting Russian. The *Holodomor* fell heavily on the Ukrainian-speaking peasants of Eastern Ukraine and the Kuban region of Northern Caucasus. The result – and this is a history everyone in Ukraine knows, even if it is rarely discussed in Russia or among newcomers to Ukrainian politics in the West – is that the current high level of Russian-speaking in Eastern Ukraine is a direct result of the suppression of the Ukrainian language and the starvation of millions of Ukrainian speakers under Soviet rule, which many Ukrainians regard as *Russian* rule. The Russian government disclaims responsibility for Stalin's repression and points out that many Russians suffered as well, even as Putin increasingly praises Stalin's legacy.

The result is that simply ratifying the status quo seems to some to acquiesce in and perpetuate the results of Tsarist and Stalinist repression. Those seeking to promote the Ukrainian language see it as undoing that oppression, while others see oppression in efforts to change the language in which people are schooled or interact with the government. At the time of independence, leaders sought to diffuse the issue by devising a civic (rather than ethnic) definition of citizenship (anyone on Ukrainian territory was a citizen, regardless of one's 'nationality' or language).

One might simply hold a plebiscite, as Russia did in Crimea under very questionable conditions. Ukraine itself held a vote on independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, and in every region (including Crimea) a majority voted for independence (though the margin was lower in the Donbas than in the West, and much lower in Crimea, where 54% supported independence).[3] The regions that have been occupied by Russia are among those with the highest percentage of those who speak primarily Russian. Language policy is a very complicated question in Ukraine, and it has been made more complicated by politicians using it to try to instil fear and mobilise voters in elections.

The broader point, however, and it is essential, is that the Russian Empire and then the Soviet Union controlled vast swaths of Ukraine for many years before 1991. Leading Soviet politicians came from the region, key battles of World War II were fought on the territory, major economic assets were there, and some Russian literature was set there.[4] It is not hard to see why many in Russia regard the idea that Ukraine – and especially Eastern Ukraine and Crimea – is not part of Russia as hard to comprehend. Some in the West have the same reaction.

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It is precisely these attitudes that convince many in Ukraine that there is something to fear from Russia. The same history that shows some that Ukraine is part of Russia shows others that Russia is a threat to the language, culture and lives of Ukrainians. Ukrainian distinctiveness persisted despite the concerted efforts of two very autocratic regimes to eradicate it. In this view, Ukraine is a distinct place and a distinct people, but was always ruled by foreigners, and will be again if it does not guard its independence jealously. Put differently, much disagreement about the appropriate relationship between Russia and Ukraine, both within the region and outside it, comes down to one's prior beliefs about the relationship between Ukraine and Russia. Does Russia's historical role in Ukraine justify involvement today? Or does it show why Ukraine must be completely independent? Or does 1991 represent a break, such that what came before is irrelevant? Supporters of Russia and critics of the West tend to fall back on the first view. Supporters of Ukraine, and of Western support for Ukraine, tend to fall back on one of the latter two views.

## Ukraine and Russia Since 1991

With this brief review of history and national identity issues, we turn to the period since 1991. Russia objected to Ukrainian sovereignty from the very beginning of this period, and repeatedly contested it in the following years. Russian objections to full Ukrainian sovereignty predated NATO enlargement and the rise of Putin, and were shared across almost the entire Russian political spectrum, with only a very narrow group of pro-Western reformers advocating that Russia write-off Ukraine for the sake of concentrating on domestic reform. This wide consensus was obscured by the fact that one of those who sought to put the Ukraine issue behind Russia was Boris Yeltsin, President of Russia from 1990 to 1999. Yeltsin sought to prevent Ukraine from becoming fully independent, but once it seemed beyond his control, he sought to move forward, even as many in his government continued to seek revision of 1991 arrangements.

This chapter reviews several key periods and incidents between Russia and Ukraine since 1991. It is too short to provide a detailed or comprehensive treatment. Rather, it highlights several key episodes that provide insight into the historical depth of contention over the proper relationship between Ukraine and Russia. These episodes include: (1) The 1991 agreement that formally dissolved the Soviet Union and founded the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). (2) The long contentious struggle over ownership of the Black Sea Fleet and its base at Sevastopol, in Crimea. (3) The 1994 trilateral nuclear deal and the accompanying Budapest Memorandum, through which Russia, the UK and the US provided security assurances for Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty in return for Ukraine's agreement to surrender its nuclear weapons. (4) The 1997 Friendship Treaty between Russia and Ukraine, which appeared to signal Russia's acceptance of Ukraine's independence. The treaty was ratified by the state Duma and Federation Council in 1998–1999 with Russian deputies linking the question to the Black Sea Fleet, Crimea and Sevastopol. Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov voiced territorial claims against Ukraine and intervened in Crimean affairs throughout the two decades leading up to the crisis in 2013–2014. (5) The 2004 Orange Revolution, in which Russia backed the fraudulent election of Yanukovych and initiated its tactic of equating pro-Western Ukrainian politicians with 'fascists'. Combined with 'colour revolutions' in Serbia, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan, this episode increased Russian sensitivity to the threat of transnational diffusion of pro-democracy movements to Putin's rule.

### 1991: The Collapse of the Soviet Union and Formation of the CIS

Both Soviet leaders (represented by Gorbachev) and Russian leaders (led by Boris Yeltsin) opposed Ukraine's independence in 1991. But the battle between Gorbachev and Yeltsin for control in Moscow provided Ukraine with the leverage to insist on complete independence.

When Ukraine's parliament declared independence on 24 August 1991, it scheduled a referendum on independence for 1 December, to be accompanied by elections for President. That autumn, two contests proceeded in parallel. In one of these, Yeltsin sought to seize control of the levers of power from President Gorbachev in Moscow. Essentially, this meant that the government of the Russian SFSR (controlled by Yeltsin) won the loyalty and took over the functions of the much more extensive government of the Soviet Union, (controlled nominally, but increasingly tenuously, by Gorbachev). As a result, the Soviet foreign, defence, finance and other ministries became Russian ministries. In the second contest, Moscow tried to retain some form of devolved control over Ukraine, while Kravchuk rejected any new agreements until after the 1 December 1991 election and referendum. On this issue, Yeltsin and

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Gorbachev were united.

