

# Election and Opposition in Authoritarian States

Essay

Euromaidan – Democratic Revolution or Coup D'état

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## Introduction

The Euromaidan was a mass protest movement that had been outgrown into a revolution or coup that led to the overthrow of the legitimately elected President of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich. The revolution or coup began as a public protest at the Maidan Nazelezhnosti Square<sup>1</sup> in Kiev on the night of 21 November 2013 and ended on 22 February 2014, when Russian-backed President Yanukovich fled the country. The initial cause of the protest was Yanukovich announcement to suspend the association treaty with the European Union<sup>2</sup>, which would have opened borders to goods from the EU and would have created conditions for easing travel restrictions.<sup>3</sup> However, Ukrainian Prime Minister Azarov stated that Ukraine would inevitably face a crisis if it signed an Association Agreement with the EU.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, Yanukovich described an EU offer to lend Ukraine 610m Euros as inadequate and said it would need at least 20bn Euros a year to upgrade its economy to “European standards”.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, Vladimir Putin offered financial incentives that would keep Ukraine in the Russian sphere of interests.<sup>6</sup> Accordingly, Ukraine and Russia signed the Action plan on 17 December 2013 which determined that Russia would buy \$15 billion of Ukrainian government bonds and the cost of Russian natural gas supplied to Ukraine would be lowered to \$268 per 1,000 cubic meters.<sup>7</sup> These government actions sparked the wave of demonstrations in Ukraine. The opposition was united against Yanukovich and they have demanded his resignation, new elections,<sup>8</sup> and later in February, restoration of the country’s 2004 constitution.<sup>9</sup> According to Shveda and Park, the government did not possess any more full

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<sup>1</sup> Independence Square (English)

<sup>2</sup> Traynor, Ian and Grytsenko, Oksana (21 November 2013), *Ukraine suspends talks on EU trade pact as Putin wins tug of war*, The Guardian, Available online at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/21/ukraine-suspends-preparations-eu-trade-pact>

<sup>3</sup> *The Draft Association Agreement between the European Union and Ukraine* (9 August 2013), Government Portal, State sites of Ukraine, Available online at: <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/storage/app/media/uploaded-files/ASSOCIATION%20AGREEMENT.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> *Azarov: Ukraine would face crisis if it signed Association Agreement with EU* (24 December 2013), Interfax-Ukraine, Ukraine New Agency, Available online at: <https://en.interfax.com.ua/news/economic/183315.html>

<sup>5</sup> *Ukraine protests after Yanukovich EU deal rejection*, BBC News, 30 November 2013, Available online at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-25162563>

<sup>6</sup> *Russia offers Ukraine major economic assistance*, BBC News, 17 December 2013, Available online at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-25411118>

<sup>7</sup> *Russia offers Ukraine major economic assistance*, BBC News, 17 December 2013, Available online at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-25411118> (The Price was \$400 at the time)

<sup>8</sup> *Yanukovich Rejects Oppositions Demand; Protests Continue*, RadioFreeEurope-Radio Liberty, 13 December 2013, Available online at: <https://www.rferl.org/a/ukraine-yanukovich-rejects-demands/25200123.html> ; *Ukraine Opposition demands Russia Agreement Details*, BBC News, 18 December 2013, Available online at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-25426305>

<sup>9</sup> Sasse, Gwendolyn (12 April 2016), *Constitution Making in Ukraine: Refocusing the Debate*, Carnegie Europe, Available online at: <https://carnegieeurope.eu/2016/04/12/constitution-making-in-ukraine-refocusing-debate-pub-63304> ; *Ukraine’s Opposition*

legitimacy.<sup>10</sup> In the eyes of the protesters, the government has betrayed Ukraine's future linked to European integration, which could bring political reforms as a way of fighting corruption that has plagued Ukraine.<sup>11</sup> However, describing the protestors, they emphasize that “the bulk of the protesters were mainly the Ukrainian speakers from Western Ukraine and Greek Roman Catholics of that religious affiliation, and solidarity with the protesters was expressed by Crimean Tatar population of Crimea and almost all other major religious denominations, except for the Russian Orthodox Church.”<sup>12</sup> Indirectly, this claim was also confirmed by Onuch who wrote that on “24 November, the protests organized by opposition political parties, student organizations, as well as, long-time activists grew in size to approximately 200,000- 300,000 in Kyiv. Tens of thousands of ‘ordinary’ Ukrainians joined in Lviv (and across west Ukraine), and a few thousand to a few hundred joined in eastern and southern cities like Odessa, Crimea, Kharkov, and Sumy.”<sup>13</sup> Also, as far as the democratic concept of revolution is concerned, it is highly controversial that some of the leaders of the parliamentary opposition were leaders of far-right political parties which program is based on the ideology of the famous Ukrainian Nazi collaborator, Stepan Bandera. Their influence on protestors was remarkable, and accordingly, the entire demonstrations were marked by a commemoration of Stephen Bandera which clearly meant that the opposition no longer wanted to be part of the "Russian world".<sup>14</sup> Having this in

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*demands to restore 2004 Constitution urgently*, Johnson’s Russia List, 12 February 2014, Available online at:

<https://russialist.org/ukraines-opposition-demands-to-restore-2004-constitution-urgently/>

<sup>10</sup> Shveda, Yuriy and Park, Joung Ho (January 2016), *Ukraine’s revolution of dignity: The dynamics of Euromaidan*, Journal of Eurasian Studies, Vol. 7, Issue 1, p. 86, Available online at:

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1879366515000305>

<sup>11</sup> *Ukraine’s Maidan Revolution*, The Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington, June 2017, Available online at: [https://jsis.washington.edu/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Ukraine\\_Euromaidan\\_CCP\\_ii.pdf](https://jsis.washington.edu/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Ukraine_Euromaidan_CCP_ii.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Shveda, Yuriy and Park, Joung Ho (January 2016), *Ukraine’s revolution of dignity: The dynamics of Euromaidan*, Journal of Eurasian Studies, Vol. 7, Issue 1, p. 86, Available online at:

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1879366515000305>

<sup>13</sup> Onuch, Olga (2014), *The Maidan, Past and Present: Orange Revolution (2004) and the EuroMaidan (2013-2014)*, Marples, D. et. al. (eds), Columbia University Press: New York, Available online at: [https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:0761e853-1f4e-4e7c-9ed4-416631d7c2ab/download\\_file?file\\_format=pdf&safe\\_filename=The%2BCase%2Bof%2BEuroMaidan%2Band%2Bthe%2BOrange%2BRevolution.pdf&type\\_of\\_work=Book+section](https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:0761e853-1f4e-4e7c-9ed4-416631d7c2ab/download_file?file_format=pdf&safe_filename=The%2BCase%2Bof%2BEuroMaidan%2Band%2Bthe%2BOrange%2BRevolution.pdf&type_of_work=Book+section)

<sup>14</sup> Kramer, E. Andrew (16 December 2013), *Unease as an Opposition Party Stands Out in Ukraine’s Protest*, The New York Times, Available online at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/17/world/europe/unease-as-an-opposition-party-stands-out-in-ukraines-protests.html> ; Foxall, Andrew and Kessler, Oren (18 March 2014), *Argument: Yes, There are Bad Guys in the Ukrainian Government*, Foreign Policy, Available online at: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2014/03/18/yes-there-are-bad-guys-in-the-ukrainian-government/> ; Draitser, Eric (29 January 2014), *Ukraine and the Rebirth of Fascism*, CounterPunch.org, Available online at: <https://www.counterpunch.org/2014/01/29/ukraine-and-the-rebirth-of-fascism/> ; Lévesque, Julie (06 March 2014), “Democratization” and Anti-Semitism in Ukraine: When Neo-Nazi Symbols become “The New Normal”, Global Research –