On 1 December 1991, Ukraine's citizens voted decisively for independence and for Kravchuk as president. Two things are notable. First, of the leading candidates, Ukrainians chose the less nationalist one (Kravchuk) over the former dissident and nationalist leader Vyacheslav Chornovil. Second, while the independence vote was regionally skewed, with higher support for independence in the West than in the East and South, every *oblast* of Ukraine, including Crimea, Donetsk and Luhansk, voted in favour of independence. These results left Kravchuk in a powerful bargaining position when he met with Yeltsin and Belarusian leader Stanislav Shushkevych on 7–8 December to agree on a new formal relationship between the three states.[5]

Yeltsin faced a dilemma. Gorbachev was still legally the president of the USSR, and there was only one legal way to remove him: dissolving the 1922 Union Treaty that had originally formed the Soviet Union in legal terms. But dissolving the Union Treaty, legally, meant total independence for Ukraine and Belarus. The only way to square the circle for Yeltsin was to simultaneously negotiate a new agreement to create a looser union. Kravchuk refused, insisting that the new 'Commonwealth of Independent States' take the form of an agreement among states, with each state retaining a veto over any future action, rather than a federation or confederation with some prerogatives reserved for a new 'centre'. Yeltsin faced the choice between finding another way to defeat Gorbachev or accepting Ukraine's independence for the time being and trying to reach a new agreement later. He chose to sign the agreement, which led directly to the cessation of the USSR as a subject of international law and prompted Gorbachev's ignominious resignation on 25 December, accompanied by the replacement of the Soviet hammer and sickle by the Russian tricolour over the Kremlin.

The deal that cemented Ukraine's independence and the collapse of the Soviet Union was not welcomed by Russian leaders, Yeltsin included. Rather it was accepted because there was no other clear way to complete Yeltsin's takeover of the government in Moscow. In the subsequent months, Russia sought with growing frustration to reel this concession back in, insisting that certain prerogatives belonged to the CIS or to Russia, rather than Ukraine. Of particular concern were the armed forces, which Russia sought to maintain as a single military, while Ukraine, seeing a separate army as a defining attribute of an independent state, insisted on dividing. The same was true of nuclear weapons and monetary policy, among other issues. There were very good reasons to maintain a single currency and monetary policy, but Ukraine, again citing sovereignty (and due also to a lack of enthusiasm for macroeconomic stabilisation), refused, leading to hyperinflation in 1993. In the years after 1991, Russia continued to contest Ukraine's sovereignty along two different axes, the CIS and the ownership of the Black Sea Fleet and its base at Sevastopol.

**The CIS**

Throughout the early post-Soviet years, Russia promoted a federal role for the CIS, which would have legitimised a hegemonic role for Russia in the region. Russia sought central control in three broad issue areas: trade and monetary policy, peacekeeping and nuclear weapons. In the first and third of these, Russia's goals were at least in part supported by the international community. But there was a fundamental conflict of goals on how any cooperation would be organised. Russia was unwilling to create an organisation which limited its power (akin to Germany being 'bound' by the EU), while several others, including Ukraine, refused to be part of an organisation which limited their newly established sovereignty.

On trade and monetary policy, the international community, notably the International Monetary Fund (IMF) – which was a major vehicle for aid to the post-Soviet states – also supported some kind of unified structure. While the Soviet economy was badly in need of structural reform, fragmenting it into 15 separate economies created a separate economic shock, as the gains from trade were lost. Just as Western Europe was implementing the Single European Act in order to gain the advantages of a larger single market, the post-Soviet states were moving in the opposite direction.

The collapse of the single currency, as the Soviet ruble became the Russian ruble, caused further economic harm. Each of the new governments was capable of emitting currency and credit, creating a massive collective action

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problem. As each paid its salaries in newly created credit, the effects were spread (in the form of increasing inflation) across the entire region. On the currency question, Russia and Ukraine oddly ended up supporting the same policy. Russia was trying to implement structural adjustment, or 'shock therapy', which meant controlling the money supply to limit inflation. Ukraine continued to create currency and credit to keep enterprises afloat, causing inflation in Russia as well as Ukraine. When Ukraine created its own currency, and Russia introduced a new ruble, essentially kicking the other states out of the ruble zone, they both gained monetary autonomy. The downside was that volatility of these two currencies considerably undermined trade in what was still a highly integrated economic space.

The problem was how any integrated space would be governed. As the European Union had concluded, a functioning economic union required delegating some sovereignty to an international or supranational organisation. Ukraine and some others were unwilling to do this, given their historical record of briefly lived independent statehood, their recent experience with Russian dominance of the Soviet Union, and their ongoing experience with Russian questioning of their sovereignty and independence. On top of that problem, there was a fundamental conflict of interest involving voting rules for any supranational decision making.[6] Given Russia's size within the region (in terms of population and GDP), there was no voting system that did not either give Russia a dominant position (which Ukraine and others rejected) or leave Russia at risk of being outvoted by others (which Russia rejected). Ultimately therefore, Ukraine did not participate extensively in much of what the CIS did, and this caused great frustration in Russia. For Russia, Ukraine was pettily holding up progress, and rejecting Russia's natural leadership in the region. For Ukraine, Russia was trying to reassert the control that Ukraine had only recently escaped.

A more challenging problem was that of peacekeeping in the region. Conflict had broken out between Armenia and Azerbaijan even prior to the Soviet collapse, and in late 1991, Russian speakers (as in the Donbas, mobilised by their Soviet rather than ethno-cultural identity) in the Trans-Dniestr region of Moldova had declared their independence, supported by the Russian 14th Army, which continued to be located there after Moldovan independence. Further unrest was taking place in Georgia, where separatists in Abkhazia, supported by Russian forces, were fighting Georgian government forces.