mind, for instance, it is difficult to imagine a protest in Germany where you can hear the Nazi salute "Heil Hitler" or "Sieg Heil", and then evaluate this event as a democratic demonstration. On the other side, the Ukrainian nationalist-fascist salute "Glory to Ukraine – To Heroes Glory" became a slogan of the Euromaidan protesters in their fight against the Yanukovich regime.<sup>15</sup> According to Milne, fascists, oligarchs and western expansion were at the heart of the crisis.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, Ukrainian far-right groups were supported by the US government, as well as the parliamentary opposition.<sup>17</sup>

The culmination of the demonstrations was the massacre in Maidan square, which took place from 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> February 2014.<sup>18</sup> Although more than 50 demonstrators and policemen had been shot dead, it is still not clear what the cause of this massacre was, or who gave the order.<sup>19</sup> According to Katchanovski, a retired Georgian general claimed that the massacre was committed by Georgian snipers<sup>20</sup> whose engagement is linked to Michael Saakashvili, but no such reliable evidence has been provided.<sup>21</sup> He emphasizes that this massacre was a key element of the violent

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Center for Research on Globalization, Available online at: <https://www.globalresearch.ca/democratization-and-anti-semitism-in-ukraine-neo-nazi-symbols-become-the-new-normal/5371919>, Whelan, Brian (24 January 2014), *Ukraine: far-right extremists as a core of 'democracy' protest*, Channel 4, News, Available online at: <https://www.channel4.com/news/kyiv-svoboda-far-right-protests-right-sector-riot-police>

<sup>15</sup> Luhn, Alec (21 January 2014), *The Ukrainian Nationalism at the Heart of 'Euromaidan'*, The Nation, Available online at: <https://www.thenation.com/article/ukrainian-nationalism-heart-euromaidan/>; Sones, Mordechai (19 August 2018), *Fascist Salutes: Does it matter anymore?*, ARUTZ SHEVA – Israel National News, Available online at: <https://www.thenation.com/article/ukrainian-nationalism-heart-euromaidan/>

<sup>16</sup> Milne, Seumas (29 January 2014), *In Ukraine, fascists, oligarchs and western expansion are at the heart of the crisis*, The Guardian, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/jan/29/ukraine-fascists-oligarchs-eu-nato-expansion>

<sup>17</sup> Taylor, Adam (16 December 2013), *John McCain Went To Ukraine And Stood On Stage With A Man Accused Of Being An Anti-Semitic Neo-Nazi*, Business Insider, Available online at: <https://www.businessinsider.com/john-mccain-meets-oleh-tyahnybok-in-ukraine-2013-12?IR=T>, Quinn, Joe (12 February 2018), *Anatomy of a Washington-Backed Coup D'état*, *Global-Politics EU*, Available online at: <http://global-politics.eu/euromaidan-anatomy-washington-backed-coup-detat/>

<sup>18</sup> Katchanovski, Ivan (September 3-6, 2015), *The "Snipers' Massacre" on the Maidan in Ukraine*, University of Ottawa, Paper prepared for presentation at the Annual Meeting of American Political Science Association in San Francisco, p. 8, Available online at: [https://www.voltairenet.org/IMG/pdf/The\\_Snipers\\_Massacre\\_on\\_the\\_Maidan\\_in\\_Uk-7.pdf](https://www.voltairenet.org/IMG/pdf/The_Snipers_Massacre_on_the_Maidan_in_Uk-7.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> Schwartz, Mattathias (30 May 2018), *Who Killed the Kiev Protesters? A3-D Model Holds the Clues*, The New York Times Magazine, Available online at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/30/magazine/ukraine-protest-video.html>

<sup>20</sup> *Грузинский снайпер рассказал, кто убивал людей на Майдане*, Sputnik, Tallinn, 13 February 2018, Available online at: <https://ee.sputniknews.ru/politics/20180213/9295245/gruzinskij-snajper-rasskazal-kto-ubival-ljudej-majdane.html>, *Итальянский телеканал показал исповедь "снайперов с Майдана"*, Sputnik, Tallinn, 21 November 2017, Available online at: [https://ee.sputniknews.ru/world\\_news/20171121/8055879/italjanskij-telekanal-pokazal-ispoved-snajperov-majdana.html](https://ee.sputniknews.ru/world_news/20171121/8055879/italjanskij-telekanal-pokazal-ispoved-snajperov-majdana.html)

<sup>21</sup> Katchanovski, Ivan (September 3-6, 2015), *The "Snipers' Massacre" on the Maidan in Ukraine*, University of Ottawa, Paper prepared for presentation at the Annual Meeting of American Political Science Association in San Francisco, p. 7, Available online at: [https://www.voltairenet.org/IMG/pdf/The\\_Snipers\\_Massacre\\_on\\_the\\_Maidan\\_in\\_Uk-7.pdf](https://www.voltairenet.org/IMG/pdf/The_Snipers_Massacre_on_the_Maidan_in_Uk-7.pdf)

overthrow of the corrupt and oligarchic, but democratically elected government in Ukraine.<sup>22</sup> The consequences of this undemocratic change of government were the Russian Annexation of Crimea, the war in Donbas and the de-facto break-up of Ukraine. In the end, this overthrow escalated an international diplomatic conflict between the West and Russia over Ukraine.

What Causes Democratic Revolutions and Under What Conditions Do They Succeed?

### The Euromaidan Example

A democratic revolution is a political science term denoting a revolution in which democracy is instituted, replacing a previous non-democratic government, or in which revolutionary change is brought about through democratic means, usually without violence.<sup>23</sup> One of the fathers of modern nonviolent struggle and anti-government resistance movements against anti-democratic regimes around the world was Dr Gene Sharp.<sup>24</sup> He was often called “the Machiavelli of nonviolence” and his work and strategy were adopted by insurgents in the Baltics, Serbia, Ukraine, Burma (Myanmar) and Egypt, during the Arab spring turmoil.<sup>25</sup> He founded the Albert Einstein Institution in 1983 to promote indigenous regime change that does not invite violent retaliation.<sup>26</sup> Among others, his work influenced Beissinger who claims that “each successful democratic revolution has produced an experience that has been consciously borrowed by others, spread by NGOs, and emulated by local social movements, forming the contours of a model”.<sup>27</sup> In particular, his model has revolved around six following features: 1) the use of stolen elections as the occasion for massive mobilizations against pseudo-democratic regimes; 2) foreign support for the development of local democratic movements; 3) the organization of radical youth movements; 4) a united opposition established in part through foreign prodding; 5) external

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<sup>22</sup> Katchanovski, Ivan (September 3-6, 2015), *The “Snipers’ Massacre” on the Maidan in Ukraine*, University of Ottawa, Paper prepared for presentation at the Annual Meeting of American Political Science Association in San Francisco, p. 63, Available online at: [https://www.voltairenet.org/IMG/pdf/The\\_Snipers\\_Massacre\\_on\\_the\\_Maidan\\_in\\_Uk-7.pdf](https://www.voltairenet.org/IMG/pdf/The_Snipers_Massacre_on_the_Maidan_in_Uk-7.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> *Democratic Revolution*, Wikipedia, Available online at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic\\_revolution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic_revolution)

<sup>24</sup> *Remembering Dr Gene Sharp*, Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Oxford, 16 February 2018, Available online at: <https://www.politics.ox.ac.uk/news/remembering-dr-gene-sharp.html> , *Gene Sharp*, Wikipedia, Available online at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gene\\_Sharp](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gene_Sharp)

<sup>25</sup> Roberts, Sam (2 February 2018), *Gene Sharp, Global Guru of Nonviolent Resistance, Dies at 90*, The New York Times, Available online at: <https://www.politics.ox.ac.uk/news/remembering-dr-gene-sharp.html> ,