Russia requested permission to be identified as a peacekeeper for these conflicts, based on the argument that only it had the capability and interest to provide the needed peacekeeping forces. However, both the Georgian and Moldovan governments resisted Russia being identified as a peacekeeper, as Russia had also been involved in supporting one side in the conflict. Ukraine also opposed Russian peacekeeping, as it feared what Russia might do either in Crimea or Eastern Ukraine. In sum, already by 1993, the basic pattern that was exhibited in 2014 was already in place, and was already a source of tension between Russia and Ukraine. In both Moldova and Georgia, Russia fomented separatism, supported it militarily (while denying doing so), and then proposed that more of its troops enter the conflict zone as peacekeepers. Hybrid warfare, it would seem, long pre-dates the Donbas.

**Nuclear Weapons**

More important for many in the West was the question of control over nuclear weapons. Ukraine's inheritance of the weapons on its territory gave it the third largest nuclear arsenal in the world (after Russia and the US), and the same principle, applied to Belarus and Kazakhstan, meant that the number of nuclear powers suddenly grew from seven to ten. This was seen as threatening by both Russia and the US. The US government, under both George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton, viewed Ukraine primarily through the lens of nuclear weapons. The US was concerned not only about nuclear proliferation and about the fear that Ukraine could not responsibly handle the weapons, but about the entire framework of arms control between the US and Russia being undermined by this proliferation.[7]

From 1991 until the resolution of the issue in January 1994, this was the primary focus of US foreign policy regarding Ukraine, and the US and Russia joined forces to compel Ukraine to surrender the weapons. From the US and Russian perspective, Ukraine's July 1990 Declaration of Sovereignty, which stated Ukraine's desire to become an independent and non-nuclear state, was a binding commitment to denuclearise. By 1993, Russia's assertiveness in the region had already convinced many in Ukraine that it should either keep the weapons or at least insist on 'binding' security guarantees in return for surrendering them. A related issue was who would benefit financially from the reprocessing of the uranium, and Ukraine's insistence that it be compensated for the material in weapons that

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had already been transferred to Russia led to the impression in the US that the Kravchuk government was seeking to extract as much money as possible.

With the Ukrainian economy in freefall, partly due to the Soviet legacy, partly to the breakup of the Soviet economy, and partly due to the absence of reform, Ukraine was in an increasingly desperate position, and found that the nuclear weapons issue kept it isolated. The final issues holding up an agreement were the amount of compensation and the nature of security guarantees Ukraine would receive. Ukraine sought something akin to the NATO Article V guarantee, a commitment that an attack on Ukraine would be regarded as an attack on all NATO members. The US and others were unwilling to make such a commitment, and Ukraine had to settle for security assurances by Russia, the UK and the US that they supported Ukraine's territorial integrity.

To codify these commitments, the US, UK and Russia signed the Budapest Memorandum in December 1994, in which they committed to 'refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine, and that none of their weapons will ever be used against Ukraine except in self-defence or otherwise in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations'.[8] The fact that these commitments were a crucial issue in 1994 shows the deep roots of Ukraine's security fears. Ultimately, however, the absence of a mechanism for enforcing the commitments left Russia free to violate them in 2014 and the US and Britain uncommitted to doing anything about it. This was as they wanted it, and Ukraine had few options to change the deal, which prevented Ukraine's ostracism and reduced economic pressure, but left it militarily vulnerable.

## The Black Sea Fleet, Crimea and Sevastopol

Ukrainian sovereignty over Crimea and Sevastopol was questioned almost from the beginning of the post-Soviet era, with Russian officials making it clear that they believed even less in Crimea's separation from Russia than in the rest of Ukraine's. Thus, in January 1992, having just signed the deal that dissolved the Soviet Union, President Yeltsin stated 'The Black Sea Fleet was, is and will be Russia's. No one, not even Kravchuk will take it away from Russia'.[9] The issue was not just the fleet (the ships of which were mostly obsolescent), but rather Crimea, where it was based. Russia's claims on Crimea were based partly on history (the territory had only been formally part of Ukraine since 1954), partly on ethnicity and language, and partly on strategic military importance. It is hard to know what was driving what: did Russia seek control of Crimea as a means of controlling a crucial naval base, or did it insist on maintaining a presence on the naval base as a means of maintaining a long-term claim on Crimea and a toehold for a future move?

Regardless of the exact motives (and different Russians likely emphasised different reasons), Russian demands concerning Crimea persisted throughout the entire post-Soviet era. Thus, in keeping with Yeltsin's position, the Russian Congress of People's Deputies passed a resolution in January 1992 questioning the 1954 deal that gave Ukraine sovereignty over Crimea. In June 1992, the two sides agreed to split the assets of the fleet, but the details of the split and of basing rights continued to prevent a deal from being finalised. In September 1993, Russia cut off the gas supply to Ukraine and offered to restore it on the basis of receiving a favourable division of the fleet and rights over the Sevastopol base. These events all predated serious discussion of NATO enlargement.

The problem was complicated during this period by a move among some Crimean leaders to secede from Ukraine. In May 1992, the Crimean parliament declared Crimea's sovereignty (it already had been upgraded in 1990 from *oblast* to autonomous republic within Soviet Ukraine), but a compromise was reached in which Crimea's autonomy was increased and the Crimean parliament rescinded the sovereignty declaration. In 1995, President Kuchma, an Eastern Ukrainian who had been elected on a moderate pro-Russian platform the year before, dissolved the institution of Crimean presidency and, combined with in-fighting among Russian nationalists, this took the wind out of the sails of Crimean separatism. That essentially resolved the question of secession from within Ukraine, but the conflict over Sevastopol continued. Russia insisted on its right to continue basing its part of the fleet there, and Ukraine resisted.