<sup>26</sup> The Albert Einstein Institution – Advancing Freedom with Nonviolent Action, Available online at: <https://www.aeinstein.org/>

<sup>27</sup> Beissinger, R. Mark (June 2007), *Structure and Example in Modular Political Phenomena: The Diffusion of Bulldozer/Rose/Orange/Tulip Revolutions*, *Perspectives of Politics* 5(2), Princeton University, p. 261, Available online at: <https://scholar.princeton.edu/sites/default/files/mbeissinger/files/beissinger.modularrevolution.pdf>

diplomatic pressure and unusually large electoral monitoring; and 6) massive mobilization upon the announcement of fraudulent electoral and the use of nonviolent resistance tactics.<sup>28</sup>

Considering the Ukrainian Euromaidan case, the cause of massive democratic demonstrations was Yanukovych's decision to suspend the Association Agreement with the European Union. However, he was democratically elected President and thus, we cannot speak about the existence of possible fraudulent elections. Although his government was corrupt<sup>29</sup> and this regime could be qualified as pseudo-democratic, the absence of any major official electoral criticism<sup>30</sup> does not provide justification for the first and sixth features of successful democratic revolutions.<sup>31</sup>

Speaking about 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> features which are related to the international interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign state, it is necessary to bear in mind the United Nations Charter, Article 2, where is stated that "Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nation to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter; but this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII"<sup>32</sup>, and on Declaration on Principles of International Law, concerning Friendly

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<sup>28</sup> Beissinger, R. Mark (June 2007), *Structure and Example in Modular Political Phenomena: The Diffusion of Bulldozer/Rose/Orange/Tulip Revolutions*, Perspectives of Politics 5(2), Princeton University, p. 261, Available online at: <https://scholar.princeton.edu/sites/default/files/mbeissinger/files/beissinger.modularevolution.pdf>

<sup>29</sup> Düvel, Frank and Lapshyna, Irina (15 July 2015), *The Euromaidan Protests, Corruption, and War in Ukraine: Migration Trends and Ambitions*, Migration Policy Institute, Available online at: <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/euromaidan-protests-corruption-and-war-ukraine-migration-trends-and-ambitions> , *Corruption Perception Index 2013*, Transparency International, Available online at: <https://www.transparency.org/cpi2013/results#myAnchor2>

<sup>30</sup> The Tymoshenko campaign challenged the final election results in the High Administrative Court (HAC) alleging that the 7 February vote was marred by numerous violations and called upon the court to order a third round. The court hearing commenced with 49 judges sitting in panel. On the second day of the hearing, following the court denying her motion to call PEC and DEC members and observers as witnesses, Ms. Tymoshenko requested her complaint be withdrawn. The HAC halted the hearing and allowed the withdrawal, thus leaving the complaint without consideration. On the same day, President Yushchenko signed a decree for the inauguration of Mr. Yanukovych as the fourth President of Ukraine. Ms. Tymoshenko subsequently reiterated her allegations of fraud, but also stated that she would not challenge the result in any other court.

*Ukraine, Presidential Election 17 January and 7 February 2010*, OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report, Warsaw, 28 April 2010, Available online at: <https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/ukraine/67844?download=true>

<sup>31</sup> *Ukraine, Presidential Election 17 January and 7 February 2010*, OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report, Warsaw, 28 April 2010

<sup>32</sup> *Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice*, Article 2, Paragraph 7, p.3, San Francisco 1945, Available online at: <https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/ctc/uncharter.pdf>



Relations and Cooperation among States (24 October 1970) where is stated that “No State shall organize, assist, foment, finance, incite or tolerate subversive, terrorist or armed activities directed towards the violent overthrow of the regime of another State, or interfere in civil strife in another State”<sup>33</sup>. Concerning these internationally adopted principles and having in mind the international interference in the internal affairs in Ukraine,<sup>34</sup> it is impossible to rate the so-called “Revolution of Dignity” as democratic. The sensitivity of international interference in the internal affairs of another State and the omnipresent double standards are the best exemplified in the subject of possible Russian meddling in the US Presidential election in 2016.<sup>35</sup>

The last remaining features, the organization of the radical youth movements have shown that collaboration with far-right parties cannot be classified as democratic.<sup>36 37</sup>

All things considered, the Euromaidan revolution does not match the standards of a democratic revolution, and its dynamics correlate more to a violent Coup D'état.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> *Declaration on Principles of International Law, concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States*, p.7, 24 October 1970, Available online at: <https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/files/3dda1f104.pdf>

<sup>34</sup> *White Book on Violations of Human Rights and the Rule of Law in Ukraine* (November 2013 – March 2014), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Moscow, April 2014, Available online at: <https://www.greenvillepost.com/special/White%20Book.pdf>, Weissman, Steve (2014), *Meet the Americans Who Put Together the Coup in Kiev*, Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity, Available online at: <http://ronpaulinstitute.org/archives/featured-articles/2014/march/25/meet-the-americans-who-put-together-the-coup-in-kiev/>, Gearan, Anne (2014), *In recording of U.S. diplomat, blunt talk on Ukraine*, The Washington Post, Available online at: <https://www.rferl.org/a/nuland-russia-eu-ukraine-reaction/25256828.html>, A PIVOTAL MOMENT FOR THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP: OUTLOOK FOR UKRAINE, MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, BELARUS, ARMENIA, AND AZERBAIJAN; HEARING BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPEAN AFFAIRS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS UNITED STATES SENATE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS FIRST SESSION NOVEMBER 14, 2013, Available online at: Homeland Security Digital Library: <https://www.hsdl.org/?abstract&did=759623>

<sup>35</sup> Masters, Jonathan (26 February 2018), *Russia, Trump, and the 2016 U.S. Election*, Council of Foreign Relations, Available online at: <https://www.cfr.org/background/russia-trump-and-2016-us-election>

<sup>36</sup> Vasilyeva, Nataliya (2 January 2014), *Thousands march to honor Nazi collaborator in Kiev*, The Times of Israel, Available online at: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/thousands-march-to-honor-nazi-collaborator-in-kiev/>

<sup>37</sup> Cohen, F. Stephen (2 May 2018), *America's Collusion with Neo-Nazis*, The Nation, Available online at: <https://www.thenation.com/article/americas-collusion-with-neo-nazis/>

<sup>38</sup> Quinn, Joe (12 February 2018), *Anatomy of a Washington-Backed Coup D'état*, Global-Politics EU, Available online at: <http://global-politics.eu/euromaidan-anatomy-washington-backed-coup-detat/>, Belkin, Aaron; Schofer, Evan (1 October 2003), *Toward a Structural Understanding of Coup Risk*, SAGE Journals, Journal of Conflict Resolution No 47(5), pp. 594-620, Available online at: <http://aaronbelkin.org/pdfs/articles/Toward%20a%20Structural%20Understanding%20of%20Coup%20Risk.pdf>, Bell, Curtis (17 February 2016), *Coup D'état and Democracy*, SAGE Journals, Comparative Political Studies 49(9), Available online at: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/295091779\\_Coup\\_dEtat\\_and\\_Democracy](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/295091779_Coup_dEtat_and_Democracy)