In 1997, the two sides finally reached a compromise which gave Russia roughly 80% of the fleet's ships, a 20-year (until 2017) lease on part of the base, and the right to keep a force of up to 25,000 personnel at the base. The agreement committed Russia to 'respect the sovereignty of Ukraine, honour its legislation and preclude interference

in the internal affairs of Ukraine'.[10] Ukrainian President Yushchenko later announced Ukraine's intention to let the lease lapse in 2017, but in 2010 President Yanukovych lobbied the Ukrainian parliament to vote for the Kharkiv Accords that extended the fleet base to 2042 in return for a cut in gas prices (though Russia continued to charge Ukraine the highest gas price in Europe throughout Yanukovych's presidency).

**The Russia-Ukraine Friendship Treaty**

With the issue of the Black Sea Fleet and Sevastopol apparently resolved, Russia and Ukraine were able to sign a Friendship Treaty later in 1997. This treaty was seen as putting the two states' relations on a clear basis in international law, addressing many issues that had been left hanging. Among other things, Article II of the treaty states that, 'In accord with provisions of the UN Charter and the obligations of the Final Act on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the High Contracting Parties shall respect each other's territorial integrity and reaffirm the inviolability of the borders existing between them'.

In many respects, this was the high point in post-Soviet Russian-Ukrainian relations, as it appeared to signal Russia's recognition that the disintegration of the USSR in 1991 would not be reversed. However, while Yeltsin said at the signing that, 'My friend President Kuchma and I vow at this sacred place, at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, that the treaty that we sign today will be fulfilled'[11], other Russian leaders asserted a revisionist policy. Boris Nemstov, widely regarded as a moderate and pro-Western politician, sought to have Russian firms buy property in Sevastopol, saying, 'Historical justice should be restored by capitalist methods'. Moscow Mayor Luzhkov introduced a measure in the Federation Council to declare Russian sovereignty over Sevastopol,[12] and called the Friendship Treaty the 'surrender of Crimea'.[13] In the coming years, Luzhkov would spend considerable resources from the Moscow city budget to build a branch of Moscow State University in Sevastopol, along with housing for Russian service members and various other buildings.

In 1999, when the Friendship Treaty finally came to the Federation Council for ratification, Luzhkov and others opposed it, fearing that it would reduce Russia's leverage over the region. In 2010, after Yanukovych extended Russia's lease on the base, Luzhkov continued to assert that Sevastopol is a 'Russian city'.[14] In sum, the issue was never really settled for many Russian elites, including moderates as well as radical nationalists. Writing in 1998, Russian historian Alexander Yanov lamented that, 'Three out of the five possible candidates to succeed Yeltsin – Luzhkov, [Gennadiy] Zyuganov, and [Aleksandr] Lebed – advocate the transfer of Sevastopol to Russia, which amounts to open confrontation with Ukraine; the fourth candidate – [Viktor] Chernomyrdin – states publicly: 'Russia is not a country but a continent'.[15]

The idea that the 1997 Friendship Treaty would be a turning point was a recognition that up until that point, Russia had not accepted Ukraine's independence or its full sovereignty over Crimea, especially Sevastopol. The hope was that the treaty would put that contestation to rest, but it did not. From our post-2014 perspective, it demonstrates nearly the opposite of conventional narratives that see the Ukraine-Russia conflict as something that arose after a period of relative comity. In actuality, the relationship was fraught from the beginning due to Ukraine's insecurity and Russia's dissatisfaction with the status quo of an independent Ukraine. The events related so far predated NATO enlargement (agreed in 1997 and implemented in 1999) and the rise of Putin (who was elected President in 2000). There can be little doubt that NATO expansion irritated Russia and that Putin's approach to democracy, to Ukraine and to the West did not help, but they cannot have been the root causes of the tension that was present from the moment of Ukraine's independence. This was rooted more fundamentally in Russia's conception of its national identity, its borders, and its role in the region.

**The Orange Revolution**

From the Friendship Treaty in 1997 until the Orange Revolution in 2004, several important developments paved the way for the disruption that was to follow. First, NATO added three new members (Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland) in 1999, over Russia's objections. Second, at almost the exact same time, NATO engaged in a bombing campaign to force the government of Serbia to stop ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. This intervention, which was repeatedly cited later by Putin, caused anger within the Russian leadership and nearly spurred a military

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confrontation between NATO and Russian forces in Kosovo. Third, Putin replaced Yeltsin as president, and initially had very constructive relations with the West, even as he methodically reduced pluralism in Russia by gaining control over the press, the oligarchs and the regions. This put democracy on the agenda in the region. Fourth, in Ukraine, Kuchma won election to a second term. In doing so, he sought to emulate Russia in reducing competing sources of power, and he sought to do this while maintaining good relations with both NATO and Russia. In both Ukraine and Russia, politics in the years before 2004 were increasingly about whether democracy would survive.

In Ukraine, President Kuchma's efforts to consolidate power encountered considerable opposition, but he seemed to have won a decisive victory when a constitutional referendum in 2000 appeared to have strengthened his power over the parliament and the prime minister. Before the results could be implemented, the release of recordings made in Kuchma's office implying his involvement in the murder of journalist Georgiy Gongadze, as well as various other misdeeds, turned the focus of Ukrainian politics to Kuchma and his growing autocracy. Kuchma decided not to seek to circumvent a constitutional ban on a third term as elections approached in 2004. Instead, he supported as his successor Yanukovych, a former Prime Minister, leader of the Party of Regions, and one of the leaders of the Donetsk Clan. His opponent was Yushchenko, another former Prime Minister under Kuchma, who supported a much more pro-Western policy and had very late in the game joined the broader anti-Kuchma opposition, together with Yuliya Tymoshenko. There was wide consensus that Yanukovych would align Ukraine with Russia, and that Yushchenko would align it with the West, and so the country appeared to be at a tipping point.

The Russian government threw its support wholeheartedly behind Yanukovych. Yanukovych's campaign team was largely composed of Russian political technologists. Russian media, which were widely watched in Ukraine, gave extensive favourable support to Yanukovych, and Putin personally travelled to Kiev to support him in both rounds of the elections. Shortly before the first round of the election, Putin appeared at a military parade in Kiev, standing shoulder to shoulder with Kuchma and Yanukovych. This campaign marked the emergence of Russian media and leaders accusing the Ukrainian opposition of being 'fascists', linking them with the World War II era Ukrainian nationalist Bandera, whose legacy was highly contested. Russian media also helped present Yushchenko as a pawn of the United States (his wife is an American-Ukrainian), which after the invasion of Iraq was unpopular in Ukraine. These were themes to be used in Russia's information warfare again in 2014, and they resonated in Russia.

After the exposure of fraud in the second round of the 2004 election, Russia continued, along with Yanukovych, to insist that the election was valid and should stand. When a compromise to end the crisis led to the second round of the election being re-run, a Commonwealth of Independent States election monitoring team deemed it illegitimate.

The Orange Revolution was a turning point in Russia's relations with Ukraine and the West, but not for the reasons people expected at the time. In 2004, the hope or fear, depending on one's preferences, was that the Orange coalition was going to reform Ukrainian government, reduce corruption, build a more 'European' state, and align itself with the West. Instead, it engaged in intense infighting, did little to limit corruption, and managed to resuscitate Yanukovych (who by this time was being advised by the American political consultant Paul Manafort[16]) when Yushchenko appointed him Prime Minister.

While the immediate danger to Russia posed by Yushchenko's election receded, the example it set worried Putin and other Russian leaders. The lesson from the ouster of Slobodan Milosevic in Serbia in 2000, of Eduard Shevardnadze in Georgia in 2003, and then of the blocking of Yanukovych coming to power in the Orange Revolution, was that colour revolutions were camouflage for the real purpose of regime change of authoritarian leaders in the post-communist world. This appeared to be a direct threat to Putin's rule in Russia. Putin and many others saw an even more sinister danger: that the revolutions were not really about democracy, but rather were about geopolitics.

The fact that many in the US exaggerated the role of international support in driving these revolutions, and that they openly hoped for something similar in Belarus in 2005, solidified the idea that democracy promotion was not about promoting democracy but about removing governments that did not support the US. In response, Russia began a series of domestic and international initiatives aimed at preventing such protests in Russia. Domestically, these measures included forming the group *Nashi* (Ours) as a pro-Putin youth group to challenge any other youth movements, and limiting the activities of NGOs, especially those with funding from abroad. Internationally, Russia

collaborated with China to form the Shanghai Treaty Organisation, among the missions of which was to promote the value of a pluralist international order in opposition to the West's universalist claims about liberal democracy.[17]

## Ukraine between Russia and the West

The role of the West in the background to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine is complicated by the fact that the 'West' encompasses several states and groups of states: the US, Germany, NATO, the EU and various combinations of these. But the overall story is fairly straightforward. From the 'prehistory' of Ukraine's independence, it was clear that Ukraine was important to the West in terms of the West's relationship with Russia, and not as an important factor in its own right. This frustrated Ukrainian leaders, and took them some time to come to terms with, as Ukrainian leaders (including Yanukovych) have tended to exaggerate Ukraine's importance to the West. Ukraine's relations with Russia have always interacted with Russia's relations with the West, and while Ukraine has sometimes used this linkage to its advantage, the eroding relations between Russia and the West increasingly made Ukraine a battlefield, rather than the bridge that it hoped to be.

In the early post-Soviet years, the United States was the primary external actor in the Ukraine-Russia relationship because Europe was focused on its own transformations. These included implementing the Single European Act and single currency, managing the reunification of Germany, and making the transition from state planning and communism to a market economy and democracy in Central Europe.

Ukraine struggled to find an important place in US foreign policy for three reasons. First, the US was focused on Russia, the success or failure of which was seen as much more important than that of Ukraine. Second, US interests in the international politics of the region were essentially conservative – both the Bush and Clinton administrations were focused as much on preserving the status quo in arms control and political stability than in transforming the region. The threats the US feared – breakdown of Soviet-era arms control agreements, nuclear proliferation and ethnic unrest – seemed better prevented by preserving Russia's dominance than by undermining it. Ukraine's reconsideration of its nuclear status played into this conservatism. Third, in contrast to Russia under Yeltsin, Ukraine under Kravchuk and then Kuchma was unwilling to embrace the kind of reform that the 'Washington consensus' insisted was necessary. The notion that Ukraine might provide a necessary check on Russia was not widely shared, though Zbigniew Brzezinski articulated this argument cogently in early 1994.[18]

Several things happened to change this. First, the signing of the Trilateral Agreement on nuclear weapons removed the primary obstacle to a closer US relationship with Ukraine. Second, a series of events in 1993 and 1994 undermined US confidence both in Russian economic and democratic reform, and in Russia's willingness to join the Western community (as viewed from the West) in foreign policy. If there had been a tension before between doing what was right by Ukraine and pursuing US interests vis-à-vis Russia, those two concerns increasingly aligned in favour of supporting Ukraine, both because of its intrinsic importance and because it provided a hedge against Russian reassertion.