## Post-revolution situation – the outcomes and effects

Post-Maidan Ukraine is characterized not only by regime change, but also by a new geopolitical partnership with the European Union<sup>39</sup>, the United States of America<sup>40</sup>, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization<sup>41</sup>. In particular, Presidential elections were held on 25 May 2014, resulting in Petro Poroshenko being elected President of Ukraine and elections to the parliament (Verkhovna Rada) were conducted in October of the same year. According to Pifer, the new Ukrainian government made some impressive reforms in the following two years, including reforming government finances, pension reform, an e-declaration system requiring that officials declare their wealth, an e-procurement system for government purchases, energy sector and price reform, and weaning the country off natural gas from Russia. However, he states that Poroshenko's regime has not fully conducted judicial reform and emphasizes that the government should strengthen the rule of law and reinforces further measures to curb corruption.<sup>42</sup> On the other side, Cohen speaks about Poroshenko's government refusal to seriously investigate the "Maidan sniper," whose killing precipitated the former president's ouster, snipers who now seem to have been not his agents but those of right-wing Maidan forces – or to bring to justice extreme nationalist behind the subsequent massacre of pro-Russian protesters in Odessa.<sup>43</sup>

In order to understand this regime change on a theoretical basis, Matsiyevsky describes Poroshenko's regime as a clear example of a hybrid regime where the state has competitive elections, but the weak rule of law and formal institutions that are subverted by clientelism,

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<sup>39</sup> *EU-Ukraine relations – Factsheet* (30 September 2019), The European Union – External Action, Brussels, Available online at: [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/4081/eu-ukraine-relations-factsheet\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/4081/eu-ukraine-relations-factsheet_en), See also: *EU Relations with Ukraine*, Council of the European Union, Available online at: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/eastern-partnership/ukraine/>

<sup>40</sup> *Joint Statement on U.S. – Ukraine Strategic Partnership* (16 November 2018), U.S. Secretary of State, Washington, DC, Available online at: <https://ua.usembassy.gov/joint-statement-on-u-s-ukraine-strategic-partnership/>; *FACTSHEET: U.S. Assistance to Ukraine* (21 November 2014), The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, Available online at: <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/11/21/fact-sheet-us-assistance-ukraine>

<sup>41</sup> *Distinctive partnership between Ukraine and NATO* (2017), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Available online at: <https://mfa.gov.ua/en/about-ukraine/euroatlantic-cooperation/ukraine-nato>, See also: *Documents on Ukraine on NATO Multimedia Library*, Available online at: <http://www.natolibguides.info/nato-ukraine/documents>

<sup>42</sup> Pifer, Steven (22 February 2019), *Ukraine: Looking forward, five years after the Maidan Revolution*, Brookings, Available online at: <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2019/02/22/ukraine-looking-forward-five-years-after-the-maidan-revolution/>

<sup>43</sup> Cohen, F. Stephan (13 April 2016), *President Poroshenko's Problems and the Crisis of the US 'Ukrainian Project'*, The Nation, Available online at: <https://www.thenation.com/article/president-poroshenkos-problems-and-the-crisis-of-the-us-ukrainian-project/>

corruption and secretive deals among elites.<sup>44</sup> Accordingly, he states that the qualitative change has not occurred in Ukraine pointing out that the lack of elites' renewal and the dominance of informal rules over formal procedures are two important factors that keep the institutional core of Ukraine's hybrid regime unchanged.<sup>45</sup>

In conclusion, the empirical findings in this article have shown that the Euromaidan was Coup D'état and not a democratic revolution, and the post-Maidan outcomes reflect a geopolitical struggle between the Russian Federation and the U.S. The real impact of the European Union on this revolution is questionable given the leaked phone call from U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, Victoria Nuland.<sup>46</sup> However, the situation in Ukraine remains complicated and in order to gain a better understanding, it may be necessary to reconsider the political bestseller "The Grand Chessboard", written by Zbigniew Brzezinski.

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<sup>44</sup> Matsiyevsky, Yuriy (15 November 2018), *Revolution without regime change: The evidence from the post-Maidan Ukraine*, *Communist and Post-Soviet Studies*, Vol. 51, Issue 4, pp. 349-359, Available online at:

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0967067X18300631>

<sup>45</sup> Matsiyevsky, Yuriy (15 November 2018), *Revolution without regime change: The evidence from the post-Maidan Ukraine*, *Communist and Post-Soviet Studies*, Vol. 51, Issue 4, pp. 349-359, Available online at:

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