Domestically within Russia, events called into question both whether Russia could reform economically and whether it could adopt democracy in some form. The two issues were joined in the violent conflict between Yeltsin and the Congress of People's Deputies in 1993. A sizable majority in Russia's parliament steadfastly opposed Yeltsin's reform plans, and criticised the role of the West in promoting them. If democratic norms were followed, economic reform would likely cease, and hardliners might return to power. Keeping Yeltsin in power and reform moving forward meant taking undemocratic steps: the unconstitutional dismissal of the parliament, the violent emptying of the building, and the unilateral writing of a new constitution. Western leaders were torn between their desire to see Yeltsin triumph and their distaste at the means needed to do so. Ultimately, however, believing that there could be no Russian democracy and reform without Yeltsin, most strongly supported the measures he undertook. At the same time, however, the need to think about other contingencies was clear. That message was reinforced in the 1993 parliamentary elections, in which Vladimir Zhirinovsky's neo-fascist party and the Communist Party outpolled Yeltsin's party. It was reinforced even more beginning in late 1994, when Russia sent its armed forces into the republic of Chechnya, beginning a brutal campaign to prevent its secession.

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Internationally, the situation was only slightly better. The arrest of Aldrich Ames for spying for Russia was substantively a minor matter, but received huge attention in the US because it appeared to show that Russia still considered the US an adversary, and was spying on it even as the US was propping up Russia's economy. Other elements of US domestic politics further undermined the relationship: at the very time that many were saying the US should put together a 'new Marshall plan' for Russia, a domestic recession and the 1992 presidential election combined to make a sizable investment in foreign aid impossible. As a candidate, Bill Clinton blasted George H.W. Bush for focusing on international affairs at the expense of the US economy, and as President he chose to focus on energising the US economy rather than Russia's.

All those events pale in long-term importance next to the outbreak of war in the former Yugoslavia. This conflict was central to the worsening of relations between the US and Russia, with far-reaching consequences for Ukraine. In December 1994, Russia vetoed a UN Security Council Resolution intended to limit Serbian economic support for forces fighting in Bosnia. Over the next few years, as efforts to limit the conflict continued, two things became apparent. First, Russia and the US supported very different outcomes in the conflict, undermining the notion that they had become partners rather than adversaries. Second, Russia's use of its UN Security Council veto, and its independent position more broadly, made it clear how problematic it would be to have Russia inside key Western institutions such as NATO. As a result of the Yugoslav wars, the notion of including Russia within an expanded NATO appeared increasingly problematic. This toxified the discussion of NATO enlargement, because the discussion was increasingly about expanding NATO but not including Russia. That inevitably but inadvertently raised the question of where NATO enlargement would end, and as disagreement over Yugoslavia peaked in 1999 with NATO's intervention over Kosovo, the stakes seemed ever more important.

This erosion of the US-Russia relationship did not directly involve Ukraine, but indirectly it completely changed the context of Ukraine's relations with both Russia and the US. Along with Yeltsin's struggles to consolidate domestic reform, the Russian position on the Yugoslav conflict convinced many US policy makers that they needed to hedge against the possibility that reform would fail or that Russia would become an adversary in Europe. Russia's second war in Chechnya, beginning in 1999, fed that perception. For Russia, these episodes gave weight to the view that events since 1991 were undermining Russia's international role, and that Russia was becoming side-lined in a Europe increasingly dominated by the United States. This made both the US and Russia more interested in Ukraine, which throughout the 1990s maintained pluralist politics and a 'multi-vector' foreign policy.

Throughout the period prior to 2013, there was an imbalance of interest in Ukraine. While Russia was pressuring Ukraine to move more closely toward it, and Ukraine was generally resisting, the situation was the opposite regarding the European Union and the West more broadly, where Ukraine was seeking closer integration with Europe and the West but was being held at arm's length due to the absence of reform. Especially during Kuchma's first term (1994–1999), the IMF struggled with the dilemma of whether to continue aiding Ukraine even though it had not met the conditions of previous loans, or to cut off aid and risk an economic crisis that might drive the country into Russia's arms. Similarly, in the realm of military reform, NATO found that programmes for transformation of the military were consistently unimplemented, but hesitated to cut off aid and the military contacts that accompanied it.

These dilemmas became sharper during Kuchma's second term (1999–2004). Kuchma had used various tactics to limit the competitiveness of the 1999 election, but as with Yeltsin, the fact that his second-round opponent was a communist led the US to support him anyway. But as he threatened civil liberties and political competition, the West's concern grew more intense. Two events were especially influential. The first was the murder of the journalist Georgiy Gongadze and the crackdown on opposition of which it was a part. The second was the revelation that Ukraine had made a deal to supply Kolchuga air defence radar systems to Iraq in the run-up to the US-led invasion in 2003. This infuriated the Bush administration, which responded by dramatically reducing interaction with Kuchma's government.[19]

These events strengthened the perception in the West that for Ukraine to succeed, and for the West to support it, its leadership would have to change. Increasing suppression of Kuchma's rivals, including the incarceration of Yuliya Tymoshenko (to be repeated in 2011), deepened the sense that Kuchma could no longer be a partner. Both US and European leaders transparently preferred Yushchenko in the 2004 presidential elections, but their role both in the

election and subsequent protests has been exaggerated.[20]

Following the Orange Revolution, the US and EU both dramatically increased their aid to Ukraine, believing that Ukraine had a unique opportunity to embrace domestic reform and to integrate into Europe. The opportunity for European integration only became possible after the EU launched its Eastern Partnership (a brainchild of Polish Foreign Minister Radek Sikorski) in 2009 which was implemented after the Euromaidan. Those hopes were rapidly dashed, as Tymoshenko and Yushchenko attacked one another and as reports of corruption among Yushchenko's administration made it clear that not much had changed. Western governments were disappointed and mystified when Yushchenko appointed Yanukovych, who had been responsible for attempting to steal the 2004 election, to the position of Prime Minister in 2006. At this point, the West in general and the US in particular lost interest, amid what was often known as 'Ukraine fatigue' and preoccupation in the US with wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The 2008 global financial crisis further distracted the US and Europe from Ukrainian affairs.

In April 2008, NATO leaders met at Bucharest. On the agenda was the question of whether to extend Membership Action Plans (MAPs), which would pave the way to membership (without making a final decision) to Georgia and Ukraine. The US supported this step and Russia opposed it. Both German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Nicholas Sarkozy advocated deferring a decision in order to placate Russia, and that policy prevailed. While Putin appeared pleased to have avoided something Russia was strongly opposed to, many viewed this as a deferment of a decision, not as a decision against extending MAPs, and eventually offers of membership, to Georgia and Ukraine. The communique issued at the summit stated the intention of offering membership to Ukraine and Georgia in the future. Samuel Charap and Timothy Colton described this result as 'the worst of all worlds: while providing no increased security to Ukraine and Georgia, the Bucharest Declaration reinforced the view in Moscow that NATO was determined to incorporate them at any cost'.[21] Russia invaded Georgia five months later.

Speaking to the NATO-Russia Council in Bucharest, Putin strongly opposed bringing Ukraine into NATO. In doing so, he drew attention to what he saw as the artificiality of Ukraine's borders and on the presence of Russian speakers in Eastern and Southern Ukraine, an area he would describe as *NovoRossiya* six years later.[22] Putin told NATO:

But in Ukraine, one third [sic[23]] are ethnic Russians. Out of forty-five million people, in line with the official census, seventeen million are Russians. There are regions, where only the Russian population lives, for instance, in the Crimea. Ninety percent are Russians. Generally speaking, Ukraine is a very complicated state. Ukraine, in the form it currently exists, was created in the Soviet times, it received its territories from Poland – after the Second World War, from Czechoslovakia, from Romania – and at present not all the problems have been solved as yet in the border region with Romania in the Black Sea. Then, it received huge territories from Russia in the East and South of the country.

Putin warned:

If we introduce into it NATO problems, other problems, it may put the state on the verge of its existence. Complicated internal political problems are taking place there. We should act also very, very carefully. We do not have any right to veto, and, probably, we do not pretend to have. But I want that all of us, when deciding such issues, realise that we have there our interests as well. Well, seventeen million Russians currently live in Ukraine. Who may state that we do not have any interests there? South, the South of Ukraine, completely, there are only Russians. The Crimea was merely received by Ukraine with the decision of the CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union) Politburo. There were not even any state procedures on transferring this territory.

Following the election of Yanukovych in 2010, the EU supplanted the US as the main Western interlocutor with the Ukrainian government, and the topic shifted from NATO membership, which was clearly a distant prospect at best, and one that Yanukovych did not support, to deeper integration with the EU, which was more popular and less divisive in Ukraine, and which would have a much more significant economic impact. Until then Russia had only opposed NATO enlargement, but from 2010, Russia strongly objected to the EU Association Agreement and to the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) that it envisioned, because such an agreement would preclude Ukraine from joining the CIS Customs Union, as one country cannot be a member of two customs

unions.[24] The CIS Customs Union had been established in January 2010, only nine months after the Eastern Partnership, with which it was meant to compete.

Crucially, Putin viewed Ukraine as an important member of Putin's future Eurasian Union and Russia worked towards achieving this goal. Russia clearly viewed the Eastern Partnership as a 'geo-economic' threat,[25] and many have seen this as another instance where the West forced Russia into a corner. The EU was adamant, however, that no third party could effectively veto an agreement between the EU and another country. This norm was extremely important, as it underpinned the notion of a Europe governed by norms and rules rather than by great powers. Russia believed the exact opposite, namely that Russia as a great power should wield an acknowledged veto over arrangements, especially in its sphere of interest. This combination of incompatible economic plans and contradictory norms set the international stage for the events that took place in the fall of 2013.

### Conclusion

This chapter has sought to emphasise two key points. First, Russia's desire to limit Ukraine's independence and to retake control of at least some part of Crimea did not emerge during the Putin era. Rather they were there from the very beginning. Second, the example set by the Orange Revolution was seen as threatening to Russia because such a revolution might be replicated in Russia. Democracy in Ukraine would undermine the claim that democracy could not work in Russia and would undermine Russia's geopolitical position.

The first point is significant because it undermines two arguments about the source of the 2014 conflict that are made both by critics of the West and by critics of Putin. Critics of the West assert that Russia's annexation of Crimea was the West's fault. The central support for this is that NATO enlargement (beginning in 1997) and NATO support for Ukrainian membership (enunciated in the 2008 Bucharest Summit) left Russia little choice but to respond.[26] There is room for considerable debate concerning the wisdom of US, European and NATO policy after 1991, but it cannot be the source of Russia's designs on Ukraine, which very clearly predated any of the policies that critics point to.

The second point is significant because it recasts the feeling of insecurity that Russia felt in the years after the Orange Revolution. While Russian concern about NATO enlargement was real, this was not an existential threat. Increasingly, democracy was seen as a threat to the Putin regime and by extent to Russia. The more the Putin and the Russian elites based their rule on autocracy rather than democracy, the more dangerous democracy in Ukraine became, for if Ukraine could build a European democracy, why not Russia? This could undermine the legitimacy of Putin's authoritarian model, and the Orange Revolution showed how street protests could turn dissatisfaction into regime change. That some American officials openly hoped for such an outcome was not reassuring.

For Putin and for many Russian great power nationalists, a threat to Putin's regime was tantamount to a threat to Russia's national security. The view that only Putin had been able to stop the decay in Russia, and that the West sought to weaken and surround Russia, meant that democracy was not only a political threat but an existential one. The West can be faulted for not being more sensitive to Russian fears, but the alternative – accepting Russia's right to rule its neighbours – was not without danger. The deeper underlying problem was that as Russia receded from democracy, the assumption that common interests outweighed conflicting interests was reversed. Thus, the disagreement over Ukraine's status increased in salience just at the time that Yanukovych was indirectly forcing his own citizens to take a stand one way or the other.

Because it is not tenable to assert that Russia's designs on Ukraine were caused by Western actions, the real question is whether the West should have acquiesced in Russian claims about a 'sphere of influence' that were present from the very beginning (and indeed go back at least to the end of World War II). That is a much harder question, and one can see arguments on both sides. But, in terms of getting the historical and causal arguments right, instead of saying the West caused the crisis, it is much more accurate to say that Russia had claims on Ukraine, that the West and Ukraine resisted those claims, and that Russia used force to get its way.

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# Russia-West-Ukraine: Triangle of Competition 1991–2013

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## Notes

[1] http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20603

[2] Peter J. Potichnyj, Marc Raeff, Jaroslaw Pelenski and Gleb N. Zekulin, eds., *Ukraine and Russia in Their Historical Encounter* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1992).

[3] Voting in Crimea also presents a problem of ratifying historical injustice: Stalin deported the entire Tatar population from Crimea in 1944, increasing the Russian ethnic majority now observed in the peninsula.

[4] As Timothy Snyder has shown, Ukraine and Belarus bore the brunt of World War II, both in the proportion of soldiers and civilians killed. Of 13 'Hero Cities' identified by the Soviet government after World War II, four (Odesa, Kyiv, Sevastopol and Kerch) were in Ukraine. Two of these, Sevastopol and Kerch, are in Crimea and are now controlled by Russia. See his *Bloodlands* (New York: Basic Books, 2010).

[5] See chapter one 'The Demise of the Soviet Union and the Emergence of Independent Ukraine' in P. D'Anieri, Robert Kravchuk and T. Kuzio, *Politics and Society in Ukraine* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1999), pp.10–44.

[6] This dilemma is discussed in depth in P. D'Anieri, 'International Cooperation among Unequal Partners: The Emergence of Bilateralism in the Former Soviet Union', *International Politics*, vol.34, no.4 (December 1997), pp.417–448.

[7] On the nuclear negotiations, see Steven Pifer, *The Trilateral Process, The United States, Ukraine, Russia and Nuclear Weapons* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2011) and chapter 3 'Controlling the Nukes' in James Goldgeier and Michael McFaul, *Power and Purpose: U.S. Policy Toward Russia after the Cold War* (Washington: Brookings, 2003), pp.41–58.

[8] http://www.pircenter.org/media/content/files/12/13943175580.pdf

[9] Sobchak and Yeltsin were quoted in John Rettie and James Meek, 'Battle for Soviet Navy', *The Guardian*, 10 January 1992.

[10] 'Bound by treaty: Russia, Ukraine and Crimea', *Deutsche Welle*, 3 March 2014. http://www.dw.com/en/bound-by-treaty-russia-ukraine-and-crimea/a-17487632 This article denotes four separate legal documents committing Russia to Ukraine's territorial integrity: the Helsinki Final Act, the Budapest Memorandum, the Black Sea Fleet Agreement, and the 1997 Russia-Ukraine Friendship Treaty.

[11] Michael Specter, 'Setting Past Aside, Russia and Ukraine Sign Friendship Treaty', New York Times, 1 June 1997. http://www.nytimes.com/1997/06/01/world/setting-past-aside-russia-and-ukraine-sign-friendship-treaty.html

[12] These examples are from P. D'Anieri, *Economic Interdependence in Ukrainian-Russian Relations* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999).

[13] Clifford J. Levy, 'Moscow's Mayor Exports Russia's New Nationalism', *New York Times*, 25 October 2008. http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/26/world/europe/26mayor.html

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[15] Alexander Yanov, 'The Rape of Russia', *Moscow News*, 18 June 1998.

[16] T. Kuzio, 'Ukrainian Kleptocrats and America's Real-Life House of Cards: Corruption, Lobbyism and the Rule of Law', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, vol.50, no.1 (March 2017), pp.29–40.

[17] P. D'Anieri, 'Autocratic Diffusion and the Pluralization of Democracy', in Bruce Jentleson and Louis Pauly, eds., *Power in a Complex Global System* (London: Routledge, 2014), pp. 80–96.

[18] Zbigniew Brzezinski, 'The Premature Partnership', *Foreign Affairs*, vol.73, no.2 (March/April 1994), pp.67–82. https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russian-federation/1994-03-01/premature-partnership

[19] It is not clear whether the Kolchuga's were ever delivered to Saddam Hussein's regime. From the US perspective, it did not matter.

[20] Ironically, both US democracy supporters (including government employees) and the Russian government had an interest in attributing a large role to the US. For democracy promotion advocates, the Orange Revolution justified further investment in their programs. For Russia, the US role bolstered the notion that the revolution was sponsored from outside rather than being internal and hence more legitimate.

[21] S. Charap and T. J. Colton. *Everyone Loses*, p.88.

[22] https://www.unian.info/world/111033-text-of-putins-speech-at-nato-summit-bucharest-april-2-2008.html

[23] Putin dramatically overstated the number of ethnic Russian in Ukraine. According to the most recent (2001) census, 8.3 of Ukraine's roughly 48 million citizens identified as ethnic Russian, comprising 17% of the population, down from 22% in the 1989 census. Similarly, he overstated the portion of Russians in Crimea in the next sentence. It was actually 58%. See State Statistics Committee of Ukraine, 'All-Ukrainian Population Census 2001'. http://2001.ukrcensus.gov.ua/eng/results/general/nationality/

[24] If one country were a member of both customs unions, goods could flow freely from all the countries in one union through the joint member to all the countries in the other, effectively creating a single large customs union.

[25] See S. Charap and T. J. Colton, *Everyone Loses*, p.29. They use Edward Luttwak's definition of geoeconomics as 'the logic of war in the grammar of commerce'. See Edward N. Luttwak, 'From Geopolitics to Geoeconomics: Logic of Conflict, Grammar of Commerce', *The National Interest*, no. 20 (Summer 1990), pp.17–23.

[26] See, for example, J. J. Mearsheimer, 'Why the Ukraine Crisis is the West's Fault'. S. Charap and T. J. Colton, *Everyone Loses*, devote particular attention to the role of the 2008 NATO Bucharest Summit.

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